Relationship Between Compatibility, Leisure and Marital Satisfaction among Married Nigerians

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Abstract
Marital satisfaction is a vital topic of study, because of the ever developing need to fortify the well-being of individuals and families. This research aims to explore the relationship between compatibility, leisure activities and marital satisfaction among Nigerian couples. The measures used in this research were the Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale and the ENRICH Marital Satisfaction Scale. The questionnaire was distributed to married Nigerians using an online survey form. A total of 218 individuals participated in this study, but only 217 samples were analysed. The mean score suggested that there is a high level of marital satisfaction among Nigerian couples, which is consistent with the results of past studies which have investigated the levels of marital satisfaction of Nigerian couples. Multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the influence of compatibility and leisure activities on marital satisfaction. Results show that it was a statistically significant model ($F_{(2,214)} = 20.36$, $p < 0.001$). Compatibility ($t=6.338$, $p<0.001$) was a statistically significant predictor of marital satisfaction. Leisure activities was not a significant predictor of marital satisfaction. The proposed recommendation for future research would be to recruit a representative sample for future studies using stratified random sampling techniques to increase generalizability.
Keywords: Marital Satisfaction, Compatibility, Leisure Activity, Couples, Marital Relationship.

Introduction
Marriage is a lifelong commitment which is of huge significance to society. Although the structure and types of marriages differ across cultures, there is a consistent motif in the complementary and interrelated nature of these marital relationships in which two or more people resolve to spend their entire lives together (Pareek & Jain, 2018). According to the Nigerian population statistics taken in 2019, single persons make up 46.44% of Nigeria's whole population, while married people make up 50% and divorced people make up 0.72 – although it should be noted that there were several cases of divorce which were undocumented at the time this statistic was taken. Couples and marriages are indispensable to safeguarding the

construct of the family in society. Families are still viewed as key units of society (Zabriskie & McCormick, 2001), and it follows that more grounded marriages lead to more grounded families, which, thus, reinforce society. Intending to promote good marital quality and satisfaction in marital relationships, this study investigates whether a relationship exists between compatibility, leisure activities and marital satisfaction.

Literature Review
Compatibility
Attention has been given in past studies to the factor of compatibility within marriages, as it is an integral component of a marital relationship. One of the reasons why couples see therapists and marriage counsellors is because of a feeling of incompatibility between them (Pirnahad et al., 2017).

Levinger and Grand (1985) defined compatibility as the proportion of facilitating to impeding or interfering events between husband and wife. This definition was derived from Kelly et al.'s (1983) argument of 'interchain facilitation versus interference'. If a husband believes that his wife's behaviour is aimed towards a particular objective, the causal connection of the husband to the wife's 'chain' may either facilitate or interfere with her achievement of that objective. In facilitation, interchain causal connections help promote a partner's aspirations, whereas, in interference interchain connections, these aspirations are disturbed. Disruptive behaviour includes distracting, confusing, unsettling or disrupting a partner's plans or activities.

Marital compatibility is the extent to which married individuals continue to facilitate, rather than interfere with, each other's relational goals (Levinger & Grand, 1985). Incompatibility between married couples was one of the multiple factors found to precipitate divorce in the research carried out by (Apostolous et al., 2018). Lack of compatibility between a couple affects not only every aspect of their relationship but also their personal and social lives and their children, assuming that there are any from the marriage.

People in compatible relationships have better mental and physical health than those who are not. Couples who lack harmony and mental stability are incompatible, and incompatibility can lead to antagonistic attitudes, anxiety and depression for those involved in the relationship (Pirnahad et al., 2017). These antagonistic attitudes may also contribute to marital discontentment and can lead to incompatibility, physical separation and divorce.

Intimate marital violence is one of the leading causes of marital incompatibility (Pirnahad et al., 2017). According to Breiding et al (2015) 'intimate marital violence' refers to any act of physical, sexual or psychological violence (force inclusive) or stalking done by one or both parties unto the other. It may occur between people who are spouses as well as those who are not. This form of violence is targeted towards women more frequently than men (Miller & McCraw, 2019). Physical violence was predicted to contribute to marital incompatibility, and the same was predicted of psychological violence, which includes belittling or disparaging one's partner(s); using intimidation or threats of violence to control them; imposing limitations on their freedom and access to and use of resources; and hostile withdrawal. All these acts have negative implications and contribute to marital incompatibility (Pirnahad et al., 2017).

Saggino et al (2015) opined on the subject of compatibility that one's personality should be considered a contributing factor. Their research suggested that couples with similar personalities are more compatible, despite various compatible relationships between people with differing personalities. This similarity in personality is thought to encourage marital compatibility as well as marital satisfaction.

Leisure Activities
Several empirical studies have proven that couples who engage in leisure activities together have increased satisfaction in their marital relationship than those who do not (Kyeong et al., 2019). However, the time spent on leisure activities between couples has decreased over the years due to several factors, including busier schedules, parenting needs and a reliance on the media and gadgets (Amato et al., 2016).

Othner and Mancini (1990) created a framework to investigate couples' leisure activities. This framework outlines three types of leisure participation: joint, parallel and individual leisure. Joint leisure refers to when couples engage in activities that demand distinguishable mutual participation; individual leisure is when one engages in leisure activities without one's significant other; and, lastly, parallel leisure is when couples engage in leisure activities at the same time but do not make any form of contact with each other. This study's primary concern is the act of joint leisure.

Joint leisure activities are used to reinforce marital relationships. They incorporate simple activities, such as dining, playing and exercising together, into the relationship. They are often unrestricted and require little preparation time but provide ample opportunity to cultivate conjugal relationships (Zabriskie & McCormick, 2011). Past studies have established a significant relationship between joint leisure and marital satisfaction. The other types of leisure mentioned have been found to negatively affect marital satisfaction, especially leisure activities undertaken individually (Sharaievska et al., 2017). However, it is important to note that joint leisure activities only result in increased satisfaction if the activity itself satisfies both parties. If the leisure activity is unsatisfactory to one or both partners, its positive effect will be lost.

Marital Satisfaction
Marital satisfaction is an important area of study because it affects the ever-developing welfare of people and families. This has driven researchers involved in marriage and familial study to explore marital satisfaction in detail (Amato et al., 2016). The shaping and preservation of fulfilling conjugal relationships, and the possibility of preventing or mitigating divorce between married couples, yield reasons enough to study marital satisfaction.

According to research by Lukman et al (2020), the number of divorce cases in the northern part of Nigeria – the most populated part of the country – is among the highest in West Africa. They further stated that one in three marriages break down in less than three years of marriage. It can, therefore, be deduced that newly wedded couples in the northern part of Nigeria have issues in their marital relationships which are leading to dissatisfaction in their marriages and, eventually, physical separation.

Neglecting facets of a marital relationship creates tension, discontent and emotional and physical disconnection between partners over time. This has dangerous repercussions on the establishment of the family in society (Gadassi et al., 2016). In other words, when the various factors that maintain a marital relationship are established and upheld, marriages thrive and a well-coordinated society emerges.

Marital satisfaction impacts the lifelong well-being of the involved parties. This includes the couple's overall happiness, psychological health, physical health and life satisfaction (Patricia et al., 2017). A couple's well-being may be positively or negatively affected by marriage, depending on their marital quality. Due to the lack of studies done on marital satisfaction and considering the importance of leisure and compatibility on marital satisfaction, as found in previous research, this study aims to investigate the relationship between compatibility, leisure and marital satisfaction among Nigerian couples. The objectives of this study are as follows: to determine the level of marital satisfaction among Nigerian couples; to examine the effect of leisure activities on marital satisfaction and; to examine the effect of marital compatibility on marital satisfaction among Nigerian couples. The hypotheses of this study are as follows:

H1: Leisure activities have a significant association with marital satisfaction among Nigerian couples.
H2: Marital compatibility has a significant association with marital satisfaction among Nigerian couples.

Research Methods
Participants
The inclusion criteria for the samples were that participants had to (1) be of Nigerian nationality, (2) be married for at least one year, (3) be at least 20 years of age, (4) possess an internet-based device able to access and participate in the study's online questionnaire and (5) be able to read and understand English.

Survey Instruments
Demographics
Questions on the participants' demographics were related to their age, gender, religion, number of children, educational level and average monthly income.

Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (RDAS)
The Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (RDAS) developed by Busby, Crane, Larson and Christensen (1995) assesses marriage quality and other similar dyads. It has 14 items, including subscales that measure four empirically verified components: dyadic satisfaction, dyadic consensus, dyadic cohesion and affectional expression. The present study used only two of these subscales in its analysis: the dyadic satisfaction subscale and the dyadic consensus subscale. Each of these two components has a Cronbach's coefficient alpha of no less than 0.75. The dyadic consensus subscale has 6 items and a Cronbach's coefficient of 0.898. The dyadic satisfaction subscale has 4 items and a Cronbach's coefficient alpha of 0.779.

The responses on the dyadic consensus scale range from 0 to 5, with (0) representing the response of 'always disagree', (1) representing 'almost always disagree', (2) representing 'frequently disagree', (3) representing 'occasionally disagree', (4) representing 'almost always agree' and (5) representing 'always agree'. The scores range from 0 to 24, with individuals who are more likely to agree on the items presented scoring higher on this scale and having higher dyadic consensus than those who score lower.

The responses on the dyadic satisfaction subscale range from 0 to 5 as well, with (0) representing the response of 'all the time', (1) representing 'most of the time', (2) representing 'more often than not', (3) representing 'occasionally', (4) representing 'rarely' and (5) representing 'never'. The scores range from 0 to 50, with individuals who score higher on this subscale having higher levels of dyadic satisfaction. The benchmark for marital satisfaction on this scale is 20, while the benchmark for consensus is 30.

ENRICH Marital Satisfaction Scale (EMS) (Leisure Activities)

The ENRICH Marital Satisfaction Scale (EMS) (Leisure Activities), used for evaluating and resolving relationship issues and nurturing communication and happiness in relationships, was developed by Olson, Fournier and Druckman in 1987. The EMS assesses potential areas of contention and identifies areas of power and enrichment in marital relationships. Its multidimensional marital satisfaction inventory includes 12 categorical scales. These scales were developed and validated through a series of comprehensive theoretical and empirical analyses, which utilised Cronbach's .92 alpha coefficients (Fournier et al., 1983; Olson et al., 1987). The 12 categories included in the EMS's inventory are idealistic distortion, marital satisfaction, personality issues, communication, conflict resolution, financial management, leisure activities, sexual relationship, children and parenting, family and friends, equalitarian roles and religious orientation.

Only 10 items of leisure activities category were used in this study. The leisure activities scale evaluates the couple's preferences for investing their free time. The items illustrate social versus individual exercises, shared versus individual preferences and the partners' individual anticipation for spending leisure time with one another. The responses to the scale were arranged in a Likert-style, with (1) representing 'strongly agree', (2) representing 'moderately agree', (3) representing 'neither agree nor disagree', (4) representing 'moderately disagree' and (5) representing 'strongly disagree'.

Data Collection

Questionnaires written in English were created and distributed through Google Forms to married Nigerian couples. The study's aims, advantages and objectives were all included in the questionnaire.Participant consent was obtained prior to the study's call for voluntary participation from its respondents. Similarly, the right to withdraw from the study was made clear in the questionnaire. The approximate time it took to complete the questionnaire was 15 minutes. People who agreed to participate in the study were encouraged to share the questionnaire link with others whom they thought met the inclusion criteria.

Data Analysis and Results

A total of 218 individuals participated in this study. Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) software was used to examine the data. The reliability of all the scales was tested after

the data was collected. The revised dyadic adjustment scale, which measured the marital satisfaction and compatibility variables, had a Cronbach's alpha of .718 and .806, respectively. The EMS (Leisure Activities) obtained a Cronbach's alpha value of .705.

Skewness and kurtosis tests of the data were conducted to determine its normality. Outliers within the data were scrutinised, and only one invalid response was found and removed. The normality test results showed that the data was parametric.

Table 1 shows the frequency, percentage of the remaining 217 participants. All the participants were of Nigerian nationality and had been married for at least one year. The gender distribution of this study was 132 females (60.8%) to 85 males (39.2%), with a mean score of (M=1.4, SD= 0.5). Participants were within the age range of 20 to 40 years (71.0%), 41 to 60 years (18.9%) and 61 years and above (9.7%), with a mean score of 1.4 (SD= 0.7).

The participants comprised people of varying religions, including Christians (94.9%), Muslims (1.4%) and those of other faiths (3.7%). 12.9% of the participants had no children, 85.3% had 1 to 5 children, and 1.8% had 6 to 10 children. The participants' education levels are as follows: 6.5% of them were high-school leavers, 17.1% held diplomas, 56.7% held bachelor's degrees, 17.1% held master's degrees and, lastly, 2.8% were PhD holders. The mean score of the participants' education levels is (M=2.9, SD= 0.8). Finally, in terms of the participants' average monthly incomes, 60.8% of them earned below #250,000, 24.4% of them earned between #251,000 to #500,000, 5.1% of them earned between #501,000- #800,000, 1.8% of them earned between #801,000 to #1m and, finally, 7.8% of them earned more than RM1m//#98297840.83, which totalled to a mean score of 1.7 (SD=1.2).

Table 1
Participants' Demographic Characteristics (N=217)

Variables	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation
Age			1.4	0.7
20-40	154	71%		
41-60	41	18.9%		
61 and above	21	9.7%		
Gender			1.4	0.5
Male	85	39.2		
Female	132	60.8		
Religion			1.2	0.8
Christian	206	91.4		
Muslim	3	4.9		
Others	8	3.7		
Number of children			1.9	0.4
No Children	28	12.9		
1-5 children	185	85.3		
6-10 children	4	1.8		
Educational level			2.9	0.8
High-school leavers	14	6.5		
Diploma	37	17.1		
Bachelor's	123	56.1		
Master's	37	17.1		
PhD	6	2.8		
Average monthly income			1.7	1.2
Below RM2500/#250,000	132	60.8		
RM2501/#2501-RM5000/#500,000	53	24.4		
RM5001/#5001, 000-	11	5.1		
RM8000/#800,000	4	1.8		
RM8001/#8001, 000-RM1m/#1m	17	7.8		
More than RM1m/#98297840.83				

As presented in Table 2, the result indicates the respondent's mean score for the variables are respectively; marital satisfaction is 3.9, compatibility is 5.8 and leisure activities is 4.1. According to the findings, none of the respondents had low levels of marital happiness, compatibility, or leisure time activities.

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics for the Variables.

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Marital Satisfaction	3.9	0.7
Compatibility	5.8	1.2
Leisure Activities	4.1	1.2

Multiple regression analysis was carried out to determine the association between compatibility, leisure activities, and marital satisfaction. The results show that this is a statistically significant model (F (2,214) = 20.36, p < 0.001). The adjusted R^2 indicates that 16% of the variance in marital satisfaction can be explained by variances in the predictor variables. The analysis suggests that compatibility ($\beta = 0.4$) is the most influential predictor in the model. H2 is, therefore, accepted as it was posited in the hypothesis: compatibility has been proven to predict marital satisfaction. Leisure activities ($\beta = 0.03$) are the least influential predictor. H1 is, therefore, rejected, as couples engaging in leisure activities together does not have an effect on their marital satisfaction. Compatibility (t=6.338, p<0.001) is shown to be a statistically significant predictor of marital satisfaction. Leisure activities are not shown to be a statically significant predictor of marital satisfaction. Hence, the result (t=.503) is outlined in Table 3 below.

Table 3
Multiple Regression Model for the Relationships between Compatibility, Leisure Activities and Marital Satisfaction

	R^2	β	B	t	SE	CI 95.0% (B) Lower bound	bound/Upper
Model	.16						
Compatibility		0.40	.241	6.338	0.380	.166	.315
Leisure activity		0.30	.180	.503	0.350	-.520	.870

R^2: Amount of variance; B: Unstandardized coefficient; **β:** Standard coefficient; SE: Standard Error; CI: Confidence Interval.

Discussion and Conclusion
The results support H2 of this study, which posited that compatibility is a significant predictor of marital satisfaction. As such, this study has established that there is a significant relationship between compatibility and marital satisfaction. This result is consistent with previous studies', which have often associated compatibility with marital satisfaction (Pirnahad et al., 2017), as compatible partners have little issue understanding one another. These couples are sexually compatible, notwithstanding their sexual differences, content in their marriages and are likely to remain in love with one another after being married. This, in turn, promotes and maintains marital satisfaction in the marriage.

The first objective of this study showed an interesting finding, as the mean score of the descriptive statistics shows that there is a high level of marital satisfaction among Nigerian couples, which is consistent with the results of past studies which have investigated the levels of satisfaction of Nigerian couples (Abiodun et al., 2022; Oladeji, 2013). However, considering the high divorce rate in Nigeria, it is possible that social desirability bias may be at play within the collected responses, as some participants might not have felt comfortable disclosing their true feelings about their marriage.

H1 of this study was rejected, as the multiple regression analysis showed that joint leisure activities did not significantly affect marital satisfaction. This is inconsistent with the findings of previous studies. A few past studies have emphasised the importance of the relationship

between joint leisure activities and marital satisfaction (Kyeong et al., 2019). This anomalous result could be attributed to cultural differences.

Limitation

The study does not have an equal distribution of gender in its study population, with female participants outnumbering male participants by 47%. Almost all the participants were Christians, with only 1.4% identifying as Muslims and 3.7% being from other religions. As such, the results could not be generalised to all the religions included in this study. The results also could not be generalised to people of other nationalities, as all the participants were Nigerian. 56.7% of the participants were holders of bachelor's degrees, which outnumbered the other demographics in the educational level category. PhD holders were the fewest participants in this study, making up only 2.8% of the total population. 60% of the participants had low socioeconomic status, wherein their monthly income fell below RM 2, 500. Only 7.8% of the participants had high socioeconomic status, earning more than RM 1 million monthly. Therefore, the results of this study could not be generalised to those of higher socioeconomic status than the mean. A wider distribution of the participants' demographics would have yielded more detailed results.

Another limitation of this study is its sample size. The higher the number of samples, the more likely it becomes that the results of a study may be validly generalised. However, the movement control order imposed by the government to impede the spread of the COVID-19 virus impaired this study's data collection process. Only online recruitment via social media platforms could be carried out during the recruitment process.

Implications

The results of this study contribute to a body of knowledge that can be used by future researchers, especially those focusing on family and marriage, who are fascinated by the relationship between compatibility, leisure activities and marital satisfaction. Furthermore, this research may serve as the foundation for future research exploring the relationship between compatibility, leisure activities and marital satisfaction. The literature review segment of this study detailed factors that promote marital satisfaction (Fahimdanesh et al., 2020).

The result of compatibility predicting marital satisfaction will serve as a guide to married individuals. Marital satisfaction impacts a couple's wellbeing, including their overall happiness, psychological health, physical health and life satisfaction (Patricia et al., 2017). A couple's wellbeing can be positively or negatively affected by their marital quality. Therefore, this study can help married individuals enjoy their marital relationship and lead happier and more fulfilling lives.

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