

Occupational stress and marital contentment in the COVID-19 era among married tutors of colleges of education

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ABSTRACT

Occupational stress has been the subject of numerous research studies conducted across the globe due to its impact on our daily life. For instance, it can have a negative impact on teachers' psychological and normal functioning of the body at all levels as well as their performance. It can even impact adversely on their marriage and social lives as well. This study explored the relationships between occupational stress and marital contentment in the COVID-19 era. The current COVID-19 pandemic, which shook the foundations of labour, industries, and economies worldwide, has exacerbated the crisis of occupational stress among many people, including teachers. The demises, national lockdowns, and general unpredictability caused by the virus have disrupted workflow and made marriages more stressful. As a consequence, this study was based on the numerous sources of occupational stress and the association between occupational stress and marital contentment. With a sample size of 100 out of 132 married tutors from selected Ghanaian colleges of education, the research used a correlational descriptive research approach. The findings revealed that during COVID-19 married tutors faced stressful situations as a result of their expertise and talents not being fully exploited at work. Occupational stress and marital contentment were also found to be somewhat positively related ($r=.28$). The study also found that there were no gender variations in occupational stress ($P=.156$) and marital contentment ($P=.108$) among married tutors.

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1. INTRODUCTION

COVID-19 has undoubtedly altered the way human beings all over the world work. The harsh realities of having to work from home via various virtual platforms, coupled with the frustrations of working irregular hours without a clear separation of office hours and family times, pose a major source of increased stress on many people. One's ability to cope with stress can positively or negatively impact the individual's health [1]–[3]. COVID-19-related stress can take several forms, including social, emotive, and mental [4]. The advent of COVID-19 has resulted in numerous changes in our daily lives, the most notable of which is the growing use of the internet. Before this pandemic, internet materials were seen as supplemental in the educational system, whilst in many countries, in-person classes were regarded as the primary medium of teaching and learning. This circumstance may have caused many problems and stress for learners, teachers,

and parents. The problems associated with the adjustments and changes teachers have to make to deliver their work, as a result of this pandemic, appear to worsen the already stressful job of the teacher before the outbreak of the pandemic [5], [6].

Although the notion of stress is generally linked with negativity, a balanced dose of stress appears to have some benefits. According to Panigrahi [7], a disturbance in the body functions and the mind's regular operation is typified by stress. Panigrahi claims that stress has limited benefits for both organizations and employees. Panigrahi is of the view that stress contributes to both personal and organizational goals. Excessive stress can cause mental, physiological, and emotional issues [8], [9] that have a huge impact on people's health, leading to abysmal performance, emotional problems, worry [5], and even lack of employment and leaving one's job freely [6]. Stress is a state of mind or tension caused by unpleasant or difficult conditions. There can be differences between situational requirements and the capacity or motivation of individuals to achieve these requirements [10]. The failure to handle or surpass the adaptive capabilities that jeopardize the welfare of a married partner is referred to as marital stress [11]. Marital stress is a state of negative impacts like dissatisfaction and worry resulting from marriage elements. Married workers are expected to face a challenge from the demands for marriage accompanied by the requirement to engage an organization [12]. Home chores stress [13], financial stress [14], connection stress, parental stress, and elderly stress are indications of marriage stress [15]. In addition, with marriage getting older, there is more demand and pressure on the duration of marriage [16].

According to researchers [17], stress is an integral element of life and generally negatively impacts individuals' physiological and health properties. It impacts individuals worldwide, including marital life, in many ways [18]. Based on Randall and Bodenmann [18], external stress can affect marital satisfaction by reducing the spousal time that lowers the sensation of familiarity, limits efficient communication, enhances uneasiness and stiffness, and leads to poor health, insomnia, and depression. When a spouse believes their marital connection to be favourable, this is referred to as marital satisfaction. The physical and emotional requirements of spouses are crucial to improving their marital pleasure [19].

A substantial part of a person's time is spent outside the house as a result of other life commitments [20]. The workload is another crucial aspect that might influence marital satisfaction as job activities may impact other parts of life, and the burden might reduce marital pleasure [21]. Long work hours, deadlines, and lack of time for a family due to workload can negatively affect the marriage [22], particularly regarding a partner's marriage happiness [21]. Work stress can make people more irritable, nervous, sad, or melancholy [23]. It may also influence negative feelings, resulting in sexual dysfunction and lower sexual activity frequency. Marriage happiness is significantly impacted by marital satisfaction for the majority of individuals [24]. Moreover, research has shown that contentment with the workplace influences non-work life and work satisfaction [25]. Borralha *et al.* [26] as well observed that social assistance and social resources in the workplace mitigate the stress or threat of married employees. These studies were conducted in an atmosphere devoid of global pandemic so there was no third force impacting negatively on the respondents. However, it is imperative to find out what the situation is with the pandemic among married tutors in the colleges of education. The colleges of education as previously stated have been upgraded from diploma to degree awarding institutions, with little or no corresponding infrastructural development or resource availability. The demands of their new status and learning environment and adjustments the tutors needed to make in their teaching due to the COVID-19 pandemic created a compounding situation, which requires investigation.

The invasion of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) has resulted in numerous changes in our daily lives. One's ability to cope with stress can positively or negatively impact health [1]. To keep the spread of the virus further after COVID-19, most businesses in Ghana shut their doors and instituted a work-from-home (WFH) policy. Workers have reported higher levels of stress and worry as a result of this, which has had a direct impact on their lives [27]. Teaching online became the order of the day for teachers across the country, including tutors of colleges of education. Little or no training was given to these tutors, and they had to learn how to use specific Apps such as Zoom, Teams, Google classroom, and many more to teach online. The majority of the tutors were left with no choice but to dig into their already meagre salaries to purchase electronic gadgets, set up internet connectivity, and purchase internet data to execute their jobs.

Apart from their normal teaching responsibilities, the tutors of colleges of education serve as advisors, test officials, quality assurance officers, and many other tasks. Some teach more courses concerning their teaching obligations, oversee students' project work, and monitor student teaching on-campus and off-campus. Tutors who are married are also required to perform their family duties as well. This puts them in the position of combining work with performing their duties at home. Nevertheless, to be promoted within the colleges, tutors ought to publish high-quality research in renowned journals as a prerequisite. Therefore, the tutors endeavour to achieve the objectives established by their institutions under growing pressure from diverse sources. To increase the quality of teacher training in Ghana, all colleges of education have been upgraded to tertiary education levels since the 2018/2019 academic year and now provide a four-year Bachelor of Education degree program [28]. Mereku [29] argued that, even though the 41 colleges of

education were upgraded to tertiary status to offer basic education programs, they were still run like the previous missionary teacher training institutions, which prompted the upgrading to degree awarding status. The colleges of education act (Act 847) were passed in 2012 to provide legal backing for the transformation of teacher training colleges into colleges of education. The National council for tertiary education, the government entity in charge of regulating tertiary education institutions, was eventually put in charge of them. Despite these upgrades and the corresponding increase in enrolment, there hasn't been a corresponding infrastructural upgrade in these colleges of education, although the government is making some efforts in this direction.

The workload for the Tutors in the colleges of education was manageable during the diploma era compared to the current degree era. Married Tutors in the colleges of education might be stressed since they work in a new challenging professional environment with marital responsibility. Walburg and Pascoe *et al.* [30], [31] stated that academic stress could lead to tiredness, depersonalization, cynicism, and inefficiency, as well as a drop in academic achievement. Tutors who work in these settings are prone to encounter stressful situations that might result in stress. However, the impact of work stress on employee marital satisfaction is little documented in the literature. There is little research that has been conducted in Ghana as well, specifically, with a focus on the colleges of education. As a result, there is a need to investigate the ideas of work-stress and marital satisfaction to improve policymaking and the development of methods to promote a successful work-family balance. Considering the dual roles played by married tutors at school and home, the researchers thought it wise to look into issues of work stress and marital satisfaction experienced by these tutors.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Interactional stress theories focus on the functional characteristics of the communication between the individual with their working surroundings [32]. Researchers utilized key input-output or stimulus-response techniques early on, whereby predicting a bad result is behavioural, physiological, or psychological based on key life events or characteristics of the working design. Theoretically, the source of individual reaction to external stimuli is called stressors and stresses [33]. The connection between these stressors and stresses is believed to be causative [34]. The structural look of a person's communication with his work environment is the fundamental element of this stress theory [35]. As a result, the purpose of this research will be on the view of social cognition questions that centre on somatic behaviours and contextual circumstances rather than the cognitive processes of married tutors at educational colleges.

Social behaviour is the product of an exchange procedure, according to the social exchange theory [36]. This trade's purpose is to maximize benefits while reducing costs [36], [37]. According to sociologist George Homans' theory, people think about the benefits and drawbacks of social bonds. When the risks outnumber the advantages, individuals will terminate or leave a partnership. This theory offers the foundation to evaluate links between marriage and family [37]. However, the theory of social exchange should be defined not only as a reward and expense issue. It should be regarded as a two-way behaviour having varying levels of reciprocity, belief, trust, one-sided power, attitude, usefulness, result, standards, and required conditions complementary to interpersonal behaviour in certain situations, competitive in other circumstances [36]. This interpersonal behaviour will be considered between married couples in which at least one of the spouses is a tutor in a college of education.

Research into the role of selecting, optimizing, and compensating (SOC) behaviours in both work-life and family stresses [38], bothered on work-in-family (WIF) conflicts and family-in-work (FIW) warfare. Their research suggests that adopting general workplace and home behaviours are associated with less employment and family stress and lower WIF conflict and FIW conflicts. However, the lives of many have been changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The worldwide pandemic has ramifications in all countries and at different levels. Health, education, and the economy are all in a state of flux. There have been multiple reports of strained marital relationships and increasing cases of domestic violence as a result of people being locked up in their houses for months [39]. Through the adaptation of the Spillover-Crossover Model [40], job experience is initially transferred from work to the house and then socially interacting with the spouse, therefore having a beating on the quality. These theoretical arguments are generally backed up by empirical information that stress affects the quality of a stressed person's relationship [21], [41]. Marital satisfaction or pleasure refers to a person's general feeling about marriage as a whole. Marital happiness measures the quality of relationships between married couples, and only when the individual has an agreement and consistency with the state is it expected [42]. Marital pleasure has an essential function in preserving the balance of life and emotion. It is a valuable element for dealing with stress and doing well in life [43]. Several studies have demonstrated increased marital happiness in males compared to women [44],

[45]. Men and women are typically socialized differently, and a study has shown that emotional and affective spousal support foresee better marriage satisfaction [46].

Marital contentment is an unspoken requirement for a happy marriage, and the work that someone does can directly or indirectly impact their marriage [47]. Research on work-life balance and marital contentment between male and female workers, [48] was investigated. The study's purpose was to determine if male and female workers had a link between work-life balance and marital contentment. The results suggest that work-life balance has a significant positive relationship with marital contentment. It was evident from their research that these two variables are unaffected by gender or the form of marriage. Nevertheless, [45] found the opposite in a study on marital contentment. The findings indicated that men had much higher marital satisfaction than women. Likewise, the majority of investigations have concluded that marital contentment differs by gender [44], [45] and work stress [49], [50]. A meta-analysis looked at 226 different samples [51]. The findings showed substantial but minor gender differences in marital contentment, with females slightly less content than their males. Nevertheless, the moderator analysis showed the discrepancy since clinical samples were included. In non-clinical community respondents, there were no disparities between male and female partners. When male and female spousal contentment ratings were compared with dyadic data, moderator studies found no gender discrepancies.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

This research employed a cross-sectional descriptive survey research approach [52]. The target population of the research is the total number of married tutors in three of the six colleges of education affiliated with the University of Ghana, which experienced lockdowns as a result of the prevalence of COVID-19 cases. Also, it was easier to gain their trust, and have access to them. Finally, the criteria were accessibility, willingness, and experience of lockdown experienced by these married tutors of the affiliated colleges of education. A sample of 100 was used to collect data on occupational stress [53]. The brief job stress questionnaire (BJSQ) is a 57-item questionnaire that assesses job stressors (17 questions, for example, mental job requirements, and job control), psychological and bodily stress responses (29 items), and buffering elements, such as social support at work (11 items). Only the 17 questions on psychological job requirements and management were found to apply to the research and were adapted. Researchers employed the enriching and nurturing relationship issues, communication, and happiness-marital satisfaction scale known as (ENRICH) [54], referenced in [55]). Due to the COVID-19 epidemic, the questions were distributed using google forms. The responses were downloaded in excel and transferred into SPSS for analysis.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study examined marital satisfaction and work stress among married tutors of some selected colleges of education. The results are presented in Table 1. The study was focused on identifying the types of work stress experienced by the married college of education tutors, determining their level of marital satisfaction, and establishing the relationship between marital satisfaction and work stress. It was also to determine whether there are gender differences in marital satisfaction and work stress. There are 1,655 Tutors in the colleges of education in Ghana [56]. Out of this number, 100 married tutors who could only fill the questionnaire using google forms were surveyed. Data were then downloaded from the google form into SPSS to aid in data analysis. The findings in Table 1 show that 61% of the participants were married male tutors while 39% of the participants were married, female tutors. Also, the age range of the respondents showed that 45% of the respondents were from the ages of 21 to 30, whereas 46% of the tutors were between the ages of 31 and 50.

Table 1 also shows that the majority of the tutors (43%) have less than five years of experience, 19% possess more than 20 years of teaching experience. At the same time, 20% of the respondents possessed 11 to 20 years of working experience. It is also observed that 61% of the respondents have taught from 1 to 15 years, whereas 26% have taught between 25 and 40 years. This is consistent with the age categories discussed previously. Regarding the areas of expertise of the college tutors, 9% had a mathematics background, 23% were English experts, 19% were social studies experts, 17% were education experts, and 10% were science tutors. This is not surprising as these courses are mainly core courses in the colleges of education. Regarding religious denominations, 91% claimed they were Christians. This is unexpected, considering Ghana's religiously diverse population, with 71.2% of Ghanaians being Christian and 17.6% Muslim [57]. But this does not reflect in the sample sampled in terms of opportunities for these two major religions regarding employment in the selected colleges of education. It could also be that more Christians are married compared to their Muslim counterparts in these colleges but not necessarily based on employment.

Table 1. Results of biographic data

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Female	39	39.0
Male	61	61.0
Age		
21-25	31	31.0
26-30	14	14.0
31-35	12	12.0
36-40	13	13.0
41-45	12	12.0
46-50	9	9.0
51-55	3	3.0
56-60	6	6.0
Years of teaching		
1-5	43	10.0
6-10	18	10.0
11-15	10	6.0
16-20	2	1.0
21-25	1	2.0
26-30	6	10.0
31-35	10	18.0
36-40	10	43.0
Area of expertise		
Education	17	17.0
English	23	23.0
Information and communication technology (ICT)	9	9.0
Mathematics	9	9.0
Music and dance	1	1.0
Physical education	4	4.0
Religious and moral education	5	5.0
Science	10	10.0
Social studies	19	19.0
Technical and vocational education and training (TVET)	3	3.0
Religious denomination		
Christianity	91	91.0
Islam	5	5.0
Other	1	1.0
Traditional	3	3.0

4.1. Research objectives

For the purposes of this study, five research objectives were outlined. To answer these research objectives, the data collected from the participants were analyzed. The first and second study objectives were analyzed using the mean, standard deviation, and independent samples t-test. Using the Pearson product-moment correlation, the third research objective was to look at the strength and linear relationship between occupational stress and marital contentment among married tutors from the chosen colleges of education. The independent-samples t-test was used to compare the means of two unconnected groups (gender) on the same continuous, dependent variable for research objectives four and five (occupational stress or marital contentment).

Research objective one required identifying the kinds of occupational stress that married tutors in the colleges of education experience. From Table 2, the respondents indicated various job stresses they experienced at their workplace. Of the 17 statements on work stress, it was observed that overall, married tutors were stressed on “my knowledge and skills are rarely used at work” ($M=3.40$, $SD=1.21$), “I have to work as hard as I can” ($M=3.37$, $SD=1.16$). Surprisingly, these married tutors were of the view that their job was worth doing ($M=3.10$, $SD=1.35$). Married male tutors ($M=2.62$, $SD=1.32$) differed on “I can choose how and in what order to do my work” from their female counterparts ($M=2.08$, $SD=1.16$) with $p=.037$.

Table 2. Extent of occupational stress experienced by married tutors in colleges of education

Statements on work stress	Mean (Standard deviation)			Sig. level
	Overall	Male	Female	
I have a great deal of work to do	2.51 (1.44)	2.64 (1.43)	2.31 (1.45)	.263
I am not able to finish my work in the allotted time	2.07 (1.14)	2.03 (1.14)	2.13 (1.15)	.685
I'll have to work as hard as I could	3.37 (1.16)	3.36 (1.20)	3.38 (1.12)	.920
I pay special attention to my work	2.63 (.75)	2.67 (.72)	2.56 (.79)	.484
My job is challenging since it necessitates a good level of expertise and technical ability	2.96 (1.38)	3.07 (1.34)	2.79 (1.44)	.340
During the working day, I must be continually thinking about the work	2.62 (1.37)	2.72 (1.34)	2.46 (1.41)	.357
My job includes a lot of physical labour	2.25 (1.21)	2.23 (1.22)	2.28 (1.21)	.833
I am able to work at my own pace	2.41 (1.31)	2.61 (1.32)	2.10 (1.25)	.060
I am able to pick how and in what sequence to complete my tasks	2.41 (1.28)	2.62 (1.32)	2.08 (1.16)	.037*
I am able to express my views on workplace policies	2.62 (1.35)	2.56 (1.35)	2.72 (1.38)	.566
My abilities and knowledge are scarcely use at work	3.40 (1.21)	3.43 (1.19)	3.36 (1.25)	.787
There are disagreements within my department	2.68 (1.33)	2.75 (1.31)	2.56 (1.35)	.487
Other departments and my department don't like each other	2.35 (.95)	2.46 (1.03)	2.18 (.79)	.151
My working environment is pleasant	2.73 (1.39)	2.89 (1.32)	2.49 (1.49)	.164
My working environment is unpleasant (e.g., noise, lighting, temperature, ventilation)	2.32 (1.12)	2.33 (1.08)	2.31 (1.20)	.930
This job is suitable for me	2.68 (1.39)	2.61 (1.38)	2.79 (1.42)	.512
My job is worthwhile	3.10 (1.35)	3.21 (1.27)	2.92 (1.46)	.295

The second research objective was focused on establishing the extent to which participants were satisfied with their marriage. Table 3 presents the results on marital contentment among married tutors in colleges of education. The questionnaire was on a likert scale of 1-4. From Table 3, of the 12 statements on work stress, it was observed that overall, married tutors expressed the following on marital satisfaction: “I am not satisfied with the way we handle our responsibilities as parents” (M=2.71, SD=1.29), “I am dissatisfied about our relationship with my parents, in-laws, and/or parents” (M=2.70, SD=1.12), “I am not pleased with the personality characteristics and personal habits of my partner” (M=2.69, SD=1.22), and “I am not happy about our communication and feel my partner does not understand me” (M=2.52, SD=1.24). On the statement “I am very happy with how we handle role responsibilities in our marriage”, married female tutors (M=1.79, SD=1.06) were less happy than their male counterparts (M=2.34, SD=1.40).

Table 3. Marital satisfaction among married tutors in colleges of education

Statements on marital satisfaction	Mean (Standard deviation)			Sig. level
	Overall	Male	Female	
My partner's personality traits and personal habits do not sit well with me	2.69 (1.22)	2.74 (1.32)	2.62 (1.07)	.627
In our marriage, I am quite pleased with how we approach role obligations	2.13 (1.30)	2.34 (1.40)	1.79 (1.06)	.028*
I am dissatisfied with our communication and believe that my partner does not comprehend what I am saying	2.52 (1.24)	2.62 (1.27)	2.36 (1.20)	.303
I'm quite pleased with how we make choices and manage disagreements	2.03 (1.21)	2.20 (1.22)	1.77 (1.16)	.085
I am dissatisfied with our financial situation and the manner in which we make economic choices	2.35 (1.39)	2.39 (1.27)	2.28 (1.43)	.698
I am satisfied with how we plan our recreational activities and spend our free time together.	2.13 (1.35)	2.31 (1.42)	1.85 (1.20)	.083
I'm quite happy with how we display affection and sexually relate	2.10 (1.28)	2.18 (1.31)	1.97 (1.22)	.434
I'm not happy with how we handle our parental obligations	2.71 (1.29)	2.77 (1.31)	2.62 (1.27)	.560
My relationship with my parents, in-laws, and/or parents is unsatisfactory	2.70 (1.40)	2.80 (1.46)	2.54 (1.30)	.358
I'm pleased with how we live out our religious beliefs and principles	2.03 (1.12)	1.95 (1.07)	2.15 (1.20)	.381

The third research objective examined the relationship between marital contentment and work-related stress among married tutors of some selected colleges of education using Pearson's product-moment correlation (Pearson r). The findings are indicated in Table 4. A total of one hundred respondents completed the questionnaires. Initial evaluations revealed that the association was linear, with both variables normally distributed ($p > .05$) and no outliers, as shown by Shapiro-Wilk's test. There was a statistically significant, small positive correlation between occupational stress and marital contentment, $r(98) = .28, p < .005$, with occupational stress explaining 7.7% of the variation in marital contentment.

Table 4. The relationship between work stress and marital satisfaction

Variables	Mean	Standard deviation	r	p
Work stress	45.11	9.42	.277	.005
Marital satisfaction	23.39	7.16		

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The fourth research objective was to assess gender differences that exist in occupational stress among married tutors of colleges of education. The outcome of the disparity between female and male married tutors regarding work stress they experience is shown in Table 5. The results presented in Table 5 show the mean difference between male and female married tutors regarding work stress they experience. There were 61 men and 39 women that took part in the survey. To ascertain if there were any variations in job stress between married male and married female tutors at the selected colleges of education, an independent-samples t-test was used. According to a boxplot assessment, there were no outliers in the data. Shapiro-test Wilk's ($p > .05$) revealed that occupational stress results were normally distributed, and variances were homogeneous, as indicated by Levene's test for equality of variances ($p = .798$). Married male tutors ($M = 46.18$, $SD = 9.47$) had higher levels of work stress than married female tutors ($M = 43.44$, $SD = 9.22$), but a statistically not significant difference, $M = -2.74$, 95% CI [-6.56, 1.06], $t(98) = -1.43$, $p = .156$.

Table 5. Gender differences in work stress among college of education tutors

	Gender	N	M	SD	df	t	p
Occupational stress	Male	61	46.18	9.47	98	-1.43	.156
	Female	39	43.44	9.22			

Research objective five evaluated the gender differences that exist in marital satisfaction among married tutors of colleges of education. The results concerning the difference between male and female married tutors on their marital satisfaction are presented in Table 6. There were 61 married male tutors and 39 married female tutors who responded to the questionnaires. To ascertain if there were any variations in marital satisfaction between married male and married female tutors, an independent-samples t-test was conducted. Examination of a boxplot revealed no outliers in the data. Shapiro-test Wilk's ($p > .05$) revealed that occupational stress scores were normally distributed, and variances were homogeneous, as indicated by Levene's test for equality of variances ($p = .093$). Married male tutors ($M = 24.3$, $SD = 7.7$) had higher levels of marital satisfaction than married female tutors ($M = 22.0$, $SD = 6.1$), a statistically not significant difference, $M = -2.36$, 95% CI [-5.25, .53], $t(98) = -1.62$, $p = .108$. This suggests that both married male and female tutors experience similar marital satisfaction in their marriage.

Table 6. Gender differences in marital satisfaction among college of education tutors

	Gender	N	M	SD	df	t	p
Marital satisfaction	Male	61	24.31	7.69	98	-1.62	.108
	Female	39	21.95	6.05			

4.2. Discussion

According to the findings of this study, a number of factors influence the prevalence of occupational stress and marital contentment. High job demands were one of the many sources of stress mentioned by respondents. Workplace initiative is defined as the ability to investigate problems independently and take action in the workplace. Irrespective of one's job or position, there are a variety of ways to show initiative and demonstrate your determination to attain common goals. Understanding how to take more initiative at work might assist you in improving while also inspiring others to do so. This relates to risk-taking, as noted by researchers [58], [59], who opined that men take more risks in the workplace than women. Therefore, it is not surprising that married male tutors could complete their tasks at work in how and in what order they wanted without fear of repercussions. Despite the fact that married tutors believed their employment was worthwhile, [60] point out that most demoralised teachers who opt to continue in the industry engage in inferior professional activity.

The investigation also discovered that married female tutors were less happy than their male colleagues. This discovery is in line with [61]. Marriage, they claim, impairs Ghanaians' happiness and life satisfaction and the fact that marriage has an inverse relation with subjective wellbeing. Also, Rehman *et al.*

[51] indicated statistically significant but minimal gender disparities in spousal satisfaction, where women were marginally less happy than women husbands, which is also consistent with this study. This suggests that men are mostly happy in their marriages compared to women.

In terms of the relationship between occupational stress and marital contentment, there was a slightly positive correlation. Prior study has found a relationship between occupational stress and marital contentment in single-earner couples [43], [62]. This could be due to couples' compassion for one other during the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to the findings, workplace stress was shown to be greater in males than in females. However, the variations in work stress between men and women were statistically insignificant. This contradicts a study by Solanki and Mandaviya [49], which indicated that job stress has a considerably greater impact on work-life balance for women. Stafyla and Spyridis [50] intimated the existence of gender differences in stress manifestations at the workplace regarding 231 Greek adults employed at various workplaces.

When it comes to marital contentment, both married male and female tutors said they have similar levels of pleasure in their marriages. Despite male tutors scoring higher than female tutors, there was no noticeable impact of gender on marital satisfaction. In Tehran, a study was conducted to determine marital satisfaction among medical professionals, with an emphasis on gender differences. According to the data, males were much happier in their marriages than women [45]. In a similar context, Jackson *et al.* [44] conducted a meta-analysis of marital contentment disparities between men and women. The findings showed substantial but modest gender differences in married couples' marital happiness, with females slightly less happy than males. However, our study is a deviation from these findings as there were no gender differences regarding job satisfaction.

5. CONCLUSION

The researchers recommend that future research might utilize a more qualitative approach through the adaptation of semi-structured interviews and observation techniques to capture the mechanisms or situations that impact the relationship between happiness in marriage and work stress. It will also benefit the respondents as they will be aware of how work stress impacts marital satisfaction and how they can conform to mitigate the impact or eradicate it completely. A range of factors impacts the prevalence of job stress and marital contentment among married tutors in Ghana's selected colleges of education, according to the study. Large amounts of work, extremely hard work, and requiring a high level of knowledge and skill were some of the factors that had a high impact on tutors regarding work stress. When it came to marital satisfaction, some of the most common replies were that respondents were dissatisfied with how they handled their parental obligations. They were also unhappy with their parents' and in-laws' relationships. Concerning their spouses, they expressed dissatisfaction with their partner's personality traits and personal habits, and communication, believing that their partners do not seem to understand them. It was observed that workplace stress and marital contentment have a small positive link. This could be due to the empathy couples had for one other as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Finally, in this COVID-19 pandemic era regarding the study population, married tutors, both female and male, have equal levels of work stress and marital happiness. The study has received ethical approval from the Department of teacher education ethics committee, University of Ghana, Legon, Accra, Ghana.

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