



Marital Status as Determinant of Mission Engagement among Female Missionaries in The Redeemed Christian Church of God, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study stems from the need to understand the disparate treatment of trained female missionaries, often triggered by gender and marital considerations and which results in unemployment, limited opportunities for education, or participation in leadership processes. Therefore, this study examined female missionaries' perceptions, attitudes, and experiences regarding marital challenges in The Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) Mission Engagements. Grounded in the Intersectional Feminism Theory, it contributed to the literature on the experience of female missionaries in Nigeria. The study used a descriptive survey research design to randomly select 69 respondents from the estimated population of 250-trained female missionaries across Nigeria. It used a validated questionnaire, administered through Google Forms, to gather data on demographics and specific research questions. Findings reveal that female missionaries align with RCCG's mission and are actively engaged (Mean scores of 3.45 and 3.38). They acknowledge challenges, (mean score = 2.52) but view mission work as central to their purpose (mean score = 3.58). Marital status wields a modest positive effect on engagement (coefficient = 0.135, $p = 0.036$), explains approximately 4.1% of variances, but is not a significant barrier (mean score = 2.23) to mission engagement, though non-significant p -values (Fisher's Exact Test; $p=0.152$) call for caution when interpreting their impact. The study concluded that trained female missionaries in RCCG show high levels of mission engagement and positively perceive marital considerations. The study recommended that the Church protect female missionaries' well-being, expose senior pastors to missions training, and incentivise those prioritising mission work over marital status.



Keywords: Female Missionaries, Intersectional Feminism, Marital Status, Mission Engagement, The Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG)

Introduction

The Redeemed Christian Church of God, one of Nigeria's most prominent religious institutions, is well-known for its broad domestic and international missionary efforts. With a solid dedication to evangelism and missions, RCCG became one of Nigeria's most significant Pentecostal churches since its founding in 1952. The RCCG's female missionaries are critical in furthering the church's mission. Yet, it is clear that extant literature has not sufficiently examined their experiences and difficulties, particularly concerning marital status.

While a researcher (Kirkwood, 2021) has identified marital status as a critical factor that significantly affects the engagement and effectiveness of female missionaries, others have indicated that married missionaries face dual responsibilities related to family and mission, potentially impacting their availability and performance in the field (Waha, 2024; Manktelow, 2016). On the other hand, unmarried missionaries may experience distinct societal pressures and professional challenges, particularly in the Nigerian context, where cultural and religious expectations regarding marriage and gender roles are deeply entrenched (Kolapo, & Kolapo, 2019).

In Nigeria, cultural and religious norms influence the roles and perceptions of female missionaries in variegated ways in the respective geopolitical zones (Arnold, 2023). The societal expectation that women should prioritise marriage and family life can create additional challenges for female missionaries, whether married or unmarried (Abolaji, 2024). Understanding how these factors intersect with missionary work is crucial for academic inquiry and practical application within RCCG.

Research on marital status impact on female missionaries' engagement is relatively scarce. This review synthesises existing literature through the lens of Intersectional Feminism Theory to provide a context for understanding how marital status influences female missionaries' involvement in Church missions.

Intersectional Feminism was adopted as the study's theoretical framework, as Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989) proposed. Intersectional



Feminism examines how various forms of social stratification, such as race, gender, and marital status, intersect to influence individuals' experiences and opportunities. This framework helps analyse how overlapping identities impact female missionaries' engagement in Church missions. It allows for a nuanced understanding of how marital status interacts with gender norms and religious expectations, shaping the experiences and roles of female missionaries in complex ways.

Goff (2022) emphasises the pivotal role of women in mission work, particularly in reaching populations that are otherwise inaccessible due to cultural restrictions. According to Intersectional Feminism, these roles are not experienced uniformly but are shaped by intersecting factors such as marital status. Famoroti (2023) extends this by highlighting the benefits of women in mission leadership roles, noting that challenges related to marital status can impact their effectiveness. The Intersectional Feminism framework helps to understand how other identity factors compound these challenges.

Laine's study (2024) on missionary work in China reveals the complexities married missionaries face, who often balance family responsibilities with their mission duties, potentially limiting their effectiveness (Scales, 2024). This finding is aligned with Intersectional Feminism, which posits that married female missionaries face compounded pressures due to their dual roles. Conversely, Isabel (2022) addresses the unique challenges before unmarried female missionaries, such as societal scrutiny and church expectations, which Intersectional Feminism frames as aspects of their intersecting identities that affect their roles.

In Nigeria, gender roles and marital expectations significantly impact female missionaries. Chinyere, Khatidja, and Lorraine (2022) explore how these cultural norms affect married and unmarried women, finding that societal pressures can hinder mission engagement. Talatu (2020) further highlights the need for supportive structures within the Church for unmarried female missionaries. Intersectional Feminism provides a lens through which these cultural norms and expectations can be analysed as intersecting forces that shape the experiences of female missionaries.



Statement of the Problem

The experiences of female missionaries are marked by complexity, progress, setbacks, and ongoing struggles for equality and empowerment, despite their vital and expanding role in the mission outreaches and efforts of The Redeemed Christian Church of God to fulfil the Great Commission. These challenges stem from patriarchal structures, religious traditions, and systemic inequalities that result in marital or gender pay gaps, underrepresentation in leadership, and limited access to opportunities. Despite growing attention to gender equality, there is still a limited understanding of the specific types of discrimination that female missionaries face, particularly when intersecting with factors like marital status, class, race, sexuality, and ability.

Reports indicate limited job opportunities and, in some cases, outright denial of opportunities for female missionaries, influenced by marital status. This situation questions RCCG's commitment to gender equality and fairness, revealing unequal experiences for female missionaries despite the church's perceived supportive environment. This gap highlights the need to explore how marital status creates unique discriminatory experiences for female missionaries within RCCG.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The study aims to assess the role of marital status as a determinant of mission engagement among female missionaries in RCCG across Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. ascertain female missionaries' perception of their mission engagement experience in The Redeemed Christian Church of God mission activities.
2. ascertain female missionaries' perception of marital considerations on the mission engagement of female missionaries within The Redeemed Christian Church of God.
3. assess the effect of female missionaries' perception of marital considerations on the mission engagement of female missionaries in The Redeemed Christian Church of God.



Research Questions

1. What is female missionaries' perception of their mission engagement experience in The Redeemed Christian Church of God mission activities?
2. What is female missionaries' perception of marital considerations within The Redeemed Christian Church of God?
3. How does female missionaries' perception of marital considerations affect their mission engagement in The Redeemed Christian Church of God?

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design, which made the systematic collection and analysis of data to describe the characteristics and experiences of the study population from the six geopolitical zones in Nigeria possible, providing a robust dataset for subsequent analysis. The study population includes approximately 250 trained and certified female missionaries who are engaged in mission fields, or awaiting deployment, across various provinces in Nigeria.

The study selected one hundred (100) trained female missionaries serving in different parts of Nigeria but made accessible by shared ministerial groups on the WhatsApp social media platform using simple random sampling method. The response rate was 69% (N=69), and the distribution included respondents who were predominantly married (60%), while the remainder were single (25%) or widowed (15). Also, interview data collection involved two (2) RCCG regional mission coordinators, two (2) provincial mission coordinators, and the Redeemed College of Missions deployment manager to ascertain further the responses gathered from female missionaries.

Data were collected using instruments designed by the researcher. A pilot study conducted among female missionaries in the Redeemed College of Missions in Ede South Local Government of Osun State was used to ascertain the reliability of the research instrument. The study tested the three instruments' reliability, using Cronbach's Alpha, with the following result: (a) Perception of Gender and Marital Considerations in Mission Engagement (PGMCMEQ) $r = .872$. (b) Interview Guide for Church Mission Coordinators (InGuCMC)(c) Interview Guide for Deployment Manager (InGuDeM). The study used



an interview guide to facilitate an in-depth qualitative exploration of the themes identified in the survey. It contained open-ended questions aimed at uncovering the nuanced experiences of female missionaries, particularly how their marital status influenced their deployment, engagement, and overall mission effectiveness. Concerned Mission leaders, the Mission's Deployment Personnel and other key RCCG officials who oversee mission activities participated in the interview.

Demographic Information of the Respondents (N=69)

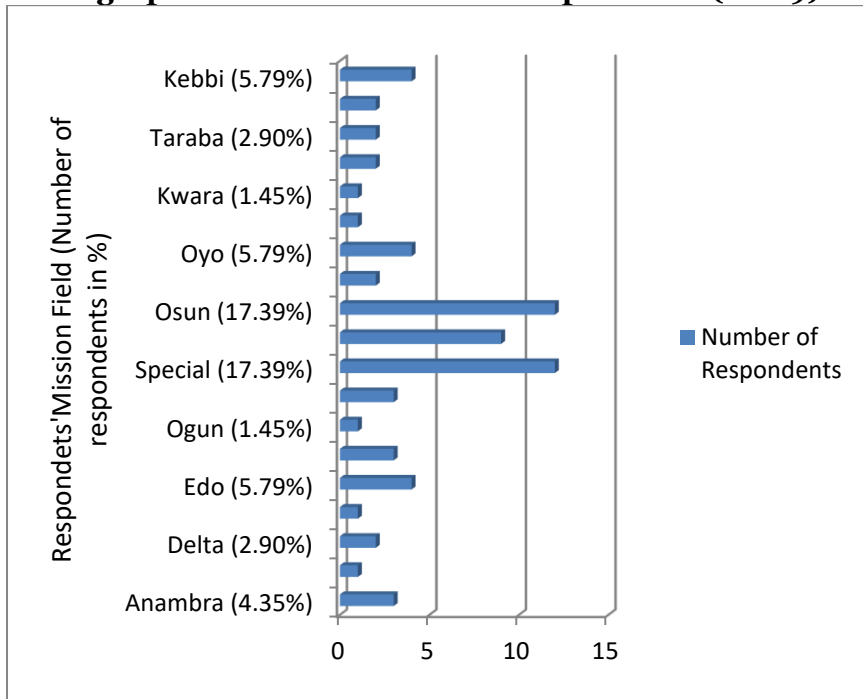


Figure 1: Distributions of Respondents per Nigerian State
(Source: Researcher's Fieldwork 2023)

Figure 1 presents the distribution of the sample of respondents selected for the study and shows the sparsely distributed nature of the target population, into the national spread of the regions and provinces of The Redeemed Christian Church of God.

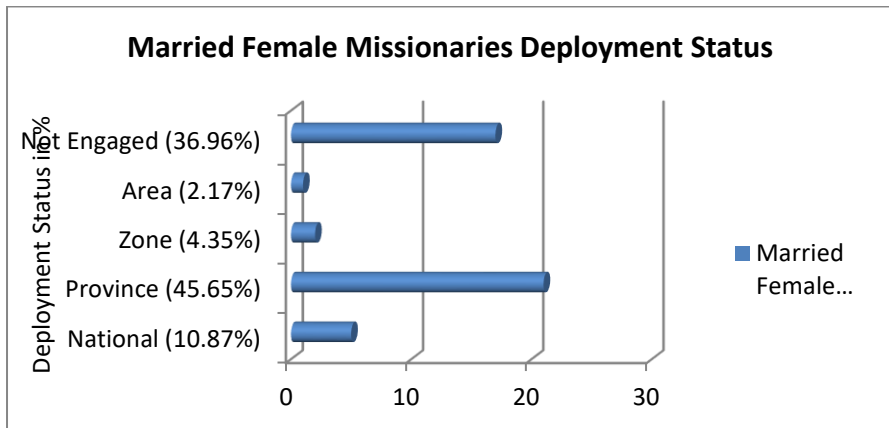


Figure 2: Deployment Status of Married Respondents
(Source: Researcher's Fieldwork 2023)

Figure 2 presents the mission engagement of the married respondents.

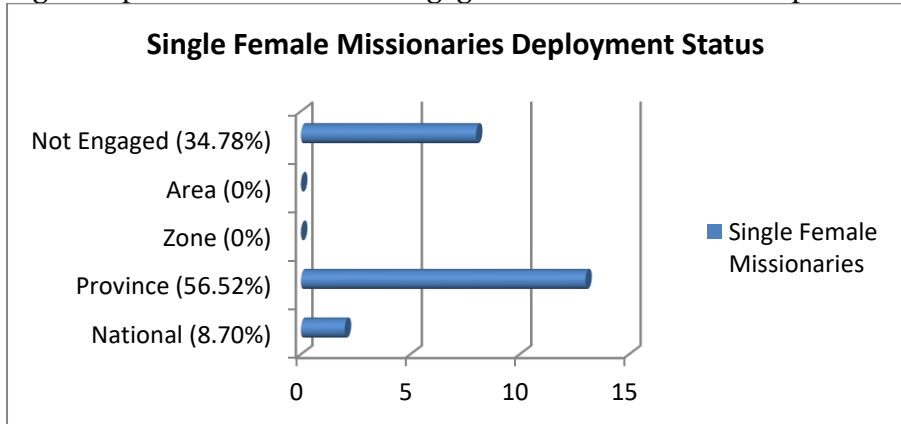


Figure 3: Deployment Statuses of Single Respondents
(Source: Field Survey 2023)

Figure 3 presents the mission engagement of the unmarried missionaries.



Results and Findings

Research Questions One: What is female missionaries' perception of their Mission Engagement experience in The Redeemed Christian Church of God mission activities?

Female Missionaries' Perception of Mission Engagement in The Redeemed Christian Church of God (N = 69)

S/ Perception of		Not	Some-	True	Very	$\bar{X}=2.5$	Decisi
N Female		True	what	of Me	True		on
Missionaries'		of Me	True	(3)	of Me		
Mission		(1)	of Me		(4)		
Engagement			(2)				
in The							
Redeemed							
Christian							
Church of God							
1	I feel properly aligned with The Redeemed Christian Church of God's mission, vision and values.	4 5.80%	6 8.70%	14 20.29%	45 65.22%	3.45	Accept ed
2	I happily, actively, voluntarily and resourcefully participate in The Redeemed Christian Church of God's mission-related activities.	8 11.60%	3 4.34%	13 18.84%	45 65.22%	3.38	Accept ed
3	The Redeemed Christian Church of God's mission	5 7.24%	12 17.39%	15 21.74%	37 53.62%	3.22	Accept ed



policy inspires
my personal
commitment to
mission work.

4 I have 18 17 14 20 **2.52** **Accepted**
encountered
challenges as a 24.64% 20.29% 28.99%
female 26.09%

missionary that
seriously affect
my engagement
with The
Redeemed
Christian Church
of God's mission
activities.

5 Mission 4 2 13 50 **3.58** **Accepted**
engagement i.e.
serving God with 5.80% 2.9% 18.84% 72.4%

all my heart,
strength, and
soul, as a
missionary is
essential to my
sense of purpose
and fulfilment.

6 My involvement 33 12 18 6 **1.96** **Rejected**
in mission work
has evolved, but 17.39% 26.09% 8.7%
negatively, over 47.82%
the years.

7 The treatment of 23 11 17 18 **2.43** **Rejected**
female
missionaries by 33.33% 15.94% 24.64% 26.09%
leaders in The
Redeemed
Christian Church



of God's mission
work in areas like
employment,
posting to
different mission
field
assignments,
and promotion,
are meaningful
to me personally.

8	I believe that my contributions to The Redeemed Christian Church of God's mission have a meaningful impact.	5	2	13	49	3.54	Accepted
		7.24%	2.9%	18.84%	71.01%		
9	I am motivated to continually improve my role in The Redeemed Christian Church of God's mission activities.	7	8	9	49	3.33	Accepted
		10.14%	11.59%	13.04%	71.01%		
10	I find joy/satisfaction in fulfilling The Redeemed Christian Church of God's mission.	5	6	15	43	3.39	Accepted
		7.24%	8.7%	21.74%	62.32%		
Overall Mean Score for the Perception of Mission Engagement =							Accepted
2.80							



Source: Researcher's Field Data 2023

Research Question Two: What is female missionaries' perception of Marital Considerations in The Redeemed Christian Church of God Mission Engagements?

Table 2 Perception of Marital Considerations in The Redeemed Christian Church of God Mission Engagement (N = 69)

S/ N	Item Statement	Not True of Me (1)	Some- what True of Me (2)	True of Me (3)	Very True of Me (4)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> = 2.5 Decision
1	My marital status affects my ability to participate in The Redeemed Christian Church of God's mission activities.	27 39.13%	14 20.29%	13 18.84%	15 21.74%	2.2 Reject 3 ed
2	I have observed differences in how married and unmarried individuals engage with The Redeemed Christian Church of God's mission work.	15 21.74%	12 17.39%	16 23.19%	26 37.68%	2.7 Accept 7 ed
3	In my opinion, The Redeemed Christian Church of God provides adequate support and accommodations for missionaries with varying marital statuses.	20 28.99%	19 27.54%	13 18.84%	17 24.64%	2.3 Reject 9 ed
4	Specific challenges or advantages are associated with my	17 24.64%	13 18.84%	23 33.33%	16 23.19%	2.5 Accept 5 ed



marital status in mission
engagement.

5	I believe that The Redeemed Christian Church of God's mission is inclusive of individuals with diverse marital situations.	18	11	22	18	2.5 Accepted
		26.09%	15.94%	31.88%	26.09%	
6	My spouse's or family's support or involvement affects my mission engagement.	22	12	14	21	2.4 Rejected
		31.88%	17.39%	20.29%	30.43%	
7	Marital-related experiences have influenced my perception of The Redeemed Christian Church of God's mission.	17	15	15	22	2.6 Accepted
		24.64%	21.74%	21.74%	31.88%	
8	I believe that a supportive marital environment enhances my mission engagement.	6	7	15	41	3.3 Accepted
		8.70%	10.14%	21.74%	59.42%	
9	I believe that The Redeemed Christian Church of God recognizes and values the contributions of married missionaries.	9	9	14	37	3.1 Accepted
		13.04%	13.04%	20.29%	53.62%	
10	My marital status has never been a hindrance to my involvement in The Redeemed Christian Church of God's mission.	10	9	15	35	3.0 Accepted
		14.49%	13.04%	21.74%	50.72%	



Mean Score for the
Perception of Marital
Considerations in The
Redeemed Christian
Church of God Mission
Engagement =2.72

2.7 Accepted

Source: Researcher’s Field Data 2023

Research Question Three: What is the effect of female missionaries’ perception of Marital Considerations on their Mission Engagements within The Redeemed Christian Church of God?

Table 3 Coefficients Table: Linear Regression on Marital Considerations and Mission Engagement

Coefficients ^a							
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	1.698	0.122	13.943	.000	1.456	1.939
	PMC	0.135	0.064	2.129	0.036	0.009	0.262

a. Dependent Variable: LEVELME
Source: Researcher’s Construct 2023

The intercept reveals the estimated mean mission engagement when marital considerations are absent, indicated by a constant value of 1.698 (t = 13.943, p < 0.001). The key finding, however, is the coefficient for Marital Considerations (PMC), which is 0.135 (t = 2.129, p = 0.036). This coefficient indicates that with each one-unit increase in marital



considerations, there is a corresponding 0.135 increase in mission engagement. The 95% confidence interval (ci: 0.009, 0.262), which excludes zero, further supports the significance.

Table 4: ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) Table: Linear Regression on Marital Considerations and Mission Engagement

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	0.196	1	0.196	4.534	.036 ^b
	Residual	4.573	106	0.043		
	Total	4.769	107			

a. Dependent Variable: LEVELME
b. Predictors: (Constant), PMC
Source: Researcher’s Construct 2023

The results in Table 4 confirm the statistical significance of the overall regression model. The F-value of 4.534 (p = 0.036) signifies that the model, including marital considerations, significantly predicts mission engagement. The variance is 0.196, underscoring the strength of the relationship, explained by the model, and represented by the Regression Sum of Squares.

Table 5 Model Summary Table: Linear Regression on Marital Considerations and Mission Engagement

Model Summary									
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change



					th e Es ti m at e	Cha nge			
1	.2 0 3 ^a	0.0 41	0.03 2	0. 2 07 7	0.04 1	4.534	1	1 0 6	0.036

a. Predictors: (Constant), PMC
Source: Researcher's Construct 2023

The Model Summary Table 5 enhances our comprehension of the model's predictive capacity. An R Square value of 0.041 indicates that around 4.1% of the variability in mission engagement can be attributed to marital considerations. Considering the number of predictors, the Adjusted R Square is 0.032. The F Change statistic (4.534, df1 = 1, df2 = 106, $p = 0.036$) mirrors the observed statistical significance in the ANOVA Table, reinforcing the idea that marital considerations make a substantive contribution to the model.

Discussion of Findings

Research question one revealed that most female missionaries feel strongly aligned with RCCG's mission, vision, and values (mean score = 3.45) and actively participate in mission Findings from research question one show that most female missionaries feel strongly aligned with RCCG's mission, vision, and values (mean score = 3.45) and actively participate in mission activities (mean score = 3.38). RCCG's mission policies (mean score = 3.22) inspire and help them view mission engagement as central to their purpose and fulfilment (mean score = 3.58). The study identified challenges confronting female missionaries' engagement, which are not overwhelmingly negative, as attested by the



mean score 2.52. Conversely, the study rejected perceptions that their involvement has negatively evolved over the years (mean score = 1.96) and the meaningfulness of treatment by leaders (mean score = 2.43), which suggests generally positive or neutral views in these areas. Additionally, the belief in the meaningful impact of their contributions (mean score = 3.54) and motivation to improve (mean score = 3.33) were "strongly" accepted. The mean score of 2.80 indicates a generally positive perception of mission engagement among female missionaries in RCCG.

Research question two revealed that marital status does not adversely affect participation in mission activities (mean score = 2.23), and female missionaries view the adequacy of support for varying marital statuses sceptically (mean score = 2.39). However, there is acceptance of the observation that differences exist in how married and unmarried individuals engage in mission work (mean score = 2.77) and that specific challenges or advantages are associated with marital status (mean score = 2.55). The respondents positively viewed the inclusivity of individuals with diverse marital situations in RCCG's mission (mean score = 2.58). They see supportive marital environments as enhancing mission engagement (mean score = 3.32) and acknowledge the value RCCG places on contributions from married missionaries (mean score = 3.14). The results reveal that female missionaries recognise marital status as a factor and not a significant barrier to mission involvement, as affirmed by the mean score of 2.72.

Research question three assessed the effect of female missionaries' perceptions of marital considerations on their mission engagement in The Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG). The first significant finding is from the Linear regression analysis, which indicates that marital considerations (PMC) positively affect mission engagement, with a coefficient of 0.135 ($p = 0.036$). This coefficient implies a simultaneous increase of 0.135 units in mission engagement for each unit increase in marital considerations. Also, the confidence interval (0.009 to 0.262) confirms the statistical significance of this effect. The ANOVA results indicate that the regression model significantly predicts mission engagement, with an F-value of 4.534 ($p = 0.036$) and indicates the model's validity. The Model Summary Table shows that marital considerations explain about 4.1% of the variability in mission



engagement ($R^2 = 0.041$), with an Adjusted R^2 of 0.032, reflecting the model's modest explanatory power.

In summary, marital considerations have a statistically significant and positive effect on mission engagement, corroborating a similar finding by Milioni, who highlights similar challenges of married women in ministry and emphasises the burdens of family and missionary responsibilities (Prevost, 2021; Milioni, 2024). "They explain a minute portion of the variance" suggests that other factors also play a role in influencing mission engagement among female missionaries in RCCG. Milioni highlights similar challenges of married women in ministry, emphasising the dual burden of family and missionary responsibilities (Smith, 2023; Prevost, 2021).

This finding is consistent with broader research on gender and leadership within religious organisations, which has documented the challenges women face in ascending to leadership positions due to both explicit and implicit biases. Alqahtani's "The Status of Women in Leadership" is definitive of such challenges, including a male-normed corporate culture and organisational structure. The RCCG, like many other religious organisations, reflects the broader societal pattern, where marital status intersects with other factors to create additional barriers for women.

Conclusion

This study assessed trained female missionaries' perception of their Mission Engagement experience as determined by marital considerations within The Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG). Findings reveal that RCCG's trained female missionaries feel aligned with her mission, positively perceive mission engagement, and actively participate in mission activities. Even though female missionaries acknowledge some challenges, they view mission engagement as central to their purpose and fulfilment. The findings reveal that female missionaries are neutral concerning the evolution of their involvement in missions over time and of treatment by leaders, suggesting an overall positive experience with room for improvement.

The study found that marital status does not significantly hinder participation in mission activities. Perceived differences in engagement between married and unmarried individuals were not as significant obstacles. The study found supportive marital environments beneficial



to mission engagement, and both married and unmarried missionaries' contributions are valued. The mean score of 2.72 indicates female missionaries' acknowledgement of marital considerations but not as a significant factor hindering mission involvement.

The analysis of marital considerations' effect on mission engagement revealed a statistically significant positive impact (coefficient = 0.135, $p = 0.036$). Although marital considerations influence mission engagement, the effect size is modest, explaining only about 4.1% of the variability, which suggests that while marital status has a role, other factors also significantly influence mission engagement. The findings suggest that further research should explore additional factors affecting mission engagement.

Recommendations

The results avow the significant effect of marital status on female missionaries' engagement within RCCG. While all female missionaries face challenges, each married woman encounters unique obstacles hindering her effectiveness and career progression in the mission field. These suggest the use of approaches that are considerate of married missionaries' specific needs and circumstances. Recommendations include:

1. Development of support systems to help married missionaries balance their domestic and missionary responsibilities better. This support can include flexible deployment options, provision of childcare support, and mentorship programs that pair married missionaries with those who have successfully navigated similar challenges. Single missionaries suffer emotional distress from different challenges of work-life balance. They would benefit from more robust community support within the RCCG, including mentorship programs and social networks that provide emotional and spiritual support.
2. Awareness and training programs within RCCG leadership to recognise and address the implicit biases that prevent married women from advancing to leadership positions.
3. Another intervention is the provision of financial incentives to support missionaries who forfeit mission engagement for marriage to fellow missionaries as additional aid for managing family responsibilities.



These findings add to the growing literature on gender, marital status, and religious ministry. It provides valuable insights for religious organisations facing similar challenges to plan for the long-term career trajectories of female missionaries by examining how marital status influences their overall satisfaction and retention in the mission field.

The findings indicate that marital status is crucial in shaping the level of engagement, type of assignments, and roles and responsibilities assigned to female missionaries within the RCCG. Married missionaries are perceived as more stable and reliable, leading to their preferential assignment to leadership roles and more demanding mission fields. However, they reported lower engagement levels than their single and widowed counterparts. This perception is rooted in the RCCG's traditional views on marriage as a stabilising factor in a person's life. It enhances their ability to handle the rigours of missionary work. Specifically, 68% of married respondents faced conflicts between their marital responsibilities and mission duties, which aligns with findings from recent research.

The finding- that single missionaries, particularly younger ones, are often assigned to less challenging roles, focusing on supporting activities rather than leading them, is consistent with findings from Adams and Muthoni. This finding reflects a broader societal expectation within the RCCG that married individuals are more mature and capable of handling responsibilities. This finding may inadvertently limit the opportunities for single women to engage in missionary work entirely. The findings suggest that while the RCCG values the contributions of all missionaries, marital status significantly influences the scope and nature of these contributions, often to the detriment of single missionaries' professional growth and engagement.

The study revealed the societal and organisational expectations for married missionaries to embody traditional gender roles, balancing their responsibilities in the mission field with those at home. This dual expectation places a significant burden on married missionaries, who must navigate the demands of their mission work while fulfilling those related to their marital status. Interestingly, the study found that some married missionaries embrace these expectations. In contrast, others express frustration at the additional pressure, which detracts from their ability to engage in missionary work thoroughly. This dichotomy reflects the broader tension within the RCCG and similar organisations that



uphold traditional gender roles even as women increasingly take on leadership roles in mission work.

For single missionaries, the absence of domestic responsibilities often leads to a perception that they have more time and energy to devote to missionary work. However, this perception is a double-edged sword, which places the expectation on single women to take on more tasks or work in more challenging environments without the support structures typically available to their married counterparts. The study suggests that while single missionaries may have greater freedom to focus on their work, they also face unique challenges related to their marital status, including social pressures to marry and a lack of institutional support. The challenging environments in which missionaries operate strain communication among married missionaries and their family members, managing household responsibilities from afar, and the emotional toll of separation negatively impacts the effectiveness and well-being of married missionaries.

Despite female missionaries' commitment to their mission work with significantly different engagement levels, the findings reveal that the status of being married gives a female missionary the edge for leadership role consideration, particularly in settings that require stability and experience.

The exhibition of a strong sense of duty and responsibility by married missionaries enhances their engagement and secures leadership roles for them. This result aligns with Thompson's findings on the barriers women face in ascending to leadership positions but extends it by showing how marital status specifically interacts with these barriers. In contrast, committed single missionaries approach their mission work by focusing on personal growth and professional development. They seek out challenging assignments despite organisational and societal pressures to get married, which affects their long-term engagement.

Assigning married missionaries to flexible mission tasks helps, which may result from the organisation's understanding and empathy for the missionary family. For single missionaries, the Church could focus on creating opportunities for professional development and leadership and providing a supportive community that mitigates feelings of isolation.

This study fills several gaps in the literature. It assesses how marital status impacts mission engagement within the context of RCCG, includes diverse samples from all six geopolitical zones in Nigeria and



provides a comprehensive view of the challenges female missionaries encounter across different regions (Thompson, 2022).

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