



## JOB STRESS, JOB ATTITUDE AND MARITAL SATISFACTION AMONG CIVIL SERVANTS IN ONDO STATE, NIGERIA.

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### ABSTRACT

*The current study was designed primarily to find out the influence of job stress, job attitude on marital satisfaction. Data were obtained from four hundred and twenty-three respondents who are civil servants from the Ministry of Agriculture, Health and Education in Ondo State. The respondent consists of 189 male and 234 female. Standardized psychological instruments were used to measure the variable. As predicted there was a significant effect of job stress and job attitude on marital satisfaction, result reveals that employees who experience lower job stress and positive job attitude experience higher level of marital satisfaction. it was observed from the study that there is no sex differences in both the job stress and job attitude but there is sex differences in marital satisfaction, males experience higher marital satisfaction than females. it was also observed from the study that there is no significant effect of type of job on job stress, job attitude and marital satisfaction among the three sampled professions. The implications of these findings were discussed.*

**Key words:** *job stress, marital satisfaction, job attitude.*

### INTRODUCTION

Social scientists have long been concerned with marriage quality (Burgess and Locke 1954), but questioning how family preferences might shape marriage behavior and quality has only regained substantial attention over the past 20 year. Marital satisfaction or happiness refers to an individual's overall feeling about marriage as a whole and has been shown to be strongly associated with psychological well-being, positive morale, lower depression and better immune functioning (Rutgers, 2014). Marital satisfaction is an indicator of the quality of relationships between married couples and it is achieved only when there is congruity and consistency between the individual's current states of marital relationship with the state he/she expected (Ratra&Kaur, 2004). Marital satisfaction has an important role in maintaining life balance and emotional atmosphere. According to Floyd & Zmich (1991) it is an effective factor to cope with stress and having good performance in life. However, several evidences indicate that couples at the present time are faced with many problems which are preventing them from establishing and maintaining intimate relationships and having satisfactory marital life (Bernshtain&Bernshtain, 1989).

For example, The Punch Newspaper of September 12, 2016 reported that more than 30,000 failed marriages were recorded in Badagry area of Lagos between January and September 2016 as recorded by Family Reloaded Organisation. Even though when a family is intact, it is not an indication that the partners are satisfied but divorce is a direct outcome of unsatisfactory marital relationship. Roach (2001) defines marital satisfaction as general feelings and attitudes of individual towards spouse and marital relationship.

As cited by Ryan & Tammy (2013), Karasek's (1979) job strain model suggest ways in which job demands and control can lead to job-related strain, which can impact non-work variables via negative physical and psychological consequences. One of the biggest sources of stress in marriage is trying to balance work and family. The potential for conflict and stress



increases as most workers struggle with the demands of balancing paid employment and home responsibilities (Landy & Conte, 2004). In the light of the changes and trend in the workforce, there is likely to be a continuous decrease in marital satisfaction. As cited by Butts, Casper & Yang 2013, in 2010, 58% of married employees were dual-earner couples, and 64% of mothers with children under the age of 18 were employed and that the proportion of men and women in the workforce is now almost equal at 53% and 47% respectively (Bureau of Labour Statistics, 2011). This shows that, families are currently experiencing the kind of pressure that was never experienced before now.

Family and work are inter-related and interdependent to the extent that experiences in one area affect the quality of life in the other (Sarantakos, 1996). Home-work interface is known as the overlap between work and home; the two way relationship involves the source of stress at work affecting home life and vice versa. Home-work interface is important for the workers to reduce the level of work-related stress. According to Lasky (1995) demands associated with family and finances can be a major source of "extra-organizational" stress that can complicate, or even precipitate, work-place stress. Russo & Vitaliano (1995) argued that the occurrence of stressors in the workplace either immediately following a period of chronic stress at home, or in conjunction with other major life stressors, is likely to have a marked impact on employee's outcome. Job stress is commonly acknowledged to be a critical issue for managers of organizations as job stressors tend to contribute to organizational inefficiency. Job stressors contribute to organizational inefficiency, high staff turnover, absenteeism due to sickness, decreased quality, and quantity of practice, increased costs of health care, and decreased job satisfaction.

Stress is a concept that has received increased attention in marital research during the last decade, showing that it plays an important role in understanding the quality and stability of close relationships. Evidence suggests that stress is a threat to marital satisfaction and its longevity, for example, Roberts, (2004) examined the impact of job stress and physical exhaustion on the physiological and subjective components of emotional response during marital interactions between 19 male police officers and their spouses. Couples completed 30-day stress diaries and participated in 4 weekly laboratory interaction sessions. During interactions on days of greater stress, both spouses were more physiologically aroused, husbands reported less positive and more negative emotion, and wives reported less emotion (both positive and negative). On days of greater exhaustion, husbands were more physiologically aroused. All of these findings are indicators of heightened risk for poor marital outcomes and thus document an emotional mechanism by which job stress and exhaustion can negatively impact marriage.

Dealing with job demands depletes an individual's resources and leads to strain reactions (Meijman & Mulder, 1998). One of the organizational outcomes that were affected by job stress is performance. Job stress is a mental and physical condition, which affects an individual's productivity, effectiveness, personal health and quality of work. Job stress victims experience lowered quality of work life and performance. The harmful and costly consequences of stress demonstrate the need for strategies to limit stressors within the organization. Organization that does not adopt strategies to alleviate stress may find their employees looking elsewhere for better opportunities. The impact of stress from overwork, long hours at work and work intensification has had major and often devastating effect on organizations of developed nations (Reese 1995). Story and Repetti (2006) conducted a hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) among 43 couples to investigate the effect of daily fluctuations in marital behaviour (anger and withdrawal) as a function of same-day job stressors. The results show that there are significant relationship between job stressors and marital satisfaction; the results also suggest that spouses in high-conflict families may be especially vulnerable to the effects of job stressors on marital satisfaction.



The notion that job attitude plays an important role in determining job outcome I captured in the interest of many scholars. It has long been assumed that job attitude influence work behavior. Job attitude is a set of evaluations of one's job that constitute one feelings toward, belief about, and attachment to one's job. It refers to the 'feel' part of the job, it relates to how you feel about the job and your approach to the job. Overall job attitude can be conceptualized in two ways either affective job satisfaction that constitute a general or global subjective feeling about the job, or as a composite of objective cognitive assessments of specific job facets, such as pay, conditions, opportunities and other aspects of a particular job, their occupation and their employer. However, according to research development, there is no commonly agreed definition on job attitude. Moreover, one's attitude towards his/her work does not necessarily have to be equal with one's attitude towards his/her employer. Job attitude are attitude developed towards a job through the organization, working environment, affective disposition, aggregate measure of job characteristics and the social environment. They depend on broad totality of work conditions and are associated with different levels of satisfaction. Work attitude is intangible, it cannot be seen but it can be felt.

The work-family interface is consistent with the spillover model of work-family relations, in which attitudes and behaviours are believed to carry over from one domain to the other.

## Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested in this study;

- That employees who experienced higher job stress will experience lower marital satisfaction
- That employees with negative job attitude will experience lower marital satisfaction
- That there will be a significant sex differences in job stress, job attitude and marital satisfaction
- That older employees will experience less stress, positive job attitude and experience marital satisfaction than the younger employees.
- That year in service will significantly predict job stress, job attitude and marital satisfaction

## METHOD

### Participants

The participants for this study consist of employees from the public service. The sample was selected from three different settings which include Ministry, Health sector and the Teaching service, in Akure South local Government Area of Ondo State. Four hundred and twenty three staff was purposively selected from a large group of employees. The participant comprised of one hundred and twenty staff (120, representing 28.40%) from the Ministry of Agriculture, one hundred and five staff (105, representing 24.80%) from the State Hospital and one hundred and ninety-eight (198, representing 46.80%) teachers of secondary schools. The sample consists of 189 male (representing 44.68%) and 234 (representing 55.32%) female participants. Their age ranges from 18 to 60 years.

### Measures

**Job stress** was measured using Job Related Inventory (IT) developed by R.L. Kahn (1964) to measure the nature, causes and consequences of job stress. Kahn provided the psychometric properties for American sample while Osegbea provided the properties for Nigerian samples. The scale has a co-efficient alpha of 0.77 and two weeks test-retest co-



efficient of 0.83. The coefficient of alpha obtained by Sheridan 1979 and Osaghae 1998 are 0.87 and 0.89 respectively. A concurrent validity co-efficient 0.01 was obtained by correlating J.T with rated performance (Sheridan, 1978) while the correlated J.T equivalent with checklist symptoms stress by Kyriakon and Sit Cliff (1978)

**Job attitude** was considered an aggregate latent construct in line with previous studies (e.g. Zhao, Wayne, Gilibkowski, & Bravo, 2007). This includes the effect of job satisfaction, job commitment and turnover intention. It was measured using three standardized instrument which include: **The Generic Job Satisfaction Scale** developed by Scott MacDonald and Peter MacIntyre (1997) was used to measure job satisfaction. The Chronbach's alpha reliability for this scale is ( $\alpha = .77$ ). The diversity of item themes likely reduced the reliability coefficient. However, a diversity of items is consistent with the intent to include the relevant facets of job satisfaction of what was been measured. **Job Commitment Scale developed** by Cook and Wall (1980) in addition to two items from Meyer and Allen's (1980) for use in samples of blue-collar employees. The reliability estimates of this scale are found by Meyer and Allen (1997) to be internal consistencies of the dimensions varying between 0.85 for affective, 0.79 for continuance and 0.73 for normative. The overall reliability estimates exceed 0.79 (Allen & Meyer, 1997). Turnover intention was measured using **Turnover Intention Scale** developed by Cammann Fichman, Jenkins & Klesh (1979). It is a 3 item inventory. The scale has an internal consistency alpha of .78.

**Marital satisfaction** was measured using The Marital Adjustment Test developed by Norton (1983). It is a 6-item measure of marital satisfaction. The sixth item is answered on a 10 point scale ranging from 1 (extremely low) to 10 (extremely high). The Marital Adjustment Test (MAT) has demonstrated good criterion-related validity and good convergent validity (Sharpley & Cross, 1982). Locke and Wallace (1959) also reported that the MAT was able to identify "maladjusted" couples with a 96% accuracy rate. The Quality of Marriage Inventory (QMI) was found to have good convergent validity with the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale (Callahan, 1996) psychological properties for the scale with co-efficient alpha of 0.65 and two weeks test-retest co-efficient of 0.87.

## Procedure

Participation involved completing the administered questionnaire that provide demographic information as well as measure the variables of interest. The researchers personally administered the questionnaire to the respondents. The participants were not assisted in their responses to the questionnaire, so as to ensure unbiased data collection. The researchers personally retrieved the questionnaire from the respondents on completion. The response rate was 82.32%. The process of data collection took about three week for completion.



## RESULTS

Table 1 shows the means, standard deviations and correlation among the studied variable. Job stress correlated negatively with the three measures of job attitude i.e job commitment, job satisfaction and turnover intention and also with the global job attitude while job attitude correlated positively with marital satisfaction.

**Table 1:** Mean, Standard Deviation and Correlations Among Study Variables

| Variables              | M     | SD   | 1     | 2    | 3    | 4    | 5   | 6 |
|------------------------|-------|------|-------|------|------|------|-----|---|
| Job stress             | 18.50 | 2.16 |       |      |      |      |     |   |
| Job attitude ( Global) | 24.43 | 1.53 | -.80* |      |      |      |     |   |
| Job commitment         | 6.02  | 0.92 | -.06* | .70* |      |      |     |   |
| Job satisfaction       | 4.00  | 1.37 | -.96* | .33* | .82* |      |     |   |
| Turnover intention     | 3.23  | 0.79 | .04*  | .45* | .47* | .64* |     |   |
| Marital satisfaction   | 9.38  | 2.54 | -.56* | .04* | .13  | .23  | .03 | 1 |

**Table 2:** A two-way ANOVA table showing the effect of job stress and job attitude on marital satisfaction.

| Variables                 | SS       | Df  | MS       | F    | Sig     |
|---------------------------|----------|-----|----------|------|---------|
| Job stress                | 2314.710 | 1   | 2314.710 | 4.71 | P > .05 |
| Job attitude              | 5644.213 | 1   | 5644.213 | 3.79 |         |
| Job stress + Job attitude | 6381.171 | 2   | 6381.171 | 5.82 |         |
| Error                     | 1045.210 | 416 | 9.168    |      |         |
| Total                     | 1628.728 | 418 |          |      |         |

From table 2 above, it can be observed that there is a significant effect of job stress on marital satisfaction,  $F(1, 418) = 4.71, P > .05$ . The mean score reveals that employees who experience lower job stress experience a higher level of marital satisfaction. The result also reveals that there is a significant effect of Job attitude on marital satisfaction, and a significant joint effect of Job stress and Job attitude on marital satisfaction,  $F(1, 418) = 3.79, P > .05$ . The mean score also reveals that positive job attitude increases marital satisfaction. There was also a significant joint effect of job stress and job attitude on marital satisfaction,  $F(1, 418) = 5.82, P > .05$ . This shows that employees who experience lower job stress and have positive job attitude experience greater marital satisfaction than employees with higher job stress and negative job attitude.

**Table 3:** An independent t-test table showing sex differences in job stress, job attitude and marital satisfaction.

| Variables            |        | N   | $\bar{x}$ | t     | P        |
|----------------------|--------|-----|-----------|-------|----------|
| Job stress           | Male   | 189 | 19.75     | -1.93 | P < 0.05 |
|                      | Female | 234 | 18.87     |       |          |
| Job attitude         | Male   | 189 | 25.87     | -0.40 | P < 0.05 |
|                      | Female | 234 | 24.91     |       |          |
| Marital satisfaction | Male   | 189 | 15.82     | 3.67  | P > 0.05 |
|                      | Female | 234 | 12.62     |       |          |

From the table 3 above, it can be observed that there are no sex differences in both job stress and job attitude, but there is a significant sex difference in marital satisfaction [ $t(421) = 3.67, p > 0.05$ ]. The result reveals that males are more maritally satisfied than females.

**Table 4 :**One way ANOVA summary table showing differences in job stress, job attitude and marital satisfaction along the three professions.

| Variable             | Group        | Sum of square | Df  | Mean of Squares | F     | P     |
|----------------------|--------------|---------------|-----|-----------------|-------|-------|
| Job stress           | Btw group    | 99.024        | 3   | 33.008          | 1.294 | P<.05 |
|                      | Within group | 7552.613      | 419 | 25.516          |       |       |
|                      | Total        | 7651.637      | 422 |                 |       |       |
| Job attitude         | Btw group    | 1165.812      | 3   | 318.604         | .855  | P<.05 |
|                      | Within group | 134552.785    | 419 | 454.570         |       |       |
|                      | Total        | 135718.597    | 422 |                 |       |       |
| Marital satisfaction | Btw groups   | 358.017       | 3   | 119.339         | 2.218 | P<.05 |
|                      | Within group | 15922.703     | 419 | 53.793          |       |       |
|                      | Total        | 16280.720     | 422 |                 |       |       |

From the above table it can be observed that there is no significant difference in job stress, job attitude and marital satisfaction as experience by the three professions. This means that type of job does not affect job stress, job attitude and marital satisfaction.

## .DISCUSSION

The overarching goal in the current study was to examine how job stress and job attitude has contributed to marital satisfaction of employees considering the blur in work and family. Thus, the aim was to provide empirical evidence to the role of job stress and job attitude on marital satisfaction. As hypothesized the result reveals that there is a significant effect of job stress on marital satisfaction, such that lower job stress increase marital satisfaction. This may be as a result of workers inability to separate the work and home domain thereby allowing a spillover effect of job stress on marital satisfaction. As pointed out by Llies, Wilson & Wagner (2009) a clear segmentation between work and home limits the psychological influence of work on the home domain by preventing the spillover from work aspect such as job related thoughts and worries into the home domain. It is important to note that a clear segmentation of work and home can also prevent the spillover of positive experiences (Hahn & Dormann 2013) This result is in support with the study carried out by (Seccombe, 2008), where he posited that men and women are increasingly involved in work both inside and outside the home unlike the earlier days while men went to work while women stays at home. His studies corroborate with the result of the study, he stressed further that, marital happiness is highly related to work environment. Thereby, if an individual work in a stressed like environment, that is, the environment where such person experience stress, this is likely to influence the marital happiness and then has major effect on marital satisfaction.

The work of Ganster (2005) also corroborate the result, Ganster (2005) examined the direct and indirect effect of job stress on marital satisfaction, he posited further in his research that, job stress may inhibit the psychological, physical and behavioural of the stressor thereby leading to aggression and frustration and this may thus affect marital satisfaction. He concluded on work role-family conflict, that is the conflict that exist between the work role an individual perform at work and the role in the family may directly influence the marital satisfaction if the work role is too tedious, such individual energy and time might have been consumed and thus have lesser time and energy to spend at home. Recent studies such as Park et al, 2011, Sonnetag, Kuttler & Frtz, 2010 suggest that actively separating work and private life domain fosters psychological detachment while Boundary theories posit that creating and maintaining boundaries around life domain represent a way of simplifying and ordering the environment. Mousavi (2006) shows that marital satisfaction in employed married women is in some aspects more than housewives and threatening factors of marriage are less effective for them in



comparison to the non-employed women. Moreover, they have a stronger relationship with their spouse. Studies show that employed women have more marital satisfaction than housewives. Specially those who have jobs with not -fixed work hours or part -time jobs ( Khosravi, 2003), due to less work hours and work hour that is more compatible with women's other rules, are more satisfied with themselves (quoted by Mousavi, 2006).

As hypothesized also, the result reveals that there is a significant effect of job attitude on marital satisfaction and it was observed from the study that employee with positive job experience higher marital satisfaction. This result is in support with the study of Holman (2002) which says being unfaithful on one's work can unmistakably influence and cause problems in marriage discovered infidelities raise issues of honesty, trust between the partner, commitment and intimately love. A spouse's infidelity has the potential to inflict these emotional costs, marital satisfaction appears to be negatively related to the likelihood that a spouse will be unfaithful. He concluded that, the more likely one's partner is to be unfaithful in his or her job or occupation and the less satisfied one is with his or her marriage and marriage partner. This result support the studies of Snyder(1997),he proposed that marital satisfaction is more influenced by job attitude while providing cues in maintaining job stress. Dispute in financial matter with customers may fire back and has negative effect in their marriage. Continuity in creating dispute at work may affect the physiological make up of such worker or individual and thus has a negative effect on marital satisfaction.

Consistent with many studies on sex differences on psychological variablesthe result reveals no significant effect of sex on job stress, job attitude but a significant sex differences was observed on marital satisfaction with male employee experiencing higher marital satisfaction than the female counterpart. This result is in support with the studies of (Gangster 2005) which emphasize much on work role-family conflict. He stressed forward in his studies that, women are more prone to job stress than male. Women are emotional being and thereby exhibit higher emotional behaviour than men. Women who are still at the stage of child bearing may find it very difficult to cope with work role and family and this may hamper marital happiness. Saccumber (2008) also says in his studies that, in the stage of work role today give more opportunity to work unlike the earlier days while men work and women are at home. Today's work organisation allows male and female to work and sometimes females handle complex work than male in some settings. The ability to cope with work and family role may induced stress and thus has a major blow to marital satisfaction of the couple's.

The result reveals no significant difference in job stress, job attitude and marital satisfaction among the three professions contrary to expectation. This result is in support with the studies of (Heller & Watson,2005) which shows that workplace stress can come from any combination of long hours, perceived lack of control, pressure to perform, low pay, high-risk activities and non-stop deadlines which are not peculiar to any profession. Although, considering the health profession and what areinvolved it was expected to experience greater stress compared with the teaching profession. The no significant difference obtained might be as a result of the role of the spouse, Green et al (2011) suggest that partner reaction to employee work- to- family conflict can have important consequences. Partners form attributions about the source of employee work-to family conflicts and develop attitude towards this employee's condition which impact on the employees experience in terms of job stress, job attitude and marital satisfaction.Unemployment or feeling not working enough is also a source of stress. An increased demand in one domain, either work or family, can cause strain on the other because of the overlap in these two roles and spouses limited time and energy and thus affect their marital satisfaction.



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