

The practice and challenges of counseling in Protestant Christian marriage: The Case of
JimmaJiren and Middle Town Kalehiwot Churches

By

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Declaration

This is to certify that the research thesis prepared by Berhanu Godu, entitled to investigate the role of Counseling in Christian marriage: The Case of Two Selected Churches Jiren and Middle town Kalehiwot and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Social Work fulfills with the regulation of the University and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

BCOL-Biblical Counseling On-Line

FGD- Focus Group Discussion

IDI- In Depth Interview

KHC- Kale-Hiwot Church

KI - Key Informants

NIV- New International Version

Abstract

One of the main foundations of community is marital issue. Because marriage is the base for society. The main objective of the study is to explore the practice and challenges of counseling in Protestant Christian marriage in Jimma town two Kalehiwot Churches, namely Jimma Jiren and Middle town KHC. For the study, qualitative research method was applied. In-depth interview with selected thirty individuals and focus group discussion with two groups (each had six participants) were conducted. Moreover, five key informants' interviews were also carried out. This study used non probability sampling technique as a major sampling method and purposive sampling technique were employed to select participants. Data were collected by in-depth interview and FGD. The qualitative data was analyzed by organizing data in some meaningful form. Ethically since the issue under the study was very critical necessary care was taken to protect confidentiality of the information. The findings of this research reveal that, the practice of marriage therapies were like guidance, advice, and Biblical teaching. The Biblical counseling is giving attention to marriages which are disadvantaged and to restore them for better and changed lives. The main finding of the study show that there was an absence of formal professional way of counseling, lack of skilled or educated counselor whom trained in theology and absence of secured office for marital counseling. Formal professional counseling, counselors whom trained marriage counseling course in theology and secured offices will be recommended.

Key words: Practices, Challenges, Counseling, Marriage, Christian, Protestant

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1. Back Ground of the Study

A survey of Christian counseling material shows that much of the available marital counsel does not address becoming “one flesh”, but rather focuses on surface level matters such as conflict resolution, attaining happiness, communication, and such. These are all very relevant and helpful in attaining marital oneness, but focusing on these issues without starting at the root can be equated to putting the cart before the horse(Colin, 2014).

Marriage is the lifelong union of a man and woman, in a mutually committed and exclusive relationship, covenanted before God, for the purpose of mutual friendship and support and to possibly raise children, and this relationship is ideally to be broken only by death itself. Counseling is important for married couple or pre- marriage in aiding them to become absolute oneness. Meaning they are one no more two here after. Biblical oneness is most effectively forged within marriage when couples understand and are committed to God’s vision for the union and are together growing in the knowledge and grace of their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ(Colin, 2014)

The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of the people.

The number of people seeking helps for troubled marriages far out numbers those seeking for their marital problems. When people seeking counseling from their pastor, most frequently it is

concerning marital problems. Most Christians value marriage, God approves of the permanence of the marriage. God hates the pain and brokenness that oozes from divorce (Worthington, 2015).

Counseling skill is also very helpful and important if it is with cultural and religious context of some area. In counseling skill, one has to be not only a good communicator, but also a good listener to his or her clients. Basic counseling skills, also requires an analysis of what makes an effective communicator. This includes attention giving, observing, careful listening and responding (Aldridge & Rigby, 2004).

The development of improved communication practices helps a marriage adapt to changing conditions including those encountered at midlife. Of course, a couple's satisfaction at midlife is only partly determined by current events and interactions. It is also a product of roles that the partners have embraced or rejected, adaptation to changing social norms (Relley, 2009).

In marital couples there are numerous and severe problems which created in their lives. Thus marriage Counseling has a great challenges to support those marriages to become one flesh and continue their lives in peace.

According to Hook and Worthington (2009), Christian couple counselors should be highly religious, because their religiosity affects their attitude toward incorporating religion in counseling. There were difference between professional, pastoral and lay counselors, suggesting that each be treated separately rather than be lumped generically as Christian couple counseling. Marriage Counseling was unresolved problem for the many past decades. Now it is a time to get awareness for the social workers to awake and strives their effort and brings change for the community they are living in (Pretorius & Van As, 2003).

Christian counseling is based on biblical principles. Christian marriage counselors seek to recognize, understand and find solution to challenges that some people face in their marriages. The basic effect of counseling on marriages is the restoration of peace in the lives of individuals and their homes. When the members of the home front are not at war with each other, our nation progresses. This is so because the nation is made up of people from different homes. The peace in homes is the peace in the nations. When parents fail, their homes are destroyed. If there are vulnerable children, these grow up to create more problems for the society. However, wise parents seek counseling. Effective counseling fights the devil off (Aririguzoh, 2020).

In Jimma area KHC Christian Marriage Counseling was introduced since June, 1989 after the Churches restoration from Derg persecution. Few married and pre married couples were getting advice and guidance from Church leaders and pastors (JimmaJiren KHC office, 2020). So this study mainly focuses on identifying the practice of marriage counseling, role of counseling and the major challenges in those Churches and come up with better findings that shows the effectiveness.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

African communities continue to face many challenges that will positively and negatively impact on relationships, including marriage. In traditional African society divorce was not a common occurrence because of the cultural practices, like wife inheritance and that cemented relationships and promoted the institution of marriage. As societies continue to adjust to the new world order that has been brought about by globalization, it is also imperative that institutions like marriage will be affected. According to Sodi (2014), relationship difficulties, for which counseling may be required is often present in marriages. For instance, as cited in Gichinga (2005) at Sodi (2014), identified the following challenges faced by married couples that could

result in the need for Counseling; communication, abuse, (physical,emotional), parenting challenges, trauma(chronic and thermal illness), alcoholand substance abuse, financial deficiency, childlessness; family and sexual dysfunction(Sodi et al, 2014).

Studies in Africa show that about 45% of the family institution to day is struggling to survive. Husbands and wives frequently undergo relationships. To complement, the researchers observed that in Zimbabwe, in the place of Domboshava area has high figures of divorced couples. The majority of them are coming from Christian background. The majority problem that has repeatedly kindness from the beginning is disagreements (John, 2017).

Any couple struggling in their marriage should seek counseling sooner rather than later. Every marriage includes bumps and turns that if not handled correctly can create chasms too wide to bridge. Often, either from pride or shame, a couple does not seek help with issues early enough to save the marriage. They wait until so much damage has been inflicted that the marriage is already dead and the counselor has little to work with. *"Where there is no guidance, a people falls, but in an abundance of counselors there is safety. When we face battles too great to wage alone, wise people seek wise counsel*(Ministry, 2020).

One of the articles written by Kelvin Mutter,(2013) indicated that, Pastoral and Christian Responses to marital problems have matured as the knowledge base informing the practice of marital therapy has matured. Whereas earlier efforts could best be described as attempts to help couples cope, today's practitioners have at their disposal methods of intervention which have the potential of fostering healing with the marital relationship. As we look to the future the challenge will be to engage the disciplines of empirical research and rigorous theological reflection so as to provide Clients and the Church the best of what is available.

Research carried out here in Ethiopia in Oromo community showed as, counseling helps an individual keep in balance of the community life in the well-established and secured style and may help him/ her lead better interaction in the society, family and neighborhood as well as increasing self- peace as of the respondent's opinion. It could be done, as of the writers, in the form of informal discussion with known individuals and elders in the family and kinship. Marriage and family counselors communicate with individuals, groups and parents as to facilitate positive interaction, developing trust and common understanding among family and community members. Marriage counseling may be considered in this context as any counseling with one or more clients dealing with problems related to marriage, including getting married (i.e. premarital counseling), staying married, or resolving problems related to marriage (e.g. sexual, money, children, in, in- laws, communication, etc.)(Getachew Abeshu and Tsehay baissa, 2019).

As the researcher claims the gap should be, area/geographical gap, knowledge gap and practical gaps. Because the above researches focus about general counseling, but this research typically indicates about the practice and challenges of counseling in protestant Christian marriages, to help them for better survival and sustain their peace in the marriages. So this research will fills the gaps by conducting research on the practice and challenges of Counseling in Christian Community in JimmaJirenanand Middle town KHC to solve marital issues.

1.3.Research question

The thesis addressed the following research questions:

- What were thepracticeof marriage counseling in JimmaJiren and Middle town KHC?

- What were the practices and challenges of Counseling in Christian marriage in JimmaJiren and Middle town KHC?
- What were the major Challenges of Counseling in Christian marriage in JimmaJiren and Middle town KHC?

1.4. Objective of the Study

1.4.1 General Objective

The general objective of this study was to explore the practice and challenges of counseling in protestant Christian marriage.

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

- To identify the practice of marriage counseling in JimmaJiren and Middle town KHC
- To understand the practice and challenges of Counseling in Christian marriage in JimmaJiren and Middle town KHC
- To identify the major challenges of Counseling in Christian marriage in JimmaJiren and Middle town KHC

1.5. Significance of the Study

The study is so important for the Christian members to get awareness the practice and challenges of counseling to have marital counselors apply all type of practices of counseling to restore and make healthy relationship among the married couples. Additionally higher structure of KHC and head office will give attention and wake up to form counselors in every sector, for local Churches as well as for every Church denomination. This material is also important for pre-marital counseling, for other researchers to work around the areas of marriage counseling and

other social problems, where ever needed as base for training and equipping counselors and any type of counseling will be taken in Jimma or elsewhere in every denomination.

1.6.Scope of the Study

Obviously there were so many problems and areas to be studied in which to carry out the role of Christian marriage counseling. It was one of the current hot issues for the whole Christian followers.

Therefore, this study reaches married couples whom seek Counseling in those Kalehiwot Churches which were currently found in Jimma area for 8 branches of KHC Churches. But for this study, it was delimited to the Churches in Jimma Jiren and Middle town KHC with the role of Counseling in Protestant Christian marriage. Materials written on the marriage Counseling not be accessed in Ethiopian culture context. Additionally materials related with social, psychological and sexual were limited. This research has used a qualitative method in which the research design allows respondents to share information from their own words, thus enabling the researcher to investigate new phenomena in-depth.

Most of participants were feeling freely to express the issue and experience of marriage counseling in their community. A 38 years man who lives at Jiren Church, preacher and theology teacher told me that, he hasn't met anyone who came to discuss on issue of marriage counseling, he adds, even though if they seek Counseling there is no formal institution and office such kind of social issues to carryout. Thus those who seek Counseling could not share their inside feeling. That is why this study was a great opportunity that helps me to get a successful and new finding.

1.7.Operational Definition

Counseling: is helping an individual keep in balance of life in the well- established and secured style and may help him/her lead better interaction in the society, family and neighborhood as well as increasing self- peace as of the respondent's opinion. It could be done, as of the writers, in the form of informal discussion with known individuals and elders in the family and kinship.

Practice: Translating an idea into action and the exercise of a profession, like teaching, advice.

Challenges: Questioning a statement and demanding an explanation and some times, which makes hindrance to take some action.

Marriage is the relationship that exists between a husband and a wife in which legally formed in the Church by having a vow by both husband and a wife and also God's design for mankind, and has been the primary societal building block from the beginning of history.

1.8 Limitations

During the data collection, there was the most and difficult situation that we all faced here in Ethiopia, because of the COVID- 19 pandemic and there was also the statement of emergency. Due to that it was not possible to call respondents for FGD, in-depth interview and key informants interview. During these days most of the Churches and Schools were close their doors, people were only moving for their concern, like market and medical centers. Thus few of research questions were not fully answered.

The other limitation that I faced during the data collection was lack of finance because I am self-sponsored. Those things made me a great hindrance not to fully accomplish my work. That

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is why faced problems to buy goods like paper bottled water for my client during interviews and transportation through those two Churches.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2. Introduction

This chapter presents relevant research findings and other relevant related literatures on the role of counseling in Christian marriage and its multifaceted impacts. This chapter also includes the definitions of marriage, Counseling, the social and psychological importance of the role of counseling in protestant Christian marriage and the practice and theory discussed in line with different research findings. This helped me to identify the literature gap in relation with previously undertaken researches and it gives information about the facts related with this research topic.

2.1 Historical Background of the practice and challenges of Counseling

Couple counseling is widely practiced by Christian counselors, but there are almost no empirical data investigating it. This study presents data from a national web-based survey of counselors from the American Association of Christian Counselors, which describes the nature of Christian couple counseling, as well as counselors (Hook & Worthington, 2009).

What role does the word of God play in counseling? This is a crucial and often energetically argumentative question in the Church, and among counselors. Scripture and counseling have carefully, thoughtfully, and helpfully explored both how to think about the Bible in counseling and how to use the Bible in counseling. That means you have to have the skill of counseling and have the Bible in your hand always while you are giving, or conducting counseling (Forrey, 2014).

As Calvin Mutter cited in Gurma & Fraenkel, (2002). The field of marital counseling as a distinct practice began with the establishment of the first marriage counseling centers in Los Angeles, New York, and Philadelphia in the 1930s and the emergence of marriage preparation programs.

This development differentiated marital counseling from the work of other professions. Marriage counseling movements were showing signs of growth, the Christian counseling tradition emerged as another voice in the therapeutic conversation”(Mutter, 2013).

Counseling skills are interpersonal communication skills derived from the study of therapeutic change in human beings, and values in a manner consistent with the goals and values of the established ethics of the profession of the practitioner in question. In addition the use of counseling skills will find that their own professional skills are enhanced by the process. One of the overlaps with counseling will be in the area of underlying values. Both processes are concerned with the recipient being responsible for determining their future rather than their helper. There is an emphasis in both on the client’s capacity for self-determination(Rigby, 2004).

Counseling is the application of wisdom to our personal problems. The primary source of wisdom is the Bible and the creative approaches to the application its principles, to lives. Christian marriage counselors should have to use regularly Biblical verses like (Ephesians 5: 23-30) while counseling and incorporating with prayer. Those people who are selected for counseling have to have an adequate knowledge of Bible or learned theology courses as well as secular knowledge and trained in marriage counseling. Additionally those people must have the lived experience with the congregation and must have also a good profile for the whole congregation(Fanning, 2009).

In the above Biblical verses Ephesian 5: 23-24 clearly shows that the submission of wife for her husband and husband has to love his wife as himself, as Jesus loved Church. This verse doesn’t show husband is the powerful leader over his wife, but he has to love his wife as himself. Both husband and wife have equal gender equality.

Counseling is a therapy which is worked by counselors with couples who are unhappy or conflicted with a partner or spouse. It is also likely that these counselors will have played a significant part in the person's resolution of these issues. Since assisting a person to cope with the breakdown of an intimate relationship is one of the most difficult and complex issues individual counselors can be faced with, the skills and knowledge developed in such counseling will be wholly relevant when counseling two people rather than just one, even though the way these are developed will need to be modified by the new context. The advantage of seeing both partners rather than just one will soon become evident, with more detailed and full information being revealed, including a more balanced view of the issues affecting the couple(Pace, 2020).

Counseling also is focuses on the peculiar need of an individual. It is about trying to find a solution to an individual's need. Counseling cares for people who may be passing through some storms of life or the drums beats in their lives sound discordant chords and they are tired of them. For example, some people go to the counselors when any of the pillars that hold up their marriage covenants are under threat, shaking, broken, or destroyed. The factors that make people to seek counseling today are still the seven things that the Lord hates: Haughty eyes, lying tongues, hands that shed innocent blood, hearts that devise wicked schemes, feet that quickly rush into doing mischief, false witnesses that lie dispense lies and persons who stir up discord in the community (Aririguzoh, 2020).

2.2 Practice of Counseling

Communication is a key thing for effective counseling. If anyone needs to be a counselor, he /she have to be a good listener and communicate very well with his clients. The ultimate goal for a counselor is to communicate effectively enough to elicit a change in their clients.

The challenge encounters when counselors engaged in counseling are the errors of approach, the errors of interpretation, the errors of language, the error of judgment and the error of communication. These five terms are called as the five errors of communication. Thus five of them are very important in marriage or any other type of counseling. In order to be a competent counselor, one has to carefully know these five errors of communications (Conte P. , 2009).

Narrative therapy, one of the methods of counseling marriage is the way how couple can come to counselors to tell their past history. If the counselor listen carefully and patiently, the clients start to narrate what they did in the past, they can talk every things if the counselors can only show their gesture to follow up his clients speech, that he/ she can talk what his/her heart contain. The counselors may gather full information from their client's previous history as well as the client himself or herself can get relief after much speech to their counselors. Sometime the client himself can start weeping and then can get even healed from his or her painful grieves. The counselors can gather everything from their clients narratives how they can get ways of intervention from the clients rhetoric's (Marthin, 2010).

According to Henderson, (2012) , there should be formats or structure for marital couples to reach in counseling. This will be couple- to- couple format. If you are “discipline” or “mentoring” couple in your Church community and you have been assigned a couple to counsel toward marriage, then the couple-to- couple format will be the best option. It will be up to you to arrange a suitable time line and structure for helping the couple you have been asked to serve. The same is true for any marriage counseling whether pre- marriage or post- marriage counseling as I have mentioned before, couple counseling must be carried by married Christian couple counselors. No single individual, pastor, leader or professional counselor can be a Christian marriage counselor (Henderson J. , 2012).

The faith based community has been playing an active and vital role in the prevention of HIV and helping those living with virus to live fulfilling life counseling for married couple is very important part of that response and faith- based bodies are in a unique position to provide this guidance. Faith communities have the advantage of meeting regularly and frequently in special groups and religious gatherings on weekly basis(Hopkins, 2012).

Counseling is a helping relationship where a counselor assists an individual, family, couple or a group of people to: identify current and/or potential challenges in their lives; analyze the situation objectively and compassionately; and, work through Solutions to live a happier and more fulfilling life. The process of identifying and acting on the right solution remains the responsibility of the counselee(s). The Counselor's duty is to shed light on the current or expected challenges and to help the person or couple understands how these challenges can be overcome spiritual counseling is a unique form of counseling that uses spiritual resources as well as psychological understanding for growth and well-being. It can be provided by religious leaders, lay ministers, or support staffs who have training in mental health, social work, religious studies or theology(Hopkins, 2012).

“Marriage is the centerpiece of God’s design for mankind and has been the primary societal building block from the beginning of history. It is first introduced in Scripture immediately after Creation in the second Chapter of the Bible”(Seager, 2014).

Marriage is an institution established by God. It brings a single man and a single woman of age into a mutual relationship. When God instituted it, He intended it to be held in honor, and highlysteamed. The couples are meant to be one and demonstrate this purposefully. God placed the first couple in the Garden of Eden (Aririguzoh, 2020).

2.3 Counseling

There are many people in the congregations and Christian institutions that have been hurt and who need help, but find it almost impossible to admit their concerns. This is mostly due to the absence of someone to listen and give attention to give counseling to restore the congregation or Christian communities for better changed life(Pretorius & Van As, 2003).

Christian marriage counseling becomes known after the years of (2004) and keeps counseling session biblical to maintain a focus on God's Word, and to provide resource material to assist disciples to counsel themselves. Currently Christian marriage counseling in western countries like America, counseling can be given in prepared books or in electronics or biblical counseling by on-line (BCOL). In this case, the practice and challenges of counseling is to change the counselee's focus on the false self, a self of lust and appetites to a realization of his true self a self in union with Christ. The role of counseling is, to help and restore others to this same position whereas they' in turn do likewise(Pulaski, 2004).

2.4 The Challenges of Counseling in Christian Marriages

According to Sanderson, (2008), psychological effects as symptoms of abuse, to prevent stigmatization and pathology the survivor, symptoms such as anxiety, depression, self- harm, substance misuse and suicidal need to be seen primarily as responses to trauma. Counselors need to be able to dissemble actual symptoms of abuse from perceived individual pathology or personality disturbance. By the view of Sanderson's challenges or trauma can be counseled depending on individual pathology, or personal disturbance. Here the role of counseling first knows the individuals or clients challenge and treat him accordingly.

The role of counseling is to highlight the range of individual's Pathology of impacts and long-term effects; so that counselors can ensure accurate assessment of the survivor's specific therapeutic needs, so that appropriate and effective treatment interventions can be implemented(Crstiane, 2008).

2.5. Theoretical frameworks the practice and challenges of counseling

A theory is a set of interrelated concepts used to describe, explain, and predict how society and its parts are related to each other. The usefulness of theory serves to magnify, enlarge, clarify, and expand our view of things we are looking at. A theory is a framework to help you "see" the world. Theories are also sets of interrelated concepts and ideas that have been scientifically tested and combined to magnify, enlarge, clarify, and expand our understanding of people, their behaviors, and their societies(Hutchison, 2014).

Conflict theory fits with the practice and challenges of counseling in Christian Marriages. The conflict theory is a macro theory designed to study the larger social, global, and societal level of sociological phenomena. This theory was founded by Karl Marx. Marx was a witness to oppression perpetrated (to do something that is illegal or wrong) by society's elite's members against the masses of poor. Conflict theory is especially useful in understanding: war, wealth and poverty the "haves" and the "have-nots", revolutions, political strife, exploitation, divorce, discrimination and prejudice, domestic violence, rape child abuse, slavery and more conflict related social phenomena. Thus in marriage counseling one has to know that conflicts can be created in every aspect. Conflicts are normal, but it has to be taken care in marriage counseling to treat conflicts with a great care to resolve the problems.

Conflict theories are theories about Society which emphasize that conflicts of interest do exist and human are in conflict with each other in relation to resources, prestige and power. From conflict perspective however there exists another opinion of how Society is operating. Society is distinguished by different conflicts, power and changes. In marriage counseling we also face different forms of conflicts, and then we should know how to handle conflicts for the effective resolutions. As we know also conflicts were created in every marriage. Conflicts are normal in every marriage. We should know that there weren't marriages without conflict. Thus those conflicts should be resolved by Counseling. This theory understands war, wealth and poverty, which means human being, is a social being and whenever integration one another there will be conflicts. That means conflicts are normal, but we have to find its way of resolving. Thus Counseling in Christian marriage will help to find solution by knowing the conflict theory (Hutchinson, 2014).

The second theory identifies that marital issues are structured from husband and wife, as well as their Children, their parents and deeply rooted to the societies. Marriage Counseling or guidance and advice have along history. Functional theory as it is often called is based on the "organic analogy". This is the idea, developed by early social philosophers such as Comte and Durkheim, "that society is like the human body. While the body is made up of various parts such as the organs and muscle and tissues that need to work together in order to work properly". Each part needs to be in state of equilibrium, or balance. Just as the human body has evolved over time, so the society. So marriage Counseling has structures of husband, wife and children.

The third theory which might fit with marriage Counseling is, social exchange theorists focusing on marital quality and stability have posited that individuals weigh the cost and benefits of mate selection and of remaining in a marriage. We look to this theory to explain why an individual

might remain in a dissatisfied marriage. Barriers to change and attractiveness of alternatives are the main elements of social exchange theory that used to guide the investigation of divorce. There are several terms which are central to social exchange theory that must be defined prior to a discussion of the theory. Outcomes are those rewards or costs which are received or incurred by actors from each other in an exchange relationship. Outcomes can be positive (rewards) or negative (costs) and social exchange theory makes no assumption about whether an individual will view a particular outcome as positive or negative (e.g., some individuals view divorce as positive while others view it as a negative outcome). The theory only assumes that behavior is consistent with what individual's value in their lives. Rewards may be physical, social, or psychological. Costs can be viewed as negative or as forgone rewards. Resources are possessions or behavioral capabilities (human capital) which have value to others and to oneself (e.g., a husband's job and income have value to his wife). When one resource outweighs another resource then it may become a barrier (e.g., the wife's income may be a resource that enables her to leave the marriage, but her husband's income may be so great that it may be a barrier to leaving since she won't be able to enjoy the life to which she has become accustomed without his income). Barriers are the costs of making a choice. Several studies find when barriers are many and alternatives are few individuals may remain in dis-satisfied marriages(Hutchnson, 2014).

As this theory clearly explains, marriage relationships and dissatisfaction can be viewed in the marriage. So such marital issues such as benefits in moral, psychological, financial, political religious and others should be solved by marriage counseling with individuals whom trained well and equipped with enough knowledge.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHOD

3.1 Introduction

This chapter was include Research area, Research Design and Approach, Data type and Data source, Population of the Study, Inclusion Criteria, Sampling and Sample Size, Data Collection Instrument, Method of Data Collection, Data Quality Assurance and Ethical Consideration. So that, we saw each of them one by one, how it works in this specific study.

3.2 Philosophical Stance

The researcher perspective about reality was constructivism, individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work. They develop subjective meaning towards certain objects or things. These meanings are varied and multiple, leading the researcher to look for the complexity of views rather than narrow the meanings into a few categories or ideas (Creswell, 2014).

3.3 Research Design

Stake (1995) as cited in John Creswell (2009) an appropriate research design is important to any research as it guides the process for collecting the desired data and also the process for analyzing that data. The general principle is that the research strategy or the methods or techniques employed must be appropriate for the questions you want to answer. In this case the researcher incorporate qualitative research approach and Case studies as strategy of inquiry in which the researcher explore in-depth a program, event, activity, and researchers collect detailed information using a data collection procedures over a sustained period of time (Creswell, 2009).

Among the qualitative research method, phenomenology is employed in this research. Phenomenology is both a philosophy and a family of research methods concerned with exploring

and understanding human experience (Langdrige, 2007). There are two types of phenomenological approach, among the two phenomenological techniques, this research used interpretive phenomenology. Interpretive phenomenology is an approach to qualitative research concerned with exploring and understanding the lived experience of a specified phenomenon (Smith, 2004). Interpretive phenomenology is therefore concerned to the core principles of phenomenology through paying respectful attention to a person's direct experience, and by encouraging research participants to tell their own story in their own words, (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009). Thus phenomenological research paradigm is important to describe, translate, explain and analysis the practice and challenges of marriage counseling in protestant Christian marriages, who are the subject of the research.

Case study research technique was also applied to investigate the role of counseling in protestant Christian marriage. It was appropriate because it allows the researcher to get detail data about the marital couples and other details that have taking place on the life of the marriages. Semi-structured interviews for the couples, focus group discussions with institutional workers Church leaders pastors, evangelists and co-ministers, and I had applied In-depth interviews to collect data from Church leaders of both Churches JimmaJiren and Middle town KHC. I had used thematic analysis, it is a method for identifying, analyzing, organizing, describing, and reporting themes found within a data set. Organization of the Data, Coding, Interpreting the Data, Reducing the Data into Substantive Findings were techniques of analysis. Note taking, and semi structured - interviews, in-depth, interviews and FGD were data collection instruments.

3.4 Study area

Jimma is found 335km far from Addis Ababa to the South Western part of Ethiopia. This South Western part of Ethiopia is linguistically and politically complex region. Many diversified ethnic

groups live in this region. Jimma Special Zone has the population of 227499. Among these 113269 are Males and 114230 are females. Source(Jimma Statistical office April 4,2021). In Jimma the two main religion categories are found namely Orthodox and Muslim. Protestant Christianity is one which was departed from Catholic and Orthodox a long ago. The researcher claim to conduct research in Protestant Christian religion. In Jimma there are 10 different Evangelical Churches, few of them as Kalehiwot, Muluwongel, Mekaneyesus, etc. The rest were Ministries. JimmaKalehiwot Church has 8 local Churches among those the researcher will conduct study in Jiren and Middle town.JimmaJiren is located in front of Teachers College and has 240 males and 270 females, total of 510 congregational members. Jimma Middle tow also has 420 members among those 240 are females and 180 are males. And Jimma Middle town is located behind JimmaDegitu Hotel and Regional Police Station.

3.5 Data type and Data source

Interviews An interview in qualitative research is a conversation where questions are asked to elicit information. When choosing to interview as a method for conducting qualitative research, it is important to be tactful and sensitive in its approach. Interview or the researcher, some of the fundamentals of his/her technique are Listening, Ask questions (to follow up and to clarify), be respectful of boundaries, be aware of leading questions, don't interrupt, and Make the participant feel comfortable. Qualitative researchers typically gather multiple forms of data, such as interviews, observations, and documents, rather than rely on a single data source. Then the researchers review all of the data, make sense of it, and organize it into categories or themes that across all of Data sources(Creswell, 2009).

JimmaJiren and Middle town Churches have the total population of 930, from these 420 are male 510 are female. I will use 15 members from each Church for interview. These members were

selected purposively for the research from those two Churches to represent the rest of the congregation.

In-depth interview: An in-depth interview was one in which the research tries to go deeply into some aspect of the participant's feelings, motives, attitudes, life history, etc. The intention here was to get participants talking in detail about a particular aspect of their experience and their reflections on it. The direction and nature of the responses was directed, at least initially, by the participant. The structure of the interview was one in which a very general topic was gradually narrowed down. For example, participants were asked to talk about their life in general and gradually focus down onto their work experiences. Or the topic was more specific to start with and then broadened out to (Holloway and Wheeler, 2002).

In the in depth interview the leaders, ministers and pastors were participated. The interview was translated in to the language of the community to Amharic.

3.6 Population of the Study

The study population was all married couples and those who were engaged in premarital level. Besides the married couples evangelists, pastors, leaders and ministers of the both Churches were participate in the study.

3.7 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion Criteria, for the Selection of the study participants include the following. These were all adult members of the congregation in both Churches whom were married and who were engaged to be married could fit for this study. And also who were volunteers to participate in the study. Exclusion Criteria, Individuals whom were not married Children and aged men and women could not include in the study

3.8 Sampling and Sample size

It was applied non- probability sampling for the study. Non- probability approaches are more suitable for in-depth qualitative research in which the focus was often to understand complex social phenomena. The study sample were all married couples who were volunteers in the study area, were interviewed, FGDs with few couples and leaders were conducted. The sample size in qualitative research should not be too small that it was difficult to achieve saturation at the same time. At the same time the sample should not be too large that it was difficult to make deep, case oriented analysis.

According to Creswell, (2003) 15-30 people will be included during interviews and 6-12 people can be able to participate in FGD in case studies. So, numbers of participants in my case study were 12 married females and 18 married males. It means totally interviewees, were 30 in the interview. I was interviewed six-six, individuals from each group. And 12 people for FGDs were participated in two groups. Six participants were in one group in each Church. The data collection was carried out during the time of proclamation of state of emergency in our country due to Covid-19. Because of that, the number of participants in one group was limited to 6. So, I made two groups. The FGD was held two times. The time for one interview was 10 minutes and the maximum was 15 minutes. This means 90 minutes was provided for one FGD and the same was applied to the other groups. Totally, during interviews 30 participants participated in the study.

3.9 Method of Data collection

In qualitative research, the three major tools of data collection include; in-depth interview, FGD and key informant interview. In this study the above data collection instruments were employed to gather information about the practice and challenges of counseling in protestant Christian in those selected Churches in Jimma.

3.10 Guide lines for Data Collection

Interview: In this study; an in-depth interview with the face-to-face manner was employed with married couples, as well as ministers and Church leaders. And they were asked building and synthesis of various opinions and concepts, and assembling of ideas; and summarizing, categorizing, and presenting them into convenient forms.

Audio records of key informant and in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions were transcribed. These transcriptions were read by the researcher repeatedly, who also listened to the audio records to have clear grasp of the information generated. While reading the transcripts time and again, the researchers came across themes that shed light on issues of interest under study. Having identifying these themes, the researchers then looked for patterns and linkages across information gathered from different sources and different data collection methods(Manson, 2002).

3. 11 Data analysis Techniques

The study analyzed the data obtained from the study participants through qualitative data analysis methods. Data collection and analysis strategies are similar across qualitative methods, but the way the findings are reported is diverse and it address the importance of creating a data display and suggest that narrative text has been the most frequent form of display for qualitative data. Therefore, the results are presented in descriptive narrative form(Kreuger & Neuman, 2006).

3.12 Quality assurances

The use of different qualitative techniques and the inclusion of various groups of informants in the study were of great value to enhance the quality of data and generate valid and reliable information. Triangulation was also typically a strategy for improving the validity and reliability of research or evaluation of findings. The trustworthiness of the information was assured through data triangulation.

In the study trustworthiness mechanisms like focus group discussions and individual and couple interviews were applied to reach on trust and reliable data on the lives of marital regarding to their socio economic problems.

The other mechanism used in the study was Member check list checks relating to the accuracy of the data was took place “on the spot” in the course, and at the end, of the data collection dialogues. Informants were asked to confirm as their answers of interviews and FGDs were corrected as they want to say as they intended at the last of all data collection sections. The other method used in the study was examination of previous research findings it was to assess the degree to which the study results were congruent with those of past studies.

3.13 Ethical Issues

Since the issue under the study was very crucial necessary care was taken to protect confidentiality of the information obtained from the subject of the study. Accordingly names were not be recorded or linked to the results of the study. The data collection was carried out after getting permission from Churches administration. The data collection process was started after given adequate information and explanation about the research, and its objectives for the

participants. Before starting recording the voice of the participants, or taking photographs consent was requested based on their willingness.

The study was approved by ethical clearance obtained from Jimma University together with a permission letter approved by Jimma University School of Social Work. Later the both Churches and their administration office and all participants were communicated with formal letter. Each study participants were informed on the study objectives and verbal consent was granted and confidentiality assured for any information provided.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS OF STUDY

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the major findings of the study based on the specific objectives obtained from in-depth interviews, focus group discussion and document review. Accordingly, the chapter is organized into four parts. The first part of this chapter briefly describes the background information of the study participants, basic information of the in-depth interviewees, key informants and FGD members. The second part deals with the practice of forms of Counseling in those two Churches. The third part was the practice and challenges of Counseling, and the fourth part was the major challenges that occurred in marriage Counseling.

4.2. Background of the Study participants

Semi structured interview was employed for data collection and a total of 30 individuals have been interviewed. Accordingly, the following are the lists of participants who were interviewed in this research along with their positions in the community from both Churches.

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Table. 1

Jiren KHC In-depth Interview participants

No	Age	Sex	Marital status	Religion	Education	Occupation	Ethnic group
1	50	Male	Married	Protestant	BA	NGO	Wolayta
2	38	Male	Married	Protestant	MA	Evangelist	Oromo
3	50	Male	Married	Protestant	BA	Spiritual Ministry	Yem
4	52	Male	Married	Protestant	MA	Private	Amara
5	48	Male	Married	Protestant	Diploma	Pastor	Oromo
6	45	Female	Married	Protestant	Certificate	House wife	Amara
7	65	Male	Married	Protestant	12+ TTI	Teacher	Kambat
8	45	Female	Widow	Protestant	Certificate	Civil serva	Yem
9	48	Female	Married	Protestant	BA	NGO	Tigre
10	55	Female	Married	Protestant	Certificate	House wife	Yem
11	64	Male	Married	Protestant	BA	Evangelist	Yem
12	35	Male	Married	Protestant	BA	Civil Serva	Dawuro
13	52	Female	Married	Protestant	Certificate	Evangelist	Hadia
14	46	Female	Married	Protestant	Diploma	Teacher	Kambata
15	55	Male	Married	Protestant	BA	Commerce	Yem

Table .2

Middle town KHC In-depth interview participants

No	Age	Sex	Marital status	Religion	Education	Occupation	Ethnic group
1	50	Male	Married	Protestant	BA	NGO	Wolayta
2	38	Male	Married	Protestant	MA	Evangelist	Oromo
3	50	Male	Married	Protestant	BA	Ministry	Yem
4	52	Male	Married	Protestant	Student of 3 rd degree	Private	Amara
5	48	Male	Married	Protestant	Diploma	Pastor	Oromo
6	45	Female	Married	Protestant	Certificate	House wife	Amara
7	65	Male	Married	Protestant	12+ TTI	Teacher	Kambat
8	45	Female	Widow	Protestant	Certificate	Civil serva	Yem
9	48	Female	Married	Protestant	BA	NGO	Tigre
10	55	Female	Married	Protestant	Certificate	House wife	Yem
11	64	Male	Married	Protestant	BA	Evangelist	Yem
12	35	Male	Married	Protestant	BA	Civil Serva	Dawuro
13	48	Female	Married	Protestant	BA	NGO	Tigre
14	55	Female	Married	Protestant	Certificate	House wife	Yem
15	64	Male	Married	Protestant	BA	Evangelist	Yem

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Table. 3**JirenFGD**

No	Age	Sex	Marital Status	Religion	Education	Occupation	Ethnic group
1	54	Female	Single	Protestant	Certificate	Evangelist	Yem
2	43	Female	Married	Protestant	Diploma	NGO	Yem
3	40	Female	Married	Protestant	Certificate	House wife	Yem
4	31	Male	Single	Protestant	MA	NGO	Oromo
5	55	Female	Married	Protestant	BA	Civil serva	Kambata
6	65	Male	Married	Protestant	Diploma	Minister	Yem

Table. 4**Middle town FGD**

No	Age	Sex	Marital Status	Religion	Education	Occupation	Ethnic group
1	55	Female	Married	Protestant	Certificate	House wife	Yem
2	64	Male	Married	Protestant	BA	Evangelist	Yem
3	35	Male	Married	Protestant	BA	Civil Serva	Dawuro
4	58	Male	Married	Protestant	Certificate	Commerce	Oromo
5	54	Female	Married	Protestant	BA	Commerce	Oromo
6	58	Male	Married	Protestant	BA	Private	Yem

4.3 Marriage Counseling

Marriage Counseling was not widely carried in those study areas, but rather, Bible teaching concerning marriage advising, guidance and mentoring were given to married couples from the starting of Church days. Here the researcher present and extracted data about practice of marriage Counseling, roles of marriage Counseling, and challenges of the marriage Counseling in protestant Christian marriages, and structured the results according to these functioning areas.

4.4 Practice of Marriage Counseling

The in-depth interview participant of the middle town KHC mentioned that, there were different forms of practices of Counseling around the Marriage Couples. The community believed that practice such as guidance advice and Biblical teaching, was enough for the marriage sustainable and saves of marital couples.

As most of the Middle town FGD members reported, Christian marriage forms of Counseling were based on Biblical teaching, give guidance and advising by Churches elders to those marital, God's law and religious practice in according to their culture, using the example of good families and fear of God.

As stated by one of the Jiren key informant participant mainly the practice of marriage Counseling in protestant Christian were focus on Bible teaching and to keep Couple from divorce and displacement of children.” According to one of the woman in in- depth interview from middle town Church, (Male age 48) respondent said , in my Church Middle town KHC there were matured and experienced people chosen for Counseling, then they serve only conflict resolution whenever problems happened in the marriages. The other participant from the Middle town (Female Age 55), gave her opinion in supporting to the above respondent saying,

The practice of the marriage counseling in our community is almost nothing. This means not visible but whenever problems created in the marriage, leaders and spiritual ministers can give advice as painkiller saying “keep your secret and live?” They never uncover the problem to identify and bring to resolution.” The other participant from the same Middle town Church (Male age 64), said as, *“I know, in few about the practice of marriage Counseling in theology courses, but there is no tangible practice in our local Church currently.”*

The finding shows that, the key informant in Jiren KHC, (male age 31) and minister of that particular Church mentioned that, the two forms of marital Counseling which practiced in that study area Church were In spiritual pre- marriage couples were learned and understood the Word of God before they build the marriage to live together. In cultural type of marriage tradition played a dominant role. In culture or traditional type of marriage, different practices were mentioned as the culture do not focus on the exact problem that the counselors only focus on the temporary solution between the couples. Some cultural counselor's don't address the problem to solve permanently.

The result from key- informant interviews indicates that, most of the marriages in Churches seek counseling to heal their marriages, but there were no formal office, skilled men or trained Counselors. That is why most of the marriages were in conflict and few of them were flowing to courts for separation or divorce and not good relationships were seen among them. In addition to that there is no secured place or office for a kind of services. Because marital issues are mysterious and needs confidentiality. Even though there are many Spiritual ministers in the Churches such issues were un- seen area. One of the key-informant, (Female, age 43), respondent from Jiren said “even the leaders lack to address these things.”

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As most of in- depth interviewees Jiren and Middle town reported, in cultural marriage: the culture had a great influence upon the couples. The counselor also can be chosen by their parents. Because of these different aspects of impacts, the couple forced to endure in the marriage together unwillingly.

One of the practice which has been lived for a long time in Christian community was teaching about unity for marital couples, how they endure each of them in love of Jesus Christ, how they live in His promise and overall unity. Key- informants from middle town ,(age 58 female and age 54 male), suggested as, In pre- marriage level also there were Biblical teaching from Church elders, pastors and evangelists before they get married. Additionally in the Church community as the whole congregation they get short term training, how they live in marriage and those un married also get short term training separately from married before they get married. Unless none of them can come to marriage. After completion of training they will be given certificate for the completing that formal education of marriage. This short term training can take from two weeks to six month depending on the willing of the couple. That was the way that accustomed, even some times, if they done married out of the Church regulation they will be disciplined and take the marriage course by the elders or pastors. During this counseling always the Word of God taken as the final authority for the married couple and for all Church members.

The finding shows that, in cultural marriage the culture had a dominant role there were no modern forms of training or practice, but the Church has teaching based on the authoritative Word of God about marriage ” Bible has the final authority.”

Majority of the interviewees pointed, the forms of Counseling which were carried out in their Church in Jiren congregation were, teachings like equality, love each other, work together or

shared work division between husband and wife, respect each other, patience (tolerance) and not to interference of their parents or families.

The other participants from in-depth interview in middle town (age 52 male and age 45 female), also gave their views about the practice of Counseling in their Church as ,short term meeting were sometimes carried in our Church, like one- to- one or both partners sometimes women empowering training form of congregation were given to encourage married couple. Sometimes married couple who were sustained in the marriage without conflict was taken as model to teach others. In addition there would be spiritual teaching quoting from Bible.

One of the study participant and key- informant (age 35, male), also gave his view as, *I had a good experience in my marital years. I always tried to resolve any issues with my wife to solve problems. I had never invited another third person (individual), we both had to bring sustainable peace in talking on every issues. One of the good action that I need to mention here is, there should be home visiting by spiritual workers of the Church servants preparing some checklist about the marriage problems of family crisis. One has to know that if marriages were healed the whole Church community would be healthy too. Pre-marital couple before they came to marriage they have to learn, and equip enough the knowledge of marriage, and male and female should know their role in the marriage.*

4.5 Counseling

As the majority of the Middle town FGD participants reported Marriage Counseling is helping couple make discoveries about what the Bible teaches on marriage, about their personal lives, their partners and what can weaken their marriage and what can strengthen it.

One of my key- informant from middle town KHC, (age 51 male), suggested that, marriage Counseling also encourages attitude and behavior change, relationship skills were taught and opportunities were given to practice them. Marriage Counseling may involve problem solving or crisis counseling, since any courtship will face problems and even crisis. At a time it will be necessary to refer a couple to other counselor better qualified to handle a particular problem or crisis.

As one of the elder respondent in middle town FGD said, the role of Counseling is to give the counselors an opportunity to ask each counselee questions he or she may not yet feel comfortable discussing in the presence of his or her spouse to be, to give the counselee an opportunity to discuss personal concerns with the counselor. A successful interview will happen depend on the trust and confidence that has grown between the Counselor and the Counselee. Where a couple counselors were doing the counseling the husband may talk with the man and his wife talk with the woman, that they can share their opinion with full confidence without fear or ashamed.

All of the Jiren FGD respondents said, marriage counseling has a great role. Since counseling is finding ways to get inner hidden problems of marriages and get remedy for the problems. It is one of the intervention method which further search solutions for the conflicted families. The added also counseling is the ways of understanding a broken hearts of partners or spouse and find remedial solutions.

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Finding of this study shows that, the practice and challenges of Counseling is helping marital couples, encouraging them about what Bible teaches in marriage, their personal lives and what makes their marriage strong. The result identifies that, Counseling was to uncover the hidden inner problems of marital Couples, later for finding relevant solutions.

The in-depth interview participant of Jiren KHC suggested as, the practice of counseling is treating married couples to live mutually and restore their peace for a long periods. He adds also counseling ability is a gift of God or born ability that men can help people or marriage live in harmony to each other. And counseling is an intermediation.

Here the finding is, counseling is a gift of God or inborn ability given naturally and gained by training from school for human kind to intermediate together in prayer with the clients.

One of my key-informant from Middle town Church assured that counseling is healing men's inner being without having curable medicine the broken hearted marriages.

In-depth interview participant of JimmaJiren Church (male, age 52), suggested as counseling is a therapy in which couple counselors treat or aid married couples. Marriages should not be counseled by an individual, because in case there might be sexual dysfunction. For that matter the same sex can understand the hidden feeling or problems of a client. A counselor should not be a decision maker for their clients, but rather they have to treat or help them the ways of finding solutions for themselves. This method is what we call it as therapeutic method in counseling.

The result is not a single counselor can be marriage counselor and married couples have to be counseled by married couples.

4.6 Challenges of Marriage Counseling

One of the objective of this study was to find out whether there were challenges to marriage Counseling in Christian marriage in those selected Churches and point out if there any. The study participants requested if there were any challenges they face during practicing marital Counseling or what they know in their areas. The challenges identified by the majority of study participants or respondents will be presented as follow. As the FGD participants in middle town KHC pointed out in their discussion the major challenges happening in Christian marriages were

- The counselees were not volunteer or seek to come to the Counselors
- Lack of Suitable or comfortable place (rooms) for Counseling
- Lack of confidentiality or keeping secret of counselees by their Counselors
- Not giving attention or considering as Churches duties
- Considering the problems as only the individuals issues or personal case
- Cultural hindrances not to seek Counseling
- The Counselors don't focus on the exact problem, but rather give attention for the temporary issues or to solve the current conflict only. But the most important issues left behind. Some traditional Counselors also don't address the problem to solve permanently
- In Ethiopia the Cultural marriage had great challenges because of the interference of counselees' parents or individuals selected from the community to give respect for those who had influential. Even they enforce the couple to live with their problems in unhealthy marriage.
- Unfaithfulness of the Counselors. Most of the marriage Counselors was unfaithful to their counselees.
- Lack of skilled or professional, Biblically trained Counselors

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- As we knew that Counseling was a profession which was not only for marriage, but which strives to bring peace and sustainability in the society.
- The other challenge also, the Counselors became the decision makers; they don't give chance for the victims to solve their problems or to use their own way to come to the solution.

The finding of this study clearly shows that challenges were happening in Christian marriages in our society. If Counseling is not carefully carried out in Christian marriages, it has a great challenge for the following reasons. Married couple could be divorced and, when divorce took place children would be abused and went to streets for different substance abuse. Not only would these but they be bad witnessed for the whole Church community as well as the society. Additionally those divorced partners will marry another partner, that is also become the worst. Because re-marriage is forbidden in protestant Christianity unless one of the partner is separated by death. Here the type of death has two meaning, either Spiritual or Physical death. Physical death means separation of soul from physical body or flesh. The Spiritual death was when one of the partners broke the vow which he/she made in the first marriage. Because in the first vow there was the covenant which says "only death can separate our marriage." That is why the second marriage or remarriage can take place, if and only if the above two conditions took place.

The in-depth interview participant from Jiren Church said " The greatest challenge that I observed in Christian marriage Counseling was Cultural domination hindrance, for example like when there was sexual or health problem the husband and wife fear to explain their pain, because culturally forbidden or taboo. " The second one is separation, when one of the partners separated for work or education and field work, unfaithfulness would be created in between husband and wife, which later could lead to divorce. "

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Majority of the in-depth interview participants from both Churches reported as “the challenges of marriage Couple in our community, we only knew that there was no formal Counseling except reconciliation of Couple in the time of conflict. “

The second group of FGD at Jiren Church reported as “most of challenges happened in Christian marriage today were due to the following causes.

- Separation; when one of the partners separated for work, education, or field work unfaithfulness could be created in between husband and wife which later lead to divorce.
- Family Interference; Especially the couple’s parents interference in marriage had a great challenge not to sustain the couple to independently lead their lives.
- Lack of studying God’s Word; unless couple live their lives in prayer and read Bible as their lives guidance they can be deceived by Satan, and their marriage might be set apart and faced for attack of evil spirit. This is due to evil spirit possession, husband and wife would be sick and he or she can not obey in sexual communication for common pleasure.
- Lack of genuine love; Love is the foundation for any marriage. Unless they love each other, respect each other and honor, marriages cannot be sustained
- Misunderstanding; the misunderstanding of husband and wife can cause a huge challenge in every side of their marriage. This is may be immaturity and lack of knowledge. “

The finding of this was, as all the FGD participants suggested the above mentioned points should be given attention in order the marriage could avoid those challenges and get peace and sustainability. The other thing was as few of the respondents identified that the Couple themselves didn’t know the difference between reconciliation and Counseling. After this study

conducted majority of them understood and they would be able to give awareness for the rest of the community members.

As one of my key informant whose name is Eshetu Demissie from Jiren KHC and he is a full-time minister in that particular local Church. His educational background is first degree in theology and served continuously for 20 (twenty) years. He mentioned as the major challenges of marriage counseling in that Church were as follow.

- Culture: Example when through sexual problems, husband and wife fear to each other to explain their problems. Because culturally it is forbidden or taboo to openly express themselves about sexual issues.
- Separation of husband and wife due to several reasons. Example working areas, like previously happened in Ethiopian civil servants dis-centralization, they had to go different work areas. This separation made the relationship between husband and wife gradually cool down and create unfaithfulness. And those things could make them to easily separate their marriage.
- Family interference: Especially the husband's and wife's families or the third bodies might interfere in their marriage. The marriage violated and cracked to separation.
- Lack of permanent love and prayer together a husband and wife as well as reading the Word of God. Because the word of God is considered as the most and the final authority in Christian Communities. And also the Word of God assumed as God himself. Unless the above mentioned things were lacked in the marriage there would be unsustainable situation in the family.

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- Attack of evil spirits: In protestant Christianity it was believed that, evil spirits can be possessed unless the people were not always stood firm against in prayer and reading of God's Word.
- Finical insufficiency: It is obvious that money is the basic thing for all mankind on the earth. Without having enough money husband and wife it is undoubtedly their marriage is in great problems. They could not afford everything which happened in their marriage, like health protection, clothing, tuition fee and other social problems.
- Lack of genuine love: Love is the fundamental thing in every marriage. Love is a good chain to tie a marriage than any other things.
- Misunderstanding to each other: Husband and wife sometimes cannot understand or Listen to each other
- Immaturity: Immaturity means, in knowledge, in spiritual lives. Unless the individuals are mature they face different challenges.

The result of this section as the key informant mentioned, there were a lots of challenges which would encountered in the marriage. So marriage Counseling could be remedy to restore marriages.

The key informant respondent(age 51, male), clearly set as, the key challenges impacting families todayis opposition, which affects families are rooted in challenging marriages, for marriage is the foundation of any home. The other challenge what my respondent gave was, marital couples should follow Biblical teaching and speak to key issues in the marriage and Biblical relationship principles and then speaks especially to husbands and wives and their corresponding marriage roles and responsibilities within marriage. The couple has to be true to what God has to say in the Bible, not what culture throws at them.

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The finding of this part was the key challenge of marriage is opposition. This means opposition of not to marry man and woman to be as one flesh in the marriage. And the other was husbands and wives do not speak their issues clearly and not solve by themselves.

The result of this, there has to be formal and skilled Counselors in every Churches whom always follow up the situation of the congregation members Counsel them to avoid re-marriage without Churches recommendation.

Most of the Middle town in- depth interview members (female, age 39, male, age 42, male, age 56, female, age 49, male, age 47, female age 61), all of these are married and still they are in the marriage. Their opinion about major challenges of marriage Counseling in their Churches werenot having knowledgeable Counselors, secured office for Counseling, confidentiality of Counselees with their Counselors, because marital issues are mysterious, and cultural domination of the community.”

The result shows that these major challenges of marriage Counseling will be solved by having knowledgeable Counselors, secured place or office for Counseling, creating trust and faithfulness in Counselors and Counselees, and basic teachings of marriage Counseling on the impacts of culture over marriage.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

Introduction

This section of the paper discusses findings of the study by relating them to relevant literatures. The discussion will be based on the identified themes in the data presentation section, answering the research questions presented in the first chapter of this paper. Furthermore, the limitations of the study as well as the challenges faced during the study area are also presented in this chapter.

5.1 Practice of counseling

My research question directly goes with the objectives of this study. The result of the research shows that, as the marriage problems are in the Christian community typically in the study area JimmaJiren and Middle town KHC.

Result shows about practice takes two types, Traditional and Modern. The traditional marriage counseling's are indigenous practices. Which are carried out by religious leaders and by Church fathers?These are giving guidance for marital couples, advice and Biblical teaching. Among these Biblical teaching is taken as major one which Christian communities believe as Bible is "the final authority of God." The modern types of counseling are the one which is carried by skilled professional and educated people. These kinds of practices were not fully practiced in those study area Churches, but there are few knowledgeable individuals who took theology courses in different levels. If those few individuals get an access and conducive place they can join this job. I hope in the near future because of this research they got awareness they are interested to do. The modern counseling methods are institutionalized formal professional counseling.

The result of this section as whole would be Biblical teaching, guidance, advice and formal marriage counseling.

5.2 Counseling

Here the role of counseling in Christian marriage in the specified area are helping people, encouraging martials, praying together with the couple and to uncover the inner hidden problems as to solve the problems. The role of counseling as mentioned in (Fanning, 2009). Counseling is the application of wisdom to our personal problems. The primary source of wisdom is the Bible and the creative approaches to the application.

As indicated in (Aririguzoh, 2020), Counseling focuses on the peculiar need of an individual. It is about trying to find a solution to an individual need. Counseling cares for people who may passing through some storms of life. Counseling is also a therapy which is worked by counselors with couples who are unhappy or conflicted with a partner or spouse. It is also likely that these counselors will have played a significant part in the person's resolution of these things. This mean the role of counseling is generally helping people to restore their marriages from any psychological, moral spiritual disasters.

5.3 Challenges of counseling

As the study identifies the challenges of marriage counseling are lack of skilled or professional counselors, lack of confidentiality between the counselors and clients, cultural hindrances. As (Saderson,2008), mentioned while counseling psychological effects as symptoms of abuse, not disturbing personality disturbance, anxiety, depression, self-harm and substance abuse. The other objective of my study is identifying the major challenges in Christian marriage

counseling. In Christian couples unwilling to seek counseling; unavailability of professional counselors and absence of Conducive place or office for counseling are the major challenges.

By the view of Saderson (2008), challenges or trauma can be counseled depending on the individual's pathology or personal disturbance. Here the challenge is, first knowing the individual's or client's trauma and personal disturbance, later treat him accordingly.

The finding here shows as the huge challenge faced while counseling traumatized or personally disturbed individual to take counseling. Conducive office for counseling and professional counselors whom trained in theology may take these jobs. Again in the future as the advancement of human's in different society, professional social workers are expected to involve in this sector to heal marriages and make them to live peaceful lives.

The research questions were fully answered by the study participants. Our participants also satisfied with this research being conducted in those particular study area Churches of JimmaJiren and Middle town KHC.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

6.1 Conclusion

The very objective of the research was to investigate the role of Counseling in Protestant Christian marriage and the practice existing, how it helped for couples in their marriages. The result of this research confirms that the practices which were carried out in those Churches were giving a kind of advice, guidance, and Biblical teachings. In addition to those pre-existing forms of Counseling this study found, to sustain couple in the marriage or prevent them not to expose to divorce their marriages, which results their children flow out to the streets. Formal professional Counselors who took courses in theology about marriage Counseling were needed, secured offices for marital Counseling were also needed, because marital issues are mysterious and they need confidentiality.

According to the study, it was discovered that different challenges were created and majorities of marriages were in great pain. Thus the respondents confirm that, through empowerment with few individuals who are educated and already have knowledge on the practice of marital Counseling, those who took marriage Counseling courses in theology will help them in holistic manner to be fully engaged in marriage Counseling to bring a sustainable solution for the marital couples to live in peace and respect each other.

6.2 Recommendations

The main goal of this research was to find mechanism to heal marriages in Christian community in their day-to-day lives. However I recommend that it would have been better if other researchers may further study the marital issues to come up with different forms of solutions for marriage couples make them to cope with their future lives with better life styles. In current situations as the advancement of technology and human progress marriage were violated in every corners of the world. For example in European Countries as a whole there were no formal marriages took place in Churches or in governmental institutions like municipality. Thus majority of the marriage were living as contract. Those marriages were not accepted in the sight of God as well as the Church on earth. We have to come against for such kind of practice cannot be introduced to our country. We should aware such types of practices would bring curse, which may bring God's wrath to our Country. We should also close our gates and make save the generation that we are living in it. Formal professional Counselors who took courses in theology about marriage Counseling be needed, secured offices for Counseling were also needed, because marital issues are mysterious they need confidentiality. Employing trained knowledgeable, professional Counselors, and social workers would be necessary to achieve marriage Counseling.

The finding of this research shows that there were practice of counseling such as spiritual guidance and cultural ways of advice and Biblical teaching.

The researcher of this study found that, in addition to those pre-existing forms of Counseling professional, skilled Counselors whom took course in theology about marriage Counseling were expected to join this job, to have healthy marriage in the community and prevent marriage from divorce and children from displacement to the streets. Social workers would be employed for

better assist the marriage Counseling and secured office for the Counseling in each Churches would be formed to handle those jobs.

The researcher recommend also Churches would open their gates in order to prepare conducive places, or secured office and trained professional Counselors in secular education as well as in theology whom have enough knowledge of God's Word to make counseling in every Churches to prevent their generation from sin, curse and God's wrath. It is also better if Churches would better have social workers if possible in every local Church.

6. 3 Implication for the social work education

It is recalled that the fundamental assumption and role of social work is serving the disadvantaged, marginalized and vulnerable segment of the community, therefore the first implication for social work education should be incorporating marriage Counseling and other social problems or issues as its subject matter and topic in to the curriculum of marriage Counseling education across the different levels of studies.

Commonly the women who are the victims of marital problems which are living in broken marriage or home divorced and girls and boys which are yet coming to marriage are found among the disadvantage segment of the community who need the support of social workers. Therefore, the social workers should have the knowledge about the different aspects of marriages. The other implication for social work professionals should give attention to marital issues, because marriage is the fundamental base for the whole community. Thus from social work perspectives, the social workers in order to have different literature, teaching and learning materials about marriage Counseling. The school of social work needs to encourage students and

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teachers to undertake studies on diversified aspects of marriage counseling, and its major challenge.

Eventually, the school of social work is supposed to develop different articles, journals, and research materials on the issue of marriage Counseling specially about the challenges of marriage Counseling.

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ANNEX: I

In depth interview for key informants structured and open ended questions for the assessment of role of counseling in Christian marriages, for leaders, pastors, and evangelists.

Hello, my name is Berhanu Godu. As part of the fulfillment of my master's thesis project, I am conducting a study the role of Counseling in Christian Marriage the rationale behind the practice of marriage Counseling. I would very much appreciate your participation and collaboration in this study. The information you will give me is very helpful. So please answer all the questions sincerely. Whatever information you provide will be kept strictly confidential and will not be shown to others. Thank you for your help.

Place of interview: _____

Date of interview: _____

Time of interview: _____

ANNEX: II Background of the Respondent

1. Address _____

2. Sex 1. Male. 2. Female _____

3. Age _____

4. Occupation 1. Farming____ 2. Commerce____ 3. CivilServant____

5. Daily laborer____ 5. House Wife _____

6. Education 1. Iliterate 2. Literate _____

7. If literate indicate grade completed _____

8. Marital status 1. Single ____ 2. Married ____ 3. Divorce ____ 4. Widow ____ 5. Separated ____

ANNEX: III Key Informant in-depth Interview

1. What do you know about the practice of Marriage Counseling in Christian marriage?
2. What is the role of Counseling in Christian marriage in Christian community?
3. How did the customary and religious beliefs practiced on people living in marriage?
4. Do you believe marriage Counseling can bring a sustainable peace and good social relationships in Christian community?
5. What are the Challenges of the role of counseling in protestant Christian marriage?
6. . What is the experience of your Church community in marriage counseling?

ANNEX: IVA guide for Focus Group Discussion

1. What do know about the practice of marriage counseling in your Church?
2. What forms of Counseling you know in your Church community?
3. What is the role of Counseling in Christian marriage?
4. To what extent Christian marriage Counseling practiced in your local Church?
5. Discusses the importance of marriage Counseling?
6. What are the major challenges of marriage Counseling faced in your Church community?
7. Would you cooperate to bring social and religious importance of marriage Counseling?
8. Please indicate actions that should be taken to carry out marriage Counseling?
9. Any idea you would like to add? Thank you for your participation.

ANNEX: IIV. ቃለ መጠይቅ

እንደምን አላችሁ ስሜ ብርሃኑ ጎዳ እባላለሁ ለትምህርት የመመሪያ ማሟያ ጽሁፍ ለማቅረብ የመረጥኩት የጥናት ጽሑፍ ርዕስ ጉዳይ ጋብቻን የማማከር ሚና በፕሮስተንት አማኞች ቤተክርስቲያን በሚል ርዕስ ነው። በመሰረት ሀሳብ የጋብቻ ማማከር ልምድ ዙርያ እኔ ስለተሳተፈዎችሁ በጣም አደንቃለሁ። እንዲሁም በዚህ ጥናት ከእኔ ጋር ስለተባበራችሁ በቅድሚያ ላመሰግናችሁ ወዳለሁ በዚህም ጥናት ዙርያ እናንተ የምትሰጡት መረጃዎች በጣም ጠቃሚ እንደሆኑ አምናለሁ። ስለዚህም የሚከተሉትን ጥያቄዎች በቅንነት እንድትመልሱ ሲጋብዝ የተኛውም እናንተ የምትሰጡትን መረጃዎች ሚስጥራማነታቸው በጥብቅ የተጠበቁና ለሌሎች የማይሰሙ መሆናቸውን በዚህ ማረጋገጥ እወዳለሁ።

ስለዚህ እገዛችሁን በጣም እፈልጋለሁ

- * የቃለ መጠየቅ ስፍራ-----
 - * የቃለ መጠየቅ ቀን-----
 - * የቃለ መጠየቅ ሰዓት-----
1. አድራሻው----- 2. ስም----- 3. እድሜ -----
 4. የሰራ ሁኔታ፡ እርሻ-----ንግድ----- የመንግስት ሰራተኛ---የቀን ሙያተኛ--የቤት እመቤት ---
 5. የትምህርት ሁኔታ፡- ያልተማሩ----- የተማሩ -----
 6. ከተማሩ የደረሱት የትምህርት ደረጃክ ፍል -----
 7. የጋብቻ ሁኔታ 1. ያገቡ -----ያላገቡ -----የተፋቱ -----ባልተት ----- የተለያዩ-

ANNEX: X. ቁልፍ የቃለ መጠየቅ ጥያቄዎች

1. በክርስቲያን ጋብቻ ውስጥ ስለማማከር ምን ያውቃሉ ?
2. በክርስቲያን የጋብቻ የማማከር ሂደት በክርስቲያኑ ማህበረሰብ ውስጥ የእርዎ አመለካከት ምን ይሁን ?
3. ያለጋብቻ ማማከር እውቀት በጋብቻ ውስጥ ላሉት የእምነት እና የልማዳዊ ልምዶች እንዴት ይተባበራሉ?

4. የጋብቻ ማማከር ሚና በክርስቲያን ማህበረሰብ ላይ ቀጣይነት ያለው ሰላም እና መልካም ማህበራዊ ግንኙነትን ያመጣል ብሎ ያምናሉ?

5. ስለዚህም የጋብቻ ማማከር በፕሮስታንታንት ክርስቲያን ዘንድ ሚናው ምንድን ነው?

6. የእናንተ ቤተክርስቲያን በጋብቻ ማማከር ዙርያ ያለው ተሞክሮ ምን ይመስላል?

የውይይት መሪ ጥያቄዎች

1. ስለ ጋብቻ ማማከር ምን ታውቃላችሁ ?

2. ምንጎቹ የማማከር አገልግሎት በቤተክርስቲያናችሁ ያለው?

3. የእርሰዎ (የእናንተ) የግል ተሞክሮ ቤተክርስቲያናዊ የማማከር አገልግሎት ምን ያህል ነው ?

4. እስከምንድረስ ነው የክርስቲያናዊ የማማከር አገልግሎት በአጥቢያ ቤተክርስቲያናችሁ?

5. የጋብቻ ማማከር ጥቅሜታ (ፋይዳ) ዙርያ ውይይት አድርጉ

6. ዋነኛው የጋብቻ ማማከር ማህበራዊ ጥቅሜታው ምንድን ነው?

7. ማህበራዊ እና ሀይማኖታዊ የጋብቻ ማማከር ጥቅሜታ እንድመጣ ይተባበራሉ?

8. የጋብቻን ማማከር ለማካሄድ ሊወሰዱ የሚገቡ ተግባራትን ያመልክቱ (ይጠቁሙ)?

9. በዚህ ላይ የምያክሉበት ካለ