

INFLUENCE OF AGE, EDUCATIONAL LEVEL AND LENGTH OF COURTSHIP ON  
MARITAL SATISFACTION AMONG MARRIED PEOPLE IN OYE-EKITI.

BY

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## CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this thesis was carried out by OLATEJU OLAJUMOKE OMOTOLA (PSY/12/0919) of the Department of Psychology, Faculty of Social Sciences, Federal University, Oye-Ekiti.



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## **DEDICATION**

This project is humbly dedicated to the glory of Almighty God, the Giver of wisdom and knowledge. You are worthy to be praised.

Also, to my parents Mr. N.A OLATEJU, late Mrs. OMOLOLA OLATEJU for their care, understanding and sacrifices they made for me to acquire this certificate.



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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the influence of age, educational level and length of courtship on marital satisfaction among married people in Oye-Ekiti.

Respondents ( $N = 242$ ) male 109, and female 133 completed the surveys through questionnaire regarding their experiences in their marriages.

The dependent variable which is the marital satisfaction was measured by marital satisfaction inventory scale which was propounded by Blum & Mehrabian (1999) while the independent variables which are age, educational level and length of courtship were measured by a single item each on the research instrument.

Pearson correlation, one-way ANOVA (analysis of variance), two-way ANOVA (analysis of variance) and T-test for independence variable were used to analyze the result of the data collected for the research purpose. Research indicated that there was no significant relationship between age, educational level and length of courtship on marital satisfaction.

Discussion and recommendations were made in line with the research findings.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Marriage, also called matrimony or wedlock, is a socially or ritually recognized union or legitimate contract between spouses or lovers that set up rights and commitments between each other and their children, and amongst them and their in-laws, as well as society in general. The definition of marriage varies according to different cultures, but it is majorly an institution where interpersonal connections are recognized. In some cultures, marriage is thus, prescribed or considered necessary before engaging in any sexual activity. In conclusion, marriage is considered as a cultural universal union.

In Africa, the most salient indicator of couple distress is a stable divorce rate of approximately 50% among married couples (Kreider & Fields, 2002), with about half of these divorces occurring within the first 7-8 years of marriage (Snyder, Heyman, & Haynes, 2005). Only one third of married persons report being “very happy” with their marriage, which is down more than half from 25 years ago (Snyder, Heyman, & Haynes, 2005). Independent of divorce, relationship research suggests that most, if not all, couples go through difficult periods that cause significant distress and put individuals at risk for symptom development. Marital distress can lead to higher levels of depression and anxiety, and can negatively affect children of the union, which can lead to negative outcomes later in life (Bradbury, Fincham, & Beach, 2000). The connection between relationship distress and personal emotional turmoil emphasize the importance of research that causes the relationship distress and implementing effective intervention strategies to circumvent either the dissolution of a marriage or the entering into a marriage that would later end in divorce (Haynes, Heyman, Snyder, & 2005). Understanding the underlying elements that lead to marital



satisfaction is essential for identifying how to approach couples seeking treatment for distress in their marriages (Bodenmann, Charvoz, Rigozzi, & Rossier, 2006).

One effective way of decreasing marital distress is to identify factors that most likely lead to later discord. The variables of focus in this study are age at the time of marriage, educational level at the time of marriage, and courtship length. Age at time of marriage was chosen because of its prevalence in marital satisfaction literature, and because it has been described as the single best predictor of marital satisfaction (Bumpass & Sweet, 1972). Educational level was chosen because there is a natural correlation between age and education level (i.e. the younger ones has more time to continue their education). Research has shown that women are more likely to discontinue their education post-nuptials (Bayer, 1969, 1972), and that women with more education have less stable marriages (Cherlin, 1979; Janssen et al., 1998; Kalmijn (1999). However, Heaton (2002) found that a higher education level could potentially predict marital satisfaction. The question raised by Tucker and O'Grady (2001) about whether differences in education level can predict marital dissatisfaction is also of note. Therefore, the focus of this study is to examine whether differences in education level between spouses are influenced with marital satisfaction. The final variable, courtship length, was chosen because of past research that indicated length of marriage was negatively correlated with marital satisfaction (Dush, Kroeger, & Taylor, 2008), yet there is a paucity of research that focuses on length of relationship prior to marriage. If the length of marriage is however, negatively influenced with marital satisfaction, then one can infer that those who date longer before getting married would experience more marital distress sooner because their relationships had already aged at the time of their nuptials.

Some research done in the area of marital satisfaction has focused on level of education at time of marriage (Heaton 2002). Some of the generalizations of research done agree that there exists virtually unanimous agreement of the association between the age at first marriage and the probability of divorce. In addition, they go further to assert that the younger one is when married, the higher the likelihood of divorce (Bumpass, 2007). The researcher has explored that assertion and queried whether people who marry early are at a higher risk of marital instability than those who marry later in life.

One major reason for addressing age is that factors which are negatively related to marital “success” (i.e. whether one divorces or remains married) also include many which are related to age at time of marriage, such as low education, , short premarital acquaintance (knowledge and education). In addition the researcher finds it worth to research and correlate whether personality maladjustment like financial problems, conflicts, social media, absentee spouses, among other variables (Burchinal, 1965). Also in a study which examined whether the inverse correlation between level of education at time of marriage and marital instability was attributable to the participant’s education, religious affiliation, parental marital stability, or husband’s marital history (Bumpass 2007). They performed a multivariate analysis on a large sample of married, White women under the age of 45, and found that marital instability was not attributable to the aforementioned factors. Their data showed that age at marriage was the strongest single predictor of marital instability in their analysis. This means that, absent of all other seemingly relevant variables, age at time of marriage was the strongest predictor of marital stability. The researcher believes that given the research was done at a global level there needs to correlate age , level of education, gender and courtship and find the strongest predictor of marital satisfaction which might additionally predict marital stability.

Marital satisfaction is a mental state that reflects the perceived benefits and costs of marriage to a particular person. The more costs a marriage partner inflicts on a person, the less satisfied one generally is with the marriage and with the marriage partner. Similarly, the greater the perceived benefits are, the more satisfied one is with the marriage and with the marriage partner. The categories of how people express love to each other are potentially helpful. These expressions of affection suggest a framework for understanding how different people view positive moments. Marital satisfaction has continued to be a widely investigated topic in the research on marriage and family therapy (Adams, 1988; McKenry and Price, 1988; Nye, 1988, Spanier and Lewis, 1980). Despite abundant research in this area, many scholars have pointed out some issues that need elaboration and discussion. In discussing about marital satisfaction, one would include the aspect of marital quality.

According to Spanier and Lewis (1980) in the discussion of marital quality during 1960s, focus of research was on demographic, personality and social variables and how they were related to marital happiness. In 1970s, the emphasis was then concerned on marital adjustment and satisfaction. Later, in the 1980s, marital stability, an aspect that was seen as highly associated with marital happiness was also seen as the focus of attention in marriage research (Carlson and Stinson, 1982). According to Schoen et al. (2002), marital satisfaction is a global evaluation of the state of one's marriage and a reflection of marital happiness and functioning.

From an evolutionary perspective, marital satisfactions were viewed as a psychological state of regulated mechanisms that monitor the benefits and costs of marriage to a particular person (Buse and Shackelford, 2000). Marital satisfaction can be evaluated from the perspectives of both husbands and wives point of view. Several factors were said to influence wives' marital satisfaction. These factors include level of intimacy, the ability to self-disclosure with their

spouses and perceiving their partners as responsive (Laurenceau et al., 2005). Other factors include husbands' expression of affection and amount of time spent together, as well as communication styles. On the other hand, factors associated with marital satisfaction from the husbands' point of view include satisfaction with sexual relationship, division of household tasks or view of gender roles and the extent of input they perceived to get in the relationship. It was also indicated that age has an increasing positive effect on marital happiness, that is the higher the age as at time of marriage, the better the outcome in terms of marital happiness (Orden and Bradburn, (1968); Carlson and Stinson, (1982).

According to research, marriage has a significant number of benefits for adults' psychological well-being, physical health, and economic stability. These benefits were related however, to the quality and stability of the marriage, not simply being married. Healthy relationships that tend to last longer, are generally happier, and seem to give each individual the intrinsic part of contemporary conception of a meaningful rich life that they all desire (Flowers, 1998, p. 531). Marital happiness is still the largest contributor to overall happiness for married individuals and is strongly associated with physical and psychological well-being (Johnson, Remer1995 & Reynolds, p. 156). The unhealthy relationships that either lack these aspects or possess deficits in certain parts are typically the ones that end in divorce because they do not fulfill the happy, long lasting, meaningful criteria for a rich life.

Marriage is a complex union, which has changed over time and across cultures. In ancient times, women were considered to be "owned" by men, and such marriage could not be dissolved except by the death of one's spouse (Waite, 2005). In ancient Athens, the majority of girls married between 14 to 18 years of age (very soon after their menarche) to husbands who were often a decade or older (Abbott, 2010). The concepts of marital satisfaction were used to describe the

extent to which a person enjoys his/her marriage. A higher level of satisfaction is seen as a measure of marital success. It is, therefore, important to study the influence of marital satisfaction in order to determine what variables could potentially predict the outcome of marital success. People get married in hopes of having a happy marriage, which is conceptualized as a successful marriage. Spanier (1976) argued that, although this concept may seem ambiguous, the growing field of research in this area demands attention. There is a strong interest in the continued study of how couples form successful marriages, to which the profusion of existing research can attest.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

In Africa, the most salient indicator of couple distress is a stable divorce rate of approximately 50% among married couples (Kreider & Fields, 2002), with about half of these divorces occurring within the first 7-8 years of marriage (Snyder, Heyman, & Haynes, 2005). Only one third of married persons report being “very happy” with their marriage, which is down more than half from 25 years ago (Snyder, Heyman, & Haynes, 2005). Independent of divorce, relationship research suggests that most, if not all, couples go through difficult periods that cause significant distress and put individuals at risk for symptom development. Marital distress can lead to higher levels of depression and anxiety, and can negatively affect children of the union, which can lead to negative outcomes later in life (Bradbury, Fincham, & Beach, 2000). Hence, there is a need to assess some of these factors (age, educational level and length of courtship) as underlying influence of marital satisfaction.

### **1.3 Research Question**

Generally, the study seeks to assess marital satisfaction from the perspective of married people in Oye Ekiti community. Therefore, the study is purported to achieve the following;

1. Will there be any significant influence of age as at the time of marriage on marital satisfaction?
2. Does length or time of period spent together prior to marriage has significant influence on marital satisfaction?
3. Will the highest level of schooling that a person has attained as at time of marriage have significant influence on marital satisfaction?
4. Will there be significant interaction effect of age, length of courtship, educational level and gender on marital satisfaction?

### **1.4 Purpose of the Study**

The main objective of the study is to examine the influence of age, educational level and length of courtship on marital satisfaction among married people in Oye-Ekiti. The study is geared towards the following specific objectives;

1. To determine the influence of age as at time of marriage of married people on their marital satisfaction
2. To test if the number of years of courting will influence marital satisfaction
3. To examine the influence of educational level as at the time of marriage on marital satisfaction of the participants
4. To examine the interaction effect of age, educational level and length of courtship on marital satisfaction

### **1.5 Relevance of the Study**

The study among other things will expose married people on how to achieve marital satisfaction and its antecedent, which can therefore help to manage risky behaviors that may lead to marital dissatisfaction. The finding of this study will also expose prospective married people to achieve satisfying marriage. It will also add to the existing literature on marital issues and involve policy makers to make well-informed decision regarding marital satisfaction. It will also guide further research into the area of marriage and counseling.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THEORETICAL FRAME WORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Theoretical Framework

##### Theories of Marital Satisfaction

##### 2.1.1 Bowen Theory.

Bowen Theory (Bowen, 1978; Kerr & Bowen, 1988) has considered a seminal theory in the field of marriage and family therapy. Bowen theorized that each individual contains three basic systems (beyond our basic biology)—the emotional system, the feeling system, and the intellectual system. The emotional system refers to the automatic reactions we have to stimuli or events. This is our most primitive system. We have no control over our emotional system and it is usually out of our awareness. The feeling system is essentially our subjective response or evaluation of our emotional system. The intellectual system is our thinking system. This is where the rational ability to decide how to act occurs. Bowen recognized that individuals do not develop in a vacuum. Rather, individuals group in family units, and these families develop and comprise a whole that, in many ways, is greater in power than the sum of the individuals from which it is comprised. In essence, families develop an “emotional system” or “emotional field” in which they operate. This emotional field is the core of what makes a family system. Bowen later explained that while the “family system” may not be causal in nature (regarding individual actions), it provides a way of understanding the roots of family and individual behavior and problems (Kerr & Bowen, 1988). The emotional system can be conceptualized as a sort of emotional energy field that surrounds and connects family members. Families interact as a system, or a whole. A family system develops prescribed ways for individuals to relate in order to create the most comfort for family members. This emotional system (emotional energy) can



be “heavy” or “light”. When an emotional system is heavy, family members have little freedom in how they can act in relation to each other. When it is lighter, they have much more freedom to act for themselves as an individual. Bowen further explained Differentiation of self, which was referred to as the degree from which each person can be separate from this emotional field, is called differentiation of self. The concept of differentiation is a core concept in Bowen Theory. Differentiation refers to the degree to which each person is able to be separate from the emotional field of the family. If a person has a lower level of differentiation, much of their energy is bound in the relationship processes of the family. They have little ability to act outside of the emotional reactions of the family emotional system. A person low in differentiation is emotionally reactive to the emotions of a situation. Another term used to describe low differentiation is “fusion.” In essence, individuals become “fused” with the family’s emotional system; unable to figure out where their emotions stop and the others’ begin, thus losing control of their own reactions and behavior. In contrast, high levels of differentiation refer to having greater separation from the emotional field of the family system. When the emotional field is “light” persons have more freedom to act according to how they desire to act in a given situation, rather than being a slave to their immediate emotional response. Persons with higher levels of differentiation are able to use their intellectual system to decide how to react to a given situation. Kerr and Bowen (1988) further explained, “Autonomy does not mean selfishly following one’s own directives; it means the ability to be self-determined. Self-determination could result in the choice to be guided by the best interests of the group”. Furthermore, Bowen’s theory explains how the three systems of humans can determine their level of marital satisfaction and happiness.

### **2.1.2 Attachment Vs Independence.**

This theory posits that it is natural for young couples to appear as if they share one life. Within most Christian societies, marriage vows state that, “the two shall become as one”. This kind of attachment, if carried out in the relationship for an extended amount of time, can become a strain on the individualistic characteristics of each partner.

Eckstein & Axford (1999) noted that young children and adolescents need to learn a healthy balance between attachment and independence. They say that when couples feel both independent from and attached to their partner, they appear to be happiest. Several theoretical bases have been used by numerous researchers to explain the concept of a balance between attachment and independence in the marital dyad. One of the most prominent of these theories is Bowlby’s Attachment theory.

Guided by Bowlby’s attachment theory Ainsworth (1985) noted that adults who possess a secure attachment style tend to develop mental models of themselves as being valued and worthy of others’ concern, support, and affection. Significant others are described as being accessible, reliable, trustworthy and well intentioned. Secure individuals report that they develop closeness with others easily, feel comfortable depending on others and having others depend on them, and rarely are concerned about being abandoned or others becoming extremely close to them. Their romantic relationships, in turn, tend to be characterized by more frequent positive effect, by higher levels of trust, commitment, satisfaction and interdependence, and by happy, positive, and trusting styles of love.

According to Ainsworth, adults who hold an ambivalent or attached style, tend to possess mental models of themselves as misunderstood or under-appreciated. They report that others seem to be reluctant to get as close as they would prefer, frequently worry that their significant others do not

truthfully love them or will abandon them the first chance they get. These beliefs along with others such as, that partners are undependable and are unwilling to commit themselves, force these adults to over-commit (i.e. become too attached) in order to counterbalance the views that are held of their partners.

Conversely, adults who hold an avoidant or detached style tend to possess mental models of themselves as being aloof, emotionally distant, and skeptical. They report that others seem to be overly eager to make long-term commitments to relationships and/or are just unreliable. The feelings of being uncomfortable when close and difficulty trusting and depending on others, forces these adults to push away and become disengaged from significant others in order to relieve the tensions of the uncomfortable feelings. In essence, attachment can be adequately represented in terms of two underlying dimensions. These dimensions reflect the degree to which an individual feels uncomfortable in close romantic relationships (discomfort with closeness) and the degree to which he or she fears abandonment from romantic partners (anxiety over abandonment). High discomfort with closeness involves a belief that attachment figures are untrustworthy and cannot be relied upon to provide assistance in times of need. In contrast, high anxiety over abandonment involves a belief that a married person is 'unlovable' and unworthy of help from attachment figures in time of need (Roberts & Noller, 1998, p. 121).

This modality of thinking puts a lot of emphasis on how one thinks of his/her partner. Although there is some truth to the idea that humans must categorise entities outside of themselves in order to realize a consistency within the world, nevertheless the way in which this organization occurs starts within the self. This is touched upon within Bowlby's theory, but is either not extended to its full length or not given the importance it so rightly deserves.

A belief that one is unlovable by others probably will result in abandonment issues for the individual, but what of the individual who has never learned how to be comfortable alone. This person probably will have abandonment issues also but, in this context, does not hold the negative self-view of 'I am unlovable'; this person would hold a view more closely to that of 'I am nothing if I am alone'. Each of these individuals will possibly be too attached to his/her partners, but it has little to do with how they categorize their partner and everything to do with what is going within themselves.

Eckstein & Leventhal (1999) used the analogy of a 'three-legged sack race' to illustrate the importance of a balance in the level of attachment and independence in a marital relationship. Using theoretical bases of family systems they too state that there are two types of imbalances that can occur; "one is the concept of too much dependence (no individuation), the other extreme imbalance is independence (no contact)" (p. 400). Within the analogy, a couple that maintains this balance has their inside legs inside the sack and their outside legs free. When there is no individuation then all three legs are inside the sack, and when there is far too much independence all three legs are outside the sack.

This analogy of the three-legged sack race was used to describe these theoretical concepts in laymen's terms for the Eckstein & Leventhal experiment. The author seeks to add to this already useful analogy and say that instead of looking at three distinct levels of attachment, for the purposes of this study the researcher will be looking at an attachment continuum that is curvilinear in nature. The three extremes of attachment, independence, and balanced would fall to the far right, left, and top respectfully.

Gottman, in a third theoretical basis, in his 1998 review of the Bank Account Model (BAM) which assessed the seven negative patterns in ailing marriages, suggests that "...the amount of

cognitive room that couples allocate for the relationship and their spouse's world," soothes each individual and aids in problem resolution (p. 182). Problem resolution is one of many areas of a relationship that can be fixed in a less stressful state when a balance between attachment and independence is maintained within the relationship.

Levels of attachment in the marital dyad are extremely important areas of research because of the tendency for insecure attachments to lead to marital violence. "Discomfort with closeness is primarily associated with a lack of emotional involvement in relationships and a strong tendency to deny negative affect (Eckstein & Leventhal, 1999, p.408).

### **2.1.3 Dynamic Goal Theory of Marital Satisfaction**

According to Li and Fung (2011), marriage is more voluntary in nature and is symbolized by the couple's love for each other and desire to be together (2011, p. 246). Their marital satisfaction is the main factor that influences the dynamic goal theory of marital satisfaction. The theory looks at the marital quality and the emotional aspect of the marriage (Li & Fung, 2011). The theory further explains that marital goals are the core foundation of the marriage and need to be achieved to reach marital satisfaction. Furthermore, the theory states that there are three types of marital goals to be achieved which includes; personal growth, marital growth and companionship growth. Personal growth goals are based on the improvement and development of oneself with the help of the spouse within the marriage. When these goals are met, a feeling of accomplishment helps the spouse to feel capable of future challenges. Young adults who have a future waiting for them (Li & Fung, 2011), should accentuate marital goals. Companionship goals show the bonding and emotional meaningful goals that a spouse needs with the other spouse, while the instrumental goals focus on the tasks that occur throughout life that include using the spouse's physical and mental resources (Li & Fung, 2011). The nature of marriage is known as the instrumental goals and is often applied as a division of household effort and responsibilities. Instrumental support from the spouse can help to

improve marital quality; however, unequal division of effort and responsibilities can lead to marital conflict (Li & Fung, 2011).

The dynamic goal theory of marital satisfaction also argues that a couple's vulnerability and stressful events within their environment, help them to modify their life to the environmental changes that interact and combine together influencing the couple's marital stability (Li & Fung, 2011). Other research suggests that wives, regardless of their ethnicity, feel that their marriage relationship is unfair (Forry, Leslie & Letiecq, 2007). Forry, Leslie and Letiecq (2007) studied 76 African American and White couples to determine the couples' marital quality, sex role ideology, and perceived unfairness. Either the couples who participated had attended college or were college graduates, an average marriage of nine years, an average income of \$63,350, and an average of two children living in their household. The study's results showed that the perception of the marital relationship and the poor quality of the marital relationship was the same in both interracial marriages and same - ethnicity marriages (Forry, Leslie & Letiecq, 2007). The difference noted in this study was that marrying interracially can have a significant effect on the racial identity of the non-White spouse and the White spouse. White individuals in an interracial relationship do experience racial discrimination towards themselves or their partners. Nonetheless, a marriage will take place when the total value of two individuals being married surpasses the total of their value from being single (Fryer, 2007). Thus, interracial couples and same-ethnicity couples have the same marital relationship, but interracial couples experience discrimination for not staying pure to their ethnicity.

Dynamic changes occur throughout adulthood and the importance of the marital goals does likewise. Marital goals are impacted by the society's and the couple's norms. Prioritizing goals

in marriage can affect interaction patterns in a marriage to simplify the success of marital satisfaction.

## **2.2 REVIEW OF RELATED EMPIRICAL STUDIES**

### **2.2.1 Age at Time of Marriage and Marital Satisfaction**

Most research in the area of marital satisfaction has focused on age at time of marriage (e.g. Lee, 1977; Booth & Edwards, 1985). There is virtually unanimous agreement that there is an inverse association between the age at first marriage and the probability of divorce—meaning that the younger one is when married, the higher the likelihood of divorce (Lee, 1997). People who marry early are at a higher risk of marital instability than those who marry later in life. One major reason for addressing age is that factors which are negatively related to marital “success” (i.e. whether one divorces or remains married) include many which are related to age at time of marriage, such as low education, premarital pregnancy, short premarital acquaintance, personality maladjustment, and low socioeconomic background (Burchinal, 1965).

Bumpass and Sweet (1972) studied whether the inverse correlation between age at time of marriage and marital instability was attributable to the participant’s education, premarital pregnancy, religious affiliation, parental marital stability, or husband’s marital history. They performed a multivariate analysis on a large sample of married, White women under the age of 45, and found that marital instability was not attributable to the aforementioned factors. Their data showed that age at marriage was the strongest single predictor of marital instability in their analysis. This means that, absent of all other seemingly relevant variables, age at time of marriage was the strongest predictor of marital stability.

Lee (1977) studied the relationship between marital satisfaction, age at marriage, and marital role performance. "Role performance" was defined as the extent to which a person acts out what is perceived to be their role socioeconomically and interpersonally in marriage. This study used the data from a non-random sample of 394 married couples, including spouses' evaluations of role performance in order to gain a more accurate response. All respondents were in their first marriage, had been married six years or less at the time of the study, and were under 35 years of age. Through the use of multivariate analysis, Lee found a positive correlation between age at time of marriage and marital satisfaction after controlling for the antecedent variables of length of marriage, education, socioeconomic background, and religious importance. This means that as the age at marriage increased, marital satisfaction increased as well. This positive correlation finding was true for both males and females. Lee concluded, however, that the strength of the correlation was moderate at best, and may be related to an unmeasured third variable—potential for remarriage. He hypothesized that those who marry young may be cognizant of their better potential to remarry in the event of a divorce, and may then be less willing to tolerate dissatisfaction.

Booth and Edwards (1985) expanded on the research done by Bumpass and Sweet (1972) and Lee (1977) and also found that age at marriage was positively correlated with marital satisfaction due to inadequate preparation. They hypothesized that this situation likely stemmed from inadequate role models or from lack of exposure length to these role models because of early termination of their "marriage apprenticeship" (p. 68) as a result of early marriage. They felt that people who married at an early age were more likely to experience deficiencies in their marital role performance, which then led to marital dissatisfaction. Data for this study came from a national sample of men and women under 55 years of age who were interviewed by telephone in



1980. Researchers used random digit dialing procedures to locate eligible participants. In total, the analysis involved 1,715 men and women currently in their first marriage. To test their hypotheses that early marriage was related to marital instability and poor role performance, and to control for the confounding variable of external pressure for marriage, Booth and Edwards used the Marital Instability Index (Booth, Johnson, & Edwards, 1983) as well as multiple items to assess role performance, alternatives to the present marriage, and external pressure for marriage. They found that marital instability is the highest for those who married early (before age 20). Those who married in their twenties scored the lowest on marital instability. They found that those who married later than their twenties scored similarly to those that married earlier, which suggested that marital stability might have a curvilinear relationship with age.

Bradbury, Fincham, and Beach (2000) continued in this similar study of marital satisfaction in relation to age. Their research indicated that both society and the individual benefit when couples form strong marriages, as those unions frequently lead to less involvement in crime and other detrimental activities by spouses and/or offspring. Slowly declining divorce rates over the last eight years may be related to a sharp increase in the average age of brides and grooms during that same span of time; however, overall marital satisfaction has dropped significantly over the past four decades, and continues to noticeably decline for nearly all couples during the first decade of marriage. Furthermore, the positive and negative factors that led to both increased marital satisfaction and marital dissatisfaction, respectively, may not be mutually exclusive (i.e. satisfaction in marriage is a judgment based on criteria that changed both with the age of each partner and that of the marriage).

Jose and Alfons (2007) examined the effects of age, number of children, employment status, and length of marriage on marital satisfaction. They found that those who married later were more

likely to remain married, but also that those who married younger and get divorced are more likely to remarry. Contrary to previously stated results, these researchers found that age had a significant negative effect on the sexual adjustment and marital adjustment of first-married adults. In other words, the older one was at the time of first marriage, the less adjusted the individual would be toward the marriage and, consequently, the less satisfaction one would express. Middle-aged adults seemed to have greater adjustment problems than both young and elderly participants involved in the study. These researchers also found an effect related to education level, which will be discussed in the next section.

### **2.2.2 Education Level and Marital Satisfaction**

Given that education level generally increases as age increases, (e.g. people do not decrease in education level) and that age is positively influenced with marital satisfaction, it seems reasonable to suggest that education level would be positively influenced with marital satisfaction as well. Research has indicated that education level may predict marital satisfaction in some populations, though past studies were focused on whether women continued their education beyond time of marriage (Bayer, 1969, 1972), or have shown whether educational attainment pre- and post-nuptials was related to marital satisfaction (Davis & Bumpass, 1976). While studies have explored whether continued education for women could be predictive of marital instability has been explored, no studies have been devoted specifically to whether education level pre- and post-nuptials is related to marital satisfaction. Because of this dearth in research, one variable included in this study is education level and its possible influence to marital satisfaction.

Davis and Bumpass (1976) studied continued education among women in the United States. They found that women with eight or less years of schooling at time of marriage were less likely

to continue with their education, though this was attributed to less initial commitment to education. They also found that women who had some college at the time of marriage were more likely to continue their education past the time of their marriages, and that women who were divorced or separated tended to continue their educations. However, there was no confirming or disconfirming evidence that a desire to continue education is what led to the marital instability that caused the disruption (Bumpass & Sweet, 1975). It would therefore be interesting to explore whether education level could lead to marital instability, especially when Cherlin (1979), Janssen, Poortman, and Kalmijn (1998), and Kalmijn (1999) all found that highly educated women had higher rates of unstable marriages.

Jose and Alfons (2007) also found that as education level increased, there were indications of increased sexual adjustment problems. Heaton (2002) explored information from the 1995 National Survey of Family Growth that indicated that marriages contracted after 1980 are becoming increasingly stable and sought to find explanations for this change. In contrast with the aforementioned findings (e.g. Cherlin, 1979; Janssen et al., 1998; Kalmijn, 1999), Heaton found that marital dissolution is lower among women who are more educated or who marry at an older age. In fact, he concluded that age at marriage plays the greatest role in accounting for trends in marital dissolution, and stated that women who marry at older ages have more stable marriages. He also found that marriages were more stable if the husband is older or more educated, but not if the wife is older or more educated.

Tucker and O'Grady (2001) also included a discussion of intelligence, as measured by educational attainment level, in their study. They investigated factors related to marital satisfaction, including attractiveness, education level, and age at marriage. Using American undergraduates to rate eight bogus marriages on a 15-item Likert scale, they found that subjects

judged similarities in education levels to be an important determinant in whether the couple was likely to have a satisfying marriage. An important aspect of this study was that people of higher education levels were only seen as having more marriages that are satisfying if the education level was commensurate with that of their spouse. Lower-educated couples were also judged as having satisfying marriages, as long as they were similarly matched in level of education. It is important to note, however, that these test subjects judged fictional marriages. Dyadic satisfaction among real-life couples was not assessed.

Elder (1969) took a sociocultural look at education level and marriage, and defined it, along with physical attractiveness, as a factor in marriage mobility. Marriage mobility is defined as the change of social class or status, usually to a higher level, through marriage. A woman who is high in marriage mobility has a greater ability to change social status through marriage. Elder hypothesized that women who were better educated and more attractive were more likely to marry men of a higher social status. Although his findings on female marriage mobility may now seem quaint and out-of-date, elder made the point, that “American society generally disapproves of a marital exchange in which the ownership of these attributes [education and attractiveness] is reversed, such as when the woman has the intelligence and talent, and the man has the youth or beauty” (p. 520). This theory is consistent with the conclusions made by Tucker and O’Grady (2001) that married couples with differing levels of education may be less satisfied with their marriages if the woman of the dyad is the one with a higher level of education. However, there may be the added factor, which Elder (1969) discussed, that women who attend college have a larger pool from which to choose potential partners. It may be that women who have a high level of education are more satisfied with their marriages because they were exposed to more potential mates and were allowed higher selectivity. As the relationship between marital satisfaction and

differences in partner education level is unclear and yields mixed results when examined, it is therefore important to explore this relationship further.

### **2.2.3 LENGTH OF COURTSHIP AND MARITAL SATISFACTION**

The final factor of focus in this paper is length of courtship prior to marriage, as this method has not been used in previous research. Length of courtship has been studied infrequently in relation to marital satisfaction, and sources of information are much less prevalent than the previous variables of education level and age.

Hanssen (2006) reported in his study of 952 southern California participants that he found a positive correlation between courtship period and marital satisfaction (measured by the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale [Burnett, 1987]) and a negative correlation between courtship period and incidences of divorce. Hansen concluded that a longer courtship period leads to a higher level of later marital satisfaction.

Teichner and Farnden-Lyster (1997) studied whether total length of relationship, including dating period and marriage, related to marital satisfaction. They surveyed 49 recently married couples and found that those who had been in relationships less than 52.5 months reported significantly higher marital satisfaction (as measured by the Dyadic Adjustment Scale [Spanier, 1976]) than those who had been in relationships for more than 52.5 months. There are two major downfalls to this study: the unexplained, arbitrary cut-off point of 52.5 months, and the lack of distinction between the time spent dating (courtship length) and the total time married. Nevertheless, these findings are in direct disagreement with those of Hansen (2006), who found that those who dated longer before marriage later reported a higher level of marital satisfaction. Though courtship length been infrequently studied, length of marriage has recurrently been used

as a variable correlated with marital satisfaction, and these studies often agree with Teichner and Farnden-Lyster (1997) rather than Hansen (2006).

Dush, Taylor, and Kroeger (2008) used longitudinal data (N = 1,998) to test for the course of marital happiness over time. Respondents were surveyed in six different waves that spanned 20 years (1980-2000). The researchers found that, though the respondents reported varying levels of overall happiness (separated into “low,” “middle,” and “high” happiness groups), all groups experienced a decline in marital happiness over time. They concluded that, over time, people become increasingly less satisfied with their relationships, though this lack of satisfaction is mediated by the respondents’ original happiness in their marriages. In other words, people who were originally in the “high” happiness group experienced less of a decline than those in the “low” happiness group, though everyone experienced a decline.

### **2.3 Research Hypotheses**

1. Married people who are younger in age (as at time of marriage) will significantly exhibit higher marital satisfaction than married people who are older.
2. Married people that have low education level will significantly exhibit higher marital satisfaction than married people who have higher educational level.
3. Married people who spent fewer years in their courtship will significantly exhibit higher marital satisfaction than married people that have spent longer years.
4. There will be a significant interaction influence of age, educational level and length of courtship on marital satisfaction.

## 2.4 Operational Definition of Terms

**Marital Satisfaction:** marital satisfaction is defined as an individual's subjective evaluation of the marital relationship. Satisfaction may be used interchangeably with happiness, lack of distress quality. Marital Satisfaction was measured using marital satisfaction inventory by Blum and Mechrabian 1999. It is a 26-item scale where the higher the score on the MSI the higher the satisfaction while the lower the score on the MSI the lower the satisfaction.

**Age:** Age is simply the length of time that an individual has lived. Age here refers to the chronological age of the participant, which has to be mainly as at time of marriage.

**Length of courtship:** This implies the number of years the participants spent while courting together. This involves the period of pre-engagement between each of the couples prior to marriage. It was dichotomized into three levels and measure as less than 1 year [1], 1-5 years as [2], and 6-10 years as [3].

**Educational level:** This entails one's educational attainment or highest degree of education of an individual as at the time of marriage. Educational level was dichotomized into five levels and measure as SSCE [1], OND [2], HND [3], first degree [4] and postgraduate [5].

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Research Design**

An expo-facto research design was used in this study, specifically survey. The reason for this particular design is because the variables were not manipulated. The study design was descriptive and inferential in nature. In the study, the variable characteristics were described as they naturally occurred. The independent variables are age, educational level and length of courtship while the dependent variable is marital satisfaction.

#### **3.2 Research Setting**

Ekiti state is a state in western Nigeria. Oye-Ekiti is a town and local government area in Ekiti and was carved out of Ekiti North Local government. The study was carried out in Oye-Ekiti.

#### **3.3 Population**

The study population consisted of two hundred and forty two married people in Oye- Ekiti. All participants were required to be adults (older than 18 years old) and were in heterosexual marriage for at least six months.

#### **3.4 Sampling Technique**

The sample consisted of married people in Oye-Ekiti. The sample size for the study was 242 married people. Purposive sampling technique was used which is a type of non-probability sampling method. This sampling technique was employed because the participants used in this study are married people.



### **3.5 Participants**

Two hundred and forty two participants were purposively sampled to participate in this study. The breakdown of the participants is as follow: Gender, participants were male 109 which accounts for 45.0 percent and 133 were female which made of 55.5 per cent. In terms of marital status, 242 were married which amounts to 100.0%,. In terms of educational qualification, 15 of the participant had SSCE which amount to 6.2%, while 34 of them possessed OND/NCE which amounts to 14.0%, 42 of them had HND which amounts to 17.4%, 102 had BSC which amounts to 42.1%, 49 had post graduate degree which amounts to 20.2%. In relation to religious affiliation; 215(88.8%) were Christian, 25(10.3%) were Muslim, while just 2 (8%) were traditionalist. In terms of length of courtship, 1-5years 134 participants which amounted to 55.4% of the total population was involved, less than1 year (23.1%), 6-10 years 52 participants which amounted to 21.5%.

#### **3.6.1 Research Instruments**

The study made use of standardized psychological instrument. The instrument had two sections A and B.

Section A measured the demographical variables of participants such as gender, age at time of marriage, years of marriage, marital status, and level of education, religious affiliation, and length of courtship was categorized under section A even though it is not demographic factor.

#### **3.6.2 Section B: Blum and Mehrabian Marital Satisfaction Scale.**

The Blum and Mehrabian marital satisfaction scale has 26 items used for assessing the level of marital satisfaction among married people. Blum and Mehrabian, (1999), developed it. The

scoring format for the scale is 1-8; high score on the scale indicates high marital satisfaction, while low scores indicates low marital satisfaction.

The Cronbach alpha for this scale is .79 as reported by the authors. In the present study, the researcher obtained cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.05

### **3.7 Procedure**

The purpose of this study was explained to participants .Ethical issues were considered and assurances were given based on confidentiality and discretion of the study. Participants were made to understand that participation will help them to address a very important issue. Direction on how to complete the questionnaire was given and the participants were guided on proper completion of the questionnaire. The researcher assured the participants that their responses would not be personally identified. Two hundred and fifty questionnaires were given out and two hundred and forty-two were collected. Two hundred and forty two questionnaires were used for statistical analysis.

### **3.8 Statistical Analysis**

Data collected in the study were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. Demographic characteristics of the participants will be analyzed using descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, frequency table and percentage. Hypotheses stated in the study were tested using inferential and descriptive statistics. Hypotheses one was tested using Pearson correlation, hypothesis two was tested using independence T-test, hypothesis three was tested using one way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). Hypothesis four was however tested using 2by5by3 ANOVA so as to show the interaction influence of age, educational level and length of courtship on marital satisfaction.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS

The data collected were scored and analysed. The following are the results:

**Table 1: Means (M), Standard Deviations (SD) and Correlations**

Variability N=242	M (SD)	1	2
1. Marital age	29.69 (5.20)	-	
2. Years of marriage	9.60 (8.21)	-.03	-
3. Marital satisfaction	104.08 (12.58)	.001	-.13*

\*  $p < .05$  (2-tailed)

The result of correlation analysis among marital age, years of marriage and marital satisfaction are presented in table 1 above. There is a negative correlation between years of marriage and marital satisfaction [ $r(241) = -.13, p = .04$ ]. However, marital age was not related to marital satisfaction [ $r(241) = .001, p = .99$ ].

#### Hypothesis One

Married people who are younger in age will significantly exhibit higher marital satisfaction than married people who are older.

**Table 2: Comparison of mean scores on marital satisfaction between younger and older marital age**

Variable	Younger marital age		Older marital age		t (70)	95%CI
	M	SD	M	SD		
Marital satisfaction	102.35	17.23	103.45	10.87	-.33	[-7.79, 5.60]

The result in table 2 above shows that difference in marital satisfaction scores between participants who married at a younger age ( $n = 34, M = 102.35, SD = 17.23$ ) and older age ( $n = 38, M = 103.45, SD = 10.87$ ) were not statistically significant,  $t(70) = -.33, p = .75, 95\% CI [-$

7.79, 5.60]. This means that age as at the time of marriage does not determine marital satisfaction. Therefore, hypothesis one is not supported.

**Hypothesis Two**

Married people with low educational level will significantly exhibit higher marital satisfaction than married people who have high education level.

**Table 3: comparison of mean scores on marital satisfaction among educational levels**

Variable	Level	N	M	S.D	df	F	p-value
Educational Levels	SSCE	14	106.93	7.48	4, 233	1.57	.84
	OND/NCE	34	101.29	13.63			
	HND	41	106.76	11.25			
	BSc.	100	102.74	12.67			
	Post	49	105.71	12.74			
<b>Dependent Variable:</b> Marital satisfaction							

$F(4, 233) = 1.57, p = .84$

The result in table 3 above shows that difference in marital satisfaction scores among SSCE holders (n = 14, M = 106.93, SD = 7.48), OND/NCE (n = 34, M = 101.29, SD = 13.63), HND (n = 41, M = 106.76, SD = 11.25), BS.C (n = 100, M = 102.74, SD = 12.67) and postgraduate (n = 49, M = 105.71, SD = 12.74) were not statistically significant,  $F(4, 233) = 1.57, p = .84$ . This means that education does not determine levels of marital satisfaction. Therefore, hypothesis two is not supported.

**Hypothesis Three**

Married people who spent fewer years in courtship will significantly exhibit higher marital satisfaction than those who spent more courtship years.

**Table 4: Comparison of mean scores on marital satisfaction according to courtship duration**

Variable	Level	N	M	S.D	df	F	p-value
Years of courtship	< 1 year	55	104.35	12.22	2, 235	.18	.83
	1-5 years	132	104.34	12.84			
	6-10 years	51	103.14	12.49			
<b>Dependent Variable:</b> Marital satisfaction							

$F(2, 235) = .18, p = .83$

The result in table 4 above shows that difference in marital satisfaction scores among participants who spent less than 1 year in courtship ( $n = 55, M = 104.35, SD = 12.22$ ), 1-5 years in courtship ( $n = 132, M = 104.34, SD = 12.84$ ) and 6-10 years in courtship ( $n = 51, M = 103.14, SD = 12.49$ ) were not statistically significant,  $F(2, 235) = .18, p = .83$ . This means that courtship duration does not determine levels of marital satisfaction. Therefore, hypothesis three is not supported.

#### Hypothesis four

There will be a significant interaction influence of age, educational level and length of courtship on marital satisfaction.

**Table 5: 2x5x3 ANOVA testing the interaction effect of marital age, educational level and length of courtship on marital satisfaction**

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	p-value
Marital age (MA)	52.075	1	52.075	.244	.62
Educational level (EL)	539.146	4	134.787	.631	.64
Length of courtship (LC)	265.959	2	132.979	.623	.54
MA * EL	799.325	3	266.442	1.248	.30
MA * LOC	231.902	2	115.951	.543	.58
EL * LOC	1014.286	7	144.898	.679	.60
MA * EL * LOC	628.293	2	314.146	1.471	.24

Dependent Variable: Marital Satisfaction

The result in table 5 above shows that marital age, educational level and length of courtship did not interactively influence marital satisfaction. Therefore, hypothesis four is not supported.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section contains discussion, conclusion and recommendation based on the entire study. It sheds more light on the statistical results and findings that was mentioned in the previous chapter. This will enable us make useful inferences, deductions and generalizations in the society. Furthermore, limitations of the study were highlighted and directions for future research in this area of study.

#### 5.1 Discussion

This study investigated the influence of age, educational level and length of courtship on marital satisfaction among married people in Oye-Ekiti metropolis. The researcher's purpose in this study was to explain the variance of marital satisfaction among married people.

Hypothesis one stated that Married people who are younger in age (as at time of marriage) will significantly exhibit high marital satisfaction than married people who are older. The findings of this study showed that there was no significant difference in the mean score of participants on marital satisfaction based on age (as at time of marriage). In other words, age does not influence marital satisfaction. This finding contradicts the findings of Bradbury, Fincham, & Beach, 2000; Bumpass & Sweet, 1972; Lee, 1977) who found a strong correlation between the two variables, the results from this sample did not show a statistically significant relationship between these variables. This may be related to this particular sample, as the majority of respondents ( $n = 242$ )

were married in their twenties (between the ages of 15-24 younger age and 34\_ 48 older age). There may not be a diverse enough sample to measure the relationship between age and marital satisfaction. Age was still not significantly correlated with these measures. In this sample, there does not appear to be a relationship between age at time of marriage and marital satisfaction. This lack of a significant correlation indicates that age at time of marriage may not be as strong of a predictor of future marital happiness as past research has indicated (Bumpass & Sweet, 1972). This may be unique to these respondents, or there may be a mediating variable that was not identified by the questionnaire. In addition, it is possible that with a larger sample size there would have been more of a variety of ages represented. Perhaps a sample more representative of the population would have yielded different results.

Hypothesis two stated that Married people that have low education level will significantly exhibit high marital satisfaction than married people who have high education level, no statistically significant results were found. Education level does not appear to be correlated with marital satisfaction. It does appear, however, that there is a negative correlation trend with education level, meaning that as the respondent's education level increased, overall marital satisfaction decreased. These results may highlight some difficulty in adjusting to marriage when one is more educated. However, because the statistical analysis of this study was not significant, the actual effect of education level on marital satisfaction is conclusive. This result is congruent with the findings of previous researchers (Cherlin, 1979; Janssen et al., 1998; Jose & Alfons,

2007; Kalmijn, 1999), which indicated that higher education levels are positively correlated with marital instability and sexual adjustment problems. The correlation between marital satisfaction and differences in education level between spouses pre- and post-marriage was also not statistically significant. This may be related to the small sample size, between education levels among respondents and their spouses, or that these differences simply are not significant. Tucker and O'Grady (2001) reported this finding as *perceived* satisfaction. In other words, it was the opinion of outside observers that couples with similar educational backgrounds would be more satisfied, rather than reported finding from existing couples. Therefore, influence in education level may not actually be related to marital satisfaction. The lack of statistical significance currently supports that there is not a strong relationship between level of education and marital satisfaction.

Hypothesis three stated Married people who spent fewer years in their courtship will significantly exhibit higher marital satisfaction than married people that have spent longer years. However, this hypothesis was not confirmed. The result showed that there is no significant difference in the mean score of courtship length on marital satisfaction. This means that courtship duration does not determine levels of marital satisfaction.

Hypothesis five stated that there will be a significant interaction influence of age, educational level and length of courtship on marital satisfaction. The result shows that marital age, educational level and length of courtship did not interactively influence marital satisfaction.



Therefore, hypothesis four is not supported. This indicates that age, educational level and length of courtship do not interactively determine or predicts level of marital satisfaction. That is to say that age, educational level and length of courtship cannot combine to influence the intention to marital discord.

### **5.1 Conclusion**

The basic conclusion in this study is that marital satisfaction of married people in Oye-Ekiti cannot be influenced by all the variables in this research work some of which were investigated in this study. That be said, the results of this study showed that age, educational level and length of courtship does not influence marital satisfaction of married people in Oye Ekiti. This entire variable does not determine ones marital satisfaction, it depend on the love, cordial relationship and understanding between the spouse that can predict marital satisfaction.

Finally, it was reported in this study that an interaction influence does not exist between age, educational level, and length of courtship on marital satisfaction.

### **5.3 Implications of Findings/ Recommendations**

The present study contributes to existing knowledge and expands the understanding of influence of age, educational level and length of courtship on marital satisfaction in Oye- Ekiti. However, following recommendation could be taken into account based on the findings. Future research should focus on the separate stages of the study, courtship, engagement, marriage of a relationship rather than relationship length as a whole in order to gain a more specific understanding of the relationship trajectory.

Another scope of future research could be to explore other demographic variables, such as gender, as it relates to differences in marital satisfaction. Previous research (e.g. Cherlin, 1979, Janssen, Poortman, and Kalmijn, 1998, and Kalmijn, 1999) discussed the relationship between gender, education, and marital stability. Gender was not a focus of this research.

Finally, although the influence between education level and marital satisfaction was not statistically significant, more research is needed in this area because of the conflicting and outdated existing research. It would also be interesting to determine, in a large-scale study, whether the perceived relationship between similarities in education level and marital

Satisfaction discovered in the research by Tucker and O'Grady (2001) could be replicated with real-world couples.

### **5.3 Limitations of Study**

As with most research studies, this study is subjected to several limitations;

Firstly, some participants did not want to participate in the study for reason best known to them, the researcher had to assure them of the confidentiality of the data collected before they could participate in the study.

Secondly, the limitation of this study is that it is based on self-report measures. Participants may have responded with considerable bias or answered in a socially desirable manner. It is impossible to assess the extent to which participants answered candidly, and the extent to which they prevaricated.

Thirdly, respondents were unable to understand some of the test items; item like my spouse and I settle out disagreement with mutual give and take were not easily understood by respondents, so researcher had to explain what the item means.

Finally, another limitation is the relatively small sample size ( $N = 242$ ) and homogeneity of respondents. A larger sample may have yielded more individuals who were older, less or more educated, or had been married multiple times. Also, only two participants had been previously divorced, which may indicate that people with a high overall marital satisfaction self-selected to participate in this survey. People who were less satisfied may be under-represented

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**Frequencies**

Statistics						
	Sex	Marital Status	Length of Courtship	Highest Educ.	Religious Affiliation	
N	Valid Missing	242 0	242 0	242 0	242 0	242 0

**Frequency Table**

Sex					
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	
Valid	Male	109	45.0	45.0	45.0
	Female	133	55.0	55.0	100.0
	Total	242	100.0	100.0	

Marital Status					
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	
Valid	Married	242	100.0	100.0	100.0

Length of Courtship					
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	
Valid	Less than 1 Year	56	23.1	23.1	23.1
	1-5yrs	134	55.4	55.4	78.5
	6-10yrs	52	21.5	21.5	100.0
	Total	242	100.0	100.0	

Highest Educ.					
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	
Valid	SSCE	15	6.2	6.2	6.2
	OND/NCE	34	14.0	14.0	20.2
	HND	42	17.4	17.4	37.6
	BSc	102	42.1	42.1	79.8
	Postgraduate	49	20.2	20.2	100.0
	Total	242	100.0	100.0	

Religious Affiliation					
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	
Christian	215	88.8	88.8		88.8
Muslim	25	10.3	10.3		99.2
Traditionalist	2	.8	.8		100.0
Total	242	100.0	100.0		

DESCRIPTIVES VARIABLES=Age YM MS  
/STATISTICS=MEAN STDDEV MIN MAX.

### Descriptives

Descriptive Statistics						
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	
Age	242	15	48	29.69	5.204	
Years of Marriage	242	1	40	9.60	8.213	
Marital Satisfaction	238	58	130	104.08	12.579	
Valid N (listwise)	238					

CORRELATIONS  
/VARIABLES=Age YM MS  
/PRINT=TWOTAIL NOSIG  
/MISSING=PAIRWISE.

### Correlations

Correlations					
	Age	Years of Marriage	Marital Satisfaction		
Age	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	1 -.033 242			
Years of Marriage	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.033 .614 242	1 242		
Marital Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.001 .993 238	-.133 .041 238	1 238	

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).



T-TEST GROUPS=Age1 (1 2)  
 /MISSING=ANALYSIS  
 /VARIABLES=MS  
 /CRITERIA=CI(.95).

**T-Test**

Group Statistics					
Age1	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	
Marital Satisfaction	Younger marital age	34	102.35	17.227	2.954
	Older marital age	38	103.45	10.874	1.764

Marital Satisfaction	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	t-test for Equality of Means					
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Equal variances assumed							
Equal variances not assumed		5.621	.021	-.326	70	.746	-1.094
				-.318	54.541	.752	-1.094

Marital Satisfaction	Independent Samples Test	t-test for Equality of Means			
		Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed		3.359			
Equal variances not assumed		3.441		-7.793	5.604
				-7.992	5.803

ONEWAY MS BY ET  
 /STATISTICS DESCRIPTIVES  
 /MISSING ANALYSIS.

**Oneway**

Marital Satisfaction	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
SSCE	14	106.93	7.478	1.999	102.61	111.25	96	121
OND/NCE	34	101.29	14.628	2.509	96.19	106.40	58	129
HND	41	106.76	11.247	1.756	103.21	110.31	58	130
BSc	100	102.74	12.667	1.267	100.23	105.25	65	130
Postgraduate	49	105.71	12.738	1.820	102.06	109.37	69	127
Total	238	104.08	12.579	.815	102.48	105.69	58	130

Marital Satisfaction

ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	981.531	4	245.383	1.566	.184
Within Groups	36520.788	233	156.742		
Total	37502.319	237			

T-TEST GROUPS=EL1(1 2)  
 /MISSING=ANALYSIS  
 /VARIABLES=MS  
 /CRITERIA=CI (.95) .

T-Test

Group Statistics

	EL1	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Marital Satisfaction	HND & below BSC & above	89 149	104.70 103.72	12.379 12.725	1.312 1.042

Independent Samples Test

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	t-test for Equality of Means					
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Marital Satisfaction	Equal variances assumed	.951	.330	.580	236	.563	.979
	Equal variances not assumed			.584	189.302	.560	.979

Independent Samples Test

	Std. Error Difference	t-test for Equality of Means			
		95% Confidence Interval of the Difference			
		Lower	Upper		
Marital Satisfaction	Equal variances assumed	1.688	-2.346	4.303	
	Equal variances not assumed	1.676	-2.327	4.284	

ONEWAY MS BY LOC  
 /STATISTICS DESCRIPTIVES  
 /MISSING ANALYSIS.  
**Oneway**

Marital Satisfaction

Descriptives

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Less than 1 year	55	104.35	12.218	1.647	101.04	107.65	58	129
1-5yrs	132	104.34	12.838	1.117	102.13	106.55	58	130
6-10yrs	51	103.14	12.485	1.748	99.63	106.65	65	130
Total	238	104.08	12.579	.815	102.48	105.69	58	130

Marital Satisfaction

ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	58.185	2	29.092	.183	.833
Within Groups	37444.135	235	159.337		
Total	37502.319	237			

UNIANOVA MS BY Age1 EL LOC  
 /METHOD=SSTYPE(3)  
 /INTERCEPT=INCLUDE  
 /CRITERIA=ALPHA(.05)  
 /DESIGN=Age1 EL LOC Age1\*EL Age1\*LOC EL\*LOC Age1\*EL\*LOC.

**Univariate Analysis of Variance**

Between-Subjects Factors

	Value Label	N
Age1	1 Younger marital age	34
	2 Older marital age	38
	1 SSCE	5
	2 OND/NCE	11
	3 HND	14
	4 BSc	27
	5 Postgraduate	15
	1 Less than 1 year	16
	2 1-5yrs	42
	3 6-10yrs	14

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects  
 Dependent Variable: Marital Satisfaction

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	3729.736 <sup>a</sup>	22	169.533	.794	.717
Intercept	442217.055	1	442217.055	2071.390	.000
Age1	52.075	1	52.075	.244	.624
EL	539.146	4	134.787	.631	.642
LOC	265.959	2	132.979	.623	.541
Age1 * EL	799.325	3	266.442	1.248	.303
Age1 * LOC	231.902	2	115.951	.543	.584
EL * LOC	1014.286	2	144.898	.679	.689
Age1 * EL * LOC	628.293	2	314.146	1.471	.240
Error	10460.917	49	213.488		
Total	777009.000	72			
Corrected Total	14190.653	71			

a. R Squared = .263 (Adjusted R Squared = -.068)

T-TEST GROUPS=YM1 (1 2)  
 /MISSING=ANALYSIS  
 /VARIABLES=MS  
 /CRITERIA=CI (.95).

T-Test

	Group Statistics				
	Years of Marriage	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Marital Satisfaction	Less than 3yrs of marriage	45	108.89	11.645	1.736
	More than 15yrs of marriage	43	103.14	11.751	1.792

	Independent Samples Test		t-test for Equality of Means				
	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Marital Satisfaction	Equal variances assumed	.018	.893	2.305	86	.024	5.749
	Equal variances not assumed			2.304	85.740	.024	5.749

Independent Samples Test

		Std. Error Difference	t-test for Equality of Means	
			95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
			Lower	Upper
Marital Satisfaction	Equal variances assumed	2.494	.791	10.708
	Equal variances not assumed	2.495	.789	10.709

**APPENDIX**  
**DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY**  
**FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OYE-EKITI, NIGERIA**

Dear Respondent.

This questionnaire is designed to obtain information on certain attitudes. As part of this exercise, you have been selected to participate in this study. Therefore, your honest and correct responses are essential for this exercise to be successful. The information you give is strictly for research purpose only and therefore whatever information given will be treated with absolute confidentiality.

Thank you.

**SECTION A**

Demographic Information:

1. **Sex:** Male (  ) Female (  )
2. **Age**( as at time of marriage): (  )
3. **Years of marriage :** (  )
4. **Marital status:** Married (  ) Separated (  ) Divorced (  )
5. **Highest Education** Level: SSCE (  )OND/NCE (  ) HND (  ), First Degree(  )  
Postgraduate (  )
6. **Religious Affiliation:** Christian (  ) Muslim (  ) Traditionalist (  )
7. **Length of courtship:** Less than 1 year (  ), 1-5 years (  ), 6-10 years (  )

**SECTION B**

Using the scale below, please indicate the level of your agreement with the following items by choosing the option that best represents your views. A= strongly agree, B= Agree, C= Undisagree, D= Disagree, E=strongly disagree.

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	U	D	SD
1.	My spouse and I agree on how we handle our finances.					
2.	I prefer doing things without my spouse.					
3.	My spouse is very loving and affectionate.					
4.	I regret marrying my spouse.					
5.	My spouse satisfies me sexually.					
6.	I don't get the love and affection I want from my spouse.					
7.	My spouse and I agree on the friends with whom we associate.					
8.	My spouse and I share the same basic philosophy of life.					
9.	I don't approve of the way my spouse relates to my family.					
10.	My spouse and I have similar ambition and goals.					
11.	My spouse and I have marital difficulties.					
12.	I always confide in my spouse.					
13.	If I were marrying again, I would pick my present spouse.					
14.	My spouse really gets on my nerves.					
15.	My spouse and I kiss daily.					
16.	My spouse and I do not communicate well with each other.					
17.	My marriage is not as good as most marriages.					
18.	My spouse and I settle out disagreement with mutual give and take.					
19.	I am very happy with my marriage.					
20.	My spouse and I seldom laugh together.					
21.	I am committed to my marriage.					
22.	My spouse and I quarrel frequently.					
23.	My spouse and I agree on how to spend our leisure time.					
24.	My spouse and I often argue about finances.					
25.	My spouse and I often disagree about major decisions.					
26.	I am pleased with my relationship with my spouse.					