



Emotional Intelligence and Marital Satisfaction of Ministers in the Apostolic Church Nigeria, Uyo Field, Akwa Ibom State

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Abstract

Original Research Article

The study examined the extent to which emotional intelligence predicts the marital satisfaction of ministers in the Apostolic Church Nigeria, Uyo Field, Akwa Ibom State. Six research questions and six corresponding null hypotheses were formulated to guide the investigation. A correlational research design was adopted for the study. The population comprised 313 ministers in the Apostolic Church Nigeria, Uyo Field, Akwa Ibom State, out of which a sample of 205 ministers was selected using the purposive sampling technique. Two researcher-developed instruments titled “Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire” (EIQ) and “Marital Satisfaction Scale for Church Ministers” (MSSCM) were employed for data collection. The instruments were subjected to face validation, and their internal consistency reliability was determined, yielding coefficients of 0.76 for the EIQ and 0.73 for the MSSCM. Data collected were analysed using simple linear regression statistic. Findings revealed that self-awareness, and empathy significantly predicted the marital satisfaction of ministers in the Apostolic Church Nigeria, while motivation did not. Based on these findings, conclusions were drawn, and three recommendations were made, one of which is that empathy training should be incorporated into ministerial counselling and leadership development programmes to enhance marital satisfaction of ministers.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence, self-awareness, motivation, empathy, marital satisfaction, church ministers.

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INTRODUCTION

Marital satisfaction is a fundamental aspect of personal well-being and relational health, particularly for individuals in high-responsibility roles such as ministers. Marital satisfaction is the degree of contentment and fulfillment individuals experience within their marriage. It encompasses various dimensions, including emotional intimacy, communication,

shared values, and mutual respect. Marital satisfaction is closely linked to overall well-being, influencing mental health, physical health, and life satisfaction. High levels of marital satisfaction are associated with positive outcomes such as lower rates of depression, anxiety, and stress, while dissatisfaction can lead to negative consequences, including increased conflict, emotional distress, and even divorce (Graham, Diebels, and Barnow, 2019).



When examining marital satisfaction specifically among church ministers, it is essential to consider the unique challenges and expectations they face in their roles. Ministers often serve as spiritual leaders and role models within their congregations, which can place significant pressure on their personal lives and relationship. The expectations for ministers to maintain exemplary personal lives can create a heightened sense of scrutiny, making marital satisfaction even more critical for their overall well-being and effectiveness in ministry.

Church ministers frequently experience high levels of stress due to the demands of their roles, which may include counselling congregants, leading worship services, preaching and managing other church activities. This stress can spill over into their marital relationship, potentially leading to conflicts and dissatisfaction. The emotional toll of their responsibilities may hinder their ability to engage fully with their spouses, resulting in feelings of isolation or disconnection. Moreover, the nature of ministry work often requires ministers to be available to their congregations at all hours, which can disrupt family time and create imbalances in their personal lives. The lack of boundaries between work and home life can lead to feelings of burnout, further impacting marital satisfaction. In many cases, ministers may prioritize their congregational duties over their marital relationship, inadvertently neglecting the emotional needs of their spouses (Holt and DeVoe, 2015).

Despite these challenges, church ministers may find ways to cultivate marital satisfaction through the use of emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence refers to the ability to recognize, understand, and manage one's own emotions while also being attuned to the emotions of others (Goleman, 1995 cited in Iruloh and Ukaegbu, 2017). Emotional intelligence is particularly important for ministers, who often experience complex emotional landscapes both in their personal lives and in their ministerial roles. The emotional competencies associated with emotional intelligence are self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills (Duncan

& Goddard, 2015). However, only self-awareness, motivation, and empathy were investigated in this study.

Self-awareness is the ability to recognize one's own emotional states and understand how they affect thoughts and behaviours. For church ministers, being self-aware can lead to better communication with their spouses, as they can articulate their feelings and needs more effectively. This awareness can also help them identify patterns in their emotional responses, allowing for more constructive interactions with their partners. Motivation in the context of this study refers to the intrinsic drive to maintain a healthy marriage. For church ministers, this motivation can be particularly strong, as they often view their marital relationship as a reflection of their spiritual commitments. A strong sense of purpose can inspire church ministers to invest time and effort into nurturing their marriages, thereby enhancing their overall marital satisfaction. Empathy, the capacity to understand and share the feelings of another, is essential for ministers in nurturing emotional connections with their spouses. By being empathetic, ministers can create a supportive environment that fosters open communication and emotional intimacy. This emotional connection is vital for resolving conflicts and building a strong partnership, which can serve as a foundation for both personal and ministerial success (Adebayo & Fashola, 2019).

Thus, the need for this study in Akwa Ibom State, particularly focusing on church ministers, is underscored by the unique challenges they face. Church ministers often experience high levels of stress due to their dual roles as spiritual leaders and family members. The expectations placed upon them by their congregations can lead to emotional strain, which may adversely affect their marital relationship. Understanding the interplay between emotional intelligence, self-esteem, and marital satisfaction can provide valuable insights into how church ministers can enhance their personal relationships while fulfilling their ministerial duties.

More so, the cultural context of Akwa Ibom State, where traditional values and

religious beliefs significantly influence interpersonal relationship, adds another layer of complexity to the study. In this environment, the expectations for ministers to maintain exemplary personal lives are particularly pronounced. Therefore, exploring how emotional intelligence predict marital satisfaction of church ministers in Akwa Ibom State is essential for developing targeted interventions and support systems. Hence, this research examined the extent to which emotional intelligence ((self-awareness, motivation, and empathy) predict marital satisfaction of ministers in the Apostolic Church Nigeria, Uyo Field, Akwa Ibom State.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Marital satisfaction is a crucial determinant of the overall well-being and effectiveness of church ministers, particularly within the context of the Apostolic Church Nigeria, Uyo Field, Akwa Ibom State. A fulfilling marital relationship does not only enhance the emotional and psychological health of church ministers but also significantly influences their capacity to perform their pastoral duties. When ministers experience high levels of marital satisfaction, they are more likely to exhibit positive emotional states, engage meaningfully with their congregations, and foster a supportive church environment. This satisfaction can lead to improved communication, stronger interpersonal relationships, and a greater sense of community within the church.

However, marital dissatisfaction poses significant challenges for church ministers, which could lead to emotional distress and a decline in their professional effectiveness. Personal observations by the researcher have revealed a troubling trend among ministers in the Apostolic Church Nigeria, Uyo Field, Akwa Ibom State, where many appear to struggle with marital issues that adversely affect their personal lives and ministerial responsibilities. Common manifestations of marital dissatisfaction among these church ministers include poor communication, unresolved conflicts, emotional disconnection, and a lack of support from their spouses. Such challenges can create a cycle of

stress and burnout, making it increasingly difficult for ministers to fulfill their roles as spiritual leaders and caregivers.

The implications of marital dissatisfaction could extend beyond the individual ministers. They can also have a detrimental impact on the church community as a whole. Church ministers who are grappling with marital issues may find it challenging to provide the emotional and spiritual support that their congregants require. This disconnect can lead to decreased congregational morale, reduced engagement, and a weakened sense of community within the church. Furthermore, the emotional toll of marital dissatisfaction can contribute to mental health issues, such as anxiety and depression, which can further impair a church minister's ability to lead effectively and serve their congregation.

In light of these observations, it is essential to explore the extent to which emotional intelligence could predict marital satisfaction of church ministers. Emotional intelligence is critical for fostering healthy communication and conflict resolution within marriages. Similarly, self-esteem, or an individual's overall sense of self-worth, can significantly impact how ministers perceive and engage in their marital relationships. High levels of emotional intelligence and self-esteem may facilitate better interpersonal interactions thereby leading to increased marital satisfaction. Hence, this study became very necessary to investigate the extent to which emotional intelligence and self-esteem predict marital satisfaction of ministers in the Apostolic Church Nigeria, Uyo Field, Akwa Ibom State

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which emotional intelligence predict marital satisfaction of ministers in the Apostolic Church Nigeria, Uyo Field, Akwa Ibom State. Specifically, the study sought to determine the following:

1. The extent to which self-awareness predicts marital satisfaction of ministers in the Apostolic Church Nigeria.

2. The extent to which motivation predicts marital satisfaction of ministers in the Apostolic Church Nigeria.

3. The extent to which empathy predicts marital satisfaction of ministers in the Apostolic Church Nigeria.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The findings of the study would be very beneficial to church ministers, their families, church members, the larger society, guidance counsellors and future researchers.

Church ministers would benefit directly from the findings of this study as it may provide them with a deeper understanding of the extent to which emotional intelligence and self-esteem predicts their marital satisfaction. The study would offer strategies for improving emotional intelligence and self-esteem ultimately leading to healthier and more fulfilling marital relationship.

More so, the families of ministers, particularly their spouses and children, stand to gain from the information provided by this research. Improved marital satisfaction can lead to a more harmonious family environment, fostering emotional stability and support for all family members. The study would highlight the importance of family dynamics in the context of church ministry, encouraging families to engage in practices that promote relational health and resilience.

Church members would benefit indirectly from the study's findings as the marital satisfaction of their ministers can significantly impact the overall health of the church community. Ministers who are satisfied in their marriages are likely to be more engaged, emotionally available, and effective in their pastoral roles. This can lead to a more vibrant church environment characterized by strong relationships, effective leadership, and a supportive community. In addition, the study would encourage congregants to prioritize their own marital relationships, fostering a culture of healthy marriages within the church.

The larger society would benefit from the findings of the study as well. Healthy marriages among church ministers can lead to stronger

community ties and a more engaged citizenry. When ministers model healthy relationships, they can influence societal norms and values, promoting a culture of support, compassion, and mutual respect. This can have a ripple effect, encouraging individuals and families within the society to prioritize their own relationships and contribute positively to societal well-being.

Furthermore, guidance counsellors would benefit from the findings of this study by gaining relevant information on the specific challenges that ministers face in their marriages, including the pressures of church leadership, public scrutiny, and the emotional demands of ministry. This understanding would enable counsellors to tailor their approaches and interventions to address the unique environment in which ministers operate, making their counselling more relevant and effective.

Finally, the findings of the study would contribute to the existing body of literature on emotional intelligence, self-esteem and marital satisfaction, particularly within the context of religious leaders. Researchers and academics would find valuable data and information that can inform future research. This study may also serve as a foundation for further exploration of related topics, such as the impact of ministry on family dynamics and the role of emotional intelligence and self-esteem in pastoral care.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions guided the conduct of the study:

1. To what extent does self-awareness predict marital satisfaction of ministers in the Apostolic Church Nigeria?
2. To what extent does motivation predict marital satisfaction of ministers in the Apostolic Church Nigeria?
3. To what extent does empathy predict marital satisfaction of ministers in the Apostolic Church Nigeria?

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The following null hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance guided the study at .05 level of significance:

1. Self-awareness does not significantly predict marital satisfaction of ministers in the Apostolic Church Nigeria.
2. Motivation does not significantly predict marital satisfaction of ministers in the Apostolic Church Nigeria.
3. Empathy does not significantly predict marital satisfaction of ministers in the Apostolic Church Nigeria.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study investigated the extent to which emotional intelligence predict marital satisfaction of ministers. Emotional intelligence variables such as self-awareness, motivation, and empathy were investigated in this study as independent variables while marital satisfaction served as the dependent variable. Only ministers in the Apostolic Church Nigeria, Uyo Field, Akwa Ibom State were studied.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

MIXED MODEL OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE BY GOLEMAN (1995)

Mixed Model of Emotional Intelligence was propounded by Daniel Goleman in 1995.

Daniel Goleman expanded the concept of emotional intelligence beyond the cognitive abilities outlined in the Ability Model. His Mixed Model incorporates emotional intelligence with personality traits and social skills, emphasizing the importance of emotional and social competencies in personal and professional success. Goleman's work popularized the concept of emotional intelligence in the mainstream, linking it to leadership, workplace performance, and interpersonal relationships.

The Mixed Model highlights the interplay between emotional awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Goleman argues that these competencies are essential for effective communication and relationship management, making them particularly relevant in the context of marriage and intimate relationships. Self-awareness refers to the ability a person to recognise his own

emotions and understanding their impact on behaviour. Self-aware partners can express their feelings more clearly, reducing misunderstandings and fostering intimacy.

Self-regulation is the ability of a person to control impulsive feelings and behaviours. In a marriage, self-regulation helps partners respond to conflicts calmly and rationally, promoting stability and satisfaction. Motivation refers to the drive to pursue goals with energy and persistence. Motivated individuals are more likely to invest in their relationships, seeking solutions to problems and maintaining a positive outlook.

Empathy is a person's understanding and sharing the feelings of others. Empathetic partners can provide emotional support and validation, which are essential for a healthy marriage. Social skills refer to the ability of a person to build and maintain healthy relationships. Strong social skills enable couples to navigate challenges together, enhancing their bond and satisfaction.

Daniel Goleman's emotional intelligence theory is related to this present study because it emphasizes the importance of self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social skills in interpersonal relationships. According to him, in the context of marriage, couples with high emotional intelligence are better equipped to communicate effectively, manage conflicts, and provide emotional support, leading to increased marital satisfaction. Partners who are self-aware can articulate their feelings more clearly, which reduces confusion and misunderstandings. For example, if one partner feels neglected, being self-aware allows them to express this feeling constructively rather than resorting to passive-aggressive behavior. On the other hand, self-regulation contributes to emotional stability within the marital relationship. Partners who can maintain their composure during difficult times create a sense of safety and security, which is essential for marital satisfaction.

More so, when partners demonstrate empathy, they validate each other's feelings, making each person feel heard and understood. This validation is crucial for emotional intimacy

and connection. Finally, couples with strong social skills can work together as a team, whether in parenting, financial decisions, or household responsibilities. This collaboration enhances the sense of partnership and shared goals.

EMPIRICAL LITERATURE

SELF-AWARENESS AND MARITAL SATISFACTION

Using a quantitative cross-sectional approach, Garba and Ibrahim (2016) examined how self-awareness predicts marital satisfaction among 1,180 married professionals in Kano State, Nigeria. A correlational research design was adopted for the study. A sample of 330 married professionals was selected for the study using convenience sampling procedure across diverse sectors. The Self-Awareness Scale and Marital Satisfaction Inventory were used for data collection. Applying multiple regression analysis, they found that self-awareness was a significant predictor of marital satisfaction ($\beta = 0.50, p < 0.05$). The authors recommended the implementation of emotional intelligence workshops to foster improved marital and professional relationships. Similarly, Bamidele (2018) carried out a study titled self-awareness and marital satisfaction among married civil servants in Osun State, Nigeria. The study employed a survey design with a sample of 200 married civil servants selected through simple random sampling. Two standardized instruments were used: the Self-Awareness Questionnaire (SAQ) and the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS). Both instruments were validated and yielded reliability coefficients of 0.78 and 0.81 respectively. Data analysis was conducted using Pearson correlation and t-test statistics at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed no significant relationship between self-awareness and marital satisfaction. Bamidele explained that external factors such as financial stress, workload, and limited spousal communication may have overshadowed the effects of self-awareness on marital satisfaction. The study concluded that while self-awareness may contribute to emotional intelligence, it does not necessarily guarantee marital happiness in contexts burdened by socioeconomic stressors.

Adebayo and Fashola (2019) conducted a study on Self-awareness and marital satisfaction among married adults in Lagos State, Nigeria. The study adopted a correlational research design with a sample of 210 married participants selected through stratified random sampling technique. Data were collected using the Self-Awareness Inventory (SAI) and the Marital Satisfaction Scale (MSS), both of which were validated by experts and recorded reliability coefficients of 0.82 and 0.79 respectively. Pearson Product Moment Correlation and multiple regression analyses were employed to analyze the data. The findings revealed that individuals with higher levels of self-awareness exhibited better emotional control, empathy, and communication skills, which collectively enhanced marital harmony and satisfaction. The study concluded that self-awareness fosters emotional understanding and relational competence, key factors necessary for building and sustaining healthy marriages. It was recommended that couples participate in self-awareness and emotional intelligence training to improve marital outcomes.

MOTIVATION AND MARITAL SATISFACTION

A study titled motivation and Marital Satisfaction among Married Clergy in Cross River State, Nigeria was carried out by Basse and Akpan (2019). The study employed a correlational research design to examine whether different dimensions of motivation predict marital satisfaction among clergy. A sample of 210 married clergy members from various denominations was selected using a purposive sampling technique. Two instruments, namely the Motivation Scale for Clergy (MSC) and the Marital Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ), were used for data collection, with reliability coefficients of 0.81 and 0.85 respectively. Data were analyzed using Pearson Product-Moment Correlation and simple regression analysis. The findings revealed that motivation had no significant relationship with marital satisfaction. The authors argued that clergy often channel their motivation toward ministry success and spiritual obligations rather than relational or emotional intimacy, which can create role strain

and reduce marital quality. They recommended that clergy couples should consciously balance ministry responsibilities with family life to maintain marital harmony. Chukwu and Ibrahim (2020) carried out a study titled professional Motivation and Marital Satisfaction among Married Civil Servants in Abuja, Nigeria. The research adopted a descriptive survey design to explore how job-related motivation affects marital satisfaction. A sample of 250 married civil servants (130 males and 120 females) was selected using stratified random sampling. The study utilized the Work Motivation Inventory (WMI) and the Marital Satisfaction Scale (MSS), both of which demonstrated strong internal consistency with reliability coefficients of 0.78 and 0.83 respectively. Data were analyzed using multiple regression analysis at a 0.05 level of significance. The results indicated that professional motivation did not significantly influence marital satisfaction. The authors explained that highly motivated individuals tend to be career-focused and goal-driven, which may lead to work–family conflict, leaving less time and emotional energy for their partners. They concluded that occupational motivation does not automatically translate into emotional satisfaction within marriage. In their own study, Oyeleke (2018) examined the relationship between motivation and marital satisfaction among married teachers in Oyo State, Nigeria. The study utilized a correlational survey design with a sample of 200 married secondary school teachers drawn through multistage sampling. Data were collected using the Teacher Motivation Scale (TMS) and the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS), which yielded Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficients of 0.84 and 0.86 respectively. Data analysis was performed using Pearson correlation and linear regression techniques. The results revealed a significant positive relationship between motivation and marital satisfaction, showing that motivated teachers demonstrated greater emotional involvement, better communication, and higher levels of marital commitment. The researcher concluded that intrinsic motivation contributes to greater relational investment and emotional connection, which enhances overall marital satisfaction.

EMPATHY AND MARITAL SATISFACTION

A study which examined the relationship between empathy and marital satisfaction among married civil servants in Jos, Plateau State was conducted by Okafor and Yusuf (2017). The study used a correlational research design. The population consisted of 520 married civil servants across five ministries. A sample of 190 participants was selected using simple random sampling technique. The Empathy Disposition Scale (EDS) and the Marital Contentment Inventory (MCI) were administered. Data were analyzed using Pearson correlation and stepwise regression. The findings revealed a strong positive correlation between empathy and marital satisfaction, with empathic listening emerging as a strong predictor. The study recommended policy initiatives that support emotional intelligence development in marital education programmes. Similarly, Okeke (2018) carried out a study titled empathy and marital satisfaction among married health workers in Anambra State, Nigeria. The research utilized a correlational design to examine whether empathy predicts marital satisfaction among healthcare professionals. A sample of 150 married health workers (including nurses, doctors, and laboratory scientists) was selected using convenience sampling. The data collection instruments included the Empathy Quotient Scale (EQS) and the Marital Adjustment Test (MAT), both with Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficients of 0.79 and 0.83 respectively. Data were analyzed using Pearson correlation at a 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed no significant relationship between empathy and marital satisfaction. The researcher argued that although empathy fosters emotional understanding, other contextual factors such as economic stress, time constraints, and communication breakdown play a more dominant role in determining marital happiness among health workers. The study concluded that empathy alone may not be sufficient to sustain marital satisfaction without complementary psychosocial and economic stability. Okafor and Udoh (2019) conducted a study titled empathy as a predictor of marital satisfaction among married pastors in Enugu State, Nigeria. The study

adopted a correlational research design aimed at determining the extent to which empathy influences marital satisfaction among married clergy. A sample of 180 married pastors was selected using purposive sampling from various denominations in Enugu State. The instruments used were the Empathy Scale (ES) and the Marital Satisfaction Index (MSI), both with Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients of 0.82 and 0.87 respectively. Data were analyzed using Pearson correlation and simple linear regression. Findings revealed that empathy significantly predicted marital satisfaction, implying that pastors who exhibited higher levels of empathetic understanding tended to experience deeper emotional intimacy, reduced conflict, and higher relationship quality. The authors concluded that empathy is crucial for maintaining harmony and mutual understanding in marital relationships, particularly among individuals engaged in emotionally demanding occupations like ministry work.

Empirical studies were reviewed to determine the link between each of the independent variables and the dependent variable. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, none of the empirical literature reviewed investigated the extent to which emotional intelligence predicts marital satisfaction of ministers in the Apostolic Church Nigeria, Uyo Field, Akwa Ibom State. This is the gap which this present study filled.

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

A correlational research design was adopted for the study. A correlational research design is applied in any investigation that is directly aimed at prediction of criterion variables on the basis of known value of predictor variables (Wali, 2004). The design is appropriate for this study since the researcher is interested in determining the extent to which emotional intelligence predicts marital satisfaction of ministers in the Apostolic Church Nigeria, Uyo Field, Akwa Ibom State.

POPULATION OF THE STUDY

The population of the study consisted of 313 ministers in the Apostolic Church Nigeria,

Uyo Field, Akwa Ibom State. The Apostolic Church Nigeria, Uyo Field, Akwa Ibom State is made up of 11 major centres and 45 areas. This data is obtained from the office of the General Secretary, the Apostolic Church Nigeria, Uyo Field, Akwa Ibom State (2025) (See Appendix One).

SAMPLE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

A sample of 205 ministers in the Apostolic Church Nigeria, Uyo Field, Akwa Ibom State was selected for the study using purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling technique was chosen because it allowed the researcher to deliberately select church ministers who possess specific characteristics relevant to the study, namely being married ministers in the Apostolic Church Nigeria, Uyo Field, thereby ensuring that only participants with the required experience and knowledge of marital relationships in the context of church ministry were included in the research.

INSTRUMENTATION

Two researcher-made instruments, titled "Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire" (EIQ) as well as "Marital Satisfaction Scale for Church Ministers" (MSSCM) were used for data collection. The EIQ consisted of 30 items. Ten items measured each of the independent variables, namely self-awareness, motivation, and empathy. MSSCM consisted of 20 items which measured marital satisfaction of church ministers. The items were responded to on a four point rating scale namely Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) weighted 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively.

Validation of the Instrument

The instruments were subjected to face validation by three experts. Two of the experts were selected from the Department of Guidance and Counselling and one expert from Measurement and Evaluation, Department of Psychological Foundations, University of Uyo, Uyo. The purpose of the study, the research questions and the null hypotheses were made available to the experts at the time of validation. The experts' suggestions and comments were

incorporated in the final copy of the instruments before they are administered on the respondents.

RELIABILITY OF THE INSTRUMENT

To determine the internal consistency of the instruments, the researcher randomly selected 20 ministers in the Apostolic Church Nigeria, Uyo Field, Akwa Ibom State who were part of the population but not part of the study sample to respond to the instruments. Data generated were subjected to inter-item analysis using Cronbach Alpha statistics for reliability coefficient determination and reliability coefficients of 0.76 and 0.73 were obtained for EIQ and MSSCM respectively. By implication, the instruments were adjudged reliable.

METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

Data collected were analysed using simple linear regression statistic. The R and R² values (coefficient) of simple linear regression

statistics were used to answer all the research questions. The null hypotheses were tested using significant value at .05 alpha level of significance. All data were subjected to analysis using statistical package for social science.

DECISION RULE

The following decision rule guided the answering of all the research questions:

0.000 - 0.199 Very low extent

0.200 - 0.399 Low extent

0.400 - 0.599 Medium extent

0.600 - 0.799 Strong extent

0.800 - 0.00 Very high extent

If the value of significant value is less than .05 alpha level of significance, the null hypothesis of no significance was rejected while the alternate hypothesis was upheld and vice versa.

RESULTS

Table 1: Simple regression analysis on the extent to which self-awareness predicts marital satisfaction of ministers in the Apostolic Church Nigeria, Uyo Field, Akwa Ibom State (n = 205)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of Estimate	Remarks
1	0.695	0.483	0.417	18.0072	Moderate Extent

Table 1 shows the simple regression analysis on the extent to which self-awareness predicts marital satisfaction of ministers. The coefficient of determination (R Square) is 0.483, which

means that self-awareness accounts for 48.3% of the variance observed in marital satisfaction among the ministers.

Table 2: Simple regression analysis on the extent to which motivation predicts marital satisfaction of ministers in the Apostolic Church Nigeria, Uyo Field, Akwa Ibom State (n = 205)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of Estimate	Remarks
1	0.187	0.034	0.025	18.2384	Very Low Extent

Table 2 presents the simple regression analysis on the extent to which motivation predicts

marital satisfaction of ministers. The coefficient of determination (R Square) is 0.034, suggesting

that motivation accounts for only 3.4% of the variation in marital satisfaction among the ministers.

Table 3: Simple regression analysis on the extent to which empathy predicts marital satisfaction of ministers in the Apostolic Church Nigeria, Uyo Field, Akwa Ibom State (n = 205)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of Estimate	Remarks
1	0.752	0.565	0.508	18.3311	Moderate Extent

Table 4.4 presents the simple regression analysis on the extent to which empathy predicts marital satisfaction of ministers. The coefficient of

determination (R Square) is 0.565, meaning that empathy accounts for 12.3% of the variation in marital satisfaction among the ministers.

Table 4: Summary of F-ratio table associated with simple regression coefficient on the extent to which self-awareness predicts marital satisfaction of ministers in the Apostolic Church Nigeria (n = 205)

Predictor	B	SE B	Beta	F-ratio	P	Remark
(Constant)	58.110	1.978	-			
Self-Awareness	2.186	0.353	3.486	.037	.000	Rejected

Table 4 presents the summary of the t-test associated with the simple regression analysis on the extent to which self-awareness predicts marital satisfaction of ministers. The F-ratio of .037 at a significance level (p) of 0.000 indicates that the prediction is statistically significant. This

implies that self-awareness significantly predicts marital satisfaction of ministers. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, confirming that higher levels of self-awareness contribute significantly to greater marital satisfaction among ministers.

Table 5: Summary of F-ratio associated with simple regression coefficient on the extent to which motivation predicts marital satisfaction of ministers in the Apostolic Church Nigeria (n = 205)

Predictor	B	SE B	Beta	F-ratio	P	Remark
(Constant)	48.546	1.971	-			
Motivation	1.854	0.016	0.042	.855	7.519	Accepted

Table 5 presents the summary of the t-test associated with the simple regression analysis on the extent to which motivation predicts marital satisfaction of ministers. The F-ratio of .855 with a significance level (p) of 7.519 indicates that the prediction is not statistically significant. This

implies that motivation does not significantly predict marital satisfaction of ministers. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted, suggesting that motivation does not have a meaningful predictive influence on the marital satisfaction of ministers.

Table 6: Summary of F-ratio associated with simple regression coefficient on the extent to which empathy predicts marital satisfaction of ministers in the Apostolic Church Nigeria (n = 205)

Predictor	B	SE B	Beta	F-ratio	P	Remark
(Constant)	55.763	2.221	-			
Empathy	2.170	1.905	3.668	.044	.000	Rejected

Table 6 presents the summary of the t-test associated with the simple regression analysis on the extent to which empathy predicts marital satisfaction of ministers. The F-ratio of .044 at a significance level (p) of 0.000 indicates that the prediction is statistically significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, confirming that higher levels of empathy contribute meaningfully to greater marital satisfaction of ministers.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

In response to the research question on the extent to which self-awareness predicts marital satisfaction of ministers in the Apostolic Church Nigeria, the finding indicated that self-awareness contributes to marital satisfaction to a medium extent. More so, the test of corresponding hypothesis one showed that self-awareness significantly predicts marital satisfaction of ministers implying that self-awareness plays a vital role in shaping the emotional, psychological, and relational quality of ministers' marriages. Self-awareness, as a key component of emotional intelligence, refers to an individual's ability to recognize and understand their emotions, values, and motives, as well as how these influence their behavior and interactions with others. Among ministers, this trait is particularly crucial because of the dual responsibilities they carry, balancing demanding ministerial duties with family and marital commitments. A high level of self-awareness enables ministers to remain emotionally attuned, recognize stress triggers, and respond to marital challenges with empathy and restraint rather than impulsivity or defensiveness. This awareness also fosters introspection and accountability, helping ministers acknowledge personal shortcomings and take deliberate steps toward improving communication, understanding, and

emotional connection within their marriages. The present finding corroborates the findings of Adebayo and Fashola (2019), but contrasts with that of Bamidele (2018), who found no significant relationship between self-awareness and marital satisfaction among married civil servants in Osun State.

In response to the research question on the extent to which motivation predicts marital satisfaction of ministers in the Apostolic Church Nigeria, the finding indicated that motivation contributes to marital satisfaction to a very low extent. More so, the test of corresponding hypothesis three showed that motivation does not significantly predict marital satisfaction of ministers in the Apostolic Church Nigeria suggests that intrinsic or extrinsic drives to achieve personal or professional goals may not necessarily translate into greater fulfillment or harmony in marital relationships. In this context, motivation though an important aspect of emotional intelligence appears to play a limited role in determining how satisfied ministers feel in their marriages. This may be due to the fact that marital satisfaction depends more on interpersonal factors such as communication, empathy, trust, and emotional connection rather than on personal ambition or achievement orientation. For ministers, whose professional motivation often centers on spiritual service and pastoral responsibilities, the emotional demands of ministry may not align directly with the affective and relational needs of marriage. Thus, while a minister may be highly motivated in ministry work, this same drive might not automatically enhance marital satisfaction, especially if professional commitments reduce time and attention given to the spouse. This present finding aligns with the report of Bassey and Akpan (2019), but contrasts with the study of Oyeleke (2018), who reported a significant

positive relationship between motivation and marital satisfaction among married teachers in Oyo State.

In response to the research question on the extent to which empathy predicts marital satisfaction of ministers in the Apostolic Church Nigeria, the finding indicated that empathy contributes to marital satisfaction to a medium extent. More so, the test of corresponding hypothesis four showed that empathy significantly predicts marital satisfaction of ministers implying that the ability to understand, share, and respond to a partner's emotional experiences plays a vital role in maintaining harmony and fulfilment in marital relationships. Empathy enables individuals to perceive their spouse's feelings, offer emotional support, and manage conflicts with compassion and understanding. Among ministers, who are constantly engaged in pastoral care and emotional guidance of others, empathy becomes an essential interpersonal skill that not only enhances their ministry effectiveness but also strengthens their marital bond. This finding suggests that ministers who demonstrate higher levels of empathy are better equipped to communicate effectively, resolve misunderstandings amicably, and create a warm and supportive marital environment, thereby increasing overall marital satisfaction. This present finding is consistent with the report of Okafor and Udoh (2019), but contrasts with that of Okeke (2018), who found no significant relationship between empathy and marital satisfaction among married health workers in Anambra State.

CONCLUSION

In view of the findings of the study, it is concluded that emotional intelligence is not only critical for personal growth and effective ministry but also fundamental for maintaining a healthy, fulfilling marital relationship. Their influence underscores the need for deliberate efforts to develop these attributes among church ministers, as emotionally intelligent and self-assured individuals are better positioned to foster love, understanding, and long-term satisfaction

in their marriages despite the unique challenges associated with pastoral life.

IMPLICATION FOR GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING

The findings of this study have profound implications for counselling practice, particularly in marital and pastoral counselling contexts. Firstly, counsellors working with church ministers and their spouses should design and implement programmes aimed at developing emotional intelligence skills such as self-awareness, and empathy. These can be achieved through workshops, seminars, and experiential counselling sessions where participants learn to identify, understand, and manage their emotions as well as respond appropriately to their partners' emotional needs. By strengthening these competencies, church ministers can improve communication, resolve conflicts amicably, and build stronger emotional bonds with their spouses.

Secondly, the findings suggest that motivation alone does not significantly predict marital satisfaction, indicating that counsellors should not rely solely on motivational strategies in addressing marital issues. Instead, they should adopt a holistic approach that combines emotional intelligence development, communication training, and self-esteem enhancement to achieve meaningful and sustainable marital improvement.

Furthermore, the study highlights the need for premarital and marital counselling programmes in the church to integrate emotional intelligence components into their curricula. Counsellors can also organise periodic emotional wellness sessions for church ministers and their families to help them cope with the psychological and social pressures associated with ministry work.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the study recommended the following:

1. Church authorities and counsellors should organise regular self-awareness workshops and reflective retreats for church ministers to help

them identify their emotional strengths, weaknesses, and triggers. This will enable them to manage their emotions more effectively within marital interactions and respond thoughtfully to their spouses' needs.

2. Counsellors and church leaders should not overly rely on motivational teachings alone to improve marital satisfaction. Instead, they should focus on emotional and relational skill-building programmes that foster communication, understanding, and mutual respect between partners.

3. Empathy training should be incorporated into ministerial counselling and leadership development programmes in the Church.

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APPENDIX
EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE QUESTIONNAIRE (EIQ)

INSTRUCTION: Choose your response from the number of alternatives by ticking appropriately in the box provided.

KEY: The response options are Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD)

S/N	Self-Awareness	SA	A	D	SD
1.	I am conscious of how my actions affect others.				
2.	I am aware of my personal values and beliefs.				
3.	I can easily describe my emotional reactions to different situations.				
4.	I recognize when I am under stress and understand why.				
5.	I often evaluate the impact of my behaviour on those around me				
6.	I take time to think about how I responded to events during the day.				
7.	I am aware of the patterns in my behaviour across different settings.				
8.	I am aware of how my mood influences my thoughts and behaviour.				
9.	I can accurately assess how others perceive me.				
10.	I am aware of how my body reacts to different emotions.				
	Motivation				
11.	I set challenging goals for myself and strive to achieve them.				
12.	I am driven to succeed even when no one is watching.				
13.	I remain committed to my objectives despite obstacles.				
14.	I feel inspired by the possibility of personal growth.				
15.	I am enthusiastic about tasks that help me reach my goals.				
16.	I push myself to keep going, even when I feel discouraged.				
17.	I take pride in achieving high standards in my work.				
18.	I enjoy finding new ways to improve my performance.				
19.	I believe that hard work will help me reach my dreams.				
20.	I find internal satisfaction in doing my best.				
	Empathy				
21.	I try to imagine how others feel in difficult situations.				
22.	I feel concerned when I see someone in distress.				
23.	I listen carefully to others so I can understand their emotions.				
24.	I notice subtle changes in people’s expression.				
25.	I can relate to people even when their experiences are different from mine.				
26.	I feel moved when I hear about others' misfortunes.				
27.	I try to put myself in someone else's shoes before judging them.				
28.	I can tell when someone is pretending to be fine.				

29.	I try to comfort people who are going through hard times.				
30.	I often find myself thinking about how others are feeling.				

MARITAL SATISFACTION SCALE FOR CHURCH MINISTERS (MSSCM)

INSTRUCTION: Choose your response from the number of alternatives by ticking appropriately in the box provided.

KEY: The response options are Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD)

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD
1.	I feel emotionally close to my spouse.				
2.	My spouse understands the challenges of my ministerial calling.				
3.	I am satisfied with the level of communication in my marriage.				
4.	I feel supported by my spouse in my ministry work.				
5.	My spouse and I pray together regularly.				
6.	My spouse and I spend quality time together despite my ministry schedule.				
7.	I am content with the intimacy in our relationship.				
8.	My spouse respects the boundaries of my pastoral duties.				
9.	I feel emotionally secure in my marriage.				
10.	My spouse encourages me when I feel overwhelmed by church responsibilities.				
11.	I feel my marital needs are understood and respected.				
12.	My spouse and I resolve disagreements in a loving manner.				
13.	I feel connected to my spouse even during busy ministry periods.				
14.	I feel that my spouse genuinely enjoys being married to me.				
15.	My spouse helps me balance family responsibilities.				
16.	My spouse trusts me and I trust my spouse.				
17.	I feel free to share my burdens with my spouse.				
18.	I feel that my spouse is proud to be married to me as a minister.				
19.	I am satisfied with how we support each other emotionally.				
20.	I thank God for the peace and joy I experience in my marriage.				