

Relative Effectiveness of Communication Counselling Model among Married Secondary School Teachers in Kontagora Education Zone of Niger State

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Abstract

The study investigated the relative effectiveness of communication counselling model: among married secondary school teachers in Kontagora Education zone of Niger State. The survey research design was adopted for the study. Two hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. A total of 229 respondents were selected from ten (10) schools through stratified and purposive sampling technique. A validated questionnaire vetted by experts in Research Measurement and Evaluation was used as an instrument for data collection. One-way ANOVA was used for data analysis. The study revealed that communication counselling model was significantly positive; that synaptic, semantic and pragmatic influenced family stability. The results further revealed that when there is too much noise will lead to reaction. However, if the reaction cordial there will be positive communication but when the reverse is the case conflict will certainly occur in communication comprehension will not be achieved. Based on these findings, the researchers recommended that School counsellors should create awareness on the important of communication counselling model especially when dealing with conflict in the marital Intending married couples should be guided appropriately on the need for mutual understanding in marriage. They should be conscious of the role synaptic, semantic and pragmatic levels as communication counselling model plays to and successful marriage.

Keywords: *Communication counselling, Strategy, Marital stability, Married secondary school teachers, Kontagora education zone.*

Background to the Study

Marriage is an institution constituted by God which is legally, traditionally and culturally bound and universally accepted. Marriage is the most valuable, important challenging and also rewarding relationship in the view of Murdock and Undiyande and Ugal (2006) marriage is the mutual agreement of a man and a woman to live together as husband and wife to live a life of vocation of love and sharing and to raise children and a delicate and difficult association. This is because it could involve challenges which if not controlled by couples could lead to separation, divorce or dissolution.

As cited by Oslon (1996) in Onwuasoaya (2009), the current trend is that about 50% of recent United States marriages are likely to end in divorce (US Bureau of census, 1997). Oslon also predicted that after ten years of marriage only about 25% of couples will stay happily in their home. In marriage there is usually legal bound (approval) expectations that binds both of the couples and also psychological bonds for marriage to be sustainable such as love, intimacy, honesty etc. However, for the facts that couples are humans and no god, it is natural to expect that there will be differences in opinions, values, needs, desires and habits which are the challenges of everyday living, there are bound to be conflicts and misunderstandings once in a while (Tololorunleke, 2003).

Many families within our societies experience difficulties as a result of marital conflicts. This constitutes a major threat to sustainability of marital peace, sustainable development within and outside the marital environment. In line with the above it has therefore become a great concern on the high incidence of divorce and unstable marriage today. According to Onwuasanya (2009) this could not be unconnected with mode of entry into marriage, unrealistic expectations, marrying the wrong person for wrong reasons. Marriage is essentially a difficult relationship that despite choosing wisely and rightly challenges are bound to occur. Hence, for the effective and efficient enhancement of marital stability, efforts should be made in building the right communication skills needed to sustain stability in marriage. These salient communication skills could be acquired through effective marital counseling using communication theory model of conflicts resolution

Stability is the quality of being steady and not changing or being disturbed in any way in this context it connotes that the rate of mutual exchange of benefit is high while the rate of mutual exchange of punishment is low (Onwuansoanya, 2009). A stable marital is one that enjoys a healthy relationship and is able to resolve conflicts when it occurs and forge ahead. It is one in which the spouse is a source of emotional support, companionship, sexual gratification and economic support for the other. Spouses are in agreement on pivot issues of marriage such as in handling marital income, dealing with members of extended marital (Nwobi in Onwuansoaya, 2009).

Promoting marital stability is dependent on how effective and efficient members of the marital work towards making relevant adjustment when need be. The building of marital stability requires some sacrifice from both couples towards necessary transition to sustainable relationship. A marital success is a correlate of the happiness and satisfaction

of members (Geoge, 2002). Also in his view a stable marital is one in which there is expression of happiness and contentment. It could be inferred from the above that there is inter-relationship between marital stability and marital adjustment. In the study carried out by Orourke and Cappeliez (2003) one of the correlates of marital adjustment is compatibility among married couple. Marital instability will be the case once couples are not compatible. The implication is that in an unstable marriage, there is lack of mutual understanding, lack of love, dishonesty, lack of positive communication skills, lack of management and care, where there is chaos, pride, irrational thinking etc. a marriage/marital in such situation needs a re-think for attitudinal change. Marital stability could be enhanced through marital counseling theories depending on the nature of the problems encountered by couples. Such theory as communication model is adopted for conflict resolution for marital stability for sustainable development.

Communication is the process of passing information from the sender to the receiver communication is like a life giving river. When there is poor communication or breakdown in communication between couples a huge dam stopping the flow thereby causing everything around the couples to suffer and slowly dies (Anyanwu, 2013). The pattern of communication in any marriage can destroy or build on the marital stability. If the communication pattern is negative, it lead to marital conflict situation in which there are different ideas, opinion, sharp disagreement of opposition, etc. communication is a glue which cements a relationship together and when it breaks down, the relationship crumbles. Communication is therefore the most common sources of marital conflict resolution which promotes marital instability and overall peace and unity in the family.

Statement of the Problem

Experience and personal interaction with some secondary school teachers shows that most couples (husband and wife) in Kontagora education of Niger State are complaining and accusing each other and exhibiting stubborn behavior in the marriage. Thus many families have been at seriously disagreement in their marriage which have eventually led to divorced. This marital disunity occurs simply because of their failure to arrest, manage or resole conflicting issues between couples or families.

Many families in Kontagora education Zone are going through a lot of stress and hardship, divorce, separation arising from marital conflict effect can drastically affect marital stability. The effects on the children, couples themselves and the sustainable development are devastating as has been observed by the researcher. For harmonious and sustainable relationship, couples must adopt positive communication pattern void of noise and command. It is against this background that the study sets to investigate the irrelativeness of communication counselling model as a vital tool for promoting marital stability among married couples in Kontagora zone of Niger State.

Purpose of the Study

The study is conducted to examine the influence of synaptic, semantic and pragmatic as communication counselling model on marital stability among married women in the study area.

Statement of Hypothesis

Ho₁: Communication counselling model in terms of synaptic, semantic and pragmatic does not significantly influence marital stability among married couples.

Conceptual and Theoretical Literature

Marital communication theory is a theory of marital communication propounded by Bateson (1956). The theory tried to look at the effect of communication on the marital stability. The theory posits that inappropriate communication is essentially the problem of troubled marriages and as well troubled families. According to the theory families establish communication patterns which enable an observer to generate some level of understanding of the level of unity or disunity in the marriage. The theory also emphasized that problem arise in marriages as a result of lack of clarity or the presence of noise, confusion in exchange of communication of the members of the families involved. In a nut shell the theory stressed that; the communication pattern of a marital can destroy or build on the marital stability.

Levels of Bateson (1956) Communication Model

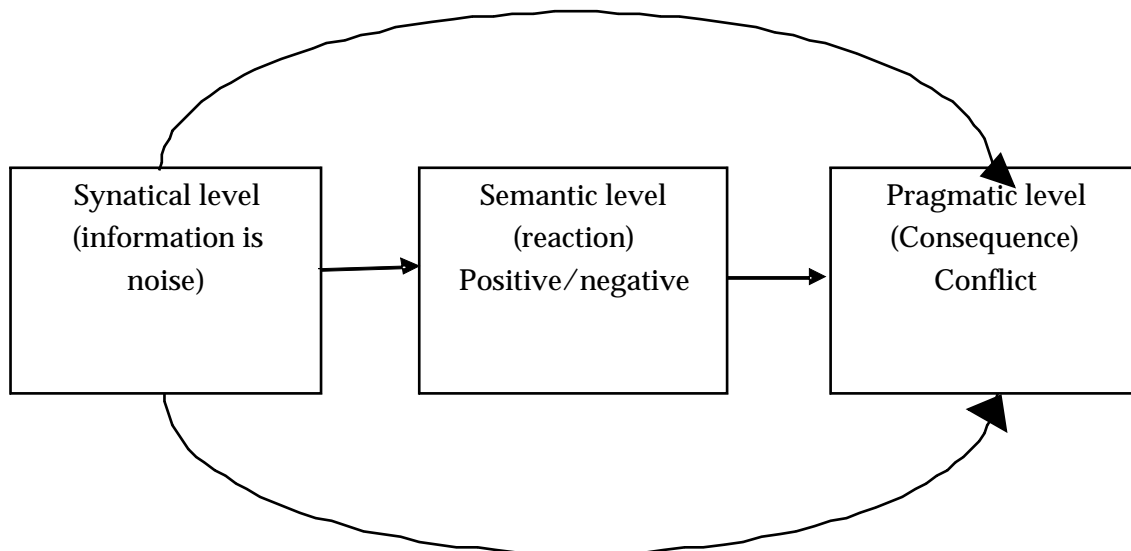
The theory has three levels of communication, the syntactical level, semantic level and the pragmatic levels. Based in the theoretical view marital conflict can arise from these three levels. Synactical level: Synatax is noun, a set of rules that govern how words are combined to form phrase or sentence or the arrangement of words in a sentence. In this context it connotes the manner information is transmitted from the sender to the receiver. Knowledge of this level of communication is very useful to marital members because its interpretation determines how the receiver reacts to the information passed. At this level communication is viewed as "NOISE" communication is noise in a situation whereby such ideas communicated is a distraction. The receiver of the communication or message finds it difficult to make meaning out of the communication. When there is too much noise in communication, it will be very difficult interpreting the communication or information and when this happens it results in mis-comprehension and crises. Noise arises in communication because of economy of words from the sender of the information. Hence, the receiver assimilates it based on his own comprehension.

Semantic level: Semantic has to do with the meaning of words and it aids the recipient to react properly to the information received, the receivers' attitude certainly influences his reaction. At this level of communication the effect of the noise (synactical level) in communication is discovered. In a marital or marital interaction therefore, predisposing factor of reaction or pattern of reaction is dependent on the interpretation given to the noise in communication. The way within a marital unit or marital union in which one individual communicate will determine how the other individual will react. In trying to give directive or information in a family setting the head of the household may create a

noise (communicate void of clarity) and the presence of Noise may bring confusion and distraction on the subordinates, thereby making them not to effectively perform as expected of them. In adequate performance therefore results in conflict.

Pragmatic level: Pragmatic levels deals with the practical consequences as a result of noise at synatic level and effect on the semantic level. This level of communication aids the counselor to determine the effect of one partner message on the other (Steinglass, 1987). This will also determine the behavior of the receiver. At this level of communications the action is exhibited by shouting, barging, fighting etc. In this level pragmatic level the pattern of behaviour can be positive or negative depending on the reaction as well as the information. Marital conflicts therefore arise as a result of chain factors. This model is presented in table 1.

Model 1: Communication counselling model developed by Bateson (1956)
Communication mode resulting in natural conflict



Marital conflict arising as a result of three chain factors discussed above.

In other to create a healthy relationship among marital units, the marital counselor has to make use of reports and commands. At the report stage, the parties concerned in the conflict come together as one so as to discuss issues or take decision. The counselor has to make them to understand, that in the relationship, and as they interact, there should be no noise, no command. The implication here is for the counselor to try as far as possible to remove the issue of noise and command in the relationship. When the issue of noise and command is removed, the communication will be smooth and lively, friendly, reflection of love and perfection on the other hand (on command) where there is commands, it implies that one is the parties is showing that he is superior to the other individual and by assuming this position, the communication is harsh to the extent that one of the parties is

made to be a slave of the other while the other is being looked upon as the master. The command situation is not always advisable because it creates conflicts instead of resolving conflicts. It is important therefore for parties involved to imbibe or utilize the fool theory whereby one acts as a fool in order for peace to reign.

Methodology

The research study was essentially descriptive/survey in nature. Since students in tertiary institutions are involved in communication counselling services, the target or accessible population for the study therefore consisted of the entire student in tertiary institution between the age brackets of 10-45 years. Purposive sampling technique was used to draw two hundred and thirty five (235) married secondary school teachers from the seven local Government areas namely Kontagora, New Bussa, Magana, Rijau Mariga, Magama and Mashegu. Ten (10) schools were drawn to constitute the sample for the study. Relative effectiveness of communication counselling model were measured in three different dimensions (synactical semantic and pragmatic) with a checklist on marital stability questionnaire (CCMAFS) designed by the researchers for the study.

The instrument had three sections. Section A elicits information on personal data of the respondents like Local government area and school. Section B had fifteen items on synactical, semantic and pragmatic levels of communication counselling, while section C was a checklist designed by the researcher to measure marital stability. To ensure face validity the instrument was given to three experts in Research Measurement and Evaluation and psychology unit of the Federal college of education Kontagora and Zaira respectively. The researchers equally established the reliability of the instrument with internal consistency using Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient. A reliability co-efficient of .81 for synactical, .79 for semantic, .80 for pragmatic and .85 for marital stability was obtained and this was considered perfectly positive enough therefore the instrument was judged reliable for data collection.

The instrument was administered by the researcher to 235 married secondary school teachers between the ages of 10-45 years in marriage. From the administered questionnaire only 229 were retrieved and were used in the analysis. The coding system was four point Likert type scale ranging from strongly Agree (SA) 4 points, Agree (A) 3 points, Disagree (D) 2 points and strongly disagree (SD) 1 point in the positively worded items and the reverse in the negatively worded items.

Results and Discussion

The data collected were subjected to descriptive and inferential statistics using one-way Analysis of Variance as presented in table 1

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of communication counselling model on marital stability

Group	N	Mean	SD
Synactical	98	14.04	1.84
Semantic	83	13.14	1.07
Pragmatic	48	13.50	.71
Total	229	13.73	1.66

Sources of variance	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F-value	Sig.
Between Group	19.47	2	9.73	3.65	.001
With Groups	601.17	226	2.66		
Total	291.15	228			

*P<.05 df=2,266 F-critical =3.09

From the result in Table 1 teachers under the category of synactical were 98, with a mean of 14.04 and standard deviation of 1.84. For teacher that falls under the category of semantic are 83 with a mean of 13.14 and a corresponding standard deviation of 1.07. Similarly for teacher who were in the category of pragmatic were 58 with mean of 13.50 and standard deviation of .71

The result of the one-way ANOVA reveals that between groups sum of squares is 19.47, 2 degrees of freedom and mean square of 9.73. Within group sum of squares was 601.17, 266 degrees of freedom and mean sum of 2.66. Total sum of squares was found to be 620.64 with a corresponding 228 degrees of freedom. The calculated F value is 3.65 with a significant value of .027. The F-critical table value of 3.06 was found to be less than the calculated F-value of (3.65). This implies that the null hypothesis that states “communication counselling model in terms of synaptic, semantic and pragmatic does not significantly influence marital stability among married couples” is rejected. Aptly put, synaptic, semantic and pragmatic as communication counselling models has a significant influence on marital stability among married teacher in Kontagora education zone of Niger State. Table 2 presents a summary of post-hoc comparison with Fisher's Least Significance Difference was conducted to find out the mean difference of the relative effectiveness of synaptic, semantic and pragmatic as communication counselling model.

Table 2: Post-hoc comparison with Fisher's Least Significance Difference the influence of synaptic, semantic and pragmatic as communication counselling model

(i) Variable	(J) Variable	Mean difference	Sig.
Synaptic	Semantic	.90*	.008
	Pragmatic	.54	.640
Semantic	Synaptic	-.90*	.008
	Pragmatic	-.36	.759
Pragmatic	Synaptic	-.54	.640
	Semantic	.36	.759

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level

From the post-hoc analysis in Table 2, with synaptic and semantic, semantic and synaptic, there was a significant mean difference whereas for synaptic and pragmatic, semantic and pragmatic, pragmatic and synaptic, pragmatic and semantic there was no statistical mean difference.

Summary and Conclusion

From the data analysis and discussions of finding the summary reveals that communication counselling model in terms of synaptic, semantic and pragmatic has a significant influence on marital stability among married women in the study area. Based on the findings summarized above the following conclusions are drawn from the study.

1. Communication counselling model in terms of synaptic, semantic and pragmatic is a strong determinant on marital stability in the study area
2. Noise and wrong tones of command are negative factors in communication process that can result into disunity among couple, which if not properly handled may lead to marital instability among married couples.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study the following recommendations are made:

1. School counsellors should create awareness on the important of communication counselling model especially when dealing with conflict in the marital
2. Intending married couples should be guided appropriately on the need for mutual understanding in marriage. They should be conscious of the role synaptic, semantic and pragmatic levels as communication counselling model plays to and successful marriage.

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