

INFLUENCE OF EDUCATION AND OCCUPATION ON LIFE SATISFACTION OF MARRIED WOMEN

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Abstract

The study investigated the influence of education and occupation on life satisfaction of married women using 240 participants aged between 25 and 52 years with a mean age of 34.19 and standard deviation of 4.95. The satisfaction with life scale (SWLS) by Diener (1993) was used to ascertain the level of life satisfaction among the participants in different occupations and levels of educational attainment. The 4x3 factorial design study used the two-way ANOVA statistic and the scheffe's post analysis test to analyze and make inferences on the data. The result showed that at $P < .001$ educational attainment and occupation both significantly influenced life satisfaction.

INTRODUCTION.

For many years, the concern for happiness has been the main focus of psychological thought. This has bothered scientific thinkers who only recently decided to measure happiness scientifically. According to a research carried out by Diener and his colleagues (1996) using college students vast majority of college students all over the world consider happiness and life satisfaction to be extremely significant. Many factors were thought to determine people's subjective well-being. Diener and Fujita (1995) in their goal theory posited that resources that are most related to a person's life satisfaction are those resources that help his or her particular or specific goals. Also, happiness is influenced by engaging in interesting activities (Cikzentmihalyi, 1997), and improving on various dimensions (Biswan-Diener, 2000). Culture is also an important predictor of life satisfaction (Diener and Lucas, 2002).

It is a near truism that happy people are appraised to possess more desirable life than unhappy people, to be better people, and to be more likely to be admitted in heaven. However, few people would doubt that subjective well-being is the only ingredient to a good life (Diener, Sapyta and such, 1998).

Women's education and occupation as determinants of life satisfaction is a background to this study. Women in our traditional setting have their major preoccupation as family management, bearing and rearing children and providing for the marital and emotional need of their husbands and family. Today, many women combine their traditional family responsibilities with such other occupation as teaching, banking, civil and public services, (which in this paper are referred to as white collar professions); trading and hawking (Okoye, 2005).

This study is concerned with married women; women engaged in petty businesses; and women engaged in banking, civil service, public service, and teaching, as well as how their various occupation and education influence their life satisfaction. Life satisfaction is a measure of subjective well-being. Subjective well-being means people's evaluation of their lives, and

include happiness, pleasant emotions, life satisfaction, and a relative absence of unpleasant emotions.

Formerly, education which implies systematic training and instruction was thought to be a prerogative of men. But today, women occupy reasonable percentage in all institutions of learning and in all professions. Education not only provide awareness of social and occupational mobility but also affords a new outlook, freedom from tradition, the willingness to analyze institutions, values, and pattern of behavior and the growth for rationalism. Education of women gave room for an awareness of ideal family pattern (Okoye, 2005).

Occupations are everyday tasks that people of all ages do to survive and look after themselves, to enjoy life, and to be active participants to the social and economic fabric of their community and the world. Occupation ascribes meaning of life, it is a factor in determining health and well-being. It organizes behavior, develops and changes overtime, it shape and it shaped by environment and has therapeutic effectiveness. A human being is an occupational being and has intrinsic dignity and worth. Every person has potential ability to participate in occupation and have diverse abilities for participating in occupations. Occupational health has personal dimensions associated with spiritual meaning and life satisfaction.

Education is one of the major predictor of job choice. Highly educated women go for highly placed jobs like civil and public service, banking and teaching. Wilson, (1967) wrote, "The happy person is young. Healthy, well-educated, well-paid, extroverted, optimistic, worry-free, esteemed, job-moral, modest aspirations of either sex, and of a wide range of intelligence" (Pg 294).

Women's Occupation and Life satisfaction.

It is believed that women occupying more than one social role such as employee, wife, and mother have lower levels of depression; and better physical health. However, some psychologists indicate that the combination of employment and motherhood may result in low levels of marital adjustment and feeling of guilt. Others argue that employment has no effect on mothers' mental health, except perhaps under special circumstances. Some psychologists have studied how experience in work and family role contribute to mental health by comparing those relations in employed-married women. They found that moods experienced at home tended to be stronger predictors of depression among housewives than among employed people.

Women's Education and Life Satisfaction

It has been proposed that a significant proportion of educated persons had acquired an upper status in society and that substantial upward social mobility was associated with an increase in the level of education. Research has shown that women with higher education are more likely to work in a managerial or professional occupation and less likely to have low wages. Those with better education especially a college degree are more likely to escape low wage jobs and are more likely to be in a managerial or professional occupation. (Amott, 1994). Attainment of higher education gives access to a reasonable income. Aggregate data reveal a positive and direct correlation between levels of education and income. As the educational level of women

appreciates, so also their occupational pattern. Again, parents engaged in respectable professions which require specific or higher educational qualifications are well placed in society. Little but significant correlations between education and subjective well-being have often been found. Education is more highly related to well-being for individual with low income (Diener, 1993); and in poor countries (veenhoven, 1994). At least part of the relationship between education and subjective is probable due to covariance of education with income and occupational; status. (Witter, 1984).

PURPOSE OF STUDY

This study is aimed at finding out whether:

- (1) Women's education has any influence on their life satisfaction.
- (2) Women's occupation has any influence on their life satisfaction.

HYPOTHESIS

The hypotheses for this study are:

- (I) Educational attainment will significantly influence women's life satisfaction
- (2) Occupation will significantly influence women's life satisfaction.

METHOD

Participants: Two hundred and forty participants, (80) married women' who are white collar professional, (80) married women who engage in petty trading and (80) married women who are fulltime housewives, selected from Awka metropolis in Anambra State were used for this study. Their age ranged from. 25-52 years with a mean age of 35.9 and a standard deviation of 4.95.

Instrument: The instrument used was the Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS) originally constructed and validated by Pavot and Diener (1993) to measure life satisfaction. The scale is divided into two sections. A and B. section. A elicits data on demographic variable while section B demands them to use the rating scale provided to indicate their degree of agreement to each item in the satisfaction with Life scale. The instrument is scored on a five point Likert-like scale. The reliability of the instrument was tested through initial and subsequent studies which examined the internal consistency of the instrument and coefficient have repeatedly exceeded .80. In the original validation study Diener and his colleagues found two months test-retest correlation coefficients to be .82.

PROCEDURE

I firstly sought permission from the leaders of the group of participants selected. When this was granted. I arranged with them on the dates that will be convenient for them. This will afford the leaders time and opportunity to inform and organize their subordinates for the research. Market women were met in the market at Eke Awka. I used two market associations here (food item trader association and vegetable/fruits traders association)

The civil servants were met through their various leaders in the state and Local Government secretariats through the office of the H.O.S who directed a secretary in his office to assist me.

Some of the bank staff used were reached through their public relations officer. For teachers, I sought the help of the head teachers in two private schools who assisted me in summoning the parents of their pupils who were housewives. Then on the arranged dates, I administered the instruments to the participants. After responding, I collected the instrument immediately. The participants were given verbal instructions on what to do. They cooperated well with the research. I distributed the instrument to only married woman who are either fulltime house wives, these engaged in petty trading and those engaged in whole collar professions. The instrument were later scored accordingly.

DESIGN AND STATISTICS.

This study involved two factors: Education and occupation. Education has four group-primary school, Secondary school, tertiary school and post tertiary education. Occupation has three groups-fulltime housewives petty trading and while-collar professions. The factorial design was 4x3. Two-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVAR) was used in computing the significance difference in scores. Scheffe test was used for pair wise multiple comparison of the groups, via SPSS 9.0.

RESULTS

Table A: Table of means and standard deviations for life satisfaction for all group studied.

OCCUPATION	EDUCATIONAL	MEAN	STANDARD	N
FULLTIME HOUSEWIVES	STATUS	5.5294	DEVIATION	17
	PRIMARY	7.8258	1.0678	63
	SECONDARY		2.5498	
HOUSEWIFE PETTY TRADER	TOTAL	7.3375	2.4953	80
	PRIMARY	10.6429	1.3927	14
	SECONDARY	11.6308	1.5769	65
	TOTAL	11.4557	1.5835	79
HOUSEWIFE WHITE COLLAR JOB	SECONDARY	14.5000	2.8445	12
	TERTIARY	20.1803	2.5528	61
	POST TERTIARY	22.0000	3.2660	7
	TOTAL	19.4875	3.4051	80
TOTAL	PRIMARY	7.8387	2.8530	31
	SECONDARY	10.1643	3.1294	140
	TERTIARY	20.1803	2.5528	61
	POST TERTIARY	22.0000	3.2660	7
	TOTAL	12.7657	5.6920	239

This table showed that mean score for all the groups studied were significantly different.

TABLE B. SUMMARY ON UNIVERIATE ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE (ANOVA)

SOURCE OF VARIANCE	SUM OF SQUARE	DF	MS	F	SIG.
CORRELATED MODEL	9561.195a	6	1093.532	220.669	.000
INTERCEPT	19925.886	1	19925.886	4020.937	.000
OCCUPATION	740.929	2	370.465	73.758	.000
EDUCATION	438.741	3	146.247	29.512	.000
OCCUPATION & EDUCATION	10.594	1	10.594	2.138	.145
ERROR	1149.684	232	4.956		
TOTAL	46659.000	239			
CORRELATED TOTAL	7710.879	238			

a. R Square =.851 (Adjusted Rsquare =.847)

It displays the outcome of the analysis of variance, showing that there is a significant main effect for education and occupation on life satisfaction $F = 74.75$ at $P < .001$ for occupation and $F = 29.51$ for education.

TABLE C (i): Scheffe pair wise multiple. Multiple comparisons of means for occupation.

OCCUPATION	OCCUPATION	MEAD DIFFERENCE	SIG.
Full Time Housewife	House wife petty-Trader	-4.1182*	.000
	House wife white collar Profession.	-12.1500	.000
Housewife/ Petty trader	Fulltime Housewife	4.1182*	.000
	Housewife/white Collar Profession	-8.0318*	.000
Housewife/ White collar Profession	Fulltime Housewife	12.1500*	
	Housewife/Petty Trader	8.0318*	

* $p < .05$

TABLE C (ii): Scheffe pair wise multiple comparison of means for education.

EDUCATIONAL Status	Educational Status	Mean Difference (I-J)	Sig.
PRIMARY	Secondary	-2.3256*	.000
	Tertiary	-12.3416*	.000
	Post Tertiary	14.1613*	.000
SECONDARY	Primary	12.3416*	.000
	Tertiary	10.0161*	.000
	Post tertiary	-11.8357*	.000
TERTIARY	Primary	12.3416*	.000
	Secondary	10.0160*	.244
	Post tertiary	-1.8197*	
POST TERTIARY	Tertiary	1.8197*	.000
	Secondary	11.8357*	.000
	Tertiary	1.8197*	.244

* $P < .05$

This table also shows a significant mean difference for education for various categories of educational status. This result confirmed hypothesis I.

DISCUSSION

The analysis of result shows a significant influence of education and occupation on life satisfaction.

Education was found to have a significant main effect on life satisfaction. It is a major predictor of life satisfaction. This is probably a result of many factors. For instance, educated woman plans her family well, therefore is more likely to attend to her schedules better and take care of her reproductive life. It is also possible that the respect and honour which her education accrues to her in the company of other persons increases her self-worth, so she becomes or feels better and more satisfied with life. It is possible however that it is the relationship between the educational level and economic status that reflected in the results.

Occupation was also found to have a significant main effect on life satisfaction studies showed that women occupying more than one social role have lower levels of depression. House wives who are white collar professionals performed better in the life satisfaction index. This to me could be as a result of the status which their occupation ascribes to them in the society. It could also be as a result of good financial power which goes with the jobs. Also, house wives who are petty traders performed better than fulltime housewives. It is possible that this could be as a result of the financial independence which their petty businesses accrues to them. It is also possible that the opportunities for social interaction which the woman are exposed to increases their sense of belonging and therefore leads to positive life satisfaction.

Finally, I am of the opinion that Nigerian woman as people of a poor nation will perceive financial satisfaction, which comes as a result of occupational status as a factor of positive significant value in appraising of psychological and subjective well-being. Also, satisfaction with life is ineluctably tied with holistic health and longevity (Obi- Nwosu, 2003). This result underscores the urgency of good level of education and good occupation in longevity and health of woman.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the influence of education and occupation on life satisfaction of married women. The major findings of this study demonstrated the significant main effect of their education and occupation on life satisfaction. It further showed that women with higher educational status and occupational status experience more satisfaction in life than those with lower educational and occupational status.

The result correlated with those from previous studies on subjective well-being. Psychological well-being. Diener, and his colleague (1993); and Veenhoven (1994) found that education is more highly related to well-being in poor countries. Occupation also have effect on married women's life satisfaction. Diener and Lucas (1995) discovered that financial satisfaction was a stronger predictor of life satisfaction in poorer nation.

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