

Barriers to Marital Expectation among Individuals with Hearing Impairment in Oyo State

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Abstract—The study was designed to examine the barriers to marital expectations among unmarried persons with hearing impairment in Oyo State, Nigeria. Descriptive survey research design was adopted. Purposive sampling technique was used to select one hundred participants made up forty-four (44) males and fifty-six (56) females, all with varying degrees of hearing impairment. Eight research questions were raised and answered. The instrument used was Marital Expectations Scale with reliability coefficient of 0.86. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics tools of frequency count and simple percentage as well as inferential statistics tools of T-TEST and ANOVA. The findings revealed that there was a significant relationship existing among the main identified barriers (environmental barrier, communication barrier, hearing loss, unemployment and poor sexuality education) to the marital expectations of unmarried persons with hearing impairment. The joint contribution of the independent variables (identified barriers) to the dependent variable (marital expectations) was significant, $F = 5.842$, $P < 0.05$, accounting for about 89% of the variance. The relative contribution of the identified barriers to marital expectations of unmarried persons with hearing impairment is as follows: environmental barrier ($\beta = 0.808$, $t = 5.176$, $P < 0.05$), communication barrier ($\beta = 0.533$, $t = 3.305$, $P < 0.05$), hearing loss ($\beta = 0.550$, $t = 2.233$, $P < 0.05$), unemployment ($\beta = 0.431$, $t = 2.102$, $P < 0.05$), poor sexuality education ($\beta = 0.361$, $t = 1.985$, $P < 0.05$). Environmental barrier proved to be the most potent contributor to the poor marital expectations among unmarried persons with hearing impairment. Therefore, it is recommended that society dismantles the nagging environmental barrier through positive identification with individuals suffering from hearing impairment. In this connection, members of society should change their negative attitudes and do away with all the wrong notions about the marital ability of individuals with hearing impairment.

Keywords—Hearing impairment, marriage, marital expectations, barrier.

I. INTRODUCTION

HEARING impairment is a growing disability with far-reaching psychological and socio-economic implications. It is not evident to others until one tries to communicate and it has a pervasive influence on the victim's total personality. The World Health Organization put the estimate of people with disabling hearing impairment globally at three hundred and sixty (360) million of whom about two-thirds live in developing countries including Nigeria.

Generally, people with hearing impairment encounter daunting challenges in their effort to achieve a steady quality

of life. Apart from facing education, economic, and career challenges, individuals with hearing impairment also find it difficult to access the marriage institution. Marriage, as a concept, is underscored by the coming together in agreement of a man and a woman who love each other and want to live together to fulfill their individual and corporate expectations from the union. It provides the family setting that serves as the nucleus of society and it creates the home environment which makes for the propagation of human species, the rearing of offspring, the emotional assurance of man's peace of mind, the cultivation of moral values and the balance inter-exchange of love as well as security, succour and acceptance [1]. Expectations in marriage consist mostly of preconceptions about what behaviour should or should not occur within the marriage such as the extent to which partners should share values, how much time they should spent together, how disagreements should be handled and any other issues deemed important in marriage [2], [3]. Reverence [4] added that marital expectations are what partners see as appropriate roles within marriage and their beliefs about how marriage works.

A survey of research literature [5]-[11], [13]-[15] suggested that unmarried persons with hearing impairment have little or no positive expectations of marriage as a result of the existence of a number of intrinsic and extrinsic factors which include environmental barrier, communication barrier, hearing impairment, poor sexuality education and unemployment among other factors. The cumulative effects of hearing loss have been shown to be harmful to individuals in intimate relationships. For instance, in studies carried out by [10], [11], [13], [16] results documented psychosocial effects such as irritability, feelings of depression and personal inadequacy, low self-esteem, suspiciousness, anger, moodiness, fear, aggression, loneliness among others. Similarly, a study carried out by [5] revealed the vulnerability of intimate relationships to hearing loss through effects such as poor communication, feelings of resentment, frustration, tension, and guilt. Likewise, [17] showed that the life of a person with hearing impairment is fraught with communication problem, loneliness, relationship challenge, fear of appearing stupid, massive injury to self-esteem, under-achievement directly attributable to hearing loss rather than inability and the primary affliction in theory if not in practice with the normal hearing population. Evidence suggests that hearing impairment leads to poorer quality of life, shorter life expectancy, greater difficulty in social activities and a higher level of social isolation [18]. Evidence also suggests that hearing loss is related to lower likelihood of marriage. However, it was observed that men with hearing loss stand a

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better chance of finding marital partners than women with hearing loss. This is because a large number of women are engaged in interpreting services. Thus, men with hearing impairment arguably may have a better opportunity to meet women who understand the situation of things with hearing impairment [17]. Also, [19] noted that adolescent girls with hearing impairment have less exposure to intimate relationships and less access to marital information than adolescent boys with hearing impairment.

Evidence gathered by [17] indicated that people with disability including those with hearing impairment experienced considerable difficulty in navigating intimate relationships and in exercising their right to establish a family. Obstacles are raised by relatives, local authorities, the state and religious leaders. Examples include the forced sterilization to control the fertility of disabled people and forcible segregation of the sexes. One notable effect of hearing impairment which can affect intimate relationships is loneliness and isolation which in turn lead to the inability to participate in social activities and fewer opportunities to learn about sexual issues from peers, to engage in sexual experimentation and to develop social skills to build sexual relationship or to initiate sexual communication. As a consequence, unmarried persons with hearing impairment may not be able to achieve sexual harmony with future marital partners when they eventually get married. Furthermore, because of their inability to interact with others, individuals with hearing impairment lack the social cues that normal hearing people rely on to relate with others, to make decision, to forge personal and social identity, to work and to form intimate relationships. The stress of hearing loss include the fear of not being able to react or respond appropriately in a given situation, the fear of living unsuccessful married life and the fear of having a would-be partner who may not be committed to the relationship. All these fears can cause depression which may interfere with the ability to pay attention to partners in relationships [20], [21] and to improve the relationships. There is a wide body of literature suggesting a robust association between depressive symptoms and relationships functioning. Among individuals with hearing impairment, relationships in which one member is depressed have been found to be characterized by more tension, hostility and negative expressiveness than that in intimate affairs where neither partner experiences depressive symptoms. Anger and aggressiveness are natural consequence of hearing impairment. There is a tendency for individuals with hearing impairment to overreact to situations and this in turn can complicate their intimate relationships. A person with hearing impairment who constantly exhibits traits of anger and aggression may be seen as lacking the needed skills to establish and sustain an intimate relationship. Additionally, potential suitors may be scared away by unbridled display of anger and aggression. Nevertheless, though hearing impairment is one major challenge to the marital expectations of unmarried persons with hearing impairment, its influence appears to wane when viewed against the backdrop of environmental barrier. This is because society erects the

marital obstacles through negative attitudes towards people with hearing impairment and through derogatorily labelling people with hearing impairment as asexual or sexless. Reference [22] put it graphically thus, “the cause of oppression usually exists in the social or constructed environment and not in the impaired body.” People with hearing impairment are further wrongly believed to have different sexual aspirations from their normal hearing counterparts. For instance, [17] findings revealed negative attitudes by normal hearing students towards students with hearing impairment. Normal hearing students were skeptical about marrying a person with hearing impairment for fear of giving birth to children with hearing impairment. Besides, in a study conducted by [11] on women with disabilities including those with hearing impairment in Hong Kong, their findings revealed that many of the respondents viewed inability to find the right marriage partners because of the persistent environmental barrier as the greatest challenge to their marriage expectations. Worse still, the medical model of disability presents individuals with hearing impairment as sick people who need to be cured. All these misconceptions have made it difficult for them to express their needs for intimacy and in finding marriageable partners leading to untold misery and frustration [14]. Unless the environmental barrier and the other identified barriers to marital expectations of individuals with hearing impairment are broken, unmarried persons with hearing impairment will continue to experience difficulty in navigating intimate relationships. However, little or no study was found that focused solely on the barriers to the marital expectations of unmarried persons with hearing impairment. This lapse in literature is surprising given the fact that individuals with hearing impairment are also active participants in the marriage enterprise. Since individuals with hearing impairment are often described in terms of their primary challenges, attention has invariably been shifted to education, language development and technology of hearing to the utter neglect of their marital issues – a situation which poses a big challenge to psychologists, marriage counsellors, marital therapists, social workers and interested researchers as they are totally incapacitated by paucity of information needed to help individuals with hearing impairment in the aspect of marriage. It is against this background that this study is investigating barriers to marital expectations among persons with hearing impairment in Oyo State of Nigeria. Hence, the following research questions will help in the direction of the study.

II. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- (1) What are the marital expectations of unmarried persons with hearing impairment?
- (2) What are the identified barriers to the marital expectations of unmarried persons with hearing impairment?
- (3) What are the ranks of the identified barriers?
- (4) What are the impacts of the identified barriers on marital expectations of unmarried persons with hearing impairment?
- (5) What is the joint contribution of the identified barriers

(environmental barrier, communication barrier, hearing impairment, unemployment, and lack of sexuality education) to the marital expectations of unmarried persons with hearing impairment)?

- (6) What is the relative contribution of each of environmental barrier, communication barrier, hearing impairment, unemployment, and lack of sexuality education to the marital expectations of unmarried persons with hearing impairment?
- (7) What is the significant difference in the identified barriers to marital expectations of unmarried persons with hearing impairment on the basis of gender?
- (8) What is the significant difference in the identified barriers to marital expectations of unmarried persons with hearing impairment on the basis of educational attainment?

III. METHODOLOGY

The study employed descriptive survey research design the choice of which allowed the researchers to find out the present state of relationships among the variables in the study without manipulating any of them. The population of the study consisted of all unmarried persons with hearing impairment in Oyo State. The study employed purposive sampling technique to select participants based on their unique attributes. On the whole, participants for the study were one hundred (100) unmarried persons with hearing impairment. They were drawn from diverse backgrounds, roles, geographical locations and perspectives, and they include students, teachers, self-employed workers, civil servants and those in private sectors, all with varying degrees of hearing impairment.

IV. RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

Marital Expectations Scale adapted from [23] Marital Perception Scale was employed for data collection. The validation of the instrument was determined with the assistance of test experts. The instrument was also subjected to the Cronbach's Alpha method of reliability measure. This was done by administering the research instrument to twenty unmarried persons with hearing impairment outside the scope of the study as a pilot test. The result yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.86.

V. METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

The researchers engaged and trained a research assistant versed in America and Local Sign Languages to assist in administering the instrument to places where cluster of the participants were identified. The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics tools of frequency counts and simple percentage as well as inferential statistics tools of ANOVA/T-test.

VI. RESULTS

The implication is that most unmarried persons with hearing impairment envisage good marital relationship as the quality they desire most in their future marriages followed by sharing of interest and hobbies, spending time together, and openness to each. The implication of this is that individuals with hearing impairment believe that environmental barrier is the most obvious challenge to their marital expectations followed by communication barrier, hearing impairment, unemployment, lack of sexuality education and so on.

TABLE I
MARITAL EXPECTATIONS OF UNMARRIED PERSONS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT

Items	SA%	A %	D%	SD%	Mean	S.D
Marriage is a sacred (holy) act	49	39	7	5	3.32	.815
Marriage provides psychological and emotional security for both partners	36	53	10	1	3.24	.668
Early marriage holds much promise for marital success	30	39	17	14	2.85	1.00
Regular communication is essential in marriage	51	33	14	2	3.33	.792
Partners must be good lovers	49	33	11	7	3.24	.911
In marriage partners totally accept each other	47	34	19	0	3.28	.766
Marriage is a social responsibility	34	50	15	1	3.17	.711
Complete happiness is impossible in marriage	36	40	14	10	3.02	.953
Money is as important as love in marriage	35	40	22	3	3.07	.832
Your partner must be your best friend	45	37	11	7	3.20	.899
In any situation, marital relationship should not break up	49	34	14	3	3.29	.820
Sharing interests and hobbies keeps relationship healthy	52	36	11	1	3.39	.723
Partners must spend time together	47	40	13	0	3.34	.699
Partners must be open to each other	52	32	13	3	3.33	.817
Sexual intercourse is important in marriage	30	45	22	3	3.02	.804
Marriage is for procreation only	27	32	27	14	2.72	1.016
There must not be conflict in marriage	19	40	37	4	2.74	.812
Conflict free marriage will not last	22	41	31	6	2.79	.856
Divorce is a way out of bad marriage	44	37	13	6	3.19	.884
A good relationship is strong enough to survive anything	57	36	5	2	3.48	.689

TABLE II
IDENTIFIED BARRIERS TO THE MARITAL EXPECTATIONS OF UNMARRIED PERSONS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT

Items	SA%	A%	D%	SD%	Mean	S.D
Partners worry a lot about family's interference in marriage.	38	37	7	18	2.95	1.08
Communication barrier hinders marital expectations	45	40	13	2	3.28	.766
Financial problem wreck marital relationships.	20	59	15	6	2.93	.769
Depression and aggression scare away potential suitors	22	51	21	6	2.89	.815
Poor social skills hinder marriage expectations	18	43	21	18	2.61	.984
Inaccessibility to marriage information poses a barrier to marital expectations	18	44	33	5	2.75	.809
Individual personality type can make or marital expectations.	36	43	17	4	3.11	.827
Changing role of marriage lowers marriage expectations	33	35	14	18	2.83	1.08
Delay in marriage is associated with diminished marriage expectations	43	33	15	9	3.10	.969
Environmental barrier pose a big obstacle to marriage among the Deaf.	51	30	17	2	3.30	.823
Unemployment is associated with poor marital expectations.	41	39	16	4	3.17	.842
Poor sexuality education among the Deaf leads to lower likelihood of marriage.	38	42	16	4	3.14	.829
Love between partners is not enough to ensure a successful marital relationship	42	29	20	9	3.04	.994
Hearing loss is a big marital challenge for the Deaf	49	30	18	3	3.25	.857
Without equality between partners, marital relationship dies	40	33	19	8	3.05	.957
Men with hearing impairment find it difficult to get marital partners	21	43	13	23	2.62	1.06
Woman with hearing impairment find it difficult to get marital partners	23	34	21	22	2.58	1.07
Low educational attainment is associated with poor marital expectation	22	52	18	8	2.88	.844
Unmarried or dating persons with hearing impairment are always tensed or depressed when negotiating intimate relationship	22	59	16	3	3.00	.711
Family's disapproval is a significant barrier to marriage expectations among the Deaf.	43	35	13	9	3.12	.956

TABLE III
THE RANKS OF THE IDENTIFIED BARRIERS TO THE MARITAL EXPECTATIONS OF UNMARRIED PERSONS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT

Items	Mean	Rank
Environmental barrier	3.30	1 st
Communication barrier	3.28	2 nd
Hearing loss	3.20	3 rd
Unemployment	3.17	4 th
Poor sexuality education	3.14	5 th
Family's disapproval	3.12	6 th
Individual personality type	3.11	7 th
Delayed marriage	3.10	8 th
Lack of equality between partners	3.05	9 th
Insufficient love between partners	3.04	10 th
Tension or depression when negotiating intimate relationships	3.00	11 th
Partners worry a lot about family's interference in marriage	2.95	12 th
Financial problem	2.93	13 th
Depression and aggression	2.89	14 th
Low educational attainment	2.88	15 th
Changing role of marriage lowers marriage	2.83	16 th
Inaccessibility to marriage information	2.75	17 th
Difficulty by men in getting marital partners	2.62	18 th
Poor social skills	2.61	19 th
Difficulty by women with hearing loss in getting marital partners	2.58	20 th

The result shows that environmental barrier ranks higher than other barriers to marital expectations of unmarried persons with hearing impairment. It was followed by communication barrier, hearing loss, unemployment, poor sexuality education and so on.

The result shows that isolation and societal alienation are the greatest impacts of the barriers to the marital expectations of unmarried persons with hearing loss. Other impacts are depression, indecision, anxieties, worry, lack of confidence, and so on as shown in Table II.

TABLE IV
THE IMPACTS OF THE IDENTIFIED BARRIERS ON MARITAL EXPECTATIONS OF UNMARRIED PERSONS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT

Items	SA%	A%	D%	SD%	Mean	S.D
My marriage is unduly delayed	30	23	22	25	2.58	1.16
I experience frustration at my inability to communicate my feelings to any lady I like	27	34	33	6	2.82	.903
I wonder if I will ever marry	38	31	17	14	2.93	1.05
I see gloom and hopelessness everywhere	13	42	25	20	2.48	.959
I tend to blame everybody for my hearing loss	15	26	24	35	2.21	1.08
Inability to find a partner weakens my confidence	30	36	23	11	2.85	.978
I experience depression at a critical moment	39	32	16	13	2.97	1.08
I feel more lonely and alienated	37	38	19	6	3.06	.897
I take comfort in drugs and alcohol	24	32	25	19	2.61	1.05
I have a battered self esteem and low morale	28	36	27	9	2.83	.943
Marriage means complete loss of freedom	32	27	23	18	2.73	1.10
Marriage does not bother me any more	24	27	27	22	2.53	1.08
Unmarried people are subjects of gossip	34	26	24	16	2.68	1.10
Co-habitation is an option to marriage	30	29	18	23	2.78	1.08
It is not compulsory to marry	36	29	23	12	2.66	1.13
I am afraid that my marriage may not last based on the identified barriers	40	23	21	16	2.89	1.03
I tend to think that the would- be partner may not be committed to the relationship	43	21	23	13	2.87	1.11
I am at a loss whether to marry a normal hearing person or a person with hearing impairment	28	33	18	21	2.94	1.09
persons with hearing impairment may not have the skills to bring up children	19	34	15	32	2.40	1.12
Persons with normal hearing are always wary of entering into marital relationship with persons suffering from hearing impairment	37	24	28	11	2.87	1.04

TABLE V
THE SUMMARY OF REGRESSION ANALYSIS OF THE COMPOSITE
CONTRIBUTION OF INDEPENDENT VARIABLES TO THE DEPENDENT VARIABLE

	Sum of Squares	Df.	Mean Square	F	P	Remark
Regression	942.79	2	471.397	5.84	0.00	Sig.
Residual	7826.59	97	80.687			
Total	8769.39	99				

It was shown in Table V that the joint contribution of the identified barriers to the marital expectations was significant ($F_{(2,97)}=5.842$; $R=0.328$, $R^2=0.108$, $Adj R^2=0.089$; $p<0.005$). About .089% of the variation was accounted for by the independent variables. The table also shows that the analysis of variance for the regression yielded a F-ratio of 5.842 (significant at 0.05 level). This implies that when all the variables are taken together, they contribute significantly to the marital expectations of unmarried persons with hearing impairment. It was also shown that other variables not included in this model may have accounted for the remaining variance.

Table VI reveals the relative contribution of the independent variables to the dependent variable, expressed as beta weights. It was shown that the identified barriers are significant. Environmental barrier ($\beta = 0.808$, $t = 5.176$, $p < 0.05$) is the most potent contributor to the prediction followed by communication barrier ($\beta = 0.533$, $t = 3.305$, $p < 0.05$), hearing Loss, ($\beta = 0.550$, $t = 2.233$, $p < 0.05$), unemployment, ($\beta = 0.431$, $t = 2.102$, $p < 0.05$) and poor sexuality education, ($\beta = 0.361$, $t = 1.985$, $p < 0.05$) in that order. It implies that there was a relative contribution of each of the independent variables (the identified barriers) to the dependent variable (marital expectations) of unmarried persons with hearing impairment.

TABLE VI
RELATIVE CONTRIBUTION OF THE INDEPENDENT VARIABLES TO THE
DEPENDENT VARIABLES (TEST OF SIGNIFICANCE OF THE REGRESSION
COEFFICIENTS)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	26.974	12.808	-	2.106	.038
Environmental barrier	.644	.194	.808	5.176	.000
Communication barriers	.501	.152	.533	3.305	.001
Hearing Loss	.448	.201	.550	2.233	.021
Unemployment	.423	.188	.431	2.102	.032
Poor sexuality education	.364	.211	.361	1.985	.042

TABLE VII
T-TEST OF DIFFERENCE IN THE IDENTIFIED BARRIERS TO MARITAL
EXPECTATIONS OF UNMARRIED PERSONS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT ON THE
BASIS OF GENDER

Sex	N	Mean	S.D	df.	t-Cal	t-Crit	P
Male	44	55.52	9.765				
Female	56	54.03	9.159	98	4.783	1.990	0.044

Significant at $p < 0.05$

Table VII shows that there was a significant difference in the identified barriers to marital expectations of unmarried persons with hearing impairment on the basis of gender. It was observed that the t- Calculated value was greater than t-Critical values ($t\text{-Cal}=4.783 > t\text{-Crit} = 1.990$), ($P < 0.05$). Also, the mean shows little difference. Males have mean value of 55.52 while females have mean value of 54.03. Therefore it was concluded that, there was a significant difference in the identified barriers to marital expectations of unmarried persons with hearing impairment on the basis of gender.

TABLE VIII
SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE IN THE IDENTIFIED BARRIERS TO MARITAL EXPECTATIONS ON THE BASIS OF EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Education attainment	N	Mean	S.D	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F-cal	P
Primary six	20	56.30	7.89	149.66	3	49.89	4.56	0.05
SSSCE	39	55.33	8.59	8619.74	96	89.79		
First Degree	38	53.23	10.74	8769.39	99			
Others	3	54.00	13.53					

The results in Table VIII shows that there was a significant difference in the identified barriers to marital expectations of unmarried persons with hearing impairment on the basis of educational attainment, ($F_{(3/96)} = 4.556$; That is $F\text{-Cal}=4.556$ was greater than $F\text{-Critical}=2.10$, ($P = 0.046 < 0.05$). The mean values also show the educational attainment as follows; Primary six has higher value of 56.30, followed by SSSCE at 55.33, other qualifications have mean value of 54.00 and First degree has mean value of 53.23. The result shows that there was a significant difference in the identified barriers to marital expectations of unmarried persons with hearing impairment on the basis of educational attainment.

VII. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings revealed that many of the participants identified good and enduring marital relationships as their

most desired marital expectations followed by sharing of interests and hobbies as well as spending time together. This submission is in consonance with the findings of [2] who stated that effective intimate relationships such as sharing values, spending time together and solving disagreements together enhance positive marital expectations. Evidence suggests that partners who do things in common are less likely to engage in activities that breed conflicts. Besides, they have the chance to strengthen their relationships. Other desired marital expectations of unmarried persons with hearing impairment are regular communication, acceptance of each other, constant love and so on. The findings also revealed that environmental barrier, communication difficulty, hearing loss, unemployment and poor sexuality education are the most pronounced barriers. Environmental barrier encompasses attitudinal issues, labelling and the societal degradation of

people with disability. The findings thus agree with [9], [12] who noted that society tends to view people with hearing impairment as asexual that have different sexual aspirations from their normal hearing peers. The findings also support the views of [22] who contended that the cause of oppression usually exists in the social or the constructed environment and not in the impaired body. Furthermore, the findings corroborate the submissions of [14], [20] that both communication difficulty and hearing loss posed significant barriers to marital expectations of individuals with hearing impairment.

The study ranked of the perceived barriers to marital expectations of unmarried persons with hearing impairment and found that environmental barrier ranked higher than other barriers which lends credence to the view expressed by [17] that individuals with disability including those with hearing impairment viewed inability to find the right marital partner as a result of the persistent environmental-induced barrier as the major challenge to their marital expectations. Environmental barrier was followed by communication barrier, hearing loss, unemployment and poor sexuality education among others. Findings of this study revealed isolation and societal alienation as the most significant impacts of the barriers to marital of people with hearing impairment. This is supported by [18] that hearing loss arising from difficulties in communication can give rise to isolation, reduced social activity and the feelings of being excluded. Other impacts include depression, indecision, anxieties, lack of confidence and worry. The findings showed that there were both composite and relative contributions of the identified five independent variables to marital expectations of unmarried persons with hearing impairment. The result supports the findings of [17] who pointed out that the life of a person with hearing impairment is fraught with communication problem, loneliness, relationship challenge, the fear of appearing stupid, the massive injury to self-esteem and underachievement directly attributable to hearing loss rather than inability.

The study found a significant difference in the identified barriers to marital expectations of unmarried persons with hearing impairment on the basis of gender. The results support the findings of [19] who explained that while knowledge deficit arising from parental boundaries, lack of access to information and lack of exposure to intimate relationships would complicate the ability of adolescents with hearing impairment to establish romantic relationships, these constraints may be more prevalent for young adolescent girls with hearing impairment. The findings of research question seven also agree with the submission of [17] and [19] who noted that men with hearing impairment stand a better chance of finding marital partners than women with hearing impairment. It was also revealed that there was a significant difference in the identified barriers to marital expectations of unmarried persons with hearing impairment on the basis of educational attainment and this is consistent with [5] who stated that hearing loss-induced low educational attainment has considerable effects on future life goals including marriage. It was observed from the synthesis of research

literature that girls with hearing loss tend to record lower academic performance than boys with hearing loss.

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