

Responsibilities, Challenges and Coping mechanisms of Married Individuals in Tertiary Institutions of Odeda Local Government Area, Ogun State

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Abstract

The study investigated the family responsibilities, challenges and the coping strategies among married individuals in two tertiary institutions in Odeda LGA. 204 respondents were randomly selected. Data was collected using questionnaire and interview guide. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics and content analysis. Findings revealed that family responsibilities reported by respondents were basically money oriented. Majority agreed that their jobs affects their family responsibilities. Goal setting, planning, avoiding procrastination among others were ways of coping with family life. Conclusions were made. The study has implication for policy and practice.

Keywords - Family, job, coping factors, relationship, employees,

Introduction

History has shown the significant roles of the family in the society referencing men as the breadwinners providing for family needs and women as homemaker nurturing her members. With industrialization, there is shift resulting in changes in family roles of men and women. Developed countries have emphasized the dual roles of women in economic activity as well as mothering. For instance, Esping-Andersen (2009) noted the fact that women in industrialized world have embraced the job market, thus, increasing their labour force alongside with men. Also, Anyakoha (2015) emphasized the need for family members taking up new responsibilities so

as to ensure the effective running of the home due to economic recession. Thus, these new roles of married individuals as male or female seems to be common in developed and developing countries. Female take up economic responsibility while men are more involved in family responsibilities in a way has weakened the family life (Oláh, Kotowska and Richter, 2018).

There are still gaps unbridgeable between mothers and fathers in terms of paid work, housework and child care. Pew Research (2013) found that mothers are still much involved in the care of children and housework than fathers while, men are more involved in paid work than mothers after 5 decades. Slightly more

than half of mothers and fathers had difficulty in coping with responsibilities of job and family life. However, 50% of fathers conflicted about time spent with their children when compared to 68% of mothers saying they spend the right amount of time with their children. With regards to time, women in dual family earners are more devoted and committed to childcare and housework than paid work while fathers are more devoted to their work than care of children and housework. This is an indication that traditional family responsibilities may not be eroded with civilization or gender policy.

In the African society the stay-at-home-norm engage women in unpaid domestic duties which seems to have reduced drastically. Family responsibilities cannot exist outside challenges. For instance, the running of a home is geared towards a healthy functioning of the family while at the same time promoting women in different careers related to the well-being of the family (Anyakoha, 2015; Albert, 2017). Often times, research has shown that spill over of daily work schedule can affect the family life (Vergel, 2016). St-Amour et al, (2007), described the forms of conflict that may arise due to the different roles expectations - time, behavioural and tension. Fatoki and Kobiowu (2015) found that women in career complained of childbirth, care giving, house chores giving, house chores, and family obligations affect their progress. This implies that women in paid job and other responsibilities outside the home may suffer setback if they cannot cope with dual responsibilities.

Family-work conflict negatively affected work performance and positively related to work withdrawal (Frone, Yardley, & Markel, 1997; MacEwen & Barling, 1994 in Perry-Jenkins, Repetti, and Crouter, 2000). Major reasons for dissatisfaction both in family and life domains include lack of time, spending too much time on job or main activity and not having enough time for other activities. But constraint factors encouraging dissatisfaction were found to be absent of spouses, taking care of relatives and age of children Statistics Canada (2012). Factors promoting satisfaction includes flexible work schedule through organizational policies, sex and location across the two domains. However, time was a major factor in that study to determine relationship and the satisfaction derived in both domains. The new role performed by men in chores is determined by their educational level, traditional breadwinner roles, working conditions. According to Oláh, Kotowska, and Richter (2018) there is still barrier to doing of house chores in many countries with more traditional roles.

Previous research has established the fact that different strategies were found to be helpful in these domains. Hadden and Hede (2010) carried out a qualitative study on the work-relationship towards effective strategies found out that boundary-spanning strategies which involved the organization, family and individual to include boundary management, technology, leisure activities, support, flexibility, cognitive and behavioural strategies are means of reducing family/work demands. Similarly, Seeley (2015) found that strategies that contributed to the domains of family and

work life by couples include proactively structuring opportunities for time with family, accessing familial and paid support, shared planning and organization, control one's schedule, living within means, creating opportunities for alone time, work validation and satisfaction, to transition between work and family domains. Fatoki and Kobiowu (2015) reported the measures of coping with family and academic role of women to include having a supportive husband in order to address job requirements for their progress as well as assisting in carrying out house chores.

Working in government organization seems no to pose a threat to the family. Studies have been carried out on married women academics while the married non-academic individuals whether male or female seems to be lacking in research. Thus, this study sought to bridge the gap related to the family life of married non-academics. The main purpose of this study is to assess family responsibilities, job challenges and coping strategies among married individuals in tertiary institutions in Odeda Area Local government area of Ogun State, Nigeria.

Objectives of the study

The broad objective of the study was investigated family-work relationship challenges and coping strategies among women and men in the tertiary institutions in Odeda Local Government area of Ogun State. Specifically, the study determined:

1. the responsibilities performed by respondents in the homes
2. challenges respondents encounter in carrying out their responsibilities
3. ways respondents cope with their family responsibilities

Research questions

1. What are the responsibilities performed by respondents in the homes?
2. What are the challenges respondents encounter in carrying out their responsibilities?
3. What are the ways respondents cope with their responsibilities?

Methodology

Design of the Study: The study adopted a descriptive survey design to assess the family-work relationship among married men and women in the tertiary institutions in Odeda Local government Area LGA of Ogun State.

Area of the Study: The study was conducted in (LGA) of Ogun State. There are two tertiary institutions in the LGA - Federal College of Education Abeokuta (FCEA) and Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta (FUNAAB). FCEA was established in 1976 and it is the first tertiary institution in Ogun State. It has four schools and 10 departments (<https://fce-cedep.com/home-page/>). FUNAAB was established in January 1988 with tripod mandate of teaching, research and extension services. It is one of the three Universities of Agriculture in Nigeria. It has ten colleges (<https://unaab.edu.ng/>). The choice of the institutions is the fact that married individuals make up the larger percentages of staff.

Population of the Study: The population of the study consists of men and women who are married and working as non-academic staff in the two tertiary institutions of Odeda LGA.

Sample for the Study: Random sampling technique was used to draw 204

respondents for the study. The selection criteria for choosing a man or woman as a respondent must be that either is married for at least 3 years with 2 years working experience in the institution.

Instrument for Data Collection: A structured questionnaire was developed which adapted family-work relationship scale tagged FWBAMWM. The questionnaire contained three sections. Section A focused on family responsibilities; Section B elicited information on challenges in carrying out responsibilities; and Section C focused on the ways of coping. Sections A and C employed always, occasionally and never as the rating scale and scored 3, 2, and 1 respectively while five-point Likert scale of strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree and never which was scored 0, 3, 2, 1, and 0 respectively for Section B. The benchmark for agreeing or disagreeing to a statement was 1.5 for family responsibilities and coping skills, and 2.0 for challenges.

Data Collection Method: Two hundred and twenty (220) copies of questionnaire were distributed to the married individuals by 3 research assistants.

Efforts were made to ensure that the items were filled correctly without omitting any of the needed information. Two hundred and four (204) of the distributed questionnaires were returned showing 96% return rate. The interview schedule was based on consent approval of the respondents and was guided by the research questions. The researchers took notes and comments.

Data Analysis Technique: The data obtained were subjected to statistical analysis such as frequencies, percentages, mean, standard deviation (SD).

Results

Demographic characteristics of Respondents

About half of the respondents were male (51%). The mean age of the respondents was 42 years. One quarter of the respondents had Master's degree and two third of the respondents were responsible for the care of relatives. It is interesting to note that some of the respondents were single (10%). However, only 4% of respondents do not have any child and majority (74%) had under 18 children.

Table 1: Mean Responses on Married Individuals Family Responsibilities

S/N	Family Responsibilities	\bar{x}	SD	Remarks
1.	Provide money for the family needs	1.63	0.54	Agreed
2.	Financing of children education	1.56	0.62	Agreed
3.	Buying of food stuffs	1.54	0.63	Agreed
4.	Responsible for other family project	1.43	0.64	Disagreed
5.	Cleaning the house	1.41	0.65	Disagreed
6.	Cooking of meals	1.40	0.70	Disagreed
7.	Washing of cloths	1.31	0.68	Disagreed
8.	Building project	1.30	0.64	Disagreed
9.	Dressing the children	1.29	0.69	Disagreed
10.	Feeding Children	1.28	0.71	Disagreed
11.	Carrying of pregnancy	0.78	0.76	Disagreed

\bar{x} - Mean SD -Standard Deviation

Table 1 above shows that only three items out of the 11 items listed as family responsibilities were agreed upon. Item 1 (provide money for the family needs) had the highest mean value (1.63, SD=0.54), followed by item 2 (Financing of children education, mean =1.56, SD =0.62 and buying of food stuffs (Mean =1.54, SD=0.63). This is because all these items had mean score of 1.5 and above. This indicated that respondents' family responsibilities majorly were centred mainly on basic necessity of life such as

money, food and education. Findings from the interview schedule revealed the following to be the family responsibilities take on by respondents:

- Help in finance
- Work hand in hand with spouse to take care of children
- Pay school fees
- Cooking
- Washing of cloths
- Taking care of wives, husbands and children

Table 2: Mean Responses on Challenges encountered by respondents in carrying out their family responsibilities

S/N	Challenges encountered	\bar{x}	SD	Remarks
1	My job makes it difficult to become the kind of spouse or parent I would like to be	2.07	0.901	Agreed
2	My job produces strain that makes it difficult to fulfil my family obligations	2.03	0.890	Agreed
3	The amount of time my job takes up makes it difficult to fulfil family responsibilities	1.96	0.893	Disagreed
4	My work schedule conflicts with my family life	1.93	0.930	Disagreed
5	Because my work is so demanding, at times I am irritable at home	1.93	0.886	Disagreed
6	My work takes up time that I would like to spend with my family	1.80	0.928	Disagreed
7	I always have spill over of work undone every day	1.78	0.913	Disagreed
8	The demands of my job make it difficult to be relaxed at all the time at home	1.77	0.926	Disagreed
9	My family dislikes how often I am preoccupied with my work while at home	1.73	0.875	Disagreed
10	Due to work-related duties, I frequently have to make changes to my family plan	1.71	0.901	Disagreed
11	On the job, I have so much work to do that it takes away from my personal interest	1.58	0.895	Disagreed
12	After work, I come home too tired to do some things that I would like to do	1.40	0.886	Disagreed
13	Often times than not, I focus on work during working hours and also think about it when I'm at home	1.28	0.886	Disagreed

Table 2 shows that two out of the 13 items were agreed upon as challenges faced by

the married individuals in discharging their family responsibilities. This indicates

that job was a major challenge in the discharging family responsibilities. Findings from the interview schedule reveal the following to be the challenges

faced by respondents in discharging their family responsibilities:

- money
- time
- stress

Table 3: Mean Responses on the Respondent Ways of Coping with their Family Responsibilities

S/N	Challenges	\bar{x}	SD	Remarks
1	I set realistic goals for myself	1.88	0.32	Accepted
2	I organise my day and prioritise how best to accomplish task	1.85	0.40	Accepted
3	I sort out priorities with my marriage being the most important	1.81	0.43	Accepted
4	My spouse is supportive when it comes to house chores	1.69	0.53	Accepted
5	I share house chores among my children	1.43	0.74	Not Accepted

Table 3 shows the ways respondents accepted in coping with family responsibilities. The results from the above show that four out of the five items were accepted by respondents as ways of coping with family responsibilities. Their means values ranged from 1.69 to 1.88. Standard deviation were within the ranges of 0.32 to 0.53. Findings from the interview schedule reveal the following to be the family responsibilities take on by respondents:

- planning
- supportive spouse
- wake up early
- time management
- plan each day activity

Discussion

From the analysis, the findings revealed that the major family responsibility is related to money. Majority of respondents emphasized that they provide financially for the family in order to take care of family needs, educate children and buy food in the house. This shows that family responsibilities may not be carried out without finance and both male and female

are involve. Anyakoha (2015) emphasized the need for family members taking up new responsibilities so as to ensure the effective running of the home due to economic recession. Thus, it indicates that the source of livelihood is important to sustain the family well-being. Meeting physiological as identified by Maslow requires money. Aruma and Hanachor (2017) stated that human physiological needs such as shelter, food, education and clothing ranked highest in scale of preference. This is in line with the findings of the study as seen in Table 1 that respondents take more responsibilities on providing money, financing education of their children and buying food.

Furthermore, while the care of children is no longer depending on the mother figure alone, the interview revealed that women still take care of children and do the house chores. This result is in agreement to the findings of Pew Research (2013) findings that showed that despite the fact that roles have converged, there are still gaps in the responsibility of men and women and mothers are still much involved in the care

of children and housework than fathers. This implies that married individual whether men or women still cannot cope with some responsibilities. The interview shows that some men still see domestic chores as women's responsibilities coupled with the time consumption allocated to such responsibility could require extra energy. It means that majority of married individual still do not have the ability to maintain a wide spread out of energy and effort to all the domains of life (Shivakumar, 2011).

Inferring from Table 2, this study found that job was a major challenge affecting married individuals in discharging their family responsibilities. Job responsibilities make family obligations difficult for married individuals. From the interview for the study, women especially identified time as a major challenge in achieving and performing their roles in the family especially when there is need to care for the husband and at the same time the job seems to be at stake. The findings indicate that the non-availability of women to take care of their family can result in dissatisfaction and conflicts in role expectations may set in. This supports the findings of Statistics Canada (2012) that the lack of time and spending too much time on job or main activity and not having enough time for other activities can cause conflict. St-Amour et al, (2007) also attest to the fact that time and tensional conflict may arise due to the different roles expectations. This implies that married individual desire to meet up with their different roles expectations as a wife or husband in the family, and/or as an employer which is often than none, not always realistic.

Interestingly, the major ways of coping identified to be acceptable are setting realistic goals, organise and plan each activity, sort out priorities and having supportive spouse in house chores. This means that when married individuals have their own goals and prioritize their activities, it goes a long way to take up both family and job responsibilities simultaneously. This shows the personal measures or strategies of coping with family responsibilities. The ability of an individual to personally work out means of attaining relationship in their daily life is a proactive decision making.

On the other hand, the external coping factors are those factors that are within the environment of the married individual. These external factors such as spouses, children and relatives provide support to the married individuals. Spouse play significant role in assisting their wives (Fatoki and Kobiowu, 2015). Consequently, coping strategy was evident as means of living a fulfilled life among married individuals. This finding corroborate the study of Haddon and Hede (2010) and Seleeby (2015) in search of effective strategies among different professionals that as they discovered proactive, adaptive, technological, support and leisure factors as means of coping among the population studies. Seleeby (2015) further stressed couples proactively structured opportunities for time with family, accessed familial and paid support, shared planning and organization, control their schedule, lived within means, created opportunities for alone time, work validation and satisfaction, to transition between work and family domains.

In fact, with supportive spouses and children, married men and women can cope with family and work responsibilities. Supportive spouses have been found to relieve their partner and bring satisfaction Spouses Pew Research (2013) found out that the absence of spouse is associated with lower satisfaction and may cause poor family-work relationship. Supportive spouses make family obligations stress-free. This findings also agrees with Fatoki and Kobiowu (2015) who reported the measures of coping with family and academic role of women to include having a supportive husband in order to address job requirements for their progress as well as assisting in carrying out house chores. This implies that the dual role of married individual requires planning as well as supportive spouses.

Conclusion

The present study reveals that married individuals are dual earners couples sustaining the family through their paid jobs. The traditional system of male figure is still predominant in the Nigeria society where men majorly focus on work and breadwinner role. However, women are able to practice dual roles of being a breadwinner and at the same time home keeper. Women are still much involved in child care and house chores at the same time. The challenges faced by respondents is discharging their family responsibilities was majorly associated with job. However, the different coping mechanisms such as settings goals, planning and having supportive spouses can help married cope with the responsibilities of family life and its responsibilities. External factors such as supportive spouses can provide human

and economic resources for the effective functioning and running of the family. From this study it is established that no longer do women play only homemaker role, but also the economic role.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the results of this study:

- Organise trainings on how to reduce stress and other challenges of family life should be considered intermittently among married people in institutional settings.
- Men and women should be provided with flexibility in schedule of work to attend to urgent family needs
- Provide paternal leave so as to encourage more
- Men should encourage women always by supporting them at home and work place.
- Family policies that support the home front
- There is need for married men to also adjust to the role of home making

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