

Effective Communication in Marital Homes and Work Performance Among Secondary School Teachers in Delta State of Nigeria: Implications for Family Counselling

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Abstract

The influence of communication in marital homes on secondary school teachers' work performance in Delta State was investigated in this study. Only one each of research question and hypothesis were formulated to guide the study by the researcher. Next, the ex-post facto research design was used in the study. The study has a population of 6340 married teachers from 80 public secondary schools in Delta State. Out of this population, 1060 respondents were selected using the stratified random sampling technique. A four-point scale instrument of a validated questionnaire was used for the respondents. The instrument (questionnaire) was titled "Marital Problems and Work Performance Questionnaire (MPWPQ)." The obtained data were analyzed using mean responses to answer the research question while the t-test was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The investigation result showed that lack of communication in marital homes influences secondary school teachers' work performance in Delta State of Nigeria. Upon this result, recommendations such as the following were made; that Delta State Education Board should employ sufficient trained counsellors to handle school and family counselling in the schools. Secondly, that these counsellors should sensitize married teachers, principals, education administrators and others through workshop and seminars with emphasis on the fact that out of school factors can influence work performance. Finally, married teachers should be encouraged to attend workshops and seminars on factors capable of influencing their work performance.

Keywords: *Communication, Marital Homes, Work, Performance, Family Counselling*

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Background to the Study

In marriage, the most important variable is communication. It is the reciprocal exchange of information between the spouses and their young ones. In fact, communication is the process of sharing with others one's ideas, feelings and opinions. Positive communication such as this could be lacking in the secondary school teachers' homes (Modo, Nyarks and Ugbe, 2014). Thus, when there is no pleasant verbal and non-verbal exchange of oral information in the homes or when these exchange of informatively transmitted, there exists what is called “lack of communication in the marital homes” (Maciver, 2012). Verbal and non-verbal communication exist in form of accusations, ridicule, disrespectful judgments, sarcasm and disdainful comments about one another. In normal and functional homes, the communicative expressions include the exchange of deep emotional words and appreciation of each other's weaknesses and strength, warm greetings, handshakes, smiles, emotional touch, hair styles, dressing and asking after one another's welfare (health, safety, happiness, prosperity, well-being, etc.).

For a good relationship to exist between the couple, there must be positive communication in the home. According to Muazu, Abbas, Afuguai and Makarfi (2010), positive communication in the marital home makes up the love strength of the marriage. But on the other hand, lack of positive communication leads to marital problems and conflicts and possible dissolution or divorce/separation. In fact, there will be happiness, unity and marital confidence if couples interact honestly by expressing their feelings (positive communication). When there is maintained ideas and feelings in the marriage, positive communication is the root cause. Again, lack of communication can bring about disintegration in the marital unity of the couple. Thus, this can go a long way to affecting the married teacher's school environment.

In the main, many of our secondary school teachers may not enjoy the profession if there is lack of positive communication in their marital homes. The human resources that are needed for the enhancement of societal development are the teachers. In fact, they implement the policies of the government and help build up young minds of these adolescents academically, socially and morally (Modo, Nyarks and Ugbe, 2014). Marital homes have problems, but the most acute of them is lack of positive communication. And if this happens in the homes of the teachers who have regular contact with young adolescents, the teachers' transferred aggression may be brought to bear on them. Positive communication facilitates a worker's function at work and also relates him to its external environment (Maciver, J. E. 2013). So a teacher who is married and before going to work had a warm rapport at home will work more effectively than his counterpart who had no positive communication before going to work.

As a result of the fact that positive communication can affect work performance, there is the need to embark on a research such as this to ascertain how lack of communication in marital homes influences secondary school teachers' work performance in Delta State and to suggest ways of ameliorating its influence through family counselling among the teachers for maximal performance at work place.

Theoretical Framework

The hierarchy of needs theory (Maslow, 1970) is a necessity for this research work. There are five major human needs in the theory. These needs are physiological, safety, social, esteem and self-actualization needs of man. Ranking these needs, the first three are the basic human needs also called the lower needs. But the esteem and self-actualization needs belong to the complex needs (higher needs) of man. It is the accomplishment of the basic needs that makes the individual yearn for the complex needs in life.

Motivation stems from an individual's desire to fulfill a need which is the premise of Maslow's theory. It is true in life that people are motivated by unsatisfied needs. Which mean that the lower needs must be satisfied first. Thus, the work performance needs such as marital communication at home falls within the social needs of man. Once this is not satisfied effectively, the teacher at work may not work effectively.

There is the need to feel needed, affection, sense of belonging, association (such as love, friendship, interaction and acceptance by others). All these are social needs. They are fulfilled while interacting with others. If these are absent in marriage, conflicts set in, and the teachers home have needs negatively, the motivation to work drops and work performance at school wane (Modo, Nyarks and Ugbe, 2014). Furthermore, once these needs are not satisfied in the teachers' homes, absenteeism, poor performance, emotional break down and low job satisfaction will not take a toll. The dividend of these negativism above give birth to students' laxity and maladjustment. Hence, the consideration of Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory is paramount to this study.

Supports from Literature

In marriage, there are languages and expressions that are convivial to matrimonies. Such interpersonal expressions within the union is supposed to be informational, directive, ludic and performative (Modo, etal. 2014). To send information from one person to another in the family requires effective communication (Maciver, 2012). In fact, couples use these to express their mood, feelings and ideas to one another. To affect and influence the role of others in the family, it plays the directive role. But to seek ideas (ideational) from one another in the family, the above mentioned means are used to control one another. In conclusion, they play the ludic role in their use to make family member happy and flow on. So, to attain effective communication in the homes, the various roles mentioned above should be applied in the homes.

The success of marital homes is due to effective communication. (Modo, Nyarks and Ugbe, 2014). Marriages need it so as to circulate roles within the family, plan for their achievements and motivate members to share out their love and successes. Communication is only positive if it can share ideas and appreciation of each other's weaknesses. Such ideas shared always in form of straight forward discussions not twisted ones (George, 2009). It is only at this level that the communication is appreciative and affectionate; enhancing respect, mutual care, kindness and warmth for each other in the family.

Effective communication within the family influences members for good. But if the opposite is the case in the family, it affects the couples in their lives and work places. This is why such positive communication like factual conversation, ideas, small talks, deep insight and opinions always bind the family together (George, 2009). A study once used 26,442 married couples and from the survey, 86% do not understand their feelings, 78% do not share their feelings, 75% are afraid to share feelings because their partners will be angry, 67% receive silent treatment from their partners and 65% received from their partners' comments that will put them down (Modo, Nyark and Ugbe). One of the issues that make marital communication ineffective is the couples' misunderstanding of their feelings. Such distortion must be avoided to make marital communication effective. These maladjustments can be corrected through marital counselling management skills by a trained counsellor.

Communication adjustment through counselling is possible (Onwuasoanyes and Okeke, 2009). The variables of this study include; communication, management, sex-related skills and socialization which are tools for marital stability in spousal unions. From the study, the result revealed that communication skill management enhances marital stability. This shows that family and marriage counselling, when used, can foster marital communication stability.

Many problems we found in work place and marriage are caused by lack of communication among couples. A study on family – work conflict, information use and work competence by Olorunfemi (2009) showed that in analyzing the conflict between family and work obligations pose critical problems for the couples. Negative perception and use of information cause marital brouhaha, while effective use of information reduces family – work conflict. So, working class couples (teachers) should ameliorate the pressure of lack of communication through marital counselling.

Basically, marital communication has serious influence on marital stability of married teachers (Assan, 2008). This study supports family counselling as a professional tool in ameliorating the influences of marital communication of the effectiveness of teaching. In fact, marital communication enhances work performance; especially the teacher. There was a study on Perna-social indicators of marital stability of workers in Nigeria by Sanni, Umobona, Modo and Okediji (2011). Their findings showed that, when family counselling is conducted on married teachers/workers, there will be effective communication in the homes of the married teachers/workers in the Nigerian society.

Statement of Problem

In our secondary schools today, students' maladaptive behaviours socially and academically is blamed on the teachers (Modo, Nyarks and Ugbe, 2014). In fact, once examination results are poor, or students engage in any kind of social vices, the teachers are equally blamed. The obvious reason is the fact that the schools train the students academically, socially, psychologically and morally. For the students to be effectively moulded, the teachers work performance come to mind.

The fact exist that many of our teachers are married and hence prone to family problems occasioned by negligence such as lack of effective marital communication. Thus, the problem of the study is to investigate the influence of communication in marital homes on secondary school teachers' work performance in Delta State.

Research Question

In what ways does lack of effective communication in marital homes influence secondary school teachers' work performance in Delta State?

Research Hypothesis

Lack of effective communication in marital homes does not significantly influence secondary school teachers' work performance in Delta State, Nigeria.

Methodology

The ex-post factor design was used for this study. The population of 5,360 was used for the study. They were all married secondary school teachers in Delta State. One thousand and sixty (1060) married teachers from sixty (60) of three hundred and fifty (350) public secondary school in Delta State, who were selected through stratified random sampling technique form the sample for this study. The sample size comprised of five hundred and thirty (530) each of male and female married teachers from public secondary schools in Delta State, Nigeria.

Research Instrument

The instrument used for this study is called “Marital Problem and Work Performance Questionnaire” (MPWPQ). It is a 4 point scale validated instrument. It has two parts and two sections. Part one treats the bio data of the respondents. But part two consists of Section A and B. Section A has five items that elicit responses on lack of communication in marital homes. While Section B comprised of ten items which covered the areas of the teachers' work performance such as lesson preparation, quality teaching with instructional materials, marking students' work, giving students feedback, cooperation with colleagues, accepting changes, obeying school rules, liking the students, giving help when necessary and teaching on time following the school time tables.

Data Analysis

The obtained data were analysed with the use of mean responses to answer the research question. The weighted mean point of 2.5 and above were considered strongly agreed items by the respondents. While is considered strongly disagreed if the weighted mean score is below 2.5. Finally, at 0.05 level of significance, the dependent T-test was used in analyzing the only hypothesis of the study.

Results

Research Question: In what ways does lack of effective communication in marital homes influence secondary school teachers' work performance in Delta State, Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation on Lack of Effective Communication in Marital Homes of Secondary School Teachers

Variables	N	\bar{X}	SD	Weighted \bar{X}
Lack of effective communication	1060	9.41	2.512	1.86
Teachers' Work Performance	1060	20.94	7.561	2.07

Table 1 above shows that majority of the respondents disagreed strongly to the instrument's items that were supposed to enhance marital communication in the teachers' home. This is clear from the weighted mean score of 1.86. the fact that the weighted mean score is less than 2.5 shows that there is no effective communication in the homes of the married teachers in Delta State. Again, the result equally revealed that the teachers' work performance is poor in Delta state with the weighted mean score of 2.07 which is less than 2.5.

Hypothesis: Lack of effective communication in marital homes do not significantly influence secondary school teachers' work performance in Delta State, Nigeria.

Table 2: Dependent T-test analysis of influence of lack of effective communication in marital homes on secondary school teachers' work performance (N = 1060).

Variables	\bar{X}	SD	Cal-t	T-crit
Lack of effective communication	9.45	2.512		
Teachers' Work Performance	20.95	7.561	66.647	1.95

$P \infty .05$, $df = 1060$; critical $t = 1.95$

The dependent t-test used in testing the hypothesis reveals that the calculated t-value is 77.647. This is greater than the critical t-value of 1.95 at 1060 degree of freedom and .05 level of significance. From the analysis of the findings, it is clear that there is a significant influence in the study. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, showing that there is a significant influence of lack of effective communication on secondary school teachers' work performance in Delta State, Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

Most graduates from our secondary schools do not bear what it takes to be graduates of the system. Table 2 above indicates that lack of effective communication in marital homes influences secondary school teachers' work performance. It is obvious that teachers' effectiveness in schools are hindered as a result of lack of effective communication in their matrimony (Addian, 2008). Furthermore, this study also found out that effective communication has influence on marital stability of married teacher. In the same vein, Sanni, Umobong, Modo and Okediji (2011) observed in their study that effective communication is a significant indicator of marital stability of workers and teachers.

To support the findings of this study, Ndimele (2001) affirmed that positive and effective communication has to play its informative directive, per formative, expressive, ludic, ideational and phatic roles in teachers' marriages for effective work performance in the

schools. Okeke (2009) equally supported this view above when they opined that communication management enhances marital stability in the workers home thereby promoting maximal performance at work place. Once communication is effectively managed at home, the teachers or workers will establish rapport in their homes and environments and in turn perform effectively at work without doubt.

Conclusion

From this study and similar ones reviewed in this research, it has become clear that not until married teachers show concern for the issues of effective communication in their homes and go for counselling remediation, marriage welfare and work performance will suffer.

Implication for Counseling

Trained counsellors should work together with the teachers once intervention remedy has kicked off. This is because lack of effective communication in marital homes of teachers can affect their work performance negatively. Such counseling remediation's will salvage the teachers' work performance for optimal results in our secondary schools.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are put forth as wind falls from the study:

1. So that we have sufficient counsellors to man the school, the Delta State Post Primary Education Board should employ more trained counsellors. These professionals should be empowered to administer school and family counselling in the schools so as to resolve these problems among the married teachers.
2. Workshops and seminars should be organized by the school board from time to time with emphasis on variables that can affect work performance. Such workshops or seminars should include not only married teachers, but school principals, education administrators and other employers of labour.
3. So as to impact positively on the work performance of married teachers, special workshops or seminars should be organized for them with compulsion. This will make them understand what it takes to be cautious of such possible factors such as ineffective marital communication to can hinder their work performance in the schools.

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