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DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES

FACULTY OF ARTS

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

**PASTORAL COUNSELING: A STUDY OF PASTORAL
MARITAL COUNSELING SERVICES IN THE AFRICA INLAND
CHURCH AND THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH WITHIN
MACHAKOS AND NAIROBI COUNTIES IN KENYA**

BY

ABRAHAM WAILA WAMBUA

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FOR THE AWARD OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY DEGREE IN
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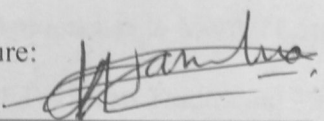
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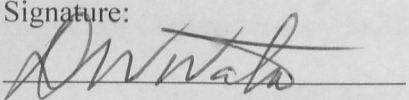
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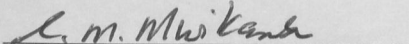
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ABRAHAM WAILA WAMBUA
C82/7592/92

The thesis has been submitted for examination with the approval of my supervisors:

Signature:  03/12/2013 Date:

Prof. D. W. Waruta

Signature:  03/12/2013 Date:

DR. C.M. Mwikamba

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DEDICATION

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

A.I.C	Africa Inland Church
ABCs	Attitudes, Behaviour, and Communication
A.C.K	Anglican Church of Kenya
ACA	American Counseling Association
FLEP	Family Life Education Programme
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HIV/AIDS	Human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
P.C.E.A	Presbyterian Church of East Africa
R.C.C	Roman Catholic Church
SRHT	Sound Relationship House Theory

WORKING DEFINITIONS OF KEY CONCEPTS

African family: A setting which consists of at least two adults of the opposite sex, living in a socially approved sexual relationship and with children on board (Agnes Zani).

African Christian Family: A holy, permanent, monogamous conjugal relationship between two adults of the opposite sex and with the mandate of procreation and nurturing of the children.

Christian family: a holy, permanent and monogamous heterosexual union which is intended to co-operate with God by procreating children who are destined to be the adopted children of God by instructing them for His kingdom. The union between husband (male) and wife (female) is to last until death (Mathew 19:6, Luke 16:18, Mark 10:11, I Corinthians 7:10).

Counseling: This is a relationship and a process where a helper (Counselor) assists a helpee (client) to solve his/her problems. It is practiced by Counseling Psychologists, Marriage Counselors, Pastoral Counselors, teachers, parents and friends. It is for normal people who need help to cope with personal problems. It takes shorter duration than psychotherapy.

Client-Centred Therapy: This is a counseling or psychotherapy based on the assumption that the client needs to be assisted to experience being valued, is worthwhile and with Counselor's facilitation is able to use his/her own resources to work out their problems. The therapy is non-directive and humanistic and was propounded by Carl Rogers in 1950.

Infidelity: This is an extra marital affair between a spouse and another partner. It is a voluntary sexual intimacy between a married person and a partner other than the lawful spouse. It may also be looked at as emotional or physical relationship with a person other than a spouse.

Pastoral marital counseling: In this study it refers to the counseling provided to those about to get married, in existing marriages or after one spouse is no longer in marriage.

Profession: Refers to a vocation or form of employment that requires specialized knowledge and skills. It is characterized by and conforms to academic, technical and ethical procedures, standards and codes which articulate the professional culture of a specific group of peer professionals.

Professional Counselor: Refers to a trained person usually in psychology and other behavioural sciences who helps people (counselees of clients) to deal with their problems through a complex interaction of relationship. He or she uses certain skills and adopts certain attitudes so as to introduce and sustain in the clients' deep self deep self exploration leading to self understanding leading to action(s).

Marital Pastoral Counselor: The person especially church personnel who provides personal care and counseling to Christians especially those who are preparing to get married or are in marriage.

Marriage Counselor: This is a helper who assists a couple a couple build their marriage by teaching a husband to be more dynamic conversationalist and expressing more heart-felt affection and teaching a wife to become a better lover and recreational companion, be more realistic in their demands and expectations.

Psychotherapy: This is similar in approach and techniques to counseling and is practiced mostly by psychiatrists, clinical psychologist and sometimes by psychiatric social workers. Its goal is to bring about deep personality changes in psychotic and chronic psychoneurotic patients in terms of more re-organization of the psychological processes. It requires many sessions lasting for months or even years. In short psychotherapy is the treatment of emotional illness by various psychological techniques.

Psychoanalysis: A method of assisting people with problems by first unearthing what is in their dreams. This approach to therapy (treatment) was founded by Sigmund Freud. It is based on the belief that what hurts us today originated from our experiences in our past.

Psychiatrist: A medical doctor who is specialized in treating emotional illness (mental disorders)

Psychodynamics: Pertaining to mental and emotional forces, their source in past experience and their effects.

ABSTRACT

Pastoral counseling is one of the major strategies used by churches to ensure stability in marriages and families. Besides the establishment of pastoral marital counseling to Christians, families have continued to face different challenges including high rates of divorce and family break ups. This study aimed at investigating the pastoral marital counseling in Africa Inland Church (A.I.C) and Roman Catholic Church (R.C.C) in Machakos and Nairobi Counties in Kenya. The study was guided by the following specific objectives: to establish the status of pastoral marital counseling, to assess the professional level of training of marital pastoral Counselors, to evaluate the content of pastoral counseling training and to investigate the perception of different categories of people towards marriage and marital counseling. The study was carried out in Africa Inland Church (A.I.C) and Roman Catholic Church (R.C.C) in Machakos and Nairobi Counties in Kenya. Descriptive survey research design was used for the study. The study targeted church ministers, teachers/instructors in pastoral institution, married or once married, unmarried, and professional Counselors, Sociologists, Lawyers and "Administrative" officers. Purposive sampling technique was used to sample the respondents for the study. Both primary and secondary data was used for the study. Secondary data was collected through library research while primary data were collected using questionnaires and interview schedules. Questionnaires were used to collect data from church ministers, teachers/instructors in training institutions, married or once married and the unmarried while interview schedules were used to collect data from the professionals and area administrators. A total of 334 respondents were targeted by the study including 32 church ministers, 128 married or once married, 128 unmarried, 20 teachers and instructors from training institutions, 4 chiefs, 4 doctors, 4 family planning officers, 4 Sociologists, 4 Lawyers and 6 professional Counselors. Out of the total targeted population, 248 responded including 28 church ministers, 94 married or once married, 90 unmarried, 16 Teachers/instructors, 3 Chiefs, 2 Doctors, 2 family planning officers, 4 Sociologists, 3 Lawyers and 6 professional Counselors giving a response rate of 74%.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

This chapter presents information on the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, rationale of the study, area and scope of the study and research methodology.

1.1 Background of the Study

The pressure of life in our fast-changing societies seems to cause many problems to people. Today we live in a world of changing values and professionalism and couples in marriage are not spared. This has led to the need for counseling both in the Church and the entire society.

Counseling is an art and science where two or more people are engaged in a helping relationship in which one of them (Counselor) is a trained, educated, qualified, and most often licensed and certificated as the helper and the other(s) is a client(s) seeking help. The purpose of the relationship is that of the Counselor helping one or more clients to solve issues, concerns or problems which arise from attempts to cope with life in an increasingly complex world¹. According to American Counseling Association, counseling is defined as a relatively short-term, interpersonal, theory-

¹ Maples, M. (1996). Cornerstones of a civilized society. *Juvenile and Family Court Journal*, 47(3), 41-60.

based process of helping persons who are basically psychologically healthy resolve developmental and situational problems.²

Pastoral counseling is an approach to counseling in which the insights of theology and spirituality are integrated with the principles of modern behavioural science to help individuals, couples, families, groups and institutions achieve wholeness and health³. Pastoral and spiritual work therefore can be seen as care, counseling and therapy by an appropriately qualified pastoral worker, utilizing dimensions of faith, spirituality, religion and values towards an adequate definition of the life situation of the clients and in particular towards the holistic healing of individuals, groups and communities.

Pastoral counseling is different from mainstream forms of counseling, as pastoral counseling is guided by the conviction that emotional distress or problems can best be addressed by taking into consideration both spiritual aspects and knowledge of human psychology⁴. Problems often threaten both spiritual and emotional resources. A pastoral worker therefore explores the possibilities and implications of a religious or/and spiritual definition of the situation. A religious and spiritual definition of situation refers to beliefs, practices and groups oriented towards a transcendental or

² American Counseling Association (ACA) (2007). Counseling fact sheets: Definition of counseling. Retrieved June 20, 2008, from <http://www.counseling.org/Resources/Consumers>

³ De Jongh van Arkel, J.T (2000). Caring for all: Exploring the field of pastoral work. Only study guide for CGM309-4. Pretoria: University of South Africa.

⁴ [http://www.pastoral/explorefaith.org.Pastoral Counseling.htm](http://www.pastoral/explorefaith.org.Pastoral%20Counseling.htm)

supernatural reality⁵. Pastoral counseling assists people in realizing their potential, using their opportunities and making responsible decisions.

Pastoral and spiritual work is rooted in a history and tradition that date back to one of the oldest forms of care for individuals in need. The different faith communities have always endeavoured to take care of members and people in need. A study of the religious documents of major faith traditions (Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu and Buddhist) also reveals a particular sensitivity to and focus on the poor, suffering and marginalized, as well as situations of social injustice⁶. According to Gerkin, “care for the people involves care that confronts issues of justice and moral integrity in the life of the people”⁷. Pastoral and spiritual workers have therefore been called to practice this profession which addresses these issues and contexts.

Family therapy developed well after Second World War. The first marriage centers opened in 1930 in USA. Sigmund Freud was among the first people to use psychoanalytical approach to treat families. He would isolate the neurotic family member and talk about transference in assisting the patient⁸. Carl Rodgers developed client-centered therapy to help individuals who were facing various problems. His

⁵Application Draft for the Establishment of a Professional Board in terms of Section 14A of the Social Services Professions Act 1978 (Act 110 of 1978) 2002. Pretoria: South African Association for Pastoral Work

⁶ <http://www.pastoraltherapy/Preamble.htm>

⁷ Gerkin, C.V (1997). *An introduction to pastoral care*. Nashville: Abingdon.

⁸ Fuster J.M (1988). *Personal counseling*. Bundra Bombay; Better yourself books

belief was that the client has a problem and a solution to it⁹. This was discussed more in the theoretical framework.

In 1957 Christian Midelfort published “The Family in Psychotherapy” and later Nathan Ackerman followed with “The Psychodynamics of Family Life in 1958. Family groups were also treated in Atlaytian in 1946 by Carl Whitaker.

By 1970 family therapy came of age. The current approach to family therapy is systematic and it looks at an eclectic way of resolving issues. Clients are seen by Counselors together with family members and the following areas may be considered:- background of the family, the environment they live in, the relationship in the family, and the client’s behavior that make them dysfunctional.

Marriage counseling may be seen as counseling involving couples or individuals who are in marriage. The couple could be (a) a man and a woman, (b) a man and a man, (c) a woman and a woman. In Kenya, it is not yet legal to have same sex marriages. The issues brought for counseling may involve individual issues e.g alcoholism in marriage, marital disagreements, family issues on parenting, spiritual matters and premarital issues.

⁹ Rogers, C.R (1967). *On Becoming a person: A Therapists' View of Psychotherapy*, London; Constable

Many marriages are challenged by the following general issues: communication, infertility or childlessness, family of origin (in-laws) and sexual dysfunctions. The marital challenges may cause quarrels and fights which could be verbal or physical. They may also cause triangulation where parents may involve children in their quarrels. In some extreme cases incest may occur. Spouses may take their stresses from family issues to the workplace without knowing. At times a family member may abandon and neglect the family. Some spouses become over-responsible and take up more responsibility and then resent the other family members. This can lead to stress in the marriage and family. The stress may spill over to those who are close to family members¹⁰.

Marriage preparation and enrichment programmes, and premarital and marital counseling are some of the means by which family professionals attempt to prevent or mitigate the challenges that often lead to the failure of relationships. Although the risks of unhealthy relationships are many, researchers and clinicians have begun to focus on a variety of avenues to attenuate these risks. Research shows that effects of broken marriages such as depression, anxiety, substance abuse, intimacy problems, finances and stress are far reaching and extend beyond the family to society as a whole¹¹. This is an indication that the institution of marriage has many challenges. Increasing knowledge and building skills through education on relationships are important ways of combating marital dissatisfaction and the risks of unhealthy

¹⁰ Gichinga, E.M (2005). *Marriage Counseling. A Counseling Guide*. Nairobi; GEM Counseling.

¹¹ Bridges, M., & Isabella, G. M. (1998). What matters? What does not? Five perspectives on the association between marital transitions and children's adjustment. *American Psychologist*, 53, 167–184.

relationships. Marriage preparation and enrichment programmes, premarital counseling, and other preventative methods may be helpful in building strong marriages and limiting marital distress.

The first mention of premarital counseling as a valued service occurred in a 1928 article in the American Journal of obstetrics and gynecology. From then, and until the mid 1950s, most of the writings concerned physicians and the premarital physical examinations. In the 1950s, religious literature as well as mental health literature began to focus upon premarital counseling¹². Thus the church is a partisan and its contribution to the stability of marriages cannot be ignored. This study sought to assess the status and quality of pastoral marital counseling in African Inland Church and the Roman Catholic Church in Kenya.

The practice of counseling cannot be classified as a new phenomenon. In the Traditional African societies, before, during and after initiation, a young adult was taught how to be a wife/husband in preparation for getting married¹³. There was also a reservoir of individuals to whom those in need of help could turn to¹⁴. They would instruct a couple on the expectations and roles in the marriage. This is an indication that even before the Christian church took on its role in marital counseling; the foundation was already laid down in the traditional set up.

¹² Boehi, D. Et al. (1997). Preparing for marriage. California, Gospel Light.

¹³ Mbiti, J. S (1969). African Religions and Philosophy. Nairobi, General Printer

¹⁴ Gichinga, E. M. (2003). Premarital Counseling. Makuyu – Kenya, Don Bosco Printing Press

Even though traditional spiritual counseling continues to help many people in need, long ago it was already realized that in many cases specialized, professional pastoral care was necessary for effective treatment. In the 1920's, The Reverend Anton Boisen, Father of the Clinical Pastoral Education movement in the United States, revived the important role of the clergy in the treatment of mental illness by placing theological students in supervised contact with patients in mental hospitals¹⁵. This innovative educational program brought disciplined training to the historical link between faith and mental health. The systematic integration of religion and psychology for psychotherapeutic purposes began in the 1930's, with the collaboration of Norman Vincent Peale, a renowned minister, and Smiley Blanton, a Psychiatrist, and the formation of the American Foundation of Religion and Psychiatry, now called the Institute of Religion and Health¹⁶.

Although the risks of unhealthy relationships are many, researchers and clinicians have begun to focus on a variety of avenues to attenuate these risks. Increasing knowledge and building skills through relationship education are important ways of combating marital dissatisfaction and the risks of unhealthy relationships. Marriage preparation and enrichment programmes, premarital counseling, and other preventative methods may be helpful in building strong marriages and limiting marital distress. Evaluations show that many of the available premarital programmes

¹⁵ <http://www.goldstrom.net/2007/01/what-is-role-of-pastoral-counseling.html>

¹⁶ <http://www.metanoia.org>

significantly improve the way relationships between people influence how they function in various spheres of their life¹⁷.

Some of the benefits of premarital education include greater ability to manage conflict, more positive interactions in marriage, and a potentially lower risk for divorce. Marriage or relationship counseling can be an important intervention for marriages and relationships on the brink. Importantly, research has shown that counseling is at its most effective when used early, before the relationship reaches severe levels of distress¹⁸. Unfortunately, most couples consider marriage counseling only as an intervention for extremely severe relationship problems and not as a preventative or enriching method.

Marriage counseling has also been found to positively affect marital outcomes. In a study examining the effectiveness of counseling, researchers found that for recently married soldiers, premarital counseling and marriage counseling were both significantly effective in increasing marital satisfaction. For the spouses of soldiers, only the combination of premarital and marital counseling was significantly effective in increasing marital satisfaction¹⁹.

¹⁷Carroll, J. S &Doherty, W. J. (1993). *Health and the Ethics of Marital Therapy and Education. The Implications of New Research into the Health Benefits of Marriage for Law, Medicine, Ministry, Therapy, and Business.* Louisville, KY: William B. Eerdmans press.

¹⁸ Jacobson, N. S., & Addis, M. E. (1993). Research on couples and couple therapy: What do we know? Where are we going? *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 61, 85-93

¹⁹ Schumm, W. R., Silliman, B., & Bell, D. B. (2000). Perceived premarital counseling outcomes among recently married army personnel. *Journal of Sex and Marital Therapy*, 26, 177-186.

Premarital counseling is vital for couples contemplating marriage. It provides couples contemplating marriage with the necessary information to establish and develop a strong marital foundation. Premarital programs are perceived to offer the necessary guidance and groundwork to assist couples in evaluating their readiness to enter into a permanent life of commitment. Research indicates that premarital counseling plays a vital role in building strong marriages. When it is properly done, if any endeavor, dream and goal is not backed by concrete plans and preparations they result into failure and marriage is no exception¹⁵.

Today, the pastoral profession is practiced internationally and is recognized by professional bodies and associations responsible for the organization and regulation of the profession²⁰. Pastoral counseling has, for instance, now become a major provider of mental health services in the United States, accounting for over three million hours of treatment annually in both institutional and private settings, offering individual, group, marital and family therapy²¹. In South Africa, the South African government also identified several key issues towards the resolution of which pastoral and spiritual work can make a significant contribution²². The Christian church in Kenya through its various denominations is expected to play an important role in marital counseling. Besides their crucial role, no study has been done to assess the status and quality of Pastoral Marital Counseling in Churches here in Kenya. This

²⁰ Application Draft for the Establishment of a Professional Board in terms of Section 14A of the Social Services Professions Act 1978 (Act 110 of 1978) 2002. Pretoria: South African Association for Pastoral Work

²¹ <http://www.metanoia.org>

²² [www.gov.co.za/key issues](http://www.gov.co.za/key_issues)

study therefore aimed at assessing the status and quality of pastoral marital counseling in Africa Inland Church and Roman Catholic Church in Kenya. This will be evaluated on the basis of the training level of the Counselors, the content of counseling offered and the perception of various people towards marital counseling.

Stable marriages are believed to bring about stable and harmonious families which contribute towards building peaceful and prosperous nations. It is presumed that children brought up by parents in stable families are likely to grow into reliable members of their Churches.²³ Such children are also likely to grow into useful citizens of their countries.

There has been a significant increase, among professionals/researchers and the public, in effort to increase the effectiveness of helping couples attain the ever-elusive happy and healthy marriage, especially while divorce rates have remained high. Thus, it is important to understand whether these efforts, in the form of marriage preparation, premarital and marital counseling, and marriage enrichment are actually effective. This assessment can only be effective by looking at the status and quality of pastoral marital counseling service in churches.

²³ Ibid, September 26, 1990, p, 17

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Marital challenges have not just plagued non-Christians but also the Christian church. In the October 2007 issue of a local Christian daily, "The Shepherd", the feature story was on troubled marriages. Writers observed that the phenomenon of troubled Christian marriages and divorce especially in the United States of America is on the rise. The daily highlighted the troubled marriage of renowned Christian women leaders Paula White and Juanita Bynum who were planning to divorce and had sued their spouses respectively. In a study on divorce by the Barna Research Group in the United States, the survey found that divorce rates among conservative Christians were significantly higher than for other faith groups, and for atheists and agnostics.²⁴

Feinberg, Feinberg and Huxley note that the lack of proper equipping of engaged couples for marriage in America has created an epidemic both within and outside the church²⁵. The divorce rate they indicate hovered around 50% for both groups, of great concern is the perpetual cycle that is furthered through children of divorce. They also point out that any Counselor would attest to the loneliness, abandonment, and dissatisfaction of children who have become victims of divorce. They therefore conclude that the Counselor facing the engaged couple today has the challenge to help them lay the foundation for a happy and successful marriage now more than ever.

²⁴ Barna, G. (1999). Online article: http://www.religioustolerance.org/chr_dira.htm , 2006-06-08.

²⁵ Feinberg J S, Feinberg P D, and Huxley A (1993). *Ethics for a Brave New World*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books.

The scenario is not very different in Kenya. The rate of divorce and separation is on the rise amongst Christians worldwide and Kenya is no exception. A Christian writer in a leading local daily in Kenya pointed out “Divorce rates are rising in Kenya as individualism grows, extended families drift apart and failed marriages lose their stigma”²⁶. Not only are church members affected by divorce but Christian leaders too. For example, a prominent evangelist in Kenya’s capital Nairobi was featured very prominently in the local dailies in the months of January and February 2007 after she denounced and publicly insulted her former husband.

The western education system, socio-economic, cultural, religious and political changes in the societies of today seem to encourage or cause instability in marriages. Some of the elite find it difficult to choose what to give top priority when attending to their careers, religious and political affairs. These consume the time and resources which would have been expended in nurturing marriages and families. As a result, we often hear of and read about misunderstandings and conflicts among couples. Some husbands complain that their wives do not play their roles as mothers effectively.²⁷ According to Magesa, the mother is universally recognized as a mediator, even if often inconspicuously. He adds that peace and tranquility in the family depends largely upon her skills in handling the members of her family. Tacitly, she is accredited with the know-how and know-why in family management and gets silent credit on it. Women therefore play a role of conciliators in the wider community as

²⁶ Kamotho, S. (2001). Facing up to Breaking up. The Daily Nation, Saturday magazine. Pp 6-7.

²⁷ *Ibid*, September, 18, 1991, 20 & 21.

well and failure to heed their advice often brings unfavorable consequences²⁸. Some wives also complain that their husbands keep on quarrelling and beating them. This is viewed by some Counselors as an expression of devaluation of women who seem to be regarded as men's property. This is a serious misconception and violation of any kind of love bond between two people, as well as violation of the individual dignity of the victims.²⁹ Sometimes the conflicts result in separation, divorce and even death with their accompanying problems. Many mischief in children, wives and husbands are a direct result of long separations of the family members.³⁰

Cruelty is one of the most frequently cited reasons for divorce.³¹ Alice Wainaina once argued that many divorces that occur in society are because of the love of money between couples in the home. But material things can never take the place of a loving husband or wife.³²

Divorce seems to increase at a high rate and this is viewed with concern by many people. The Christian Churches are quite against this phenomenon. But, what steps have they taken to remedy the situation? The author suspects that the Churches feel "helpless" when confronted with this reality. In fact, no society is likely to favour this trend. Although our future depends on the children of today, the Kenya of tomorrow will depend on the kind of children Kenyans are bringing up today. Cases of parents

²⁸ Magesa, L. (2013). *What is not Sacred? African Spirituality*. Maryknoll; New York. Orbis Books.

²⁹ *Daily Nation*, Wednesday, May 23, 1990, p. 21

³⁰ Okullu, H. (1990). *Church and Marriage in East Africa*, Nairobi, Uzima Press.

³¹ *Daily Nation*, Wednesday, May, 23, 1990 p. 21

³² *Ibid*, Wednesday, May 23, 1990, p.21

battering and even murdering their children have been witnessed. The author concurs with a cabinet minister for Culture and Social Services who stated that every child born has a right to the basic needs of life and should have a good social environment in the formative years so that it can grow up as a responsible citizen.³³

A question therefore arises as to whether this phenomenon could be attributed to lack of pastoral marital counseling in our Churches and society in general. Pastoral marital counseling is one of the ways of dealing with the problems and challenges to marriages and the families. This study therefore sought to find out whether pastoral marital counseling is practiced in A.I.C and Roman Catholic Churches in Nairobi and Machakos Counties and if it is practiced, how effective is it?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

This study aimed at investigating the pastoral marital counseling services offered by African Inland Church and Roman Catholic Church. The study was guided by the following specific objectives:

1. To establish the status of pastoral marital counseling services in A.I.C and Roman Catholic Church in Machakos and Nairobi Counties in Kenya.
2. To assess the professional level of training of pastoral Counselors in A.I.C and Roman Catholic Church in Machakos and Nairobi Counties in Kenya.
3. To evaluate the content of pastoral counseling training in A.I.C and Roman Catholic Church in Machakos and Nairobi Counties in Kenya.

³³ *The Daily Nation*, January 7, 2013. New Constitution of Kenya (2010); Children's Act CAP 141.

4. To investigate the perception of different categories of people, towards marriage and marital counseling

1.4 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the status of pastoral marital counseling in A.I.C and Roman Catholic Church in Machakos and Nairobi Counties in Kenya?
2. What is the professional level of training of pastoral Counselors?
3. What is the content of pastoral counseling training?
4. How do the perceptions of different categories of people affect the pastoral marital counseling?

1.5 Rationale for the Study

A majority of Kenyan citizens is composed of professing Christians³⁴ and so minding about the provision of marital counseling to the Christians would mean catering for the majority of our population which now stands at more than 38.6 million.³⁵

Kenya's urban areas are centers of innovation, industrialization, education, science and technology and culture. According to the 2009 census, one out of every three Kenyan lives in an urban area implying that out of the 39 million total populations, 32.3% or 12.5 million Kenyans (70% of which live in informal settlements) lived in some 108 designated urban centers with populations ranging between 20,000 and 3

³⁴ Barret, D. B. (1973). *Kenya Churches Handbook*. Kisumu, Evangel Publishing House, p. 38.

³⁵ Kenya National population council, 2009

million³⁶. Kenya's development blue print, Vision 2030 estimates that by the year 2015, the level of urbanization will have reached 44.5%, and eventually the percentage is set to reach 54% by 2030 with nearly 30 million people living in urban areas. The urban population generates over 65% of the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Nairobi alone contributes 60% of the GDP to the national economy³⁷.

In both urban and rural areas divorce cases are increasing year by year. If the trend is allowed to continue more social problems will be caused.³⁸ In a book published in January 1991, Stephen M, Njiro, after studying 104 divorce petitions filed in Nairobi between 1972 and 1989, argued that majority of these are filed in the first five years of marriage.³⁹ After looking at 1500 divorce petitions filed in Nairobi between 1982 and 1990, Raphael Kahaso asserted;-The city of Nairobi has been plagued with divorce cases filed in the courts seeking dissolution of marriages. Other married couples simply drift away from their spouses instead of filing divorce petitions.⁴⁰

In 75% of the divorce petitions above, cruelty is one of the grounds and in 90% adultery is one of the grounds. Around 80% are filled by career men and women. Teachers filed 40% of the petitions. Catholics filed 40% of the petitions. Kahaso adds that 10% are withdrawn after the parties involved reconcile. The author believes that

³⁶ Kenya National population council, 2009

³⁷ Ibid

³⁸ *The Standard*, Tuesday, September 3, 1991, p, 19.

³⁹ *The Daily Nation*. Tuesday, September 24, 1991, p. 19.

⁴⁰ *The Standard*, Monday, April 22, 1991, p, 17.

counseling can increase the number of those reconciling after differing for some time. The research investigated the quality of the pastoral counseling given to marriage hopefuls and the married. It seems to be helpful during the relatively 'stormy' initial years of marriage.

Many families are faced with problems because some husbands and wives do not cope well and this leads to the suffering of the children in those families.⁴¹ In our times some wives of rich men have been left to suffer like widows in their homes. Their husbands keep close to their girlfriends to get away from criticism and questions of dissatisfied wives. This causes the suffering wives to lead depressed lives.⁴²

It is generally believed that pastoral marital counseling, in its different forms, is useful in dealing with some of the individual family and social problems. The author agrees with Bishop Tiberius Mugendi that marriages will succeed only when spouses have life-long tolerance, respect and love.⁴³

Some key areas in marriage are not effectively handled making some marriages have difficulties or failing. There is therefore need to strengthen pastoral marital counseling in Churches through offering adequate counseling services in terms of content and depth in order to enhance understanding among the married and the

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, Wednesday, August 21, 1991, p 20.

⁴² *Ibid.*, Friday, May 11, 1990-pp.15 & 19

⁴³ *Ibid.*, Monday January 15, 1990, p11

marriage hopefuls. There is need for counselor to become more informed on how to handle marital relationships so that they can be clearer on sensitive sexual issues when the deal with clients.

Finally, few researches on Pastoral Marital Counseling have been done in our country and so the author believes that his study is timely.

1.6 The Scope and Area of Study

This study was carried out in A.I.C and Roman Catholic Church in Machakos and Nairobi Counties. The study focused on investigating the pastoral marital counseling services offered in the Churches studied. This was achieved by looking into whether the Churches offered pastoral marital counseling services, the level of training and preparedness of those involved in counseling, the content of pastoral marital counseling offered and the perception of different categories of people on the pastoral marital counseling. The study targeted the clergy involved in pastoral marital counseling, the married or once married, the unmarried (youth), professional and 'administrative' officers involved in counseling those with problems and teachers/instructor in pastoral training institutions. Questionnaires and interview schedules were used to gather information from the respondents.

1.7 Methodology

This stud was carried out in Machakos and Nairobi Counties. Nairobi County is selected because it is representative of urban areas where many rapid changes are taking place. In Nairobi, as in some other metropolitan cities of Africa and the world,

marriages are breaking down and divorce is increasingly taking place.⁴⁴ The changes are to some extent attributed to the modern socio-economic changes which are taking place. Machakos district was selected on the basis that it is in both rural and urban setting African Inland Church (A.I.C) and Roman Catholic Church have been there for long. The two denominations have many Church communities and followers (old, middle aged and young). The County also has many A.I.C pastoral training institutions of different categories and many Roman Catholic mission stations with many trained personnel.

Descriptive survey research design was used for the study. The design was adopted because of the nature of the study which was basically descriptive as it was aimed at assessing the quality of pastoral marital counseling services in churches using the indicators such as the professional training of the Counselors, the content of the training and attitude towards pastoral marital counseling training. The survey approach was deemed appropriate because not all the A.I.C and Roman Catholic communities in Machakos and Nairobi Counties were studied.

The population for the study was A.I.C and Roman Catholic Church in Machakos and Nairobi Counties. The targeted population for the study was church ministers, teachers/instructors in pastoral institution, married or once married, unmarried, and professional Counselors, Sociologists, Lawyers and “Administrative” officers. The church ministers were targeted as they are the ones charged with the responsibility of

⁴⁴ Okullu, H. Op.cit, p. 28.

offering pastoral marital counseling. The married or once married members of the Christian communities were perceived to have gone through marital counseling and therefore had the required information for the study. The unmarried members of the communities were targeted because they were perceived to be the category of the communities who were targeted with marital programs in churches especially premarital counseling hence their views were perceived to be very crucial for the study.

Teachers/instructors from institutions of training were targeted because they are responsible for training the church ministers hence their views were very important for the study. Professionals were also targeted due to the fact that they also offer marital counseling to those in need hence their views were considered important for the study. Finally, the area administrators were targeted as they are perceived to handle some of the marital problems in families in their areas of administration hence their views were required. The provincial administration officials are at times involved in assisting couples deal with marital problems, and this makes it possible for them to give information on marital problems and how to handle them.

Purposive sampling technique was used to sample the respondents for the study. This technique was deemed appropriate as it allowed only those who were perceived to have the information required for the study to be sampled. Both primary and secondary data was used for the study. Secondary data was collected through library research while primary data were collected using questionnaires and interview

schedules. Questionnaires were used to collect data from church ministers, teachers/instructors in training institutions, married or once married and the unmarried while interview schedules were used to collect data from the professionals and area administrators.

A total of 334 respondents were targeted by the study including 32 church ministers (16 from A.I.C and 16 R.C.C), 128 married or once married (64 from A.I.C and 64 from R.C.C), 128 unmarried (64 from A.I.C and 64 from R.C.C), 20 teachers and instructors from training institutions (10 from A.I.C and 10 from R.C.C), 4 chiefs, 4 doctors, 4 family planning officers, 4 Sociologists, 4 Lawyers and 6 professional Counselors. Out of the total targeted population, 248 responded including 28 church ministers, 94 married or once married, 90 unmarried, 16 Teachers/instructors, 3 Chiefs, 2 Doctors, 2 family planning officers, 4 Sociologists, 3 Lawyers and 6 professional Counselors giving a response rate of 74%.

Two research assistants were recruited to help in the collection of data. The research assistants were trained to give them tips on how the data was to be collected and from whom. One of the assistants helped in the collection of data from the selected churches in Nairobi County while the other helped in Machakos County. During data collection, those who knew English were requested to fill the questionnaires and give them back to the research assistant. By doing this, views of many were collected in a short time, but it was not possible for some to return the instruments in time.

Primary data from the field was first edited. Coding was done to translate question responses into specific categories. This was expected to organize and reduce research data into manageable summaries. The fact that most of the information collected was qualitative, content and thematic data analysis techniques were used to analyze the qualitative data while quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages. The findings from quantitative data were presented in form of tables. The findings of the study were then presented as per the study objectives in chapters three, four and five.

One of the limitations of the study was that some of the respondents were not readily willing to provide the information required for the study. To overcome this limitation, the researcher and his assistants used a letter from the University clarifying the purpose of the study which gave them confidence to participate in the study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON THEORIES AND PRACTICE IN PASTORAL MARITAL COUNSELING

2.0 Introduction

This section presents information on different approaches to marital counseling, theoretical framework, conceptual framework, pastoral training on counseling, content of pastoral marital counseling service and the effect of perception on pastoral marital counseling.

2.1 Approaches to Marital Counseling

There are two approaches to marital counseling which include the traditional approaches and Christian approaches.

2.1.1 African Traditional Marital Counseling Approach

Traditional Africans approached life communally and practiced a kind of wholistic approach to counseling. The uncles and grandfathers played a key role in guiding and counseling boys because they are more objective in handling the boys as they are culturally close to them but with some emotional distance. The aunts and grandmothers did the same to the girls who could discuss any issue with them with cultural approval. This counsel helped to minimize marital problems in the future and also to reconcile differing spouses⁴⁵.

⁴⁵ Mbiti, J.S. (1977). *Introduction to African Religion*. Heineman, London, Ibadan, Nairobi, Lusaka, 82-109.

Elders provided guidance and counseling to groups of young people mostly during initiation ceremonies at puberty. Boys were taught their responsibilities when they entered the institution of marriage. Likewise the girls were informed about what was expected of them when they got married. Every member of a community was supposed to get married. There were different forms of marriage to ensure that all members were catered for.

When instructing the youth, the need to respect the dignity of each individual and safeguard human life in the community at any cost was emphasized. People enjoyed dancing, music, story telling and feasting together. They got opportunities to express their feelings; they could laugh and cry depending on the occasion.

Africans conceived of only one united anthropocentric universe where the supernatural realities and the natural lived together in harmony: God, spirits, human beings, animals and plants, and the in-animate phenomena and objects lived together. If human beings failed to maintain sound ethical relationship with all the members of the universe, then chaos resulted⁴⁶. There was need to reconcile all human beings who differed among themselves and also with other members of the universe in order to restore normality. Individuals were also given personal guidance and counseling (but it was not from the western perspective). The youth took the elders advice seriously because they regarded them (elders) as authorities in dealing with matters of life as

⁴⁶ Mbiti, J.S, Ibid.

they had wide experience in handling various life matters. Life did not seem to change much and fast in those days.

If a member of a community, such as the Kamba of Kenya had a problem, a diviner-doctor helped the victim and was assisted by other members of his society. The diviner-doctor acted like both a Doctor and a Counselor. The healing and counseling he provided were regarded as works of mercy to the community by those gifted with life force, hence they were primarily performed free of charge.

Causes of diseases were taken to be more than biological. At times the diviner-doctor, acting as a Counselor, dealt with the psychological and spiritual aspects of one's disease and affliction and then referred the client/patient to a medicine man for physical treatment. The diviner-doctor also acted as an intermediary between human beings and the supernatural to ensure that peace and harmony was maintained in the universe. He usually discussed problems with individuals and then involved the members of the client's family in solving the problem. Both medicine and counsel (advice) were given to the suffering persons in order to realize healthy life physically, socially, spiritually and psychologically⁴⁷. The individual's problem was usually tackled from a social perspective as community members were expected to life inter-dependently.

⁴⁷ Waruta, D.W (2005). *Marriage and Family in Contemporary African Society*. Pastoral Care in African Christianity: Challenging Essays in pastoral Theology by Waruta, D.W and Kinoti, H.W (eds).

The problems of couples were mostly handled by parents with the assistance of uncles, grandfathers, relatives and senior clan elders in the case of husbands. In the case of wives, the problems were handled by parents, aunts, grandmothers, relatives and elders. Both sets of families used to meet to sort out many of the marital problems. Those to assist were supposed to listen patiently to the problems and propose possible solutions without partiality.

A diviner-doctor was usually consulted to tell the cause and remedy to a problem, Reconciliatory rituals and sacrifices were performed to reassure the sufferers and their community that their problem had been solved once and for all. In the ritual the diviner-doctor could touch the clients walk around them several times, ask them to 'vomit' the evil words they have hidden in themselves, give them medicine to take, shake their hands, and ask them to promise to live in peace with each other and other people. After asserting their independence the spouses could face future life with confidence.

Among many traditional African communities, a marriage could break down, but it does not break up. This is because the payment of dowry (which proved to the girl that the man was determined to marry her) and marriage rites such as cutting of a sheep's shoulder (in Kikuyu marriage) and "kirisia or kilisua" (among Luo) bound the spouses and their families together.⁴⁸ Men were allowed to practise polygamy, David G. Maillu asserts that when the Second wife married, she married the man, the first

⁴⁸ Okullu, H. *Op.cit* pp. 26-36

wife, the children of the first marriage, the man's relatives, and also the relatives of the first wife! This is his assertion about the second wife:-

She marries an institution, not a single person, and there is no shortcut to that as long as she lives in Africa where the extended family is the key to stable living. A proverb goes, "he who buys a cow buys its cowdung too".⁴⁹

A girl who wished to be married a second or third wife ensured that she was welcomed by some members of the man's home before marrying. Women went for polygamous marriages primarily for security and a sense of belonging. To many Africans, many wives and children were a sign of wealth, power, security, prestige, ability to lead and economic manpower for the man to exploit.

In case of death of a husband the widow was inherited by his younger brother or a close relative, but the children belonged to the deceased man. In some cultures, for example the Kamba culture, barren women could marry other women to bear children for them. Marriage was respected and protected as a key rite of passage in the continuity of a community's life cycle. The extended family members were also well catered for in the marriage Institution. This study sought to investigate the pastoral marital counseling in A.I.C and R.C.C in Nairobi and Machakos Counties.

⁴⁹ Maillu D. G., (1988). *Our kind of Polygamy, Nairobi*, Heineman, pp. 164

Those to provide Pastoral Marital Counseling in Kenyan context need to be equipped with the above knowledge so that they can be effective in providing the service to Christians and the general society. The African world view is informed by the cultural issues highlighted in this work. Thus, in order to be effective in evangelizing and providing pastoral care and counseling in African social and cultural environment, one has to bear in mind the importance of enculturation in order to make the Christian gospel relevant to the recipients⁵⁰.

2.1.2 Christian Marital Counseling Approach

Over the years Christian Counselors have used many techniques that have been developed and used by non-believers but there are various features that make Christian counseling distinctive. Collins mentions four characteristics that make Christian counseling unique⁵¹.

First, it is based on unique assumptions. Meir, Minrith and Wichern note that it accepts the Bible as the final standard and authority⁵². Adams notes that it is only biblical counseling that possess divine authority⁵³. He considers this authority to be imperative in counseling. Lawrence Crabb remarks that every concept of biblical counseling must build upon the fundamental premise that there is really is an Infinite and personal God who has revealed himself propositionally in the written word like

⁵⁰ Magega, L. (1999). *Rethinking Mission. Evangelization in Africa in a new Era*. Eldoret. AMECEA Gaba Publications.

⁵¹ Collins G.R 1(988). *Christian Counseling: A Comprehensive Guide*. Revised Edition. U.S.A: W Publishing Group.

⁵² Meir P., Minirith M., Wichern F. (1989). *Introduction to Psychology and Counseling: Christian Perspectives and Applications*. Michigan: Baker.

⁵³ Adams, J.E (1973). *The Christian Counselor's Manual*. Michigan: Zondervan.

the bible and the living word like Jesus Christ⁵⁴. While discussing Maslow's hierarchy, Kincely observes that many biblical Counselors have rejected the various need theories because of their apparent contradiction to the word of God⁵⁵.

Second, it has unique goals. Whereas secular counseling seeks to help counselees change behaviour attitudes, values and or perceptions based on humanistic standards. Christian Counselors seek to stimulate spiritual growth in counselees by encouraging confession of sin and the experience of forgiveness; modeling Christian standards, attitudes, values and lifestyles; presenting the gospel and encouraging counselees to commit their lives to Christ; and stimulating them to develop values and lives that are based on biblical teachings. Christian counseling therefore has a strong element of guidance in it. Crabb indicates that the goal of Christian Counseling is to free people to better worship and serve God by helping them become more like the Lord⁵⁶. Rowe concurs with this thought. As McConaughy writes, Biblical Counselors have a biblical picture of humans i.e. human beings are accountable to the creator⁵⁷.

Third, Christian Counseling uses unique methods. The Christian Counselor does not use methods or techniques that would be considered immoral or inconsistent with biblical teachings. Rowe observes that a Counselor cannot separate methods from beliefs.

⁵⁴ Crabb, L.J (1975). *Basic Principles of Biblical Counseling*. Indiana: BHM Books.

⁵⁵ Knicely, A. (2007). *Rethinking Maslow's Hierarchy and the Needs' theories*. Online article: www.nanc.org 2007-10-10

⁵⁶ Crabb, L.J (1989). *Effective Biblical Counseling*. London: Zondervan.

⁵⁷ McConaughy, J. (2007). Online article: www.nanc.org 2007-10-10

Finally, Christian Counselors possess unique Counselor characteristics. Broger concludes that Christian counseling is based on these presuppositions which have been verified by years of application, observation and testimony⁵⁸. The principles of Christian counseling are not only verifiable but they are also effective in every part of the world, in every culture, with all age groups and in all levels of society. This study sought to investigate the pastoral marital counseling services offered to Christians in A.I.C and R.C.C in Nairobi and Machakos Counties in Kenya.

In an analysis of 23 studies over the past 30 years, researchers from American universities found that couples who received premarital counseling scored 30% higher in the categories of communication and overall satisfaction with their spouse than couples who did not receive premarital counseling⁵⁹. In one study of 2,800 couples from all over the United States who had been married up to eight years, 66% of them agreed that premarital counseling was effective and valuable⁶⁰. One can conclude that marriages are stronger, and couples are much more satisfied if they receive premarital counseling before getting married. A study done by Williams et al, found that most people who received marriage preparation from ministerial staff rather than by licensed professional Counselors and financial planners reported the highest overall perceived value of premarital counseling⁶¹. These findings show the

⁵⁸ Broger, J.C. (1993). *Self-Confrontation*. Kerala: Gospel for Asia Publications.

⁵⁹ Williams, J. (2003). Talk before tying the knot. *Psychology today* 36(4), 17. Retrieved from Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection database.

⁶⁰ Williams, L.M., Riley, L.A., Risch, G.S. & Van Dyke, D.T. (1999). An empirical approach to designing marriage preparation programmes. *The American journal of family therapy*, 27(3) 271-283. doi:10.1080/019261899261970

⁶¹ Ibid

centrality of pastoral marital counseling in Churches in the Western world and the same applies in Kenya. However, no studies have been conducted to verify the findings in Kenyan context. This study sought to find out the presence and status of pastoral marital counseling in the Kenyan context.

As the term suggests, Christian pre - marital counseling refers to that aspect of Christian counseling that is focused on helping unmarried persons prepare for marriage. There are various reasons for the present instabilities in Christian marriages but key among them is the lack of care with which many marriages are put together. Marriages based on physical attraction, the desire to escape from certain realities in life such as running away from a difficult family situation or bowing to societal expectations when one reaches a certain age are just a few of the factors that cause marriages not to stand when the pressures of living together come. That is a weak foundation of dreams and inadequate preparation. Wright notes that many marriages today are like the house built upon sand referred to in Mt 7:26⁶². Pre-marital counseling seeks to address the causes of these instabilities in marriage before one encounters them.

Klassen indicates that, the need for premarital counseling in the church is testified to, in part, by the church's history of involvement in this particular area of counseling⁶³. He notes that the impetus for pre-marital counseling in the church would seem to be both sociological and theological. It is considered sociological considering the large

⁶² Wright, N.H (1980). *The Pillars of Marriage*. California: Regal Books.

⁶³ Klassen M. (2007). Counseling for Quality: Recent Research Relevant for Premarital Counseling in the Church. Online article: <http://www.directionjournal.org/article/?415-10-10>

number of troubled marriages in our society and theological taking into account the high regard accorded the institution of marriage in the Bible. This study therefore sought to investigate the preparation given to the marital pastoral Counselors in the theological institutions in Kenya. The practice in the churches is an indication of the pre-service training given to the pastoral Counselors in the theological institutions.

What then is the purpose of Christian pre – marital counseling? In his guide on pre – marital counseling, Miller gives us the key motive when he points out that few things are more profitable than men and women committed to the study of God's Word as it relates to marriage, particularly in today's society⁶⁴. Christian pre – marital counseling is designed to help couples grasp the mind of God in relation to marriage. When approached reverently and biblically, marriage can be one of the most joyful experiences this life can offer. Yet we are familiar with many of its consequences such as divorce and domestic violence. Any couple entering into the marriage covenant needs to assess what God's expectation of them is in marriage before they make the commitment.

Collins outlines eight reasons for pre-marital guidance. These are: unrealistic expectations that lead to disillusionment; personal immaturity that can lead to insensitivity; changing roles that can lead to confusion; alternative styles of marriage that can lead to uncertainty such as gay marriages and blended families; loosening sexual standards that can lead to immorality; previous experiences that can lead to

⁶⁴ Miller, J .(2006). *Marriage (Part 1)*. Online article: <http://www.bible.org>, 2006-09-04.

self confidence such as remarriage of widowers or widows and circumstances that can lead to later misery such as a pregnant bride and serious emotional problems⁶⁵.

Strauss brings up an important aspect when he describes a couple that had come to him for pre-marital counseling⁶⁶. He indicates that at some point he tactfully had a conversation with the bride to be on his perception that the groom was only interested in the gratification of physical desires. However the couple went ahead and got married in another church but two years down the line they had divorced. It is important that the couples coming for pre-marital counseling evaluate their reasons for wanting to get married. The result of this counseling should lead to either marriage, a postponement of the marriage or a cancellation.

Kisau (2005:22-23) tends to agree with Strauss when she proposes a four pronged purpose of Christian pre-marital counseling. First, she observes that it encourages the couple to assess their readiness for marriage. The couple needs to be able to answer why they are getting married. It is better to have a broken engagement than to have a broken marriage.

Second, it helps the Counselor in guiding the couple in discussion and explain God's biblical concept on marriage. Many couples go into marriage with preconceived ideas picked from their socialization process and rarely understand God's plan and purpose

⁶⁵ Collins, G.R (1988). *Christian Counseling: A Comprehensive Guide*. Revised Edition. U.S.A: W Publishing Group.

⁶⁶ Strauss, R.L (2006). *A New Commitment*. Online article: <http://www.bible.org>, 2006-06-08.

for marriage. It is therefore the role of every Christian pre – marital Counselor to help clarify these.

Third, it gives the couple an opportunity to discuss practical issues. These include their expectations, how to cope with their differences, parents, where to live, children and relationships with others.

Finally, it is an important time for the couple to be taught and helped to understand the role of sex in marriage. Lack of preparation may lead to unrealistic expectations that can lead to disillusionment.

The present Christian counseling has utilized the western culture which is highly influenced by Christianity and vice versa. In the western world, counseling is regarded as a modern profession akin to psychology. It (counseling) is regarded as primarily a face to face interpersonal relationship whereby the client is assisted by a Counselor to deal with a problem of living. The counseling is mostly based on an individualistic approach to life rather than the communal one of the traditional African societies. Counseling does not aim at changing the situation/environment for the client. But the client is helped to explore his thoughts and responses to different stimuli- This helps someone understand oneself better, reduces anxiety and confusion in his mind, and also reduce stress in order to make useful adjustments and decisions.

Counseling also attempts to help someone to accept or cope with changes in everyday life.⁶⁷

In the West, Counselors get into their profession with an assumption that man is a moral being, man is what he is as a result of what has happened to him since birth (or even conception), and man is what he is as a result of his relationship/interaction with his environment. For various reasons, particular Counselors emphasize one of the three basic assumptions about who man (and woman) is. The Christian Counselors tend to put much emphasis on the moral capacity in man. This is evident in literature by Christian Counselors such as Lawrence⁶⁸.

Many approaches to counseling have been proposed, but there are basically three approaches to problem solving. These are: the directive approach, the non-directive client centred approach, and the integrity therapy approach which is interactional in nature⁶⁹.

In the directive approach, the Counselor acts like a doctor by diagnosing the problem of client and directing/prescribing a solution to the problem. This approach is Counselor centred and does not prepare the client to tackle a future problem.

⁶⁷ Wambua, A.W (1989). *Some aspects of Christian Pastoral Care and Counseling in the Contemporary Secondary School of Kenya: A study of Selected Schools in Machakos District*. Unpublished M. A. thesis, University of Nairobi, pp. 47/8.

⁶⁸ Crabb, L.J. (1987). *Understanding People: Deep Longings for relationship*. Michigan; Zondervan Publishing House.

⁶⁹ Wambua, A.W. Op.cit, pp 50-55.

In the non-directive approach the client is helped to think about his problem and even look for a suitable solution to his own problem. This approach is client-centred where the Counselor facilitates in order for the client to solve his own problem. This approach was propounded by Carl Rogers and is application to this study with some modification to add the religious dimension of those involved.

In the integrity therapy approach, the Counselor and client sit as equals and explore the client's problem and also find its suitable solution together. This is the approach many modern Counselors advocate for. The "friendly" interaction between the client and the Counselor eventuates with a solution to the problem, In fact this approach is a synthesis of the earlier two approaches. The client is free to adopt the best solution proposed during the counseling interview, whether it was proposed by him or the Counselor that does not matter.⁷⁰ In this last approach, the client feels he is valued as an individual despite the problem he is facing, and he is not the only one faced with problems.

In western counseling, effective counseling presupposes selection, training and supervision by those involved in the counseling profession (these requirements are important in other professions), congruence, acceptance, empathy, understanding, integrity and temperament are important traits for a Counselor who should also be a good communicator. The Counselor is compassionate, genuine and trustworthy with

⁷⁰ Ibid,

the ability to listen to other people with undivided attention. It is of necessity that the Counselor keeps confidential all the secrets disclosed to him by clients.

When counseling is taking place, the beliefs and values of those involved cannot be ignored. When either the Counselor or client is a Christian, in some way Christian counseling takes place. Christians approach the psychology of man with an assumption that mankind is created in the image of God, (Genesis 1-3) and though fallen, he bears that divine image⁷¹ like the creator who is personal, all humankind (male and female) long for a relationship of unconditional love and significance. Man is rational and so he can reason. He has the volitional ability to make choices, and even set goals and pursue them, Man is emotional and so he experiences different feelings at different times. The significance of humankind depends on the fact that they are created in the image of God and as such deserve to be unconditionally loved and respected.⁷²

Christian Counselors take it as their duty to help humankind overcome the limitations which were imposed on human-kind by the fall (sin) so as to lead an abundant life in his environment here on earth and later in heaven, God's dwelling place (John 10:10). The Christians believe that when someone's intellectual, physical, social, political economic and psychological problems are solved through counseling, that enables one to become more spiritual. If one aspect of a man's life is ailing, it affects the other

⁷¹ Crabb, L. J. & Allender, O, (1990). *Encouragement: The key to caring*. New Maiden, Navpres, p. 138

⁷² *Ibid*, pp. 193-208.

aspects of that man's life, hence Counselors cannot afford to ignore any of one's problems.

Christian Counselors assume that man is a moral agent apart from being a victim. So in counseling the Counselor helps the client to forgive those one has fallen victim to, and also repent (ask God for forgiveness) for the wrong strategies he (client) has used to keep himself from further hurt, rather than turn to God to meet his crucial needs. Christian pastoral Counselors use prayer, Scripture, Church activities and Christian literature (In addition to the resources utilized by other Counselors) to help their clients solve their problems and grow to greater wholeness, Crabb has suggested a Christian model of counseling which has three levels:-

1. Encouraging people by speaking sensitively to their hidden fears;
2. Exhorting people by specifying biblical solutions to their problems in living;
3. Enlightening people to understand why their lives are disordered and how they can effect a deep change in their approach to life.⁷³

The first level counseling is supposed to be done by the whole Church congregation, the second level by those elders and members who feel talented and interested in helping others and have been trained through seminars and workshops, and the third level by trained Counselors who have gone through full time counselling course after their undergraduate degrees. However, the author believes that people who are

⁷³ Ibid, p. 138

intelligent but do not possess degrees can be trained to be pastoral Counselors. The difficult problems are to be referred to the third level Counselors.

According to Collins, traditionally, counseling has been divided into three categories: remedial, preventive and educative. Remedial counseling involves helping people to deal with the existing problems of life. Preventive counseling seeks to stop problems from getting worse or to prevent their occurrence at all. In educative counseling the Counselor takes the initiative to teach principles of mental health to larger groups.⁷⁴ The last type of counseling can only be done by people who are trained in psychology.

In this fast changing world, there are many rapid socio-economic and political changes caused by modern education, urbanization, industrialization, mass media, literally materials, films and videos. For example, in African countries, at the beginning of the last century people earned their living mostly through hunting, subsistence farming, fishing, keeping animals and trading using items such as cowrie shells, ivory and minerals. Banks and shops were not there. Today, young people mostly think of earning their living through working for salaries in industries, mechanized cash crop farms, professional institutions and offices. People are now struggling to acquire modern education and skills in order to win "white collar" jobs in factories, offices, and modern professions such as medicine, law, teaching, engineering and architecture.

⁷⁴ Collins, Op.cit p. 55

Wherever industries and trading centres have been built, people are converging there to work and reside, hence the growth of some urban centres. Through modern technology many literary materials are being published and circulated. Films and videos have been invented. They teach many things about life from the perspective of a diversity of cultures. The newspapers, televisions, radios, fax and computers help today's humankind live physically apart but very close in ideas because dissemination of information is very efficient for those with these facilities. Those who have access to these facilities have more knowledge of modern life than the illiterate elders who may not know some of the languages widely used in communicating cross-culturally. We are faced with unemployment which is pinching even the well educated. Many people are migrating from rural areas to "cities" hoping to get jobs there.

Before Vatican II, Christian theology regarded marriage as a voluntary vocation, a permanent bond between one man and one woman for the primary purpose of procreation and nurturing children. This position is no longer popular after Vatican II. According to Turner, religious innovations in Africa have continued to take place. Marriage provides legitimate relationship between men and women, built on mutual affection, credible relationship and a desire and to live an honest, conspicuous and credible existence. In a family relationship, we expect children to be brought up in an orderly context where love and care abides. Children are prepared to become

responsible adults and law-abiding citizens⁷⁵. The essential secondary end of marriage is mutual aid which is a remedy for concupiscence. Every Christian is free to choose either to be a virgin or to enter matrimony which is viewed as a way of mutual spiritual perfection.

According to the Jerusalem bible, marriage institution is holy (Genesis 1:27-28, Tobias 6:16-22, Matthew 19:8-9, Ephesians 5:22-33). In the nuclear Christian families, husbands are expected to love their wives the way Christ loved the Church and sacrificed himself for her as his bride. In marriage, each spouse gives the other power and right to use his/her body and no marriage is valid without this exchange of rights, so marriage in essence carries a necessary ordination to reproduction as its end.

Apart from propagating the human race, Christian matrimony brings forth children for the Church. The children are fellow citizens with saints and domestics of God (Ephesians 2:19). They are expected to be brought up for the worship of God and the saviour Jesus Christ. In the late decades of 20th century, it is important to note (especially among Catholics) that:-

Even though the secondary end, mutual perfection, is first in the thought of the majority of those about to be married, and even though this end tends to be psychologically predominant, especially in men, the primary end, procreation-education, is superior in dignity and in design.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ Gichinga, E.M In Mary Getui's (2008). *Responsible Leadership in Marriage and Family*. Nairobi. Acton Publishers

⁷⁶ Macdonald W. J. (1966). *New Catholic Encyclopedia*. New York, McGraw-Hillbook company. Vol. 9 pp.269/70.

This position has since changed and so the values of marriage among the Roman Catholics have also changed.

It is acknowledged that the ends of marriage are essentially inseparable. Unity and indissolubility are the two properties of marriage. The practice of polygamy or polyandry or when permanence is removed through separation or divorce attainment of the natural goals of marriage becomes impossible. For the good of children nature provides that the marriage union of parents be indissoluble. Divorce causes an irreparable loss for children by depriving them all that parents mean to them, such as love, security, guidance, protection, attention and training.

Love demands permanence, constancy and the impossibility of escape. The conjugal act in marriage is a sign and symbol of the deep love and a union of self-surrender. It is only when one's spouse dies that she/he is allowed to remarry at will⁷⁷. Marital counseling deals with interpersonal relationship during courting, in marriage and after marriage.

Mugambi states that among the normal adults in tropical Africa, marriage is regarded as one stage in the process of growing up. A person who does not pass through this rite of passage is considered immature. One of the reasons is that through marriage, a person learns to relate with a wide variety of individuals and communities both within

⁷⁷ Wambua, A.W (2004). African Cultural Heritage and Counseling. In Amani, A Pioneering Counseling and Training Model for Kenya and the Region. Nairobi Amani Counseling Centre and training Institute. pp 13-22.

the extended family and among the in-laws. Another reason is that the individual learns to become a responsible partner to care for the spouse. Parenthood is a further justification of the institution of marriage. Through marriage, the individual is publicly released to manage a household and own property as bequest to the offspring. Monogamy, polygamy, polygyny and polyandry are all recognized forms of marriage in tropical Africa, depending on the culture and specific context. It is therefore important to understand and appreciate this rite of passage as it is practiced in specific African cultural context⁷⁸.

In marriage counseling, Emmy Gichinga has discussed about the problems couples in Nairobi take to their Counselors. In her view, couples fear separation and divorce because of the stigma associated with them. The faith of married couples assists them to stay in their relationships because they are keen on turning to God in prayer when they have marital problems⁷⁹.

People who have been influenced by the above factors seem to have more experience about life than the traditional elders, who now feel incapable of guiding and counseling today's younger generations. The Counselors of contemporary people need to be people who are knowledgeable about the experiences of those they counsel. They also need to be trained in the modern approaches to providing both preventive and curative counseling. People in our modern societies (especially the

⁷⁸ Mugambi, J.N.K (2008). *Rites of Passage and Cultural education in Tropical Africa Today*. In Responsible Leadership in Marriage and Family by Getui, M.N; Nairobi. Acton publishers.

⁷⁹ Gichinga, Op.cit. pp 151-154.

educated ones who live in urban areas) seem to value specialization and that is why they will go to a Church Minister, modern Counselor, psychologist or doctor rather than go to a traditional herbalist or diviner-doctor when they have a psychological problem.

Silliman and Schumm observe that premarital counseling is provided by clergy, professional Counselors, paraprofessionals, and counseling trainees⁸⁰. Premarital counseling research and literature continually reports that clergy provide 75 to 80% of the premarital counseling offered⁸¹. Silliman, Schumm, and Jurich's study reported that most people desire clergy as a premarital counseling provider. Stahmann lends support, noting that premarital counseling has not been identified as a regular part of the clinical practice of today's family therapists⁸². This study sought to find out who provides the pastoral marital counseling in the in churches in Kenya.

Silliman, Schumm, and Jurich write that premarital counseling provider traits most valued by consumers are that the provider be well trained and respectful. On the contrary, the least desirable traits of providers are lack of openness and probing into the private lives of the couple. Silliman and Schumm add that providers should be open, warm, professionally competent, and able to provide confidentiality. The

⁸⁰ Silliman, B., & Schumm, W.R. (1999). Improving practice in marriage preparation. *Journal of Sex and Marital Therapy*, 25, 23-43.

⁸¹ Murray, C. E. (2004). *Empirical investigation of the relative importance of client characteristics and topics in premarital counseling*. (Unpublished dissertation) University of Florida, Gainesville.

⁸² Stahmann, R.F. (2000). Premarital counseling: A focus for family therapy. *Journal of Family Therapy*, 22, 104-117

authors stress the importance of professional competence over the providers' marital status.

Russell and Lyster assert that the timing of counseling has an impact on the satisfaction levels⁸³. Couples whose wedding date was close to the counseling sessions reported less satisfaction. The authors report that couples receiving counseling less than two months before the wedding took fewer risks in talking about troublesome issues and learning new skills than those receiving counseling more than two months before their wedding date. Silliman and Schumm suggest that premarital counseling should take place four to twelve months before the wedding, stating that new learning may pose a threat to wedding plans or established relationship patterns. They believe that couples can benefit from premarital counseling in all stages of their relationship; however, they should be advised of the risks of last minute training. There are a variety of assertions in premarital counseling research about the length and number of premarital counseling sessions. In this study, the researcher sought to find out the duration for prepastoral marital counseling and its place in the marriage process.

Williams, Riley, Risch, and Dyke conducted a study and found that eight to nine sessions are ideal⁸⁴. Silliman, Schumm, and Jurich conducted a study of 185 undergraduates which revealed that 3-4 hours in premarital counseling is preferred

⁸³ Risch, G. S., Riley, L. A., & Lawler, M. G. (2003). Problematic issues in the early years of marriage: Content for premarital education. *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, 31(3), 253-269.

⁸⁴ Williams, L.M., Riley, L.A., Risch, G.S., & Van Dyke, D.T. (2000). An Empirical Approach to Designing Marriage Preparation Programs. *The American Journal of Family Therapy*, 27, 271-283.

and options involving more than six hours produced significantly lower mean scores for desirability⁸⁵. Silliman and Schumm report that there are differences in the length and amount of sessions, depending on the type of premarital counseling program⁸⁶. The authors state that church based programs are usually shorter, rarely exceeding six hours. They also note that school or community programs are longer than church based programs, often requiring more than eight hours. Finally, Silliman and Schumm state that research-based programs are the longest, usually ranging from 10 to 30 hours of training. The authors add that weekend formats work well. They also report the same for short sessions that occur over several weeks. This study sought to find out the number of sessions churches use for the prepastoral marital counseling.

When a person has a psychological problem, it is only a person who is trained in modern counseling and psychology that may be most helpful to him. This is because a trained Counselor knows how to study a client's problem before assisting the client to solve it. People seem not to be satisfied with directives on what to do to solve problems, but they are rather interested in knowing the possible causes of their problems and also possible solutions to them so that they can choose the solutions they think are the best for their various problems. The author is of the view that those involved in counseling others should use whatever methods they think could be most useful in handling particular clients. A combination of counseling approaches (i.e. an

⁸⁵ Silliman, B., Schumm, W.R., & Jurich, A.P. (1992). *Young adults' preference for premarital preparation program designs: An exploratory study*. Contemporary Family Therapy, 14, 89-100.

⁸⁶ Silliman, B., & Schumm, W.R. (1999). Op.cit.

eclectic approach) is advocated for in order to ensure that clients benefit most from counseling.

2.2 Pastoral Training on Marital Counseling

Christian Counselors are unique in that they do not proceed in the same way and use methods or agree on the same explanations of why people behave as they do. The Denver Christian Counseling Centre views Christian Counselors as persons who have three distinct characteristics⁸⁷. First, they have received graduate training in both religion and behavioral science for a clinical practice that integrates psychological and theological disciplines. Second, Christian Counselors believe that there is One God in whose image and likeness we are created. They believe that we yearn for a transforming connection with the divine, and that psychotherapy can mediate the loving and healing nature of being itself.

Third, Christian Counselors also make therapeutic use of traditional religious resources such as prayer, Scripture reading, and participation in the worship and community life of a congregation. Adams notes that there are three people involved in counseling. He makes reference to Mt 18:20 to conclude that where a Christian Counselor and a counselee meet in Jesus name, they can expect the very presence of Christ as Counselor in charge⁸⁸. As a result, Christian Counselors also pay special attention to the religious history of the client and his or her family, noting how it may contribute to the suffering or resources needed for coping.

⁸⁷ Denver Christian Counseling Centre (2008). What is Christian Counseling? Online article: <http://www.denverchristiancounselor.com/denverchristiancounseling.html>, - 12 -12

⁸⁸ Adams, J.E (1986). Op.cit.

In his definition of a Christian Counselor, Collins indicates that a Christian Counselor is one who is a deeply committed, Spirit guided servant of Jesus Christ; applies his or her best God given abilities, skills, training, knowledge and insights; to the task of helping others move to personal wholeness, interpersonal competence, mental stability and spiritual maturity.”⁸⁹ This is a thought that he carries forth from his book in 1988 and which Meir, Minrith and Wichern concur with⁹⁰. They sum it up by referring to such a person as a wise Christian. That is one who is in pursuit of God, knows God’s word in a living way, knows the importance of prayer, values fellowship with godly people and shares the word of God.

Meir, Minrith and Wichern term this as the basic characteristics of a Christian Counselor. They however outline other essential qualities which they term as learned or gifts from the Lord. These include accepting attitude, good listening skills, and knowledge of proper technique, appropriate use of scripture and prayer, unshockable response, confidence and a sense of humour. They do outline the need for proper training for Christian Counselors. Adams sums it up by pointing out that it is not experience, but biblical truth and skills developed by biblical principles that qualify someone to counsel⁹¹.

Odell (2000) identified three factors that contribute to a positive outcome in

⁸⁹ Collins, G.R (1988). *Christian Counseling: A Comprehensive Guide*. Revised Edition. U.S.A: W Publishing Group.

⁹⁰ Meir P., Minrith M., Wichern F. (1989). *Introduction to Psychology and Counseling: Christian Perspectives and Applications*. Michigan: Baker.

⁹¹ Adams, J.E (1983). Op.cit.

counseling. First of all, he observed that a positive therapeutic outcome is a function of the Counselor's ability to match therapeutic interventions with the particular challenges presented by the client or couple⁹². In this regard, the manualized treatment strategies of Worthington and Wright serve to focus the work of the pastoral or Christian marital Counselor by providing specific interventions designed for use with particular types of issues or at specific points in the therapeutic process. In addition to these strategies, the published empirical research on Christian marital therapy provides pastors and Christian marital therapists with important data supporting the effectiveness of specific interventions or strategies in specific contexts⁹³.

Second, Odell (2000) observed that a positive therapeutic outcome is a function of the Counselor's ability to work with the values of the client or couple⁹⁴. This observation is supported by Worthington's research team who has noted that therapeutic outcomes with highly religious clients are improved when the therapist is able to employ those values in the therapeutic process⁹⁵. One significant aspect of these findings is that, while the Christian counseling literature frequently focuses on the theoretical interface between theology and counseling theory, clients appear to be primarily concerned about the interface between their theological values and those of the Counselor or therapist. Finally, Odell observed that a positive therapeutic

⁹² Odell, M. (2000). *Errors in therapy*. Supervision Bulletin, Spring, 10-11.

⁹³ Ibid

⁹⁴ Ibid

⁹⁵ Ripley, J. S., Parrott, L., III, Worthington, E. L., Jr., Parrott, L., & Smith, C. (2001). *An initial empirical examination of the Parrott's marriage mentoring: Training the program coordinators*. Marriage and Family: A Christian Journal, 4(1), 77-94

outcome is a function of the Counselor's ability to employ a therapeutic model that "fits" the client's understanding of the presenting problem. This study sought to establish the qualifications of marital pastoral Counselors. This entailed educational and professional qualifications of the marital pastoral Counselors.

2.3 Content of Marital Counseling Programmes and Services

This section presents literature on the coverage of the marital counseling in terms of the services and contents.

2.3.1 Influence of Family and Social Background

For many writers on marriage preparation, it is vital that each partner identifies the influence of family of origin in the shaping of their individuality as well as the possible differences of values and perceptions concerning marriage that may arise between the couples as a consequence of their respective family background. The work of Kenneth Mitchell and Herbert Anderson in this regard is particularly notable as they focused exclusively on the family of origin in their marriage preparation⁹⁶. In 1981 they published a seminal journal article on their approach to marriage preparation, specifically adopting the family systems perspective of the time "as the most useful way to make a bridge between past experience of being in a family and the expected experience of beginning a new family". From the family system perspective, the identification of the couple's possible emotional and psychological attachment to their families of origin is seen by these authors to be critical if the

⁹⁶ Mitchell, K.R & Anderson, H. (1981). *You Must Leave Before You Can Cleave: A Family Systems Approach to Premarital Pastoral Work*. *Pastoral Psychology*, 30(2):71-88.

couple's marriage is to work. In exploring the dynamics of the families of origin, Mitchell and Anderson in particular focused on attitudes about sexuality, the handling of money and the place of religion within their family of origin.

Anderson continued with this approach after Mitchell died in 1991 by publishing a full-length book in 1993 with Robert Fife on marriage preparation. The specific focus of their book revolves around the concept "to cleave" which is taken from the King James Version of Genesis 2:24: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." They argue that "cleave" carries both the meaning of "sticking or adhering to" and "to sever, to part or disunite". In effect this means that it is necessary "to cleave or separate oneself from one's origins in order to cleave or attach to someone in the bond of marriage"⁹⁷. For Anderson and Fife the metaphor "of one flesh" reflect their understanding that the modern bonds of marriage represent two people who leave father and mother to become united in a new bond and yet remain two distinctive identities⁹⁸. They conclude that the freedom to make an emotional commitment to another human being and to accept that person's claim on one's life depends on letting go of and being released from or at least redefining the claims and commitments of our families of origin and our friends. The longer it takes to effect an emotional separation from our family and friends, the longer it will take to become married.

⁹⁷ Anderson, H & Fife, R C 1993. *Becoming Married*. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox Press.

⁹⁸ Ibid

Anderson and Fife require of their couples in preparation for marriage to construct a genogram of their respective families with the object in mind of capturing the many family stories that reflect the special meanings of past remembrances. What is notable about their approach is that it has a strongly narrative flavour. They make the point that: Norma Wood and Herbert Stroup had similarly based their premarital counseling course on Bowenian family systems theory, inviting the couples to examine their relationship “by studying each partner’s ‘family of origin’ system”⁹⁹. Each partner is required to draw their family genogram back to paternal and maternal grandparents and then to consider their family culture and values in terms of finances, religion, emotional relating, power and authority as well as freedom of individuality, sexuality¹⁰⁰.

During initiation to adulthood, indigenous boys and girls were taught by special men and women elders the kind of challenges to expect in marriage. The approach to life was communal and therefore, the individual personality differences among people were not made the focus of the traditional education on marriage life. So, here in Kenya, our approach to marriage and family has been different from that of Westerners.

Another writer, David Lawson, had a similar approach to marriage preparation in that he viewed the “differentiation of the self” as being “particularly critical in premarital

⁹⁹ Wood, N.S & Stroup H.W (1990). Family Systems in Premarital Counseling. *Pastoral Psychology*, 39(2):111-119.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid

preparation as it is a requisite for healthy and growth engendering functioning in the newly-formed family system”¹⁰¹. The work of marriage preparation, according to Lawson, is to aid the couple in “rebalancing relationships within their family of origin without severing family bonds”. This approach involves the exploration of relationships in the family of origin, including family rules, and the extent to which the process of self differentiation has taken place thereby enabling the couple “to determine their own structure for family functioning”¹⁰².

Other marriage preparation writers have also included the influence of the family of origin in the couple’s discovery of their own identity and values but as only part of their marriage preparation courses.

Of the earlier writers, Mace had insisted that marriage preparation starts with each partner finding out who they are by first identifying their family background before going on to consider their social adjustment, education, spirituality, sexuality and physical and mental well-being¹⁰³.

Guldner, who had developed a seven-session marriage preparation course after evaluating premarital counseling training courses during the late 1960s, devoted the third session to what he called the couples’ “self-system”, which would have

¹⁰¹ Ibid

¹⁰² Lawson, D.J (1983). Differentiation in Premarital Preparation. *Journal of Psychology and Christianity*, 4(3):56-63.

¹⁰³ Mace, DR (1972).. *Getting Ready for Marriage*. Nashville: Abington Press.

“emerged in the families of origin”. Couples are also required to look at the best and the worse life experience they ever had and how they had coped with it¹⁰⁴.

Charles Wood developed a set of questions around family background, symbols of power and value (money, education, and career), sexuality, religion and personal identity¹⁰⁵. The purpose of the questions are to invite the couple to see that in all facets of similarity and differences the events of their relationship are at the same time capable of being obstacles to the relationship and opportunities for the development of the relationship.

Interestingly Michael Foley in his book on marriage preparation positioned his approach on the assumption that “many of the traditional customs, values and practices surrounding the family are being called into question”. Furthermore, according to his view, couples often live away from the support of family and childhood communities, and since both husband and wife are out in the work place and women “have a right to develop as people”, traditional roles within the family need “be negotiated according to the different situations which prevail in each marriage”¹⁰⁶. The author concurs with Foley that each context should determine how each couple will live within their marriage. The traditional ways may not automatically hold in the current situations.

¹⁰⁴ Guldner, C.A (1977). *Marriage Preparation and Marriage Enrichment: The Preventive Approach*. *Pastoral Psychology*, 25(4):248-259.

¹⁰⁵ Wood, C. (1979). *Premarital Counseling: A Working Model*. *Journal of Pastoral Care*, 23(1):44-50.

¹⁰⁶ Foley, M. (1981). *Marriage – A Relationship: Preparation and Fulfilment*. London: Darton, Longman & Todd

Klassen's premarital counseling model focuses on discussing seven areas with the couple, starting with the area of family background as critical role model and influence in the lives of the couple (Klassen), while Rolfe made the argument for Christian marriage preparation as a time to assess the dynamics of the couple's relationship in terms of their family heritages¹⁰⁷.

Of the other later marriage preparation writers, Wilson requires of a couple preparing for marriage that they fill out a Premarital Awareness Inventory which provides general background to each partner and forms the basis for further exploration of each individual's personal life journey by taking a closer look at their family of origin relationships¹⁰⁸. Whether Wilson consciously so intended is not clear, but his Premarital Awareness Inventory has a notably social constructionist flavour. According to him the point of the exercise is to provide "a structured context in which couples can share their story as a sacred opportunity" while teaching "the couple the richness which can exist in the diversity of perceptions and perspectives". In particular, it is his position that "the perceptions that others have of us, significantly influence the parameters of our relationships", which is why "the importance of each person listening to the other's story cannot be over-emphasized"¹⁰⁹.

¹⁰⁷ Klassen, M (1983). Counseling for Quality: Some Considerations for Premarital Counseling in the Church. *Journal of Pastoral Counseling*, 18:73-80.

¹⁰⁸ Wilson, K. (1991). Marriage Preparation as Ministry: A Model of Pastoral Premarital Counseling. In LeFevre, P and Schroeder, W W (eds.) *Creative Ministries in Contemporary Christianity*. Chicago, Ill.: Exploration Press.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid

Giblin focuses on two of his four marriage preparation sessions on the family of origin as the model for “relational intimacy”. He argues that although many modern couples “may assume they are beyond the influence of such factors ... we continue to carry ‘invisible loyalties’, the images and patterns of thinking, feeling, and behaving from the past”. To this end, Giblin also requires a genogram to be drawn that is intended to identify how the “models of being male and female, father and mother, husband and wife” may have influenced the couple partners¹¹⁰.

Kromker in his marriage preparation course, focuses specifically on the couples identifying the expectations that they may have acquired from their families of origin and then alerting them to consider in the light of this awareness what they could realistically expect in their marriage¹¹¹.

In her guide for Marriage Sponsor Couples, Mary Ann Paulukonis devotes the first of her four-session marriage preparation course to placing marriage within the context of the Christian family, which is seen as a reflection of the relational life of the Trinity¹¹². This relational aspect of the family can therefore be seen as a developing system where each engaged person is part of their family of origin, where they have learnt different responses to people and circumstance. The couple needs to appreciate these differences and where necessary to modify these responses in order to develop a

¹¹⁰ Giblin, P. (1994). *Premarital Preparation: Three Approaches*. *Pastoral Psychology*, 42(3):147-161.

¹¹¹ Kromker, S. (1994). *Preparation for Marriage: The Evaluation of a Premarital Programme for Trinity Baptist Church*. Unpublished MA (Social Work) Thesis, University of Port Elizabeth.

¹¹² Paulukonis, Op.cit.

healthy family where there is good communication, trust, respect, sharing and responsibility. An important aspect of the family life cycle, according to Paulukonis, is that change is a normal and inevitable factor in every family as the life cycle passes from the newly-wed family through to the young family, adolescent, midlife and finally aging family.

In Kenya, people who are getting married and starting families are influenced by the Western education to a good extent. They are no longer in the traditional African setting, therefore to know about family cycle is relevant to them. They should be prepared for a different way of living which is not much supported by the indigenous social supports like the extended families, clans, relatives, children and grand parents.

2.3.2 Personality Dispositions

It is notable that not many of the marriage preparation writers under review give much time, if any, to the impact or otherwise of personality disposition on the marriage. In fact, it is only Kromker, who in his Master's dissertation identifies personality as a critical element to be considered by couples preparing for marriage and he follows the four-temperament model of Tim La Haye and Arnold Mol¹¹³ which include the four temperaments of melancholy, phlegmatic, choleric and sanguine. Kromker does point out that there is a danger of labelling people as it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. For Kromker temperament analysis is seen only as

¹¹³ Mol, A. (1981). *Let's Both Win*. Pretoria: Femina.

Neuger, C.C & Poling, J.N (1997). *Gender and Theology*. In Neuger, C C & Poling, J N *The Care of Men*, Nashville: Abingdon Press.

indicator of where the focus should be in the relationship¹¹⁴. The author is of the view that marital pastoral Counselors have a responsibility of informing couples on the influence of their personality types on their marital relationships. This should start at the pre-marital stage of the process. The study also sought to find out whether personality traits was a component of the pastoral marital counseling in the Churches studied.

Guldner does not specifically speak of personality although his third session is devoted to the couples “as persons their self-systems” (author’s emphasis), although he specifically links the shaping of the self-system to their families of origin¹¹⁵. Klassen is concerned with the impact of the couple’s self-esteem on their relationship and he quotes the social science research of his day to the effect that good self-esteem predicts a good quality of marital life. In this regard it is interesting to note that the more recent quantitative research of Murray et al. suggests that partners with a negative self-image invariably underestimate the affection they are receiving which leads to unsatisfactory relationships¹¹⁶.

Mace asks his premarital couples to explore how well they know themselves: “who you are, how you came to be what you are, where you stand now, and what you are asking of life?” These questions are explored within the context of evaluating their

¹¹⁴ Kromker, S (1994). Op.cit.

¹¹⁵ Gardner, S. P., Giese, K., & Parrott, S. M. (2004). *Evaluation of the connections: Relationship and marriage curriculum*. *Family Relations*, 53, 521-527.

¹¹⁶ Murray, C.E (2006). Which Topics Are Important to Address in Premarital Counseling? A Survey of Clergy. *The Journal of Pastoral Care and Counseling*, 60(1-2):69-81.

family background, while taking a critical look at their social adjustment and intellectual, vocational and spiritual development. Furthermore, the couple are requested to consider their past sexual experiences and attitude towards their own sexuality as well as their past love relationships¹¹⁷. It is interesting that Mace does not offer a personality framework within which the couple could undertake this self exploration, although when he gets the couple to explore the nature of their relationship he refers to “temperament differences” such as introversion-extraversion as a possible future source for conflict¹¹⁸.

2.3.3 Marital Roles and Responsibilities

The issue of marital roles in the home versus career receives considerable attention from Christian writers on marriage preparation and it is notable that although the liberation of women in the home and the workplace is acknowledged, marriage preparation writers still see that perceptions and expectations concerning respective roles and responsibilities of husband and wife in the home and workplace need to be understood and negotiated.

According to Mace (1972:62-67), as couples identify their individual expectations and goals for their marriage and then discusses how these expectations may need to be altered, adjusted or even dropped if in conflict with the building of a unified marital relationship. Couples are encouraged to recognize that “no close relationship

¹¹⁷ Mace, Op.cit.

¹¹⁸ Ibid

can be achieved and maintained in any other way than by resolving the conflict which it inevitably produces”¹¹⁹.

The fourth session of Guldner’s marriage preparation course is assigned to marital activities, which include a wide range of issues such as housekeeping and routines, budget, food, relationship with others, religious activities and self-development, there is no indication that the role of husband and wife in relation to these activities is actually considered¹²⁰.

Although Foley also alludes to the social revolution of the emancipation of women, he insists that if the future husband and wife are to be equal partners then the differences between the sexes and personalities need to be understood and recognized by the couple preparing for marriage¹²¹. Foley’s position is that there is still considerable ignorance concerning the effects of a woman’s reproductive physiology (menstruation and childbearing) on her personhood requiring the sympathy and understanding of the husband. Although Foley is cautious not to generalize as to psychological differences between men and women, he does go on to take a modernist position and claims that men “tend” to be concerned with ideas and theories while women are more people-centered and men are more functional whereas women are more concerned with beauty than utility. Foley admits, however, that differences as to the expression of feelings has as much to do with social

¹¹⁹ Ibid

¹²⁰ Guldner, Op.cit

¹²¹ Foley. Op.cit

conditioning as so-called gender differences, where boys are brought up not to show their feelings. This has also been true in the traditional African life setting. The African men usually suffer in silence because culture has not prepared them to be talking about their problems and hurts. Counseling can help them to become open and get assistance when life in the marriage and family lands them into some problems.

Klassen is of the view that to avoid later misunderstandings in the marriage, role clarification for the couple is encouraged. He points to the change in the traditional work and domestic roles within marriage and the need for the premarital couple to clarify their personal role expectations as future husband and wife¹²². Rolfe requires of couples preparing for marriage to look at and discuss their expectations of marriage, children, leisure time and friends¹²³.

In her book on a parish team approach to marriage preparation, Margaret Grimer stresses the importance of really listening to the couple being prepared for marriage¹²⁴. She points to research that indicates couples often think they share domestic roles but in reality the wife still carries the greater burden within the home and therefore the premarital couple need to clearly identify their role expectations in the light of the model of the parents as well as current social trends. Couples should be open to negotiate their roles as husband and wife within the home as well as the

¹²²Klassen, Op.cit

¹²³ Rolfe, D.J (1985). Developing Skills and Credibility in Marriage Preparation Ministry. *Pastoral Psychology*, 33(3):110-172.

¹²⁴ Grimer, M. (1986). *Water Made Wine: A Parish Team Approach to Marriage Preparation*. London: Darton, Longman and Todd.

attitudes they hold regarding their respective working life. In particular, care needs to be taken that the value of equality in the workplace is not mere lip-service, but that there is a clear understanding of the impact of work life on the home¹²⁵.

Wilson' approach to marriage preparation has a distinctive post-modern flavour in that he points out that "the perceptions that others have of us, significantly influence the parameters of our relationships"¹²⁶. This is why for him "the importance of each person listening to the other's story cannot be over-emphasized". His premarital counseling program would then include the couple exploring their respective external relationships (with family, friends) and internal relationships (regarding marital roles, sexuality, family planning and communication skills).

Giblin, who writes from the perspective of pastoral care within the United States context and claims experience in both research and practice regarding premarital programmes, devotes two full sessions of his marriage preparation course on the couples discussing and clarifying their expectations, realistic and unrealistic, of marriage. This process would involve examining the models that they had learned from their families of origin¹²⁷. In Kenya, the influence of the families of origin cannot be ignored in premarital counseling. The author therefore sought to find out the whether in-laws influence is to blame for the problems facing married couples.

¹²⁵ Ibid

¹²⁶ Wilson, Op.cit

¹²⁷ Giblin, Op.cit.

2.3.4 Communication Skills and Conflict Resolution

Communication in the marital relationship and in particular the resolving of conflict has received considerable attention from a number of marriage preparation writers. Foley (1981:33) is quite clear that “one of the most necessary elements in a satisfactory marriage is good communication” and that this gets to the very heart of what marriage is all about. For Foley, the difficulty of communication between husband and wife is seen within the context of the newly-wed couple adjusting to one another while living under the daily pressures of working, which often leaves the couple too tired at the end of the day to communicate effectively (Foley 1981:34-35). While pregnancy and the arrival of children ideally should help cement the couple’s relationship, often these changed circumstances pose new challenges to their relationship. According to Foley the husband may feel threatened by the new mother’s absorption with her baby. Whether one agrees with this gender generalization or not there is no doubt that the previous one-to-one relationship of the couple can only be maintained with the arrival of children by making time to communicate at an intimate level (Foley 1981:35-36).

For Klassen, the quality of marriage is dependent on effective communication and therefore he argues that it is necessary for the premarital couple to identify any faulty communication between them¹²⁸. Interestingly, Klassen refers to social science research of his day to support his arguments. He cites a study by Schulman that faulty communication can often be found to be at the root of the couple’s misconceptions of

128 Klassen, Op.cit

one another. Of particular importance for Klassen is the connection between communication and self-esteem and he quotes Miller, Corrales and Wackman to the effect that “by the way people communicate to each other, they are demonstrating their intention to maintain and build, or to destroy, their own and the other person’s esteem”. As regards communication and conflict resolution, Klassen (1983:76-77) refers to the findings of Knudson, Sommers and Golding (1980) that there is a direct correlation between couple’s access to one another’s interpersonal perceptions and their ability to resolve conflict.¹²⁹

According to Fr. John Thomas and Fr. David Thomas, good marital communication involves giving attention to a number of factors, including that both parties are clear about the meaning of words used between them; acknowledging and respecting the feelings of one another; adopting a non-judgmental and open acceptance of the other person in the relationship and avoiding accusations¹³⁰. They draw attention to the importance of non-verbal elements in communication and recommend touch as one of the most powerful forms of communication in marriage¹³¹. Constructive conflict resolution requires the avoidance of negative tactics such as the silent treatment; lower the emotional temperature by postponing the argument; stay focused on the issue at hand; and to refrain from dragging past issues into the present argument.

¹²⁹ Ibid

¹³⁰ Thomas, J. L and Thomas D.M (1994). *Beginning Your Marriage*. Chicago: Acta Publications.

¹³¹ Ibid

Couples are urged to listen before responding and to keep a measured, calm tone to their voices¹³².

Giblin similarly links “effective marital functioning” to skilful communication and conflict resolution in the marriage and he identifies the need for self-disclosure in the relationship and taking the risk of speaking one’s heart to one’s partner, sharing feelings, even anger¹³³. Good communication requires adopting active listening skills, seeking clarification when in doubt and using “I” statements to take ownership of one’s expressed feelings, values and ideas.

Although Paulukonis’ guide to marriage preparation is written from the perspective of the Marriage Sponsor Couples, “married couples who help engaged and newly married couples prepare for Christian marriage”, the aim of this guide is for engaged couples preparing for marriage to develop their communication skills as modelled by the Marriage Sponsor Couple. The communication skills modelled and practiced in the remaining three sessions include the communication skills of attending, reflective listening (labelling feelings and identifying content), responding (empathy, questioning and respect) and presenting (i.e. summarizing, sharing self and confronting)¹³⁴.

¹³² Ibid

¹³³ Giblin, Op.cit

¹³⁴ Paulukonis, Op.cit

The recent review article by writer Joan Groom on mostly Christian premarital programmes and some social science research studies, highlights that of all the factors that positively influence a stable marriage, which include social background and contextual factors as well as individual traits and behaviour, it is the couple's "interactional processes" that are of the greatest importance. According to her review, the greatest predictors of marital conflict are criticism, defensiveness, contempt and listener withdrawal¹³⁵. The counter to these negative interactional communication processes would be behaviour that includes "intimate" behaviour (affection and sex); "interactive" behaviour (conversation and courtesy); "instrumental" behaviour (personal care and household management) and "companionship" that includes recreation and joint activities¹³⁶.

To improve communication between marital couples, Groom cites with approval a communication tool known as "The Speaker-Listener Technique", which involves the speaker holding an object while speaking and the listener remaining silent until the object is passed on to them. The speaker may only speak for themselves and the listener is required to paraphrase what had been heard¹³⁷. In addition, couples are encouraged to practice "social support", which includes "communication caring", the validation of the other's words, feelings and actions, and the provision of information, assistance and tangible resources. Finally, Groom concludes "the fundamental need

¹³⁵ Groom, J. (2001). What Works in Premarital Counseling. *Journal of Pastoral Counseling*, 36: 46-59.

¹³⁶ Ibid

¹³⁷ Ibid

for the individuals in the relationship to recognize the role basis values such as courage, honesty, generosity and self restraint play in their interactions”¹³⁸.

Relating to the field of marital conflict, a study by Baxter (1990) was of notable interest as this quantitative research study asserted that conflict inevitably arises in intimate relationships where there are conflicting needs for closeness and independence; openness, honesty and privacy; and the comfort of predictability and the excitement of the unexpected¹³⁹.

In their earlier review of the research field of marriage, Baron and Byrne(1994:340) observed that, as the marital relationship deteriorates, the positive affirmations are replaced by rudeness, sarcasm, criticism and other negative messages. According to the research findings of Bradbury and Fincham, couples in conflict tend to blame one another and express negative evaluations of one another instead of trying to resolve their problems¹⁴⁰.

In a later review of the social psychology research on close relationships, Baron and Byrne noted work that echo some of the sentiments of the above mentioned Christian writers, namely that in situations of marital conflict, attacking your partner’s positive

¹³⁸ Ibid

¹³⁹ Baxter, R. (1990). *The Practical Works of the Rev. Richard Baxter: Volume XVII*. Edited by William Orme. *The Cure of Melancholy and Overmuch Sorrow, by Faith and Physic*. London: Paternoster.

¹⁴⁰ Bradbury, T .N & Fincham, F.D (1992). Attributions and Behaviour in Marital Interaction. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 63:613-628.

self-evaluation should be avoided¹⁴¹. Other research advise couples to rather pause and consider their actions before acting or speaking, to be empathic towards one another when arguing, and not to become hostile or defensive when they experience conflict in their relationship. A quantitative study from 2001 indicated that couples experience greater intimacy in their relationship when each partner feels understood and the interaction between them is pleasant, positive feelings are expressed and emotions and private information are disclosed¹⁴². This findings underscore the value of sound communication in a marriage relationship concerning what we perceive as either positive or negative about the relationship.

2.3.5 Love, Sexuality and Children

2.3.5.1 Love

Interestingly, not many of the writers on Christian marriage preparation consulted for this literature review pay particular attention to love and romance in the marriage. However, a number of social psychologist researchers have done research on love and marriage and so before taking a look at the marriage preparation writers on the topic, the quantitative social research in this field is first briefly reviewed. It should however be noted that this research does not appear to have taken into account the feminist liberation perspective of the past twenty-five years that has sought to understand the

¹⁴¹ Baron, R.A & Byrne, D. (1994). *Social Psychology: Understanding Human Interaction*. 7th ed. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

¹⁴² Ibid

power relationships of patriarchy and to find ways to relate to one another that reflects our common humanity¹⁴³.

In their earlier research review of social science studies of the field, Baron and Byrne ask what is meant by love and refer to Hatfield's work on "passionate love" that is characterized as sexual attraction and physical arousal for the loved person, a desire to be constantly in their presence and despair at separation and ending the relationship. Hatfield and Sprecher went on to develop the Passionate Love Scale that measured these emotional aspects of passionate love¹⁴⁴.

Some social science research has sought an explanation for the occurrence of romantic love by means of patriarchal, bio-evolutionary discourse that holds the view that attraction to the appropriate love object has to do with reproduction and protection of the offspring¹⁴⁵. An alternative patriarchal discourse that is offered by social psychology research suggests that potential partners form a relationship based on an equitable exchange, with the emphasis of the success of the male being exchanged for the attractive attributes of the woman¹⁴⁶.

¹⁴³ Neuger, C.C & Poling, J.N (1997). *Gender and Theology*. In Neuger, C C & Poling, J N *The Care of Men*, Nashville: Abingdon Press.

¹⁴⁴ Hatfield, E. & Sprecher S. (1986). Measuring Passionate Love in Intimate Relations. *Journal of Adolescence*, 9:383-410.

¹⁴⁵ Baron, Op.cit

¹⁴⁶ Ibid

Social science researchers also look to psychological explanations for romantic behaviour such as that of the perceptions of one another tends to be favourably biased towards one's own ideal self while the virtues of the loved one are emphasized and any faults minimized. Accordingly, matching one's partner closely to the projected ideal ensures a happier relationship and stands a good chance of lasting¹⁴⁷. The research of Knee is interesting in this respect as it supports the theory that the relationship tends to be strengthened over time when a couple believe they are meant for one another¹⁴⁸.

In the late 1980s Robert Steinberg sought an explanation for what sustained long-lasting relationships, and notably marriages, and developed the Triangular Model of Love that measures the balance and presence of the love elements of intimacy (i.e. emotional closeness), passion (sexual attraction) and decision/commitment (reflecting the cognitive commitment to the relationship)¹⁴⁹. The ideal form of love, consummate love, would be when all three of these components are in balance and equally strong¹⁵⁰. On the other hand, an earlier study in the 1980s of 351 couples married fifteen years or longer found that the couples ascribed the success of their marriages on the presence of friendship, commitment, similarity and positive affect¹⁵¹. While a study in the mid-1990s identified "companionate love", i.e. activities that are shared,

¹⁴⁷ Ibid

¹⁴⁸ Knee, C.R (1998). Implicit Theories of Relationships: Assessment and Prediction of Romantic Relationship Initiation, Coping and Longevity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 74:360-370.

¹⁴⁹ Steinberg, R. (1986). A Triangular Theory of Love. *Psychological Review*, 93(2):119-135.

¹⁵⁰ Baron, Op.cit

¹⁵¹ Ibid

joint projects that are worked on, ideas that are exchanged and couples ability to laugh together, as ensuring marital satisfaction¹⁵².

The presence of similarity in the relationship had also been identified by social psychology research as a positive contributor to a fulfilling and lasting relationship. Some research has actually identified that couples often enter a relationship assuming greater similarity of partners than actually exists. A longitudinal study during the early 1990s indicated that similarity of couples had remained constant over time from the time of their engagement through twenty years of married life¹⁵³. On the other hand, some social science research discourse suggests that the very differences that initially had attracted later lead to disenchantment. Dissimilarities that cause marital conflict are not evident during the passionate love phase before marriage, but no matter how passionate the initial attraction, invariably differences and negative qualities become apparent between married couples and which over time tend to be less tolerated¹⁵⁴.

Returning to the Christian marriage preparation writers, of particular interest are the writings of Claude Guldner, Michael Foley and John Thomas and David Thomas. The latter three writers in particular see love in marriage as central to the modern marriage and they are concerned with the creation of intimacy and development of the personal relationship throughout the marriage. This is the teaching of Catholic Church since

¹⁵² Ibid

¹⁵³ Ibid

¹⁵⁴ Ibid

Vatican II Council. The traditional authors I handled earlier did not put emphasis on love and intimacy in marriage as central throughout the marriage. To modern people, the way people relate in a marriage matters a lot.

In traditional African life, people could be expected to marry and then cultivate their love for one another. This happened among the traditional Akamba who live in Machakos County. Other Kenyan ethnic communities did not behave differently from the Akamba. The modern Akamba couples are influenced by Western education and Christianity hence they highly value love, intimacy and a happy relationship as qualities to nurture in marriage.

Two of Guldner's seven-session marriage preparation course are relevant to love and marriage. The second session encourages the couple to explore "their attitudes regarding love and marriage", which includes companionship, sharing and affection. Session Five is intended to assist "the couple in exploring together the feeling or emotional dimensions of the relationship", which includes closeness and distance, dominance and submission, receiving and giving nurturance, and capacity for empathy¹⁵⁵.

Foley points to the loving relationship in marriage as a recent development in modern society¹⁵⁶. Previously, marriage was seen as a contract between two people that

¹⁵⁵ Guldner, Op.cit

¹⁵⁶ Foley, Op.cit

necessitates duties and rights and with the man enjoying the greater rights. At the same time, Foley is careful to define love in marriage not as a falling in love that implies merely a romantic, sexual relationship, but rather the adoption of conscious decisions each day to love your partner. Love is giving, not taking. To truly love in marriage, Foley says “we have to die to our selfish, single way of life in order to lead a new, shared life based on mutual self-giving”¹⁵⁷. Foley concludes by referring to Paul’s letter to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 13: 4-7), acknowledging that this passage refers to all Christian relationships, but that it holds a particular meaning for married couples. In the four verses Paul says:

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil, but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres (NIV, 1 Cor. 13: 4-7).

This way of viewing marriage as an important social institution applies to the Kenyan situation and Africa in general.

According to Thomas and Thomas we have been “created by the God of love with a huge desire to love and be loved”. At the same time, as we enter adulthood, aware of our mortality and dependent on our own resources, we come to the realization of our “ultimate aloneness”¹⁵⁸. Although marriage offers relief of this pain of loneliness, the risk of love lies in becoming vulnerable as we drop our personal defenses, revealing our fears, hopes and weaknesses to our loved one¹⁵⁹. Furthermore, “to fully love another”, Thomas and Thomas remind us that we must first love ourselves. If we

¹⁵⁷ Ibid

¹⁵⁸ Thomas, Op.cit

¹⁵⁹ Ibid

enter marriage with a sense of personal inadequacy we are more likely to take than to give in the relationship¹⁶⁰. In line with their argument, Thomas and Thomas characterize marital love as always being respectful towards one's beloved; to give more than to take; to be discerning about our beloved's real needs; to be fully committed to the other, and, where understanding moves into action for the other¹⁶¹.

The author is of the view that pastoral marital counseling in Kenya should seek to prepare and assist people to engage in marriages where sacrificial love is practiced. When spouses practice selfless love then the other find it easy to reciprocate and make the marriage life enjoyable. If this practice can spread in Africa and Kenya in particular, then it can be hoped that marital problems would diminish and the families and Churches together with the general society would benefit. They would use their resources and time to improve their living standards.

2.3.5.2 Sexuality

Sexuality in marriage is included in the marriage preparation courses of a number of Christian authors writing in the main during the 1970s and 1980s on the subject. The theological point of departure for most of these writers is that: In marriage, God's gifts of sex and affection find their true and lasting expression in an indissoluble relationship¹⁶². This drop has occurred in the U.S.A. From the media reports, the same could be happening in Kenya. The media pornography has provoked the youth to want to know about their sexuality through experimenting with their bodies, thus,

¹⁶⁰ Ibid

¹⁶¹ Ibid

¹⁶² Anglican Prayer Book (1989). *Anglican Church of Southern Africa (ACSA)*. London: Collins.

they become sexually active at an early stage. I believe there may be other factors leading to the scenario.

However, before attending to the marriage preparation literature where this relational approach to sexuality in marriage is described, it is of interest to once again note, when turning to social science research, the patriarchal discourse that holds men are more physical in their relationships than women. According to this discourse, women are generally distressed when their male partners are not loving and protective towards them, whereas men are distressed when their female partners rejected them sexually. Other quantitative research on jealousy in intimate relationships similarly reflect the conventional discourse that men tend to become jealous in relation to sexual infidelity whereas women are inclined to jealousy and feel threatened when their partner becomes emotionally committed to someone else. One wonders to what extent this patriarchal discourse is reflected in the research findings of over 80 percent of United States college men reporting that they had sexual relations without any emotional commitment, while the same percentage of college women had reported they required emotional involvement as a prerequisite for sexual relations¹⁶³. Of particular interest for Christian marriage preparation are those social science studies that highlight the growing number of young couples who are engaged in premarital sexuality. Already during the 1980s research studies had noted how premarital sexuality had changed since the 1960s and that sex had become accepted as part of intimate relationships. This trend has continued as the age for first-time

¹⁶³ Baron, Op.cit

intercourse had dropped since the 1970s through to the 1990s for boys at seventeen years of age and sixteen for girls¹⁶⁴.

As to the role of sexuality in intimate relationship, the later review by Baron and Byrne is of some interest as they had reported that whereas at least 56 percent of cohabiting couples have sex at least twice a week, amongst married couples sexual activity declines within the first four years of marriage from 11 intercourse acts every four weeks to 5.¹⁶⁵ Of particular note for Christian marriage preparation on sexuality is the earlier study by Udry that concluded “the rate of decline in frequency of intercourse is an inverse function of length of marriage. The fastest rate of decline is in the early years of marriage; the longer married, the slower the rate of decline.”¹⁶⁶

Returning to the Christian marriage preparation literature and the subject of sexuality in marriage, Mace’s *Getting Ready for Marriage*, is written from his perspective as a seasoned marriage Counselor and is set against the era of human sexuality studies by Masters and Johnson and the plethora of popular literature on mainly sexual techniques¹⁶⁷. Mace welcomes this new openness concerning sexuality but suggests that couples should consider five areas of sexuality in marriage. Firstly, couples are urged to find out whether their sexual education is adequate and informative. Secondly, each partner should be comfortable about their own sexual nature, and

¹⁶⁴ Ibid

¹⁶⁵ Ibid

¹⁶⁶ Udry, J.R (1980). *Changes in the Frequency of Marital Intercourse from Panel Data*. Archives of Sexual Behavior, 9:319-325.

¹⁶⁷ Mace, Op.cit

thirdly, the couple need to be open with one another about their sexual feelings and responses. This discussion, fourthly, leads naturally to the couple seeking full agreement as to what satisfies them both sexually. Mace however insists, lastly, that sexuality in marriage is about the experience and not the performance¹⁶⁸.

The next section of chapter 7, marriage preparation, starts is dedicated to exploring

Although Jack Dominian writes from the perspective of marriage enrichment and therefore his writings have not been reviewed for this study, the fact that his views on sexuality are pertinent to the course at Christ Church, I have chosen to review a popular book that he co-authored with Edmund Flood in the earlier 1990s¹⁶⁹. In *The Everyday God* expresses the view that “married love is the means of salvation, the way people share in God’s activity” and the healing of our wounds of feeling unloved, insecure, anxiousness and even paranoia and depression can take place in marriage through mutual respect, kindness, reliability trustworthiness and understanding¹⁷⁰. Consequently, for Dominian, the sexual act is in the first place an affirmation of one another as important and significant. Secondly, through sexual intercourse the couple fully experience their femininity and masculinity.

Thirdly, the sexual act “can become on certain occasions a means of reconciliation”. Fourthly, in the recurrent coming together as husband and wife in a sexual union they experience “hope that another human being recognizes our existence”. And, lastly, through sexual intercourse the couple are giving recurrent thanks to each other for

¹⁶⁸ Ibid

¹⁶⁹ Dominian, J. (1993). *Marriage*. In Dominian, J & Flood, E. *The Everyday God: Changing Lives at Home and at Work*. London: Geoffrey Chapman.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid

being together. In this total giving to one another, not only physically but with their whole being, the couple is engaged in “an expression of prayer” since true prayer is total self-giving¹⁷¹.

The personal counseling model of Word includes work with the couple in sexual counseling.

The sixth session of Guldner’s marriage preparation course is dedicated to exploring the sexual relationship. In Guldner’s opinion, it was necessary to provide “accurate information on human sexual function” no matter “how sophisticated” the couples may be. The couples are required to explore “the ABCs of sex: attitudes, behaviour, and communication” as well as “family planning and contraception”¹⁷².

A study by GEM Counseling center in Kenya on 135 couples found communication to be the most influential factor in marriage. It is this factor which helps couples to sort out their differences to forestall chronic runaways, separations and divorce¹⁷³.

When there is communication discord in marriage the following problems may arise: individual fail to clarify their needs, there is no good listening and spouses and their children become self-centered. Individual deliberately refuse to talk and secrecy and inadequate sharing of ideas prevails. The couples are not transparent due to fear of vulnerability. Spouses and their offspring lack sensitivity of the needs of others. People talk by proxy e.g through children, friends and relatives. The family members feel free to communicate through written notes, e-mails or by telephone which lack the personal contact which should be there in good communication. The mode of

¹⁷¹ Ibid

¹⁷² Guldner, Op.cit.

¹⁷³ Gichinga, E. M. (2005) *Marriage Counseling: A Counseling Guide*. Nairobi, Kenya: GEM Counseling Services

communicating is determined by the context of the couple in whichever community they live. They will use what they believe will enable them achieve their goal.

The premarital counseling model of Wood includes sexuality as one of six counseling sessions for couples preparing for marriage. In his article, he poses a number of questions for consideration by couples during these sessions. His questions on sexuality focus on the couple's initial introduction and understanding of their sexuality within the context of their family, their own early experiences of their sexuality and what experiences they had dating¹⁷⁴.

The final questions probe the nature of the couple's present sexual experience, looking at assertiveness and aggression, affection or lack thereof, modesty, talking openly or not about each others sexual needs, and finally, their attitude regarding parenthood and contraception.

Foley wrote similarly within the context of the so-called new permissive culture of the post-war society but his point of departure on this subject is that sexual intercourse as "an expression of love between two people who are committed to each other in a shared life" is reserved solely for marriage.¹⁷⁵ Foley is a man of his time and his views reflect those of his society. For him the sexual relationship of the couple starts with the understanding that the woman's "sexual energy is linked up

¹⁷⁴ Wood, Op.cit

¹⁷⁵ Foley, Op.cit

with [her] domestic and material activities” and that her sexual satisfaction is dependent on her husband fulfilling his role “as provider, protector and supporter or co-parent”. The emphasis is placed on the husband being attentive to his wife, stimulating her during fore-play, and not falling asleep after sexual intercourse. It is important for Foley that couples communicate openly about their sexual feelings and needs within the context of their relationship¹⁷⁶. These ideas of Foley sound reasonable and applicable to our marriages in Kenya. If spouses are either aggressive or submissive in their communication they will not live their time lives. When they become assertive, their behaviour matches their words and they live genuine fulfilling lives.

The African Bishops at the Rome Synod expressed the view that the Roman Catholic Church required to teach a positive theology of human sexuality. For them, this theology is underscored by five points –firstly that “sexuality is a gift from God”; secondly that “sexuality is a relational power”; thirdly that “sexuality is not identical with genitality (sic)”; fourthly that sexuality is a holistic expression of self-giving; and finally that this theology of sexuality necessitates the prohibition against premarital sex, contraception and divorce in order to safeguard the positive value of Christian marital sexuality¹⁷⁷.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid

¹⁷⁷ Ajzen, I., & Fishbein, M. (1980). *Understanding attitudes and predicting social behavior*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Referring to research concerning marital problems and sexuality current at the time of his writing, Klassen suggests that a premarital course should include the physiology of sex and the sexual act as well as family planning and contraception. At the same time, the premarital Counselor should explore the couples' sexual background to determine whether there is a conflict between their religion and sexuality¹⁷⁸. As Africans, Kenyans who have been influenced by our African traditional heritage will not normally feel free to talk freely about their past sexual relationships.

The starting point for Thomas and Thomas on this subject is that "sex is not only something we do; sex is something we are", implying "the integrating of love, trust and commitment into our sexuality". However, if we allow our sexuality to control, hurt or to manipulate the other, then sexuality loses "its power for good"¹⁷⁹. Although Thomas and Thomas acknowledge that sexual roles have loosened up in the latter half of the 20th century, they still hold to the gender difference between men and women, maintaining that men tend to be more goal-focused and career-orientated while women are more sensitive as to how the goal is achieved and are more relationship determined. In their view these differences are best worked out between a particular man and a particular woman¹⁸⁰.

¹⁷⁸ Klassen, Op.cit

¹⁷⁹ Thomas, Op.cit

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

For Thomas and Thomas, sexual fidelity in marriage is not a matter of restriction or burden but “actually a freeing up of each person to fully relate sexually, without fear of rejection or betrayal” while, the “first ‘fruit’ of married love” is the child conceived from this sexual union between husband and wife. The authors go into sexual biology in some detail and then conclude with some practical suggestions concerning the right atmosphere and setting, talking, frequency and duration and techniques, concluding “the best overall setting for lovemaking is committed marriage”¹⁸¹. Issues of family planning and sex were investigated because they have bearing on a happy marriage and family.

2.3.5.3 Parenthood and Children

Of the writers on marriage preparation reviewed, only the Roman Catholic writers Michael Foley (1981) and John Thomas and David Thomas (1994) have included parenthood as part of their preparation of premarital couples.

According to Foley “considering parenthood is a very important aspect of marriage preparation”¹⁸². He approaches the subject from the perspective of Roman Catholic family planning and responsible parenthood, which is based on “the belief that through marriage we are called to collaborate with God in bringing new life into the world”¹⁸³. Accordingly Foley counsels the premarital couple to plan their family for when they have had time to establish a “solid and stable relationship” and when they

¹⁸¹ Ibid

¹⁸² Foley, Op.cit

¹⁸³ Ibid

are financially able to take care of their family¹⁸⁴. Although Foley cites opinion polls that indicate Roman Catholic couples do use artificial methods of birth control, he advises the ovulation method as the safest natural way while advising couples in the United States to partake in the Catholic Marriage Advisory Council's programmes on natural contraception. Foley tries to place the modern Roman Catholic couple's dilemma regarding family planning within a theological context¹⁸⁵.

The difficulties which a couple experience in the area of family planning as they attempt to exercise responsible parenthood are a reflection of the whole of married life. In Christian terms it means they experience both the cross and the resurrection. To my mind, this is a rather specious argument which contradicts his earlier admission that theology and the realities of the modern, industrial society should be "closely related"¹⁸⁶. This leaves us with food for thought. It appears as if this is of the contradictions in articulation of his ideas. The issue of family planning is a challenging one and the Roman Catholics have their official stance on it while the Protestants have their stance. I think what people do in family planning is determined by their faith and context.

In keeping with the view of Pope John Paul II that marital love "is not exhausted by the communion between husband and wife, but it is destined to continue raising up new life", Thomas and Thomas similarly counsel marriage preparation couples to

¹⁸⁴ Ibid

¹⁸⁵ Ibid

¹⁸⁶ Ibid

limit the number of children according to their income as well as the well-being of the family, but advise them to adhere to the Roman Catholic Church's teaching concerning Natural Family Planning¹⁸⁷. Couples who cannot conceive and for whom "the desire to do so is all the greater" are advised to first seek medical help and then to consider adoption or fostering. They warn childless couples not to be "tempted to turn inward, to feel sorry for themselves, or to pursue a lifestyle of self-centeredness", but rather to express their fruitfulness through service to others¹⁸⁸.

The birth of the first child changes everything in the life of the young couple, according to Thomas and Thomas and they advise couples to talk about their feelings and to establish the ground rules for their future life together. It is important that there is clarity concerning their roles as mother and father while taking care that their relationship as wife and husband do not suffer accordingly. The young infant's needs do come first, but it is essential that the young parents also enjoy time on their own. Help from the extended family and friends are indispensable, but they probably need to be invited to do so¹⁸⁹. The traditional African couples would stay close to their newborn together and even sleep with him/her. The baby would sleep next to the mother and not between the spouses; this was so especially among the Akamba ethnic group who are part of this study. The extended family members would assist in caring for the baby, but with the coming of urbanization, this is becoming impossible. So,

¹⁸⁷ Thomas, Op.cit

¹⁸⁸ Ibid

¹⁸⁹ Ibid

the spouses have to agree on how to nurture the baby and also continue enjoying their time together. This is not very easy, but spouses can work on it.

When children grow in a dysfunctional family their suffering may manifest itself in various ways: they may act out unhealthy behaviours, the younger children may regress to behaviors like bedwetting or thumb sucking and the older children can engage in drug abuse. Therefore, there is need for spouses to be assisted to be in a position to make their families as functional as possible. In a functional family, it is my view that parenting will be relatively easier and the father and the mother will mould the offspring to be healthy, happy and well behaved.

2.3.6 Christian Marriage and Spirituality

As is to be expected, religion and the teachings of the church concerning marriage and the spirituality of marriage forms part of marriage preparation for most writers. The purpose of marriage preparation, according to Parsons, is to bring the couple to “commitment to faith in Christ, and life in his Church, which is the only true basis to a successful and happy marriage”¹⁹⁰. Although Mitchell and Anderson agree that the place of religion in family life is important, they advise not to confront couples directly concerning their faith but rather to encourage a discussion on the role of religion in each family of origin¹⁹¹. Wood on the other hand is quite explicit about the role of religion in the life of the couple preparing for marriage as he posed questions such as the role the church in their families of origin and how they intend to live their

¹⁹⁰ Parsons, M. (1967). *Marriage Preparation*. London: SPCK.

¹⁹¹ Mitchell, Op.cit

devotional life¹⁹². The African Bishops at the Rome Synod of 1981 are similarly unambiguous in their theology of marriage and faith as they link the human need for intimacy to the Paschal Mystery where the couple “must die to the ‘old’ person in themselves and in their relationship, in order to be born again as ‘new’ persons with a new and deeper love”¹⁹³. These Bishops are encouraging the Christians to practice sacrificial love in their marriages if they want them to be happy social institutions to themselves as spouses and to other people.

Foley is quite clear about his belief that marriage is a Christian vocation where the demands of married life and the limitations on our personal freedom become opportunities to live a life of love and service¹⁹⁴. The Christian marriage is the basic Christian community, living a life of mutual love, devotion and service to others, thereby witnessing to the world that this is a Christ-centered family. Pastoral Marital Counseling should be a tool for preparing Christians to voluntarily serve one another and promote happy life in the families.

Klassen on the other hand is open to couples preparing for marriage who do not share the same religious affiliation or faith. Apart from trying to help them to “build a satisfying relationship vis-à-vis their religious diversity”¹⁹⁵. Klassen points to discussions concerning death, lifestyle and attitudes towards the future as matters of

¹⁹² Wood, Op.cit

¹⁹³ Afer [African Ecclesial Review] (1981). *Synod of Bishops, 1980*. Special Double Issue, 23 (1 & 2), February – April.

¹⁹⁴ Foley, Op.cit

¹⁹⁵ Klassen, Op.cit

spirituality if not religion. Grimer makes the point that couples who choose to marry in a Christian church “are entitled to know what their wedding signifies to the Christian community”¹⁹⁶. Rather than focusing on religion, however, Grimer suggests three exercises for couples to explore the spirituality of their relationship in terms of identifying special moments, helping one another and seeking reconciliation in conflict.

For Rolfe the spiritual preparation of premarital couples is a matter of “review and consolidation – not teaching or evangelizing”. The review would involve the Church’s teachings about marriage as “a permanent covenant in which God is involved, both in making and living the covenant”¹⁹⁷.

Kromker, whose faith is rooted in the Baptist tradition, sees marriage as instituted by God with the husband as the head of the family and the wife submitting to his authority out of respect for him and for God¹⁹⁸. The husband must though earn this respect by loving his wife and not embitter his children. Kromker foresees religious differences as a potential source of conflict in marriage that need to be dealt with during marriage preparation. The author’s view is that mixed marriages are good and they play an important role in uniting Christian denominations and ethnic communities. These marriages are pushing us to seek to understand other people’s cultures and religious doctrines and practices. We as human species are homosapiens

¹⁹⁶ Grimer, Op.cit

¹⁹⁷ Rolfe, Op.cit.

¹⁹⁸ Kromker, Op.cit

and highly valued creation of our maker. People of different places on the globe create culture for survival. All culture are important to those who practice them and it is important to practice Xenophilia as we face marriage issues with those we know and those we do not fully know. Candidates of mixed marriages need to look at each others' faith positively and discuss ways of maintaining their personal piety and spirituality after marriage.

Giblin insists that Christian couples should relate their marriage to their faith experience since "marital spirituality is about God's immanent presence and voice in both partner's lives"¹⁹⁹. Referring back to the couple's genogram, Giblin would have the couple explore their family of origin stories relating to the images of God as well as their experience of love, acceptance and forgiveness and the place of prayer, Scripture, quiet times and meditation in their families of origin. If the couple is not particularly religious, Giblin would explore their reverence for creation and their sense of the purpose of life (vocation), gratefulness (Eucharist and grace), community (the Church), forgiveness (reconciliation) and mystery²⁰⁰.

Thomas and Thomas urge young couples preparing for marriage "to look to Jesus as a model of love that is life-giving in the fullest possible way" and in so doing Christian marriage becomes a sacramental symbol of God's love and presence in human life²⁰¹.

The couple are the sacrament to each other through their self-giving to one another as

¹⁹⁹ Giblin, Op.cit

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

²⁰¹ Thomas and Thomas Op.cit

well as a sacrament to the world, witnessing their love relationship. In this sense, the spirituality of marriage is then reflected in the ordinary events of married life where the loving relationship is lived by means of mutual respect, discipline and sacrifice.

Paulukonis describes “spirituality as our way of relating to God” and therefore sees spirituality in our relating even if we ignore God and, similarly, marital spirituality exists whether the couple is specifically religious or not²⁰². The foundation for a person’s spirituality is reflected in Jesus’ commandment to love your neighbour as yourself, which involves acceptance of self and respect for God’s creation. Apart from each marital partner’s personal spirituality, the couple’s spirituality is reflected in “their dying and rising with Jesus through their marriage, their recognition of the sacred in the ordinary married lives, and their faithfulness to God by being faithful to each other”²⁰³.

2.4 Perception/attitude of People on the Effectiveness of Pastoral Marital Counseling

The term “attitude” is widely used by the public to denote a psychological state that predisposes a person to act favorably or unfavorably to an event or situation. This viewpoint favors defining attitude as having several components and restricted definitions. Allport (1954) defined attitude as “a mental and neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the

²⁰² Paulukonis, Op.cit

²⁰³ Ibid

individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related"²⁰⁴. Eagly and Chaiken (1993) defined attitude as "a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor"²⁰⁵. Although formal definitions of attitude vary, most contemporary social psychologists seem to agree that the characteristic attribute of attitude is its evaluative (pro-con, positive-negative) dimension²⁰⁶.

The definition that was used in this study is: "An attitude is an individual's disposition to respond favorably or unfavorably to an object, person, institution, or event, or to any other discriminable aspect of the individual's world"²⁰⁷. This definition is favored in this study because of its evaluative nature, which refers to overt or covert evaluative responding of cognitive, affective, or behavioral responses (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993)²⁰⁸. Although the most popular classification system distinguishes between cognition, affect, and behavior/conation, it is useful to separate verbal from nonverbal responses within each of these three categories.

It is theorized by Western scholars and this the author agree with them that more positive attitudes towards marriage preparation, premarital counseling, marriage enrichment, and marriage counseling would lead to a better chance of preventing or

²⁰⁴ Allport, G.W. (1954). The historical background of modern social psychology. In G. Lindzey (Ed.), *Handbook of social psychology* (Vol. 1, pp. 3-56). Cambridge, MA: Addison-Wesley.

²⁰⁵ Eagly, A. H., & Chaiken, S. (1993). *The psychology of attitudes*. Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

²⁰⁶ Ajzen, Op.cit

²⁰⁷ Ibid

²⁰⁸ Eagly, Op.cit

successfully intervening in distressed romantic relationships including marriages, as well as promoting healthy relationships. Thus, knowledge of attitudes held towards these programmes and services at the early age of adolescence might yield important information for those marketing and developing the programmes. Prior research with adolescent populations has not examined differing perceptions towards these programmes among diverse demographic groups. It is essential to determine who is interested in participating in marriage preparation, premarital and marital counseling, and marriage enrichment, who is already participating, as well as who benefits from these interventions. It is important to know the target audience as well as the potential audience, so that the programmes and services can be developed and marketed as effectively as possible in order to reach the maximum number of individuals and couples at the earliest opportunity.

Evaluations of youth relationship education curricula have yielded evidence of increases in positive attitudes towards marriage preparation, counseling, and enrichment²⁰⁹. However, prior evaluations of youth relationship education programmes have not examined differing effects among diverse demographic subgroups. It is important to know how diverse populations are affected by youth relationship education, so that these programmes can be developed and marketed in a way that benefits all adolescents.

²⁰⁹ Gardner, S.P. (2001). *Evaluation of the .Connections: Relationships and Marriage. curriculum*. Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences Education, 19.

Marital counseling involves series of marriage counseling sessions aimed at helping individuals to learn skills useful for resolving marital conflicts. Evidence has shown that it is beneficial for better understanding of marital roles²¹⁰. Akande, Olowonirejuaro and Akuchie contended that attitudes are deeply rooted and influence success in many subjects. It is also an enduring trait in life which is a composite of many experiences, that could be positive or negative depending on the circumstances and experiences of individuals²¹¹.

According to Campbell, attitude is a latent variable which could influence negative or positive action in an individual²¹². For instance, a person's attitude could be as a result of the influence or impact made through a particular situation. Some people are predisposed to acting in a negative way based on certain conditions in marriage such as infidelity on the part of a spouse, environmental conditions, just to mention a few. Thus, the extent to which a person is able to communicate her concerns brings about changes in her attitude. Since marital conflicts might result from attitudinal problems of a spouse, this study investigated the perceptions of different categories on people in Churches studied on pastoral marital counseling especially the youth.

²¹⁰ Ambakederemo, E. T. & Ganagana, T. (2006). Causes of Marital Instability in the Port-Harcourt Municipality, Nigeria: Solutions and Counseling Implications. *The Nigerian Journal of Guidance and Counseling*, 11(1), 14-24

²¹¹ Akande, J. A.; Olowonirejuaro, O. A. & Akuchie, R. C. (2008). *Attitude of Colleges of Education Students towards some Essential Concepts for Excellent Academic Performance*. Paper presented at the 32nd Annual National Conference of Counseling Association of Nigeria (CASSON) held between 18th - 21st August in University of Ilorin, Nigeria

²¹² Campbell, D. P. (1993). *The Indirect Assessment of Social Attitudes*. *Psychological Bulletin*, 4715-4738.

Research has suggested that the couples most in need of premarital education are the least likely to attend. Sullivan and Bradbury sought to find out whether premarital prevention programmes actually reached couples most at risk for marital dysfunction²¹³. They gathered information from participants on nine risk factors, which they chose from previous literature reviews on marriage. These risk factors were: lower age, lower income, lower education, parental divorce, higher neuroticism, lower marital satisfaction, higher stress, physical aggression, and impulsivity²¹⁴. The authors found that couples who participated in premarital education programmes were not shown to be at greater risk for marital difficulties based on the listed risk factors. Actually, husbands involved in marriage education tend to be older, more educated, and score higher on marital satisfaction measures and lower on marital aggression scores, factors which are associated with better marital outcomes anyway. These findings suggest that premarital education programmes are not reaching couples most in need of the education. This is true of the U.S.A communities.

Stanley et al. also sought to examine who tends to participate in premarital education²¹⁵. These authors found that within their Midwestern United States sample, having a religious wedding and higher levels of education were associated with a

²¹³ Sullivan, K. T., & Bradbury, T. N. (1997). Are premarital prevention programmes reaching couples at risk for marital dysfunction? *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 65, 24-30.

²¹⁴ Kelly, E. L., & Conley, J. J. (1987). Personality and compatibility: A prospective analysis of marital stability and marital satisfaction. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 52, 27-40.

²¹⁵ Stanley, S. M., Amato, P. R., Johnson, C. A., & Markman, H. J. (2006). Premarital education, marital quality, and marital stability: Findings from a large, random household study. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 20, 117-126.

higher likelihood of having participated in premarital education. Being African-American and ever having received public assistance were both associated with a lower likelihood of having participated in premarital education²¹⁶. It is important to note, however, that lower levels of involvement in premarital education among minorities may not mean a corresponding lack of interest. It may instead reflect a lack of access to such programmes. In one study, younger, lower income, and African-American individuals were actually more likely to report interest in relationship education than other, low-risk populations²¹⁷.

Silliman and Schumm sought to examine adolescents' perceptions of marriage and premarital couples' education²¹⁸. They surveyed 159 high school students (84.3% Caucasian), with an average age of 15.8 years. Sixty-six percent of the students reporting gender identified themselves as female. Students were enrolled in Family and Consumer Science classes in two rural high schools and two urban high schools. The breakdown of family structure was as follows: married (54.5%), separated (2.2%), divorced (8.2%), remarried (27.7%), and other (7.5%). This study utilized instruments that measured adolescents' intentions to attend marriage preparation courses, their understanding of what the programmes entailed, and also their perception of the importance of preparing for marriage.

²¹⁶ Ibid

²¹⁷ Johnson, C. A., Stanley, S. M., Glenn, N. D., Amato, P. R., Nock, S. L., Markman, H. J., & Dion, M. R. (2002). *Marriage in Oklahoma: 2001 baseline statewide survey on marriage and divorce*. Oklahoma City, OK: Oklahoma Department of Human Services.

²¹⁸ Silliman, B., & Schumm, W.R. (2004). *Adolescents' perceptions of marriage and premarital couples education*. *Family Relations*, 53, 513-520.

The students' attitudes towards and expectations of marriage were also assessed. Although internal consistency was relatively low for these measures, factor analysis was used to maximize the validity of the findings. Results show that although high school students are less familiar with marriage preparation programmes than previously studied college students, they were just as likely to agree that preparing for marriage was important²¹⁹. Forty-one percent of the adolescents reported intentions to partake in premarital education. Interestingly, these authors also examined the relationship between perceptions of marriage education, attitudes and expectations of marriage, and static variables such as sex, dating status, or at-risk status. At-risk status was defined as having experienced family abuse, dating abuse, or drug use within the family. Perceptions of marriage education, and attitudes towards marriage did not differ by sex, dating status, or at-risk status²²⁰. In this study, adolescent attitudes towards marriage education and counseling seem stable across different subgroups.

Numerous pre-marital counseling programmes have been developed worldwide. Whereas they may differ in the content and duration, they all seem to underscore the importance and relevance of Christian pre – marital counseling. For example, Nicky and Sara Lee have written the Marriage Book based on the marriage course they ran in the United Kingdom. This course covers topics including ; Building Strong

²¹⁹ Sullivan and Bradbury, Op.cit.

²²⁰ Ibid

Foundations; The Art of Communication; Love in Action; Resolving Conflict; The Power of Forgiveness; Parents and In – laws and Good Sex²²¹.

The Rapha Christian Counseling Centre has developed a pre-marital counseling package for couples. One of the goals of this program is to first help the couple in practical ways to learn about differences, similarities, Conflict styles and resolution, communication, expectations, emotional intimacy, stress in the relationship and how each deals with it. Second, it aims at providing couples with a place to discuss how, if at all, they plan to integrate their faith into their marriage. Finally, it aims at providing a realistic screening aspect for the marriage. Should the couple marry? Are they ready? The ultimate decision always rests with the couple. Although reasons indicated for pre - marital counseling and the proposed content may differ slightly among Christian writers, they all do underscore the importance of setting a biblical foundation for marriage²²².

The literature reviewed above has not focused on the status and quality of pastoral marital counseling services provided in A.I.C and Roman Catholic Church in Kenya. This study was therefore mounted to fill this gap in knowledge.

²²¹ Nicky, R. & Sila L (2002) *The marriage preparation course manual*. London Alpha International,.

²²² Miller, Op.cit

2.5 Theoretical Framework

This section presents theories used in the study. The three theories adopted for the study were: Attachment theory in Psychotherapy, the Sound Relationship House Theory and Humanistic theory.

2.5.1 Attachment Theory

The attachment framework was developed by John Bowlby (1973)²²³ to account for the way that individuals form emotional bonds with significant others, and how psychological disturbances such as depression and anxiety are linked with disruption to those bonds. Bowlby showed how attachment provides for the safety and protection of the growing child, and how separation or loss disturb this 'secure base' or 'safe haven', generating powerful and primitive emotions in an attempt to restore the attachment²²⁴.

Attachment theory is currently attracting renewed interest and is being applied to individual psychotherapy, couples, family, and short-term dynamic therapy (Whiffen, 2003)²²⁵. Attachment theory, however, is not so much a method of treatment as a way of thinking about relationships, including the therapeutic relationship. It enables us to think about the client's experience within a developmental framework and to formulate explanations about his/her distress.

²²³ Bowlby, J. (1973). *Attachment and Loss, Separation, Anxiety and Anger*. NY, Basic Vol. 2,

²²⁴ Ibid

²²⁵ Whiffen, V. (2003). *What Attachment Theory Can Offer Marital and Family Therapists*. In S. Johnson & V. Whiffen (Eds), *Attachment Processes in Couple and Family Therapy*, NY, Guilford.

Attachment theory offers a way of conceptualizing how the effects of early events have influenced the 'working models' (Bowlby, 1973) of relationship that the individual employs (Sable, 2000)²²⁶. Whereas secure attachment experiences lead to unconscious beliefs that others are available, understanding, and responsive (Fonagy, 2001), insecure attachment experiences lead to unconscious beliefs that significant others are unavailable and unresponsive, or rejecting, abandoning, and abusive²²⁷.

Individuals search unconsciously for a partner who can somehow 'fit' or tolerate their internal working model, with the hope that old patterns can be mastered. Understanding these experiences and the relational strategies they produce assists therapists to formulate therapeutic goals helping clients to come to a more balanced position not too distant and not dependently close to the therapist and others.

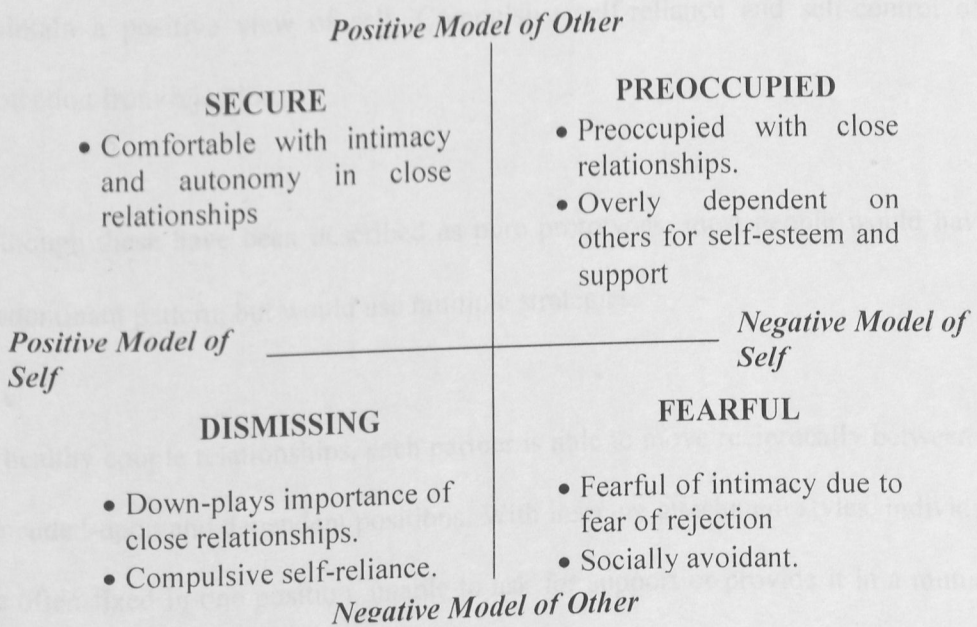
Attachment theory helps us to understand the couple relationship in terms of the attachment styles each partner uses and the interaction between different styles. One very useful model is provided by Bartholomew, Henderson & Dutton (2001)²²⁸. Using Bowlby's analysis of internal working models, they have generated four prototypic attachment patterns in adulthood, underpinned by the two dimensions of 'model of self' and 'model of other'.

²²⁶ Sable, P. (2000). *Attachment and Adult Psychotherapy*, Northvale, NJ, Jason Aronson.

²²⁷ Fonagy, P. (2001). *Attachment Theory and Psychoanalysis*, NY, Other Press.

²²⁸ Bartholomew, K., Henderson, A. & Dutton, D. (2001). Insecure Attachment and Partner Abuse. In C. Clulow (Ed.), *Adult Attachment and Couple Psychotherapy*, Hove, East Sussex, Brunner-Routledge.

Figure 2.1: Two-Dimensional, Four-Category Model of Adult Attachment.



Adopted from Bartholomew, Henderson and Dutton (2001)²²⁹. Two-Dimensional, Four-Category Model of Adult Attachment.

- Secure attachment leads to a positive view of self and other. Secure individuals can establish close relationships and use others as support when needed. In this study, these categories of people are the ones targeted with pastoral marital counseling. This is due to the fact that they are ready to avail themselves and seek support from the marital Counselors
- Preoccupied attachment leads to a positive model of others, but negative model of self, eliciting a demanding and dependent style.
- Fearful attachment is where others are viewed as uncaring and the self as unlovable. Intimacy is avoided because rejection is expected

²²⁹ Ibid

- Dismissing attachment leads individuals to distance themselves from others to maintain a positive view of self. Compulsive self-reliance and self-control offer protection from rejection.

Although these have been described as pure prototypes, most people would have a predominant pattern, but would use multiple strategies.

In healthy couple relationships, each partner is able to move reciprocally between the depended-upon and dependent positions. With insecure attachment styles, individuals are often fixed in one position, unable to ask for support or provide it in a mutually enhancing manner. One of the questions always being raised has to do with individuals who fall into the preoccupied, fearful, or dismissing categories, and whose attachment strategies are highly entrenched. Can we help them by only attending to the couple relationship in the present, or do we also need to explore past relationships as a way of understanding how the insecurities in the present are fuelled by past anger and anxiety?

As argued by Grant & Crawley, 2002, each of us has our own unique repertoire of relationship experiences, beginning with our very earliest experiences with our mother and other caregivers²³⁰. Some of these experiences were what we needed at the time to facilitate our development, while others were disappointing or lacking, or

²³⁰ Grant, J. & Crawley, J. (2002). *Transference and Projection: Mirrors to the Self*, London, Open University Press.

perhaps too overwhelming in terms of the level of excitement or frustration involved. From this repertoire of early life experiences, each of us develops our own unconscious 'agenda for relationship', the uniquely personal pattern of what we look for, expect, fear and long for in our adult relationships. This becomes our personal template through which we instinctively, and largely unconsciously, manage our experience of relationships. This theory was relevant to this study as it helped the author to relate one's background to the factors which influence their behavior.

Attachment theory was adopted for the study as it helped the author to explain the content of pastoral marital counseling. The facts that the theory helps in conceptualizing how different events and set ups affects relationships, it was therefore important in investigating the content of pastoral marital counseling services offered in Churches. It explains that insecure attachment experiences may lead to breakdown of marriages and vice versa. The theory therefore can help an individual to search for partners who fit their internal model with the hope of mastering the old patterns. The fact that it helps in understanding relationship was very crucial as it helps the counselors and counselees to understand one another making pastoral marital counseling more effective.

2.5.2 The Sound Relationship House Theory (SRHT)

This theory was developed by Gottman (1999)²³¹. The theory describes the characteristics of long-term, stable relationships in some three components: the Friendship System, the Conflict System, and the Meaning System. The first three levels of the SRHT describe the friendship system.

Gottman (1999) speaks of seven principles that can be used to strengthen relationships. Taken together, he calls these principles “The Sound Relationship House,” and this theory forms the basis of the Gottman Approach. Briefly, the seven principles, which are not independent, but rather, which build sequentially on one another to form a strong relationship, are:

1. **Love maps:** The most basic level of friendship, a love map refers to feeling known by your partner. It is the road map you create in your mind of your partner’s inner world of thoughts, feelings, hopes, aspirations, dreams, values, and goals. The fundamental processes are asking open-ended questions and remembering the answers.

2. **Fondness and admiration:** This level describes partners’ ability to notice and express what they appreciate about each other. Building a culture of respect, partners catch their partner doing something right and convey appreciation, respect, and affection verbally and nonverbally. The fundamental processes are a positive habit of

²³¹ Gottman, J. M. (1999). *The Marriage Clinic: A Scientifically Based Marital Therapy*. New York, NY: W. W. Norton.

mind that ignores the partner's mistakes and instead notices what the partner is doing positively for the relationship and expresses appreciation, fondness, affection, and respect.

3. Turning toward: When couples are just kind of hanging out, they actually are often letting their needs be known to one another either nonverbally or verbally. They're making bids for emotional connection. When partners turn toward bids, it is like putting money in the emotional bank account that gets built over time. Conversely, if bids are ignored (turning away) or attacked in response to the bid (turning against), it is like taking money out of the emotional bank account. There is a hierarchy of bidding, from getting one's partner's attention to getting empathy and emotional support. Of the newlyweds who were divorced six years after the wedding, 33% turned toward bids, while the ones still together after six years turned toward bids 86% of the time.

4. Sentiment override: If the first three levels of the friendship system are working well, then couples will be in positive-sentiment override. Conversely, when the friendship is ailing, couples will be in negative-sentiment override.

Negative-sentiment override: The negative sentiments we have about the relationship and our partner override anything positive our partner might do to repair. We are hypervigilant for put-downs; we tend not to notice positive events. We tend to distort

and see even neutral (and sometimes even positive) things as negative. We are overly sensitive.

Positive-sentiment override: The positive sentiments we have about the relationship and our partner override negative things our partner might do. We don't take negativity personally, but merely as evidence that our partner is stressed. We tend to notice negative events but not take them very seriously. We tend to accurately see the positive things our partner is doing and minimize the negative, perhaps even distorting toward the positive, and seeing even negative interactions and gestures as neutral.

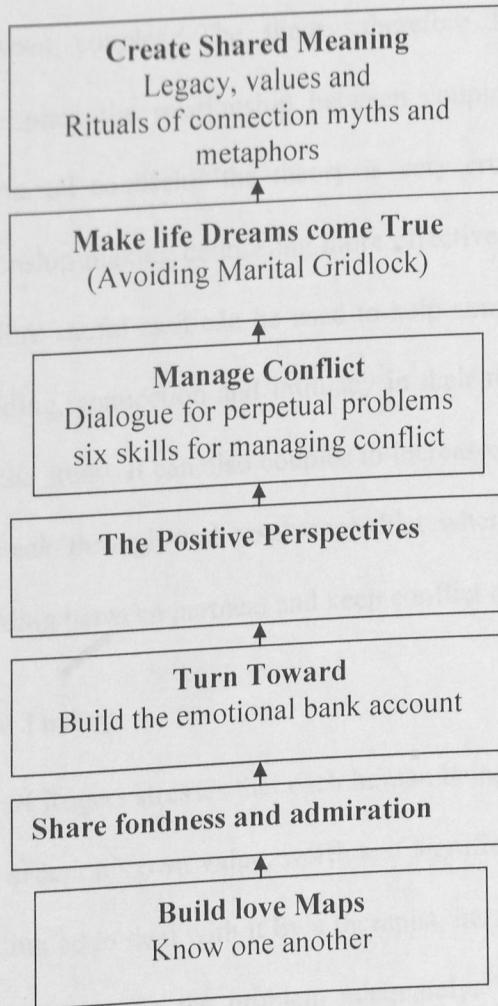
5. **Manage conflict:** Relationship conflict is natural, and it has functional, positive aspects. The masters of relationships are gentle toward one another; they start conflict discussions without blame (including preemptive repair); they accept influence; they self-soothe; they repair and deescalate, using positive affect during conflict to deescalate physiological arousal (especially humor and affection); and they are able to offer compromise. The longitudinal research indicates that only 31% of couples' problems are solved over time. Surprisingly, it turns out that 69% of couples' problems were perpetual (they don't get solved over time), relating to lasting differences in personality, preferences in lifestyle, and differences in needs. The masters of relationships create a dialogue with these perpetual issues, while the disasters are in gridlock about these perpetual issues. This latter finding reveals the

existential nature of most conflicts and has led to the “dreams within conflict” intervention.

6. **Make life dreams come true:** A crucial aspect of any relationship is to create an atmosphere that encourages each person to talk honestly about his or her dreams, values, convictions, and aspirations, and to feel that the relationship supports those life dreams.

7. **Create shared meaning:** A relationship is about building a life together, a life that has a sense of shared purpose and meaning. Couples do that in many ways, including creating formal and informal rituals of connection, creating shared goals and life missions, supporting one another’s basic roles in life, and agreeing on the meaning of values and symbols. So here we return once again to build love maps, but at a deeper level.

Figure 2.2: Building the Sound Marital House



Adopted From Gottman (1999). The sound relationship house.

Sound Relationship House Theory by Gottman is research-based interventions and exercises, as it helps couples break through barriers to achieve greater understanding,

connection and intimacy in their relationships. The theory helps us to understand what actually works to help couples achieve a long-term healthy relationship.

Sound relationship theory was adopted in this study to explain the bondages and relationship between couples. The theory therefore helped the researcher to understand and explain the relationship between couples and the bonds in their relationship. A marital counselor the theory is very crucial as it can be used to understand relationship making counseling more effective and person centered. The theory was therefore useful as it can be used to help couples break through barriers greater understanding, connection and intimacy in their relationships which was the main concern of the study. It can also couples to increase: increase respect, affection, and closeness; break through and resolve conflict when they feel stuck; generate greater understanding between partners and keep conflict discussions calm.

2.5.3 Humanistic Theory

This theory by Carl Rogers stresses that each human being is unique and has capacity to recognize and accept his own value, worth and significance²³². When a person has a problem, if facilitated to deal with it by a therapist, he/she is capable of tapping his personal resources and solve the problem adequately. The helper has to have the following qualities: 1) congruence, 2) unconditional acceptance towards client and 3) empathy - which is to understand the client's frame of reference and communicates this understanding with the client, then, the client will feel being fully received by the Counselor and the healing process in the client will start automatically. So, according

²³² Rogers C.R (1951). *Client Centered therapy*. Boston, p.20.

connection and intimacy in their relationships. The theory helps us to understand what actually works to help couples achieve a long-term healthy relationship.

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²³² Rogers C.R (1951). Client Centered therapy. Boston, p.20.

to this theory, the interpersonal relationship between the Counselor and the client determines whether therapy will take place or not.

In this theory, the therapist remains non-directive and client centered. He bears in mind that he/she is an expert in counseling skills and attitudes while the client is an expert in the problems facing him/her. This theory is based upon a secular humanistic assumption about the human nature. However, it has to be backed by religious belief that each person is also a beloved child of God and has to be respected as such. The marital pastoral Counselor bears in mind the approach of Carl Rogers and compliments it with religious elements from theologians like Mitman. According to Mitman, a good Counselor seeks to understand with a client, not about a client²³³. The author concurred with Mitman and used the theory in the study to establish if what happens in the Churches is informed by it.

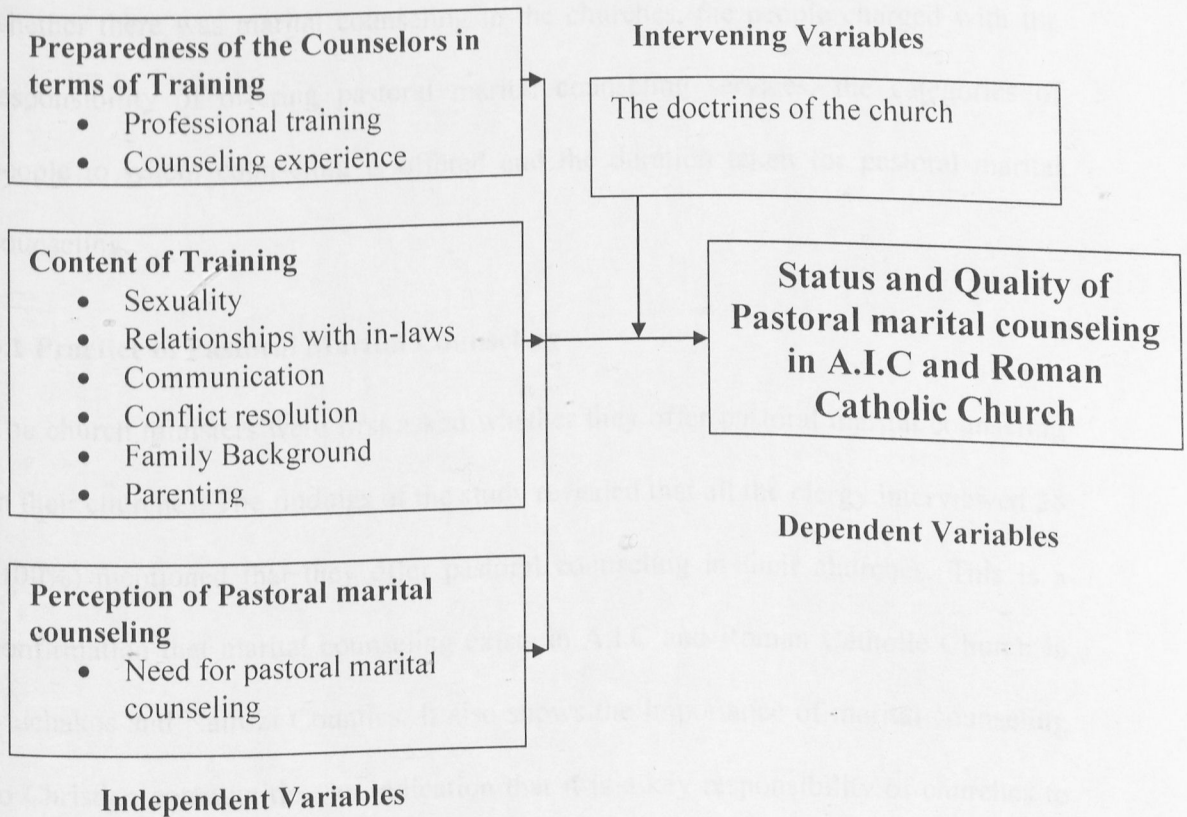
The humanistic theory was adopted for this study as it pointed out the most effective ways of handling clients which should be adopted by the pastoral marital counselors. It helped in clarifying that both the counselors and the counselees have a role to play but the answers to the problems the clients face lies within themselves.

²³³ Mitman, J.L.C (1980). Premarital Counseling: A manual for Clergy and Counselors. New York, The Seabury Press.

2.6 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework below shows the relationship between the variables of the study. The dependent variable for the study was status and quality of Pastoral marital counseling while the independent variables were: preparedness of the Counselors in terms of training, content of training and attitude towards training. The intervening variable for the study was the doctrines of the church with regard to pastoral marital counseling.

Figure 2.3 Conceptual Framework



Source: Author (2013)

CHAPTER THREE

STATUS OF PASTORAL COUNSELING SERVICES IN A.I.C AND R.C.C IN MACHAKOS AND NAIROBI COUNTIES

3.0 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the author reviewed relevant literature in his study area. This chapter therefore presents the findings of the study on the status of pastoral counseling services in the A.I.C and Roman Catholic Church. To evaluate the status of pastoral counseling in the sampled Churches, the researcher sought to establish whether there was marital counseling in the churches, the people charged with the responsibility of offering pastoral marital counseling services, the categories of people to whom counseling is offered and the duration taken for pastoral marital counseling.

3.1 Practice of Pastoral Marital Counseling

The church ministers were first asked whether they offer pastoral marital counseling in their churches. The findings of the study revealed that all the clergy interviewed 28 (100%) mentioned that they offer pastoral counseling in their churches. This is a confirmation that marital counseling exists in A.I.C and Roman Catholic Church in Machakos and Nairobi Counties. It also shows the importance of marital counseling to Christian communities, an indication that it is a key responsibility of churches to their adherents.

In an interview with the married and once married groups to establish whether they went through pastoral counseling, it was revealed that 55% of the respondents (constituting 32% from R.C.C and 23% A.I.C) mentioned that they went through counseling before they got married. This is an indication that there are beneficiaries from pastoral counseling programmes in churches and therefore the programmes were worth evaluation to establish their effectiveness. On the other hand, it was found that 45% of the respondents married or once married (constituting 18% from R.C.C and 27% from A.I.C) did not go through pastoral counseling. The reason being that some were in a marriage of come-we-stay while others did traditional marriages and therefore the counseling they got was from the traditional set up. From the findings of the study, it can be concluded that there is pastoral counseling in A.I.C and Roman Catholic Church in Nairobi and Machakos Counties.

The findings of the also revealed that most of the respondents who had gone through pastoral marital counseling were from R.C.C. This was based on the fact that R.C.C has worldwide marriage encounter enrichment programme which was established to enrich marriages. The programme emphasizes on love between couples and teaches the marriage couples on how to live according to God's plan. They focus on social psycho experiences in marriage. The findings are as presented in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Attendance of Pastoral marital counseling among the Married and Once Married Respondents

Attendance of Pastoral marital counseling	A.I.C		R.C.C		Total	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Yes	22	23	30	32	52	55
No	25	27	17	18	42	45
Total	47	50	47	50	94	100

3.2 People Charged with Responsibility of Offering Marital Counseling in Churches

The researcher sought to find out the people who were charged with the responsibility of counseling in the A.I.C and Roman Catholic Church studied. In an interview with the married couples who went through the pastoral counseling, it was found that 36 (69%) were counseled by the clergy (constituting 20 {38%} from R.C.C and 16 {31%} from A.I.C) while 16 (31%) were counseled by professional marriage Counselors and best couples in the churches studied (constituting 6 {12%} from R.C.C and 10 {19%} from A.I.C). The findings of the study further revealed that pastoral marital counseling in the R.C.C was mainly done by the clergy as opposed to A.I.C church where a good percentage indicated that they were counseled by professional Counselors and best couples. The findings are as presented in Table 3.2.

Table 3.1 People Charged with Responsibility of offering Marital Counseling in Churches

Pastoral Counselors	A.I.C		R.C.C		Total	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Clergy	16	31	20	38	36	69
Professional Counselors/best couples	10	19	6	12	16	31
Total	26	50	26	50	56	100

In an interview with the ministers on whom the responsibility of counseling was bestowed, the study found that majority of the ministers interviewed 16 (69%) mentioned that the counseling was majorly the responsibility of church ministers. Others who participated were best couples and marital counseling team in marriage encounters workshops. These findings are in line with the findings of a study done by Gichiga Emmy who found that 80% of people in need of counseling first seek help from their religious leaders before even considering professional counselors²³⁴.

In AIC, best couple with experience in marriage talk to the couple before marriage and prepare them to face the new life with courage. The ministers and the best couples assist the candidates to know the challenges they might face in the new life together. Family members, relatives, elders and other friends provide them with premarital guidance. When they face a problem in marriage life, the clergy, best couples and friends assist. If the problem is hard to solve, the couple gets assisted by

²³⁴ Gichinga E.M. (2004). *Challenges of (for) Counseling Community and Mental health professionals in Kenya Today*. In Amani a pioneering and training Model for Kenya and the regions. Nairobi, Amani Counseling Centre and Training Institute.

professional counselors, administrative officers and other professional like Lawyers and Doctors.

The Roman Catholic Church uses Church Ministers to provide marriage counseling. The Church has a National Ecclesial team which offers marriage encounter enrichment programmes to Christians. The team is composed of a team and a priest and two couples and the leaders. The team meets for an hour and a half once a month for six months. In the meetings, they discuss as spouses and as groups about love between couples, how to live in marriage according to God's plan, love journey, leadership through relationship and family life. The groups are based on the belief that a "family that prays together stays together". They encourage members to always remember that "dialogue and prayer" for couples is key to a happy life together. This team has attracted some A.C.K and P.C.E.A Christians to join it for their marriage enrichment. The groups respects couples from other denominations and seeks to promote the spread of functional families in society.

3.3 Duration for Marital Counseling

The married couples who went through marital counseling were asked to state the duration for which they were counseled. The study found that 26 (50%) of the respondents indicated that they went through counseling for three months, 17 (33%) mentioned that they went through counseling for two months while 9 (17%) mentioned that they went through counseling for a period of one month and below. Regarding the duration for counseling, Russell and Lyster assert that the timing of

counseling has an impact on the satisfaction levels²³⁵. Couples whose wedding date was close to the counseling reported less satisfaction. The authors report that couples receiving counseling less than two months before the wedding took fewer risks in talking about troublesome issues and learning new skills than those receiving counseling more than two months before their wedding date.

In interviews with the church ministers/Counselors who were charged with the responsibility of offering marital counseling, they were asked to mention the number of sessions they held with those who wanted to get married. Most of the ministers interviewed mentioned that they were expected to have not less than twelve sessions before the wedding. Williams, Riley, Risch, and Dyke conducted a study and found that eight to nine sessions are ideal²³⁶. Silliman, Schumm, and Jurich conducted a study of 185 undergraduates that reveals that 3-4 hours in premarital counseling is preferred and options involving more than six hours produced significantly lower mean scores for desirability²³⁷. Silliman and Schumm report that there are differences in the length and amount of sessions, depending on the type of premarital counseling program²³⁸. The authors state that church based programs are usually shorter, rarely exceeding six hours. Further asked whether all those whom they counsel go through the twelve sessions, the study found that only a third of the ministers interviewed mentioned that their counselees go through all the twelve session. Others mentioned that majority of the counselees go through two thirds of the sessions. This was due to

²³⁵ Risch, Riley & Lawler, Op.cit

²³⁶ Williams Riley, Risch., & Van, Op.cit.

²³⁷ Silliman, Schumm and Jurich, (1992), Op.cit.

²³⁸ Silliman & Schumm, 1999), Op.cit.

lack of time and absenteeism among the counselees. They further explained that at times they merge the sessions so that what should have been learnt in two sessions can be captured in one session which is an indication of time constraint on marital counseling.

In interviews with the church ministers on the adequacy of time allocated for the counseling, the study found that 14 (50%) the ministers interviewed mentioned that the time allocated was adequate while the other 14 (50%) mention that the time allocated for the counseling was not adequate. Asked to explain their answers, those who indicated that the time allocated was inadequate mentioned that they were not at a position to cover adequately the areas of counseling required for those who wanted to get married. This they explained by the broadness of the areas of counseling. On the other hand, those who mentioned that the time was adequate explained that the sessions expected to be covered were adequate to prepare those who wanted to get married. They further emphasized that the duration should not be too long for the youth thus allocation of three months for counseling was just adequate. The caution was that those charged with the responsibility to counsel should ensure that they cover what they are expected to cover within the stipulated time.

In interviews with the youth (the unmarried) on the duration taken for counseling, most of the youths 74 (82%) mentioned that three months allocated for the counseling was enough though a 16 (18%) were of the opinion that the duration should be reduced to two months as they viewed three months to be long. This they explained

by the fact that newly married couples should continue with the counseling even after their wedding for some time thus implying that allocation of a lot of time for pre-marital counseling was not reasonable. One of the youths explained that:

"I think marital counseling should continue even in marriage because that is where people experience the actual problems as they get to know each other. I therefore believe that counseling is even more helpful during marriage as people may get into problems of misunderstanding when they are still new to each other. So for the pre-marital counseling; three months should be enough". A youth aged 23 from AIC.

However, practically on getting married many couples do not usually go to the pastoral Counselors for more sessions. Other things in their new life tend to take priority and they only consult a Counselor when they meet a challenge in their marriage life. Therefore, it is advisable for pastoral Counselors to cover most if not all of the sensitive issues in marriage during the pre-marital counseling.

Content of the pre-marital counseling should include: physical features of the couple,²³⁹ intellectual gifts (educational differences), family backgrounds, age difference, likes and dislikes, cultural differences, personality differences, religion/spirituality, previous marriages and their influence (children sickness or death) and physical health of the couple.

²³⁹ The physical features of the couple include their sense aesthetic condition of their bodies, beauty and handsomeness, their size and colour and how they view these. Could one be physically handicapped or sick and what are the implications of these in their life together as husband and wife.

The couple should also address issues of dating and engagement, sex during dating, preparation for marriage, dowry, choice of church and priest/pastor to officiate the wedding, how to finance the wedding, cultural expectation, who will be the best man and the best maid, HIV/AIDS test and how the couple will individuate and separate from the families of origin in order to cleave together as husband and wife²⁴⁰.

There should be clear arrangements on how the bride and the bridegroom will wear, be transported to the venues in good time. There should be arrangement to record exchange marriage vows for future use. It is important to plan ahead how photos will be taken, the reception venue, whether there will be an evening party and where the newlyweds will go for their honeymoon. It is advisable to discuss the purpose of the honeymoon in advance. The husband and wife should prepare to be quite intimate, explore and understand sexuality, share their personal issues deeply and enhance effective communication between them²⁴¹.

3.4 Categories of People in Need of Marital Counseling

The church ministers interviewed were asked to mention the categories of people they mostly counsel. The study found that two thirds of those who sought for marital counseling were those who wanted to get married. Others included those with marital problems in their families especially the newly married. In an interview with the professional Counselors, they stated that most of their clients were couples who had been married but were experiencing marital problems. At the Amani Counseling

²⁴⁰ Gichinga, Op.cit

²⁴¹ Ibid

Centre and Training Institute in Nairobi; from 1997 to 2003, marital problems were the most common presenting problem followed by personal growth and relationships. A presenting problem refers to the issue which a client initially communicates to the intake counselor when they first go for counseling. The actual problem is the primary issue dealt with by a client over the course of counseling as identified by the counselor. A cross tabulation analysis revealed that there is high correlation between the presenting problem and the actual problem²⁴². One of clergy interviewed mentioned that:

“In our church, pastoral marital counseling is offered to those who want to get married or those who are already married but are experiencing marital difficulties. We mostly counsel those who want to get married”. A clergy aged 50 from R.C.C.

From the findings of the study, it can be said that most of the pastoral marital programmes in Churches are offered to those who want to get married. On the other hand, most of the counseling done by professionals outside the church is for the married who have family issues and are looking for solution. This is an indication that the church is charged with the responsibility of preparing couples especially before they get married thus by assessing the status and quality of pastoral marital counseling services in churches, these programmes can be improved for the benefit of the society as a whole.

²⁴² Lagan, H. (2004). A retrospective study of Amani Client Intake, 1997-2003. In Amani Counseling Centre Training Institute, Print Option, Nairobi. pp 23-43.

CHAPTER FOUR

LEVEL AND CONTENT OF PROFESSIONAL TRAINING OF MARITAL PASTORAL COUNSELORS

4.0 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the author presented the findings on the status of pastoral counseling services in A.I.C and R.C.C in Nairobi and Machakos Counties. This chapter presents the findings on the level of professional training and the content of training of marital Counselors in A.I.C and Catholic Church in Machakos and Nairobi Counties.

To establish the level of professional training of the Counselors, the researcher sought to find information on the duration for which the Counselors had served in the church, whether the Counselors in the churches studied had undergone any professional training and the level of training they had, criteria for selection of the marital Counselors in the churches, whether the churches studied train their Counselors, time allocated for training in the institutions of training, the lowest requirement for a professional marital Counselor and the importance of training for the marital Counselors on their delivery.

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4.1 Duration of Service as Counselors in Church

The Clergy Counselors in A.I.C Churches sampled were asked to state the duration for which they had served as Counselors in their present churches. The study found that 14 (50%) of the marital Counselors in churches studied had served for a period of sixteen years and above. The study also found that 7 (25%) of the Counselors interviewed had served for a duration between ten to fifteen years, 5 (18%) had served for a duration between five years to ten years in the same capacities and that 2 (7%) had served for a period less than five years as Counselors. From the findings of the study, it can be said that most of the marital pastoral Counselors in A.I.C and Catholic Church studied had served as pastoral Counselors for long duration with majority having served for a period more than 10 years. This is an indication of wealth of experience among the Counselors in Churches studied. A comparison of experience between the A.I.C and the R.C.C clergy revealed that those from R.C.C were more experience with 39% having experience of 11 years and above compared to 35% from A.I.C. The findings are presented in table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Duration of Service as Counselors in church

	A.I.C		R.C.C		Total	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
1-5 Years	1	4	1	4	2	7
6-10 Years	3	11	2	7	5	18
11-15 Years	4	14	3	11	7	25
16 years and above	6	21	8	28	14	50
Total	14	50	14	50	28	100

Contrary to these findings, Adams pointed out that it is not experience, but biblical truth and skills developed on biblical principles that qualify someone to counsel²⁴³. According to Adams, the effectiveness of counseling cannot be fully based on the experience but on the content knowledge of the Counselor in terms of training acquired. From the findings of the study, it can be said that besides the experience of the Counselors; there is need for professional training for one to qualify as a Counselor. Thus the effectiveness of pastoral marital counseling can be based on both the experience and training qualifications of the Counselors.

4.2 Professional Training of Counselors

The Counselors were asked to mention their professional levels of training. The study found that 10 (36%) of the Counselors had diploma in counseling, 7 (25%) had certificate in counseling, 6 (21%) had degree in counseling, 3 (11%) had masters degree in counseling psychology and 2 (7%) were PhD holders while two had not trained at all. A comparison of the of the level of education between the clergy from A.I.C and R.C.C revealed that 18% of the clergy from AIC had certificate or were not trained compared to 11% of the R.C.C who had certificate. The most obvious difference was that there was no clergy in the R.C.C who were not trained. This is an indication of more serious Pastoral Marital Counseling taking place in R.C.C compared to A.I.C. This can be attributed to availability of programmes such as worldwide marriage encounter enrichment programme in R.C.C which enriches

²⁴³ Adams, (1983), Op.cit

marital counseling thus influencing the qualification of those participating Pastoral Marital Counseling . The findings are presented in table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Professional Training of Counselors

	A.I.C		R.C.C		Total	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Not Trained	2	7	0	0	2	7
Certificate	3	11	3	11	6	21
Diploma	5	17	4	14	9	33
Degree	2	7	4	14	6	21
Masters	1	4	2	7	3	11
PhD	1	4	1	4	2	7
Total	14	50	14	50	28	100

In an interview with the instructors/teachers from the sampled training institutions on the lowest requirement for one to qualify to be an effective marital Counselor, it was found that 14 (88%) of the instructors explained that for one to serve at such a capacity, the minimum professional requirement should be diploma in counseling. From the findings of the study, it can be said that most of the Counselors in the churches studied were qualified even though a significant number still did not professionally qualify to serve as marital pastoral Counselors. It was therefore concluded that one of the challenges facing marital counseling in churches is inadequate training or lack of training among those charged with the responsibility of offering marital counseling. To justify the findings of the study, Gichinga recommended that a deliberate effort must be made by those involved in training

Counselors to seek to contextualize counseling. This includes incorporating spirituality and communal worldview in the training²⁴⁴. There is no Counselor or any other professional for that matter, who is value free and value – neutral and does not have a belief in the transcendent. While training counselors for Kenyan context, spirituality and communalism should not be neglected if we hope to be effective or even attract clients. People will keep going to religious leaders from counseling whether they are trained or not; the reason being that they represent what is acceptable. We must therefore make pastoral marital counseling relevant to Kenya in the way the Africans understand it.

In both A.I.C and the R.C.C, a marital pastoral Counselor should be a person who is well equipped with knowledge about human development psychology, counseling attitudes and skills, the dynamics of life in the family cycle and the general problems facing people and how to solve them. The African concept of a holistic personality – body, mind and spirit was and is very effective in dealing with people's problems. One cannot separate spiritual matters from psychological matters. Whoever is the health provider is at an advantage if he or she can address both levels. A successful African psychotherapist or counselor is one who will address these levels by applying for spiritual and scientific approaches. Africans were using this approach through

²⁴⁴ Gichinga E.M. (2004). *Challenges of (for) Counseling Community and Mental health professionals in Kenya Today*. In Amani a pioneering and training Model for Kenya and the regions. Nairobi, Amani Counseling Centre and Training Institute.

diviners, mediums and medicine men long before Western Psychology was introduced to us 25 years ago. These specialists met people's holistic needs²⁴⁵.

4.3 Criteria for the Selection of Marital Pastoral Counselors

The church ministers were asked to mention the criteria for the selection of marital Counselors in their churches. The study found out that 18 (64%) stated that they considered the professional qualification of the Counselors, 7 (25%) mentioned that they looked at the experience and age of the Counselors while the 3 (11%) explained that they looked at the mental maturity and the capabilities of the Counselors. Silliman, Schumm, and Jurich write that premarital counseling provider traits most valued by consumers are that the provider be well trained and respectful. On the contrary the least desirable traits of providers are lack of openness and probing into the private lives of the couple²⁴⁶. From the findings of the study, it can be said that professional training of the Counselors is the key qualification for one to become a marital therapist in the A.I.C and Roman Catholic Church in Machakos and Nairobi Counties. The professional training is assumed to include acquisition of pastoral counseling skills which is not always the case. In theological institutions, the emphasis is on how to win and keep converts in the faith, rather than focusing on how they can effectively take their parishioners through various forms of counseling.

Other criteria for the selection of marital Counselors included: being married and having a successful family, commitment to church activities, elderliness and

²⁴⁵ Gichinga, E.M (2005). *Marriage Counseling: A Counseling Guide*, Nairobi. GEM Counseling Services, pp 144.

²⁴⁶ Silliman, Schumm & Jurich (1992), Op.cit.

experience, conversance with African Traditional way of life in order to help people influenced by that heritage, married through a religious/ church wedding as a sign of commitment to marriage, open mindedness, being respectful and good listener who can keep peoples' information confidential, being impartial and well focused person, having knowledge on family life education programme (FLEP) taught by the Roman Catholic church, well behaved, humble, empathic person who seeks to understand others and that he or she should be a well-wisher who instills hope in people.

In his definition of a Christian Counselor, Collins indicates that a Christian Counselor is one who is a deeply committed, Spirit guided servant of Jesus Christ; applies his or her best God given abilities, skills, training, knowledge and insights; to the task of helping others move to personal wholeness, interpersonal competence, mental stability and spiritual maturity.²⁴⁷ The definition by Collins therefore puts emphasis on the responses given by the respondents on the criteria for the selection of marital Counselors in churches. Silliman and Schumm add that Counselors should be open, warm, professionally competent, and able to provide confidentiality²⁴⁸. It can therefore be concluded that the criteria for the selection of marital Counselors in the churches studied was sound because the preferred qualities of effective Counselors was emphasized.

²⁴⁷ Collins, Op.cit

²⁴⁸ Silliman & Schumm (1999), Op.cit.

4.4 Training of the Counselors by A.I.C and Roman Catholic Church

The church ministers were asked whether their churches train those who offer pastoral marital counseling services to their members. The results showed that 15 (54%) of the Counselors had trained on their own in professional counseling institutions. The other 13 (46%) mentioned that they send their Counselors to theological institutions and seminaries. It was also revealed that most of the Counselors in Roman Catholic Church are trained in seminaries while those in A.I.C churches train in theological institutions. These are indication of the effort by churches to ensure there is effective pastoral marital counseling in churches.

In an interview with the church ministers on whether the trainings were helpful in ensuring effective marital counseling, they stated that the trainings were helpful in that trainees got equipped with the knowledge on how to handle issues pertaining to marriages and families. According to Miller, Christian pre-marital counseling is designed to help couples grasp the intension of God in relation to marriage. He adds that when marriage is approached reverently and biblically, it can be one of the most joyful experiences this life can offer²⁴⁹. However, it is important for the Counselors to be equipped to be able to deal with all types of problems facing both Christians and non Christians. From the findings of the study, it is evident that proper training of the Counselors is reflected on the quality of counseling offered to the counselees which finally impacts on the quality of marriages.

²⁴⁹ Miller, Op.cit

4.5 Meaning of Marriage

To test on the understanding of the Counselors on marriage issues, they were asked to explain what marriage meant in their own words. One clergyman from A.I.C viewed marriage as a legal union between an adult man and woman where the church “issues” legal certificates after exchange of vows to seal a marriage contract. Others respondents viewed marriage as a covenant between two people of opposite sex to live together till death. In the contemporary Kenya and the whole of Africa, it is puzzling and disturbing to hear some people talking of same sex marriages for men. The Counselors added that there is church marriage, civil marriage and customary marriage.

When both marriage hopefuls are Kenyans, the parties intending to have a marriage in church are personally required to notify public of their intention 21 days before the marriage date, also present copies of identification cards (for both parties) and Ksh 200 plus to pay another Ksh 350 after which they are given a registrars certificate. Kenyans wishing to undergo a garden marriage, after fulfilling the other two requirements as found in the church marriage pay Ksh 5,050 and obtain a special license for the marriage from the registrar. Those wishing to have a civil marriage on fulfilling the other two requirements they pay Ksh 1,550 and then they are given marriage date according to the marriage registrar’s office diary. Kenyans who can not afford any of the above three categories of marriage choose to undergo customary marriages in accordance with their ethnic cultures.

One of the ministers interviewed in A.I.C defined marriage as a life-long indissoluble union, for better or worse, of one man with one woman to the exclusion of all others on either side. In an interview with one of the Roman Catholic Clergy, marriage was defined as "an intimate community of life and love until death". He added that it is a permanent sacramental union between man and woman to live together till death and that it is marked by procreation, companionship and dedication. These are good intentions yet sometimes this life long relationship fails to work and therefore the marital pastoral Counselors provide help to married people. However, unfortunately, sometimes couples end up separating or divorcing. Those who lose their spouses through death also need to be given appropriate counseling by a helper who knows how to provide bereavement counseling.

In an interview with the married and once married respondents on their understanding of what marriage is, the following were their diverse understanding of what marriage is: a mutual social relationship between a man and woman, to get united to live together for life, a covenant between a man and woman to live together till death, it happens when a man takes a woman home to be his wife, an indissoluble agreement between a man and woman to live together and start a family, a Christian covenant involving a man and a woman who agree to live together for life in companionship, the state of being husband and wife, joining together of man and woman to be husband and wife according to the cultures of a particular people, union of two people to make one for life, an agreement of people of opposite sex to get together and start a family, a life-long social institution established by adult people of opposite sex to

legally make husband and wife and that it is a legal tie that enables man and woman start a family.

According to the researcher, an analysis of the understanding of what marriage was among the married and once married couples raised some doubts on whether they clearly understood what marriage actually is. This was an indication that something must have gone wrong in their process of marriage which can on one hand be attributed to inadequate counseling.

4.6 Content of Pastoral Marital Counseling

To test on the content of marital counseling offered in churches, the researcher sought to test on different areas of counseling offered in marital counseling and effectiveness of the training in different areas of counseling.

4.6.1 Aspects of Pastoral Marital Counseling in A.I.C and Roman Catholic Church

The ministers were interviewed on the aspects in which they base their marital counseling. The following areas were mentioned: Biblical foundations of marriage, love, communication in marriage, conflict resolution in marriages, financial management in marriages, preparation for wedding, family roles, sex, parenting and relationship with in-laws.

Other dimensions of training elicited from the married and the unmarried included: handling problems arising from cross cultural marriages, job related challenges such

as when the couples stay away from each other to pursue careers and problems that arise between children and parents. One pastor had problems in counseling a father together with his children because after the demise of their mother they did not want to have a close relationship with him. All along when the wife was alive she was the one who used to interact with the children and the husband kept aloof so they had not bonded with him.

The above findings imply that the counseling offered in the churches is divergent and mainly based on the challenges encountered daily in life. It also shows the capacity of the Counselors in terms of knowledge content for counseling. According to Ambakederemo & Ganagana, Marital counseling involves series of marriage counseling sessions aimed at helping individuals to learn skills useful for resolving marital conflicts²⁵⁰. These sessions are normally used to deal with different topics which help in enhancing the counselees understanding of different dimensions of marriage.

Married respondents were asked to suggest other areas which should be introduced into pastoral marital counseling. The following areas were elicited: dealing with stress from work, the effect of children on marriage, how to keep romance alive in marriage, how to deal with anger or silence, learning to resolve differences, and identifying trouble signs in marriage, parenting skills, resolving differences, effective listening, and learning to forgive. These were rated high.

²⁵⁰ Ambakederemo & Ganagana, Op.cit.

According to Silliman and Schumm, the area of pastoral marital counseling include: adjusting to married life, attitudes and beliefs toward marriage, the benefits of premarital counseling, careers, commitment, communication skills, compatibility of values, conflict resolution, coping skills, the couple's reasons for entering premarital counseling, emotional management, friendships and social support, family-of-origin influences, finances, fun and leisure, gender role expectations, the importance of spending time with one's partner, parenting and children, personality characteristics, problem-solving skills, religion, romance, and the sexual relationship. This is an indication that despite the fact that the content of what is covered in the pastoral marital counseling in churches; there are other areas which should be incorporated to increase its effectiveness.

Gichinga identified the following challenges faced by married couples that could result in the need for counselling: communication; abuse (physical, emotional); parenting challenges; trauma (chronic and terminal illness); infidelity; alcohol and substance abuse; finances; infertility and/or childlessness; family of origin (in-laws); and sexual dysfunction²⁵¹.

In a study that examined the demographic profile and other characteristics of couples seeking mental health services in Limpopo Province (South Africa), Sodi & Sodi found communication to be a major problem (97.6%), followed by lack of trust (suspicions and extramarital affairs) (55.3%). Other common marital problems

251 Gichinga, E. M. (2005): *Marriage Counselling: A Counselling Guide*. Nairobi, Kenya: GEM Counselling Services

included: financial problems (45.9%); sexual problems (37.6%); in-laws (34.1%); and, substance abuse (34.1%)²⁵². Studies from Kenya and South Africa seem to suggest that there are regional or culture- specific differences in the prevalence and types of marital difficulties reported. Beside the differences, the findings reveal that there are specific areas which should be addressed in the pastoral marital counseling as describe by the areas of needs as highlighted by the already done studies.

4.6.2 Effectiveness of Pastoral Counseling in A.I.C and Roman Catholic Church

To test on the effectiveness of pastoral counseling, the married and the once married couples were asked to indicate the level of effectiveness of different areas of counseling in churches. The following were their responses with regard to different variables tested.

On sexuality in Marriage, 63 (67%) of the married and once married respondents stated that the training was effective. This they explained by the fact that they were taught on how they are to handle sexual issues in marriage such as when to have sex and when it was not necessary, cleanliness and understanding one another when it came to sexual issues. On the other hand, 31 (33%) mentioned that their Counselors did not go into details on what they were expected to do when it came to sex issues. They explained that they had to discuss some issues pertaining to sex with their best couples to get more information and that some used trial and error without prior information on what they were expected to do when it came to sexual issues. The

252 Sodi, T., and Sodi, E. (2006). *Couple therapy in a psychology practice in Limpopo Province (South Africa: Analysis of archival records)*. Paper presented at the 26th International Congress of Applied Psychology, Athens, Greece.

Roman Catholic clergy who practice celibacy were frank to marriage candidates and referred them to married couples for counseling on handling sex in marriage. This honesty and referral is deemed to be very important in counseling. One of the married respondents explained that:

“Counseling helped me because I got to know more on what I want expected to do in marriage when it comes to sex. I learnt a lot on the area of sexuality in marriage”. A married respondent aged 35 from R.C.C.

From the findings of the study, it is evident that even though some who went through the counseling benefited, some did not benefit because some issues were not handled properly during the counseling sessions. This is an indication that in as much as the counseling is offered in the churches studied, some stones are left unturned which are perceived to be very crucial in realizing healthy marriages. Thus, there is need for the Counselors to become clearer when it comes to sexual issues during their counseling. The Counselors also need to encourage their clients to read books and other literature on sex and romance in marriage, after the reading, they can discuss what they have read with the Counselor.

Regarding communication in marriages, 71 (76%) of the married or the once married respondents indicated that counseling on communication was effective. This was brought out by their mentioning that they were taught about the power of words in communication between couples, the importance of listening to each others' opinions and understanding one another. On the other hand 23 (24%) mentioned that counseling on communication was ineffective in the sense that it was not offered to

them during their premarital counseling. The marriage candidates wish to be given practice in communicating when they are to get married. From the findings of the study, it can be concluded that counseling on communication was effective in pastoral counseling, however, there is need for improvement on the same so that all those participating in the counseling could benefit from such knowledge to ensure successful marriages and families.

On the finances, 48 (51%) of the respondents explained that it was effective while 46 (49%) stated that it was ineffective. Those who mentioned that the counseling on finances is effective explained that the knowledge they got during the counseling helps them in their marriages. This they elaborated by stating that they went through training on setting priorities for their finances together, budgeting together, opening of joint accounts, consultations before making major purchases and the general knowledge of the key role of financial management in ensuring stable marriage and families. On the other hand, those who stated that the training was ineffective explained that there was no time for teaching on finances during their counseling, the Counselors just rushed over some areas and thus they did not benefit much. They were convinced that handling of finances is very challenging in families. Therefore the pastoral marital counseling offered in churches should include training on financial management in the family.

Regarding counseling on conflict resolution in marriages, 63 (67%) of the married and once married respondents mentioned that it is not effective while 31 (33%) said

that it is. Those who stated that it is effective explained that the trainings on conflict resolution helped them to identify the causes of conflicts such as unfaithfulness, finances, lack of proper communication, irresponsibility by either of the spouses and how they can be handled. One of the resolutions of conflicts among the respondents was stated as having time to talk about the problems as spouses and involving church ministers or elders in church whenever a problem cannot be solved by the two independently. Those who stated that the counseling is ineffective explained that either they did not go through the sessions or the Counselors rushed over the topics, thus denying them adequate time to grasp and understand the topics deeply. The pastoral Counselors in the churches are very busy with many church responsibilities. So they need to be trained to cope with their stressful careers by being relaxed in their approach to daily life, especially when they are providing marital counseling. If a Counselor does not appear relaxed in a session, this can make clients to feel accepted and free to share the issues they took to the counselor.

Finally, on parenting, 54 (57%) of the respondents indicated that the counseling is less effective while 40 (43%) stated that it is effective. This they explained by the fact that issues on parenting were not coming out clearly during premarital counseling as the roles of the spouses were not well highlighted. When training Counselors on spousal roles in marriage it is necessary for counselees to be informed and sensitized on the changing roles of wives and husbands due to the modern changes brought about by civilization, careers and lifestyles.

The respondents felt that the depth of the counseling offered is inadequate because they were not given chance to ask questions regarding how to tackle issues such as how to arrive at the number of children the couple chooses to have. Those who stated that it is effective explained that they discussed and made up their minds on the number of children they wished to have in their marriages and the responsibility of caring and upbringing of the children.

The Counselors appear to have emphasized different dimensions in the premarital counseling they gave to their clients. The researcher believes they had good reasons for doing that. From the findings of the study, it can be said that besides the existence of pastoral marital counseling in churches, some key areas in marriage are not effectively handled which can be considered to be one of the reasons why marriages fail. There is therefore need for pastoral marital counseling in churches to be strengthened through offering of adequate counseling services in terms of content and the depth to enhance understanding among the married and the unmarried.

In an interview with the teachers/instructors from the institutions studied on the content of counseling given to students, the study found that they are taught on divergent areas of counseling and how effective and successful marriages can be realized. This is an indication that in terms of training at the institutions, the Counselors are effectively trained. However, this is not evident in the actual ground where now counseling should be rendered to the people in need of such services. Nicky and Sara have written the Marriage Book based on the marriage course they

ran in the United Kingdom. This course covers topics including; Building Strong Foundations; The Art of Communication; Love in Action; Resolving Conflict; The Power of Forgiveness; Parents and In – laws and Good Sex²⁵³. Comparing the findings of the study on the content of pastoral marital counseling with contents of what is offered in other nations, it can be said that the content of what is offered in the training institution and finally to the counselees is not a challenge to the effectiveness of pastoral marital counseling. Therefore, it can be concluded that the challenge comes during the delivery of the service to the counselees in churches. The author makes this statement because the pastoral marital counselors were given the theory of counseling in the pre-service.

On the availability of training curriculum, it was found that the institutions studied did not have a curriculum for training on counseling. In an interview with some lecturers and principals of the institutions studied, it was found that the institutions taught mainly Biblical Counseling unit covering marriage and family, parenting, finances and sex in marriage. These teaching were based on pre-marriage counseling handbook and a handbook for pastors and lay leaders. Other areas of training included: Christian home, healthy marriage and home problems/challenges such as cultural difference, careers of spouses and religious denominations. In addition to the above, the researcher believes the training should include topics such as HIV/AIDS, drugs and substance abuse and relationships in general. One of the teachers in the theological colleges mentioned that:

²⁵³ Nicky & Sila, Op.cit

"Currently we teach Biblical Counseling as a unit but we do not have a particular curriculum on pastoral marital counseling. Our institution is in the process of coming up with one which I believe will make the counselors more effective". A teacher aged 48 from Pastoral Training Institution in Machakos County.

4.7 Content Knowledge of the Pastoral Counselors

To establish the content knowledge of the Counselors, those who were married or once married and had gone through pastoral marital counseling were asked to indicate whether their Counselors were qualified in terms of the content knowledge in their profession. The study found that 35 (67%) of the respondents indicated that their Counselors were knowledgeable on their areas of counseling while 17 (33%) indicated that their Counselors were not knowledgeable content wise. Those who mentioned that they were knowledgeable explained that the way in which the Counselors answered their questions was satisfactory. They also stated that the depth of the explanations they gave with regard to questions on marriage and their willingness to hear from counselees proved their content knowledge was adequate. On the other hand, those who stated that their Counselors were not knowledgeable explained that they were not ready to handle some questions on marriage life which were challenging and the fact that they used referrals on some situations which they perceived to be beyond their ability to handle.

The researcher believes that this second category of informants did not understand that referrals are a very important aspect of counseling. The helper assists by connecting the client with the professional or person who will give the appropriate

help. The Counselors were just being genuine to their helpees, which is proper for Counselor to do.

From the findings of the study, it can be concluded that some Counselors did not have the required content knowledge to enable them to effectively handle the counselees in the churches studied. This was attributed to the theoretical knowledge gained from the theological institutions coupled with limited practical counseling which could have supported their content knowledge. It should be noted that counseling is something to be known theoretically and to be done practically for it to be effective. Just like driving a car, one can know the theory behind driving the machine but if a person has not been given the practical driving skills, he/she cannot drive it despite the theoretical knowledge. Likewise one can have theoretical counseling knowledge but if she/he has not been given practical skills in counseling, it will not be possible for them to counsel others effectively.

CHAPTER FIVE

PERCEPTION OF PEOPLE TOWARDS MARRIAGE AND MARITAL COUNSELING

5.0 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the author presented and discussed the findings on the level and content of professional training of marital pastoral Counselor. To test on the effect of perception on the effectiveness of pastoral marital counseling in A.I.C and Roman Catholic Church, the researcher tested on: need for pastoral marital counseling in churches, the proportion of Christians who go through pastoral marital counseling before getting married, the attitude of the respondents towards marital counseling and the benefits of pastoral marital counseling.

5.1 Need for Pastoral Counseling

On the need for pastoral counseling in the churches studied, the married and the once married respondents were asked to state whether there is need for pastoral counseling or not. The study found that 82 (87%) of the respondents mentioned that there is need for pastoral marital counseling in their churches while 12 (13%) mentioned that there was no need for pastoral marital counseling in the churches. This they explained by the fact that the counseling prepared them to resolve problems that would otherwise not be easy to solve. They also mentioned that going through pastoral marital counseling prepares the minds of those who want to get married in terms of the responsibilities that come with marriage. It also gives spouses opportunity to prepare

for their marriage in advance, thus forestalling the rampant marital problems which have emerged in our society and are impacting negatively on the lives of people. One of the once married respondents explained that:

"I believe marital counseling is very important and helpful because it prepares both the parties into marriage. I got into marriage without getting through the counseling. I can say that is was the cause of our problem. The reason is that we got into marriage without exposure of what it takes in come we stay manner and our marriage did not take long" Once married respondent aged 36 from A.I.C.

Research shows the effects of broken marriages such as depression, anxiety, substance abuse, intimacy problems, finances and stress are far reaching and extend beyond the family to society as a whole²⁵⁴. This is an indication that the institution of marriage has many challenges. It is also an indicator for the need for pastoral marital counseling which is central in ensuring the survival of marriages to restore what has been lost. Increasing knowledge and building skills through relationship education are important ways of combating marital dissatisfaction and the risks of unhealthy relationships. According to Lesage-Higgins, marriage preparation and enrichment programmes, premarital counseling, and other preparatory methods may be helpful in building strong marriages and limiting marital distress²⁵⁵. It can therefore be concluded that there is need for strengthening pastoral counseling in A.I.C and Roman Catholic Church.

²⁵⁴ Bridges & Isabella, Op.cit.

²⁵⁵ Lesage-Higgins, Op.cit

In an interview with the youth on the need for pastoral marital counseling in churches, this study found 46 (51%) of the youths indicated that there was no need for the pastoral marital counseling in churches while 44 (49%) stated that there was need for counseling in churches. Those who mentioned that there was no need for the pastoral counseling in churches justified their opinion by saying that besides the existence of such programmes in churches, divorce is increasing in society even among those who wed in churches. Those who stated that the counseling is necessary explained that the counseling is important in giving direction to those who want to get married and thus helping them in making the right decision. From the above findings of the study, it can be said that about half the youths in A.I.C and Roman Catholic church have negative attitude towards pastoral marital counseling. One of the youths commented that:

“Whether people go through counseling or not; there are still a lot of challenges in marriage life and I think it is not necessary. I have seen couples who went through the counseling and they finally divorced”. A youth aged 26 from A.I.C.

Akande, Olowonirejuaro and Akuchie contended that attitudes are deeply rooted and influence success in many subjects. It is also an enduring trait in life which is a composite of many experiences, that could be positive or negative depending on the circumstances and experiences of individuals²⁵⁶. It is therefore a concern of the researcher that something has to be done regarding the pastoral counseling in churches to reverse the growing negative attitude of the youth towards marital counseling. This is based on the fact that the youth are the future Counselors and

²⁵⁶ Akande, Olowonirejuaro and Akuchie, Op.cit

church ministers and thus maintaining the status quo will definitely worsen the situation as divorce rates and even homicide within marriages are on the increase.

5.2 Proportion of Christian Communities Going Through Pastoral Marital Counseling before getting married

In an interview with the church ministers on the proportion of congregants who go through the marital counseling before they get married, the findings of the study revealed that 14 (50%) of the church ministers interviewed (constituting 9 {32%} from R.C.C and 5 {18%} from A.I.C) mentioned that between 50% -70% go through marital counseling before they get married. The study also found that 7 (25%) mentioned that less than fifty percent go through marital counseling (constituting 3 {11%} from R.C.C and 4 {14%} from A.I.C) and the other 7 (25%) mentioned that more than seventy percent of the congregants who want to get married go through pastoral marital counseling (constituting 2 {7%} from R.C.C and 5 {18%} from A.I.C). From the findings of the study; it is evident that a slightly higher percentage of the adherents from R.C.C go through counseling compared to those in A.I.C. This can be attributed to the emphasis by the Catholic church of Marital counseling programmes. Importantly, research has shown that counseling is most effective when used early, before the relationship reaches severe levels of distress²⁵⁷. Unfortunately, most couples consider marriage counseling only as an intervention for extremely severe relationship problems and not as a preventive or enriching method²⁵⁸. Thus,

²⁵⁷ Jacobson & Addis, Op.cit

²⁵⁸ Bringle, R. G., & Byers, D. (1997). Intentions to seek marriage counseling. *Family Relations*, 46, 299-304.

some only come for the marital counseling when things are not working as they expected. The findings are presented in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1 Proportion of Congregants going through Pastoral Marital Counseling before getting married

Proportion	A.I.C		R.C.C		Total	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Below 50%	4	14	3	11	7	25
Between 50-70%	5	18	9	32	14	50
More than 70%	5	18	2	7	7	25
Total	14	50	14	50	28	100

From the findings of the study, it can be said that more than half of those who get married in churches go through pastoral marital counseling in the churches studied. This is an indication of the importance of the counseling especially for those who want to get married. The importance of pastoral marital counseling has been echoed in different countries; In South Africa, the South African government identified several key issues towards the resolution of marital problems of which pastoral and spiritual work is perceived to have a significant contribution²⁵⁹. This is an indication that pastoral marital counseling is very important and should be taken seriously to ensure that family as an institution and as the smallest unit of a society remains successful even for the generations to come.

²⁵⁹ www.gov.co.za/key issues, Op.cit

In a retrospective study examining the effectiveness of counseling, researchers found that for recently married soldiers in America, premarital counseling and marriage counseling were both significantly effective in increasing marital satisfaction. For the spouses of soldiers, only the combination of premarital and marital counseling was significantly effective in increasing marital satisfaction²⁶⁰. This is so because pastoral marital counseling should start before marriage during courtship and continue within marriage to support those who marry in mastering coping skills in marriage.

In an interview with the teachers/instructors in the institutions of learning studied on the importance of pastoral marital counseling, they mentioned that the counseling was very important. The importance was emphasized by the fact that curriculums are being or have been developed in the theological institutions and schools where counseling psychology are taught to equip ministers and professional Counselors with the knowledge to help marriages. This is an indication of positive attitude towards counseling as a whole.

In interviews with professionals on the importance of pastoral marital counseling offered in churches, it was emphasized that the church is the best ground for offering such like services as they are places where people go for spiritual nourishment and counseling there is readily available at no fee. It was recommended that people should be encouraged to make use of such opportunities to ensure stable marriages. They further emphasized that churches should ensure that those who offer marital

²⁶⁰ Schumm, Silliman & Bell, Op.cit

counseling should be professionally qualified and have the practical skills to enhance the effectiveness of such programmes in churches. Sound training in counseling has to consider selection of the trainees, the quality of training they are given which should include group and peer counseling practical sessions. After qualifying the Counselor need to be supported by the supervision of a qualified and experienced Counselor.

Supervision in counseling ensures that the Counselor stays and grows in self-awareness, continues to learn from the more experienced colleague, gets opportunity to unload their frustration and anxieties and the Counselor is ethical in dealing with clients.

The supervisor ensures that what takes place in counseling is for the benefit of the client, the supervisee exercises justice, it is not harmful to client or society, the client grows in understanding, and allows clients make their own autonomous decisions with the facilitation of the Counselor. This will enable marital pastoral Counselors to be effective in their work and is likely to make clients change their attitude towards pastoral marital counseling.

5.3 Recommendations on the Ways of Improving Pastoral Marital Counseling in

Churches in Kenya

The following were the recommendations given by respondents for improving the effectiveness of marital counseling:

Provincial administrators, school administrators, and church leaders should organize seminars, workshops and conferences where they invite trained marriage Counselors to counsel the people in groups.

Mass media need to be used more to sensitize marriage hopefuls and the married to use counseling whenever they have a challenge/problem in their relationship with the partners.

Churches should set some time for teaching people on how to keep healthy in their marriages by living in accordance with what psychologist have found useful to be known by the marriage hopefuls and the married. This can be educative and preventive counseling where the professional is assisting masses to stop marital problems from occurring or escalating in churches and society in general.

Education on marriage and family should start early in one's life. The church should introduce teachings on marriage and family life to the youth early in life to equip them with knowledge and skills they would require upon reaching marriage age. This idea is echoed by Warura and Kinoti who are of the opinion that it is not enough to wait to counsel the young people until they come to pre-wedding counseling since at

this time they have already made up their minds and it may be most difficult to help them to view their anticipated relationship realistically²⁶¹. According to them, pastoral counseling of families will continue to be inadequate as long as it starts at treating the symptoms rather than the cause of the disease.

Parents should endeavor to be act as role model to their children in their marriages. This will help their children to emulate their manner of life in word and deed. This may result into stable marriages and families in the future.

Those who regularly talk to spouses with problems should be trained in modern counseling methods to be effective in their interventions.

Spouses need to be reminded to seek for help early whenever they have a problem that they cannot resolve on their own. This will help in the resolution of the conflicts before they go out of hand, thus saving families from break ups. Marriages need constant support to stay healthy and functional.

Parents need to learn some basic counseling skills so that they can introduce counseling approach to solving problems to their children at an early age. This may include having open discussions with their children on sexuality. This will give them a chance to put what they leant into practice in their marriages later in life.

²⁶¹ Waruta, D.W and Kinoti, H.W (2005). Pastoral Care in African Christianity. Challenging Eassays in pastoral Theology. Action publishers, Nairobi, Kenya.

Marital Counselors in churches should take their counseling roles seriously and help those with marital problems to reduce family break ups. This will eventually strengthen marital counseling in churches making it beneficial to many who may be in need.

Those intending to marry should seek for guidance from the marital pastoral Counselors in churches. This will help in the recognition of the critical role of the marital counseling in churches thus making it effective and of help to those in need.

Cohabiting and trial marriages should be discouraged in churches. This is because they promote instability in the family institution and also because they lead to marital break ups as those involved do not get well prepared before they get married.

Modern Counselors need to know African cultural heritage which took preventive counseling seriously. This knowledge background will help in the determination of the root causes of marital problems thus coming up with appropriate solutions for those in need.

People need be taught the importance of going for counseling before their problems escalate to complicated levels.

Marital counseling services need to be intensified in rural areas. For now counseling centers are in the urban areas.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Introduction

In the preceding chapters, the author has presented the findings of the study based on each of the objective of the study. This chapter therefore presents summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study. The purpose of this study was to assess the status and quality of pastoral marital counseling in A.I.C and Roman Catholic Church in Machakos and Nairobi Counties. The study was guided by the following specific objectives: to establish the status of pastoral marital counseling in A.I.C and Roman Catholic Church in Machakos and Nairobi Counties in Kenya, to assess the professional levels of training for pastoral Counselors, to evaluate the content of pastoral counseling training, to investigate the attitudes of different categories of people towards marriage and marital counseling, and to recommend on the ways of improving pastoral marital counseling in the Churches.

6.1 Summary of the Findings of the Study

This sub-section presents the summary of the findings of the study as per the research objectives:

The first objective of the study was to establish the status of pastoral counseling in the A.I.C and Roman Catholic Church studied. The study found that pastoral marital counseling was offered in A.I.C and Catholic church in Machakos and Nairobi

Counties and that church ministers are the people charged with the responsibility of offering the service. The findings are in line with that of Silliman and Schumm who observed that premarital counseling is provided by clergy, professional Counselors, paraprofessionals, and counseling trainees²⁶². In addition, Silliman, Schumm, and Jurich's study reported that most people desire clergy as a premarital counseling provider²⁶³. Other people involved in the counseling in the churches studied were best couples and marital counseling teams. Some clergy especially from the Roman Catholic Church referred counselees to professional Counselors from their denominations.

Regarding the duration for the counseling, it was found that most of the counseling took three months divided into sessions. The respondents had different perceptions with regard to the time allocated for pastoral marital counseling especially pre-marital counseling. The church ministers viewed the time allocated to be adequate while the youths viewed the duration of three months to be too long for premarital counseling. Concerning the categories of people who go for marital counseling, the study found that majority were those who wanted to get married. Others included those with marital problems in their families especially the newly married couples. In interviews with the professional Counselors, it was stated that most of their clients were couples who had been married but were experiencing marital problems. Very few marriage candidates went to these professional therapists for pre-marital counseling. The

²⁶² Silliman and Schumm, (1999) Op.cit

²⁶³ Ibid

candidates seemed to believe that these therapists deal with people with serious problems in their lives.

The second objective of the study was to assess the professional level of training of marital pastoral Counselors. The study found that most of the marital Counselors in A.I.C and Roman Catholic Church studied had served as pastoral Counselors for long duration with majority having served for a period of more than ten years. It came out clearly in the study that, besides the experience of the Counselors in helping clients; there is need for professional training for one to qualify as a Counselor. Thus the effectiveness of pastoral marital counseling was found to be determined by both the experience and professional training of the Counselors.

Regarding the professional qualifications of the Counselors, the study found that 36% of the Counselors had diploma in counseling, 25% had certificate in counseling, 21% had first degree in counseling, 11% had masters degree in counseling psychology, and 7% were PhD holders while two had not trained at all (see table 4.2). The lowest requirement for one to qualify as a pastoral marital Counselor according to the teachers/instructors in the training institutions studied was diploma in counseling psychology. Thus, most of the Counselors in the churches studied were qualified even though a significant number still did not professionally qualify to serve as marital pastoral marital Counselors.

On the criteria for the selection of the Counselors, the study found that professional training of the Counselors was a key requirement for one to qualify as a marital therapist in the A.I.C and Roman Catholic Church in Machakos and Nairobi Counties. Parishioners want to be counseled by people who are professionally qualified. It was also found out that a few Counselors did not have the required content knowledge and practical skills of counseling to enable them to effectively handle the counselees in the churches studied.

The third objective was to evaluate the content of pastoral marital counseling training. The following areas of training were mentioned: Biblical foundations of marriage, love, communication in marriage, conflict resolution in marriages, financial management in marriages, preparation for wedding, family roles, sex, parenting, and relationship with in-laws. On the effectiveness of the delivery of pastoral counseling, the study found that some areas such as sexuality, communication, finances and parenting were inadequately handled. In terms of the training given in training institutions, the study found that Counselors were taught on divergent areas of counseling and how effective and successful marriages can be realized. The study revealed that despite the fact that the Counselors were well prepared in the institutions they attended; their delivery on the ground was wanting. They had the theoretical knowledge without corresponding practical skills of counseling, so they could not offer the counseling effectively.

The fourth objective of the study was to investigate the perception of different categories of people towards marriage and marital counseling. The study found that there was need for pastoral marital counseling in the churches studied. Regarding the proportion of the Christians going through pastoral marital counseling, the study found that approximately more than half of those who want to get married go through the pre-marital counseling. The importance of pastoral marital counseling was emphasized by the fact that curriculums are being/have been developed in the theological institutions and schools where counseling psychology is taught to equip ministers and professional Counselors with the knowledge to help marriages and families. This was an indication of positive attitude towards counseling as a whole. The Counselors further emphasized that the church is the best ground for offering this service as it is a place where people go regularly for spiritual nourishment and the fact that the counseling there is readily available at no fee. People should be encouraged to make use of such opportunities to ensure stable marriages and families which influence the quality of life in society in general.

6.2 Conclusions

From the findings of the study, it can be concluded that there is pastoral marital counseling in A.I.C and Roman Catholic Church in Machakos and Nairobi Counties. The church ministers are charged with the responsibility of offering the pastoral marital counseling with the help of marital counseling teams in churches and best couples.

It can also be concluded that one of the challenges facing marital counseling in A.I.C and Roman Catholic Church is inadequate training or lack of training among those charged with the responsibility of offering pastoral marital counseling. This is evidenced by the fact that some of the Counselors in the churches studied offered counseling without any professional training.

It can further be concluded that the content of the training offered to the trainees in training institutions was adequate. However, the training does not emphasize on the practicing of the counseling skills in order to internalize the attitudes and the skills of the Counselor. This is based on the fact that like driving, counseling is not something to be known only theoretically but should also be done practically. The challenge therefore arises in the delivery of the contents to the counselees in churches. Thus, the content of training in the colleges is not a challenge to the pastoral marital counseling; a challenge arises when Counselors do the practical counseling in the Churches and the community.

Finally, it can be concluded that perception is not a challenge to pastoral marital counseling in A.I.C and Roman Catholic Church in Machakos and Nairobi Counties. This is supported by the fact that the believers in the churches voluntarily go for pastoral marital counseling in the churches studied. Most of the married people who went for various forms of pastoral marital counseling testify that they benefited

6.3 Recommendations

The respondents in the study recommended that pastoral marital counseling in churches should be improved by encouraging the Christians to take the marital counseling more seriously. This can be done by emphasizing on the importance of pastoral marital counseling which should be introduced early in life, at home, in church, school and college and continue to the preparation for marriage and in marriage.

It was also recommended that A.I.C and Roman Catholic church should ensure that those in charge of pastoral counseling be professionally qualified to ensure the effectiveness of pastoral marital counseling. This can be done by either training the Counselors in pastoral institutions or by sponsoring them for training in recognized institutions offering professional counseling courses. The institutions have to be emphasizing on the practical aspects of counseling and spirituality including supervision for the practicing Counselors.

Concerning the content of pastoral marital counseling, it was recommended that besides what is offered in the curriculum, additional areas should be added to explore other areas which are challenging in marriages such as dealing with stress from work, the effect of children on marriage, how to keep romance alive in marriage, how to deal with anger or silence, learning to resolve differences, identifying trouble signs in marriage, parenting skills, effective listening and learning to forgive. It is therefore recommended that the trainings at the pastoral institutions should include practical

counseling sessions for the trainee Counselors. The author is of the view that counseling is something to be known theoretically and also to be done practically for it to be effective.

On the attitude, it was recommended that churches should teach their adherents on the importance of pastoral marital counseling especially the youth who are not so receptive of the marital counseling. This can be done by introducing the youth to the importance of marital counseling as they approach the age of marriage.

Finally, the study recommends that theological institutions should develop proper training curriculum for the pastors and priests with emphasis on both theoretical and practical counseling. This would improve the quality of pastoral marital counseling programmes in churches. The pastoral Counselors assist people outside church circles and so the general population will benefit from the counseling.

According to Kennedy and Charles in their book "*On Becoming a Counselor*", a marriage Counselor is required not to expect clients to be reasonable. In order to respond to married couple, the Counselor is supposed to listen to the people/couple instead of just listening to the problems they describe. The problems are sometimes illustrations of things they find difficult to define about their life together²⁶⁴.

²⁶⁴ Kennedy, E and Charles, C. (1990). *On Becoming Counselor*. Dublin, Island, Gill and Macmillan. Pp 307-308

Practical counseling requires that we understand and respond to the persons having problems rather than to the problems themselves. When clients feel understood by Counselor that helps them to appreciate the emotional entanglements and become reasonable and resolve the problems on their own. This may sound encouraging or discouraging to the marital pastoral Counselor, but it is the reality which every therapist needs to know.

6.4 Suggestion for Further Research

This study was carried out in A.I.C and Roman Catholic Church in Machakos and Nairobi Counties to assess the status and quality of pastoral marital counseling services. The author recommends that another study be done to investigate the challenges faced by those providing pastoral marital counseling in churches and the general society which was not the focus of this study.

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4. Denominational affiliation: _____
5. Role(s) in the Church: _____
6. Experience working with the Church: _____
7. Area of Service: _____

SECTION B: STATUS OF PASTORAL COUNSELING

8. Do you offer pastoral marital counseling in your church? Yes No

9. If yes, whom has the church entrusted with the responsibility of providing pastoral counseling? _____

10. What is the chief cause of the marriage of non-let (under 30 in your Church)? _____

11. State your professional who may be working with you and in providing marital counseling. _____

12. What are the major problems of people who are getting married? _____

13. Which group of people seem to have more problems with their marital unions? _____

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CLERGY/CHURCH MINISTERS

SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION OF THE RESPONDENT

1. Gender: Male [] Female []
2. Marital status s Married [] Single []
3. Age: _____
4. Denominational affiliation; Catholic [] A. I. C. []
5. Rank/duty in the Church: _____
6. Experience in working with the Church _____ years.
7. Area of Service Urban [] Rural []

SECTION B: STATUS OF PASTORAL COUNSELING

8. Do you offer pastoral marital counseling in your church? Yes [] No []
9. If yes, whom has the Church entrusted with the responsibility of providing marital counseling? _____

10. What is the criteria for the selection of marital Counselors in your Church?

11. State other professionals who may be assisting your personnel in providing marital counseling. _____

12. Which category of people do you offer marital counseling to? _____

13. Which group of people seems to have more problems which need marital counseling?
 - a. The engaged
 - b. The newly married

c. Those who have been in Marriage for a long time

Give Reasons: _____

14. How long do premarital classes take in your church? _____

15. How many sessions do you normally have with the counselees before they are considered ready to tie the knot? _____

16. Do you think that the timing allocated for pre-marital counseling is normally adequate? Yes [] No []

Briefly explain your answer? _____

SECTION C: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING OF THE COUNSELORS

17. For how long have you served in the church _____

18. Are you professional trained to serve in the Church Yes [] No []

If yes, what is your level of professional training?

19. Do you have professionally trained Counselor in your Church?

Yes [] No []

20. If your answer is yes, what is the level of their professional training on Counseling? Certificate [] Diploma [] Bachelors Degree []
Masters Degree [] PhD [] Any other (specify) _____

21. Does your Church train counseling personnel who can provide adequate services to the people of today's World? Yes [] No []

22. Where does your Church take the personnel for training? _____

23. Your training and experience in working with the Church have given you a wealth of knowledge, please share it with me.

a. What is marriage according to the teaching of your Church? _____

b. What is the importance of marriage? _____

- c. What are the responsibilities of a wife in a marriage? _____

- d. What needs usually motivate people to get married? _____

- e. How does marriage serve the husband? How does it serve the wife? _____

- f. How do children from the marriage of their parents? _____

- g. Why are some youngsters reluctant to get married nowadays? _____

- h. What marital problems face some husbands? _____

- i. What are the causes of those problems? _____

- j. Who helps the husbands solve those problems? _____

- k. What marital problems face some wives? _____

- m. What homely/family problems face "children"? _____

- n. What causes these problems? _____

SECTION D; CONTENT OF PASTORAL TRAINING

24. What are the areas of counseling you offer in your marital classes? .

25. The following are some of the areas of training in Pastoral Counseling. Please indicate the level of effectiveness of the trainings got in different programs regarding marital counseling in the colleges you attended?

1-Very effective

2-Effective

3-Less effective

4-In-effective

5-Not effective at all

	1	2	3	4	5
Sexuality					
Relationships with in-laws					
Communication					
Conflict resolution					
Family Background					
Parenting					

26. What were other areas of training in Pastoral Counseling which you went through? _____

SECTION E: ATTITUDE TOWARDS MARITAL COUNSELING

27. Do the Christians in your Church see the need for going for marital and other forms of counseling? Yes [] No []

How do they respond to counseling? _____

28. What proportion of the youth in your church go for premarital counseling before getting married? _____

29. What are the challenges facing marital counseling in your Church? _____

30. Marital counseling may not be adequately provided in tie churches, what other measures are supportive to marriages?

31. What can be done in order to have happy stable marriages and families in Kenya?

32. Suggest on the ways of improving pastoral marital counseling in Churches?

SECTION B: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING OF THE COUNSELORS

2.14.1. What is your highest level of education? Certificate P.E. Diploma Bachelor's Degree Master's Degree PhD Other _____

8. In terms of duration of training, do you think the time allocated for training in your institution is adequate for preparing students and Counselors for their professional work? Yes No

9. Considering the training you offer at the institution, for preparing students, do you think the training is sufficient for effective preparation for service? Yes No

10. What are the ways of relating to your wife in the marriage? Counselors in your institution? _____

APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS/INSTRUCTORS IN PASTORAL INSTITUTION

Please, answer by filling in or ticking

1. Name: Date _____
2. Sex: Male () Female () Places _____
3. Marital Status Married () Single ()
4. Denominational affiliation: Catholic (), A.I.C. ()
5. Rank/duty in the Institutions _____
6. Experience in working with the Church _____ years.
Experience in teaching in Pastoral Institutions _____ years.

SECTION B: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING OF THE COUNSELORS

7. Level of training? Certificate [] Diploma []
Bachelors Degree [] Masters Degree [] PhD []
Any other (specify) _____
8. In terms of duration for training, do you think the time allocated for training in your institution is adequate for preparing servants and Counselors for their noble call?
Yes [] No []
Briefly explain your answer? _____

9. Considering the trainings you offer at the Institutions for preparing servants, do you think the trainings are adequate for effective preparation for service?
Yes [] No []
Briefly explain your answer? _____

10. Which areas of training do you offer to the marital Counselors in your Institution?

11. According to you, what is the lowest level of professional qualification a marital Counselor should have? _____

12. Your training and experience in training Church personnel have given you a wealth of experience, please share it with me

(a) How do people understand marriage today? _____

(b) What needs are met by marriage? _____

(c) What needs usually motivate people to get married? _____

(d) In what ways is marriage useful to the husband? _____

(e) What are the responsibilities of the husband? _____

(f) How is it useful to the wife? _____

(g) What are the responsibilities of the wife? _____

(h) How do children benefit from the marriage of their parents? _____

(i) Why do some youngsters seem reluctant to get married nowadays? _____

13. What marital problems face some husbands? _____

What are the causes of those problems? _____

Who helps the husbands solve those problems? _____

14. What marital problems face some wives? _____
 What are the causes of those problems? _____

 Who helps them solve the problems? _____

15. What homely/family problems face "children"? _____

 What causes those problems? _____

 Who is supposed to help children solve them? _____

SECTION C; CONTENT OF PASTORAL TRAINING

13. The following are some of the areas of training in Pastoral Counseling. Please indicate the level of effectiveness of the trainings got in different programs regarding marital counseling in the colleges you attended?

- 1-Very effective 2-Effective 3-Less effective
- 4-In-effective 5-Not effective at all

	1	2	3	4	5
Sexuality					
Relationships with in-laws					
Communication					
Conflict resolution					
Family Background					
Parenting					

14. What were other areas of training in Pastoral Counseling which you went through? _____

SECTION D: ATTITUDE TOWARDS MARITAL COUNSELING

15. Do the Christians in your Church see the need for going for marital and other forms of counseling? Yes [] No []

How do they respond to counseling? _____

What proportion of the youth in your church go for premarital counseling before getting married? _____

16. What are the feelings of the Church concerning marital problems in Kenya today?

How can the problems be reduced through counseling? _____

17. How can most marriages be made more happier and fulfilling to the members of the nuclear families? _____

18. Apart from marital counseling what other measures are supportive to marriages

19. What would you say are the main causes of problems between spouses?

How can we deal with them? _____

20. Please comment on the following;

i. polygamy _____

ii. Monogamy _____

iii. Intermarriage _____

iv. Ideal age for marriage _____

21. Suggest ways of improving marital counseling in the churches and community in general? _____

Give any comments you have on marital counseling? _____

1. Date of interview _____

Sex: Male () Female () Age _____ Year _____

2. Denominational affiliation _____

3. Rank/duty in my Church _____

4. My occupation/profession is _____ Experience _____ Year _____

5. I was brought up by _____ Parents () Other ()

6. The type of marriage I underwent _____

Your present age is _____ years

Highest educational attainment/qualification _____

SECTION III STATUS OF PASTORAL COUNSELING

7. Is there or was marital counseling in your church? Yes () No ()

8. If yes, where was the Church entrusted with the responsibility of providing marital counseling? _____

9. Did you participate in pastoral counseling history you are aware of? _____

Yes () No ()

10. If yes, how long did it last? _____

Who organized you? _____

11. What other professionals who may be counseling you or your wife are involved in marital counseling? _____

12. According to you, which group of people seems to have more problems in their marriages? _____

a. The engaged

b. Newly married

c. Divorced who are in remarriage () or long-term _____

APPENDIX III: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MARRIED OR ONCE MARRIED

Please, answer by filling in or ticking

1. Date of interview _____ Place _____
Sex: Male () Female () Age; _____ years
2. Denominational affiliation _____
3. Rank/duty in my Church _____
4. My occupation/profession is _____ Experience _____ years
5. I was brought up in a _____ Rural area () Urban area ()
6. The type of marriage you underwent.
Your experience in marriage _____ years.
Highest educational/academic qualification _____

SECTION B: STATUS OF PASTORAL COUNSELING

8. Is there pastoral marital counseling in your church? Yes [] No []
9. If yes, whom has the Church entrusted with the responsibility of providing marital counseling? _____

10. Did you go through marital counseling before you got married?
Yes [] No []
If yes, how long did it take? _____
Who counseled you? _____
11. State other professionals who may be assisting your personnel in providing marital counseling. _____

12. According to you, which group of people seems to have more problems which need marital counseling?
 - a. The engaged
 - b. The newly married
 - c. Those who have been in Marriage for a long time

Give Reasons: _____

13. How long do premarital classes take in your church? _____

14. Do you think that the timing allocated for pre-marital counseling is normally adequate? Yes [] No []

Briefly explain your answer? _____

SECTION C: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING OF THE COUNSELORS

15. Are you professional trained to serve in the Church Yes [] No []

If yes, what is your level of professional training?

16. When did you complete your training as a Church minister/servant? _____

17. Do you have professionally trained Counselor in your church?

Yes [] No []

18. Does your Church train counseling personnel who can provide adequate services to the people of today's World? Yes [] No []

19. Our experience in life and marriage have given a wealth of knowledge, please share it with me:-

(a) What is marriage? _____

(b) What are the responsibilities of a husband in marriage? _____

(c) What are the responsibilities of a wife in marriage? _____

(d) What motivates people to get married? _____

(e) What mistakes can people make when getting married? _____

(f) Why are some youngsters unwilling to get married these days?

(g) Were you counselled before you got married? Yes () No () Who counselled you?

_____ How many times? _____ for
what period before marriage? _____. How long did each counseling session
take? _____

(h) Do you think such counseling is or can be useful to those preparing to get
married? Yes () No (). Give reasons:

(i) When should such counseling start for those preparing to get married?

Give Reasons _____

(j) After getting married do you think it would be wise for spouses to have further
counseling? Yes () No (). Give reasons

If your answer was yes, for how long after marriage? _____

SECTION D; CONTENT OF PASTORAL TRAINING

20. Which areas were you counseled in during your marital classes?

21. The following are some of the areas of training in Pastoral Counseling. Please
indicate the level of effectiveness of the trainings got in different programs regarding
marital counseling in the colleges you attended?

1-Very effective

2-Effective

3-Less effective

4-In-effective

5-Not effective at all

	1	2	3	4	5
Sexuality					
Relationships with in-laws					
Communication					
Conflict resolution					
Family Background					
Parenting					

22. Briefly explain your answer as indicated above? _____

23. What were other areas of training in Pastoral Counseling which you went through? _____

SECTION E: ATTITUDE TOWARDS MARITAL COUNSELING

24. Do the Christians in your Church see the need for going for marital and other forms of counseling? Yes [] No []

How do they respond to counseling?

25. What proportion of the youth in your church go for premarital counseling before getting married? _____

26. Does your Church value marital counseling? _____

Does it actually provide it to its members? _____

27. Did you go through pastoral counseling before marriage? Yes [] No []

If yes, did you benefit from the counseling? Yes [] No []

Briefly explain your answer? _____

28. What are the problems faced by married couples? _____

What causes those problems? _____

How can those problems be solved? _____

27. What problems do some wives encounter in marriage? _____

What are the causes of those problems? _____

How can they be solved or alleviated? _____

28. What homely/family problems do some "children" face? _____

What causes them? _____

How can they be avoided/solved? _____

29. What problems can make spouses think of divorce? _____

30. What problems are faced by members of a family where divorce or separation-occurs? _____

31. Who is charged with the responsibility of providing marital counseling in your Church? _____

Do you think such a person is well qualified to provide it? Yes () No ().

Give reasons: _____

32. Is that "counsellor" conversant with the modern techniques and approaches to counseling? Yes () No () Give Reasons! _____

33. How can knowledge of traditional African way of life and counseling be useful to the modern counsellors? _____

34. Please comment on the following

(a) polygamy _____

(b) monogamy _____

(c) intermarriage _____

(d) ideal age for marriage _____

35. Marital counseling may not be adequately provided in your Church, What other measures are supportive to marriages? _____

36. Would you agree with those who say relatives of spouses are the main cause of problems/strained relationships, in marriages? Yes () No ()

Give reasons: _____

37. What would you have to say about "family planning" and the methods used? _____

38. Give your comment on separation _____

39. Give your comment on divorce. _____

40. Suggest ways of improving marriages and marital counseling. _____

41. Give any other comments on marital counseling. _____

APPENDIX IV: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE UNMARRIED

Please answer by filling in or ticking

1. Date of interviews _____ Place: _____
Sex: Male () Female () Ages _____ years.
2. Denominational affiliation _____
3. Rank/duty in my Church _____
4. My occupation/profession is _____ Experience _____ years.
5. I was brought up in a _____ Rural area () Urban area ()
6. Highest educational qualification _____
7. I request you to answer me the following questions as honestly as you can.
 - (a) What is marriage? _____
 - (b) Do you intend to get married some day? Yes () No () Give reasons:

What type of marriage do you intend to undergo? Give reasons:

 - (c) Why do people get married? _____
 - (d) What are the responsibilities of a husband in marriage? _____
 - (e) What are the responsibilities of a wife in marriage? _____
 - (f) What factors should one consider when choosing a life partner, and why?

 - (g) Do you believe people need marital guidance from a knowledgeable person as they prepare to get married? Yes () No () Give reasons _____
 - (h) Who should give/gives that counseling to youngsters? _____

When should marital counseling start? _____
When should it stop? _____

- (i) What qualification would you wish a marriage Counselor to have?
(j) Do you think that kind of "service"¹¹ would be useful to Christian youngsters and couples? Yes () No ()

Support your answer with reason/s: _____

8. What problems face some husbands in marriage? _____
What causes those problems? _____
How can they be alleviated or solved? _____
9. What problems face some wives in marriage? _____
10. What are the causes of those problems? _____
How can they be avoided or solved? _____
11. What problems face some "children" in homes/families? _____
12. How can they be alleviated/solved? _____
13. What problems are encountered by the different members of families where divorce or separation occurs? _____

14. How do these people benefit from a peaceful "happy" home/family?
i. husband _____
ii. wife _____
iii. children/community around _____
iv. National Leaders _____
15. What qualities would you wish your "counselor" to have in order to be effective in preparing and counseling you for marriage?

15. Apart from counseling, what other measures support marriages? _____

16. What do you think causes strained relationships between spouses? _____

17. What would you say about "family planning and the methods used? _____

18. Give your opinion about separations _____

19. Give your opinion about divorce. _____

20. Suggest ways of improving marital counseling _____

21. Do you think knowledge of traditional African approach to life and counseling can be useful to today's counsellors?
If yes in what ways? _____
22. Please comment on the following:-
- (a) polygamy
 - (b) monogamy
 - (c) intermarriage
 - (d) ideal age for marriage
23. Give any other comments on marital counseling

APPENDIX V: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR PROFESSIONALS

Please, answer by filling in or ticking.

1. Name: _____ Date, _____
2. Sex: Male () Female () Age _____
3. Marital Status: Married () Single ()
4. Religion/Denomination affiliations _____
5. Rank/duty in the Church _____
6. Your profession _____
Experience in your profession _____
7. Which category of people do you normally offer your counseling services to? _____
7. Please, share some of your experiences with me?
 - (a) How do the people of today define marriage? _____
Why? _____
What are the responsibilities of a husband in marriages? _____

What are the responsibilities of a wife in marriage? _____

(b) What problems face marriages in our society today? _____

What are the major causes of those problems? _____

(c) How can the problems be alleviated or resolved? _____

(d) Who seems to suffer most when marriage/family problems arise? _____

Please, give your comment on separations and divorce _____

(e) Do you think marital counseling is important for the members of our society?
Yes () No () Give reasons;

Would you say it is being provided in our society today?

Yes () No ()

Give reasons: _____

8. What seems to motivate people to get married?

9. Do you believe adequate preparation for marriage is important? Yes () No ().
Why? _____

Is our society preparing people for marriage in the right way? Yes () No () Give reasons;

10. In your opinion, does our society provide adequate post-marital counseling?

Yes () No ()

Give Reasons: _____

11. What qualifications do you think a counsellor needs in order to be able to provide marital counseling effectively? _____

12. How can knowledge of traditional African approach to life and counseling be useful to modern counsellors?

13. Please comment on the following!

(a) polygamy _____

(b) monogamy _____

(c) intermarriage _____

(d) ideal age for marriage _____

14. What is your comment about marital problems in the present Kenyan society?

15. Do you think the urban people have less marital problems than the rural people?

Yes () No (). I don't know (). Give reasons!

16. Apart from counseling, what other measures are supportive to marriages? _____

17. In what ways can marriages be made relatively happier and rewarding? _____

Why are some of today's youngsters unwilling to get married? _____

18. Please, suggest ways of improving marital counseling in our country. _____

When should it start and stop for a couple? _____

19. Give any other comment you have on marital counseling: _____

APPENDIX VI: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS

Please, answer by filling in or ticking.

1. Name: _____ Date: _____
2. Sex: Male () Female () Age _____
3. Marital Status: Married () Single ()
4. Religion/Denomination affiliations _____
5. Rank/duty in the Church _____
6. Your profession _____
Experience in your profession _____
7. Please, share some of your experiences with me?
 - a. How do the people of today define marriage? _____
Why? _____
What are the responsibilities of a husband in marriages? _____

 - What are the responsibilities of a wife in marriage? _____

 - b. What problems face marriages in our society today? _____

 - What are the major causes of those problems? _____

 - c. How can the problems be alleviated or resolved? _____

 - d. Who seems to suffer most when marriage/family problems arise? _____

 - Please, give your comment on separations and divorce _____

 - e. Do you think marital counseling is important for the members of our society?
Yes () No () Give reasons; _____

Would you say it is being provided in our society today? Yes No () Give reasons: _____

8. What seems to motivate people to get married? _____

9. Do you believe adequate preparation for marriage is important? Yes () No (). Why? _____

Is our society preparing people for marriage in the right way? Yes () No () Give reasons; _____

10. In your opinion, does our society provide adequate post-marital counseling?

Yes () No ()

Give Reasons: _____

11. What qualifications do you think a counsellor needs in order to be able to provide marital counseling effectively? _____

12. How can knowledge of traditional African approach to life and counseling be useful to modern counsellors?

13. Please comment on the following!

a. polygamy _____

b. monogamy _____

c. intermarriage _____

d. ideal age for marriage _____

14. What is your comment about marital problems in the present Kenyan society?

15. Do you think the urban people have less marital problems than the rural people?

Yes () No (). I don't know (). Give reasons!

16. Apart from counseling, what other measures are supportive to marriages? _____

17. In what ways can marriages be made relatively happier and rewarding? _____

Why are some of today's youngsters unwilling to get married? _____

18. Please, suggest ways of improving marital counseling in our country _____

When should it start and stop for a couple? _____

19. Give any other comment you have on marital counseling: _____

7. A.I.C. Nairobi

A.I.C. CHURCHES STUDIED IN NAIROBI COUNTY

8. A.I.C. Rongai

9. A.I.C. Embakasi

10. A.I.C. Ziwani

11. A.I.C. Longolola

12. A.I.C. Embakasi

13. A.I.C. Uthmaniyah

14. A.I.C. Marikani

OTHER A.I.C. CHURCHES IN THE COUNTRIES STUDIED

15. A.I.C. Headquarters in Nairobi

16. A.I.C. Mombasa

17. A.I.C. Malindi

18. A.I.C. Mtwara

19. A.I.C. Zanzibar

20. A.I.C. Kismayu

21. A.I.C. Malindi

22. A.I.C. Mombasa

23. A.I.C. Malindi

APPENDIX VII: AIC CHURCHES IN THE COUNTIES STUDIED

AIC CHURCHES STUDIED IN MACHAKOS COUNTY

1. A.I.C Bomani Machakos
2. A.I.C Athi River
3. A.I.C Mumbuni
4. A.I.C Tala
5. A.I.C Kunikila – Mbiuni
6. A.I.C Kakuyuni
7. A.I.C Nzevea

AIC CHURCHES STUDIED IN NAIROBI COUNTY

8. A.I.C Riruta
9. A.I.C Eastleigh
10. A.I.C Ziwani
11. A.I.C Lang'ata
12. A.I.C Embakasi
13. A.I.C Umoja
14. A.I.C Mathare

OTHER AIC CHURCHES IN THE COUNTIES STUDIED

15. A.I.C Headquarters in Nairobi
16. A.I.C Mitaboni
17. A.I.C Muisuni
18. A.I.C Masii
19. A.I.C Yoani
20. A.I.C Kathiani
21. A.I.C Makutano
22. A.I.C Mavindini
23. A.I.C Mwala

24. A.I.C Kamuthanga
25. A.I.C Upper Hill
26. A.I.C Parklands
27. A.I.C Kawethei
28. A.I.C Katangi
29. A.I.C Komarock
30. A.I.C Otiende
31. A.I.C Huruma
32. A.I.C Dandora
33. A.I.C Ngumo
34. A.I.C Kayole
35. A.I.C Matungulu
36. A.I.C Manyatta
37. A.I.C Muthetheni
38. A.I.C Buruburu
39. A.I.C Kyanzavi
40. A.I.C King'atuani

OTHER ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH STUDIED IN THE COUNTIES STUDIED

15. Mirani Catholic Church
16. Kabaa Catholic Church
17. St. Francis Xavier Parklands
18. St. Paul University Chapel
19. Gatura Catholic Church
20. Kyanzavi Catholic Church
21. Kapiti Catholic Church

**APPENDIX III: ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE COUNTIES
STUDIED**

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH STUDIED IN MACHAKOS COUNTY

1. Machakos Catholic Church
2. Tala Catholic Church
3. Athi River Catholic Church
4. Misyani Catholic church
5. Masii Catholic Church
6. Mwala Catholic Church
7. Yoani Catholic Church

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH STUDIED IN NAIROBI COUNTY

8. Consolata Shrines – Westlands Nairobi
9. Holy Family Basilica
10. Kariobangi Catholic Church
11. Buruburu Catholic Church
12. Dagoreti Catholic Church
13. Embakasi Catholic Church
14. Kahawa Catholic Church

**OTHER ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH STUDIED IN THE COUNTIES
STUDIED**

15. Mbiuni Catholic Church
16. Kabaa Catholic Church
17. St. Francis Xavier Parklands
18. St. Paul University Chapel
19. Githurai Catholic Church
20. Kyanzavi Catholic Church
21. Kambai Catholic Church

22. Kamuthanga Catholic Church
23. Kathiani Catholic Church
24. Mitamboni Catholic Church
25. Eastleigh Catholic Church
26. Ngumo Catholic Church
27. Huruma Catholic Church
28. Uthiru Catholic Church
29. Ngara Catholic Church
30. Katangi Catholic Church
31. Matungulu Catholic Church
32. Kitwii Catholic Church
33. Jericho Catholic Church
34. Kathithiyamaa Catholic Church
35. Mbilini Catholic Church
36. Dandora Catholic Church
37. Ruaraka Catholic Church
38. Mathare North Catholic Church
39. Yatta Catholic Church

APPENDIX IX: PASTORAL AND THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTIONS STUDIED

A.I.C PASTORAL AND THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTIONS STUDIED

1. Mulango Bible College
2. Scott Theological College
3. Ukamba Bible College
4. Nduluku Bible Institute
5. Kangundo Bible School

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH PASTORAL THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTIONS

1. Pope Paul VI Junior Seminary
2. Catholic University of Eastern Africa
3. St. Thomas Theological Seminary
4. St. Mathias Mulumba – Kapsabet
5. Philosophy Seminary – Bungoma

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APPENDIX X: MAP OF THE STUDY AREA

MAP OF NAIROBI COUNTY

MAP OF MACHAKOS COUNTY

