

INFLUENCE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE ON CONFLICT RESOLUTION AMONG COUPLES IN KARU LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF NASARAWA STATE

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Abstract

This study investigated the influence of emotional intelligence on marital conflict resolution of couples in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, adopting the survey design. The simple random and stratified sampling techniques were used to draw a sample of 100 young spouses (50 males and 50 females). The instruments for the conduct of the research were adapted E-OSC Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (EIQ) and a researcher-made instrument, Conflict Resolution Questionnaire (CRQ); validated by experts in the field of Guidance and Counselling. The instruments were close ended type of questionnaires with reliability coefficients of 0.79 for EIQ and 0.83 for CRQ, using Cronbach Alpha reliability method. The study was guided by five research questions and five corresponding hypotheses. The t-test statistical tool was used to analyze the data at 0.05 level of significance. The results reveal that all the components of emotional intelligence significantly influenced marital conflict resolutions as follows: self-awareness on conflict resolution ($t=57.247$; $P = 0.00 < 0.05$); self-regulation on conflict resolution (57.346 ; $P = 0.00 < 0.05$), self-motivation on conflict resolution (55.238 ; $P = 0.00 < 0.05$), empathy on conflict resolution (53.178 ; $P = 0.00 < 0.05$), and social skills on conflict resolution (53.178 ; $P = 0.00 < 0.05$). These results confirm that emotional intelligence significantly influenced conflict resolution and marital adjustment among the participants. It is therefore recommended that counsellors should help couples to be emotionally intelligent in order to resolve marital conflicts amicably to foster marital stability and satisfaction.

Key Words: Emotional Intelligence, Conflict Resolution, Couples, Marital Stability, Marital Satisfaction

Introduction

Marital conflicts prevail in Nigeria in an unprecedented manner as cases of divorce continue to escalate. However, Yahaya (2008) postulated that it is difficult to provide accurate statistics on the rate of divorce due to the fact that not all cases of divorce are reported and recorded but there are indications of high rate of divorce according to literature and media reports. Marital conflict resolution fosters marital stability and satisfaction among couples. There are many ways of resolving marital conflicts but emotional intelligence seems to be one of the most seamless accesses to marital stability as couples through the process of understanding own and partners' pattern of emotional feelings can resolve their challenges with little or no third-party involvement. Emotional Intelligence refers to the capacity to recognize and manage our own feelings and to recognize and respond effectively to those of others (Adeniyi, & Ekeanya, 2021). It can help couples to control their own emotions and the emotions of their partners, leading to more effective communication and conflict resolution (Knox et al., 2023; Jardine et al., 2022).

Couples who are emotionally intelligent are likely to have a good understanding of their feelings and are capable to control their moods and be psychological harmonious with their partners to avoid marital distresses. Goleman (1995) proposed five components of emotional intelligence model. The first component is self-awareness which is the ability to recognize how one feels and understands habitual emotional responses to events. Self-regulation as a component is the ability to stay focused and think clearly even when experiencing strong powerful emotions. Self-motivation component is the ability to use deep emotional feelings to guide one towards achieving goals in spite of prevailing stressors, obstacles and setbacks in one's psychosocial environments. Social skill component is the ability to use own emotion to manage, influence and inspire positive emotions in others to foster social bond, trust and effective communication. Empathy component is the ability to use emotional feelings to sense, understand and respond adaptively. Empathy creates an atmosphere for parties in a relationship to willingly forgive one another, thereby enhancing mutual respect and peaceful co-existence.

Conflict is a constant phenomenon in every facet of human engagements (Aina & Obi, 2022). As a result of this constancy, it is critical that couples should develop and maintain a simple mechanism that continue lubricate their marital vows to remain peacefully married and make the home conducive for raising morally sound children for the overall good of the society to foster national cohesion. Emotional intelligence can promote healthy marital engagements as it improves couples' communication effectiveness and the way for stronger bonds to uphold stability and satisfaction. Couples' emotional intelligence resulting in emotional regulation is necessary for marital satisfaction and stability (Wollny et al.2020). Collaborating this view, Parsakia et al. (2023) have posited that emotional intelligence could help couples to manage their emotions and stress levels, thereby enhancing positive interactions and greater feelings of

closeness and intimacy. Moreover, couples who are highly emotionally intelligent may handle marital conflicts better and increase quality of romantic relationships (Zmaczyńska-Witek et al., 2019; Hadian & Amini, 2019). Empathy and forgiveness can go a long way to revive a crumbling marital relationship and sustain it (Gaur & Bhardwaj, 2015)

Marital Conflict or Marital instability could be perceived as a marriage with a high propensity to divorce, which is determined by the presence of thoughts or actions capable of precipitating separation (Usoroh et al. 2010). Marital conflict could lead to disagreement and quarrel among couples and trigger marital dissatisfaction which could in turn culminate in separation or divorce.

Previous studies reveal the potency of emotional intelligence as key driver of marital conflict resolution. Some of these studies are revealed in this present study. For instance, Nwoke, Amadi, and Ikezam (2022) investigated emotional intelligence as correlates of marital stability among married couples in Rivers State, Nigeria. A correlational design was adopted for the study. The Taro Yamen's formula was used to determine the sample size of 392 respondents from an estimated population of 20,000 married couples in the three Senatorial Districts in Rivers State, Nigeria. Two researcher's structured instruments titled "Emotional Intelligence Assessment Questionnaire and Marital Stability Scale were used to elicit information for the study to determine the extent to which self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, predicted marital stability among married couples in Rivers State Nigeria. The instruments were validated by experts in the field of educational measurement and evaluation and educational guidance and counselling. The reliability of the instruments was established using Cronbach Alpha; the results yielded 0.81 for emotional intelligence assessment questionnaire and 0.78 for marital stability scale. Findings of the study revealed that to a high extent self-awareness, self-regulation, and empathy predicted marital stability among married couples in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Parsakia et al. (2023) also investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence and marital conflicts, utilizing a cross-sectional design. The participants were 100 married couples who were recruited through convenience sampling from different regions of the Canada. The inclusion criteria for the study were that the couples had to be married for at least one year and have no history of mental illness. The participants were asked to complete the EQ-i questionnaire, which measured emotional intelligence, and the MCQ questionnaire, which measured the marital conflicts. The questionnaires were completed by both partners separately, and the responses were matched based on the couple's identification code. The data was collected through an online survey platform. The data analysis was conducted using the Actor-Partner Interdependence Model (APIM). The results for the APIM indicated that husbands' emotional intelligence as well as the wives' emotional intelligence exhibited a significant actor effect on their marital conflicts. Similarly, husbands' emotional intelligence as well as the wives' emotional intelligence exhibited a significant partner effect on their spouses' marital conflicts.

The researchers confirmed the importance of emotional intelligence in romantic relationships and provided insights for clinicians and researchers working with couples to improve their marital relationships.

Furthermore, Cheung et al. (2022) examined three configurations of couples' level of self-control on marital conflict. The data used to test these hypotheses was a unique couple data from 894 married couples from a representative sample in Hong Kong. The researchers tested three competing hypotheses: similarity hypothesis, complementary hypothesis, and totality hypothesis. Two-level random-intercept models were employed. The study revealed that similarity of self-control between husband and wife was important in predicting marital conflict and that marital conflict was strongly associated with the mismatch of self-control between partners.

In another development, Heidari, and Kumar (2021) investigated the influence of trait emotional intelligence on marital satisfaction among married couples in India. There were 304 participants, consisting 152 wives and 152 husbands drawn from various cities across India. To assess participants' emotional intelligence and marital satisfaction, the TEIQue-SF and ENRICH-SF were used. The statistical analysis was determined using the Chi-square, Kruskal-Wallis, and Mann-Whitney U tests. Results indicated participants with better emotional intelligence had higher marital satisfaction. The researchers concluded that higher levels of emotional intelligence led to greater marital satisfaction. Goyal and Narayan (2024) also undertook a comprehensive analysis on the relationship between emotional intelligence and marital adjustment and found from studies that individuals with higher emotional intelligence tended to have better marital adjustment. The review study emphasized how emotional intelligence improved empathy, effective communication, and conflict resolution in couples.

In addition, Sharma (2024) investigated how middle-aged couples handled and resolved conflict in their marriages based on their emotional intelligence, which included traits like self-awareness, emotional regulation, empathy, and effective communication. A cross-section between-group, mixed method research design was used in the study. Using purposive sampling, the researchers selected 43 couples living in Noida who were married. The goal of the research was to shed light on how emotional intelligence affected healthy conflict resolution, improved relationship satisfaction, and benefitted couples' general well-being in their middle years of adulthood, which was usually between the ages of 40 and 65. The study found that emotional intelligence of husbands and wives from disturbed couples did not significantly correlate with marital quality. Similarly, the researcher also reported that among the non-distressed husbands and couples, no correlation was found between emotional intelligence and marital quality. Thus, a statistical correlation between the emotional intelligence of married couples who were not experiencing distress and the quality of their marriage was not sufficiently supported by the available data.

Adeniyi and Ekeanya (2021) examined the relationship between emotional intelligence, marital communication, conflict resolution skill and marital stability among married persons in

Lagos State. Three research questions and three null hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance guided the study. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised all married persons in Lagos State. A sample of 100 respondents was selected across four orthodox churches in Lagos State, using simple random sampling technique. Three research hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of Significance.

Emotional intelligence, marital communication, conflict resolution skill and marital stability questionnaire (EICCRSMS) was used to collect relevant data. The data was analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Statistics. Findings of the study showed that emotional intelligence did not necessarily relate to marital stability while marital communication and conflict resolution skills correlated to marital stability.

In line with the objective of this study, the influence of the five components (indices) of emotional intelligence: self-awareness (ability to recognize your feeling); self-regulation (ability to stay focused when experiencing powerful emotions); self motivation (ability to persevere amidst obstacles or setbacks); empathy (ability to put yourself in another person's shoes); and social skills (abilities to inspire positive emotions in others) on marital conflict resolution among couples in the area of study was carefully examined.

Statement of the Problem

Marriage is a highly valued union all over the world. It is a legally recognized romantic union that is often celebrated with joy in different cultural ways in Nigeria. Though marital union is common to human existence, it is very complex because of its fragility which could breed dissatisfaction, anxiety, depression and relationship deterioration. Parties in marital relationship may enjoy the bliss that comes with it if they are emotionally intelligent enough to handle the inevitable obstacles that usually confront spouses. Thus, marriage is a relationship that thrives on emotional intimacy, love and companionship. Marital conflict is a global phenomenon and Nigeria as a nation is no exception, particularly, Karu Local Government of Nasarawa State. It is common knowledge that marital instability can affect growth and development of families if the situation is not addressed properly. Thus, a study of this nature with emphasis on Karu Local Government Area as the study area is important to save marriages from crashing, thereby fostering marital stability and enhancing growth and development as peaceful marital unions are breeding grounds for good character formation in children who are the fruits of marital unions. Karu Local Area is home to many Nigerians from different ethnic groups as it is more or less an extension of Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja which can no longer contain the bulging population of people working in the FCT anymore, giving Karu the responsibility of housing a good number of couples.

Marital stability or marital conflict resolution has dominated scholarship discourse of the years from various dimensions. However, studies with emphases on the influence of emotional intelligence on marital conflict resolution is relatively silent. Thus, there seems to be paucity of scholarship reports with spotlights on the influence of the five components or indices of

emotional intelligence on marital conflict resolution or stability, creating a research vacuum that requires careful investigation and report to provide the needed knowledge that can guide counsellors to help couples experiencing storms in their marriages, using the approach of emotional intelligence to pave way for stable and conflict free marriages.

In keeping with the above, this study examines the influence of emotional intelligence on conflict resolution among couples in Karu Local Area of Nasarawa State with emphasis on its five components or indices: self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation, empathy and social skills.

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this study is to examine the influence of emotional intelligence on conflict resolution among couples in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State. Specifically, the study established:

1. The influence of self-awareness on conflict resolution among couples in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State
2. The influence of self-regulation on conflict resolution among couples in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State
3. The influence of self-motivation on conflict resolution among couples in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State
4. The influence of Empathy on conflict resolution among couples in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State
5. The influence of social skills on conflict resolution among couples in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State

Research Questions

1. Can self-awareness influence conflict resolution among couples in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State?
2. Does self-regulation influence conflict resolution among couples in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State?
3. To what extent does self-motivation influence conflict resolution among couples in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State?
4. How much influence does empathy have on conflict resolution among couples in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State?
5. What is the influence of social skills on conflict resolution among couples in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State?

Research Hypotheses

This study tested the following hypotheses:

1. There is no significant influence of self-awareness on conflict resolution among couples in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State
2. There is no significant influence of self-regulation on conflict resolution among couples in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State
3. There is no significant influence of self-motivation on conflict resolution among couples in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State
4. There is no significant influence of empathy on conflict resolution among couples in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State
5. There is no significant influence of social skills on conflict resolution among couples in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State

Methodology

This study adopted the survey design. The population comprised of all couples in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State. The simple random and stratified sampling techniques were used to draw a sample of 100 married participants (50 males and 50 females). The instruments for the conduct of the research were adapted E-OSC Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (EIQ) and a researcher-made instrument, Conflict Resolution Questionnaire (CRQ); validated by experts in the field of Guidance and Counselling. The instruments for the study were close ended type of questionnaires with reliability coefficients of 0.79 for EIQ and 0.83 for CRQ, using Cronbach Alpha reliability method. Both of them consisted of two sections, Section 'A' which dealt with the bio-data of respondents. Section 'B' contained questionnaire items based on 4-point rating scale, strongly agreed (4), agreed (3), disagreed (2) and strongly disagreed (1); and required respondents to tick only one option on each item presented in the questionnaire. Specifically, the study was guided by five research questions and five corresponding hypotheses. The t-test statistical tool was used to analyze the data at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question One: Can self-awareness influence conflict resolution among couples in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State?

Hypothesis One: There is no significant influence of self awareness on conflict resolution among couples in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State

Table 1: One-Sample t-Test Table Showing Influence of self Awareness on Conflict Resolution

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	T	Sig. (2-tailed)
Self Awareness	100	9.0700	1.58436	99	57.247	.000
Conflict Resolution	100	27.8200	4.18120			

It could be seen from Table 1 that t value of 57.247 resulted as the influence of self-awareness on marital conflict resolution, meaning that self-awareness can influence. This result is significant because $P = 0.00 < 0.05$ given 99 as degree of freedom. Since the result is significant, the null hypothesis is rejected while the alternate hypothesis is upheld. This means that there is a significant influence of self awareness on conflict resolution among couples in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State

Research Question Two: Does self-regulation influence conflict resolution among couples in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State?

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant influence of self regulation on conflict resolution among couples in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State

Table 2: One-Sample t-Test Table Showing Influence of Self Regulation on Conflict Resolution

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	T	Sig. (2-tailed)
Self Regulation	100	8.4900	1.48048	99	57.346	.000
Conflict Resolution	100	27.8200	4.18120			

It could be seen from Table 2 that t value of 57.346 resulted as the influence of self-regulation on marital conflict resolution, meaning that self-regulation does influence marital conflict resolution. This result is significant because $P = 0.00 < 0.05$ given 99 as degree of freedom. Since the result is significant, the null hypothesis is rejected while the alternate hypothesis is upheld. This means that there is a significant influence of self regulation on conflict resolution among couples in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State

Research Question Three: To what extent does self-motivation influence conflict resolution among couples in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State?

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant influence of self motivation on conflict resolution among couples in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State

Table 3: One-Sample t-Test Table Showing Influence of Self Motivation on Conflict Resolution

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	T	Sig. (2-tailed)
Self Motivation	100	8.9000	1.61120	99	55.238	.000
Conflict Resolution	100	27.8200	4.18120			

It could be seen from Table 3 that t value of 55.238 resulted as the influence of self-motivation on marital conflict resolution, meaning that self-motivation influences marital conflict resolution to a reasonable extent. This result is significant because $P = 0.00 < 0.05$ given 99 as degree of freedom. Since the result is significant, the null hypothesis is rejected while the

alternate hypothesis is upheld. This means that there is a significant influence of self motivation on conflict resolution among couples in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State.

Research Question Four: How much influence does empathy have on conflict resolution among couples in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State?

Hypothesis Four: There is no significant influence of empathy on conflict resolution among couples in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State

Table 4: *One-Sample t-Test Table Showing Influence of Empathy on Conflict Resolution*

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	T	Sig. (2-tailed)
Empathy	100	8.6800	1.63225	99	53.178	.000
Conflict Resolution	100	27.8200	4.18120			

It could be seen from Table 4 that t value of 53.178 resulted as the influence of empathy on marital conflict resolution, meaning that empathy has reasonable influence on marital conflict resolution. This result is significant because $P = 0.00 < 0.05$ given 99 as degree of freedom. Since the result is significant, the null hypothesis is rejected while the alternate hypothesis is upheld. This means that there is a significant influence of empathy on conflict resolution among couples in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State

Research Question Five: What is the influence of social skills on conflict resolution among couples in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State?

Hypothesis Five: There is no significant influence of social skills on conflict resolution among couples in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State

Table 5: *One-Sample t-Test Table Showing Influence of Social Skills on Conflict Resolution*

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	T	Sig. (2-tailed)
Social Skills	100	9.3100	1.41917	99	65.602	.000
Conflict Resolution	100	27.8200	4.18120			

It could be seen from Table 5 that t value of 65.602 resulted as the influence of social skills on marital conflict resolution, meaning that social skills have high level of influence on marital conflict resolution. This result is significant because $P = 0.00 < 0.05$ given 99 as degree of freedom. Since the result is significant, the null hypothesis is rejected while the alternate hypothesis is upheld. This means that there is a significant influence of social skills on conflict resolution among couples in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State.

Discussion of Findings**Emotional Intelligence and Marital Conflict Resolution**

The results of this study reveal that all the indices of emotional intelligence significantly influenced marital conflict resolutions as follows: self awareness on conflict resolution ($t=57.247$; $P = 0.00 < 0.05$); self regulation on conflict resolution (57.346 ; $P = 0.00 < 0.05$), self motivation on conflict resolution (55.238 ; $P = 0.00 < 0.05$), empathy on conflict resolution (53.178 ; $P = 0.00 < 0.05$), and social skills on conflict resolution (65.602 ; $P = 0.00 < 0.05$). These results confirm that emotional intelligence significantly influenced conflict resolution, thereby fostering marital stability among couples in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State. This finding agrees with Parsakia et al (2023) who noted significant influence of emotional intelligence on spousal relationships in Canada. This finding is also in consonance with Heidari et al (2021) who indicated that participants with better emotional intelligence had higher marital satisfaction in a study in India. It equally harmonizes with Goyal et al (2024) who found from studies that individuals with higher emotional intelligence tended to have better marital adjustment. However, this finding contradicts Sharma (2024) who posited that there was no statistical correlation between the emotional intelligence and marital quality in Noida; and Adeniyi et al (2021) who submitted that emotional intelligence did not necessarily relate to marital stability in Lagos State. The finding confirms that emotional intelligence can lead to spousal emotional control and conflict resolution as suggested by Knox et al. (2023).

Self-awareness and Marital Conflict Resolution

This study reveals a statistically significant influence of the self-awareness component of emotional intelligence on marital conflict resolution ($t=57.247$; $P = 0.00 < 0.05$). This aligns with Nwoke et al (2022) who posited that high extent of self-awareness predicted marital stability among married couples in Rivers State, Nigeria. Self-awareness can help spouses to understand who they are. The more a spouse understand his or her emotions and thoughts, the more he or she is likely to appreciate the fact that his or her partner too experiences emotions. Thus, self-awareness can lubricate marital relationship.

Self-regulation and Marital Conflict Resolution

This study reveals a statistically significant influence of the self-regulation component of emotional intelligence on conflict resolution (57.346 ; $P = 0.00 < 0.05$). This finding agrees with Nwoke et al (2022) who noted that high extent of self-regulation predicted marital stability among married couples in Rivers State, Nigeria. The finding also aligns with Cheung et al (2022) who observed that marital conflict was strongly associated with the mismatch of self-control between partners in Hong Kong. Self-regulation in this study proves to a vital ingredient in conflict resolution. It can help couples to regulate negative emotions like frustration and anger to avoid unnecessary emotional outbursts that could lead to deterioration of romantic relationship.

Self-motivation and Marital Conflict Resolution

This study reveals a statistically significant influence of self-motivation component of emotional intelligence on conflict resolution (55.238; $P = 0.00 < 0.05$). This finding agrees with previous studies which posited that emotional intelligence potentially acts as a catalyst to marital stability and adjustment (Parsakia et al., 2023; Heidari et al., 2021; Goyal et al., 2024). Self motivation is crucial in marriage because it is the inner drive that helps spouses to pursue their goals of marital satisfaction at all cost. It makes couples to be determined to keep to their marital vows without relying on external encouragement to resolve conflict in order to move towards the goal of a successful marriage.

Empathy and Marital Conflict Resolution

This study reveals a statistically significant influence of the empathy component of emotional intelligence on conflict resolution (53.178; $P = 0.00 < 0.05$). This finding is supported by Nwoke et al (2022) who opined that high extent of empathy predicted marital stability among married couples in Rivers State, Nigeria. The finding agrees with Goyal et al (2024) who found in a review study that emotional intelligence improved empathy and conflict resolution in couples. According Gaur et al (2015) empathy and forgiveness could help couples to save their marital relationship from collapse. Human beings are prone mistakes, making it impossible for any relationship to last without the virtue of empathy. Spouses who are empathetic could easily bear with their partners and would be willing to resolve conflicts as quickly as possible.

Social Skills and Marital Conflict Resolution

This study reveals a statistically significant influence of social skills component of emotional intelligence on conflict resolution (65.602; $P = 0.00 < 0.05$). The finding agrees with Goyal et al (2024) who found in a review study that emotional intelligence improved effective communication and conflict resolution in couples; and Adeniyi et al (2021) who posited that marital communication and conflict resolution skills correlated to marital stability in Lagos State. Social skills refer to the ability of couples to interact and communicate. Emotional intelligence leads to effective communication of couples and enhances marital stability and satisfaction (Jardine et al., 2022). Thus, Social skills can enrich marital communications, implying that spouses who do not communicate effectively may face the risk of emotional tensions in their marriages.

Conclusion

This study has investigated the influence of emotional intelligence on marital resolution of couples in Karu Local Government Area of Nasarawa State. The results of the study have also revealed that all the components of emotional intelligence significantly influenced marital conflict resolutions as follows: self awareness on conflict resolution ($t=57.247$; $P = 0.00 < 0.05$);

self regulation on conflict resolution (57.346; $P = 0.00 < 0.05$), self motivation on conflict resolution (55.238; $P = 0.00 < 0.05$), empathy on conflict resolution (53.178; $P = 0.00 < 0.05$), and social skills on conflict resolution (65.602; $P = 0.00 < 0.05$). These results confirm that emotional intelligence significantly influenced conflict resolution and marital adjustment among the participants.

Recommendations

In the light of the effectiveness of emotional intelligence as a catalyst for marital conflict resolution recipe, the following recommendations are proffered.

Based on the findings of this study, counsellors should guide spouses on how to be emotional intelligent and deploy the five components of emotional intelligence to build stable marriages in their marital counselling interventions. In addition, Counsellors teach couples how they can be emotionally self-aware, regulate their emotions, self-motivate during stormy periods in their marriage, deploy social skills to build psychosocial and romantic bonds, and empathize with their partner to foster reconciliation.

As a result of the findings of this study, spouses should be encouraged by helping professionals to embrace forgiveness and effective communication towards marital conflict resolution. Counselling intervention should emphasize emotional regulation, grounded in tolerance to help couples to embrace peace and cohesion to foster good quality of life and marital stability.

Couples should adopt appropriate resolution strategies like negotiation instead of using force or coercion to resolve marital conflicts. Negotiation stems from emotional intelligence and helps couples to discuss their differences in order to arrive at consensus. Counsellors may deploy negotiation approach in marital conflict resolution interventions.

Emotional education should be built into our educational processes to help learners appreciate emotional intelligence right from their school days before marriage. Government should encourage emotional education in our schools since emotional skills can be taught and learnt.

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