TOWARD A

PREMARITAL COUNSELLING MODEL

VINCENT BENJAMIN

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TOWARD   A

PREMARITAL   COUNSELLING   MODEL

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DECLARATION

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The Registrar (Academic)
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Dear Sir

I, Vincent Benjamin

REG.NO: 200102700

hereby declare that the dissertation/thesis entitled

TOWARD A PREMARITAL COUNSELLING MODEL

is the result of my own investigation and research and that it has not been submitted in part or in full for any other degree or at any other University.

_____   _____

(Signature)   (Date)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

All glory and honour to the Lord Jesus Christ for granting me the strength and ability in completing this dissertation. I acknowledge that had it not been for Him, I would have never accomplished this task. May the name of the Lord Jesus be praised.

I place on record my sincere thanks to my supervisor, Prof J.A. Smit for his constant support and timeous reminder to finish the course. Sir, thank you for making a difference in my life.

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CHAPTER ONE

RESEARCH DESIGN / INTRODUCTION

1.0   INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

The 11 February 2005, brought to completion my ten years of service in the ministry at the Asherville/Sydenham Baptist Church. As a community worker, distancing oneself from the community is unethical and above all absolutely ungodly. In the Holy Word of God, known as the Bible, we are instructed to render a helping hand to our society. Communal living was so important in the days of old that the Decalogue (Ten Commandments) had much to say when it came to community issues:

> You shall not give false testimony against your neighbour. You shall not covet your neighbour's house. You shall not covet your neighbour's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbour (N.I.V Holy Bible 1997:83).

We are called upon to live in harmony and to enhance a networking within the community.

It is an accepted fact that all societies have their own make-up of fibres that draw people together. Therefore the strengths of one society may not necessarily be the same as another society. All of these factors are important for one to consider as we think of community work. Being in the ministry gives me an opportunity to have a 'birds eye' view of the spiritual dimension of our community, to a certain extent. On the basis of the stressed fact, I have chosen to make a deposit into the community at Asherville by way of dealing with the subject matter of premarital counselling.

As one of the several pastors residing in the Asherville area, I am of the strong belief that being involved in the community is a must in the time we are living in, and there is no exchange for this tedious task. Glancing at the activities of all other religious faiths, I do not see much being done when it comes to the involvement of teenagers. Yet on the same

note, many youngsters are becoming parents before their proper time. Various factors contribute to this prevalent problem, not mentioning the many other issues such as:

- ➢ drug abuse;
- ➢ prostitution;
- ➢ eloping;
- ➢ suicide;
- ➢ peer pressure;
- ➢ gangsterism;
- ➢ lack of parental respect; and
- ➢ school bunking.

Trying to help in all the problematic areas is almost impossible. I have chosen to zero in and assist with grooming couples preparing for marriage. My intentions are not only to help those contemplating marriage but to also alert our High school students so that they have some knowledge about marriage before they commit to it.

The great majority of young people today have a high ideal of what marriage ought to be and anything that helps them at a crucial moment in their lives is gladly received. Preparing young people for marriage is one of the key events that are most needed taking into consideration the high divorce rates and the many marital strains that are prevalent in our society. Thus premarital counselling prepares couples in advance as to what they should expect in marriage and how to respond when challenging situations do arise. Counselling of this nature helps to curb problems and gives clarity when direction is needed. Yet the ultimate goal of premarital counselling is to assist the couple to have a successful and happy marriage.

Premarital counselling is concerned with the well–being of the whole person and family. Holistic thinking is important for grooming and growing of a family. Irene and Herbert Goldenberg (2000: 3) stated that,

> A family is far more than a collection of individuals sharing a specific, physical and psychological space. The relationship between the members, of this micro-culture is deep and multi-layered, and is based largely on a shared history, internalised perceptions and assumptions about the world, and a shared sense of purpose.

Thus, seeing that family-hood stretches over a long period, it needs a lifetime commitment. Premarital counselling prepares couples to accept this challenge and start on the right footing from day one.

Divorce on the other hand comes to the fore when spouses fail to see the basic need for the existence of a family. Affection, loyalty, and durability of membership characterize all families and further distinguishes them from other social systems. Premarital counselling is in some little way a preview of marriage and it helps as a building block for the years that lie ahead. It contributes in promoting positive relationships in up and coming families, and attends to the personal needs of their constituents preparing them to cope with developmental or unexpected crises. Premarital counselling is designed to alert individuals and extend a helping hand to them in order for their own families to enjoy this rich deposit that will bear much fruit in the future. Good advice is either trodden under foot or taken into the heart for application. Ultimately, premarital counselling is a choice. I equate this choice to one who is called upon to go to a far country for the first time and he is given a choice to either use the area map or struggle in finding his way to this distant land. Without a map one is bound to get lost but with a map, the possibility to find your destination is overwhelming. To me, this is the chance that one takes in the light of premarital counselling.

1.1 TOPIC AND RELEVANCE

Due to an increase in people preparing for marriage and others undergoing marital conflict, there is a dire need for counselling in this area. The title of my research will be as follows:

TOWARD A PREMARITAL COUNSELLING MODEL.

My reason for pursuing this topic is due to the high divorce rates and marital conflicts that are evident in almost every newspaper and other media. Divorce is catastrophic, leaving in its wake insecure and hurting children and spouses. To help couples who are planning to marry is the best method of preventing the present statistics to increase. I believe that premarital counselling is a must for every couple before they can engage in marriage.

In my mini-dissertation (2001), I gave a general overview showing the need for premarital counselling. Concentrating on the Asherville area, I approached married couples- those ranging from 2 years to about 25 years in marriage. Almost all of the couples agreed that premarital counselling would have done them a "world of good." They were of the strong opinion that youngsters must be given premarital counselling before entering into marriage. Some of the concerns that they had prior to marriage were finances, religion, accommodation, adapting to change, and in-law pressure. The majority of the respondents mentioned that if they were alerted about the importance of some of these aspects, they would have had better and brighter opportunities in marriage and more-so would not have made so many blunders in marriage. They had to learn through trial and error.

Mention was made that advice from friends and family members concerning marriage was not easily given and neither easily accepted. Couples were taught that experience is your best teacher. There was also common agreement that in any marriage both spouses should aspire to develop themselves mentally and psychologically in order to handle life's challenges. From the analysis of findings, a few other aspects that surfaced were related to stress. An estimated 50% of the respondents admitted that pressure from family members, especially in-laws, brought considerable stress into the marriage. Due to in-law pressures there is strain in the spouse's relationship. Another issue that contributed toward stress was the inflation rate. Three quarters of the respondents conceded that budgeting was vital and must be prioritised in order to cope with inflation rate. Deficiencies in communication were noted as adding to the stress factor.

A critical scholarly literature overview was carried out looking at the need for premarital counselling, together with its benefits and goals. Worthington and McMurry suggested that in order to see the need for premarital counselling, one must examine some of the causes that contribute to marital problems. From my readings of various authors, I have concluded that marital problems mainly arise when partners do not value each other. Enlisted are some of the issues that do arise when couples devalue each other:

> - Sadness;
> - Anger;
> - Jealousy;
> - Depression;
> - Bitterness;
> - Lack of communication;

➢ Envy;

➢ Strife;

➢ Disrespect; and

➢ Distrust.

As for the benefits of premarital counselling, it provides couples the opportunity to discuss problems and equip themselves to look forward positively to marriage. Premarital counselling also provides a warm and loving environment for the beginning of a marriage. It creates openness for individuals to learn about strengths in marriage and helps them to surface fears and develop realistic expectations. I am of the opinion that couples who undertake premarital counselling are much more optimistic to go into marriage than non-counselled couples. I also gave an extensive overview as to why premarital counselling was not easily accessible to people of colour. The apartheid era was set in order to only benefit the Whites. Apartheid was a result of White reaction to foreign cultural influences. The Afrikaners' "laager mentality" is a symbol of self-protection against outside powers. In reality, apartheid to the White was not in the least to humiliate or do injustice to anyone. Afrikaner leaders saw apartheid as a means to avoid racial clashes in South Africa. Eventually the full extent of apartheid surfaced its ugly head. Blacks lost their identity to the prosperous Whites. They became citizens of underdeveloped homelands. "Poor" people of colour did not have access to social systems such as counselling centres. I gave a little background as to how Blacks were treated at the mines and how they had to leave the White areas at a certain time. Black compounds were built at the mines so that these labourers would not have a chance to smuggle diamonds or ore out of the mines. With these Blacks staying at the compounds, their home/family lives were shattered causing these men to take other women in addition to their wives. Promotions and wage increases were mainly given to the White workers.

Apartheid to a black people stunted their development and restricted them from progress and prosperity. It belittled them and took away their dignity and rights as a person. On the other hand, apartheid for the Whites meant keeping themselves safe and out of reach from the Blacks, whom they believed were inferior. Some of the other issues that I did address were slavery, the industrial labour movement, and the colour bar act.

In the concluding remarks, summarizing my mini-dissertation, I mentioned that premarital counselling would be beneficial in contributing toward the establishment of strong and content families. Therefore it is imperative for premarital counselling to infiltrate the community and its importance to be stressed.

In this dissertation, I investigated further on premarital counselling and took some of the findings and done an in-depth study in communication, finances, adapting to change, and handling pressure in marriage. I looked into other disciplines of counselling so that premarital counselling would be seen for its worth in the atmosphere of educating our community. My focus was specifically channelled to approximately 150 high school students. The information I already received and that which I gathered during this survey were thoroughly analysed and researched.

From my observation, the discipline of premarital counselling is still in need of a greater development. The community at large is still not given the necessary tools to go into marriage and enjoy its benefits. In continuing with my research, I would like to brief couples as to how they should cope when issues in marriage confront them face-to-face. It is true that married couples can be helped when they are confronted with issues. The most disappointing fact is that many of these disgruntled couples seek for help when it is too late. This 'late call' for help is due to secrecy when couples do not want others to know about the strains prevalent in their marriage.

Most of the time, when they do seek help, it is done out of formality just to show others, especially their in-laws, that they have tried all the possibilities to rescue their marriage. Long before they endeavour to undergo marriage counselling, they come in with this mindset, 'whatever we had between us is history and we are going our own ways from here'. Amidst this, I must admit that some married couples are determined to rescue their marriages no matter what the cost and are always willing to do their best to make their marriages work. Credit must be given to such couples.

1.2 OBJECTIVES

Looking into the characteristics of the objectives, it is something sought after or aimed at as defined in *The Pocket Oxford Dictionary* (1984:505). The definition of objective in *The*

Oxford Popular English Dictionary & Thesaurus (2000:216) is very interesting, "…thing one is trying to achieve, reach, or capture." It deals with that which one is trying to research. By listing the objectives, the reader is able to decipher almost immediately the intentions of the researcher and get to know the stance taken in accomplishing this goal.

Thus, the objectives of this research are:

1. <u>To survey scholarly literature concerning issues in premarital counselling</u>

Authors have written on issues that counsellors should address to couples contemplating marriage.

Some of the subject matters that I addressed in this dissertation are:

    a. Change- Charles Handy's foreword in recommending *Making it Happen* sums it up as a guidebook to change.

    b. Finances- David Potter, the writer of *Understanding Money*, suggests ways in which young people/couples should handle their finances when budgeting and saving, planning one's weekly shopping, and setting up home for the first time.

    c. Communication- Georgette F. McGreogor and Joseph A. Robinson, co-authors of *The Communication Matrix*, are both professional communicators and consultants. They believe that 20% of the communication techniques will handle 80% of problems, adequately and efficiently.

    d. Openness for change- Tony Eccles wrote the book entitled, *Succeeding With Change.* Patrick Rivett also wrote, *Model Building For Decision Analysis*.

2. <u>To review other disciplines of counselling and to show the worth of premarital counselling</u>

Various types of counselling put together bring to humanity wholeness. Just as the goals of counselling are important in other spheres, so is it in the scope of premarital counselling. Secular and Christian counselling methodologies are worth examining individually to see their strengths and how they contribute in advancing relationships. In like manner, if premarital counselling is given enough space, it will surely leave an indelible impression and contribute greatly to advance our society.

3. To involve the community in the research

Realizing that research ought not to be done in isolation, the community was consulted at various stages in the research. After all, the purpose of my research was done for the upliftment of the community so that they could reap the benefits.

4. To summarize the research and come up with a plan of action

After the entire research is done, it is my intention to view the findings and do a presentation of a premarital counselling workshop with the religious leaders of my community. I am convinced that this will have a ripple effect and reach the larger body of Asherville.

1.3   KEY CRITICAL QUESTIONS

This section deals with the problematization of the topic in all its complexity. Key critical questions are linked to the objectives to make certain that the researcher never strays away from the main thrust of the research. It also gives depth to the chapter in question ensuring that specific details are brought to the fore for discussion. Key critical questions are put in place so that justice in the subject matter will prevail. Every objective being linked to a key critical question(s) is fleshed out in the forthcoming chapters.

Seeing that there are four objectives, I have formulated four major key critical questions. The key critical questions for this dissertation are:

1. What scholarly literature concerning premarital counselling is available?
    1.1 What is the definition of premarital counselling?
    1.2 Why is there a need for premarital counselling?
    1.3 What are the goals or purposes of premarital counselling?
    1.4 What are some of the major issues that should surface in premarital counselling?

2. What other disciplines of counselling besides premarital counselling exist?
    2.1 What are the general issues that need to be addressed in counselling?
    2.2 What different styles and types of counselling exist?

2.3 In comparison with these approaches, what is unique in Christian counselling?

3. How can one involve the community in research?
    3.1 What is the nature of the target group that will be targeted in the research in the community?
    3.2 How will the empirical research be conducted and what is the nature of the research instrument?
    3.3 What will be the significance of the data interpretation?

4. What would be an adequate conclusion to the research?

1.4   RESEARCH APPROACH AND METHODS

The approach and methods deal with the manner in which the research will be conducted. Method specifically indicates the procedures that one follows throughout the research process. On the one hand this also draws one's attention to the fact that a methodological procedure will be engaged in, during the course of this study. Every chapter will take a certain approach. It also brings to the fore how data will be gathered and gives one the validity of the topic under discussion.

Each of the objective(s) and the key critical question(s) indicated above would be addressed in the consecutive chapters:

Chapter Two- Critical scholarly literature survey
Chapter Three- Different counselling approaches
Chapter Four- Empirical research
Chapter Five- Conclusion (summary of the research).

CHAPTER TWO- CRITICAL SCHOLARLY LITERATURE SURVEY

The first objective (to survey scholarly literature concerning issues in premarital counselling) and the first key critical question, together with 4 sub questions are addressed in this chapter. These questions relate to the definition, need for, goals and purposes and some of the major issues in premarital counselling. Some of the major issues that surface

in premarital counselling are dating, mate selection, the courting period, engagement, aspects of love, marriage expectations, the purpose of sex, the adjustment period, change, communication, finances, marital conflict, and cohabitation.

I have conducted a thorough research on the enlisted major issues thus preparing couples before they could encounter them in marriage. Some of the issues from the researcher's mini-dissertation, together with the findings that surfaced from the empirical research, were extracted and discussed at length.

Listed below are a few of the books that I consulted:
- ➢ *Marriage and Marital Therapy*- T.J. Paolino & B.S. McCrady, 1978.
- ➢ *Methods and Means for a Meaningful Marriage*- N. Alpaslan, 1997.
- ➢ *Cohabitiation*- Martin.L. Parry, 1981.
- ➢ *Communication*- Denis McQuail, 1975.
- ➢ *10 Steps to Financial Prosperity*- Bill Griffeths, 1995.
- ➢ *Human Sexuality*- A. Kosnik, 1977.
- ➢ *Human Mating Behaviour*- A. Husain, 1993.
- ➢ *The Handbook of Communication Skills*- Owen D.W. Hargie, 1997.
- ➢ *Dual Career Marriage: A System in Transition*- L.R. Silberstein, 1992.
- ➢ *Family Therapy: An Overview*- I & H. Goldenberg, 2000.

CHAPTER THREE- DIFFERENT COUNSELLING APPROACHES

As we acknowledge that counselling moves far beyond the individual involved, it takes into account the community that will benefit at large. Therefore, the counselee is given the most attention and by helping him/her, the society at large, especially the immediate family at first, will benefit from the counselee enjoying wholeness after a few counselling sessions. From my limited understanding, counselling is educational and it helps or contributes into assisting man to reach his full potential. In this chapter I reviewed a general issues concerning counseling and a selection of the different existing counseling theories, concluding with a Christian perspective to counseling.

Here are some of the counselling approaches that I reviewed:
1. Rational self counselling;
2. Scientific method of counselling;

3. Secular counseling approaches; and
4. Christian counselling.

My intention is to bring to light that as much as counselling is needed in different spheres of life, so is the subject matter of premarital counselling.

The second objective (to review other disciplines of counselling and to show the worth of premarital counselling), together with the second key critical question and three sub questions will be discussed at length in this chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR- EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

There are various approaches that could be followed to involve the community in research. In the introduction of chapter four, I listed a few of these approaches. Some of them are historical research, comparative religion research, literature research, ethical research, and empirical research. I utilized the empirical research in my findings to involve the community.

I eventually worked with 172 teenagers and presented them with a questionnaire in order to understand what they are looking forward to in marriage and to further hear their fears in marriage. These elements were discussed at length and ways will be implemented to bring them to the fore when engaging in premarital counselling. These late teens made up of the higher grades were chosen from the Centenary High School in Asherville.

My intention in gathering all of this data is to put a copy of my research into the hands of all the religious leaders in the Asherville area. As a religious leader, I find myself pulled into many families to be a policeman, a lawyer, a counsellor, a teacher, an advisor, and an observer. The point I am stressing is that a religious leader is seen as a key figure in the community. In reaching out to these leaders and empowering them with my research, it will most definitely benefit the community at large.

Questionnaires were drawn up and the respondents filled in the details. Types of questions and the styles of the questionnaire will be discussed later. The third objective (involvement of the community in research) and the third key critical questions together with the sub questions were analyzed in this chapter. In terms of my study, I want to make

a difference and give the community an opportunity of accessing information on premarital counselling as easily as possible, without any fear or exorbitant costs.

CHAPTER FIVE- CONCLUSION (SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH)

In chapter five, the entire research was summarized. A summation of each chapter was provided. The main points of my findings were highlighted. The final objective (to summarize the research and come up with a plan of action) and the fourth key critical question featured in this concluding chapter. Recommendations will be made and hopefully further plans of researching into the discipline of premarital counselling will be undertaken. Suggestions will be put in place and motivations to uplift the community, especially to understand that the need for premarital counselling is a rather pressing issue.

1.5   CONCLUSION

Seeing that the divorce rate is alarming and the marital strains of many societies are evident, premarital counselling is needed in this day and age. The ultimate goal of this research is to bring the couple to a place in their lives where they will have a happy and lasting marriage, and not add to our present statistics.

This research proposal provides an overview and a breakdown of research procedures and the envisioned writing of different chapters for this dissertation.

The provisional breakdown of the various chapters are:

> Chapter two- Critical scholarly literature survey.
> Chapter three- Different counselling approaches.
> Chapter four- Empirical research.
> Chapter five- Conclusion (summary of the research).

CHAPTER TWO

CRITICAL SCHOLARLY LITERATURE SURVEY

2.0   INTRODUCTION

Premarital counselling serves to prepare engaged couples for their marriage, and to guide newly-weds into their marriage. Archbishop Desmond Tutu in his foreword given in Dr Nicky Alpaslan's book (*Methods and Means for a Meaningful Marriage*, 1997) stated

> Marriage is indeed a means of grace, but not one to be taken for granted. Given careful preparation and nurture, it can be a rich source of joy, support and growth for both partners.

Considering the thoughts of many ministers of the Gospel, including Archbishop Desmond Tutu, it is true that premarital counselling is vital and a prerequisite for marriage in many churches. I want to take it even further by stating that all couples of all religious backgrounds contemplating marriage must undergo premarital counselling because it is a prerequisite for all those intending to marry. As we examine marriages in our societies today, we can emphatically say that many couples enter marriage without premarital counselling. Very often teenagers are of the notion that if you "miss" a person, then the possibility of marriage is rife. Yet when they do marry, they realize that they cannot cope with the pressure of living together.

2.1   DEFINITION OF PREMARITAL COUNSELLING

Many people have different concepts for the term premarital counselling. I like to highlight its basic meaning:
1. Advising couples about marriage before entering into it.
2. Making useful information available.
3. Addressing issues that are bound to surface in marriage.
4. Gives couples greater confidence and enhances their relationship.

5. Alpaslan (1997:8) also says:

    Preparation for marriage is therefore supplying of information about marriage and the relationship prior to marriage. The nature of preparation for marriage is educative, didactic, socializing and exclusively aimed at prevention.

6. A commodity that is designed to help couples cope with marriage issues.
7. Early advice on what's coming ahead.
8. Alpaslan (1997:7) gives the definition of Walker,

    premarital counselling provides young couples (with) information and assistance on important matters before problems arose, rather than treating them after they (have) developed.

9. Addressing subject matter that will become contentious issues later in marriage.
10. Building one's ammunition base for the "war" that is to come.

2.2   THE NEED FOR PREMARITAL COUNSELLING

To see the need for premarital counselling, we must consider the present scenario in marriage. People cannot cope with conflict any longer and the way out is divorce. Amendments to divorce legislations make it more accessible. I heard of a case just the other day when a lady had to sign only one document and to her amazement a few weeks later she was legally divorced. This seems to be the quick-fix solution. There seems to be a lack of problem-solving techniques that is readily available in premarital counselling. The concept of traditional marriage is side-stepped making room for modern marriage. In the traditional marriage the buzzword is for "better or for worse" with the intention that marriage is for life. As opposed to the modern marriage, if "things" are not working out, divorce is the ultimatum. In traditional marriage, divorce is out of bounds whilst in modern marriage divorce is seen for its worth and may be considered if necessary.

For lasting and strong marriages, premarital and marital counselling is essential. This will help couples realize that as much as conflict is inevitable, solutions and methods are

available for them to resolve issues that bring in dissensions. If the problem seems to linger, counselling is available. Premarital counselling also assists couples in getting a balanced view of marriage. It is known as educative (informative) counselling, carrying in its nature the ability to curb forthcoming problems to some degree.

To date, many engaged couples are not sure how to approach marriage and their expected behaviour in the relationship. For couples to consult a qualified marriage counsellor is extremely expensive. Apart from the exorbitant costs, the counsellor's environment may be too sophisticated. Under normal circumstances, many of them would have to face marriage without any counselling.

Thus, the demand for premarital counselling from ministers of religion, will increase due to:

1. Economic crises- there's so much to be done in other spheres of life, that one does not find time to make an appointment for premarital counselling. Yet with a minister of religion, he/she will make him/herself available, after hours or almost anytime as the need arises.

2. Inflation rate- the cost of therapy is exuberant. We must accept the fact that at one time, counselling of all types were generally available to "Whites" at a phenomenal rate. The ordinary person could not afford the stipulated rates. The best way is to speak to a person who does not set a prescribed "fee".

3. Awareness in the light of spiritual growth- when people come to terms with life, they want to latch on to something solid. I'm of the viewpoint that paying attention to one's spiritual status is more important than anything else. It grants stability and gives one direction in this life.

4. "Non-professionals" create a relaxed atmosphere- generally professionals (counsellors) have a system and a set manner of operation. Due to them working with so many cases, they tend to handle every case, serious or not, in a professional style. Individuals are much more comfortable in an environment where people have real problems and can empathize with their pains.

2.3   THE PURPOSE OF PREMARITAL COUNSELLING

Alpaslan's comments are worth considering,

Preparation for marriage as a proactive marriage aid-rendering service especially for engaged couples is therefore aimed at supplying information on marriage. It socializes the engaged couple regarding marriage by means of passing on information and helping them acquire relationship skills and etiquette (1997:14).

He also quoted Shovick, who sees the purpose of preparation for marriage as an entity that

… provides an opportunity to mobilize the strengths of the couple for the purpose of improving the prospects of success in marriage and personal development (1997:14).

In keeping with these comments, it is true that premarital counselling is an "advice centre" that one must log into so that the way ahead in marriage becomes a happy and peaceful environment to tread in.

I have listed some of the aims and objectives of premarital counselling:
1. Allows a partner to gain insight into marriage.
2. Marital roles and responsibilities are spelt out.
3. Informs couples how to respond when issues arise.
4. Premarital counselling can be used therapeutically to solve on-hand problems in the relationship.
5. Aimed at equipping couples to enrich their marriage.
6. To brainstorm couples and give them the opportunity to identify and discuss developmental tasks and acquire skills and problem-solving strategies.
7. A search for assistance to combat marital unhappiness.
8. It teaches the reality that an intimate relationship can be conducive to joy and happiness.
9. Prevents marriages from breaking over trivial reasons.
10. Expands one's horizons and extends their views concerning marriage.
11. Premarital counselling helps to bring a certain state of being that is required for a blissful marriage.
12. It allows the couples to view the matrimonial road before entering the course.
13. Explores the broad spectrum of marriage.
14. To have a more realistic acceptance to change in order to keep the unity and peace.

15. Acts as a facilitator so that necessary marital adjustments can be made constructively.
16. Egocentric living (single state of mind) is discouraged.
17. Premarital counselling has a preparatory purpose endeavouring to remove all uncertainties and misconceptions regarding the marital relationship.
18. Opens a way for individuals to communicate in a manner that is more acceptable and adaptable.

The fundamental purpose of premarital counselling is to cultivate healthy couples and prepare them for marriage. It is not to submerge each person's individuality and freedom into a 'conformist' pattern, but to help the emotionally immature to grow up. Love grows in such an atmosphere of mutuality, when the other is valued as much or even more than one's self. The counsellor aids each partner to understand the other and their roles in marriage. The understanding of each other's role images and role relations is the hub of premarital counselling.

2.4   MOTIVES FOR GETTING MARRIED

There are many reasons that motivate individuals to get married. A closer look at the meaning of motive according to the *Pocket Oxford Dictionary* (1984:480) is that

> which induces a person to act in a particular way, that which initiates movement, or a source of energy used to drive machinery.

The meaning of motive gives one a better understanding to identify those "forces" that influence individuals to marry. Fifteen of these "forces" are classified:

a. Pressure from parents, family members and friends sometimes force an individual to marry. Only later in marriage the individual thinks for himself/herself and realizes that they are not ready for marriage. This could be detrimental to the individual.
b. Others may marry out of the need for a parental symbol.

c. As a norm in society, the person may marry because others around the same age bracket have already married. If he/she stays around any longer people will look down upon him/her. In order to keep up with peer pressure, they settle for marriage.

d. Still others marry to deal with loneliness.

> They are in search of real companionship and see the marital relationship as the exclusive possibility to achieve this" (Alpaslan 1997:68).

> The reason to marry is just to have "company".

e. Marriage is sought after to pull away from a difficult childhood pattern of life. Some individuals wait to marry to put an end to their "home-life"- unpleasant conditions. This occurs especially amongst people who come from the average and below average families.

f. At times the death of an individual's parent may force him/her to marry in order to be secure and gain practical and personal comfort. Economic factors force them to marry in order to maintain stability.

g. Being sympathetic to a partner may at times force an individual to marry him/her.

h. A person may marry for the sole reason to satisfy his/her sexual needs. The sheer presence of sexual desire is, of course, a primary factor in drawing two people toward marriage.

i. Just to perpetuate the institution of the family.

j. A hurting person may marry a stranger just to get back at the one who hurt them. Alpaslan quoted Knox who said,

> It is a frantic attempt to establish your desirability in the eyes of the partner who just dropped you. In effect you are sending a message to the other person, 'I am a worthy person. Someone does love me' (1997:69).

k.   There are moments people marry out of spite. They do not really love the person whom they are marrying but it is done to spite family members or friends who feel that he/she should not marry.

l.   Some marry because marriage seems to offer the best chance for fulfillment in life, including the establishment of a home and the bearing and rearing of children.

m.   Marriages that are rushed into may also be risky. People mainly rush into marriage if the woman has fallen pregnant out of wedlock.

n.   Others may marry because of the idea of this eternally glowing romance.

o.   The ideal reason why people should contemplate marriage is due to the love factor that is prevalent in both the male and female. They reach the stage to marry when they cannot live apart from each other any longer and have made up their minds to marry and be there for each other.

Just as glue sticks two pieces of paper together and keep them together, love is one of the basic elements that binds two people in a relationship and keeps them together (Alpaslan 1997:70).

2.5   DATING AND MATE SELECTION

2.5.1   THE CONCEPT OF DATING

Dating and courtship may be thought of as a process made up of stages- with transitions from one stage to the next. For many individuals the process is through the stage of dating, to the stage of going steady, to the stage of engagement, to marriage (Bell 1967:79).

Dating brings to the fore that a person must learn about his/her future adult role. In the area of dating, we see a transition from parental control to individual decision-making in mate selection. This relative privacy that it affords is important because it contributes to the belief that mate selection is a private decision. Yet, dating in the true sense of the word is an end in itself with no further commitment.

A date is viewed primarily as recreational and it lasts for a short period of time. Through the process of dating, certain functions are performed for society as well as for the individual. Bell (1967:82) stated that,

> Dating serves recreational ends while at the same time providing the means through which a mutual commitment to marriage may arise.

2.5.1.1 Functions Of Dating

a. Learning of sex roles- an important aspect of adolescence is dating which means a pair-relationship. Role learning also provides an opportunity to develop one's personality, and to see more clearly some of the facets of role-playing. One's attitude and behavioural patterns are shaped in this process.

b. Pleasure and recreation- dating encourages one to engage in behaviour of a pleasurable nature and that which the individual finds enjoyable.

c. Prestige- gaining recognition by the one he/she dates.

d. Mate selection- as the individual enters late adolescence and the early adult years, dating provides the opportunity for developing an awareness of one's own needs and how they are related to the needs of others.

e. Choice- it helps to determine whether the one you are spending time with is the one you would eventually marry.

f. Exposure- gives each person an opportunity to break from his/her shyness.

g. Steadiness- the ultimate function of dating is a move from the non-committed ego-centred relationship into a genuine commitment to another person. In his writing Bell (1967:93) defined the concept of going-steady, "as an agreement between two people that they will not date any other individual."

2.5.2 MATE SELECTION

2.5.2.1 Introduction

In the past, the choice of a partner rested mainly on parents. Parents kept an 'eye' for a suitable girl/boy for their child and then made the initial contact. It was not questioned and when one thinks about it, many of those marriages are still lasting. The partners seem to match well and they are going on in years of blissful happy marriages.

The choice of a marriage partner in our day and age is left solely to the individual to make up his/her mind. In some instances, parents still influence their children to a certain extent. Although partners are chosen privately, marriages in our present times are undergoing great strain as compared to those marriages where partners were chosen by parents. Be that as it may, there is a tendency in mate selection to choose partners who have similar characteristics and outlook to life that is in keeping with the expression, "birds of a feather flock together". Paolino and McCrady (1978:104) tend to agree that, "The choice of a marital partner is one of life's most difficult decisions".

Husain says that,

> Human beings are essentially social animals. They cannot survive in isolation from their kind. By the very nature they need and strive intensely for a relationship with an opposite sex partner. This biological need is manifested in adult years in terms of forming the marital relationship (1993:1).

Husain continues to quote an extract from Plato's myths as recorded in his book, *Human Mating Behaviour* (1993:1), where he says

> Human beings were of different constitutions. They had two heads, four arms, four legs and they moved turning cart-wheels through the countryside. In this way it was always a double person that existed. This race did not act according to the will of God. As a punishment God cut the human beings into two parts and scattered them to the four winds. Since those times every human being has been only half. He wanders from place to place looking for his lost half. If he meets his lost half by chance, he is taken by an immense longing and cannot rest until he is merged with the other part, so that original unity is once again established. Only the reunion of these two halves makes man into a true human being.

The author tends to accept the truth from this myth that a human being alone, without a partner is only half and becomes a whole human being only through his or her partner. As much as these myths sound well, I believe that a myth must remain a myth. The human person is constituted as a complete unit. God made each in this way. Yet there are those

with the gift of celibacy. In general, however, each seeks and enjoys the company of another human being intimately through the process of marriage.

Whether we admit it or not, no individual makes up his or her mind alone when choosing a mate. People or factors contribute to mate selection. Thus, there are always restrictions that limit the final choice. Social or personal restrictions are prevalent. Social restrictions deal with the proper age for marriage, marital status of the other person, financial standing, and family background. Personal restrictions talk of the individual's satisfaction of his ego needs such as dressing and mannerisms. Freud (1914) formulated an individually based theory in which object choices were seen as anaclictically or narcissistically based. The person who makes an anaclictic choice is oriented primarily toward nurturance and protection, and is focused primarily on the gratification of dependency needs.

> A person who sees himself/herself as the object makes a narcissistic choice. The person who is chosen represents the ideal self or a projected past object, or a person who was one part of the self (Paolino & McCrady 1978:105).

Bell (1967:136) used the statistics of William N. Stephens who did a comparative study of 39 societies and found only 5 societies in which free choices were customarily permitted. Generally, dating and courtship lead to mate selection. It is not an overnight choice but rather a choice that is made over a space of time. As one reaches the 'marriageable age', he/she wants to marry and spend their lives together. The choice of a mate can also fulfil frustrated longings and allow new opportunities for self-realization.

2.5.2.2 Emotional And Rational Factors In Mate Selection

There is a combination of emotional and rational factors that arise in mate selection. Some of the factors that would be addressed are (a) personality differences, (b) religious differences, (c) race differences, (d) age differences, (e) height factor, (f) fertility and reproductive value, (g) physical appearance, and (h) issues of similarity.

a) Personality differences

This will always be present in every sphere of relationship. As a matter of fact, because individuals are separate beings, they contribute flavour to any relationship. So it is in marriage. The likelihood of conflict is sure to be present because we do things differently and have our own viewpoint on certain issues and matters. Recognizing

that each person is unique in his or her own way is the road to understanding. Self-acceptance is a primary characteristic of maturity and it should enable to accept others more readily/easily.

b) <u>Religious differences</u>

At one time religion was the most important social factor that determined the perception, attitude and the behavioural pattern of the individual or the family. Yet, today, for some apparent reason, religion is not a major issue when selecting a mate. As a minister of religion, we hear people commenting about religion, for instance that it is not as important as "love". As much as this carries weight, the reality of different religions may not be an issue in the inception of marriage but is bound to surface especially when children arrive. Then it is, whose religion or what rituals would the partners follow to extend a blessing to the new arrival? I have observed this often in our community.

Commenting on religious issues in mate selection, Bell (1967:143) stated that,

> a similarity of religious background means a similarity in many beliefs and patterns of life. Therefore, to say that people come from the same religious background implies more than a similarity of religious beliefs.

Evaluating the statement made by Bell, we must understand that differences will emerge in religious structures although partners may be of the same religious background. Commitment levels to their religious institutions may vary and in the majority of the relationships, partners never enjoy equal/same level of dedication. So, finding a partner of the same religion is important but their level of commitment is another issue. Thus, wide differences in intensity of religion may indicate an area of conflict for the two individuals. Just recently I was notified about an issue in a home where the wife is a Jehovah Witness and the husband is a Christian. The wife would not set foot into a church building neither will she give consent to a birthday party for her child. The husband was eager to add to the happiness of his child's birthday but the mother thought otherwise. In this instance it goes further to mean that no matter who marries in a church, the spouse has to go alone to grace that marriage. This is not easy to handle.

If couples come from different religious backgrounds, they must be open enough to talk about their future plans, especially when the baby is born. Previously the female would accept whatever choice the male made. Now, living in a time where we have freedom of speech, choice, etc, these issues must be discussed before the marriage and if needs be, it must be curtailed so that their marriage would have a solid foundation as their starting block. To many, the issue of different religious beliefs or mixed religious groups in marriage doesn't alter anything. As a marriage officer, I'm convinced that in any relationship, especially marriage, the issue of religion must be given careful thought. If freedom of religion is accessed early in marriage, then it is possible for couples of different religious backgrounds to be compatible and adaptable. Landis (1977:177) stated,

> Even with all its problems, there is evidence that the mixed religious marriage is a more successful marriage than the one with no religion at all. The marriage in which both believe and worship alike has the best chances of success.

c) <u>Race differences</u>

Since our nation is composed of people of many ethnic groups and several racial groups, there are romantic relationships between young people who are not of the same ethnic group or race. When these romances are publicized, they draw considerable criticism from family, friends and the neighbourhood. No doubt, success in mixed marriage is noted. Yet, the possibilities for success depend upon the degree of difference, the customs of the community, and the maturity of the couple. Mixed marriages are workable if couples pledge to take the extra effort to adjust.

Of all the factors, race seems to exert the strongest influence. In factors such as religion and age there seems to be a level of tolerance but when race is involved, the preference would be to marry your own race.

> The choice of somebody of the same race is regarded as one of the strongest homogeneous factors in the choice of a marriage partner (Alpaslan 1997:64).

In my interaction with different race groups, I noticed that each race would prefer to marry within their own group but they also state that they find absolutely nothing

wrong to marry across racial barriers. Living in a 'new South Africa' gives people of colour more status; there are opportunities to marry people of other races. At one time it was very secretive to have an acquaintance with someone of another race. It was considered an ill omen to do so and as a matter of fact, for some it meant expulsion from the home and family. I am of the opinion that if this restriction is lifted, people of different races will marry more than they did before. From my observation, many White men are settling down with Indian ladies. Seemingly, older White men prefer the companionship of younger Indian ladies so that they could be cared for.

Some of the disadvantages linked to mixed marriages are as follows:

1. Difficulties especially of culture are not only present between the couples but also for their children- some of them are scorned and mocked by their friends.
2. In some of these marriages, adjustments never come to an end because of family ties.
3. Studies show that marriages where both partners belong to the same race group are much happier than those of different race groups.
4. The taste of partners of different race may differ drastically based on their upbringing and way of life.
5. Communities have a lot to do in these types of marriages, labelling them as inhumane or disassociating themselves from these couples.
6. At times mixed marriages may look as a misfit with the norm of a certain race. For example, when a person of a different colour walks into the restaurant all eyes are on him/her as if they have seen someone from space.
7. Greater strain is placed on the spouse who has to change to fit into the other partner's culture and standard of living.
8. In certain instances, couples may feel very isolated and a sense of abandonment sets in.

In pointing out some of the disadvantages, one must accept the reality that more mixed marriages would occur due to an increase in contact with other races across cultural and racial lines.

It is a part of the "one world" toward which humanity is moving. Marriages that bridge cultural and racial lines will increase in number and in success (Landis 1977:176).

Although Landis wrote in 1977, it is fitting and in keeping with the slant of our political arena.

d) <u>Age differences</u>

Selection of a mate in the light of one's age or a closely related age group is the norm of the day. Yet, the extreme is still prevalent where older people marry younger mates for the sake of companionship. Those who delay the "marriageable age" may have unresolved issues such as being let down in life previously and thus are unwilling to continue in any romantic relationship. Others at times may have had low marriage motivation. Females are more concerned with age than males. Generally women tend to marry men who are a few years older than them and men tend to marry women who are a few years younger. As we deal with the subject of age, let's give attention to the words of Landis (1977:162-163),

> Hundreds of studies demonstrate beyond a doubt that teenage marriages are high-risk marriages. A few succeed. Most fail. The great dream of happiness and lasting romance disappears under the burdens, monotony, and routine of earning, cooking, paying bills, housekeeping, caring for children, and being excluded from the teenage group.

Through much reading and considering present statistics, the average girl needs to be nearing twenty and the boy should be about twenty-three years of age. I suppose marrying at a younger age is workable but the effects may be detrimental and the chances of happiness and success may be bleak. One of the great disadvantages with couples marrying at an early age is the arrival of a baby in the family. Immaturity in giving the new baby the attention and care needed is the crucial issue. The financial constraint is likely to be far greater than what the young couple expect. The other issue of age pertains to the female:

> Research shows that girls are generally more mature socially and emotionally than boys, which makes them ready for earlier marriage in these respects than boys. But

girls are definitely not biologically ready for parenthood. The best biological time for motherhood is during the eight years following full biological maturity (Landis 1977:164).

Although girls can fall pregnant after puberty, it is not the right age for considering marriage. Full biological maturity is acquired years after puberty.

e) <u>Height factor</u>

The aspect of height draws the attention of women in making sure that they select a male who's taller than them. Husain (1993:24) quoted Mullan, saying,

There is a consensus that tallness is often cited as attractive in men. Indeed it is a cardinal rule of dating and matching that the man be taller than the woman, so relative height may be just as important as absolute height. It is possible that a man appeals most to a woman when he is an optimal degree taller than her, say 6 inches taller. A much greater discrepancy than this and the woman is likely to feel that her own looks are not enhanced or that as a couple they appear ridiculous.

f) <u>Fertility and reproductive value</u>

It is proper to say that fertility has nothing to do with mate selection but it does play a vital role. For instance, there are cultures where couples first court each other for a while and see whether the woman can fall pregnant before the marriage ceremony is held. Sometimes this also happens in our own culture and western cultures, especially when a woman who is engaged, finds out that she will never be able to have children. Fertility is important for mate selection in such cases. From my observation, I believe that both male and female long to have children when they marry, yet not in all cases. "Fertility typically peaks in the early 20s and shows a similar decrement with age" (Husain 1993:25).

g) <u>Physical appearance</u>

As much as it is true that people must be seen for who they are and not for what they look like, one cannot hide the fact that physical beauty plays a vital role in mate selection. Males place more emphasis on the facial and physique than females do. The beauty of a woman and the manner in which she keeps her body is what appeals more

to a man in mate selection. It is generally observed that a person's hair-style and clothing attracts the most, particularly females by males.

h) <u>Issues of similarity</u>

Enjoying or being interested in the same things means that the couple will not only be companions in love, but will also be able to find happiness throughout a lifetime by sharing activities both enjoy. Couples who are both interested in sports or in reading or who can share hobbies can remain real friends long after they have ceased to seem glamorous or exciting to each other (Landis 1977:167).

In what follows, I consider, (i) educational/occupational level; (ii) the social level; and (iii) similar marital status for similarities that do exist.

i) <u>Educational/occupational level</u>- at one time, the male had to be more educated than the female in order to fend and provide for the family. Emphasis on education was not placed on the female. In many homes both parents are employed and this calls for both male and female to be educated to a certain degree in order to enter the work force if the need arises.

Normally when mates are selected, they are chosen from the same level of education/occupation. Many reasons give rise to this pattern of choice mainly because time is spent with individuals more at these levels than anywhere else. As much as this is normal, the other end of the 'see-saw' is also rife. Some choose otherwise based, on the fact that familiarity breeds contempt. Men marry women of the same level or a little lower whilst women marry men of the same level or higher.

This is the norm in the higher educational and occupational level. In the lower social classes, emphasis is not placed on education or occupation. Even after marriage, both partners must maintain an interest in growth and have an ongoing learning capacity in order to keep up with the times we are living in. This in-turn will be good for the extended family.

ii) <u>Social level</u>- quoting the words of Dr. Evelyn Duvall, Landis (1977:167) writes,

Building a marriage means building a common way of life. Eating, sleeping, playing, spending, earning, loving, living- all shared in marriage.

Commonness in different levels is what sparks couples to want to be together. Can you imagine what would become of couples that have totally different interests? They will always be pulling away from each other and most of the time will be spent away from each other. This is bound to cause and bring about conflict of interest. The reality of the matter is that all couples will have some differences in some areas but not to the extent where there is no commonness at all.

The best way to deal with differences that prevail or surface in our social level is to have a give and take mentality. For instance, if the one partner is a soccer fanatic and the other hates the sport, he/she should go the extra mile of learning something about soccer and make a contribution or give support to the loved one. Landis (1977:171) states that,

Both men and women who marry into different social classes, into different economic levels, or into families with very different ways of life must sometimes overcome handicaps if they are to find happiness in marriage.

In dealing on the social level the buzzword is adjustment. Every person within a marriage relationship must take time to adjust in order to make the relationship a workable one.

Although many couples from different socio-economic levels do marry, some of the facts must be adhered to for the process of success:

1. An individual is prone to adjust more easily to a higher standard of living than to a lower one.

2. The risk factor is rife when an individual who is accustomed to a higher level of life must change to an average or lower level.

3. Only an unusual person from a home with a luxurious level of living can face living on a very low income in the new home. People who marry under these

circumstances owe it to themselves to be sure that they can accept the new, much lower level of living.

4.   Couples who prefer to live on a higher income bracket get a lot of parental interference. To ascertain that their children maintain this high standard of living and they do not face many hardships, parents tend to support them financially. This however causes unnecessary conflicts and bitter experiences for the couple. Yet, on the other hand, financial assistance from the parents may be of a great help, especially when one is starting their own family.

iii) Similar marital status- the norm is that whatever marital status one partner is, he/she would prefer to settle down with a partner of the same marital status. A bachelor would choose a spinster, whilst a divorcee or widowed individual will prefer to marry a divorcee or a widowed partner.

2.6   THE COURTING PERIOD

Meeting the right person with whom to enter the bond of wedlock is certainly no easy matter. Most people follow a pattern of random dating in which they gradually build up knowledge of the opposite sex and of themselves in that relationship. Then a particular person emerges from among the dating partners as more interesting or attractive than the others. Once this type of a person is found, the process of 'going steady' begins with a view to getting engaged and eventually marrying. A basic factor in the dating system is the freedom of 2 people who decide to relate to each other.   These emotional feelings are interpreted as love, but it is more likely that they are strong feelings of sexual desire, or fear of loneliness, or even a hunger for approval. People in love have often described the emotion they feel as ecstasy, which actually means a state of being in which the person is, beside himself.   Hence they claim to be "madly in love."   Such absorbing and overwhelming feelings of madness can hardly be deemed a proper state from which responsible freedom can be exercised.

 With this general situation in mind, let us look at some particular aspects of the courtship routine where difficulties may occur. In the first place, all the players in the courting game are guilty of a good deal of dishonesty and deception.

> From the simple best-foot-forward pretence to the all's-fair-in-love-and-war attitude, young people engage in a wide variety of shams and deceits which, when successful, often turn the "victory" into a bitter disillusionment when the masks come off (Lee 1973:25).

Too often, the masks are retained well into marriage and eventually when stripped, the exposure is shocking. This so called 'cover-up' is conducted largely out of fear that another person cannot love us as we really are, so we must try to make ourselves into what we think the other person will love. On the other hand, the other person will do likewise, thus the ground is very shaky indeed.

The courting game normally involves 3 selves, with the real self being quite hidden. The first self is who you really are. The second self is who you project yourself to be. The third self is who your partner really wants you to be. The same applies to your partner. The understanding is that 'six people' are in search of two selves. Under the rules of the game, it takes a long time for the real 'selves' to meet. Sooner or later in marriage, the real self will surface, and the partners will have to live with the genuine article.

> Much of the dishonesty that runs through the courtship routine could be weeded out, also, if people could get past the thought that they must be sweet and calm and reasonable at all times while courting, and would take the chance of meeting each other as real persons. Such a view does not deny the validity and force of certain romantic elements within the relationship (Lee 1973:26).

Infatuation and ideal expectations belong only to the realm of "temporary pseudo love' - harmless if they do not trap two people in an incompatible marriage web. I tend to agree with Robert Lee in his outlook toward this issue. If people get to know each other and all the behavioural areas of their lives, then they are free to negotiate the development of their behaviour together.

The extent to which people come to know each other depends less on length of time compared to the degree of openness. Thus, the ability to choose a life partner rests solely in trusting one's own feelings, trusting the other person to be open and willing to work in mutuality, and trusting the relationship to grow and mature without fear of change.

Courtship then, may be the occasion to allow the emotion of sheer physical attraction to expand and include a love of the whole person in relation to oneself.

> But too often courtship is not used for such a purpose; the images and illusions stay intact and unrecognized differences become a major problem later in the marriage (Lee 1973:28).

2.7   THE ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

2.7.1   THE MEANING OF ENGAGEMENT

Engagement, in actual fact is the final scene of dating and courtship. Its explicit end is to culminate in marriage. The true belief and understanding of an engagement is a pledge to marry. It carries with it the idea of seriousness and the depth of the partner's relationship. Although couples may have consented to marriage in other ways and at other times, an engagement is the 'legal' side of the commitment. The engagement period is a time of personal preparation for entering into the state of marriage and its accompanying shift in life roles. Thus the function of the engagement is to inform the community that the couple is to be married.

> The giving and receiving of love is a socially conditioned need that reaches a high level of expectation during engagement (Bell 1967:104).

The goal or importance of an engagement is to solidify the notion of love and take it to a higher level of expectation. Thus, this love is seen as mature adult love and the individual often approaches it with seriousness and possible apprehension. It calls for the exchange of symbols such as rings, pins, and bracelets. During my boyhood, a word that was often used when a boy or girl was to be engaged was called 'the booking process'. We used to say that he/she is booked and must not be tampered with. 'Booking' carried the idea of being set aside and shortly marriage will follow. However, at the outset, one must understand that an engagement is not legal in the court of law as compared to marriage, but it does carry weight. All that we've mentioned thus far concerning the engagement deals with the advantages, yet there are some disadvantages. In any subject matter where there

are advantages you must find disadvantages. The engagement is often seen as a final testing period prior to marriage. In an engagement, the final decision whether to marry or not may surface. It is a period when each partner takes time off to re-evaluate his or her seriousness of committing to marriage. It carries a line of pending. Thus the engagement period may contribute toward the marriage or cause retribution. It is during this time that more of the real partner is seen than in any other phase of the relationship.

While disagreements are common during this time, there may be danger if it is extended in intensity and scope beyond the specific areas of difference. One area that often has high emotional impact for many engaged couples is the discussion of old boy/girl friends. The mention of a past love affair may threaten the security of the other partner. This sensitivity may be a little greater for the male than for the female due to his somewhat 'greater' possessive feeling.

Another common source of difficulty for the engaged couple revolves around the parent's reactions to the fiancé (e). Many times young people have this feeling that mate selection is his/her own choice, with his/her parents having nothing to do with it. Parents on the other hand feel that they should play a significant part in their children's selection of a mate. Generally young people are taken by what their eyes can see whilst most parents deal with that which is within a person. At times their judgements or comments are realistic and surface from their life experiences.

Thus, parents may influence a relationship to continue or end by pointing out the faults and dangers of the relationship. Young people should take heed of their parents' comments/contributions either for or against their relationship. As a matter of fact a mutual agreement should be met. Parents and young people should sit together and discuss the finer details. Ultimately the decision must come from the young person. Bell (1967:107) pointed out that the Burgess and Wallin findings reveal that when the parents disapproved of the engagement, 21.6 percent were unbroken and 78.4 percent were broken. When a relationship terminates in its initial stage, the pain is not so great, yet when it ends later; it is very painful due to the emotional commitments. Because of the high emotional involvement, adjustment to a broken engagement often takes an emotional toll and a vast amount of time is needed for healing. Young people who undergo broken engagements are in no hurry to enter a new relationship. Most of the time, it is much easier for a boy to get

back into a dating circulation than it is for a girl. In addition, the girl is not perceived as datable for some time because she often goes through a period of 'mourning'. Girls probably take longer to recover from a broken engagement because of the greater significance they attach to love. Depending on the depth of hurt, some young people recover and move on to another relationship whilst a few may be fearful or hesitant to engage another serious relationship. To most people, an engagement means that the couple will soon be married.

A few factors that give rise to and contribute to the meaning of engagement are:
- ➤ The presence of continuous growing love;
- ➤ Mutual agreement on important issues for and in marriage;
- ➤ Prevalent spirit of team-work;
- ➤ Familiarity must breed greater loyalty, trust, and mutual respect;
- ➤ Acceptance of future in-laws;
- ➤ Openness to issues of change;
- ➤ Having the lines of communication constantly free; and
- ➤ Facing up to the realities of life with broad shoulders.

2.7.2   LENGTH OF THE ENGAGEMENT PERIOD

This is another debated issue. Some feel that the wedding must follow a few months after the engagement whilst others feel it must follow one or two years later. Marriage experts feel that six months to a year is the desirable length of engagement for most couples. They are of the opinion that this period permits sufficient time for thorough understanding. It is also a time to discover whether the relationship is solidly based on similar interests, attitudes, and background or whether the attraction is mostly physical. Learning more about each other's opinions, ideals, and hopes will provide additional grounds for love and respect. It will make the couple double sure that their marriage is the right thing and that it will succeed. To a large extent the engagement period confirms to the couple whether their marriage will be a blessed one or a blistered one.

If the engagement period is prolonged, the sexual desires increase, bringing in unnecessary problems like pregnancy, abortion, elopement, and suicide. Some couples however prefer a longer engagement period, during which time they live together to see if they can cope

with each other. This is known as a trial marriage period. If the couple adjusts accordingly to all aspects of living together, they will make a good home for marriage. If things do not work out well during the trial marriage period, then they will decide to part and go their separate ways. The concept of the trial marriage was introduced by the 'hippie subculture'. Comments concerning the trial marriage will be dealt with in the next chapter.

2.7.3   IN-TRANSIT ENGAGEMENT FACTORS

As discussed earlier, an engagement is a stepping-stone to marriage. Paolini and McCrady's thoughts on this subject matter are worth taking into consideration:

> The individual must prepare to enter into the role of husband or wife, must disengage from old entanglements or attachments that may compete with or interfere with the commitment to the marital relationship, and must modify the patterns of premarital gratification to suit the emergency patterns of the newly-formed martial relationship (Paolini & McCrady 1978:44).

This sound advice in the above quotation carries great wisdom as one endeavours to pursue one's course into the marriage arena. The level of maturity achieved by the marital partners is of crucial significance for the success of the marriage. In relationships where the respective partners have reached levels of maturity, it is almost certain that they would enjoy a better marriage.

In keeping with the above thought pattern, I suppose numerous interesting matters must surface during this period such as the following:

1. Place of abode- to rent or purchase;
2. Budgeting for rent, clothing, furniture, pleasure, vacation, vehicle, and for 'rainy days';
3. Whether both partners should work or just the husband or just the wife;
4. The amount of support to be rendered to parents, if they are in need;
5. Settling the question of birth control;
6. Planning for children;
7. One or both partners to continue with studies;
8. Programme for the wedding;

9. Wedding helpers and clothing;

10. Taking premarital counselling separately or jointly;

11. A loan or a head start from parents;

12. Change of status at work; and

13. Transport arrangements.

These matters of interest require a teamwork effort from both partners. They discover immense joy in solving problems together and this creates a special bonding between the partners.

2.7.4   SIGNS OF SUCCESS OR FAILURE DURING THE ENGAGEMENT

Experiencing difficulties is a must. However, the manner in which these difficulties are handled is of primary concern.

> If the various tensions and disagreements are worked out to the point where greater harmony and understanding result, the signs are hopeful for a successful marriage. If one of the pair is left humiliated after the disagreement, if tension builds up, if the atmosphere is one of increasing hopelessness that problems can never be solved, then it is time for reassessment. If the engagement cannot be made to work, neither can the marriage (Landis 1977:189).

Constant nagging and unresolved issues are signposts of failure factors. When couples become bored of their partners or there is no more joy in each other's company, then something is drastically wrong. If differences are causing a rift, then this may be a sign of early failure in marriage. The couple needs to be mature enough to admit that a problem is present if they want to live their lives together.

Lucrative components that may be exhibited during the engagement period and point to success in marriage are:

a) Couples must fulfill most of each other's needs;

b) Interests and values must be shared alike;

c) Barriers are present but they are few;

d) The philosophy of marriage and life is consistent from both partners;

e) Families and friends are in agreement that couples will succeed in marriage;

f) Being conscious of each other in decision-making;

g) A considerable amount of sacrifice from both partners for the good of each other; and

h) Level of openness (confession and repentance) must be prevalent- sharing secretive issues for relieving guilt feelings of the past.

In keeping with the issue of openness, I am of the opinion that it is very valid and most definitely essential. The more problems and pains that couples can work through before their marriage, the greater the chance of them having a successful life together. Couples must learn the art of dealing with present hurts and problems instead of leaving it to fester. Marriage has its own vices and adjustments for couples to care about. They need all the space and energy to deal with it in a free and better way. If one is undecided in sharing some of his/her secrets, then it must be merited by the individual and kept as a secret. At times certain information may become a stumbling block rather than a confession for the good. Landis (1977:191) shares his thoughts on this issue,

> Some confessions can create a basis for mistrust and later be revived by the mate in times of conflict. Marriage is an institution which promises the greatest of confidences, but still each individual sustains a private world too.

As much as good things occur in the engagement period, bad things also surface for the good in the long run. Many couples ignore warning signs that emerge during this period and because they shove it off, it catches up later in marriage. If engaged couples are incapable of handling certain issues, they should first seek outside help before committing themselves to marriage. The mistake that most couples make is to think of going ahead with marriage and later trying to resolve issues that came up in the engagement period. What many people fail to take into account is that marriage has even more serious situations that one has to confront or deal with. Landis (1977:199) quoted the words of author Robert Capece,

Breaking an engagement is never easy but having the courage and the maturity to heed the warning signals of a deteriorating relationship could save a broken marriage.

A motto that one must remember in the engagement is never to ignore danger signs that may erupt. (I wonder whether couples voluntarily choose to ignore danger signs or what is it that prevents them from facing up to reality.)

There are many reasons why people choose to ignore danger signs, but I state three important ones:

1. The fear factor- mates fear the very fact that they may never find somebody else to settle down with. Others fear to face the reality of breaking an engagement. Some fear the humiliation that will follow through a broken engagement. The pressure of the family, either from the boys or girls party is greatly feared and so the best way is to marry in order to keep the peace. The fear of loneliness adds to the many fears that are prevalent during the engagement. The fear of failure will be noted in life if mates do decide to break up the engagement.

2. Refusal to accept loss- very often those couples who break up for a while find it hard to adjust and they often make up because they have become so accustomed of being in each others company. Sometimes they do not have that determination and zest to make the better choice of going their separate ways. Family pressure and at times even strong-headed mates refuse to let go no matter what the odds. In one of the studies I read about a lady whose boyfriend threatened to kill her if she would ever decide to walk out on him. She tried several times to break the relationship but he could not accept his potential loss. Refusal to accept loss is also based on over possessiveness. Such a couple may be together for quite some time and one becomes possessive and cannot accept a break-up.

At other times one partner may be on his/her way out whilst the other is still confident that they can work things out. One accepts the break-up whilst the other refuses totally. This becomes a one-sided affair. Although this may be so, if they decide to seek help from a counsellor or a religious leader, they may be able to

spare the engagement and look positively to marriage. If one talks to the strong-headed one, both may decide to work at their relationship and give it another chance. In any relationship, be it an engagement or a marriage, willingness to work things out must be amicable. Then only are the chances better to put misunderstanding aside and to concentrate on the relationship itself.

3. Sexual entanglement- when courting or engaged couples get involved in sexual activities, the bonds of breaking up are very difficult and at times absolutely uneasy. Even when they decide to break up, they may want to be together just for sexual pleasure. Males who experienced sexual activities whilst in a relationship, often admit that it is hard to turn their backs and walk away. Conscience plays a vital role in these 'break-ups'. They may be intimidated if they decide to break up their engagement with feelings of this nature, "what if my mate tells his/her friends about our sexual involvement?" The reality and the possibility of this happening is rife.

> One or both partners may feel guilty about their sexual relationship and feel that they must marry to clear their consciences (Landis 1977:200).

Yet on the other hand, guilt is nothing to base a marriage on, seeing that the after effects of marriage may be much more painful. Sexual entanglement during engagement or at any time of the relationship may give rise to pregnancy. Just to save face, individuals may marry because they have a baby that is on the way. However, research shows that forced marriages are high-risk marriages.

2.7.5   COPING WITH A BROKEN ENGAGEMENT

The blessing of a broken engagement is very evident from most of the authors who write about marriage bliss. It curbs the effects of a forthcoming marital break. In many broken engagements love turns to spite and hatred. We must admit that considerable emotional turmoil is present. Some may go to great lengths to rid themselves of their attachments and to do the person they formerly loved all the social and emotional damage they can.

The norm of hurting partners is to start a new love affair as fast as possible whilst others live with painful memories and have daydreams of the lost relationship. Kindness and courtesy should be practiced in breaking up. Landis (1977:201) stated that,

> Serious though a broken engagement is, it is most important for engaged couples to realize that ending an engagement is much easier and less serious than ending a marriage. There will certainly have to be a serious readjustment after the break, but it will not be nearly so great as readjustment after divorce.

I support and share the same viewpoint as Landis. It is far better and beneficial for partners who are undergoing strain in their relationship to break up during the engagement period than in marriage. Although partners will undergo hurt, it will be much more bearable and manageable.

At the outset of a broken engagement you will always get one party who hurts more than the other because some may be stronger than their partners. One's character trait depends on this kind of a reaction.

Here are some steps that one should pursue when working through a broken engagement:

    a. A little time is needed to accept the reality and close off this chapter in order to refocus and continue with the future;

    b. Bonding with friends help to work 'him/her' out of your way and eventually out of your mind;

    c. Help the process by ridding reminders and love letters that stand in the way;

    d. Be cautious about rebound effects. Never do something to show him/her a point;

    e. Keep occupied with activities and extra-curricula;

    f. Rejoin the crowd of 'party goers' and just know that there are many interesting and likable people in the world;

    g. Never be scared of dating again but just be cautious and take things easy;

    h. Choose those whom you feel most comfortable with and eventually narrow down to the person of your liking; and

i. Double check your every move in order to prevent further hurt and pain.

2.8   ASPECTS OF LOVE

2.8.1   THE NATURE OF LOVE

According to Lee (1973:10-11),

> one third of all marriages now end in divorce within ten years, while no one knows how many of the remaining two thirds are precarious, or how many of them might be called "emotional divorces". No one knows how many couples live together in broken homes.

Most will readily admit that current culture is preoccupied with the idea of romantic love. However, in the face of living in a broken home such a belief may only increase the stresses and strains in the marriage.

Advertisers know this, and capitalize on romance and sex to sell everything from cars to cigarettes to shampoo and aspirin. In romantic love, the couple is always young and beautiful, carefree and happy when alone together, with no worries, no responsibilities, and an unending desire and capacity for making love. This is a make belief world. Romantic love as the sole basis for marriage is at best an illusion and at worst an impossibility. It is like building a house of marriage on shifting sand. One thing is for sure: when the storms of life begin, the house will come down with a crash. Inevitably flames flicker and ardours cool in the face of the mundane problems that confront every marriage and constantly challenge the relationship based on romance.

Lee (1973:22) refers to Denis de Rougemont's seminal work, *Love in the western world*, which traced the birth of romantic love to 12th century, France. It embodied the myth of Tristan and Iseult, wherein the knight in shining armour faces danger for the reward of a smile or a scarf from his lady whom he loves passionately but never possesses. Tristan and Iseult were romantic symbols who, caught up by forces of passion over which they seemed to have no control, were compelled to seek the consummation of a love that ultimately

destroyed them. Seemingly, they were not really in love with each other at all, but each was in love with love and with himself as the person in whom the erotic, blinding, all-absorbing passions surged.

In its time the myth of Tristan actually proved to be a stabilizing force against the early breakdown of marriage. The story provided a framework within which the secret passion element could find satisfaction in symbolic expression. De Rougemont observes that this dangerous passion element still pulses today beneath the skin of a society liberated from rigid morality. Bell's (1967:111) definition of love is something worth considering as a corrective,

> A strong emotion directed at a person of the opposite sex and involving feelings of sexual attraction, tenderness and some commitment to the other's ego-needs.

2.8.2   ROMANTIC LOVE

To understand the dynamics of love, we will examine romantic love and its various facets. The Greek concept of adult love is Eros and Agape love. Eros love is associated with the sensual, physical, and sexual. Agape love is a spiritual one dealing more with the pure human emotions. Love had never anything to do with marriage or mate selection because the main reason for marriage was reproduction (having children).

Idealization, fantasy, highly emotional, and exclusiveness are some of the ingredients found in romantic love:

(a) Idealization places the love object on a pedestal untouched by the commonness and coarseness of the everyday life. It has a strong positive influence on the loved one because most of us thrive on esteem and cannot help being responsive to the one who esteems us.

(b) Fantasy deals with make-belief and creates images of what should be in a most perfect setting.

(c) The highly emotional ingredient caters for what one feels rather than what one thinks. Rational understanding is defied.

(d) Exclusiveness handles the issue with privacy.

> The belief is that in true romantic love neither person can really care about anything or anyone else. The couple live in a world of their own and, when it is necessary to move out and deal with the world at large, the overriding desire is to return to the exclusiveness of the private world as soon as possible (Bell 1967:115).

The American folklore of romantic love is soul mate. The belief in a soul mate is that in this great wide world there exists one person, and only one, meant for each of us. Bell (1967:116) stated,

> This belief is very ego-satisfying because it suggests that each of us is so special that only one person can meet our needs, and that one person has been created especially to do so.

This soul-mate concept is a very debatable factor in our day and age based on the increase of divorce.

Many young people may say they do not believe in a soul mate, but their actions often indicate otherwise. Being in love often reinforces the soul mate idea because once a loved one has been found it is psychologically reassuring to believe that there are no other possibilities. Love at first sight is generally found, across the crowded room. When this happens it can be based on little more than physical attraction. Part of the belief is that when the couple meet they will in some sense know it: something dramatic will occur between them. As a matter of fact all other individuals will become only vague shadows in the background.

The findings of the Landises as recorded by Bell (1967:117) show that out of 735 college students, 39% males and 34% females believed in the concept of 'falling in love at first sight'. With love conquering all, romantic love becomes paramount. In one respect, a belief in love helping to conquer many difficulties has some truth. Many newly married couples face rather severe role adjustments and often with limited financial support. They find that their love involvement helps them over rough spots and may even make enjoyable what without love would be unpleasant. When this happens, love is not a replacement for reality, but rather a positive force in helping to deal with it.

Bell (1967:119), in concluding his assessment of romantic love says,

> Since romantic love is an important part of the social fabric, to exclude it completely from the love relationship is to ignore social reality. Most individuals in love probably find a satisfactory middle ground between the romantic and the rational.

In view of the subject matter being love, we realize that love is an expected prelude to marriage and an element of courtship. Thus falling in love is a highly desirable basis of courtship and marriage.

2.8.3   COMPONENTS OF LOVE

Although love is only a four-letter word, it carries much strength and not to mention the numerous components that are consolidated in love. I have itemized six significant components of love. Let us examine them closely:

1. Respect- respect for the loved one as an individual in what he or she does and how he or she thinks and feels, is also an important quality. Holding a partner in great stead is much needed.

2. Sexual attraction- this sort of an attraction enters when persons are ready for a meaningful relationship. Sexual attraction welcomes companionship. It also deals with a long-term relationship.

3. Companionship- it indicates that the couple finds satisfaction in being together, but not to the complete destruction of the identity of each other in the relationship.

4. Selflessness- selflessness suggests that the individual can meet the other's need more than his/her own. Sometimes, personal preferences are put aside for the fulfillment of the other person.

5. Maturity- it refers to the ability and motivation to accept adult rights and obligations in a variety of adult role relationships. It entails dealing with issues with great responsibility and accountability. The art of maturing is to become interdependent and not drawing strength from the third party.

6. Growth- love is assumed to last forever. While the idea is that love will continue for the rest of the individual's life, many love relationships probably do not realize this ideal. Growing love implies maintaining what has existed and adding to it.

2.9   MARRIAGE EXPECTATIONS

2.9.1 THE PRESENCE OF EXPECTATION

People who enter marriage expecting too much or too little are bound for disappointment. What a person expects in his/her marriage is often reflected in his/her reasons for marrying, reasons deeper and more sub-conscious than the general response that a person marries because he 'falls in love'. "The unavailability or inadequacy of family life, education, and sex education courses for young people is well known" (Paolino & McCrady 1978:1). "Lederer & Jackson concluded that marriage is in a state of calamity" (Paolino & McCrady 1978:3). David and Vera Mace see traditional marriage as

> highly institutionalised, rigid, formal, authoritarian, ritualistic, and patriarchal. They believe that the rising divorce rate signals the breakdown of the traditional marriage (Paolino & McCrady 1978:4).

Thus, the two major frustrations in marriage are:
1. The man expecting the woman to be far more sexually responsive than she is.
2. The woman expecting the man to be far more romantic than he is.

Their mutual feelings of frustration and disappointment often lead to other feelings of disillusionment, and a sense of being cheated or of missing something through the years. It is the gap between what they experience and what they expect that causes many couples to feel their marriage is not successful. Since it is rarely possible for one person to meet the total needs of another over an extended period of time, the gaps will still appear and disillusionment will characterize the later stage of the game.

On entering marriage, one must be cautioned about this 'phantom image'- a creation of our imaginations, an abstraction from our notions about romantic love and lovers. Armed with feelings and images created for us by the songs and stories glorifying romantic love, we contrive, within our imaginations, an ideal person. This fantasy can become so vivid that we are then able to create it in the body of a person to whom we are attracted, attributing to that person certain highly desirable but actually non-existent qualities. Then we cannot help being disappointed when we discover that the traits we thought were present in the other are not and were never there at all. What we have done is enter into an unrealistic

dream relationship with a dream person whom we have fantasized in terms of our own needs and desires.

Whether one likes it or not, we all bring into our relationships images of ourselves as well as the image of the person we want to love. These shades of phantom images and ghostly lovers do not last forever. If one spouse clings to the precious memory of a 'ghostly lover', it can make life ghastly for the other partner.

> There is probably an element of animus-anima projection in the love of all men and women when they marry. After the glamour has started to fade in the couple's early months together, each begins to realize that the other does not really see him as he is. The gap has opened between illusion and reality. If the gap leads to conflict and remains unresolved the couple may give up and separate. If the gap is glossed over, the misconceptions allowed to go unchanged, the 'ghostly lover' may surface in the unconscious providing his judgemental comparisons: the wife may eventually find herself imagining her husband to be someone else when he makes love to her, the husband may fantasize a companion to fill his commuting hours to and from work; and both may become vulnerable to the presence of attractive strangers on whom they can project their ghosts (Robert Lee 1973:51).

2.9.2   BECOMING ROUTINELY MARRIED

The main difficulty in achieving an agreeable system for determining rules and responsibilities is the tendency of a new couple to try to base their patterns on what they think is a normal or conventional model. There is no such thing as a 'normal' marriage, and behaviour patterned on other marriages will likely fail because each person and each couple has different needs and abilities. Efforts to assign responsibilities, on the basis of what society thinks appropriate, for each sex rather than on competence and interest are also a breeding ground for trouble.

Lee reflects on Lederer and Jackson's book telling of a very satisfying marriage between the owner of a hardware store and an active Vassar College graduate. In the late afternoon he cooks dinner while she works in the garden and does repair jobs around the house. In examining this picture closely, from our circle of affiliation, we may consider it

unconventional, but the truth is he dislikes gardening and is tired of tools by the end of the day, and seeing that he loves cooking which is his hobby, he will be happy doing that. As for the lady, she loves gardening and for a change she's taking up handy work as a stress reliever.

The point is that the nature of the rules and responsibilities the couple decides on will greatly affect the degree of satisfaction each partner feels about the marriage, and thus will determine a great deal about the character of their relationship and interaction in marriage. As for the aspect of conflict, we must realize that it is inevitable. The couple must face the fact of conflict itself and determine how to deal with it when it arises. Most of us shy away from disagreements because they appear as threats to our relationship.

It is possible that our upbringing as children could hinder us from resolving conflicts and disagreements. We have been conditioned to think it is wrong to be angry with someone we love. Usually, when we feel anger we feel guilty and repress both feelings, which lead to more hostility until some little thing sets us off in a tailspin. After a disagreement/argument it is good to quietly talk things out and come to some solution. Those who prefer not to verbalize their hurts will continue to have feelings of frustration and tension in other areas of their relationship.

One thing that seems clear about quarrels is that when they erupt over something trivial they are frequently pointing to some deeper difficulty. The primary consideration in terms of marital adjustment is not really whether spouses quarrel but why they quarrel and how they handle it. Each partner ought to assert himself/herself as an individual with real feelings and hang in with his/her mate as a choice to stick together, rather than simply agreeing out of fear.

2.10   THE PURPOSE OF SEX

If a couple gets along all right in the bedroom, it is likely they are also getting along fairly well in the rest of the house. But if things are upset in the living room or kitchen or the study or wherever, then it is not surprising to find the bedroom representing a kind of battlefield where the couple goes to the mat and fights it out (Lee 1973:98).

These comments by Robert Lee are greatly merited. Practically speaking sex cannot and should not be enjoyed when issues remain unsettled.

2.10.1   UNDERSTANDING THE CONCEPT OF SEX

What is sex? Apart from the physical, sexual intercourse deals with a psychological and spiritual union. The sex act is a kind of ritual dance, a recurring celebration in which two people participate in an age-old yet renewing pattern of mutual pleasure and satisfaction. There is the immediate pleasure of the excitement and release of tension in orgasm, but there is also the pleasurable consciousness that the couple is participating in the ongoing dance of life in which they celebrate their humanity and their mutual devotion through the ritual of intercourse.

Understanding the purpose of sex in human life is of utmost importance.   From this repetition evolves their own unique, private relationship as a couple. They build together a common history of memories, shared joys, sensations of pleasure given and received, fulfillment together after times of suffering and struggle, and awareness of the mystery by which their union has brought forth children. A mutually satisfying and responsive experience of sexual intercourse can be one of life's peak moments.

> It serves as a 'bridge' across which flows the deepest meanings, feelings, and values in a marriage relationship. As such, it is not an end in itself for gratifying desire in marriage; it is not masturbation, but union (Stewart 1979:64-65).

It must be seen as a sacramental means of expressing the deepest communion between couples.

The sex act is the most intimate of all human relationships, with an unspoken language that richly expresses a host of emotional states of being. Through that language we can also convey fear, hatred, and impulse to punish or control, as well as many other such abuses. The very power of the sex drive makes it a viciously effective weapon. Many spouses, therefore, can twist sex to control or punish the partner, perhaps unconsciously but just as completely as if it were planned. A familiar abuse of sex is the withholding of one's favours in order to gain a material objective or to control a spouse's behaviour. Enjoyment

of intercourse depends largely on the arousal and stimulation of foreplay, especially for the woman. Unless she is an active participant in every phase of the act, neither she nor her husband will ever know what particular sensations please her most. Besides, the husband may get tired of initiating their lovemaking all the time without himself having the experience of having his wife make love to him.

Thus any kind of touching, kissing, and stimulation that increases the sensation of pleasure is a desirable area for exploration. As the saying goes, 'touching is affirmation and withholding is denial'. For instance, using the mouth to stimulate the sexual organs can bring a rise in sensory impulses to a height just short of orgasm itself.

Eating and sexual experience are probably two primary pleasures that are utterly renewable; that is, they are as enjoyable the thousandth time as the second, fifth, or twentieth time (Lee 1973:116).

Certainly there is an important element of self-discovery in the sex act which gives pleasure and arouses sensations and which tells how it feels to be a partner in this intimate human relationship.

Integral to ultimate fulfillment in sexual relationship is the experience of love and desire as a mutual seduction, the outpouring of feeling between a man and a woman who want to gratify each other, and to find themselves more whole and more human in that relationship together. Surely this mutuality is clear when we consider the very reciprocal nature of the sex act: what enhances or hinders pleasure for one person directly affects the other. Getting in touch with this interpersonal quality is a large part of the real enjoyment of sex. Interchangeable terms are used for sexual intercourse for example; the biblical term is 'to know'. To know another person in the intimacy of intercourse is the way in which we can know ourselves as sexual human beings. In this present day, the essential qualities of warmth, fidelity, lovingness, and livingness of the other person in sexual intimacy is far lost.

In many marriages the sex drive itself is impersonal and crude sex can find relief with little mutuality and personal interaction. Therefore each spouse is to explore ways of giving and receiving bodily pleasure through sensory experiences. They make no initial demand for

the couple to perform sexually until these touching, feeling, and loving caresses awaken the natural desire to come together in the sexual act. Thus, the sex act is an expression of the joyful sharing of life. The act of intercourse is seen not as a duty to be done or a bestial appetite to be satisfied, but as a free giving and receiving of pleasure and affection. It is a creative source of energy and self-expression, as well as a language beyond words in which one self seeks to communicate with another self. Justifiably Vayhinger (1972:14) declares,

> Certainly sex is one of the fundamental facts of life. By if we enter life, within it we experience frustration or ecstasy, and with it we pass on life to another generation. Although a part of all animal life, only man interprets sex, exercises conscious control over its behaviour, develops codes and moral guides for its use.

When the sexual thrill fades in marriage, people unfortunately blame either the partner or themselves for ineptness, indifference, lack of love, or sickness. They fail to accept the existential deterioration worked by prolonged familiarity. The toll that the 'dead and empty' marriage takes in human misery is incalculable. The marriage is preserved at the expense of the parties involved. "Sexual incompatibility is the reason given for much of the hostility and misunderstanding in marriage" (Seidenberg 1973:121).

A little extract that Seidenberg (1973:128) wrote was based on the writings of Karen de Crow, in which she stated that at one time men wanted to marry women who were virgins. Now she believes that men want to marry women who are athletic and great in bed. De Crow's suggestion is that women should go to bed with other men before marriage because that is what men want. From my personal belief, I totally disagree with this kind of thought. In fact, this is not a solution but rather fuel to more problems.

Alpaslan (1997:55) reminds us that,

> Just as deviant sexual behaviour and intercourse can influence the marital and sexual relationship, premarital sex can also have an influence on the marital relationship and sexual adjustment. If the intercourse before marriage occurred between the parties concerned, they may mistrust each other. Consequently they may wonder whether the partner has not already done it with somebody else, since he/she could give it so readily.

This kind of thinking will eventually takes its toll on the relationship at some time or the other.

Premarital sexual intercourse can therefore make sexual adjustment very difficult. "Marriages are not to be lightly discarded, even if they have been lightly contracted" (Seidenberg 1973:160).

2.10.2   READINESS FOR SEX

Alpaslan says, "Just as the sexes differ anatomically, they also differ in their approach to sexual intercourse" (1997:42). Generally a man reacts quicker and is sooner ready for sexual intercourse than a woman. For a woman to be geared into sexuality, she must be turned on long before the bedroom scene. Foley as quoted by Alpaslan (1997:43) states that

> In practice this means that whereas a man can be sexually stimulated and desire intercourse immediately, a woman needs the time, treatment and the right setting.

From all my readings on sexuality I have come to the conclusion that foreplay, although not necessary for a man, must be present before sexual intercourse, in order for both the man and woman to enjoy this process.

> Although the man is ready sooner, wants to move through the foreplay too quickly and is keen to enter, he must show the necessary tenderness and understanding for his partner, who takes longer to get ready. He must be assisted and encouraged to move slowly through the arousal phase. The man must therefore help the woman to become ready by kissing and touching the erogenous zones (Alpaslan 1997:43).

2.10.3   THE MEANING OF SEXUAL INTERCOURSE FOR THE SEXES

The sexual drive of a man is different to that of a woman. There is a saying, 'a man has a stronger drive whilst a woman has a longer drive'. To digest the saying just mentioned, let us explore it closely.

2.10.3.1 For The Man

A man does not necessarily have a stronger drive but rather a greater physical urgency for discharging because of the sexual tension that builds up in his body. Through intercourse, he discharges his sexual energy and tension. Let me be quick to add that he gains great satisfaction after being sexually active. He does not only have sexual intercourse to discharge his semen but also to meet his bodily needs (cravings). Many of the authors on this subject matter will conclude that sexual intercourse allows the man to relax. Alpaslan (1997:46) mentioned that Wallis sees the continuous production of male semen as energy that builds up, and if this is not discharged, the man can become a frustrated being with an impeded psycho-emotional and social functioning. Through the sexual acts the man communicates his love for his wife. A man's desire for sex may spring from sadness and loss in another area of his life. Through the act of sex, the man not only shows his wife how much he loves her but it also relaxes him from the stress and strains of life.

> This means that when a man has a satisfying sexual relationship with his wife, he will be better able to handle the friction that he experiences in his social life and work situation (Alpaslan 1997:47).

2.10.3.2 For The Woman

Sexual intercourse for the woman has an invigorating effect on her bodily strength, allows her to relax, help with stress related problems, and brings peace of mind. The act of sex is not only a physical satisfaction but contributes to a deep emotional experience. Intimacy to a woman gives worth and value to her life. It makes her feel she is cared for and valued by her husband. Her husband must therefore realize that her value is more than the sexual satisfaction that she provides.

The woman must do her share by satisfying her husband's sexual needs to bring an uplifting effect on their marriage. The complete fulfilment of sexual intercourse for both the man and woman is when a child comes along and they become parents. For the man, his sexual identity is demonstrated and for the woman, her search for fulfilment as a woman is climaxed. Yet, one must remember that sex exists not only to relieve tension; it is also an expression of the marriage couple's love for each other.

In sexual intercourse partners must remember to give satisfaction, and also make room for being satisfied. The way this can be done best is when each person is seen not as a body but as an important individual. Thus, one must be compliant, courteous, and considerate.

2.11   THE ADJUSTMENT PERIOD

2.11.1   A JOINT EFFORT

The first year of married life is climactic for the couple, and in 40 per cent of the cases studied, the marriage ends in separation or divorce (Stewart 1979:88).

This was the finding in Stewart's study. The adjustment period is what it actually stands for. It is a process of adjusting which means to arrange, put in correct order or position, regulates, make suitable, harmonize, assess and make oneself suited. This is according to the *Pocket Oxford Dictionary* (1984). To my understanding the adjustment period is to make oneself suited and to harmonize the arrangement. If the couple is aware that difficulties can be talked through and adjustments made, there is no need for the early marriage to break.

During the adjustment period many facilities must be put in place in order for the couple to work together through this time. I have listed a few of these facilities:

1. Identification of the problem- the primary task is to locate the problem as soon as possible. Very often symptoms are traced as the problem whereas the actual problem lingers much longer and causes unnecessary issues to erupt.

   The same is true when the person blames the in-laws, feels that money is mismanaged, or points to a nagging wife as the trouble spot. These troubles are like a fever in the body; they are symptoms of more basic interpersonal difficulties (Stewart 1979:89).

2. Perceiving breakdown of communication- when words are no longer used or there is no dialogue, between the couple, then communication is an issue. In the opening days of marriage, silence is a silent builder of a wall that will seem hard to put

down. The cliché that silence is golden is good but not in the early days of married life. In the Holy Bible (1984:230) in Ephesians 4:26 it is stated that one must make his/her peace before the sun goes down. It simply means that we must always have an open line of communication at all times. In marriage this ought to be sought after. Couples should be sensitive enough to perceive when there is a communication problem in their marriage. In the majority of the cases, where there is a lack of communication there is a counter charge with spiteful behaviour, icy silence or a mumbled 'yes or no' occasionally. Thus, it is the reopening of the blocked communication process that will eventually enable the couple to talk to one another.

3. Perceiving the breakdown of role behaviour- marriage at large is composed of expectations, hopes, rights, and duties that cluster around the husband and wife role.

> Difficulties arise between spouses when there is a disparity between each one's perception of his role and that of his mate, and when, often unconsciously, he behaves in an opposite manner to what his mate expects of him (Stewart 1979:90).

There are many factors that contribute toward the breakdown of role behaviour:
- Family background- how did the spouse's family line function;
- The mood swing of the time;
- The partner's rate of earnings;
- One who does the running and payments of the home;
- The cultural period;
- Role definitions;
- Company of friends and thinking pattern;
- Involvement in society; and
- Job description or status at the work place.

When role-playing is switched, somehow the other partner expects reciprocation. For instance, when a working wife assumes the duty of paying a few accounts, she then automatically expects her husband to give a helping hand with the chores at home. It is not

a force issue but in her mind it would be a way of appreciating her assistance. On the other hand, the husband may misunderstand the situation and make an issue over sweet nothing. In saying that, some wives demand that assistance must be given and this leads to problems due to a role breakdown. At the outset there must be a mutual role understanding, which must be discussed at length and adhered to for harmony and peace to prevail.

2.11.2   ADJUSTMENT WITH IN-LAWS

In virtual all cultures, in-law talks have always been a problem and will be around for many generations to come. Just a handful of couples have no problems whatsoever with their in-laws. In conversing with many married couples, many of them are frank enough to admit that at some time or the other they have been involved in disagreements or disputes with in-laws. When a person marries automatically, he/she gets attached to more families. So the numbers do not get any smaller but extends through the family circle. As numbers in relational ties increase, so does the possibility of mishaps and misunderstandings. At the commencement of a relationship, and furthermore as the wedding date draws nigh, both partners must prioritize their relationship above everybody else.

The best way to overcome in-law disputes is to make sure that partners are sensitive in caring for each other when in the company of in-laws. For example, if partner 'A' takes his/her partner 'B' to join his/her family, then partner 'A' must go out of his/her way to create a relaxed atmosphere for partner 'B'. In doing so, the tension is simmered down and partner B will mingle with the visiting families accordingly. If partner 'A' swings the other way with his/her family and "dumps" partner 'B' into the deep end, trouble ensues and one can be guaranteed that more conflicts will arise. A sour relationship will be ever present whenever in-laws are around.

> The need for marriage partners to disengage themselves from old attachments and relationships that may interfere with the marital commitment introduces a new cycle of psychological separation, particularly from parental attachments (Paolino & McCrady 1978:46).

Entering into the marital relationship calls for a new phase in the process of the ultimate separation from parental figures, even though in some basic sense that separation is never complete or total.

In meeting various married couples, especially amongst those whom I have counselled, there seems to be a general consensus, that the boy's mother, who is the wife's mother-in-law, seems to be the one who takes the lead role in in-law conflicts. "A doting mother can scarcely conceive of an inexperienced young wife taking care of a son as she has cared for him" (Landis 1977:230). Very often out of ignorance, a mother may react in a habitual manner that may offend the daughter-in-law. That is why, premarital counselling should also involve both the contracting parties enlightening them in advance as to how they should react and behave when their son or daughter marries. On the other hand, the son should also play his part as the new husband, to take his role as the head of his home and advise his mother concerning sensitive issues.

A mother has much advice and help to offer but it is the manner in which she speaks and acts that makes the difference. Her input in a new marriage is much appreciated only if the intentions and attitudes are right. In most "in-law disputes" especially involving the mother, very often the young wife/husband is also to blame because they put on their defence mechanisms. If disturbing issues are addressed early in marriage, it will save a considerable amount of problems in the future. Here again, I believe that the partner, whose family is involved, should take the lead role in putting things in order. Parents must be addressed on their involvement in the new marriage. Instead of hurting either parties they should ensure that the couple enjoy a healthy marriage. The best way to do this may be to maintain some distance. "Breathing" space must be given to the newly wedded couple. Sometimes, parents give advice even when it is not needed.

In looking at the word "in-law" we tend to forget about the words that come before: mother, father, brother and sister. If concentration is placed on the first half of the word, many issues will be resolved. When a person marries, he acquires a "2nd family". When partners learn to love and respect members of the second family, many unpleasant issues will be avoided. Even in this area, a right attitude toward one's second family prevents unnecessary problems. Having a measure of disrespect to any member of the second family will most definitely lead to serious problems and eventually a dividing wall is bound to develop. Young couples should appreciate their spouse's parents as their second parents. Many times the in-laws will be there to care for the children and provide for either of the spouses if one is gone away on business or work related outings. We seldom hear about the good that in-laws do. Where credit is due it must be given.

2.12   THE NECESSITY FOR CHANGE

Change seems to be the catchphrase in every sphere of life. In premarital counselling there is a need for individuals to be open to change in order for them to have a successful future. John Harvey Jones (1989:16), is of the opinion that every thing is undergoing change but the individual seems to be the key figure,

> Important though changes in people's expectations are, the most obvious force for change in industry is technical advance. It is technical advancement that makes it possible to create the world's goods with the labour of fewer and fewer people. It is technical advance also which is increasingly removing the natural advantages of countries with low labour costs … Technology however does not replace the role and contribution of the individual.

The setting of technology to its detailed programming for various spheres demands the application of human gifts and call for the experience, skill, and taste that categorize the craftsman (human being).

The point I am stressing is that even the field of technology needs the individual's contribution. It is the same in any other field including premarital counselling. Each person ought to make his/her contribution towards a happy and lasting marriage. There are different ways of achieving one's aims. What each of us does over a long period of trial and error is to acquire a set of tools with which we are comfortable and which we can apply in different ways to the myriad problems that we need to solve.

> One of the lessons I have learnt in life is that a bit more time for thinking and planning will immeasurably increase the effectiveness of one's input (Harvey 1989:27).

To me, this is what premarital counselling is all about. Premarital counselling is meant to equip couples with skills to brighten their marriage and enjoy success. Just as the purpose of management is to continually improve things as they change, so is premarital counselling.

Change must be a welcome agent to give us the ability and the courage to get where we are going. Jones (1989:65) stated that

> With the best will in the world, and the best board in the world, and the best strategic direction in the world, nothing will happen unless everyone down the line understands what they are trying to achieve and gives of their best to achieve it.

The presence of change creates an environment that encourages couples to do their share as best as possible. Premarital counselling also helps to unveil hidden agendas and bring the couple to a realization that they have one aim and this can only come to fruition through change from both parties. In order for this to be a success we must pay careful attention to the wise words of Jones (1989:89): "We have to have a far greater tolerance of difference and a far greater respect for differences of view." Couples must become responsible enough to digest the concept of change and be willing to change. If the responsibility of change is shared, both will be dedicated to it and share the responsibility for making sure it doesn't fail. When change is noted in either of the partners, they should be complimented and this in-turn will boost the process of change. All too often we are quick to complain and rebuke but very seldom do we actually express our appreciation. The reality of change is inescapable. Change at first is always uncomfortable. We cling to sets of values and conditions that are familiar and those, which are not so demanding of our own commitment and effort.

> The ability to create and manage the future in the way that we wish is what differentiates the good manager from the bad. The engine of change is dissatisfaction with the present and the brakes of change are fear of the unknown and fear of the future (Harvey 1989:125).

There are no substitutes for being in a winning team; one must be prepared to make a sacrifice to ensure that one's 'team' does win. While it is true that it is very difficult to lead change against the grain of how one feels, it is also detrimental to wait until those feelings have developed a large head of steam. The art is to discern the direction of the feelings and to initiate change before everyone is so frustrated and dissatisfied that they are boiling for revolution. The essence of change is to ascertain that each change made is anchored firmly in position before moving on from there. Overwhelmingly the prime responsibility is to try to ensure that the relationship we build endures, and it can only

endure by change. Due to both partners coming from different backgrounds and having different values in life, it is imperative for them to welcome change towards a lasting and understandable marriage.

2.13   THE NEED FOR COMMUNICATION

2.13.1   INTRODUCTION

Communication is the key to a good marriage relationship. It is as essential in marriage as blood is in the body. Alpaslan (1997:72) used the definition of Huut & Rydman,

> Communication is the process of conveying, transmitting or moving information, ideas, or feelings from a sending source (through a path or channel) to a receiver.

Communication can identify certain problem areas in marriage both before and after the wedding.

> Meaningful and effective communication can then be implemented to cope with problem solving. Communication is therefore the process and the effort whereby and through which the marital relationship can unfold, be enriched and develop steadily (Alpaslan 1997:81).

Alpaslan records the opinion of Van Eijk (1985:35),

> that communication nurtures togetherness and harmony within marriage and this culminates in an intimate oneness that provides continuous strength to the relationship (1997:81).

An open line of communication offers opportunities for sharing feelings and needs. When these needs are met, marriage becomes a satisfying relationship and an opportunity for growth. Effective communication enriches the partners and eventually leads them to a happy and fulfilled marriage.

Verbal and non-verbal communications are the two types that are present. Verbal communication entails words, sounds, and noise that involve the vocal chords. This is perceived through hearing. Non-verbal communication deals with body language such as facial expressions and posture. This type of communication is perceived by sight. The interpretations of these communications are sometimes misleading because what is said may be different to what it actually means.

2.13.2   ELEMENTS INVOLVED IN THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS

1. The speaker- the one who initiates the communication.
2. The receiver- the one who does the hearing.
3. Sensory organs- such as ears, tongue, eyes, nose, etc.
4. Expectations- information that one wants to divulge through communication.
5. Vocal chords- inclusive of vocabulary and tone of voice.
6. Brain- deals with the storeroom of knowledge.

In evaluating the above list, I recognize that various elements are involved in communication. Different levels of awareness give rise to the communication process:

(a) The sensational level- it points to external factors that activates the individual to engage in communication based on what he sees, hears, feels, and smells.

(b) The interpretation level- one's experiences determines how he/she feels toward certain issues. Therefore no two persons think alike and do everything in the same way.

(c) The feeling level- emotional reactions are always experienced during and after every conversation.

(d) The intention level- "Intentions point to a certain attitude when the individual prepares himself to move in a certain direction or to avoid it, with resultant pleasant or unpleasant experiences" (Alpaslan 1997:74).

(e) The action level- continuation of the intention level leads to the action level that builds intensity.

2.13.3   DIFFERENT STYLES OF COMMUNICATION

Various styles of communication are used when couples communicate with each other. Each conversation takes on a different style namely the (i) sociable, (ii) authoritative, (iii) searching, and the (iv) centred style.

i) The sociable style of communication is an easy and friendly one that carries a pleasant disposition of great ease.

ii) The authoritative style of communication is when a person wants to dominate the conversation and uses a persuasive and instructive approach.

iii) The searching style of communication carries an investigative or explorative approach. The atmosphere is calm and extremely serene.

iv) The centred style of communication is direct and action-orientated. Partners are deeply valued with a sense of honesty and warmth.

2.13.4   COMMUNICATION RESPONSES

With every communicative opportunity there are positive responses present that could promote communication, or negative responses that could hinder effective communication (Alpaslan 1997:76).

Herein are a number of factors that contribute to poor and ineffective communication:

1. Partners view marriage in a subjective manner rather than an objective manner.

2. When one partner is uncertain about himself/herself, he/she withdraws from the other.

3. Unsolved conflicts from the past can lead to negative remarks or comments.

4. Unrealistic expectations in one's marriage could lead to negativism or a breakdown of communication.

5. Long-standing married partners think they know each other more than adequately therefore there is no need for open communication. This is certainly a breeding ground for misunderstanding.

6. Feelings of inferiority cause blockage in communication.

7. Partners who mistrust each other are very reserved and careful in their communication.

8. Being afraid of upsetting each other or inviting aggression could cause one to avoid communicating.

9. In order not to make oneself too vulnerable there is a slackening in communication.

10. Fear for communication stems from when there is always one partner who comes out of a conversation as the "winner".

2.13.5   EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

a) One must consider that what is to be communicated is as important as to when it is communicated.   The feelings and mood of the person to whom you want to communicate must be taken into consideration.

b) A pleasant tone of voice in communication appeals to the hearer.

c) The subject matter of communication must be clear and specific. Never take it for granted that your partner knows what you think and mean. Incomplete statements lead to misunderstandings and wrong judgements. Alpaslan (1997:79) quotes the words of Mace (1988:32),

> How can a relationship grow if those concerned do not tell each other truthfully what they are thinking, feeling, needing and planning.

d) Your approach to communicate must be a positive one setting the stage for your partner to respond appropriately.

e) Take into consideration the feelings and needs of your partner. One must cultivate sensitivity in this area. Partners co-operate when interest is evidenced.

f) For communication to be effective one must give his/her undivided attention in order to hear all the facts and feelings that underlie the message.

g) Eye contact and facial expressions are a must for effective, productive and responsive communication. Appropriate phrases should be used to confirm agreement with and understanding of what is said.

2.14   FINANCIAL MATTERS

2.14.1   INTRODUCTION

Mundane and unromantic as it sounds, money is indeed a factor that contributes to contention in marriage. Lee (1973:58) quoted the words of David R. Mace,

> One probation officer observed after long years of involvement in domestic court cases, 'you can sum up the cause of most marriage problems under three headings-sex, in-laws, and money. And, if you ask me, I'd say money was the most common cause of all.

Money problems are generally encountered if one of the spouses has an immature or unrealistic attitude toward the earning, saving, and spending of money. Sometimes one spouse will use money as an emotional weapon to control or punish the other. Thus, financial prosperity is not about what you earn but about what you do with that which you earn. It is about handling finances wisely, whilst enjoying all its benefits to the fullest.

Very often we allow our finances to determine how our lifestyle ought to be when in actual fact, we should allow our lifestyle to determine what we do with our finances. You must take control of your money, be aware of how and where you spend it. An effective plan for your money encourages you to develop a set of priorities that helps you achieve your financial goals. Before considering money matters, one needs to see how it came into being. In the beginning seeing that there was nothing to buy, there was no need for money. The barter system was developed to give variety. For instance, a grape farmer would give the access of his crop to a maize farmer who would do likewise. In this system both parties gained by enjoying variety.

The difficulty with the barter system is that people could only exchange goods that the other people were in need of. If one did not need what was offered, the other could not get what he/she wanted. Thus, shortcomings of this nature lead to the medium of exchange known as money. Thousands of objects have been used as money in various parts of the world. Metals have been the most popular and the most lasting. The idea of exchange continues to this day. People use their skills and expertise to complete a job and at the end of the day they are paid in the form of money. In a nutshell, people are exchanging their skills and labour for coins and notes. Apart from the few who inherit their wealth, everyone must work to obtain some reward. Thus, in order to cope with the cost of living, management of money is something we should equip ourselves with. Prior to considering one's savings and investments, he/she must develop a financial goal.

2.14.2   FINANCIAL GOALS

Setting of financial goals deal with those achievements one contemplates acquiring in the near future. A vacation or the purchase of a motor vehicle must be listed as goals and various strategies implemented to meet those goals at specific deadline dates. To have realistic goals attained, the need for a budget is of great significance. This means to assign

a role to each rand earned for a month. In having an organized budget, one must also have a disciplined execution of that budget. It is also very important to control debts and ensure that when utilizing credit facilities, it is not abused.

2.14.2.1 Budget Preparation

When discussing budgeting with the couple, such questions should be asked:

- ➢ Who takes the lead in talking about the budget?
- ➢ Who is adamant about spending?
- ➢ What is prioritised by whom?
- ➢ Who will be the treasurer?
- ➢ Have they divided the responsibility of budgeting together?
- ➢ If both are working, will they pool their efforts and resources together?

At the inception the couple must consider their "nest-egg"- that which they will bring jointly into their marriage. Thus, a simple wedding with more money saved for settling down may be suggested to the couple. The reality is that most couples have elaborate weddings to the extent of starting life with a debt. Budgeting is of paramount importance because both the spouses must now adjust their financial needs accordingly.

Talks on budgeting make them aware of the adjustment that they need to make. A good form of budgeting to suggest to someone is known as the "rubber budget account". This kind of budget allows a couple to go a little over or under the amount allotted. When budgeting is in progress, queries about housing should also be discussed. Generally young couples plan to rent for a short period of time until they have a substantial down payment to build or buy a house. Other important areas that must be surfaced during budgeting are insurance policies; vehicle allowance; sundry expense; and pocket money. The use of money is intimately connected with the total relationship. A working wife makes a difference to the budget. Stewart (1979:69) is in agreement with William J. Goode who concluded in his studies that economic stress appeared to be a major factor in the marital failures studied. All too often finance is taken lightly and later in the relationship it shows its viciousness. By that time it is already too late to resolve issues.

2.14.2.2 Personal Budget

Budgeting to many people means a force or punishment to hoard money. In actual fact, it

helps one to spend one's money productively and systematically. A budget is a system that is implemented in order to plan ahead and ultimately save what is possible for long term goals, such as the purchase of a car, a vacation, a house, renewal of furniture, and other luxuries. Even when everything is running smoothly, money handling can be tricky. Unforeseen expenses creep up almost every other month and invariably cause havoc to the budget. On the other hand, an addition to the family will cause the whole budgeting process to be worked out again from the beginning. When budgets fail to balance, cuts should be made in pocket money spent on unnecessary luxuries. There is nothing wrong with living luxuriously so long as there is enough money to cover the costs. With the increase of inflation rate, the budget should be revised each year. Knowing where the money is going makes life run more efficiently.

2.14.2.3 Savings

Savings help to meet daily expenses and also help to plan and budget ahead. Your savings must be in a safe, interest bearing account that you have ready access toward. There are various ways that money can be saved, namely: national savings, commercial banks, and other savings and loans societies.

To understand the various methods of saving, let us firstly look at the definitions:

a) National savings: deals with savings with the country, directly assisting the economy. This type of savings has many advantages. There is strict state security and secrecy. No one can be given any information about your account, and the government guarantees full repayment of every single penny invested.

b) Commercial banks: banks have always looked after people's money and they continue to be pleased to do so. Money is their stock-in-trade-hard cash. Deposit accounts are a convenient way of keeping money that is not wanted immediately, but will probably be needed soon. Banks pay a fair rate of interest based on the movements of the bank rate. A saver's objective is to preserve every penny by avoiding risk altogether. The key to success for investors is in allowing their money to grow over a long period of time. Generally, the longer an investment is held, the greater the chance of a higher return.

c) Savings and loans societies: They provide a very special service. Money is lent to anyone whom they judge is earning enough to repay what he/she has borrowed plus interest, so that he/she may buy a home of his/her own. The proud new property

owner pays back the sum, month by month but first, the society has to find the money to lend. This happens by advertising in newspapers, magazines, and in its office windows. Money lent on a house is secure. In a time of inflation, bricks and mortar become more valuable each year, so that even if the borrower cannot repay, the loan is safe. The house can always be turned back into cash.

d) Whilst dealing with the aspect of savings, one must be enlightened on the terms of investments:

➢ Your needs- Before investing you should know why you are investing. That will help you determine how much money you need to invest and how much risk you can tolerate;

➢ Your expectations- Consider ahead of time how you expect a particular investment to perform;

➢ Your time horizon-When you are young, you can afford to take investment risks;

➢ Your risk tolerance- It is challenging to take a lot of risk when you are young, but you must be comfortable with the amount of risk in your portfolio; and

➢ Your knowledge of the investment- Never invest in something you are not familiar with. Do not let Brokers, neighbours, and relatives talk you into an investment you do not fully understand.

2.14.2.4 Choosing A House

I suppose that the largest single purchase an individual will ever make in his/her lifetime will be the purchasing of a house. Finding the money to pay will affect one's budget and later the house will become an important asset. Paying rent to live in someone else's house is all very well but there is nothing to show after years pass by. A little extra a week as a payment to the society will allow you to have your own home. Owning one's own home is an attractive ideal. Although it can be expensive, this will soon be offset by the increase in the value of your property.

2.14.2.5 Living On Credit

Credit seems to be a word that nobody wants to hear about at first, but later on, almost all of us are in need to take items on credit. By right, our lives are built around credit and at times we do not even know that. For instance, water, lights, and telephone are used first

and later in the month we pay for it. That is what credit is all about. There is no other way of paying for these services but to use them now and pay later. The world is full of goods that we would like to buy but cannot afford. We could wait until we had saved up the purchase price. Another method to purchase what one needs without having much money is called 'credit'.

Various methods are implemented to enjoy the credit facility:

1) Hire purchase- A higher purchase is initiated when furniture or a car is being purchased. A lump sum deposit is requested and a promise to pay a fixed monthly amount is stipulated and agreed upon. Higher purchase is an accepted feature of life today. Goods bought under such a contract remain the property of the seller until all the instalments have been paid.

2) Overdraft facility- Overdrafts are normally permitted when there is some sort of security; the deeds of a house, stock and share certificates, or a life assurance policy are usually deposited with the bank. Large department stores and some multiple firms with many branches offer a budget account with revolving credit.

3) Credit card system- A credit card is a piece of plastic with personal details, name, and number printed on it, bearing the holder's signature. The credit card headquarters will forward payment for the items purchased and a covering account detailing each transaction together with the total amount due, are posted to the purchaser. With a credit card, you could shop at tens of thousands of shops without money. It is only after a specified time period will you have to pay the money in order to purchase other items. If you do not pay this outstanding amount on time, a small interest is charged but you will still be able to use the credit facility depending on the credit limit.

2.14.2.6 Pleasure Spending

There is absolutely nothing wrong for one to "spoil" himself/herself with his/her hard-earned money. Life would be very dull if it was one long routine of only saving and spending on the necessities of life. Seeing that tastes vary, pleasure spending can be a costly business. Due to this factor, saving is required to pleasure-spend. For example, ladies who love to adorn themselves in jewellery later on find the value of these small items. Silver and gold have an intrinsic value. As the years pass, the value increases and one will never be able to buy it for less than its melted down value. Paintings can also be a

good investment. Although expensive paintings are beyond most people's purses, it is quite reasonable to buy a picture that you like, for the pleasure it will give hanging on the wall of your living room. Another area where pleasure can also be an investment is stamp collecting. Stamps are cheap enough- you can usually get them for nothing off old envelopes that come into the house.

2.14.2.7 Debt Controlling

> Debt provides convenience, freedom, and flexibility in our lives. It allows us to buy goods and services now and then by committing a portion of our future earnings to pay for them. When used properly, debt can actually create wealth (Griffiths 1995:85).

Under the heading of debt, there is a buzzword called "mortgage" which allows one to live in a house before it is fully paid for. Mortgage is to pledge or stake against future success or failure. It is made up of an Old Latin word, 'mort' meaning 'dead', and gage meaning pledge. It stands for a dead pledge. The concept is simple, if you do not pay up, you are 'dead', and the property involved will be taken away from you and sold so that the mortgage lender can retrieve the money that was loaned to you.

The history behind instalment debt first came to America in 1856 when Isaac Singer allowed customers to take his sewing machines home without fully paying for them. A monthly payment was set up for them to pay back their debt. This concept gave a boost to American commerce. The "buy now and pay later" concept increased productivity a great deal. Later in 1951, the Franklin National Bank issued plastic cards that allowed cardholders to make purchases without using cash or cheques. Customers were allowed to pay off their balances over longer periods of time.

> Debt is power. If it is used wisely, it can be a useful budgeting tool. If it is not used wisely, it can be a financially destructive weapon (Griffiths 1995:87).

There are 3 parts to a successful debt management plan:
1. How much debt is affordable- One must figure out what percentage of one's monthly budget would be devoted to instalment debt payments. To determine how much debt one can assume is a matter of setting priorities. The first priority is to

cater for the necessities in life like the running of a home. The second priority is to make a monthly contribution for life's savings. The third priority is to consider unexpected expenses that would arise. The fourth priority is to see how much finances are left over. By right, this is the amount that one can afford to pay monthly toward an upcoming debt. As long as you keep these priorities in order, you will have no problem in managing debts of any kind.

2. A valid reason for your debt- You must categorize your long-term and short-term debts. A short-term debt is normally taken over 3 months. It is generally used for convenience or emergencies (when your cash flow runs low or when you need a suit/outfit for an unforeseen occasion). Long-term debts are settled over 10 years. This is normally used for expensive household appliances, improvement to the new home and college expenses. However one decides to settle these debts, it must not exceed the planned budget.

3. Repayment of debt in emergency- The debt management plan must include an emergency debt repayment plan. Therefore one's reserve account should not become extremely low. The other option is to contact the creditors on time and make arrangements to update outstanding amounts. On the other hand, to resolve major debts, a loan may be taken against the life insurance policy.

2.15 MARITAL CONFLICT

Success in marriage has been defined on the basis of endurance, absence of marital counselling, and reported or judged happiness. While these assessments are operational, they neglect the observation that many marriages are far from ideal, yet never reach the stage of divorce, separation, or marital therapy for reasons having little to do with marital adjustment and more to do with cultural and intra-psychic factors (Paolino & McCrady 1978:103).

Values in marriage have undergone a radical change in the past century. They have shifted from an emphasis on survival and economic security to a focus on companionship, love, and communication. This shift has involved changes in societal expectations as well as in individual development and goals. Self-fulfillment has superseded all other traditional concerns and responsibilities. Changing roles and expectations of women has brought new

demands and conflicts for the partners to deal with. The style of marriage has shifted from that of two closely intertwined persons with clearly designated gender-determined roles, to that of two independent people with individual goals, styles and personalities.

Marital conflict occurs because of differences in beliefs, interests, desires, values, or expectations and also from competition between the partners. Conflict in general is not necessarily destructive. Productive conflict may be characterized by mutual recognition of different interests, open and honest communication, and the presence of trust. If this occurs, both parties can find creative solutions to their differences. Yet, destructive conflicts are characterized by tendencies to rely on strategies of power, tactics of threat, coercion and deception. This leads to mutual suspicion, lack of communication, and disappointment.

> Traditional marriage has been a blessing for men only at the expense of women. Bernard cites studies suggesting that wives lose ground in personal development and self-esteem during the early and middle years of adulthood, whereas husbands gain ground in these respects during the same years. Wives are found to conform to husband's expectations much more than husbands do to wives (Paolino & McCrady 1978:5).

2.16   COHABITATION

2.16.1   THE MEANING OF COHABITATION

In the words of Parry (1981:1),

> To cohabit generally means to live together as husband and wife, and is usually used of persons who are not married. Cohabitation describes the relationship of a couple that cohabit and they are frequently referred to as cohabitees.

Other names given to cohabitation are concubine, meaningful associate, special friend, current companion, domestic associate, etc. Judicial alternatives for cohabitation are: illegitimate wife/husband, family partner, defacto spouse, unmarried housewife, mistress, common law wife/husband, etc. Mistress suggests a woman who has been provided with a home by a man so that he may visit her and enjoy a sexual relationship.

The legal recognition of relationships outside marriage has concentrated on couples who have lived as married couples and the preparedness to extend to cohabitees certain legal protection enjoyed by spouses has not been accorded to mistresses (Parry 1981:2).

Cohabitation can be seen as an informal contract just as marriage is a formal contract and each gives rise to its own status. The reality of the matter is that the protection of matrimonial law does not extend to those who cohabit. Parry mentioned that,

Marriage is self proving, cohabitation is not. There is a register of marriages but not of cohabitation so there are no statistics, as such, on the incidence of cohabitation (1981:4).

It does however seem that cohabitation is on the increase and there is evidence that increasing numbers of couples cohabit before marriage, which is known as 'trial marriages'. Cohabitation is likely to remain an alternative to marriage thereby bringing a 'decline in divorce', seeing that there are no legal procedures in place.

2.16.2   COHABITATION IN COMPARISON WITH MARRIAGE

Sharing of lives and a home is the essence of marriage. Yet parties who cohabit do not have the legal responsibilities of a married couple. The benefits and burdens of matrimonial law do not extend to them. This is due to our social structure that is based on marriage, a formal contract, giving rise to a particular status. Marriage is the voluntary union for the life of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others. Parry (1981:6) commented that,

It is not possible to enter into a contract of marriage except in accordance with the formalities of the marriage act. The parties are not free to choose the terms of the contract and any private agreement to live together will not be a marriage.

Cohabitation by many people is regarded as immoral. One of the attractions of cohabitation is that it does not impose upon the parties the duties of marriage. Marriage does impose duties as well as confer rights. The legal recognition of marriage means that

law prohibits certain relatives from marrying their close relatives. For example, a man cannot marry his wife's mother or his stepdaughter. Thus, the prohibited degrees of affinity that arise from marriage are not attached to cohabitation. In cohabitation, you could settle down with whomsoever you choose. A cohabitee, unlike a spouse, has no right, to a maintenance allowance and no right to a home by virtue of the relationship alone. However new laws have brought changes in this area.

Marriage confers on the parties a duty to cohabit and a duty to support. A wife has the right, arising from the marriage, to be provided with a home. A spouse with no legal title to the home has a statutory right of occupation. Where a cohabitee's name is not on the title documents and she has no beneficial interest in the house, she cannot seek to rely on the cohabitation to give her a right of occupation.

> There is a general rule that spouses are under a duty to maintain each other. At common law this duty fell upon the husband alone, but recent legislation has made the duty reciprocal (Parry 1981:36).

As for cohabitees, they are under no duty to maintain each other. The English law recognizes the duty to maintain and the right to be maintained as arising out of the marital relationship, without such a relationship those rights and obligations are null and void.

Those who live together outside of marriage do not possess the same legal recognition as those who live together within it.

> The uncertainty and inconsistency of recognition is due to its having been secured on an ad hoc basis, with a view to achieving justice in the particular context and with little thought for public policy and the social implications (Parry 1981:143).

2.16.3   REASONS FOR COHABITATION

From my reading on the subject of cohabitation, I have listed some reasons as to why couples choose to cohabit:

1. No legal interventions required;
2. It can be done with ease;

3. Partners have their own rights all the time;

4. Walk out whenever necessary;

5. No age restriction or parental approval;

6. Divorce will never occur;

7. If children come along, there is a choice of surnames; and

8. When parting, take what is yours and leave peacefully.

To conclude the reasons for cohabitation, Parry (1981:126) stated that,

> Many couples who cohabit as man and wife do so because they are unable to marry, one or both of them being already married. The cohabitation may be the cause of the marriage breakdown or it may be a symptom of an already broken marriage. Whatever the reason for the cohabitation, its existence is likely to encourage the end of the marriage by divorce.

Although these reasons seem valid for partners to cohabit, they are not the ideal. In the case of a married partner cohabiting it is known as adultery. When unmarried partners cohabit it is called fornication. In both cases, cohabitation is not a trend or norm to accept as the ideal to prevent divorce.

2.17   CONCLUSION

Premarital counselling prepares engaged couples for marriage and educates those looking forward to marriage in the future. Other disciplines of counselling are administered after a specific problem whilst premarital counselling is educative and pre-emptive. It is a solution to problems that one is bound to meet in marriage. For lasting and strong marriages, premarital counselling is a prerequisite. Marital roles and responsibilities are discussed at length during the sessions. The goal of premarital counselling is to help the emotionally immature to grow up and accept the responsibilities that lie ahead in marriage.

At times, individuals marry for unthinkable reasons. Some may marry because everybody else is getting married, others may marry just to please their parents and relatives. Individuals should get married without compulsion. Normally, when one cannot live apart any longer from the person he/she loves, it is about time to consider marriage but, they

must be aware of the responsibilities that await them. Dating is a transition whereby partners tend to select a friend whom they would eventually settle down with. When a friend is chosen, dating comes to an end. In mate selection, diverse factors are considered such as: religion, race, age, height, looks, and similarity. Choosing a mate is never done single-handedly. People or factors (as listed) contribute to mate selection.

The courting period ushers in the process of going steady. When the wedding bells are about to ring, an engagement is put in place and after a period of approximately six months, a wedding is celebrated. In marriage conflict is inevitable. A good understanding of finances, the adjustment period, and the various aspects of sex will most definitely enhance the marriage. Communication is as essential to marriage as blood is to the body. Effective communication enriches couples guaranteeing a healthy, rich, and long lasting marriage.

CHAPTER THREE

DIFFERENT COUNSELLING APPROACHES

3.0   INTRODUCTION

Counselling can be understood as a very general term and at the same time may be very specific.   On the very same note, all counselling may be viewed as advantageous or disadvantageous, depending on the stance one takes in understanding the prevalent circumstances.   Counselling from a very broad spectrum is regarded mainly as an aiding hand with the intention of getting constructive changes to occur in clients.   The Pocket Oxford Dictionary (1984:164) describes counselling as advice formally given and to recommend a course or action.   It also means to consult with a person.   The *Longman Active Study Dictionary* (2004:168) sums up counselling as to advise or support someone who has problems.   I will go a step further to add that counselling is not only designed to help someone who has problems but acts as a preventative measure to ensure the problem does not get worse.   If there is acceptance between the counsellor and the counselee, progress in counselling is sure to follow.   According to Richards (1991:191), counselling to him means,

> to give one's opinion on how to best deal with the specific situation…   The one given the counsel must decide which option to act on.

Although assistance is given as to which option to adopt, the choice eventually rests on the client.

In counselling, counsellors do more than just administer tests.   Very often counsellors regard counselling as a helping relationship and therefore practice a person-centred approach.   A relationship of this nature is most likely to produce effective results in clients. They deal with the whole individual.   The goal of counselling is for the optimum development of the individual as a complete person. Colledge (2002:2) stated that

> Counselling is a psychological process in that to a greater or lesser extent all counselling approaches are aimed at changing how people think and feel.

Counselling is a movement within and between the minds of client and counsellor, but a great deal of psychological development occurs between sessions and after counselling ends.

Counsellors must be optimistic in the belief that through education, a person can realize him or herself in a deep and meaningful manner that will bring satisfaction and feelings of accomplishment. In the light of the previous statement, we must agree that humans have the potential for both good and evil and the meaning of a fulfilled life is to seek good and reject evil. Thus Patterson (1980:23) mentioned that,

The degree to which one becomes a full human being is thus determined by the measure of enlightened self-control attained and deployed in the direction of full humanity.

While self-understanding and self-direction are desirable, it must be socially enlightened self-understanding and self-direction. From my understanding, counselling is educational and it contributes to assisting a man/woman to reach his/her full potential. Counselling is a psychological process that is aimed at changing how people think and feel. It is a movement within and between the minds of client and counsellor. Without the assistance of counselling, one is incapable of developing his/her full potential.

Since the individual does not possess, full and adequate resources within [him or herself] one needs help from the outside, not only to release [one's] own growth potential, but as much to add to the dimensions of that potential (Patterson 1980:25).

The counsellor must therefore assume a responsibility to assist clients to develop their full or best potentiality. Many are of the belief that counselling is only necessary when people face problems that they cannot resolve by themselves. Yet the counselling process is aimed at overcoming negative qualities and accentuating positive ones. Positive mental health and psychological well being are the supreme focus of counselling.

Premarital counselling on the other hand is not administered when one faces problems but rather prepares couples beforehand as to what they should do when problems face them.

Counselling is thus a thinking relationship, applying human reason to the problems of human development.

> Counselling is one of the personalized and individualized processes designed to aid the individual to learn school subject matter, citizenship traits, social and personal values and habits, and all the other habits, skills, attitudes, and beliefs which go to make up a normally adjusting being (Patterson 1980:29).

In counselling, the counsellor helps the counselee to reach and tap into his or her resources to attain full development.

3.1   TECHNIQUES OF COUNSELLING

As one considers the meaning of technique (means of achieving one's purpose as stated in the Pocket Oxford Dictionary 1984:772), various styles or approaches of counselling are sought after in the sphere of counselling. No particular measure is accepted as the norm or better than the other. Diverse factors are to be considered when counselling is done. The most viable method must be adopted to ensure that the client is comfortable and willing to be open about his/her problem(s). The emphasis in the application of the various techniques utilized in counselling is to increase the client's responsibility for their own lives.

There are various techniques of counselling available to different subject matters. Enlisted are ten types of counselling techniques:

1. Establishing rapport- The counsellor and counselee must become acquainted in order to enjoy their sessions.

   > Most clients are lonely so the first step is to befriend them. It follows from this that counsellors need to be involved and caring human beings, whom clients will feel supported by and to whom they can relate (Colledge 2002:125).

   > From the point of the counsellor, he or she must make his or her environment as comfortable as possible so that the counselee will feel relaxed and not withhold any relevant and assailant points. The counsellor must assure the counselee his or her

undivided attention and utmost respect must be shown in keeping confidential information. Thus personal attention and understanding are important. The counsellor should ascertain at all times that the counselee be at ease.

2. Permissiveness- The client must be given enough opportunities to talk. The counsellor must closely adhere to these comments with undivided attention, showing that he/she is concerned with the client. The counsellor must at all times be calm and never be shocked by what he/she is informed. In like-manner, he/she ought not to criticize but rather give a hearing to the client. The message that the client receives is that someone cares much for him/her and this gives him or her the boldness to speak further and to elaborate on feelings and perceptions. It is essential for counsellors to ascertain how their clients came to have these problems and why they (clients) maintain such behaviour that not only fails to address their needs but also causes restriction of achieving success. Colledge (2002:125) is of the understanding that,

> During the initial structuring process clients are given hope by being told that they will learn to make better choices that will give them control over their lives.

3. Free association- Free association allows the counselee to speak without inhibitions. The counselee is free to report everything that comes to mind, without any reservations. Talking is the client's responsibility and the counsellor must ensure that the counselee progresses to the level of free association.

4. Rewards for talking- Patterson (1980:133) states,

> The client must be rewarded for talking while fearful and anxious in order to reinforce the talking and to enable the client to continue and to progress in uncovering repression.

The best way to reward a client for talking is for the counsellor to give his/her exclusive and undivided attention. Another manner in which the counsellor could reward the client is to accept what he/she is saying and avoid being judgemental.

5. Handling the transference- Transference provides the counsellor with greater and additional insight about the counselee. For transference to be produced and run its course, the counsellor must remain as ambiguous as possible.

> When the inappropriateness of the transference response and its obstruction of therapy are pointed out, the acquired drives to be logical and to progress in therapy lead the client to resume work and free association (Patterson 1980:134).

6. Labelling- Seeing that the production of emotional responses are bound to emerge, the therapist must help the client to label these responses. Labelling consists of producing new verbal responses by connecting words to the correct emotional or environmental cues. For efficient and maximum success in therapy, the therapist must engage in prompting or interpretation to help his/her client. The therapist should not intervene with interpretations until the client ceases to make progress by himself/herself. Prompting or help from the counsellor must be given only to a certain point.

7. Cultivating self-understanding-

> During the process of interpreting and translating the diagnosis and of explaining the evidence leading to the diagnosis, the counsellor must make certain that the student/counselee understands the marshalling of the evidence leading to the diagnosis (Patterson 1980:41).

At all times the counsellor must ensure that the counselee understands thoroughly and must also keep to the client's pace of thinking.

8. Advising a programme of action- When advising a programme of action, the counselee's choices and points of view must be heard/surfaced. It is only then that the counsellor must reveal the favourable and unfavourable data for usage. The counsellor must never be dogmatic, or even appear indecisive for this may lead to the counselee losing confidence in the validity of the information.

9. Carrying out the plan- There are a few basic ways in which the plan of action may unfold. The most sought out way is the direct advising from the counsellor where he/she states openly and frankly his/her own opinion or plan of action that will

render greater assistance to the counselee and allows the client to explore the plan for himself/herself. Later on, the plan is implemented and put into place.

10. Referral- If for some reason, the counsellor cannot be of any more help to the counselee because of a limitation in certain areas of exploration, he/she should not hesitate to refer the client to another counsellor who is more experienced in that specific field. To make a referral is not a failure, but a subtle and important art in counselling. A wise referral is one of the most significant services a counsellor can render to his client. As viewed by Clinebell 1984:311,

> Properly conceived, referral is a means of using a team effort to help a troubled person. It is a broadening and sharing, not a total transfer of responsibility.

Whenever a client is referred to another counsellor, it is noteworthy to merit the previous counsellor who has the client's interest at heart. Every counsellor, no matter what situation they may be placed in, should have the client's well being in focus.   If referral will help his/her client, he/she shouldn't hesitate to do accordingly.

3.2   THE COUNSELLING PROCESS

The counsellor acquires the position of the teacher whilst the counselee becomes the student. Colledge (2002:237) stated that the

> Counsellors' main role is that of teacher of self-help skills to promote appropriate feelings, rational thoughts and effective behaviour so that clients' chosen goals can be achieved. They employ empathic listening techniques, including reflective listening, to build a rapport with their clients. They engage in two types of empathy: affective empathy to understand how clients feel, and philosophic empathy to understand the thinking behind clients' feelings.

This enables the sessions to be a highly personalized teaching and learning process. It is clear that the teacher teaches to help the student understand and accept himself, to identify

his techniques of living, and later to substitute more adequate behaviour for greater satisfaction in his life.

> Counsellors help clients to distinguish irrational from rational beliefs and to see how rational beliefs lead to positive outcomes while irrational beliefs cause inappropriate feelings and self-defeating behaviours (Colledge 2002:238).

I am in agreement with Colledge for the counselling process is put into motion so that individuals may become aware of the range of life choices open to them.

Here are some of the basic elements that characterize counselling:
- ➢ To develop the relationship, identify and clarify the problem(s);
- ➢ To collect necessary information about counselees and to gather enough information as possible in order to help the client;
- ➢ To assess the problem(s) and redefine in skill terms.
- ➢ To state the working goals and plan interventions;
- ➢ The appraisal of potentiality;
- ➢ To help the client to achieve his/her full potential in all areas;
- ➢ To consolidate self-help skills;
- ➢ The client to come to terms and optimistically deal with the facts of life;
- ➢ To explore ways of achieving the client's chosen goals and make concrete plans of action;
- ➢ To implement the plan, evaluate the extent to which the goals have been achieved and revise the plan if required; and
- ➢ To utilize the full strength of the counselling process.

The counselling session is seen as a particular kind of interpersonal relationship that is a kind, benevolent caring for the individual in question. It is this type of relationship that seems to motivate individuals to become themselves to their full potential. Throughout the counselling process the dignity and worth of the individual is stressed. Such an attitude motivates clients to develop a positive attitude. The interview emphasizes attention and effort on a person's capacity to think and solve problems by rational means.

The democratic principle of freedom of choice is respected, but counsellors have an obligation to assist students or clients in making the best choices (Patterson 1980:33).

Counsellors are careful not to collude in clients' need for approval, so no undue warmth is shown to most clients. Instead they are encouraged to face their problems and find warmth and happiness for themselves. Illogical thinking by clients is forcefully disputed and debated, and they are taught how to do this for themselves (Colledge 2002:237).

The following are a few steps one must take into account in clinical counselling:

1. <u>Analysis-</u> (a) This step deals with the collection of information. The data must be valid, reliable and relevant. (b) After gathering the data, aptitude, interests, motives, and emotional balances are diagnosed. (c) The manner in which this important data collection takes place must not deter or drive the client away. (d) This then enables the counsellor to understand the student's attitudes and beliefs and motivates them to right thinking and beneficial wholeness.

2. <u>Synthesis-</u> the second stage of the clinical counselling is simply defined as the summarizing and organizing of the data from the analysis acquired. In this way the student's assets, liabilities and maladjustments are surfaced. When the analysis is properly synthesized, it gives room for step three of the process.

3. <u>Diagnosis-</u> Patterson (1980:37) quoted Williamson, who stated that,

    Diagnosis is the finding of consistencies and patterns leading to a terse summary of problems, their causes, and other significant and relevant characteristics of the student, together with the implications for potential adjustments and maladjustments.

The clinical method weighs and synthesizes all the data into a diagnosis. The process of diagnosis helps to identify the specific problem on hand and discovers the causes of the problem. Logic may also be used in arriving at causes, but care must be taken to distinguish between causality and simple association. The outcome of the diagnosis is called the prognosis. While the diagnosis relates to the

past and the present, prognosis ponders on the future. Patterson's (1980:37) thoughts in the area of diagnosis is,

> The enthusiastic cooperation of the student in carrying out a program of action is perhaps the most effective check on the validity of the diagnosis.

4. <u>Counselling-</u> by synthesizing the analysis, a diagnosis is ascertained. A step further into the prognosis is called counselling. In counselling the counsellor assists the client to achieve optimum adjustment of which he is capable. Counselling is not only viewed as therapy but as a primary concern with life adjustments. In counselling, the counsellor determines to go the extra mile in aiding the counselee to prepare, solve his/her adjustment situations and prevent him/her from complicated therapy.

5. <u>Follow-up-</u> this step determines the effectiveness of counselling to make sure that the client is well versed in handling problems that may be new or similar to what he was counselled on. It is also a phase of giving the client a gentle hand in order to spur him/her on in life's adjustments.

3.3   THE GOALS OF COUNSELLING

The principle aim of counselling is designed to help the counselee to take control of his/her life. Ultimately, all counselling is teaching. Depending on the nature of the problem on hand, different clients will have different goals that they would desire to attain. To a greater extent, goals are more developmental rather than remedial. Thus, the counselling process is primarily focused on overcoming negative qualities and accentuating positive ones.

> Whatever the theoretical approach, the emphasis in counselling is on increasing client's responsibility for their own lives, so it is essential for them to make choices that help them to feel, think and act effectively. They need to be able to experience and express their feelings, have rational thoughts and take effective action in the pursuit of personal goals (Colledge 2002:3).

Clearly delineated goals assist counsellors to choose the right methods to achieve them. Counselling is known to be multi-faceted therefore it has many goals. There are major and minor ones. The goals are as follows:

a) Counselling is designed to eliminate or reduce emotional disturbances in the counselee. From the moment counselling commences, it ought to render assistance in taking the client forward.

b) It enhances the minimization of anxiety and hostility.

c) It provides the counselee with a method by which he/she can maintain stability and rationalization. Patterson (1980:73) states,

> Humans, as rational beings, are able to avoid or eliminate most emotional disturbance or unhappiness by learning to think rationally.

d) Counselling moves the client into the domain of substituting rational attitudes and beliefs for irrational ones. It was mentioned by Colledge (2002:125) that counselling helps clients to avoid being controlled by the negative controlling behaviour of others and to engage in behaviours that will help them to satisfy their needs now and in the future.

e) Different spheres of counselling bring out a persons' worth and removes the feelings of low self-esteem. The problems of personal worth arise when persons evaluate themselves on the basis of their acts, mistakes and failures. Counselling of all kinds help clients to believe that they are worthwhile simply because they exist as persons.

f) According to Crabb (1985:15), both the counselor and counselee need, through their own introspection, to realize that the usual objective of all human beings so passionately desired is fundamentally self-centred: 'I want to feel good' or 'I want to be happy'. Simply stated it is to make one-self feel good again.

g) In counselling, the counsellor takes on the role of a 'parent' to lead the counselee from the sphere of the unknown to the known by unlocking facts from the counselee.

h) Counselling is to give help and advice to the hurting party. It sets a stage of healing.

i) It moves the individual to a higher and better plain in order to reach wholeness.

j) It provides a supportive, empathetic relationship.

k) It is incumbent on the counsellor to make the counselee feel as warm as possible so that he/she may call again for more assistance.

l) It helps the person to clarify the issues and explore the alternative approaches to their problem. Clients are to stop deluding themselves that they are not responsible for what is taking place in their lives

m) After alternatives have been explored, the most promising plan of action must be chosen and steps taken toward implementing the plan.

n) It is also aimed at ascertaining what kind of help people are in need of, whether medical, psychiatric, or some specialized help and how they could be referred.

o) Counseling brings in mobility and allows the counselee to use their latent resources for coping. They become more adept and steadfast in dealing with failure, loss and hurts.

p) It makes a contribution of useful ideas, information, and tentative suggestions to the counselee. The counselee learns to monitor his own attitudes, actions, and moods.

Fundamentally, the goal of counselling is for the client to become his/her own counsellor.

> Clients move from a state of poor self-concept, as expressed in behaviour that reinforces their negative self-evaluation, into a state where they are closer to the real worth of the organismic self. This is followed by a change in behaviour that reflects this improvement and further enhances their self-perception (Colledge 2002:86).

This transition must come to the fore when counselling is engaged and the counsellor must desire this for his/her client. Constant examination and assessing of the goals are crucial to decipher whether they are reachable or whether they should be revised.

3.4   THE COUNSELLING RELATIONSHIP

In the counselling relationship the emphasis is not so much on the techniques but rather on the counsellor's philosophy, attitudes, and his or her response to the counselee. As mentioned by Colledge (2002:75),

counselling starts from the assumption that both counsellor and client are trustworthy, and that all individuals move instinctively towards the realisation of their inherent potential.

Patterson (1980:497) commenting on the old system of counselling stated that,

Questioning, reassuring, encouraging, interpreting, and suggesting, though never widely used, have decreased in frequency. On the other hand, there has been a search for a wider variety of techniques, with the goal of better implementing the basic philosophy and attitudes.

When one considers the counselling relationship, it supersedes an intellectual relationship.

The essential desirable goals for a counselling relationship are as follows:

➢ Acceptance- just as the client has accepted his/her conflicts and inconsistencies, the counsellor should have a positive respect for the client as a person of worth. It also calls for a liking and warmth toward the client. The client ought to be accepted unconditionally, without any conditions attached to the acceptance.

➢ Congruence- the counsellor must thrive in the sphere of transparency and be true to his or her word. What he or she says they must do and be. He/she ought to be unified, integrated, consistent, committed, and truly dedicated. The counsellor is not to be a fake or just role-play but rather be authentic.

➢ Understanding- deals with having a correct gauging of your client's world as seen from his side. To sympathize is on a surface level but to empathize is what is needed in any spectrum of counselling. We must add that complete understanding of one's client's world is impossible but when one's our client acknowledges that one understands his/her situation, they make steady progress.

➢ Open communication- in open communication it means that the counsellor must make sure that the client acknowledges that he/she is interested in wanting to assist. The above characteristics must be expressed naturally and spontaneously, both verbally and non-verbally.

➢ Developing a relationship- when all of the above factors are in position and the client feels free from threat, a relationship develops between counselee and counsellor.

A good relationship between counsellor and counselee reduces the likelihood of drop-out, especially in the early stages of counselling when client discomfort is at its worst. It improves client co-operation and therefore facilitates a good outcome. Colledge (2002:125) expressly stated that,

> Counsellors must be honest when explaining to clients that their needs must be met and their problems solved. Counsellors must avoid being controlled by the behaviour that clients use to control others. This includes anxiety, angering and depressing. Clients are not allowed to dwell on past traumas, although counsellors will show sympathy for what has happened. This is sometimes allowed to happen so that the relationship can be strengthened for follow-up work on present choices that are perpetuating problems.

Almost everything necessary must and should be done to ensure that the client and counsellor have a good understanding in relating openly to each other.

3.5   BENEFITS OF RATIONAL SELF COUNSELLING

Maultsby (1975:7) commenting on self-counselling states that,

> No method of counselling works unless the person being counselled decides to use it. Regardless of where people get advice, whether from a psychiatrist, a psychologist, a friend, a family member, or from a book such as this one, each person must decide whether or not to act on the advice. Because of that fact, the only effective counselling is self-counselling.

In examining this statement made by Maultsby, I agree with his thinking. The counselee must come to terms with his/her issues and accept the help offered to make the necessary adjustments and live a meaningful life. For one to find fulfilment in life, it cannot be sought outside of the individual. It must be undoubtedly accepted from within oneself. I'm of the opinion that this is the starting point of all counselling.

In a layman's term, rational self-counselling is preparing oneself to accept the progressiveness of any other type of counselling. If one is not self-disciplined, then no

matter what type of counselling he/she receives, it will not be helpful. Rational self-counselling deals with opening one's thinking and engaging one's mind into receiving help from other sources of counselling. Thus, rational self- counselling highlights the reality of one's life situation, showing that he/she is in need of help. It shows the need to live. On responding to counselling, it enhances one to achieve goals efficiently. It also acts as a preventative from being side tracked and gives one a single vision.

Rational self-counselling deals with the area of our brain. To rationalize invokes two parts of our brain, the neo-cortex and the limbic system. The neo-cortex deals with the pattern of our thinking, whilst the limbic system, which is situated deep in the brain, deals with the manner of our feelings. A person's thought will determine his or her feelings. If your thought pattern is riddled with, anger, you will feel angry. On the other hand, if you think joyously, you will no doubt feel happy and there will be a sense of excitement. Thus the neo-cortex and the limbic system work together in the said order. The limbic system cannot respond if the neo-cortex does not first stimulate it. There is a driving force in being self-motivated and that is having a desire.

> Everything you do is motivated either by your desire to get something you want, or by your desire to avoid something you do not want. The something you desire may be social acceptance, approval, love, power, money, fame; or you may desire to avoid poverty, pain, humiliation, neglect, or hatred (Maultsby 1975:95).

In rational self-counselling emphasis is placed on having a desire. As Maultsby spelt out in the above quotation, there must be a two-phased desire. To want something, there must be a desire not to want another thing or an opposing element.

3.6   DIFFERENT STYLES AND TYPES OF COUNSELLING

There are different spheres in counselling. It takes on different forms and shapes. My aim is to show that as much as counselling is needed in other areas, so is the need for premarital counselling. In this chapter I have briefly described some of the different types of counselling that is pertinent in meeting the counselling needs of the person holistically.

3.6.1 <u>PSYCHOLOGY</u>

Counselling dealing with psychology calls for us to define the concept of psychology. In the true sense of the word, it is a scientific study of the behaviour and thinking of living creatures in their environment and lends a helping hand in order for them to cope with that environment. Psychology is natured such that it overlaps with philosophy, religion, physiology, anthropology, and sociology. Wilhelm Wundst first established psychology in 1879, as an independent and self-sufficient academic discipline. Later he founded a psychological laboratory at the University of Leipzig in Germany. It was at this university that the early students of psychology enrolled.

> Psychology courses are among the most popular in colleges and universities. Enrolment of graduate students in psychology programs has been increasing at a tremendous rate. Essentially every school of higher education on the North American continent devotes at least some aspects of its curriculum to the study of human behaviour or the behaviour of organisms (Meier 1993:17).

Psychology is really made up of two words, "psyche" and "logy". Psyche stands for the mind whilst logy means study. It could be called mind study or study of the mind. Approximately eleven years later in 1890, William James, a psychologist from America, wrote the first general psychology textbook entitled, *The Principles of Psychology*. The material of the book unearthed the functions of consciousness, which was known as functionalism, emphasizing the practical application of research. Later, another American psychologist, John B. Watson, wrote about the subject of behaviourism. To his understanding all other psychology had to be done indirectly whereas behaviour could be directly studied and precisely measured.

Sigmund Freud, on the other hand, saw unconsciousness as the basic cause of behaviour. His theory known as psychoanalytic psychology was derived experimentally through counselling sessions with clients. Although Freud's views have never dominated American psychology, his emphasis on early childhood experiences has powerfully influenced many psychologists. The cognitive approach that has become increasingly popular focuses on memory, thought processes, feelings, and other aspects of

consciousness. During the 1960's, humanistic psychology became extremely favoured. It emphasized human freedom and a positive view of human nature.

3.6.2   SCIENTIFIC METHOD

Psychological research has been greatly influenced by the scientific method. The greatest value of the scientific method is being able to test ideas and then discard that which is not trustworthy. In taking a scanty view of the scientific method, let's note the statement penned by Meier (1993:24),

> The current paradigm for psychology is the scientific method, a paradigm borrowed from the natural sciences.

This statement is merely suggesting that the scientific method enhances the scope of psychology. Although the scientific method is predominant in modern psychology, we must realize that science rests upon certain a priori beliefs and authority. It also involves reason and may even make use of common sense to form propositions to be tested.

At the inception of science, we find the proposal of an idea, or a hypothesis. Once tested in some way, the results of that test are evaluated to determine if the original idea or hypothesis is confirmed or not. Another way to state this from theoretical perspective is to say that through such a process, the prevailing concepts that guide research, the theory or theories are either substantiated, modified, or rejected.

3.6.2.1   Research Approaches Employed In The Scientific Method

Different research approaches are used in the scientific method.

a) One such an approach would be to carefully observe human behaviour to affirm if one action occurs regularly with another. For instance, left-handed people prefer to light off the bus by the left leg first whilst right-handed people use their right leg. If this observation occurs repeatedly, then it makes a conclusive scientific finding.

b) Another method of conducting research is the case study, which involves an in-depth account of a given individual. This approach discards statistics in favour of verbal descriptions obtained by interviewing and self-report.

c) The predominant research method in contemporary psychology is the experiment. An experiment is a set of controlled observations. In practice scientists make some kind of measurement usually a control group and an experimental group. The task is to compare the data derived from the control group to the findings related to the experimental group. Another important activity is that in addition to such comparison, the experimenter directly tests the experimental group.

3.6.2.2   Caution In The Scientific Method

Certain factors in psychological research must be carefully controlled. Bias or distortion can be introduced into research by the way the scientist chooses the subjects. Seeing that volunteers are reluctant to respond, the scientist may choose a relative or a close friend and he/she may reach conclusions that do not represent the opinions or behaviour of people in general.

The placebo effect is another factor that may distort the findings of the scientific method. In this measure, you get people who feel better by just going into the consultation room and this causes detrimental effects in the scientific conclusions. At times even experimenters may come to their own estimations by not accepting certain control measures that ought to be in place.

3.6.3   SECULAR COUNSELLING

Outside of Christian counselling is the practice of secular counselling. In the underlying paragraphs, I have briefly described some of the schools of thought and the therapeutic practices they posit.

3.6.3.1   Psychoanalysis

In psychoanalysis the exploration of the unconscious mind is emphasised. Modern psychoanalytic theory derives primarily from the work of Sigmund Freud. The theory places emphasis on the role of the unconscious and of dynamic forces in mental functioning. Treatment using classical psychoanalysis usually requires a patient to lie on a couch facing away from the therapist while both attempt to uncover subconscious conflicts. The patient is asked to talk about whatever he or she wishes, including

memories and feelings. The therapist then asks the patient for thoughts, fantasies, and feelings with the material given.

After observation, the therapist points out and works through various areas of conflict. The therapist strongly emphasizes clarification of feelings. In psychoanalytic theory patients experience acceptance from the analyst and tend to love themselves more and henceforth their defences against subconscious conflict diminish. In the process of therapy, catharsis may occur, in which the person being treated has a sudden rush of emotions accompanying a new insight. This new understanding helps therapy to progress further ushering in relief from problems. Freud also made use of dream analysis and hypnosis to deal with the unconsciousness. The dreams of clients were analysed for both manifest and latent content. The manifest content makes reference to information that can be recalled from a dream. With the extracted information from the dream, the therapist brings out meaning and symbolically disguised messages. Hypnosis (which is not used much today) would cause the patient to relax and enter an altered state of consciousness where the individual is more receptive and suggestible.

3.6.3.2   Transactional Analysis

The original name of Eric Berne was Eric Lennard Bernstein, a Jew from Montreal Canada. Berne had a name change to prevent the anti-Semitism in his time. Although Berne was strongly influenced by Freud, his theory and practice of Transactional analysis are very different from those of psychoanalysis. Transactional analysis in the light of Colledge's understanding, "is both a theory of personality and social interaction, and a method of counselling" (2002:100). It addresses the person's several basic needs. The first is psychic hunger- a need of another's time, attention, and physical bonding. The second is recognition hunger- for others to take notice of oneself and pay attention to you. Then follows the structure hunger- organization of one's time. The fourth need is leadership hunger- when one helps another to structure his/her time. The final need is excitement hunger- it is met by structuring time in exciting ways.

Transactional analysis is a contractual treatment in which patients specify what they expect to achieve in the therapeutic relationship; therapists accept or reject the contract, depending on whether they think they can help. The notion of ego state is central to

Transactional analysis. Three ego states, being that of a child, parent, and adult, form the basis for transactional analysis. At any given time people exhibit any of these three states. The first is 'child', which deals with the feelings, attitudes, and behaviour patterns of a child under six. The 'parent' state reflects advice and values, and is programmed both socially and traditionally. The third state being the 'adult' is the aspect of ego that responds to reality. Therapy begins with structural analysis- the identification of the three ego states in the individual and in others.

The wife tells the husband, "Why don't you pick up your clothes?"	
Parent Adult Child	Parent Adult Child
Husband's ego state	Wife's ego state
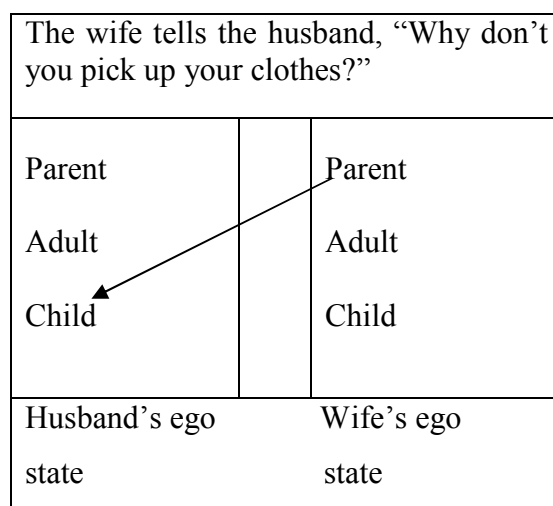
3.6.3.3   Behaviour Modification

Behaviour takes into account cognitive, motor, and emotional responses. Behaviour therapy deals with ushering in changes in overt behaviour, whilst direct behaviour modification leads to changes in feelings and attitudes. One consequence that might be changed is reinforcement. Counsellors may unknowingly use this technique by paying more attention to a client (a reinforcement) when important ideas are being discussed, and paying less attention with peripheral issues. Sometimes to change the behaviour pattern of an alcoholic, aversion therapy (use of mild shock) is administered. The idea is to develop a phobia to the smell and taste of the beverage. This can be effective if the individual genuinely wants to overcome the problem.

Aversion therapy has been successfully used on paedophiles and homosexuals. Modelling, desensitisation, and contracting are other methods used by behavioural therapists. Modelling is used most in assertive training whereby shy individuals learn to take the initiative and become more outgoing. Desensitisation is used for the treatment of phobias and is based upon classical conditioning theory. In contracting,

the counsellor and the counselee agree upon a specific plan that will be taken during sessions.

3.6.3.4 Rational-Emotive Therapy

It was the development of the ideas of Albert Ellis that led to the emergence of Rational-emotive therapy. Although Albert was born in Pennsylvania, he grew up in the city of New York. Coming from a disintegrated family, he went on to set up a private practice in marital and sexual counselling. Due to his excellent thesis presentation, Columbia University awarded Albert Ellis a PhD.

Rational-emotive therapy is an extension of behaviourism. It emphasizes the influence of beliefs upon behaviour. Rational-emotive therapy is active and directive which makes reference to events in a person's life; thought pattern and the results of one's emotions and behaviour.

> Rational living depends on feeling, thinking and behaving in a manner that promotes achievements of the goals, while irrationality means feeling, thinking and behaving in ways that hamper their achievement. Rational living involves finding a balance between the short-term pleasures of the here and now and the long-term pleasures achieved through discipline Colledge (2002:228).

Thus, the goal of Rational emotive therapy is to minimize a self-deflating outlook and help the individual acquire a more realistic, total philosophy of life. It is advantageous for most people, the mildly disturbed or those who have one major symptom. Yet, for the strongly disturbed clients it is less effective. It is also unsuitable for clients who are in the lower ranges of mental deficiency or brain damaged.

3.6.3.5 Client- Centred Therapy

> Rogers (1951) believes that all individuals possess a strong drive toward personal growth, health, and adjustment, which he calls self-actualisation. Tension, anxiety, and defensiveness interfere with basic human drives. When these forces are reduced or relieved, a person can experience personal growth. Neurotic individuals, according to Rogers, have lost sight of their own values and have taken on the values of others (Meier & et al 1993:307).

Client-centred therapy is designed to help people regain contact with their true feelings and values. Personal growth occurs when self-acceptance increases autonomy and reduces the destructive forces of anxiety. The therapist involved in client-centred therapy must ensure that he/she is transparent, genuine, honest, totally accepting and must have the utmost concern for the client. The therapist must also have an unconditional positive regard for the counselee. The counselee must be accepted as a person regardless of how socially, unacceptable that person's behaviour and feelings may be.

Therapists must possess empathy, and try to understand as clearly as possible the feelings of the client. Thus, client-centred therapy is especially effective for individuals with a poor self-image. Various techniques are used in client-centred therapy and the major one is reflection. Reflection is repeating what the counselees have mentioned using different words and sometimes condensing and clarifying what has been stated. Although client-centred therapy has been accused of not doing enough, good listening skills and reflection can help establish rapport between counsellor and client. Once the relationship has been initiated, other methods of counselling can be introduced.

3.6.3.6   Gestalt Therapy

The originator of Gestalt therapy was Fritz Perls who was born in Berlin in 1893. His disturbed family (troublesome parents) atmosphere was one of the contributing factors that led him into the field of counselling.

> Gestalt is a German noun meaning 'form' or shape, and the verb gestalten means to shape, form, fashion, structure and organise. Gestalt holds that human nature is organised into patterns or wholes and is experienced by the individual in these terms. That is, humans do not perceive things in isolation but organise them into meaningful wholes (Colledge 2002:87).

Gestalt therapy seeks to create experiences that increase self-awareness. In this therapy there is a recognition that people are kept from reaching their full potential and when

they do discover conclusively who they are, they will be able to handle conflicts and resolve issues accordingly.

Just as homeostasis is a process that restores its balance when its equilibrium is disrupted, so is Gestalt therapy needed when the individual faces imbalance in life.

> According to gestalt therapy, people rarely tap the potential within themselves or between themselves and others. Our awareness is usually directed to a few areas that are consistent with our sense of identity, and then all experience is funnelled through that self-concept. Limited self-concepts constrict awareness and inhibit experiences, so that awareness is not allowed freedom. Gestalt therapy attempts to counteract that limitation by broadening experiences (Meier & et al 1993:308/9).

In Gestalt therapy, the counsellor renders assistance to the counselee so that he/she may reach completeness and live an absolutely balanced life. The counsellor's task is to promote and encourage his/her client' sense of freedom and 'response ability'. An increased awareness of sensing, feeling, and thinking is implemented in Gestalt therapy.

3.6.3.7   Reality Therapy

A Californian-based psychologist, William Glasser, developed Reality therapy in 1950-1960. At its inception, Reality therapy was based on the assumption that people should be responsible for what they do. It deals with facing reality, doing what is right, and being responsible. It leads one to respond responsibly and deal effectively with the present and the future rather than dwelling on the past mistakes or mishaps. The therapist helps individuals devise specific plans for their behaviour and make a commitment to follow through with those plans. Behaviour deals with thinking, doing and feeling. People choose how to do them. Colledge (2002:118) mentioned that,

> All of our behaviour is aimed at trying to control our environment to meet these needs, which are never ending because when a need arises we have to satisfy it, and when we have succeeded in this other needs arise. Life is the endless striving to satisfy our various needs and to reconcile the continual conflicts between them.

The single most important social need of humanity is a cry for identity. This search for identity has been transmitted from generation to generation. Reality therapy focuses strongly on helping individuals understand and accept themselves as they are with their own limitations and abilities.

The counsellor takes on the role of being an encourager in order to help the counselee to make a valuable judgement and plan to alter behaviour. Behaviour is not a response to stimulation, it is how individuals try to control the environment to satisfy their needs.

> For example hungry people must first perceive what hunger is and how it can be satisfied by food. Then they satisfy their hunger by controlling or acting on their environment to search for food. If the preferred type of food is not available, then another type will be substituted (Colledge 2002:121).

Making a commitment to a choice develops maturity; no excuses are accepted for not following through. In essence, reality therapy deals with assisting the client to move out of a failure identity and clarifies life goals.

3.6.3.8   Adlerian Psychotherapy

Alfred Adler developed this therapy in 1911. He was a contemporary of Freud. Adler agreed that human beings have inherent factors that affect their destiny but he was of the opinion that these factors are socially inclined rather than biological. Adler's understanding of life is that it has no intrinsic meaning on its own. Instead each person gives life meaning according to his or her own fashion.

Since people grow up in a social environment, they search for significance by attempting to master their environment. Seeing that psychological problems stem from skewed perceptions, values, and goals, Adlerian psychotherapy is known to be an educative therapy. Through psychotherapy the client's social interest is released so that they can become fellow human beings who contribute to and feel a sense of belonging in their world.

3.6.3.9   Logotherapy

Viktor Frankl, the developer of Logotherapy, published his first article in 1924 in the International Journal of Psychoanalysis. Although he was greatly influenced by Freud and Adler, he was not gullible in accepting all of their ideas.

> Frankl's search for meaning in his early years resulted in the genesis of logotherapy. The term logotherapy was coined by him in the 1920s, but in the 1930s he used the word Existenzanalyse (existential analysis) as an alternative (Colledge 2002:159).

Logotherapy emphasizes the importance of the meaning of life therefore the counsellor helps the client with this quest. It focuses on the will for meaning. As stated by Colledge (2002:160),

> The will for meaning is our fundamental motivational force and throughout our lives we are faced with the need to find meaning. We need something to live for, so we encounter other people and search for meanings to fulfil. Meaning sets the pace for being, and our existence is compromised if we do not live in terms of transcendence towards something beyond ourselves.

Frankl took note of victims of World War 2 who were placed in concentration camps. Most of the time those who had a zest for life endured hardships but those who surrendered early in concentration, died soon after they arrived. Thus, there was something that provided hope to those who survived, something beyond them that beckoned them onward. In logotherapy, Frankl encourages the client to turn away from excessive emphasis upon self and to focus upon what is ultimate in life. During diagnosis clients work on issues of meaning. Seeing that meaning is an individual matter, counsellors improvise accordingly and render help on an individual basis. The intention is to broaden the counselee's field of vision so that every facet of meaning and value is apparent to them.

3.6.3.10   Physical Interventions

In addition to all of the above, physical treatments of disorder play a vital role in counselling, namely:

1. Psychoactive drugs- this is one of the most important discoveries of the mid-twentieth century. For the treatment of depression, medications such as trofanil, norpramine, and elavil are administered. Heavy tranquillizers are generally used to assist those suffering from severe anxiety. Megavitamins and hormone replacements help depression and other mental disorders. Clients who undergo medical treatment, such as schizophrenics, are much more susceptible/responsive to verbal counselling than those who refuse medical treatment.

2. Shock treatment- also known as electro-convulsive therapy was introduced in 1938 but by the 1950s it dwindled because of the introduction of antidepressant drugs. In most of the cases, shock therapy, especially for depression, is rarely the first line of treatment chosen. The side effects of electro-convulsive therapy are transient memory loss. On the other-hand, some patients have improved memory after this therapy because the depression lifts.

3. Psychosurgery- in 1935 Egas Moniz, a Portuguese neurologist, introduced prefrontal lobotomy (cutting the frontal lobe of the brain in order to relieve the client of their emotional pain and make them more compliant). Psychosurgery causes destruction of very minute areas of the brain, to accomplish very specific effects. It is also used to treat lesions in the temporal lobe of the brain that may cause marked changes in behaviour. At this juncture we must understand that psychosurgery is not brain surgery. Psychosurgery involves tampering with the brain tissue ameliorate, to sort out some psychological problem; while brain surgery deals with the removal of foreign matter such as a tumour.

3.6.4   CHRISTIAN COUNSELLING

Christian counselling deals with various aspects. The foundation of Christian counselling, the duties of a Christian counsellor, and the different facets will be discussed in this section.

<u>3.6.4.1   The Foundation of Christian Counselling</u>

The Holy Bible, known as the inspired word of God, is the absolute standard in Christian counselling. As recorded for us in the Holy Bible NIV (1997:254) that

> All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Christians are not left to be 'tossed back and forth' but can look to a final authority. Relying on the Holy Spirit to guide them through the Bible, Christians are not dependent on their own consciences to direct their behaviour.

> If conscience agrees with the Word of God, it is valid; if not, conscience is invalid. The Bible not only gives insights into human behaviour but also puts everything into proper perspective. It tells who we are, where we come from, and our nature and purpose (Meier et al 1993:314).

Christian counselling depends on the human will as well as the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit to conquer human problems. The Holy Bible NIV (1997:227) tells us "having believed, you were marked in Him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit." This verse like many others assures the believer that the Holy Spirit descends upon a person the moment he or she commits his/her life to Jesus.

> But the Counsellor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you (The Holy Bible NIV 1997:128).

Thus through God's power, the Holy Spirit, we no longer need to be slaves to a weak will, or to our social situations. We gain new power to deal with our problems. In Christian counselling, dealing with the past is fundamental.

> Because Christians find themselves forgiven for past life events, they can be guilt-free (1 John 1:9) and look forward to the future (Phil. 3:13-14). Even if some past events require insight and specific prayer to remove resentment and bitterness, believers have a secure position in Christ (Meier et al 1993:314).

3.6.4.2   Duties Of A Christian Counsellor

Although the Bible is used as the absolute standard, Christian counsellors do differ in personality, in the training they have received, and their own experiences. Yet there are some characteristics that distinguish true Christian counselling. A Christian counsellor performs the following functions: a. He/she listens attentively to the counselee;

b. Counselee is given assistance to gain insight; and

c. Helps the counselee to formulate a specific plan.

a) Listening

Simply talking to another person often relieves problems. True friendship is built when one person listens to another and shows genuine concern (Meier et al 1993:313).

Problematic people have the ability to sense when someone cares for them. Thus, they tend to gravitate toward those who are understanding, compassionate and willing to hear them out. Mention must be made that listening is one of the best ways to express concern or caring.   In the light of listening, the counsellor must acknowledge that in group counselling he/she cannot talk to more than one person at a time and must avoid interrupting a person who is talking. There is a tendency for the counsellor to argue mentally about some issue and fail to give the counselee a good hearing of the subject matter. Care should be taken not to appear restless or to convey disinterest through facial expressions. A warm smile, eye contact, and interest shown by every movement are marks of a caring listener.

b) Gaining insight

Helping a counselee gain insight is the key to counselling. When clients gain insight into the true nature of their problems, it is hopeful that their problems will be resolved over time. The manner in which one gains insight is to have a balanced focus and give attention to the present by clarifying the difference between feelings and behaviour.

To help the counselee gain insight, direct and non-directive techniques are employed:

1. Past versus present- past experiences should never be used as excuses to avoid present responsibility. As much as Christian counselling deals with the present behaviour, it is appropriate to do something about the unresolved issues from the past. Past errors and failures must be acknowledged for the individual to move on in the present, if not the past unresolved issues are dragged along. Therefore the scripture in 1 John 1:9 says, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness" (Holy Bible NIV 1997:283). Confess means to admit our past errors, 'cough it out and take in a fresh breath' in order to move forward. The Holy Bible (1997:235) states in Philippians 3:13-14, "….Forgetting what is behind and straining towards what is ahead, I press on towards the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus." This verse is an encouragement that although one acknowledges the past, it must be left behind and one must move on for progress because greater blessings are ahead.

2. Feelings versus behaviour- in various counselling approaches, feelings and behaviour seem to be treated as separate entities, but in Christian counselling both are treated equally. It is important to let counselees vent their feelings. This helps them cope with the internalised anger that causes depression and brings anxiety from the subconscious to the conscious, where it can be dealt with appropriately. When the client is given the freedom to express his or her feelings, he or she takes more to the counsellor who understands him. To take in a person's feelings is not the 'end all' but a step into the person's behavioural pattern. The Christian counsellor must move first past the feelings and then engage with behaviour. Feelings can only change if one's behaviour changes.

3. Directive versus non-directive techniques- in conventional psychiatry the counsellor does not tell patients what they should do or how they should resolve their problems. The principle used is that once the patient understands why things have gone wrong, he/she will automatically experience a changed response toward the issues at hand. Directive counselling takes the stance of teaching clients better ways to meet their needs. Much moderation is utilized in making sure that the

counsellor does not become too direct in assisting his patient. Christian counselling generally uses an 'indirect-directive' approach. The Christian counsellor should be able to recognize the clients' problems and then guide them with solutions. The goals of Christian counselling are to assist clients to solve their problems in accordance with the will of God and to help them mature spiritually. Spiritual maturity is not a one-off application but an ongoing process that would help the client cope with issues that are bound to surface later in his/her life. As we consider the life happenings of Jesus, at times He was directive and at other times He was non-directive. Some of the time, His statements were stern and at certain times, He was gentle.

> Jesus Christ demonstrated how to be both direct and indirect in helping people gain insight (see John 3), how to focus on the present without excluding the past (see John 4), and how to emphasize spiritual aspects without neglecting physical and psychological aspects (see John 5) (Meier at al 1993:316).

c) Formulating a plan of action

Once the counsellor gives a good hearing and assists the individual in determining the nature of the problem, he/she (counsellor) should extend a helping hand to the client in formulating a particular plan to deal with the problem. If the counsellor doesn't listen well, he or she will not be able to render quality assistance to the client. Very often troubled individuals cause more harm to themselves rather than helping themselves to cope with problems. In formulating a new plan, counselees should make a list of alternatives for dealing with their problem and for being mentally healthy.

The best alternatives should be chosen to formulate a plan of action.

> As the reality therapists insist, the plan needs to be specific, including, for example, a detailed exercise program or a set number of social contacts for the week. It may include some direct courses of action to deal with a particular problem, such as confronting in an

assertive manner a friend with whom the counselee is angry. It is important that the counselee makes a commitment to the specific plan and adhere to it for a set period of time (Meier et al. 1993:317).

As the plan of action is being carried out systematically, problems will be solved and the counselee's feelings will change for progress. The counsellor must ensure that the counselee spends time in reading the Bible. As individuals meditate on the Word of God and apply it to their lives, their belief systems and feelings will change. For example, a husband's faulty belief may cause him to be unloving toward his wife. As he spends time in the Word of God and realizes how much God wants him to love his wife, his marriage will improve as his faulty belief system changes.

Feelings, logic, and God's Word are the three criteria for making a right decision. Generally faulty decisions are based on putting feelings before everything else. Although feelings are the most unstable, unreliable, and changeable standards, many individuals base their entire lives on them. Christians should rely on logic on the other hand, which is far more stable than feelings, especially for those issues that are not spelt out specifically in the Bible. Yet, the best criteria for making decisions are God's Word under-girded with lots of prayer, dependence on the Holy Spirit, and the input of other mature Christians.

3.6.4.3   Different Facets Of Christian Counselling

In Christian counselling, there are different facets of counselling. I will highlight Supportive care and Crises care counselling.

1. Supportive care and counselling

In supportive care and counselling, the counsellor utilizes methods that stabilize, under-gird, nurture, motivate, or guide troubled persons, enabling them to handle their problems and relationships more constructively. Clinebell's understanding of supportive care and counselling is worth taking into consideration.

The goal is to help persons gain the strength and perspective to use their psychological and interpersonal resources (however limited) more effectively in coping creatively with their life situations. Supportive methods focus on here-and-now problems in living and helping persons to handle or accept these in reality-oriented ways, thus strengthening their ability to cope constructively in the future. Such methods seek to help persons avoid self-hurting or other-hurting patterns, and to increase mutual need satisfaction in relationships. Personality growth often occurs gradually in supportive counselling, as a result of a person's increased effectiveness in handling problems and improving their relationships (Clinebell 1984:171).

Both insight-oriented and supportive methods depend on a strong, empathic pastor-parishioner relationship. Pastoral psychotherapy uses the relationship as the foundation on which uncovering methods are based. The trustful quality of the relationship permits the use of methods aimed at dealing with repressed, threatening feelings, fantasies, and memories. The primary instrument of change in supportive care and counselling is having this dependable relationship. By relating trustfully to the pastor, such persons are able to acquire strength and build their "arsenal" to cope with issues.

Guidance, information, reassurance, encouraging and discouraging of certain behavioural patterns are methods that are most utilized by a pastor in supportive counselling. These supportive methods are employed in several other types of pastoral counselling and play a vital role in crisis caring and bereavement counselling.

1.1 Methods of supportive counselling

I will highlight seven procedures that are generally recommended for supportive counselling consisting of five procedures taken from Franz Alexander:

a. Dependency needs- automatically, the care-giver is seen as a parent figure and the parishioner adopts the attitude that somebody is going to

render great assistance. Comforting, feeding (emotionally), understanding, instructing, protecting, and inspiring are some of the dependency gratifications that communicate caring to a troubled and despondent person.

b. Emotional catharsis-

> As Carl Rogers emphasizes, the acceptance of a person's burdensome feelings is one of the most supportive things a counsellor can do. Pouring out one's feelings in an understanding relationship drains the poison from the wounds of the spirit (Clinebell 1984:172).

A troubled person feels great inward strength when he/she is aware that someone is showing concern towards him or her and is willing to render the necessary help.

c. Objective review of the stress situation- based on the trust between counsellor and counselee, the counselee is assisted to see things objectively and view problems from a wider perspective thus exploring feasible alternatives. This kind of patronage helps clients to make wiser decisions concerning what can and should be done.

d. Aiding the ego defences- initially almost all counselees will put up a defence to hide from their predicament and shift the blame on everyone else beside themselves. To pounce on them immediately is not the solution but to help them become aware of their disruption and the consequences thereof is important. Later they must be notified of their folly. If the counsellor shows up their folly too early, the client may precipitate a self-destructive atoning behaviour.

e. Changing the life situation- changes may occur in different forms. The counselee may make internal changes or be assisted with external changes. After counselling, the client may take a different approach in resolving issues (internal change). The counsellor may assist the family in locating a nursing home for an aged senile father and help them with the necessary requirements (external change).

f. Encouraging appropriate action- trials, troubles and losses generally cause people to withdraw and seclude themselves from others. It is often helpful for the pastor/counsellor to recommend some activity that will keep them occupied and in touch with people. This approach will most definitely diminish the tendency to retreat into depression. The use of bibliotherapy as an adjunct to various types of pastoral counselling has much to commend it.

g. Using religious resources- when items such as devotional literature, prayer, and scriptures are used, they tend to give counselees fresh awareness of the fact that their lives have meaning despite the pains and problems they are facing.

> In moments of spiritual openness, elicited by the meaningful use of these resources, counsellor and counselee can become aware of the supportive power of Spirit available to both of them in, through, and beyond the counselling process (Clinebell 1984:174).

1.2   Models of supportive counselling

We will consider the two major models of supportive counselling namely: sustaining and growth counselling.

➢ Sustaining counselling is a long-term pastoral care relationship. Its goal is to help persons continue to function at their own optimal level, in spite of their difficult and unchangeable life situations. The heart of this approach is the ongoing supportive relationship that such persons establish with a pastor and his congregation. Year after year this network of meaningful relationships sustains the person. Within this context, occasional brief counselling contacts that use supportive methods can have a helping effect that far outweighs the limited amount of time invested. Although little can be done to change their life situations, this caring spirit gives them strength to bear loads that would normally crush them. By being nurturing parent figures, counsellors/pastors can help make such person's lives bearable, giving them resources for carrying overbearing loads. In supportive

counselling it is often important to help parishioners achieve an attitude of acceptance toward the unchangeable aspects of their problems.

➢ <u>Growth counselling</u> occurs in a person's ability to handle life situations constructively by making better use of their personality resources and relationships. The recovery of alcoholics in AA is a clear picture of a supportive growth process. As long as alcoholics are drinking, their inner resources tend to be immobilized. AA provides supportive, accepting relationships that become a growth environment within which the alcoholic's floundering ego regains its ability to function constructively. As they face their guilt feelings, their emotional load lessens and their inner strength grows. Their previously weakened, paralysed egos gradually recover the ability to cope with adult responsibilities and relationships.

2. Crisis care and counselling

Clinebell quoted the words of Wayne E. Oates, who described crisis counselling in a vivid manner,

> The pastor moves from one crisis to another with those whom he shepherds…. Two thousand years of Christian ministry have conditioned Christians to expect their pastors to be with them at times of crises. Therefore, the Christian pastor comes to his task in the strength of a great heritage. Even though he feels a sense of awe in the presence of the mysterious and tremendous crises of life, he also feels a sense of security in the fact that his people both want and expect him to be present at their times of testing (Clinebell 1984:183).

As much as I am in agreement with Clinebell' quotation, I must stress the fact that a pastor is not only conditioned to be present when a crisis is at hand but also when a joyous occasion is in progress.

Those in the midst of crises and loss, identify the minister's image and identity as a supportive and nurturing one. Statistics in America have proven that about 39

percent of people who sought professional help in family crisis had gone to the ministers. A startling 54 percent of bereaving families had turned to ministers for consolation and comfort. Probably in the near future, I would also research our community to find out where they go for help in times of crisis and bereavement. Viewing the statistics in America, we can confidently state that the role of the minister is a strategic one as he renders assistance to the ailing and the aching.

In crisis ministry, ministers are called upon to play the role of one who brings hope and scope to destitute and disappointed families. He is there as a spiritual growth-enabler, to help crisis-stricken people discover the ultimate meaning of life lived in relationship with God. Everyone deserves special care and nurture when they are undergoing difficulties. Thus, the general ministry of pastoral care is a ministry of presence, listening, warmth, and practical support. Individuals who have the ability to mobilize their coping resources more efficiently, and handle issues more constructively require short term crisis counselling. On the other hand, those who seem derailed and traumatized by overwhelming losses need longer term counselling. To my knowledge, such persons must be referred to psychotherapists who have the training and experience to deal effectively with counselees.

2.1 The nature and dynamics of crises

Everyone is faced with situations demanding problem-solving techniques. Along the way through the activities of life, each person has a set pattern to resolve crises. Crises and tensions are correctly labelled 'disequilibriums'. Unknowingly, familiar patterns of problem solving fizzle into our approach to life's crises. The moment our skills at problem solving are inadequate, a crisis is at hand. Individuals become paranoid and cannot respond normally.   All systems turn into a mode of dysfunction. The stress stems from the deprivation of the satisfaction of some fundamental physical or psychological needs.

Listed are four characteristic phases in the development of a personal crisis:

i)   The problem, being the stimulus, causes shock in the individual, thus causing him/her to lose all sense of hope and buckle under problem solving tactics.

ii)   Venting to the failure of these responses and the continuing unmet needs, produce inner disturbances of all sorts. The person becomes

emotionally charged and moves into a state of confusion. To some extent, disorganization of normal functioning occurs.

iii) If the individual doesn't seek help in time, he/she becomes vulnerable to other issues, either big or small ones. Dropping one's guard in any stratum of life automatically leads to other infections. Crisis counselling aims at helping persons in this third stage by encouraging them to mobilize their latent (concealed) coping resources.

iv) If the problem is unresolved it may have detrimental effects leading the individual to a breaking point where major personality disorganization occurs.

There are two categories of crises, namely developmental crises and accidental crises. The occurrence of developmental crises is normal and natural, an integral part of many people's growth. Stressful experiences such as birth, weaning, parenthood, adolescence, death of a spouse, and retirement, are the occasions of crises for an individual. Each developmental stage and crisis is the occasion for a variety of caring and counselling opportunities.

Accidental crises as opposed to developmental crises can occur at any stage in life. It may be precipitated by unexpected losses of what one regards as essential sources of need for satisfaction. Experiences such as surgical operation, mental illness, physical handicap, unwanted pregnancy, earthquake, and unemployment, are all contributing factors of accidental crises.

All these events give rise to emotionally hazardous situations. The stage of crises is not around people but within them. The basis of crises is in the person and slowly overflows to the outside. It is more than a simple enduring period of danger, pain, and stress to be endured. The counsellor must approach it as a growth opportunity toward or away from greater personality strength.

2.2 Informal crisis counselling

The ministry of a pastor entails a unique portfolio in that whilst visiting, he takes the counselling to the people. Therefore, many that refuse to attend a formal

counselling session will eventually be exposed to informal counselling.

> To utilize this strategic advantage fully, ministers must learn to recognize and respond to the host of often quiet cries for help that occur in the normal course of calling, group contacts, educational and administrative duties. Much of the counselling done by pastors takes place in informal settings without being called counselling. Some occurs in the minister's office or home when people drop by for a chat, without an appointment. By allowing the sensitivities and skills of counselling to permeate their many informal and chance encounters, ministers can help many times the number of people they could reach through formal counselling alone (Clinebell 1984:190).

Informal counselling may not necessarily mean 'cheap counselling' but rather hands-on counselling. This may transpire anywhere at any given time. Generally, counselling occurs in the context of a relationship not identified as counselling. Instead of being called 'counselling', it is known as 'discussing a problem with the pastor'. Formal counselling takes a different approach altogether because it is undertaken at specific times and at a set venue. It is normally available during office hours and may entail a series of sessions at a fixed cost.

There are four ways that ministers can create opportunities for care giving in informal crisis counselling:

a)   Maintain a 'confidential help list' including the names of the lonely, the sick, new parents, the bereaved, the unemployed, the handicapped, and the despondent. An alert pastor often senses intuitively that a certain family is under extreme pressure. Such 'pastoral care suspects' should go on the special help list. By devoting extra visitation to these listed persons, ministers can build strong relationships with them.

b)   The minister should be well versed in all aspects of life and more especially emotionally, to decipher the hurting and the weary. Picking up 'mayday' signals is very important and it can only be

        done if the minister hears with his heart to the cries of people. He must have the ability to interpret non-verbal messages.

c)   Normally 'openers' (using questions and statements) are designed to interrupt camouflage and superficial conversations. This provides an opening for individuals to discuss their real feelings and deep embedded issues. Although at first, 'openers' may startle the individual, later they will reap the benefits of the conversation.

d)   When the pastor gives his/her undivided attention and responds positively to the people's feelings, they will automatically move to the level of real needs. Thus, conversation can move into informal counselling in a natural and unthreatening manner.

3.7   CONCLUSION

In this chapter various disciplines of counselling were generally reviewed. Like other counselling approaches, premarital counselling is essential for humanity to reach wholeness and enjoy life to the fullest.

Two most outstanding techniques of counselling are:

➢ For the counsellor to give his/her undivided attention to the counselee.

➢ To befriend the client in order to make him/her feel as comfortable as possible.

The counselling process entails the gathering of information, analysing it, and then identifying the source of the problem. A plan of action must be mobilized to ensure that the counselee receives healing. The ultimate goal of counselling is to eliminate disturbances in the counselee and provide him/her with stability for the future.

Some of the counselling approaches that I reviewed were: psychology, scientific method, secular counselling, and Christian counselling. Psychology focuses on one's behavioural and thinking patterns. The greatest value of the scientific method is being able to test ideas and verify gathered data. Secular counselling involves schools of thought such as psychoanalysis, transactional analysis, behaviour modification, and client-centered therapy. The Holy Bible is the absolute standard for Christian counselling.

The three functions of Christian counselling are:

> ➢ The counsellor must give a listening ear to the client.
>
> ➢ The client must be assisted in gaining insight.
>
> ➢ The counselee and counsellor draw up a plan of action.

Other facets of Christian counselling are supportive care, crisis care and counselling. The pastor is called upon to render help to hurting and ailing families that have been traumatized by developmental or accidental crises. Thus, the minister should be attuned to different aspects of life, especially emotionally, to decipher the hurting and the weary.

CHAPTER FOUR

EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

4.0   INTRODUCTION

In the light of my research, I acknowledge that interaction with the community is of vital importance. To achieve a true reflection and to gain a deeper understanding of almost any subject, it is imperative to liase with people and critically examine their input into research. In my Honours degree, my research group focused on the newly married and long standing married couples. The information I received was of great benefit for all.   Various researches may be carried out, but in my opinion, empirical research is outstanding and extraordinary in assisting the community to be educated and develop in terms of the social challenges related to marriage they face.

Strictly speaking, Centenary High School is the only high school available in Asherville. Actually, this school is situated a street away from my residence. It is on Dunnator Road. Other high schools are approximately three kilometres away from Centenary High. Centenary serves the larger community of the Overport, Sydenham, and outlying areas. The school caters for approximately one thousand one hundred and fifty seven pupils. Being the first high school to come into existence after the Sastri College Boys School, it boasts of forty-eight years of proud existence. At first, Centenary High School was only for boys and gradually they allowed girls to join the student body. The principal is Mr Y. Ahmed and the deputy principal is Mr D. Ori. The teaching body in the school comprises of 36 teachers. There are twenty classes with each class having 2 representatives who make up the student body.

4.1   TARGET GROUP

Knowing the rich history of Centenary High school in a 'nutshell', I chose to conduct my empirical research with them. My intentions at first were to meet one hundred and fifty students. Eventually I managed to meet with one hundred and seventy two students, which make up at least fifteen percent of the present student body.   Over a three-day period,

especially during the mornings, I was allowed to address the students and requested them to fill in the questionnaire.

From the one hundred and seventy two students, 53%(91) were boys and the remaining 47%(81) were girls. The 91 male students were further divided into four categories:

1. Muslims-   40
2. Hindus-   18
3. Other-   10
4. Christians- 23

The 81 female students being divided further were:

1. Muslims-   41
2. Hindus-   18
3. Other-   2
4. Christians- 20

In respect to religion, the following figures were analyzed:

➢ Muslims-   47%(81)
➢ Hindus-   21%(36)
➢ Christians-   25%(43)
➢ Other-   7%(12)

47%   25%   21%   7%
Muslims   Christians   Hindus   Other
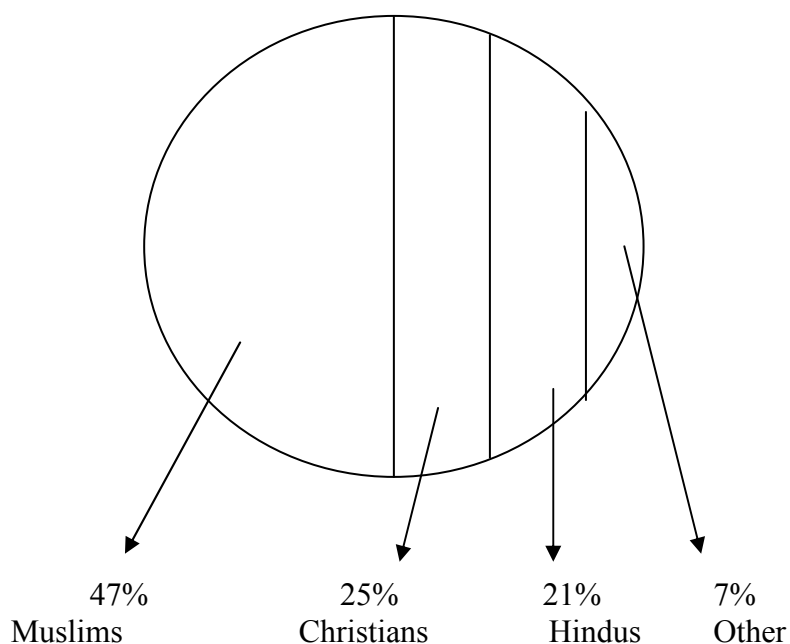
As I consider the 47% Muslim students, one must understand that the Asherville area is predominantly made up of Muslim families. Automatically, this gives rise to the larger percentage of Muslim students in attendance at the Centenary High School. The Hindu and Christian students are also from the Asherville area with the majority coming from Springtown, which borders Asherville. Those of other religions (7%) are the Black students. They are from the Clare Estate and Sydenham areas. This school has a good mixture of Indian and Black students. During my sessions, students of the enlisted religious backgrounds gave me their undivided attention and responded accordingly. From my observation, students came from all different backgrounds but were well accepted and well absorbed into the community of Centenary High School. At a glance the teachers are good facilitators and very friendly folk. The deputy principal, Mr D. Ori does a fare amount of work ensuring that the school runs effectively. Lots of discipline is in place at Centenary High School inclusive of attire and time management. In those few hours spent at the school, I observed an educator reprimanding a student for not putting his shirt into his trouser and asking another student about his loitering in the corridor. I am of the opinion that these little issues are major setbacks at some our primary and secondary schools in and around our surrounding areas.

4.2   QUESTIONNAIRE

4.2.1   EXPOSITION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The personal details of the questionnaire were made up of the student's name, surname, religion, age, grade, and gender. The choice to complete these details was optional and apart from two students, the rest of the forms carried the full personal details. It was encouraging to note that students were transparent and completed the forms. Based on this response, I deduce that this survey at the Centenary High School is worthy of recognition since this was a random sample and represents nearly 15% of the school's pupils.

Immediately after the personal details, I posed the question concerning their knowledge of premarital counselling. If they heard of premarital counselling before, they were to furnish me with their understanding of the topic. Thereafter, I explained to them what premarital counselling entails. In a simple manner, I explained the basics of premarital counselling and then referred them to the questionnaire explaining each question accordingly. I dealt

with the choice of partners, whether they would prefer to date and meet their own partner or preferred their parents or friends to choose one for them.

When dealing with the subject on spirituality, I posed a question on whether they would consider marrying someone of another faith. Finances seem to be a debatable issue therefore I encouraged them to see the importance of finances in marriage and to comment on it. Seeing that traditional marriages endorsed women to stay at home, I gave them an opportunity to air their heart feeling on whether a woman must work or stay at home. Time management was another aspect that I included into the survey. Their belief system relating to sex before marriage came under consideration especially with the HIV/Aids pandemic.

In regards to change, and choice of a marriageable age, the students had to consider their views in relation to their future studies. In my belief, based on a Biblical principle, I most certainly do not believe in 'trial marriages'. I included this question of trial marriage to investigate how the students will respond and what they would do when faced with this predicament. Students were questioned in light of the many different aspects in marriage, they had to surface some of their greatest fears they have as they contemplate marriage in the future. The last three questions were directed to derive information and conjure whether they prefer premarital counselling before they engage to marry. Immediately after all the questions, I inserted a note of appreciation to the students for participating in my research.

4.2.2   FORMAT OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Herein is the actual layout and the presentation of the questionnaire that was distributed to the Secondary School students of Centenary. At the outset, I did mention to the students that their personal details could either be filled in or if they wished, the questionnaire could be completed 'anonymously'. I here purposefully insert the entire questionnaire and later fill in the statistics on the mentioned document to show how the respondents fared on the various questions.

Attached is the blank questionnaire carrying thirty questions of various concerns.

****

CENTENARY HIGH SCHOOL

Surname and Name: _____

Religion:_____

Age: _____   Grade: _____   Male: :_____   Female:_____

1. Have you heard of premarital counselling before?   Yes _____   No_____

2. If yes, what does it entail? _____

3. How will you rate premarital counselling?   A must _____   Maybe_____
   No need_____

4. Do you feel that dating is important?   Yes_____   No_____
   Unsure_____

5. Who do you think should choose the partner?   Individual _____   Parents_____
   Friend _____

6. What characteristics would you look for when choosing?_____

7. Will you consider other people's advice?   Yes_____   No_____
   Unsure_____

8. Will you marry a person of another religion?   Yes_____   No_____
   Unsure_____

9. How will you rate finances?   Very important_____   Less important_____
   Average_____

10. Should spouses combine or keep their finances separately?   Combine_____
    Separately_____
    Whatever_____

11. How will you handle your wife earning more than you ? _____
_____

 12. How will you handle your unemployed husband? _____
_____

13. Would you consider sending your wife to work or rather stay at home? Work_____
   Stay home____
   Unsure_____

14. Will you consider family time a necessity? Yes_____   No____   Whatever_____

15. Is there a need for spouses to have their own time separately? Yes _____   No_____
    Unsure_____

16. Do you agree with sex before marriage? Yes_____   No____   Maybe_____

17. Should your partner have an aids test before marriage? Yes_____No_____
    Whatever_____

18. Is family planning important in marriage? Yes _____   No_____   Unsure_____

19. Who should handle the responsibility of child rearing? Mother _____   Father_____
    Both_____

20. Are you flexible to change? Yes_____   No_____   Unsure_____

21. What is a good age to consider marriage? _____years

22. Do you believe in trial marriage? Yes_____   No_____   Whatever_____
    Why?_____

23. What is your greatest fear as you think of marriage? _____
    _____

24. Which is a better option in marriage?   In community_____   Out of Community_____

25. Would you and your spouse live with your parents or on your own? Parents_____
    Own_____
    Why? _____
    _____

26. From your observation, what do you think are some of the major issues that create
    problems in marriage?
    _____

27. Are you looking forward to marriage? Yes _____   No_____   Unsure_____

28. Would you like to have premarital counselling? Yes_____   No_____
    Whatever_____

29. In what manner would you prefer premarital counselling to be conducted?
    Seminar/Workshop_____One on one basis_____   At School_____
    Counselling Centre_____

30. Did you find this survey interesting? Yes_____   No_____   Whatever_____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND CONTRIBUTION TOWARD THIS RESEARCH

****

4.2.3   QUANTIFIED QUESTIONNAIRE

Before commenting on the results of the analysis, I tallied the responses next to each question (especially those questions with direct answers) to give a vague idea as to how the survey was convened and thereafter I made the necessary comments. This assists one to view how 172 students fared in answering the following questions. For example, in the first question, 27 students affirmed that they heard something about premarital counselling before whilst 143 never heard of this subject. In question two, for those who heard of premarital counselling, I have inserted some of the most common phrases that they used to describe it. This was the method that I used to calculate my findings.

1. Have you heard of premarital counselling before?   Yes 27   No 143

2. If yes, what does it entail? (key words) Advice, Preparing for marriage, Taking an
                                Important step in life, etc.

3. How will you rate premarital counselling?   A must 57   Maybe 99
                                No need 11

4. Do you feel that dating is important? Yes 122   No 23   Unsure 26

5. Who do you think should choose the partner?   Individual 151   Parents 17
                                Friend 3

6. What characteristics would you look for when choosing? (key words)Caring, Honesty,
                                beauty, and kindness

7. Will you consider other people's advice?   Yes 86   No 47   Unsure 36

8. Will you marry a person of another religion? Yes 55   No 68   Unsure 45

9. How will you rate finances?   Very important 117   Less important 15
                        Average 36

10. Should spouses combine or keep their finances separately?   Combine 100
                                Separately 36
                                Whatever 30

11. How will you handle your wife earning more than you? (key words) Unhappy, Feel
                                bad, okay, Good.

12. How will you handle your unemployed husband? (key words) Send him out, respect,
                                encourage, and support him.

13. Would you consider sending your wife to work or rather stay at home?   Work 59

Stay home 35

Unsure 20

14. Will you consider family time a necessity?   Yes 168   No 0   Whatever 3

15. Is there a need for spouses to have their own time separately?   Yes 131   No 19

Unsure 19

16. Do you agree with sex before marriage?   Yes 29   No 110   Maybe 33

17. Should your partner have an aids test before marriage?   Yes 152   No 10

Whatever 10

18. Is family planning important in marriage?   Yes 152   No 9   Unsure 9

19. Who should handle the responsibility of child rearing?   Mother 5   Father 1

Both 165

20. Are you flexible to change?   Yes 81   No 42   Unsure 47

21. What is a good age to consider marriage? (Girls) 20-25yrs   (Boys) 23-27 years

22. Do you believe in trial marriage?   Yes 37   No 112   Whatever 18

Why? (key words) No commitment, irreligious, hurtful, survival, convenient,
and disrespectful.

23. What is your greatest fear as you think of marriage? (key words) Cheating, Abuse,
Change, Divorce

24. Which is a better option in marriage?   In community 121   Out of Community 45

25. Would you and your spouse live with your parents or on your own?   Parents 15

Own 155

Why? (key words) Independent, Privacy, In-laws, Relationship, Support, and Advice.

26. From your observation, what do you think are some of the major issues that create
problems in marriage? (key words) Unfaithfulness, no respect, abusive, habits,
finance, and wrong choices.

27. Are you looking forward to marriage?   Yes 77   No 35   Unsure 58

28. Would you like to have premarital counselling?   Yes 92   No 41

Whatever 37

29. In what manner would you prefer counselling to be conducted? Seminar/Workshop 11

One on one basis 57   At School 52   Counselling Centre 41

30. Did you find this survey interesting? Yes 153   No 5   Whatever 11

4.3   DATA INTERPRETATION

As I analyze the information and review the answers, I will go through each question and at certain times, combine a few of them, especially if they are closely related.

a) Knowledge of premarital counselling (questions 1-3)

An alarming 83% (143) of the respondents were absolutely ignorant about premarital counselling. The male respondents made up 47% of this alarming figure whilst the remaining 36% were females. This resurfaces the fact that whilst in their teens, girls generally grow faster than boys do and it is only later that the boys increase the momentum. Two students did not make any comments (1%). From the 16% (27) that did hear of premarital counselling, 11% (19) were girls and the balance of 5% (8) were boys.

Here are some of the comments from those who responded in the affirmative.

Premarital counselling is:

> ➢ To prepare you before you get married;
> ➢ To understand what married life is all about;
> ➢ Advice before getting into marriage;
> ➢ Information that will help you in the future;
> ➢ Help to avoid problems in the marriage;
> ➢ To prepare for something that is important;
> ➢ Knowledge of marriage;
> ➢ Pointers to help you get to know the person you're going to marry; and
> ➢ Advice to help marriages get through rough times when it does appear.

Considering that 83% (143) of this sample of High School students have never heard of premarital counselling before, one wonders how many of them will eventually have the opportunity of being enlightened before they marry. However, if they at least have an introductory message on this important subject matter before terminating their schooling career, it would make a difference in their future. Whilst conversing with one of the educators at the Centenary High School, he did mention that there is some time allocated for life skills. He suggested that introducing premarital counselling into it would tremendously enrich those students' lives in the future.

About 6% (11) of the total number of students mentioned that there is no need for premarital counselling whilst 91% (156) revealed that the possibility of undergoing premarital counselling is great. From the 11 students who were not interested in premarital counselling, 9 of them were boys. From a total of 81 girls that participated in the survey, 79 of them indicated that they are interested in premarital counselling. This reveals that girls, from an early age, tend to take marriage much more seriously than boys do.

b)   Choosing of partners (questions 4-6)

Generally, selection of partners occurs in the course of dating. I suppose that is what dating is all about. It deals in the sphere of who the individual seems most comfortable with and with whom they would want to spend the rest of their lives. However a date may not necessarily mean that you will marry the person whom you are seeing.

About 13% (23) of the respondents were negative toward the subject of dating. They were of the opinion that dating is something modern and should not be the trend. One of the students in the class shouted out to me, "God will send you the right partner without dating". Adding to those who were negative about dating, 15% (26) of the respondents were unsure about dating. From these 28% about 19% were girls who were not in favour of dating. On a casual approach with younger females, their concept of dating is that if a girl did go out with a boy then she should not think of going out until she is ready for marriage.

Yet, in the affirmative, 71% (122) students believed in the concept of dating. Two thirds of this figure pertains to males. It appears that males are more open to dating than females. Probably a lack of information in the light of dating has caused females and males to draw away from the subject. On the other hand, some have abused dating, causing it to lose its true meaning and essence. As I mentioned earlier, informing students about premarital counselling before they complete school will make a world of difference for their future.

Three categories were designated as to who should choose the partners: individual, parents, and friends. The bulk of the students being 88% (151) mentioned that the individual must choose his or her own life partner. Roughly 10% (17) of the students stated that their parents should choose their life partners for them. A verbal comment made as to why parents should choose a life partner was, "If their parents chose partners for them and they

are still in wedlock, then it is proper for our parents to choose our partners for us." This statement somehow does make sense and carries some weight with it. From the 172 students interviewed, only 3 girls mentioned that their friends should choose their partners for them.

In light of choosing a partner, the respondents mentioned various characteristics that one must consider. The comments of the males and females will be viewed separately to show what factors precipitated their choice.

> Some of the major characteristics that the females chose were:

Looks 35% (28);

Trustworthy 21% (17);

Respectful 60% (49);

Financially Secure 15% (12);

Caring/Kind Hearted 41% (33);

Understanding and Intelligent 17% (14);

Good Family Background 14% (11); and

Sense of Humour 7% (6).

FEMALES
Respectful
60%
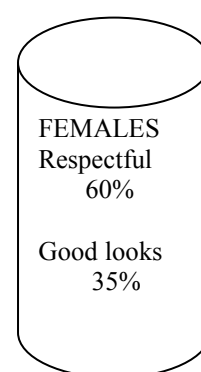
Good looks
35%

> Some of the major characteristics that the males chose were:

Good Looks 67% (61);

Trustworthy 22% (20);

Respectful 39% (35);

Financially Secure 9% (8);

Caring/Kind Hearted 23% (21);

Understanding and Intelligent 32% (29);

Good Family Background 1% (1); and

Sense of Humour 11% (10).

MALES
Good looks
67%

Respectful
39%
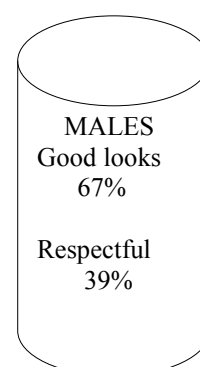
In comparison, both parties seem to have shown keen interest in the same characteristics but on a different scale. The male respondents as opposed to the females tended to place more emphasis on outward beauty than any other character trait. Speaking from a male perspective, beauty does somehow play a key factor when choosing a partner. As the saying goes, men are moved by what they see, although we are fully aware that beauty is only skin-deep.
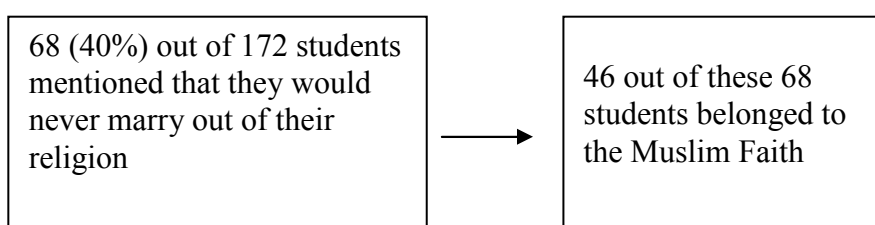
To the female respondents, looks (being handsome) took third place whilst 60% vouched for respect/good personality as the key factor in choosing a partner. This is proof enough that a female is moved not so much by what she sees but rather by how she will be treated. 41 also mentioned that they are drawn to males who are caring and kind hearted. To reciprocate in a similar manner, one must be treated respectfully. In the scope of understanding, it is noted that the males are looking forward to having partners who will be more understanding toward them. The girls as opposed to the boys have shown keen interest in the partner's family background. This is due to the female having to make greater adjustments than the male. It is the female who generally must learn the rigours of her spouse's family life. Therefore, the females (11) have shown a greater interest in the family background than the male (1). The male factors want their spouses to have a good sense of humour and be friendly toward them. Just two students of the Muslim faith, being girls, did mention that a person's spiritual life is important to take into consideration when looking for character traits.

c) Advice and religion (questions 7-8)

Over a year ago a young married couple came to me for counselling. After spending about three hours with them, they insisted on giving me an honorarium. The whole thinking was that anything you pay for, you treasure and anything you get for free, you take for granted. Now it is not always true that 'free advice' is cheap advice. It depends on what you do with the advice you receive. As I consider premarital counselling, I am of the idea that it is helpful advice that has the ability to keep you intact in marriage. Whatever advice people or family members may give concerning marriage, is something worth listening and paying attention to. On this basis, I decided to include in this questionnaire how these respondents would consider advice.

Exactly 50% (86) of the students confirmed that they are willing to accept the advice of others. It is wise to hear what people have to say and take the advice to make a difference in one's living. From these 86 pupils, 48 of them are girls. Twenty seven percent (47) of the respondents indicated that they would not take the advice of others. They seem set on hearing nothing from whomsoever. The remaining 21% (36) are unsure as to whether they should or should not take the advice of others. When it came to religion, fascinating findings surfaced. Around 32% (55) had no problem to marry someone of another religion. For this kind of an approach, the buzzword is 'tolerance'. Religious tolerance is

workable in this day and age but only to a certain extent. (It may also be an indirect indicator of how the students of this school experience members of other faiths in their school.) Most of the time, getting married with someone of another religion becomes a major issue once a child is born. The rites and the future of the child become the major issue of debate. Upfront, 40% (68) of the respondents were bold enough to say that they will never marry a person of another religion. From the 68 who mentioned that they would never marry into another religion, 40 of them were females and 28 were males. A further breakdown of the 40 females indicated that 26 were Muslims, 7 were Christians, and 7 were Hindus. A further breakdown of the 28 males indicated that 20 were Muslims, 4 were Christians, 3 were Hindus, and 1 was Zulu. From these statistics, we note that out of the 68 who were adamant to marry out of their religion, 46 were Muslims.

<table>
<tr><td>68 (40%) out of 172 students mentioned that they would never marry out of their religion</td><td>→</td><td>46 out of these 68 students belonged to the Muslim Faith</td></tr>
</table>

Deduction: A good reason is seen and given as to why Muslims seldom marry out of their religion. Their value system pertaining specifically to marriage is grounded.

The Muslim girls came up much stronger than the boys to state that marriage should only take place between people of the same religion. This is a good point to ponder on for further investigations. 26% percent (45) of the students were unsure when it came to the matter of religion. It is possible that they may settle for the yes or no, depending on their choice at that given time. Spirituality must become our focus as we contemplate marriage. It must not be taken light heartedly. Just as we consider the status of people, one's religious involvement is of paramount importance.

d) Issue of finances (questions 9-13)

The world in which we live in demands of to be thrifty with finances. Finances without a shadow of a doubt is a very important commodity. An average of 68% (117) are in agreement with this. More of the females are inclined to believe that finances are important when it comes to marriage. Nevertheless 21% (36) hold to the view that finances must be treated averagely. This means that it is not very important nor less

important. Approximately 9% (15) made up of seven girls and eight boys are of the opinion that finances are less important.

Now 58% (100) of the students are in agreement that once a couple marries, they should combine their belongings (finances) and practice the concept of becoming one, starting with their material goods. 31% percent are males and twenty seven percent are females and in agreement with combining their finances. On the other hand, 21% (36) decided against combining and would prefer to keep their monies separately and administer it accordingly as their needs arise. A fare share of males and females strongly accept this view of running their finances separately. Still 17% (30) of the respondents feel that either way (combined or separately) it will not alter the marriage in any way.

Dealing with finances, I was curious to find out how the male factors would cope if their spouses had to earn more than them. Below are some of their comments:
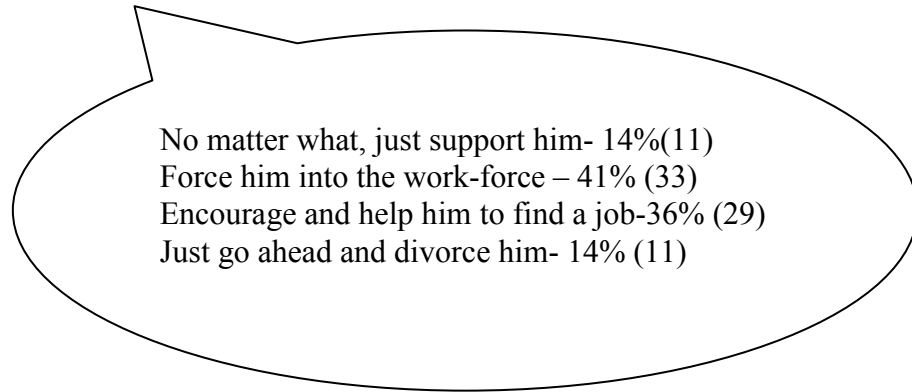
1. Good, as long as she contributes to the running expenses of the home- 15% (14)
2. No problem to accept, what counts is love and not money- 32% (29)
3. Feel embarrassed and unhappy about the situation- 21% (19)
4. Respect her but will be motivated to search for a better job- 23% (21)

Looking into history, it was the norm that the husband was the bread-winner and if his wife did work, she would never be able to match his salary. Today the situation is different because women have also spent time in studies and are now more highly paid than some of the men. In some family circles, this is not an issue at all. Yet, in other family circles, this seems to cause much dissension and grave disunity to the point of separation.

There are cases reported in Durban where men walk out of their families because their wives were earning more than they were by far. Some even go so far as to change jobs in order to earn more than the wife- often with disastrous consequences. Such competition may grow to such an extent that they may feel they had no other option but to go their separate ways. What a sad situation. What often follows is a move away from being a loving family to one where there is envy, jealousy, belittling, slander, lack of communication, and eventually divorce. A survey in this regard would probably broaden our knowledge for future reference.

After examining how the males felt if their spouses earned more than them, I posed a question to the females as to how they would cope if their husbands were unemployed, and this was the general reply:

Comments from our female respondents

No matter what, just support him- 14%(11)
Force him into the work-force – 41% (33)
Encourage and help him to find a job-36% (29)
Just go ahead and divorce him- 14% (11)

The first three points tend to be very reasonable and of a noble character. The 14% who are suggesting that they would care for their spouses seem to suggest this based on the hope that they would enjoy the benefits when their husbands do work. Forcing their husbands to work is more in the sphere of making sure that they do not become lazy and formulate a habit of sitting at home instead of being out in the work-force. To encourage and literally help them to find a job is very noble and gains much respect. As the saying goes, 'it takes two hands to clap', so is the support of spouses especially when one is going through a difficult patch like unemployment.

The reality of unemployment is rife in our community and surrounding areas. Commenting on the 14% who mentioned that the spouse must be barred out of their lives, this is harsh treatment. It seems as though the only reason the wife would latch onto her husband is for him to provide the finances for the operation of the home. The moment his resources are depleted or when he faces unemployment, he has no room in the home.

Due to the escalating costs of inflation, one salary in the home is just not enough. Therefore every other wife is stepping forward and heading toward the work place. This is done to compensate the shortfall and render assistance to her husband thereby making the home a liveable and peaceful place. From the male students, 43% (39) agreed that sending their spouses to work is in order. About 15 Muslim males and 14 Christian males made up the majority of the 39. On the other hand, 35% (32) of males are of the opinion that a

lady's place is most definitely at home. In this category 18 Muslims and 8 Hindus aired this strong view. 20% (18) of the male respondents are unsure whether the ladies should stay at home or go to work.

e) Time management (questions 14-15)

As we ponder on the present aspect of time, it would seem there is not enough hours in the day. Before we know it, the day is over. There is one reason for this; there is so much to be done in such a short space of time. With all the talk of hectic days, I am still convinced that time for the family is essential. Sometimes we are so busy with everything else that we tend to neglect our families. This eventually leads to a dysfunctional family.
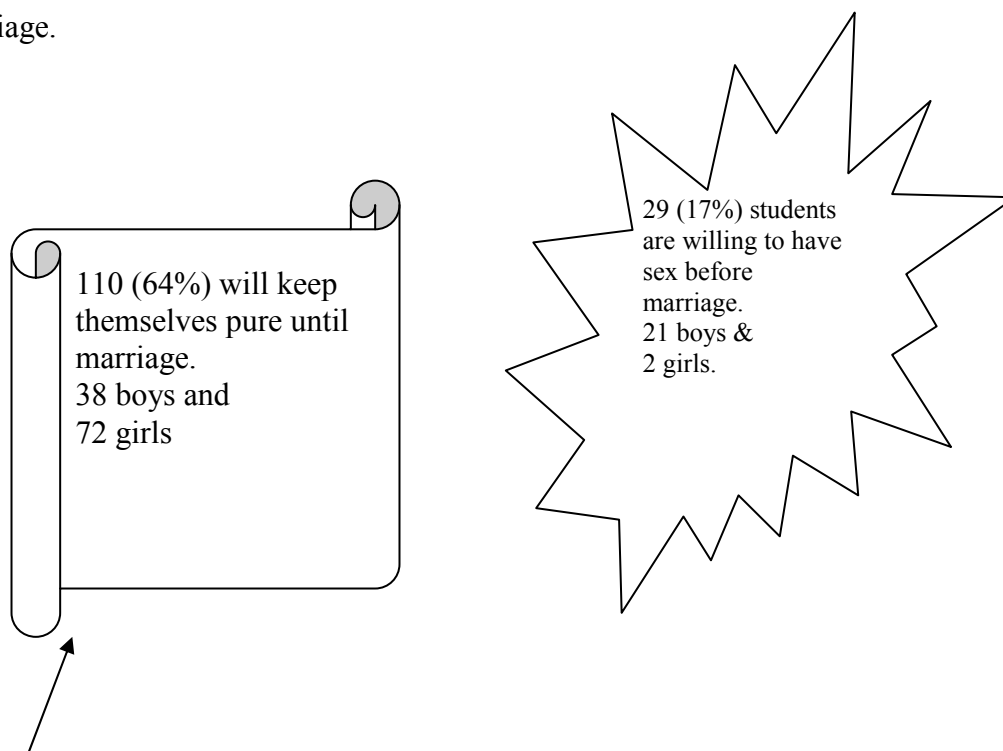
Apart from 2% being only 3 students, the remaining 168 (98%) have strongly recommended that family time be prioritised because it is of great importance. I am glad to observe such an overwhelming response from our scholars. A positive attitude like this will most definitely lead to healthy and united families.

With reference to time management, each individual in the family circle requires time to be alone. As we give a child his/her time to play in order to develop, so should spouses be allowed the opportunity to spend quality time on their own or in the company of their friends. All individuals need time to interact with others. Apart from 10 females, 71 of the female respondents were in agreement that spouses must be given the chance to have some time alone, away from family members. In total, 76% (131) pupils affirmed that time alone for spouses is wholesome. Only 11% (19) thought otherwise and another 11% (19) were unsure.

f) Matters of sex and HIV/Aids (questions 16-17)

Just reading the figures concerning some of the American schools is appalling. Almost 75% of the high school pupils in America lose their virginity before completing their schooling career. As late as Monday, 15 November 2004, the *Daily News* carried an article with the headlines reading, "School abortion shock". In giving you a little background to this article, one of the prominent Durban North High Schools forced a student to undergo an abortion without the consent of the parent in order to keep up the reputation of the school. This and other articles prove some of the learners in our local schools are promiscuous. In the questionnaire, I included this issue to identify where our students are

and how they would respond to sex before marriage. Twenty-nine of the respondents, making up 17% were truthful in stating that they are contemplating having sex before marriage. From this group, 27 were boys and only 2 were girls. Another 19% (33) mentioned that they are uncertain about whether they will engage in sex before marriage. Those that were doubtful were made up of 12 females and 21 males. It was encouraging to note that 64% (110) were firm to say that they would not consider sex before marriage. Seventy-two female and 38 male respondents preferred to keep themselves pure until marriage.

110 (64%) will keep themselves pure until marriage.
38 boys and
72 girls

29 (17%) students are willing to have sex before marriage.
21 boys &
2 girls.

This pledge is a stepping-stone to becoming faithful to the family and being loyal to their spouses. There is a possibility that those who have sex before marriage may also desire to have an affair after they marry. A closer study and more research on this topic may help young people in the future.

Taking into account the spread of HIV/Aids, it is alarming to note that this is a pandemic issue. It is true that you may never know whether your partner is HIV positive or not. The best way to combat doubt and have peace of mind is to carry out an HIV/Aids test. Yet, if we have individuals who are willing not to lose their virginity before they marry, then there will be a lesser need for an HIV/ Aids test to be done before marriage.

Owing to the great uncertainty that is prevalent, 88% (152) of the respondents feel strongly that their prospective spouses must have an HIV/Aids test. About 6% (10) are saying that

there is no need for their prospective spouses to have an HIV/Aids, and a further 6% (10) are not specifically interested if the test is done or not. Some respondents, who mentioned that there is no need for their prospective spouses to have an HIV/Aids, substantiate their view by saying that the element of trust is vital when considering marriage. To a certain extent there is merit concerning the issue of trust but to clear the air, it is always better to take the safe route and get your prospective spouse to undergo the HIV/Aids test.

g)   Child rearing (questions 18-19)

In the days of old, I often heard my mother and grandmother discuss the rearing of children. It was then, I accepted that the task of child rearing was left solely to the mother and the task of bringing in the finances was left solely to the father. Thus, mothers would have as many children as possible. For instance my father comes from a family that has eleven children. My granny never worked but bore children until she could have no more. Now, with the change in our society today, ladies are out in the work place and some men are at home. The roles seem to have somewhat switched to a certain extent.

The issue is not about having children but the number of children the couple can comfortably care for, based on the increases in inflation. There are some couples that choose not to have any children and there are those who say that one is more than enough. The simple concept that most couples often latch onto is that they must have a child and do their best in caring for them and providing all their needs. An exciting 88% (152) of the pupils agreed that family planning is very important in marriage. It is good to note that majority of the respondents have seen the hardships and present difficulties that families are undergoing thus, it had dawned on them not to add to the present predicaments. The balance of the students 20 (12%) were unsure whether they should engage in family planning once they are ready to marry.

96% of the students numbering 165 of them consented that both mother and father must be involved in child rearing. Just 4% (7) of the students thought otherwise with 5 stipulating that only mothers must rear children. For a child's healthy upbringing, he/she needs the mother's and the father's care, advice, love, and guidance. In order for balance to be obtained, a child needs both the parents to direct and lead him/her. I firmly agree with the 88% where both mother and father are called on to take the responsibility of rearing their children.

h)   Personal views on marriage (questions 20-26)

In this section we tabulate how individuals view change, marriageable age, considerations on trial marriage, and the greatest fears of marriage:

1. Changes in Marriage

    Marriage being a whole new life all on its own will most certainly require couples to adapt to change and be willing to help the situation. Having an attitude of willingness to change is a vital factor that will make marriage a life-long commitment. Today, owing to some couples being adamant about change, we have more corruption in marriages and more broken homes.

    On the questionnaire, I brought in the element of change to find out how these students would respond to change, when they face it in marriage. Without much hesitation, 54% (44) of the female interviewees surfaced their negativity toward change and some of them were unsure whether they would change for anything in marriage. A total of 46% (37) of the females did agree that they were flexible to change if the situation warranted it. As for the male interviewees, 52% (47) of them are also adamant to change and some of them are also not sure as to how they would respond when it comes to change. As for the male interviewees, 48% (44) of them are willing to accept change in marriage.

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    Females
    54%
    will not
    change
    ```

    ```
    Males
    52%
    will not
    change
    ```
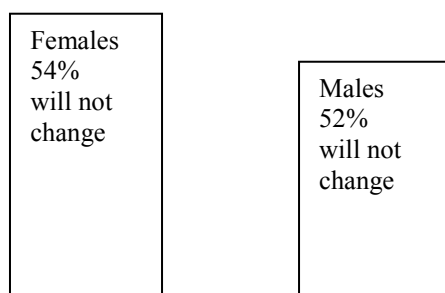
    Deduction: Equal rights of women are coming to the fore. Now women are taking a stand and they want to be heard.

    It would seem that out of the 172 respondents I have interviewed, 91 of them would most definitely face marital problems if they decide to go into marriage with their present attitude of 'no change' for me. Taking into account our present marital disputes, this is certainly an alarming figure to be concerned about. Very often people have a wrong understanding about change. They think that change is

inferior. However, it is not the weak who change but those who are willing to accommodate for others and create a friendly atmosphere in any spectrum of life, inclusive of marriage. The reality that we must face is that this is a society where everybody has their own rights and everybody does as they please. As much as this statement may hold true, marriage still operates most successfully when both parties are willing to accept change within the given parameters. An old saying goes as such, 'Marriage is a give and take situation'.

2. <u>Marriageable Age</u>

Child marriages in other countries, especially in India, are rife. There, children as young as 11 and 12 years of age are wedded. Then, considering our very own communities, one notices that teenage pregnancies are greatly on the increase. In the past years it was a norm, that teenagers completed their schooling career before considering marriage. To add to this, it was imperative that the male factor be employed. Now, anything seems to go.

Maturity, both physically and mentally, comes through age. In the light of marriage, there is a tendency to believe that those who marry at a young age, being immature, are most likely to undergo more problems than couples that are mature in age.

Majority of the female interviewees suggested the following ages for marriage, (next to the age is the number of girls who chose accordingly):

Age   Number-girls
- 20-   8;
- 21-   7;
- 22-   10;
- 23-   11;
- 24-   18; and
- 25-   15.

In the recent years, most females choose to complete their tertiary education before contemplating marriage. Thus, the average age that these females prefer to wed is

between the ages of 22 and 25. From the above-mentioned list, 67% of the female students, which make up about 54, are happy with this age for marriage.

The choice of marriageable ages that the majority of the male interviewees opted for were as follows (next to the age is the number of boys who chose accordingly):

	Age	Number-boys
➢	20-	7;
➢	21-	7;
➢	22-	9;
➢	23-	11;
➢	24-	6;
➢	25-	20;
➢	26-	8;
➢	27-	7; and
➢	30-	5.

The male respondents seem to suggest that the ages between 23 and 27 years are more suitable for marriage. Approximately 57% (52) have concurred. The others have gone as low as the age of 17 and as high as 45. Personally, I think that 17 years is way below and 45 years is way above. I am also of the view that men should marry around 23 and 27 years. By this time (23-27 years) they would have matured mentally and acquired permanent employment which makes a healthy start to a happy marriage..

3. Trial Marriage

The meaning of trial marriage is self-explanatory. It is something that you try and which, if you like it, you buy into it and if you do not, just walk away without any legal implications or explanations.

As much as this sounds so simple, it is not the way forward. Yet, one must admit that many couples are succumbing to trial marriage as the 'way out' from legal responsibilities. Only 21% (37) of the interviewees have yielded to the concept of trial marriage. These 37 respondents consist of 23 males and 14 females. Their reasons to accept trial marriage are listed.

a. To try the marriage and see if we are compatible;

b. To learn more about the other person;

c. To see if one can survive in the relationship;

d. Preparation for marriage;

e. Get to know the person before any legal proceedings; and

f. Using one's right to do as he/she pleases.

Twelve of the students alluded to the fact that trial marriage is good because it gives them time to learn more about their partners. Another four stated that trial marriage is introduced to get people ready for marriage. A further nine of them revealed that trial marriage is a test mechanism to see if they could survive in that particular relationship. Lastly, five students were of the opinion that if trial marriage does not work to one's favour, then one can walk out without any obligations.

A sum of 65% (112) affirmed that they are not in favour of trial marriages. 51 females and 53 males are saying no to trial marriages.

Here are some of their remarks:

a. Marry your partner legally because of love and no other reason;

b. Trial marriage is not allowed in our religion;

c. There is no commitment and no responsibility in trial marriage;

d. It is disrespectful and hurtful to parents;

e. It is not lasting;

f. It is unethical and therefore no sense in trying;

g. When a person marries, he/she ought to marry for life and not out of convenience;

h. It makes the individual feel used and leaves him/her with a scar for life;

i. Know the partner first and then get committed to marry; and

j. If the lady gets pregnant, it will cause her to be very unhappy.

24 interviewees stated that if you love somebody, then by all means, you should not try the marriage but go ahead and get legally married. Another 30 students mentioned that you should first get to know your partner well and then settle for a lifetime commitment. Further, 25 respondents remarked that trial marriage carries

no guarantee, therefore it is senseless to even try it and waste valuable time. More-over, 17 pupils were bold enough to state that trial marriage is not allowed in their religion. 13 of these students were from a Muslim background. It gladdens my heart to know that these individuals have religious convictions and are prepared to voice their opinions in matters of this nature. Just 10% (18) were unsure as to what they would do or how they would consider trial marriage. These comprised of 12 males and 6 females.

4. <u>Marriage Fears</u>

Almost everybody has a phobia for something in life. Some people, like myself, have a fear for cockroaches. It is something that has bugged me from the time I was a little child. Others just scare for dogs and no matter how harmless a dog may be, they would not enter a yard until the dog is chained or moved out of their sight. So too, married and unmarried individuals have a certain amount of fear when it comes to marriage. These interviewees had the opportunity to list down their fears in the sphere of marriage.

Next to each of them I will slot in the number of individuals who have the same fears:

a. Cheating- 62;
b. Divorce- 47;
c. Rearing children- 16;
d. Harsh treatment- 14;
e. In-law interference- 12;
f. No freedom- 12;
g. Marriage responsibilities- 11; and
h. Financial constraints- 10.
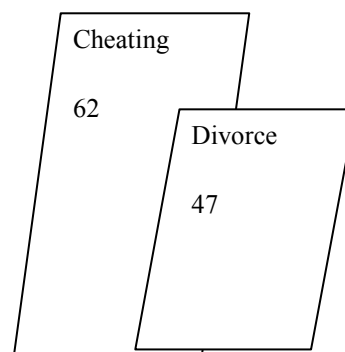
<u>Deduction:</u> Cheating and divorce work hand in hand with each other. These respondents mentioned that these (cheating and divorce) would be their greatest fears in marriage. These two points should be rightfully termed 'killers of marriage'.

Cheating falls under the matter of extramarital affairs. These students seem to worry most about their spouses initiating affairs after the marriage. The female respondents displayed more fear of their spouses cheating on them than the male respondents. Out of 62 students, 34 of them were females that make up almost 55% of the total. These 34 female students represent 42% of the female interviewees. As much as cheating hurts both male and female, it seems to me that females are much more devastated than men are if cheating is detected. From the remaining 62 respondents, 28 (45%) are males. These 28 respondents make up 31% of all male interviewees.

The second highest fear that was exhibited by the students was divorce. With the alarming rate of divorce that is riddling our society, more and more families are experiencing the devastation it (divorce) carries. The simplicity of getting a divorce adds to the present statistics. From the 47 pupils, 33 (70%) were females and 14 (30%) were males. Even under this category of divorce, which is similar to cheating, the female students have shown a far greater concern than the males. These 14 male respondents are only 15% of the total number of males who participated in the survey.

It was quite fascinating to examine how the statistics ranged between male and female in the light of rearing children. Only 4 females expressed their fear for child bearing and not for child rearing. As I consider this fear of child bearing amongst the 4 females, I suppose it is somehow only natural that they experience such emotions. The balance of the 12 males shed direct fear specifically on the rearing of children. Fatherhood is a great responsibility and increases as the children grow into adolescence.

Surprisingly, exactly 50% (7) males and 50% (7) females mentioned harsh treatment. Most of the time, males are blamed for serving harsh treatment towards their wives, but this time around, both genders express their fears alike. A few comments explaining the interviewees' understanding of harsh treatment centred on physical abuse, bickering, quarrelling, and unfair treatment.

We do not seem to hear much about in-law issues at present because most couples are living away from their parents' homes. However, this problem still exists. In this survey, only 7% (12) of the pupils mentioned that in-law issues are one of their greatest fears in marriage. In a way its exciting to note that if these pupils put parents in their right perspective, then they would not have unnecessary interference in their marriage. This 7% (12) comprised of 6 males and 6 females.

12 (7%) respondents fear that their freedom will be taken away from them when they do marry. There is a positive and a negative stance to freedom. Some couples believe, they have the liberty of being accountable to nobody else but themselves. Therefore they can do as they please, as long as the spouse approves of it. On the other hand, some partners when married may not be willing to accept such conditions. In that way, one's freedom will either be limited or diminished altogether.

Only the female interviewees brought up the subject matter concerning marriage responsibilities. The eleven females, making up 14% of all the female participants expressed their fear for the demands in marriage. They are not sure whether they would meet the expectations of marriage. One respondent mentioned that she was scared because she cannot cook. Marriage calls for a lifetime commitment and its demands are great sacrifice. Therefore it cannot be entered into light heartedly. Marriage is serious business.

Under marriage responsibilities, the females featured on top. In the scope of finances, 8 out of the 10 respondents were male factors. The aspect of finances is very important, as we have seen earlier in the survey. Just as a man is known to be the 'bread-winner' in the home, automatically males are to take on the financial responsibilities in marriage. Although a wife may render assistance financially, it is not her primary task to ensure that the bread and milk is ample at home. In the terrain of finances, some of the interviewees stated that if they were faced with unemployment, it would produce great difficulty especially in marriage.

5. <u>Marriage Contract</u>

The new rule for marriage officers is that we must not fill in the details as to whether the contracting parties are to be married in community of property or out. It is accepted that when we register couples, they automatically become married in community of property. If they wish otherwise, an Attorney must be consulted to make a legal marriage contract, as the spouses deem best. This change influenced me to ask these respondents to fill in their choices, whether they preferred to be married in community of property or out of community.

I first briefed the students on the meaning of both these terms and then asked them to fill in their responses. Here are the brief meanings of these terms.

a) To be married in community of property means that everything the couples acquire in marriage becomes jointly theirs. If for some reason they do decide to divorce, then they get 50% of everything they own.

b) To be married out of community of property means that whatever a spouse brings into the marriage and that which he or she amasses during the marriage remains separate and belong to each one accordingly. Simply stated, what is yours remains yours and doesn't become 'ours' at any time. If divorce strikes the marriage, then you only take that what you amassed during your marriage and you leave. The concept of fifty-percent shares does not apply here. (Additional clauses may however soften such a harsh look at this approach.)

Just over 70% (121) of the students were in agreement that the better marriage contract to settle for is, in community of property. From a total of 81 female respondents, 60 (74%) conceded that they would like to be married in community of property. From a total of 91 male respondents, 61 (67%) gave their consent in the similar line. The female voice in this issue is a bit more distinct than the male.

However 26% (45) have vouched for marriage out of community of property. 19 were females and 26 were males. Commenting first on the 19 females, making up 11% of the 26%, I see a group of people who are not willing to acquire anything from others but are willing to work hard to attain their own dreams. These

individuals want to safeguard their identity and be independent in this life. The same ought to be mentioned about these 26 males. Probably they want to safeguard their riches so that their spouses will not come into their lives and take away what they had worked hard for. Maybe their belief system of acquiring riches must be done individually.

6. Marriage Bonding

For marriages to bond well, it is important where couples live and with whom. In some cases, newly wed couples have no choice but to live at their parents' homes. In other situations, they choose from day one to live on their own and although they may struggle at first, they experience a wonderful bonding in marriage.

The majority of the interviewees, being 90% (155), settled to live on their own, when they do marry.

I have stated some of the reasons why these respondents will choose to live on their own instead of living with their parents:

- ➢ Do not want parents to tell them what to do. They want to run their own lives;
- ➢ Face their own problems so that their parents will not be hurt in the process;
- ➢ Prevents parents from chipping into their lives;
- ➢ To be independent and enjoy one's privacy;
- ➢ To have a better relationship with in-laws;
- ➢ To give their parents a break because they have done their fair share; and
- ➢ To enjoy the secret to less arguments.

An overwhelming 52% (89) of the students stated that living on their own will make them independent and allow them to enjoy their privacy. Others went further to say that living on your own takes away the pressures of life and give you the liberty to do as you please. Close to 26% (44) were convinced that living away from parents would prevent clashes with in-laws. As a matter of fact it would solidify the relationship between in-laws and spouses if married children lived away from them.

13 (8%) interviewees felt that when couples marry, they should live on their own and face their own troubles. If parents were roped into these troubles, it would be hurtful for them to see what their children are going through in marriage. To me, this is excellent from these 13 interviewees.

On the other hand, 9% (15) of the respondents firmly believed that wedded couples should live with parents. Here are some of their arguments for their case:

> ➢ Learn from their experience;
> ➢ As a beginner, you will need their qualified help;
> ➢ Cannot leave because of a deep attachment;
> ➢ They will assist in caring for the children;
> ➢ They are aged and in need of our assistance; and
> ➢ To receive one's inheritance/blessings.

As I view these arguments for couples to stay with their parents, most of them seem quite valid. It calls for one to ponder upon these important points and see its value in life. It is true; there are no better people to teach us about married life than our very own parents. Four students thought along these lines. Parents may not necessarily teach one everything but I suppose the basics for marriage is most essential.

Another respondent suggested that for the opening days of marriage, couples should stay with their parents, and a few months later, they should move out on their own. If couples stay and care for their parents, they in turn will reciprocate this love and render assistance to the family at large. In many instances, parents are left on their own and this sometimes de-motivates them to such an extent that they may give up on life. Although I am a strong believer that couples must live on their own when they marry, I also believe that parents must be treated well and respected for their input into our lives.

7. Marriage Issues

In marriage, conflict is inevitable. Individuals living together will always see things differently because each person sees the world through his or her own eyes. This is a reality and problems within marriage are an old issue. Hence, this

reasoning does not grant anyone permission to continue having disputes and dissensions in marriage. Every marriage has its happy and sad times. If we handle our problems maturely, we will be able to surpass many of our weaknesses and peak on our strengths. In that way, we will be open for correction and in-turn help each other to grow in the sphere of marriage.

I have catalogued the major issues that the interviewees have mentioned and which they believe instigates problems in many marriages:

      i)   Unfaithfulness- 57% (98);

      ii)   Financial matters- 32% (55);

      iii)   No trust- 24% (42);

      iv)   Abusive spouses- 23% (40);

      v)   In-law interference- 16% (28);

      vi)   Lack of communication- 15% (25); and

      vii)   Disobedient children- 8% (14).

From my observation, both male and female respondents had unfaithfulness as the number one problem in marriages. Out of the 57% (98), 33% (57) were made up of females and 24% (41) of males. In comparison with all (81) of the female interviewees, 70% (57) accepted that unfaithfulness brings disruption in marriage. From a comprehensive cover of the male interviewees' (91), 45% (41) agreed that unfaithfulness brings disruption in marriages.

Concerning financial matters, 31 of the male students as opposed to 24 female students were in agreement that this contributes to marital issues. I suppose a lack of budgeting and the mishandling of finances leads to unnecessary differences.

Dealing with the lack of trust, a very thin margin existed between males (11%- 19) and females (13%- 23). A lack of confidence in spouses leads to feelings of envy, jealousy, and eventually to distrust.

In the sphere of abusive spouses (23%), a larger percentage of females (16%- 27) than males (7%- 13) commented. The slant toward this comment is due to the fact that we hear more about women being abused than men. Some of the respondents

were not afraid to specify that abusive spouses are mainly those who consume alcohol and drugs.

As I stipulated earlier, in-law disputes, like other marital issues are age-old problems. Whether you like it or not, they are here to stay for many more years to come. 16% of the students included this as part of the reasons why marriages undergo strain and turmoil. In most of the cases, the daughters-in-law never seem to socialize well with the mothers-in-law and the same with sons-in-law and fathers-in-law. A survey in the future will be beneficial to help people understand what triggers this difference and how to make necessary changes.

Most of the time, a lack of communication between spouses, lead to altercations, rash decisions, and ultimately ugly endings. 15% (25) of the interviewees mentioned this point. Generally, when wives are hurt, they withdraw and prevent direct communication with their husbands and instead channel messages through their children. The reasons as to why this is done, is unknown but a closer examination into such happenings will be worth researching.

The manner in which children are reared can either contribute to a happy marriage or place a strain on marriage. For instance, if a father believes strongly that a child must be disciplined by spanking and if the mother believes that the child must only be grounded, there is immediate conflict of interest. Almost every time the child is disciplined, the spouses are bound to have a quarrel. Therefore, 8% (14) of the respondents were correct to include on their questionnaires that children sometimes contribute to marital problems.

i) Students' personal comments (questions 27-30)

At the conclusion of the questionnaire, I made enquiries as to whether the interviewees are looking forward to marriage, premarital counselling, and their thoughts on the survey.

From 172 pupils, only 77 (45%) were looking forward to marriage. At a closer range just 44 males and 33 females would consider marriage. The balance of the respondents (95 of them making up 55%) stated that they were unsure and from this group, 35 of them seemed negative toward marriage.

92 (53%) of the students seemed to show interest in the light of premarital counselling. 55 of them were females and 37 were males. 41 (24%) students were negative towards premarital counselling while 37 (22%) were undecided.

 Four options were given to the scholars as to where and how they would prefer premarital counselling to be conducted:

> ➤ The majority being 57 (33%) chose to have counselling done on a one to one basis. This in itself is proof that individuals love and enjoy their privacy. A total of 32 males and 25 females chose this style of counselling.

> ➤ Approximately 52 (30%) students vouched for premarital counselling to be done at school. A sum of 25 females and 27 males make up the total of 52 students.

> ➤ Just about 24% (41) of the interviewees showed interest for a counselling centre to be put in place. This group was made up of 22 female respondents and 19 male respondents.

> ➤ Only 11 (6%) students stated that they would prefer a seminar/workshop on premarital counselling. A further 6% (11) chose to remain silent on this issue of venue.

To an overwhelming 89% (153) of the respondents, the survey was exciting and profitable. Five (3%) of them did not find the survey interesting or challenging. Another 14 (8%) respondents were unsure whether the survey was interesting or not.

4.4   CONCLUSION

In empirical research, it is significant to gather community data and utilize the same information in order to identify gaps. Students from the Centenary High School were requested to give their time and air their views so that this research would be meaningful. These respondents were chosen from different walks of life and also from varying religious backgrounds. The survey, containing thirty questions each was distributed to 172 respondents. All of them completed the questionnaires as required.

A fair number of males and females were consulted to prevent any imbalances in the survey. It was glaring that the male respondents settled for beauty when choosing partners

whilst the female respondents chose care and respect as essential ingredients. As the saying goes, 'a man is moved by sight whilst a lady is moved by touch.' Considering changes in marriage, 54% of the female interviewees were negative to adapt to change whilst 46% of them were flexible to change if it was required. Fifty two percent of the male interviewees were adamant to adjust to change in marriage. The boys settled to marry a few years later than the girls. They were of the opinion that before they commit to marriage, they should have a stable job in order to have a healthy start to a happy marriage. Approximately 65% of the respondents were not in favour of trial marriage. Some were bold enough to state that their religion does not accept trial marriages. Yet 21 % were in agreement that trial marriage is fine. They saw it as a test mechanism before contemplating to marry for life.

The major fear that these students surfaced as they look forward to marriage is the aspect of extra marital affairs- to state it simply, 'unfaithfulness'. They were of the belief that this leads to most of the problems in marriage. An astounding 70% of the interviewees settled to marry in community of property. The remaining 30 % thought differently. They felt that spouses must work hard to attain their dreams and be independent individuals even in marriage. Eighty five percent of the respondents agreed that married couples must live away from their parents in order to maintain a healthy relationship with both families. Some of the other aspects discussed entailed religion, finances, promiscuity, and child rearing. Eighty nine percent of the interviewees, being 153 students out of 172, considered the survey profitable and exciting. They agreed that premarital counselling is needed before one contemplates marriage.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION (SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH)

5.0   INTRODUCTION

As the title indicates, this is my culminating chapter bringing closure to the dissertation on the subject of 'Premarital Counselling'. The meaning of conclusion from the *Oxford*

Pocket Dictionary (1990:148) suggests, "ending, judgement or opinion based on reasoning; settling or concluding; proposition in logic reached from previous ones." The purpose of this chapter is to gather all the material from my research and to present it in a summary form. At the tail-end of my research, I will make special comments suggesting my plans for future studies. Recommendations to other source materials will be highlighted. Each chapter will be summarized as follows:

1. Chapter One- Introduction to Premarital Counselling.
2. Chapter Two- Critical Scholarly Literature Survey.
3. Chapter Three- Different Counselling Approaches.
4. Chapter Four- Empirical Research.

5.1   SUMMARY OF EACH CHAPTER

5.1.1   CHAPTER ONE- RESEARCH DESIGN/INTRODUCTION

A minister of religion, including myself, ought to be part of the community and engage in useful community service. As exhibited in the Holy Bible (1997:83), especially in the Decalogue, communal living was imperative, so much so that it called for each person to love his neighbour just as he/she loves himself. Practically speaking, a neighbour comes to your rescue much faster than family members do. Each society has its own fibre of makeup and automatically, almost all the time, draws people of the same interest together. Amidst the various problems and challenges facing young people, stands the problem of teenage pregnancies which in-turn leads to immature parenting and frustrating marriages. Therefore I have decided to help those contemplating marriage and to inform some of the High School students about the importance of premarital counselling. With the consideration of the escalating divorce rate in our communities, I have dedicated my time and effort to help prepare our youth for marriage. Premarital counselling prepares couples in advance on what they should expect in marriage and how they should respond when conflicting issues crop up. It is designed to introduce people to various problem-solving methods and strategies to combat irrelevant problems in marriage. It also encourages couples to accept problems as challenges in life and to start confidently from the first day.

Premarital counselling in a nutshell is like presenting someone with a map when he/she is going to a foreign land. One cannot affirm that the traveller will never get lost but one can most certainly state that with the use of the map, it will be easier for the traveller to reach his/her destination. Although premarital counselling may seem so insignificant, the information given will definitely impact the lives of individuals along the pathway of marriage.

In this chapter, I have included an overview of the research I submitted for my Honours degree. Some of the issues that arise when couples devalue each other are: jealousy, depression, strife, distrust, bitterness. Premarital counselling provides a loving environment for the beginning of a marriage. To add to all the misery that apartheid had on our country in the past, counselling centres were not accessible to people of colour. Costs at these counselling centres were extremely high, thus making it difficult for 'non-whites' to enjoy theses services. In actual fact, the apartheid era was designed to benefit the Whites only. It was designed to stunt and restrict the Black peoples' prosperity. It truly belittled them and took away their dignity and rights as persons.

The four objectives that were used in this research are as follows:
1. To survey scholarly literature concerning issues in premarital counselling.
   Some of the subject matters that were reviewed were communication, finances, change, dating, engagement, mate selection, in-law adjustments, and cohabitation.
2. To review other disciplines of counselling and to show the worth of premarital counselling. For humanity at large to enjoy wholeness, different types of counselling, inclusive of premarital counselling is needed. Secular and Christian counselling were viewed separately to identify their contributions and see their validity in advancing relationships.
3. To involve the community in the research. One would recognize that in order for the community to benefit from the research, they must be consulted for data gathering and be made aware of the significance of a topic such as premarital counselling.
4. To summarize the research and come up with a plan of action. This objective deals directly with this very chapter of summarizing and then presenting a plan of action.

To stimulate the research further adding to the objectives as defined, fourteen key critical questions were posed and dealt with at length in the various chapters. These questions are vital for the research to become more meaningful and to find application in the community itself. Some of the key critical questions were based on the definition, the goals, the need, the techniques, and the significance of premarital counselling. Other questions discussed the types of literature available, the involvement of the community in research, other disciplines of counselling, and the manner in which the empirical research will be conducted.

5.1.2   CHAPTER TWO- CRITICAL SCHOLARLY LITERATURE SURVEY

In chapter two I turned my attention to the writings of various authors such as Alpaslan, Landis, Bell, Seidenberg, Husain, and Stewart. In addition, I have read widely, as is evident in my References.

Similar to most of the ministers of the Gospel, inclusive of Archbishop Desmond Tutu, I am of the opinion that premarital counselling is vital and it is a prerequisite for all those contemplating marriage. From the ten different statements of trying to define premarital counselling, I would say, it is in essence advice given to couples on circumstances they are bound to experience in their marriage sometimes or the other. Hence couples must bear in mind that premarital counselling will never be in vain. If conflict is inevitable in marriage, then premarital counselling is the ultimate contributor toward solutions even before the marriage is consummated.

Two most important reasons as to why couples prefer coming to a minister of religion for advice on premarital counselling are:

> ➢ This 'more emotional/ empathetic' atmosphere is key for couples to choose a minister of religion for advice.

> ➢ The cost of formal therapy is exuberant whereas a minister of religion never demands a set fee for any type of counselling.

Although this atmosphere is friendly and the costs are not exuberant, one must understand that this advice is often as good as going to a well-established therapist- especially from the

perspective of religion. Community work calls for the individual to be prioritised more than money or anything else.

The purpose for premarital counselling is aimed at equipping couples to bond in their marriage. It is put in place to combat marital unhappiness and prevent a marriage from break over trivial reasons. The design of premarital counselling is to enrich relationships. This is greatly needed in marriage as it acts as a facilitator to make necessary adjustments constructively. The goal of premarital counselling is to help the emotionally immature to grow up and not to submerge each person's individuality and freedom into a 'conformist' pattern. The understanding of each other's role images and role relations is the hub of premarital counselling.

Many reasons are known to motivate individuals into marriage. If couples marry just to please parents or family members, it could be detrimental and in due course end up in divorce. Since every other young person is marrying and leaving home, some may do so to follow suit. At other times couples plan to marry to get away from troublesome life-styles, either with parents or 'ex-friends'. Being sympathetic toward a partner may at times, force one into marriage and the aftermath may be devastating. Marriages that are rushed into are also very risky and shaky. An eternal glowing romance causes many couples to marry so they could enjoy the fantasy. Yet when the fun diminishes, then they realize that they have made a mistake about each other. These are some of the grave mistakes that couples make and to unreel from such deep commitments leaves individuals hurt, and sometimes suicidal. The ideal reason why people should contemplate marriage is the love factor that is prevalent in both the male and female. They reach the stage of marriage when they cannot live apart from each other any longer and have seriously made up their minds to be together, till death do them part.

Dating in the words of Bell (1967:82) serves recreational ends while at the same time provides the means through which a mutual commitment to marriage may arise. An important aspect of adolescence is dating which means a pair-relationship. Having a very broad outlook of dating, one realizes that it encourages engaging in behaviour of a pleasurable nature. Yet, its ultimate function is, a move toward a genuine commitment to another person.

Engagement brings finality to dating and acts as a stepping-stone to marriage. Although various pledges are given when individuals commit to getting married, engagements act as the most legal method for commitment to marriage. The engagement period is often seen as a final testing period prior to marriage. The final decision to marry or break up may occur at this time. The presence of continuous growing love, the prevalent spirit of team-work, acceptance of future in-laws, and an openness to issues of change are factors that must manifest during the engagement period. Marriage experts feel that six months to a year is a good engagement time frame before couples contemplate marriage. During the engagement, the level of maturity achieved by the marital partners is of crucial significance for the success of the marriage. Some of the lucrative components that may be exhibited during the engagement period are for couples to fulfil most of each other's needs, being conscious of each other in decision making, and having common interests. Robert Capece's comment is worth admiration for it is true that breaking an engagement is never easy but taking note of warning signs may save a relationship.

Innumerable authors, inclusive of Landis, are in agreement that dealing with a broken engagement is much easier and less serious than ending a marriage. There will certainly have to be a serious adjustment after the break, but it will not be nearly as great as readjustment after divorce. When working through a broken engagement one must learn to accept the happening, get rid of reminders such as love letters, and keep occupied with extra-curricula activities. It is always advisable to rejoin the crowd of "party goers" and after a while, never be scared of dating someone else and going on with your life.

Change must be a welcome ingredient to give couples the ability and the courage to get along comfortably in marriage. The presence of change ushers in an atmosphere of warmth and enables the individual to contribute with great grace and ease. Couples must be mature enough to digest the concept of change and thereby be willing to adjust for the good. One must realize that change, at first, is always uncomfortable but it is a reality that one cannot escape and the end result thereof is fine. Couples intending to marry must acknowledge that if the responsibility of change is shared, both will benefit greatly from it. On the other hand if only one partner is open to change, then over time, frustration is bound to set in and cause resentment. Harvey's understanding of change is quite fascinating because he mentioned that the engine of change is dissatisfaction with the present and the brakes of change is fear of the unknown/future. Although change is

essential, it must not be done haphazardly. One must ensure that each change made is firmly anchored before moving on to anything else.

Finance, no matter how unromantic it sounds, brings contention in marriage at some point or the other. When spouses handle funds immaturely, it can be detrimental to their future. One spouse may use money as an emotional weapon to control or punish the other. Another may have an unrealistic attitude toward the spending of finances, leaving nothing for a rainy day. Therefore financial prosperity is not about how much one earns but how one uses what he/she earns. In the light of finances, I must emphasize that many married couples begin with settling debts. In a sense, they start life on a wrong footing and some of them find it difficult to cope with this unwanted burden. The cause of this unforeseen debt is having an elaborate wedding, on credit.

Statistics in 1956 tell us that newly married couples in the United States owed a total of 26 billion dollars for the wedding expenses. Budgeting is of utmost importance as it makes them aware of the adjustments needed respectively. Insurance policies, vehicle allowance, rental, and sundry allowances are some of the important accounts needing attention when discussing finances. Having a right view on how to spend money and understanding the meaning of budgeting will tremendously help couples cope with financial obligations. A budget is a system that one implements in order to plan ahead and ultimately save what is possible for long term plans and goals, such as the purchase of a house, new furniture, and a car. Savings are put in place to meet known and unknown expenses.

Money can be saved through national savings, commercial banks, and building societies. National savings deal directly with the government guaranteeing every cent invested with them. Nobody has easy access to any account due to state security and secrecy. For years the banks have done a fine job of caring for the peoples' money and they will do so for the years to come. The longer one invests with the bank, the higher the interest. Building societies deal with arranging loans to purchase a home. I suppose that buying a home is about the largest purchase most couples will make in their lifetime. This is an opportunity that a couple must genuinely seek because nobody loses in purchasing a home.

At some time or the other, all of us must live on credit because our lives are built around it whether we acknowledge it or not. It is simply using a product or a service and paying for

it later. Before an individual can engage in credit, he/she must ensure that they will be able to budget for it on a monthly basis. In the same breath, it is not healthy to live on heavy credit. Different types of credit include hire purchase, overdraft facility, and the credit card system. The opinion of Griffith is that debt provides convenience, freedom, and flexibility. When it is used properly, debt can actually create wealth. I am in agreement that there is nothing wrong with pleasure spending as long as it is done modestly and moderately. There are three parts to a successful debt management plan: how much debt is affordable, a valid reason for your debt, and repayment of debt in an emergency.

In considering the various aspects of love in marriage, it is believed that one third of all marriages end in divorce within ten years. In addition to this alarming statistics, no one knows how many other couples live together in broken homes for the sake of their children only, already having undergone "emotional divorces." Lots of couples are preoccupied with the idea of romantic love where ageing is not relevant and couples live carefree and happy lives with no problems whatsoever. What a make belief world. Romantic love is really an illusion and to describe it further, it is a fantasy. Apart from romantic love, some are faced with the ideology of 'soul mate', where only one person in this whole wide world exists just for you. This is a very debatable factor taking into account our alarming divorce rates and remarriages. Many young people may say they do not believe in this concept but their actions prove otherwise. They constantly use the saying; "I am waiting for the right one."

Love at first sight seems to be bombarding youngsters. The principle factor being, when one meets somebody for the first time there will be a force that will allow them to connect with each and leave them spell-bound. This or a similar experience is captioned as 'love at first sight.'

The courting period is set in motion when a distinct individual emerges from among the dating partners. This individual captures ones' attention and seems most outstanding when compared with the others. These emotional feelings could be interpreted as love but are more likely to be strong feelings of sexual desire, fear of loneliness, or hunger for approval. In this courting game more often than once, the real person is at the background and what one thinks he/she should be, comes to the fore. Three selves normally emerge in this courting game. The first self is who the real person is, the second self is who he/she

would like to be, and the third self is the kind of person one's partner expects the other to be. Most of the time, the real you (the first self) only show up later in marriage when problems begin, or may never show up at all. The sooner your partner gets to know the real you the better the chances of adjustment in that relationship.

Expectations in marriage are at times so high that when it is not achieved, it leads to great disappointments. The general male frustration in marriage is that the woman is less responsive to sex. The general female frustration is that the man is less romantic than she is. Thus, their mutual feelings of frustration lead to other feelings of disillusionment. It is this shortfall between what they experience and what they expect that cause many couples to feel their marriage is unsuccessful. It is an established fact that every individual brings images of themselves and images of the person they want to love into their relationships. Each marriage will have its own strong points and shortcomings. There is no norm in marriage, because all couples cannot behave in the same manner and do the same things in marriage. We are individuals with unique personalities, ideas, and thoughts. No two persons are the same; therefore we all have different expectations in marriage.

One of the important components expected in marriage is the arena of sexuality. Sexual intercourse deals with both a psychological and spiritual union. A good understanding of it is of utmost importance. Therefore a mutually satisfying and responsive experience of sexual intercourse can be one of life's peak moments. It must be enjoyed as a sacramental means of expressing the deepest communion between the couple. Having its own language, the act of sex is the most intimate of all human relationships. On the very same note, one must realize that the very power of the sex drive makes it a viciously effective weapon, either to punish or usurp control over the spouse. A familiar abuse of sex is withholding one's favour in order to gain a material objective or to control a spouse's behaviour. On the other hand, enjoyment of sex calls for tenderness and an affectionate affirmation in the limelight of foreplay. Therefore each spouse is to explore ways of giving and receiving bodily pleasure through sensory experiences. In respecting the arena of sex one must realize that the act itself is not to be done out of duty but as a free giving and receiving of pleasure and affection.

In the past, the selection of a mate was left to the parents and amazingly, those marriages stood the test of time. These days, couples choose their own partners and statistics reveals

that divorce is on the rise. To date, no individual makes up his/her mind alone in selecting a mate. Either people or factors (social or personal) contribute to this selection. Social restrictions deal with family background and financial status, whilst personal restrictions deal with meeting one's ego needs and the individual's satisfaction.

In mate selection, there is a combination of emotional and rational factors:

> ➢ Personality differences- This will always be present because we are made uniquely.
> ➢ Religious differences- At one time, religion was a major issue when it came to marriage. At that time individuals would break up because they were of different religious background. In our time people are more tolerable with different religions.
> ➢ Race differences- Just as people are tolerating religion, so it is with the race issue. When reading the wise words of Alpaslan, one must accept that marrying somebody of the same race is regarded as one of the strongest homogeneous factors in mate selection.
> ➢ Age differences- The norm is to marry within the same age range, whilst the extreme is still prevalent where the elderly marry the young, mainly for companionship.
> ➢ Height factor- Generally women prefer to marry men who are taller than them and vice -versa.
> ➢ Physical appearance- Sometimes, physical beauty plays an important role in mate selection.

The adjustment period is a very crucial time in marriage. Often, a lack of adjustment in the first year of marriage tends to cause couples to throw in the towel and add to the present divorce statistics. Couples must be encouraged to discuss their differences and difficulties and come to an amicable understanding. During the adjustment period, couples must identify their problems and immediately work on solutions.

To resolve problems, the source must be identified and addressed. At first it may seem logical not to talk about issues but later it may be the root cause to the lack of communication. In the adjustment period it is essential to have an open line of communication, instead of carrying the baggage along and being unhappy. Adjusting to

in-laws has been a life-long problem and will be around for generations to come. Very rarely will we find couples that have had no fall-outs with in-laws. The best way to adjust to in-laws is to accept the reality that when couples marry, they automatically marry into the bigger family.

The only person to help with in-laws is the spouse who comes from that family. For instance, if spouse A goes to visit her families, then she must make certain that her husband is as comfortable as possible. If spouse B goes to his families, he must make sure that his wife is as comfortable as possible. This entails keeping the air clear of debates and uneasy situations. On the other hand, in-laws also have a part to play by being sensitive and know where to draw the line. They must not be overbearing in their children's marriage. Breathing space must be given to the newly wedded couple.

Communication is vital for a relationship to mature and gain strength over a span of time. Effective communication enriches the partners and eventually leads them to a fulfilled marriage. Verbal communication deals with sounds whereas non-verbal communication deals with body language. Two very important elements involved in the communication process are the speaker (initiator of the communication) and the receiver (recipient of the communication). Each conversation takes on a different form of communication namely the sociable, authoritative, searching, and the centred style. Numerous factors contribute to either poor or effective communication. Generally for effective communication, nothing is better than having a pleasant tone of voice, considering the needs of the hearer, and having a clear line of thought. Poor communication results when the speaker is less concerned about the hearer's needs. I am a strong believer that eye and facial contact is needed for effective and productive communication.

Conflict in marriage is inevitable. With the very same breath, one must understand that our modern times have contributed to more conflicts than what was an accepted happening in the past years. This shift has influenced changes in societal expectations as well as in individual development and goals. Self-fulfilment has superseded all other traditional concerns and responsibilities. Various factors subscribe to conflict in marriage such as desires, values, differences in beliefs, interests, expectations, and varying degrees of competitiveness.

Cohabitation as opposed to marriage is seen as an informal contract. Almost everything that transpires in marriage is experienced in cohabitation. On the other hand, the most important element, the legal procedure is omitted. From my observation, cohabitation grants consent to the partners to come and go as they please. Although cohabitation is ranked in line with marriage, its disadvantages are copious. A cohabitee, unlike a spouse, has not as much legal rights to maintenance and no right to a home by virtue of the relationship alone.

5.1.3 CHAPTER THREE- DIFFERENT COUNSELLING APPROACHES

Counselling of all kinds carries a therapeutic work that words cannot explain. It reaches different strata of life to make a person whole- in every sense, wholesome. A counsellor is educated and trained to convey information to an individual with the hope of bringing enlightenment to the counselee. Premarital counselling unlike other spheres of counselling is not administered when one encounters problems but rather prepares individuals to combat problems before they arise. To describe this type of counselling, I would say, it is like giving someone a few solutions before they meet issues that are most definitely sure to follow.

Diverse techniques of counselling are utilized to make the counselee as comfortable as possible. For the counsellor, establishing a good relationship with clients is fundamental. He/she must let the clients know that they have their undivided attention and utmost respect. The environment must be warm and loving so that the client feels at ease and speaks freely. Great confidence is won when the counselee observes that the counsellor is caring and interested in his/her well-being. This enthuses them to be bold and continue deeper in conversation. At certain intervals the counsellor must reward the counselee through body language, like a facial expression or the nodding of the head. Whilst the client is conversing, the counsellor must not judge or condemn him/her, no matter how wrong the comment may sound. The point must be noted and only later in the session or probably at the next session, should the counselee be informed and corrected. If for some reason the counsellor feels that he is incapable of rendering the necessary assistance to his/her client, he/she must not hesitate to refer the counselee to another counsellor who has the necessary expertise.

In the counselling process two positions must be put in place, the counsellor acquires the position of a teacher and the counselee takes the seat of the student. The counsellor helps the counselee to understand and accept himself. He also unveils appropriate behaviour for greater satisfaction in the learner's life. Counsellors have an obligation to assist their clients in making the best choices so that they could look forward to a meaningful future. In the counselling process, information must be collected and diagnosed. The process of diagnosis helps to identify the specific problem on hand and discover the causes of the problem. Thereafter a step further is counselling, whereby the counsellor assists the counselee to achieve optimum adjustment.

Just as all other disciplines have reasons for existence, counselling has a variety of goals. Counselling moves the client into the domain of substituting rational attitudes for irrational ones. It helps the client to clarify issues and explore alternative approaches to their problems. By means of counselling, counselees are moved to a higher and better plain in order to reach wholeness. It is also incumbent on the counsellor to make the counselee feel as warm as possible so that he/she may call again for more assistance. The counsellor must have a correct estimate of his/her client's world. The goal of counselling is to bring the client to a place where he/she acknowledges that they are in need of help and then accept the assistance rendered to them.

In 1879 Wilhelm Wundt established the discipline of psychology. In simple terms it deals with the study of the mind. The first general psychology textbook entitled, *The Principles of Psychology* was written in 1890 by William James. Later, Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis, emphasizing one's early childhood experiences, powerfully influenced many psychologists. The cognitive approach that is increasingly popular takes into account one's thought processes, feelings, memory, and a few aspects of consciousness. Through the scientific method, ideas are tested and those that prove unworthy are discarded. For validity of the scientific method, different research approaches are used. Careful observation of human behaviour is noted and if there is much repetition, a conclusive scientific finding is recorded. Other approaches that are followed closely are case studies and experiments. Certain factors in psychological research must be carefully controlled.

Secular counselling deals with numerous schools of thought such as psychoanalysis, transactional analysis, behaviour modification, client-centered therapy, and reality therapy. Psychoanalysis brings to the fore aspects related to the unconscious mind. The patient is required to lie on a couch in a very relaxed mood and then the therapist probes into the subconscious part of his/her mind. At other times, dreams may be analysed or hypnosis may be administered to extract information from the unconscious mind.

Behaviour therapy enforces change in overt behaviour. At times aversion therapy (use of mild shock) is administered to change the behavioural pattern of an alcoholic. In contracting, the counsellor and the client jointly agree on the plan of action that will be embarked on during the process. Client-centered therapy is modelled to unearth qualities that are within individuals. It is believed that every person, including the clients, possess the potential of personal growth, health and adjustment. This is termed self-actualisation and it helps to boost clients who have a low self-esteem. The single most important social need for humanity is a cry for identity, thus reality therapy responds to reality. It helps the counselee to respond responsibly by laying aside the past happenings and making the best of the present. Reality therapy extends a friendly hand to the client by allowing him/her to move out of the failure identity and look forward to a successful future.

In Christian counselling as opposed to secular counselling, the Holy Bible is the absolute standard. In order to overcome human problems, a client's will power is needed together with the assistance of the Holy Spirit. Acknowledging the past is very significant in order to probe into the future. The Christian counsellor listens carefully to the counselee, assistance is given to gain insight, and the counsellor helps the counselee to work out a plan of action. True friendship is built when one person listens to another and shows genuine concern. After much deliberation and support from the counsellor, the counselee gains insight and views the nature of his/her problem. The principle used is that once the client understands why things went wrong; he/she would automatically experience a changed response toward the issue on hand.

In formulating a plan of action, the counselee with the assistance of the counsellor should draw up a detailed exercise program and carry it out systematically. Different facets of Christian counselling are inclusive of supportive care and crisis care counselling. In crisis ministry the pastor is called upon to play the role of one who brings hope to the destitute

and disappointed family. In like manner, he renders assistance to the ailing and aching. In crisis counselling, one may meet with developmental crises or accidental crises. Developmental crises are normal and natural, while accidental crises occur at any stage in life and it may be precipitated by unexpected losses.

5.1.4   CHAPTER FOUR- EMPIRICAL RESEARCH   I

One hundred and seventy two students from the Centenary High School were consulted for this research. A good spread of males (53%) and females (47%) were contacted. Students from the three major religions (Muslims, Hindus, and Christians) were involved in this survey. A questionnaire comprising of thirty questions were circulated to all the students.

Eighty three percent (143) of the students were ignorant concerning premarital counselling. Majority of the students (71%) believed in the concept of dating with two thirds of this figure pertaining to males. The remaining 29% apart from being unsure of dating were of the opinion that it was from the Western context and it should not be accepted in our context. When choosing a partner, most of the female respondents agreed that having respect and a caring nature is most certainly essential. It must be observed in one's partner. The male respondents on the other hand believed that in choosing a partner, beauty (good looks) and respect is essential.

On the notion that advice is free, depending on what you do with it, only 86 out of the 172 students affirmed that they are open to accept the advice of others. If advice has a positive influence, it should be utilized and if it has no meaning, simply discarded.

From my findings on religious tolerance, 32% indicated that they would have no problem to marry people from another religion. Adding to this percentage, 26% of the interviewees were unsure about the issue. Without hesitation, 40% (68) mentioned that they would never marry out of their religion.

Taking into account the spread of AIDS, 64% (110) of the students were determined to keep themselves pure (no sex) until marriage.   72 female respondents and 38 male respondents settled for this option.   Astoundingly, 36% of the interviewees are

contemplating to lose their virginity before marriage. In total, 88% (152) agree that their partners should have an HIV/Aids test before marriage.

A sum of 65% (112) affirmed that they were not in favour of trial marriages. Their comments were noteworthy and highly recommended. Some mentioned that trial marriage was not tolerated in their religious belief, disrespectful to their parents, and can cause a scar for life. Others felt that it would usher in unhappiness, illegal pregnancy, irresponsible behaviour, and no assurance to lasting value. It is a good perspective to know that these students have religious convictions and are not easily swayed by secularising patterns.

Issues of major concern in marriage ranged from unfaithfulness to having disobedient children. Just as we all have fears for numerous things in life, marriage carries its own. Due to extra marital affairs being rife in our community, this issue has soared with the greatest concern by these students. They mentioned that unfaithfulness is the leading factor when it comes to divorce. Next in line was finance. Thirty two percent (55) of the respondents stated that a lack of budgeting and the mishandling of finances contributed to marital conflict.

At the conclusion of the research, 53% (92) of the respondents were looking forward to premarital counselling. 22% (37) were undecided whilst 24% (41) were adamant about premarital counselling. Eventually 89% (153) of the students found the survey informative and interesting.

5.2   CONCLUDING REMARKS

It is my intention that this model be employed to assist couples prior to marriage in order for them to prepare for a happy marriage and family life. This will keep them informed and updated on how they should react and what they should do when crises arise. In South Africa alone, one out of every four women face abuse daily and this statistic is alarming and painfully hurting. Something has gone drastically wrong. This is partly due to marriages being consummated irreverently, and in-turn taken light heartedly. These increasing statistics calls for one to look carefully at today's teenagers and find out whether they will increase or deflate the present statistics. The need for premarital counselling is immense and it ought to be convened fervently and must be taken seriously. I believe that

while we have the opportunity of making a difference in our society through premarital counselling, we should most certainly take the advantage.

My ambition is to continue with research and liaise with community leaders of different religions. As stated in my findings, people are very comfortable with religious leaders and are willing to give a hearing to important matters such as premarital counselling. The more I dwell on the discipline of premarital counselling, I believe it is imperative for the leaders of all religions to observe the need for premarital counselling in our community and implement the necessary actions.

The findings from the work I have researched thus far, brings to mind that a lack of understanding exists between in-laws. Somehow, there does seem to exist a healthier relationship between sons-in-law and mothers-in-law than with daughters-in-law and mothers-in-law. My intention is to do more research concerning this problematic area, thereby equipping myself to understand the root causes and devise a strategy to educate those contemplating marriage.

Through the medium of this empirical research, it is noted that most teenagers are sceptical about marriage. One of their greatest fears mentioned in my research was, spouses engaging in extra-marital affairs. This is a sad situation therefore I would regard it as an honour to help change this trend of thought by liaising with married and divorced couples to find out what caused them to start an affair or may cause them to do this. After gathering the data, I would use it in my premarital counselling to enlighten future couples and suggest ways to prevent such happenings.

In addition, and to place this future research in a more continental setting, I also intend to research the existing premarital counselling systems in the so-called mainline churches. This will then be compared with recent and current premarital counselling systems internationally. The intention with this approach will be to see whether relevant criticisms can be laid at the door of existing systems, and whether one can bring together a model which may constructively impact on the existing systems.

After all the work I have done, both in my Honours and in this Master's dissertation, I am still convinced that premarital counselling is a must for every couple considering marriage.

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Benjamin corrections

Literature review in the area of counseling XXXX
Analysis and development of quotations …
Academic style of writing …
Indentation of long quotations …
Academic referencing style …
Inclusion of all references in bibliography XXXX
Expansion of central chapter …
English editing …

Satisfaction of supervisor and HoS