



STRESS AND MARITAL CONFLICT AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN JALINGO EDUCATION ZONE, TARABA STATE NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated stress and marital conflict among secondary school teachers in the Jalingo education zone, Taraba State. Three research purposes, three research questions and four hypotheses guided the study. Correlation research design was adopted for the study. The population for this study was 854 secondary school teachers out of which two hundred and thirty-six (236) were selected through stratified proportionate and random sampling. The instrument for data collection were a structured questionnaires titled Teachers' Stress and Marital Conflict Questionnaire (TSMCQ). The instruments (TSMCQ) was subjected to face and content validity. The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach alpha which yielded 0.78 reliability index. Descriptive statistics using mean and standard deviation was used to answer the research questions, while inferential statistics using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and independent sample t-tests were used to test the hypotheses. Findings revealed a significant positive relationship between home-based stress and marital conflict and between work-based stress and marital conflict. The following are the summary of findings: A strong positive correlation exists between stress experienced at home and marital discord among secondary school educators in the Jalingo educational area ($r = 0.919, p=0.000$). In the Jalingo education zone, a study found no notable connection between stress experienced at home and marital discord among both male and female secondary school educators ($t\text{-value} = 0.057, p = 0.954$). A strong positive correlation exists between job-related stress and marital discord among secondary school educators in the Jalingo educational area ($r=0.879, p=0.000$). There is no notable connection between stress related to work and marital discord among male and female secondary school educators in the Jalingo education zone ($t\text{-value} = 0.728, p = 0.468$). The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study. Educational institutions, governing bodies, and schools ought to conduct frequent workshops on stress management and provide counseling for educators, assisting them in handling stress from both their personal lives and their professional responsibilities. This initiative will aid in addressing stress-related challenges that impact their overall well-being and job performance. School leaders ought to create guidelines that encourage a healthy work-life balance, which includes minimizing overwhelming workloads, allowing sufficient time for lesson planning, and fostering a supportive work atmosphere. Partners ought to be motivated to participate in transparent and sincere discussions regarding their pressures and difficulties to enhance their connections and reduce disputes.

Given that both male and female educators face comparable degrees of stress-induced marital issues, it is essential to create interventions that tackle stress impartially, guaranteeing that both genders obtain equal assistance. The results of this research indicate that both home-related and work-related stress significantly contribute to marital disputes among secondary school educators in the Jalingo education zone of Taraba State, Nigeria. The research identified a significant positive link between stress originating from home and marital disputes, in addition to the connection between work-related stress and marital issues. The results indicate that heightened stress, whether stemming from domestic duties or professional pressures, plays a crucial role in fostering conflicts among partners. Additionally, the research indicated that gender is not a major factor in influencing the connection between stress and marital discord. Both male and female secondary school educators face comparable degrees of marital strife due to stress originating from home and work environments. This conclusion suggests that marital difficulties associated with stress are not limited to a specific gender; instead, they impact both male and female educators in equal measure. The research emphasizes the essential requirement for strategies in stress management and conflict resolution to assist secondary school educators in managing stress in both their professional and personal spheres. By implementing support systems, providing counseling, and promoting work-life balance initiatives, it is possible to alleviate the adverse effects of stress on marital relationships.

KEY WORDS: STRESS, MARRITAL CONFLICT

INTRODUCTION

Marriage is the coming together of two different individuals as husband and wife who agree to plan and set up their own family. It is an essential phenomenon in human life irrespective of tribe, society and religious affiliations. It is an approved social institution whereby two to more persons establish a family through a socially or ritually recognized union or legal contract between spouses that establishes rights and obligations between them, between them and their children, and between them and their in-laws (Haviland et al., 2017). Marriage is an important relationship between a man and a woman because it involves emotional and legal commitments which are quite important in any adult's life. According to Olugbenga (2018), marriage in Nigeria is defined as a man and a woman partnering together as husband and wife. It is also viewed as a unique contract or union between a man and a woman that creates a conjugal and family life.

Marriage as expressed by Gusau (2016) is a relationship and bond, most commonly between a man and a woman that plays a key role in the definition of many families. Moses and Everest (2023) further buttress that marriage is a relationship that functions on many levels, which comprises of many strands woven and intermingled in a special kind of way. The legal status of husbands and wives is changed upon entry into a marriage contract, granting those new rights and obligations (Sharhabilu et al., 2022). It is an intimate union and equal partnership between a man and a woman who derives affection from each other with the aim of building a family. Family is one of the most important principal institutions in any society.

Marriage is an important event in almost any society. Marital relationship are sources of support, friendship and pleasure, which causes cooperation, sympathy, kindness, patience and responsibility towards family (Sadeghiet al., 2018). The institution of marriage is not crisis free since

the two individuals that come together as husband and wife, most of the time, have different temperaments. The implication here is that marriage especially the successful one connotes a life-long arrangement where the couples survive a multitude of demanding situations such as illness, financial constraints and family attendant problems resulting to conflict among spouse.

Conflict, an inevitable fact of life among humans, marriage and other intimate relationships are no exception. According to Hornby (2016), conflict means a disagreement and a quarrel. Sotonade (2018) also defined conflict as the struggle for control over another person's behavior or action. A disagreement in marital relationship becomes a conflict when it goes beyond the normal intellectual difference that characterizes marital relationships to the emotional realm involving feelings of anxiety or anger and followed by abusive language and hostile actions. In as much as conflict exists, the two parties at least still have a relationship, no matter how bad it may be. The conflict may lead them to hurt each other or to forgive and forget but the conflict shows that something about the relationship is still important to the people involved.

Marital conflicts in whatever guise occur in all human societies but it is observed in various degrees. Marital conflict is one that occurs between husband and wife, it exists where husband and wife have different opinions about issues, events or activities which cannot be mutually resolved (Kolo 2011). Marital conflict usually arises mostly due to lack of understanding between the man and his wife, differences in the level of education, social backgrounds, physical maintenance, love making and extra marital affairs are some of the factors to incessant marital conflict (Karanja 2016). Marital conflict is associated with heated quarrels, violence, and separation and in extreme cases divorce, it may be described as a struggle, clash, strife, disagreement or quarrel between husband and wife, and sometimes with other members of the household, over opposing needs, ideas, beliefs, values or goals (Moses & Everest, 2023). As couples progress deeper into their relationships, it is inevitable that opinions and feelings may differ. Conflict becomes destructive when individuals' are returned against each other instead of the problem.

Marital conflicts are natural because individuals are unique with different temperaments, tastes and habits. Whenever two people get together eventually some of the belief system and personal habits of one will annoy the other, regardless of the degree of love (Tasew & Getahun, 2022). In healthy relationships couples tend to accept and resolve conflict. But in case of unhealthy relationships, marital conflicts arise due to several reasons. When there is conflict between role performance and role expectation of the spouses, it leads to maladjustment of husband/wife relationships and to marital disruptions (Pathan, 2015). Marital conflict can be defined as the state of tension or stress between marital partners as the couple try to carry out their marital roles. Conflicts become progressing when couples fail to focus upon current issues affecting the family and resolve them. Each conflict that is unresolved becomes progressive, the partners tend to challenge each other's weakness and find fault in the least things done or said. Habituated conflicts are most of what remains after couples have worked out basic adjustments and learned to avoid progressive conflicts (Sharhabilul et al., 2022). For most couples, there remain certain areas where agreement will never come and where accommodation is the best that can be achieved.

Marital conflict, as defined by Olugbenga (2018), arises from opposing needs, ideas, and values between spouses (and sometimes others in the household). This lack of understanding, as further explained by Moses and Everest (2023), can stem from differences in education, social background, physical intimacy, infidelity and even extra marital affairs are some of the factors that contribute to

marital disputes. Marital conflict can range from verbal to physical abuse, and is generally associated with poorer health outcomes for the couples involved (Shrout et al., 2019). This often times leads to stress and persistent marital conflict. Hence, marital conflict can be a significant source of stress for couples.

Life throws stress at everyone, but what exactly is it? Beyond just anxiety or negativity, stress is a mind-body response to feeling overwhelmed by demands exceeding our resources or motivation. Referring to Yaro, (2022) Stress is a state of psychological imbalance caused by a disparity between situational demands and the individual's ability or motivation to meet those needs. Stress is a term usually used to describe suffering, fatigue and the feeling of not being able to cope with the demands of life. Whether it's work, home, or something else, these demands can lead to feeling strained and struggling to cope. Some sources of stress include home-based and occupation stress among others.

Home-based stress, work-based stress, and gender play critical roles in influencing marital conflict, especially among secondary school teachers, whose lives are often entangled in the demands of their professional and domestic roles. Home-based stress refers to pressures arising from family responsibilities such as childcare, financial obligations, extended family interference, household chores, and unmet emotional needs from spouses.

Work-based stress, on the other hand, emanates from the teaching profession's rigorous and often underappreciated demands overcrowded classrooms, inadequate teaching materials, pressure from school leadership, lack of motivation, poor remuneration, and long working hours. When these stressors accumulate without healthy coping mechanisms, they often spill over into marital life, fueling tension and conflicts between spouses.

Gender, as a variable, further complicates this dynamic. For instance, female teachers are more likely to experience role overload as they juggle teaching responsibilities with traditional gender expectations of homemaking and care giving. Male teachers may also experience stress but are socially conditioned to suppress emotional vulnerability, which can manifest as withdrawal or aggression during marital disputes.

The need for this study is thus justified by the rising trend of marital instability among teachers, many of whom are caught between the competing demands of their professional and personal lives.

Empirical findings support this concern. For example, a study by Oginyi et al. (2021) revealed a significant relationship between home-based stress and marital conflict among Nigerian secondary school teachers, with women being disproportionately affected.

Similarly, Eze and Okafor (2019) found that work-related stress significantly correlates with negative spousal interactions and emotional withdrawal.

Furthermore, a gender-sensitive study by Musa and Alabi (2020) showed that female teachers reported higher levels of marital dissatisfaction due to cumulative stress from school and home, underscoring the need for psychological support mechanisms tailored by gender. These findings clearly indicate that unresolved home-based and occupational stressors not only impair job performance but also erode marital quality, leading to long-term consequences such as emotional detachment, conflict escalation, or even divorce.

Therefore, this study is vital in identifying stress patterns among teachers and proposing practical interventions to promote healthy work-life balance and marital harmony.

Statement of the Problem

Secondary school teachers in Nigeria (Taraba state inclusive) are expected not only spend time on instructional activities such as lesson planning, classroom teaching, and grading homework, but also on tasks such as running co-curricular activities, attending or facilitating professional development activities, and engaging parents and the community. Furthermore, teachers are also expected to engage in administrative duties related to teaching and learning such as filling out student report cards and tracking student attendance in class, coping with the rigors of running a family life. All these can cause stress, tiring and extremely challenging process due to work demands and family responsibilities.

The prevalence of marital conflict has increased, which impacts homes and the well-being of families. Married teachers who experience marital conflict may be unhappy, find it difficult to interact with other staff and students, and be reluctant to teach effectively (Sharhabilu et al. 2022; Moses & Everest, 2023). These problems could be hindrances for spouse who are teachers in Jalingo education zone to give proper attention to their homes and their marital life as well as reducing their efficiencies at places of work. In the process of making adjustment working and coping with family responsibilities, most teachers especially in Jalingo education zone had to compromise their sleep, desires and health which might degenerate into marital conflict.

Several researchers, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and government institutions have acknowledged the growing concern of marital conflict especially among working professionals like teachers and have initiated measures to address its causes and effects. Research from Sharhabilu et al. (2022) and Moses & Everest (2023) emphasize that unresolved marital issues not only damage family well-being but also reduce productivity and emotional stability among educators. Recognizing these adverse effects, various stakeholders have made efforts to mitigate the problem, particularly through mental health advocacy, conflict resolution training, and stress management programs.

Researchers have proposed psychological interventions such as cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), couple counseling, and workplace stress reduction programs. These interventions aim to help teachers identify sources of stress, develop coping strategies, and build better communication within their marriages. Studies have recommended the integration of marital counseling into employee wellness programs, especially for public sector workers like teachers.

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as the *Women's Rights Advancement and Protection Alternative (WRAPA)* and *ActionAid Nigeria* have supported family wellness initiatives, including campaigns promoting work-life balance, gender equality in household roles, and awareness about emotional health. These NGOs often organize seminars and workshops to teach stress management, effective parenting, and conflict resolution techniques. Some also provide confidential marital counseling and help lines for distressed individuals, particularly female teachers who may lack access to psychological support in rural areas like Jalingo.

Government efforts include the Federal Ministry of Health and Education's collaboration in integrating psychosocial support into the education sector. For example, the National Policy on Health and Development includes mental health awareness and employee wellness components. Some state governments, such as those in Lagos and Enugu, have introduced teacher support programs and

counseling units within education districts though such efforts are still lacking in Taraba State. The *Nigeria Union of Teachers (NUT)* has also advocated for better working conditions, flexible work schedules for women, and the establishment of staff counseling units in schools, although implementation remains weak in rural zones like Jalingo.

In summary, while various efforts have been made to address the impact of stress and marital conflict on teachers, especially through research, advocacy, and limited policy interventions, these efforts are yet to be adequately localized or sustained in zones like Jalingo. Hence, the need for this study is grounded in the pressing reality that many teachers in the Jalingo education zone lack access to systematic marital and psychological support. The study seeks to fill this gap by examining the relationship between stress and marital conflict and offering evidence-based recommendations for improving teachers' home and work life.

This worry has necessitated this study. To this end, the main thrust of this study, therefore is to examine the relationship between stress and marital conflict among secondary school teachers.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to examine stress and marital conflict among secondary school teachers in Jalingo education zone, Taraba state. Specifically, the study examined:

1. The relationship between home-based stress and marital conflict among secondary school teachers in Jalingo education zone.
2. The relationship between home-based stress and marital conflict among male and female secondary school teachers in Jalingo education zone.
3. The relationship between work-based stress and marital conflict among secondary school teachers in Jalingo education zone.

Research Questions

The following research questions raised, guided the study;

1. What is the relationship between home-based stress and marital conflict among secondary school teachers in Jalingo education zone?
2. What is the relationship of home-based stress and marital conflict between male and female secondary school teachers in Jalingo education zone?
3. What is the relationship between work-based stress and marital conflict among secondary school teachers in Jalingo education zone?

Hypotheses

The hypotheses postulated for the study tested at 0.05 level of significance includes: -

H_{O1} ; There is no significant relationship between home-based stress and marital conflict among secondary school teachers in Jalingo education zone.

HO_2 ; There is no significant relationship between home-based stress and marital conflict among male and female secondary school teachers in Jalingo education zone.

HO_3 ; There is no significant relationship between work-based stress and marital conflict among secondary school teachers in Jalingo education zone.

METHODOLOGY

The instrument for the study was tagged Teachers' stress and Marital conflict questionnaire (TSMCQ). The instrument was divided into four (4) sections, section A contained personal data of the respondent, Section B, C, and D contained the main instrument of 38 items. Section B comprised of 15 items to elicit responses on Home-based stress for Teachers, Section C also comprised of 15 items to elicit responses on Work-based stress for Teachers while the last section D comprised of 10 items to elicit responses on Marital Conflicts for research question 4. The items of TSMCQ were measured on a four-point rating scale to elicit teachers' responses, which does not allow the participant to give a neutral answer, as neutral responses were of no importance to the study. The options were Strongly Agree (SA) = 4 points, Agree (A) = 3 points, Disagree (D) = 2 points and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1 point, for positive statements while the scoring is reversed for negative statements. This is to take care of the questions raised and the hypotheses formulated in the study by the researcher.

Purpose of the study

The aim of this research was to investigate the relationship between stress and marital discord among high school educators in the Jalingo educational area, located in Taraba state. In particular, the research focused on:

- i. the connection between stress experienced at home and conflicts in marriage among secondary school educators in the Jalingo educational area.
- ii. the connection between stress experienced at home and marital disputes among male and female secondary school educators in the Jalingo educational area.
- iii. the connection between job-related stress and marital discord among secondary school educators in the Jalingo educational area.
- iv. the connection between job-related stress and marital discord among male and female secondary school educators in the Jalingo educational area.

Research Questions

The following research questions raised, guided the study;

- i. How does stress experienced at home relate to conflicts in marriage among secondary school educators in the Jalingo education zone?
- ii. How does home-related stress impact marital discord among male and female secondary school educators in the Jalingo education zone?
- iii. How does work-related stress impact marital discord among secondary school educators in the Jalingo education zone?
- iv. How does work-related stress affect marital discord among male and female secondary school educators in the Jalingo educational area?

Statement of the Hypotheses

The proposed hypotheses for the research were evaluated at a significance level of 0.05 and consist of the following:

HO_1 ; Among secondary school educators in the Jalingo education zone, there is no notable connection between stress experienced at home and conflicts within marriage.

HO_2 ; There is no notable connection between stress experienced at home and marital disputes among male and female secondary school educators in the Jalingo educational area.

HO_3 ; Among secondary school educators in the Jalingo education zone, there is no notable connection between stress related to work and conflicts in marriage.

HO_4 ; In the Jalingo education zone, there is no notable connection between stress related to work and marital disputes among male and female secondary school educators.

Research design

The researcher utilized a correlational research design. This choice was made because correlational research design investigates the relationships between variables within a single group, without the researcher exerting control or manipulation over the data collected through careful observation from a sample that reflects the broader population of public secondary school teachers in the Jalingo Education Zone of Taraba State.

Population of the Study

The study's participants include 854 teachers from 43 public secondary schools located in the Jalingo Education Zone of Taraba State. This zone is made up of two local government areas: Ardo-kola and Jalingo. The planning and statistics unit reports that in the academic year 2023/2024, there were 226 female and 628 male secondary school teachers (refer to the Population distribution table in Appendix A, page 90). This population is diverse, including educators from various socioeconomic backgrounds, genders, cultures, and ethnicities.

Sample and Sampling

The study's sample includes 272 secondary school educators who utilized Taro Yamane's simplified formula for determining sample size, sourced from a total of 854 teachers across 43 public secondary institutions in the Jalingo Education Zone of Taraba State. By employing a hat and draw technique for random selection without replacement, the Jalingo Education Zone was chosen from the 11 educational zones located in Taraba State.

Using Taro Yamane's simplified formula to calculate sample sizes as:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where n is the sample size

N is the Population of the study

e is the margin error in calculation at 95% confidence level which is 0.05

$N = 854$

$e = 0.5$

$$n = \frac{854}{1 + 854(0.05)^2} = n = \frac{854}{3.14} = 271.975272$$

In order to guarantee that the number of educators chosen for the sample from each local government area (Jalingo and Ardo-kola LGAs) is representative, a stratified sampling method was employed to select 236 teachers from Jalingo and 36 from Ardo-kola, resulting in a total sample size for the research. (see Appendix A and B, page 90 and 91 respectively)

Instrument for Data Collection

The tool utilized for the research was identified as the Teachers' Stress and Marital Conflict Questionnaire (TSMCQ). This tool was organized into four sections: Section A included the personal information of the participants, while Sections B, C, and D comprised the primary instrument consisting of 38 items. Section B included 15 questions aimed at gathering feedback on stress related to home life for educators, while Section C also contained 15 questions focused on work-related stress for teachers. Lastly, Section D featured 10 questions designed to explore issues surrounding marital conflicts. The TSMCQ items were evaluated using a four-point rating scale designed to capture teachers' feedback, which does not permit participants to select a neutral option, as neutral responses were deemed irrelevant to the research. The response options included Strongly Agree (SA) = 4 points, Agree (A) = 3 points, Disagree (D) = 2 points, and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1 point for affirmative statements, while the scoring is inverted for negative statements. This approach addresses the inquiries posed and the hypotheses established by the researcher in the study.

Reliability of Instrument

In order to evaluate the dependability of the tool Teachers' Stress and Marital Conflict Questionnaire (TSMCQ), a preliminary test was carried out to assess the internal consistency of the tool. The individuals participating in the pilot testing consisted of 20 educators from a secondary school within the Zing Education zone. These teachers were not included in the main study but shared similar characteristics. This approach was taken to assess the reliability and effectiveness of the instrument before its official use. The tool was evaluated through the split-half technique, which was computed using the Cronbach's alpha method. The reliability coefficient for the TSMCQ instrument was found to be 0.78 (refer to appendix E, page 102). This is aligned with Okwatsa's (2021) suggestion that a

questionnaire can be deemed reliable if it achieves a coefficient of 0.7 or higher, indicating a significant level of reliability and thus a strong basis for considering the questionnaire as dependable.

Method of Data Analysis

To address the research inquiries, descriptive statistics were calculated using the mean and standard deviation (SD). The first two null hypotheses were evaluated through Pearson Product Moment correlation (PPMC), while the third and fourth null hypotheses were assessed using an independent sample t-test. The selection of Pearson Product Moment correlation along with the independent sample t-test was made because both statistical methods are employed to demonstrate the strength of the relationship between the variables, showing whether the correlation is positive or negative.

RESULT

Research Question One

What is the relationship between home-based stress and marital conflict among secondary school teachers in Jalingo education zone?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of home-based stress and marital conflict among secondary school teachers in Jalingo education zone

Variables Tested	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Home-based stress (HS)	236	38.68	5.04
Marital conflict (MC)	236	24.35	3.07

Table 1 presents mean and standard deviation of participants which indicate that the teachers had a mean score of 38.68 (SD = 5.04) on the home-based stress. While the mean marital conflict was 24.35 (SD = 3.07). Both variables were measured with a sample size of 236 teachers. HS Mean (38.69) and MC Mean (24.35): The higher mean score for home-based stress compared to marital conflict suggests that respondents generally report higher levels of stress than marital conflict.

Research Question two

What is the difference in the relationship of Home-based stress and marital conflict between male and female secondary school teachers in Jalingo education zone?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of home-based stress and marital conflict between male and female secondary school teachers in Jalingo education zone

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Male	101	63.06	8.75
Female	135	63.00	7.34

Table 2 highlight data which reflects the mean and standard deviation of scores on the difference in the relationship between home-based stress and marital conflict among male and female secondary school teachers in the Jalingo Education Zone. Male Teachers 101 respondents. Mean: 63.06, indicating the average level of relationship between home-based stress and marital conflict for male teachers. Standard Deviation (SD) is 8.75, showing greater variability in scores among male teachers compared to their female counterparts. Female Teachers 135 respondents. Mean: 63.00, reflecting a similar average level of relationship as male teachers. Standard Deviation (SD) is 7.34, indicating less variability in scores among female teachers. The means for male (63.06) and female teachers (63.00) are almost identical, suggesting no significant difference in the average relationship between home-based stress and marital conflict based on gender. The researcher will test the relationship between work-based stress and marital conflict to see whether there is difference between the variables.

Research Question three

What is the difference in the relationship between work-based stress and marital conflict among secondary school teachers in Jalingo education zone?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of work-based stress and marital conflict among secondary school teachers in Jalingo education zone

Variables Tested	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Work-based stress(WBS)	236	36.83	5.31
Marital conflict (MC)	236	24.34	3.07

Table 3 shows mean and standard deviation of participants which indicate that the teachers had a mean score of 36.83(SD = 5.31) on the Work-based stress. While the mean marital conflict was *24.34 (SD = 3.07). Both variables were measured with a sample size of 236 teachers. WBS Mean (36.83) and MC Mean (24.34): The higher mean score for work-based stress compared to marital conflict suggests that respondents generally report higher work levels of stress than marital conflict. The researcher will test the relationship between work-based stress and marital conflict to see whether there is correlation between the variables.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis One

H_{O1} ; There is no significant relationship between home-based stress and marital conflict among secondary school teachers in Jalingo education zone.

Table 5: Pearson Correlation analysis between home-based stress and marital conflict among secondary school teachers in Jalingo education zone

Correlations		Home-based stress (HS)	Marital conflict (MC)
Home-based stress (HS)	Pearson Correlation	1	.919**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	236	236
Marital conflict (MC)	Pearson Correlation	.919**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	236	236

Table 5 presents Pearson Correlation coefficient between home-based stress (HS) and marital conflict (MC) is 0.919. This indicates a very strong positive relationship between the two variables, meaning that as home-based stress increases, marital conflict also tends to increase significantly. The p-value is 0.000, which is less than the significance level of 0.01. This indicates that the relationship is

statistically significant. The analysis is based on a sample size of 236 respondents. Since the correlation is strong ($r=0.919$) and statistically significant ($p=0.000$), the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected. This means there is a significant positive relationship between home-based stress and marital conflict among secondary school teachers in the Jalingo education zone. Counseling strategies should address both factors together to effectively support teachers.

Hypothesis two

H_{O_2} ; There is no significant relationship between home-based stress and marital conflict among male and female secondary school teachers in Jalingo education zone.

Table 6: independent samples t-test analysis on the difference between home-based stress and marital conflict among male and female secondary school teachers in Jalingo education zone.

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-cal	Sig (p)
Home-based stress (HBS)	Male	10	63.06	8.75	234	.057	0.954
	Female	13	63.00	7.34			
Marital conflict (MC)		5					

The independent samples *t*-test analysis in Table 6 reveals no significant difference in the relationship between home-based stress and marital conflict among male and female secondary school teachers in Jalingo Education Zone. The sample consisted of 101 male teachers and 135 female teachers, with mean scores of 63.06 (SD = 8.75) for males and 63.00 (SD = 7.34) for females. The calculated *t*-value was 0.057, with a significance level of $p = 0.954$, which is greater than the 0.05 threshold. This indicates no statistically significant difference between the two groups, and the null hypothesis is therefore retained.

Hypothesis three

H_{O_3} ; There is no significant relationship between work-based stress and marital conflict among secondary school teachers in Jalingo education zone.

Table 7: Pearson correlation analysis between work-based stress and marital conflict among secondary school teachers in Jalingo education zone

Correlations

	Marital conflict (MC)	Work-based stress (WS)
Marital conflict (MC)		
Work-based stress (WS)		

Marital conflict (MC)	Pearson Correlation	1	.879**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	236	236
Work-based stress (WS)	Pearson Correlation	.879**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	236	236

Table 7 presents Pearson Correlation coefficient between work-based stress (WS) and marital conflict (MC) is 0.879. This indicates a very strong positive relationship, meaning that higher levels of work-based stress are strongly associated with higher levels of marital conflict. The p-value is 0.000, which is less than the significance level of 0.01. This demonstrates that the relationship is statistically significant. The analysis is based on a sample size of 236 respondents. Since the correlation is strong ($r=0.879$) and statistically significant ($p=0.000$), the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected. This means there is a significant positive relationship between work-based stress and marital conflict among secondary school teachers in Jalingo education zone.

Discussion of Findings

The Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and an independent sample t-test were performed to investigate the connection between stress levels and marital discord among secondary school educators in the Jalingo educational zone of Taraba State, Nigeria. This research uncovered a notable connection between stress experienced at home and conflicts within marriage, achieving a significance level of 0.05 ($p < 0.05$) and demonstrating a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.919$). The results align with the research conducted by Mgbenkemdi et al. (2023), Yaro (2022), Nnubia et al. (2022), Israel (2021), and Oyeleke (2017), all of whom emphasized a notable link between stress experienced at home and conflicts within marriage. This research aligns with existing literature by highlighting different origins of stress within the home, which encompass, but are not restricted to, infidelity, sexual challenges, and the imbalanced sharing of household responsibilities. The findings underscore that stressors arising from the domestic setting, including infidelity and mismatches in sexual desires and anticipations, can greatly impact marital tension.

This research also revealed a notable connection between stress related to work and conflicts in marriage, achieving a significance level of 0.05 ($p < 0.05$) and demonstrating a strong correlation ($r=0.879$). The results of this research correspond with earlier studies conducted by Nnubia et al. (2022), Ssenyonga and Hecker (2021), Odebode (2019), Sadeghi et al. (2018), Cheku and Wangdi (2021), and Palanivel and Michael (2020), all of which recognized a notable connection between different elements and the stress experienced by teachers. Research indicates that teachers often experience significant stress due to factors such as heavy workloads, disruptive student behavior, and ongoing changes in policies. This stress can lead to a range of negative outcomes, such as lower job

satisfaction, a rise in mistakes, diminished focus on student requirements, misplaced frustration directed at students, and a sense of overwhelming pressure. Consequently, these issues can also lead to conflicts in their marital relationships.

The results of the research indicated that there is no notable correlation between stress experienced at home and marital discord among both male and female educators (t -value= 0.057, p = 0.954). The results of the research align with those of Israel (2021) and Ojeme (2020), both of whom confirmed that there is no notable difference in the connection between home-related stress and marital discord among males and females. Nevertheless, the results of this research contradict those of Nnubia et al. (2022), indicating a notable disparity in how home-based stress relates to marital conflict for both genders. Females appear to face more marital conflict stemming from home-based stress compared to their male counterparts.

The results of the research indicated that there is no significant correlation between work-related stress and marital discord among male and female secondary school educators in the Jalingo education zone (t -value = 0.728, p = 0.468). In contrast, the results of this research contradict those of Adeboye (2018), Ako and Ashami (2017), Palanivel and Michael (2020), and Ramchandram (2021), which indicated that there are significant differences between genders (male and female) concerning work-related stress and marital discord. It was noted that male educators experienced greater effects on their job-related behaviors than their female counterparts.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study.

1. Educational institutions, governing bodies, and schools ought to conduct frequent workshops on stress management and provide counseling for educators, assisting them in handling stress from both their personal lives and their professional responsibilities. This initiative will aid in addressing stress-related challenges that impact their overall well-being and job performance.
2. School leaders ought to create guidelines that encourage a healthy work-life balance, which includes minimizing overwhelming workloads, allowing sufficient time for lesson planning, and fostering a supportive work atmosphere.
3. Partners ought to be motivated to participate in transparent and sincere discussions regarding their pressures and difficulties to enhance their connections and reduce disputes.
4. Given that both male and female educators face comparable degrees of stress-induced marital issues, it is essential to create interventions that tackle stress impartially, guaranteeing that both genders obtain equal assistance.

Contribution to knowledge

This study makes significant contributions to knowledge in the following ways:

1. This research presents empirical evidence that highlights a notable positive correlation between stress experienced at home, stress encountered at work, and marital discord among secondary school educators in the Jalingo educational area, thereby contributing to the current body of literature regarding stress and family relationships.
2. This study contradicts earlier research that indicated variations in stress effects based on gender, revealing no notable differences between male and female educators in how stress

- relates to marital discord. This finding question the prevailing beliefs about gender differences in the perception of stress and its influence on marital dynamics.
3. This research emphasizes that heavy workloads, disruptive student behavior, and ongoing changes in policies are key factors leading to occupational stress, supporting the notion that work environments greatly affect personal life issues, especially conflicts within marriages.
 4. This research enhances theoretical conversations regarding the impact of stress on marital dynamics by incorporating Role Expectation Theory, Conflict Resolution Theory, and Stress Theory, while also providing a foundation for subsequent studies in the fields of education, psychology, and family studies.
 5. The results highlight the importance of implementing stress management initiatives, offering counseling resources, and establishing policies that promote a healthy work-life balance for educators, delivering valuable perspectives for school leaders, policymakers, and relationship advisors.
 6. This research establishes a basis for future investigations into the relationship between stress and marital discord by suggesting the examination of other elements like financial pressures, the impact of extended family, and individual personality characteristics, which will enhance the comprehensive understanding of the topic.

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