

**JIMMA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND
BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY**

(MA PROGRAM IN COUNSELING)



Pastoral Counseling practices Employing among Jimma Town

Evangelical Churches

**A Thesis Submitted to the Department of Psychology in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts**

In Counseling Psychology

By Alemayehu Kebede

March 2017

Jimma, Ethiopia

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LETTER OF THESIS APPROVAL

This is to certify that the thesis prepared by **Alemayhu Kebede** with the topic **“Pastoral Counseling Practices Employing among Jimma town Evangelical churches.”** and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology complies with the regulation of the University and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my father Kebede Tesema and my mother Alemitu Areru.

Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my original work which has not been submitted for any degree at any university. Moreover, this thesis contains no material previously published by any other person except where due acknowledgement has been made. The comments of my advisors and reviewers have been duly incorporated.

Declared by: Alemayehu Kebede

Signature_____

Date_____

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ACRONMY

APA; American Psychologist Association

AACSB: American Association of Counseling Board

AAPC: American Association of pastoral Counselors

CARCEP: The counsel for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Program

CRCC: The Counselor of Rehabilitation Counselor Certification

E.O.C. Ethiopia Orthodox Church

LWVP: Leahy War Victims

NBCC: The National Board for Certified counselors

Abstract

The main objective of the study is to examine the practice of pastoral counseling in Jimma town Evangelical Churches. Kind of counseling that is practiced in Jimma town evangelical Churches, the way of giving counseling to the members, the professional skill of pastoral counselors working in Jimma town Evangelical churches, opportunities and challenges of counseling service in Jimma town Evangelical churches and related issues are discussed. The data were collected from pastors who are serving as counselors and members who are benefited as counselee by using interview guide and open-ended interviews. Secondary data were not gathered because counselors have no documents that they keep during counseling sessions. Researcher used pure qualitative research method and employed purposive counseling technique. The major finding of the study showed that even though modern counseling is not practiced, there is a traditional type of pastoral counseling based on biblical verses. In addition there is the lack of professional pastoral counselors, due to this there is a skill gap among counselors in the church, there is the lack of counseling room in all churches, the lack of sufficient attention for counseling in the church and there is wrong perception about counseling and no practice of modern counseling processes. Therefore, pastors should integrate spiritual counseling with scientific method to serve people in the church and outside the church since the church is being opened to all and spiritual leaders are trusted by all people in the church and outside the church.

CHAPTER ONE

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Counseling is a distinctive profession. It is concerned with wellness, profession, development and situational difficulties as well as with helping persons with particular psychological disorders. It is based on principles and a definition that has developed gradually over years.

Until Pastoral Counseling had got its identity as a separate discipline in North America in, there was the informal practice of the counseling in both Old and New Testament. In this period spiritual leaders such as levities, prophets, Rabbis as well as disciples of Jesus Christ play a significant role in paving the way for the counseling which is emerged scientifically in the first half of the twentieth century (Sisay,2015).Ever since apostolic times, counseling has occurred in the Church as a natural function of corporate spiritual life. Paul made it clear that he considered the Family of God competent to counsel one another when the need arose. He said, I myself am convinced, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, complete in knowledge and competent to counsel one another (Romans 15:14).

Consequently, church's pastoral ministry is the part of counseling that gives instructional advice to the individuals, According to Collins, the church has been experiencing counseling ministry by providing care support for wounded physically, spiritually, psychologically, and for the victims of different issues such as crime and violence for the last 2000 years. Therefore, the church is the assembly of diversified community with different kinds of problems; and has responsibility to serve as counseling institution for the members by being the part of the solution through providing competent counseling services with its appropriate process (Collins, 1988).

Crab stated that at the end of 19th century various religious organizations began to include training of psychiatry and social work into the training of church ministers. In 1963, Rev. Anton Boise began a program of placing theological students in supervised contact with mental patients. In this time, many theological seminaries and other training programs for religious professionals began to include clinical pastoral education as part of theological training. In the Same year, the American Association of pastoral Counselors (AAPC) was founded to provide professional certification for pastoral counselors (Crab, 1977).

In Ethiopia, according to Firehiywot, (cited in Ahmed 2012) traditions of modern counseling service is very young and its experience is limited to religious institutions, hospitals, rehabilitation center, schools, youth centers of HIV/AIDS and orphanage centers (Ahmed,2012).

Another history stated by Julia and Catherine describes that modern counseling came to Ethiopia in the time of war between Ethiopia and Eritrea in such a way the war creating hardships throughout the country and is affecting the health system in particular. As the war consumes resources at increasing levels, hospitals function under stressful conditions. Some immediate and positive results have been seen with the rehabilitation program, thus reinforcing the efforts of nurses, doctors, and technicians (Julia and Catherine, 2000).

As the result, Julia and Cathy traveled to Ethiopia from February 18 through March 1, 2000, on the behalf of Leahy war Victims Fund (LWVF) and established basic rehabilitation services in 11 Hospitals and trained nurses in three areas of certified physical therapist. prosthesis and orthotics. In addition they trained them to give Rehabilitation counseling to the victims (et.al.2000).

According to Amare, the history of counseling had its origins, first in religion, later in other disciplines. In Ethiopia counseling service with its literal and informal meaning /giving advice has an old history, This helping profession was carried by the priest, and

significant others in the community (Amare, 2004). Therefore, professional pastoral counseling which is integrated with scientific method is needed for today's church with its appropriate process.

The major duty of the church is providing pastoral ministry to the members. Pastoral ministry is dealing with the situation in which the pastors have to provide counseling service and care. So, church is commissioned to provide counseling service to the needy people as well as to the families in conflict, to those in grief, to those with depression, anxiety and addictions. But the process of pastoral counseling in Jimma evangelical churches is one way commission that the pastor cover the overall discussion from the beginning they met their client to till they finalize their discussion. As the result the clients may face difficulties. This study aimed at assessing the practice of pastoral counseling in Jimma Evangelical Churches.

1.2. Statement of the problem

The church has better opportunity in comparison with other counseling organizations to give counseling to the people due to two reasons. The first one is a lot of people who are coming to the church experience stress related to emotional and mental health problems regardless of age, gender, faith economic status and ethnicity and expecting that they will get divine and psychological solutions through church ministry. The second one is many people trust religious leaders to share their life secrets. In order to use such opportunity and resolve the problem of the people, the church must use professional pastors. In addition, there is minimal training in pastoral counseling in most seminaries; due to this most pastors are giving counseling services that follows the traditional ways of counseling method which is only based on one way of communication and by their own experiences based on biblical references alone as a means for the service of pastoral counseling. This indicates that there is the lack of proper counseling as the church is being the gathering of many members with different problems and different backgrounds.

In our country, many researchers studied on the need of professional counseling in the counseling and care centers. Abdulhakim Husen is one of the Ethiopian researchers who

worked on his study entitled ‘Assessments on multicultural intervention for autistic Children’. In his findings he suggested that three areas of multiculturalism namely language, accessibility, and culture are barriers affecting multicultural intervention. Therefore, counselors need to have the knowledge of the cultural background of autistic children to be more helpful while treating specific needs using speech therapy, occupational therapy, social interaction enhancement therapy, picture therapy, while teaching them self help skill like toilet usage (Abdulhakim, 2016).

Another researcher Demissie Tefera, worked on the need of professional counseling in correction center (Demissies Tefera,2016). Amare Bulti also worked on the practice, problem and prospective of counseling in secondary schools (Amare, 2004).

All the above researchers studied on the need of counseling, its professional and multicultural aspects, the challenges and the opportunities of counseling in secular organizations of counseling and care centers. They did not touch the need of professional counseling in religious institutions like Jimma Evangelical Churches. Therefore, this research may fill the gap on changing the churches’ traditional and one way counseling or advice giving into professional pastoral counseling that is integrated with scientific method for the current generation (Clebsch and Jackle, 1964, 1967).

Research Questions

1. What kind of counseling is practiced in Jimma Evangelical Churches?
2. How does the church give counseling to the members?
3. Is there professional pastoral counseling practice in Jimma town evangelical Churches?
4. What are the opportunities and Challenges of counseling in the churches?

1.3 General Objective

The overall objective of this research undertaking is to examine the practice of counseling in Jimma town evangelical churches.

1.3.1 Specific Objectives:

1. To assess what kind of counseling is exercised in Jimma town Evangelicals Churches
2. To explore how the church gives counseling to the members
3. To identify the need of professional pastoral counselors in Jimma town evangelical churches
4. To identify Challenges and opportunities of counseling that churches faced

1.4. Significance of the Study

The church is the community of diversified members. To serve these diversified members, both biblical and professional pastoral counseling that addresses the members is important. Otherwise the ministry of the church cannot be effective. So, this research is expected:

1. To bring about awareness concerning pastoral counseling practices in the churches;
2. To help Evangelical Churches and other counseling agencies to exercise professional Pastoral counseling;
3. The investigation could be a bridge for the existing research gap in this area;
4. It will be used as a reference for those who may conduct a research on the same or related topics;
5. The study may also help to create a model for counseling in our socio-religious context.

1.5 Operational Definition

Counseling: The professional relationship that helps the members and the community outside the church to strengthen individuals or groups in their life goals.

Pastoral Counseling: a type of counseling done by pastors, ministers and other persons provide therapy services for the church members and for the people outside the church who are coming for help.

Pastoral care: the activity of pastors in the local congregation by preaching, teaching visiting, strengthening the weak, encouraging, feeding the flock, making provision, shielding, refreshing, restoring, leading by being good, example to change the people's life holy and persuasive.

Church: an institutionalized Christian religion with its distinctive doctrine it could be in a national or international level.

Congregation: a group of Christians gathered together for worship in one building or in local church in Jimma town.

CHAPTER TWO

2. Review of Related Literature

2.1. The Definition of Counseling

In 2010 counseling associations like: American Association of state counseling Board (AASCB) the counsel for accreditation of counseling and related educational programs (CACREP), the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC), the counselor of rehabilitation counselors Certification(CRCC) accepted a consensus definition of counseling as follows: "Counseling is a professional relationship that empowers divers individuals, families and groups to accomplish mental health, wellness, education , and career goals" (APA, 2001).

This definition comprises important points like:

1. Counseling is dealing with wellness, personal growth, career, education and empowerment concerns. This means counselors are involving in people life concerning with social justice and advocate for the oppressed and powerless as a part of a process.
2. Counseling is worked with persons individually, in a group , and in families
3. Counseling is a dynamic process

This definition implies that counselors not only focus on their clients' goals but also they help them to accomplish it. This process comes through using a variety of theories and methods. Therefore counseling involves making choices as well as changes.

2.2. The Definition of pastoral Counseling

Clebsch and Jacl define pastoral counseling as a branch of counseling in which psychologically trained ministers and pastors provide therapy services. Pastoral counselor often integrates modern psychological method with traditional religious training in an

effort to address psycho spiritual issues in addition to the traditional field of counseling services (Clebsch, 1967).

It is also a Christian reaching out with help, encouragement , or support to another at a time of need and is a pastor centered on addressing problems experienced by individuals, families, or groups as they cope with the pressure and life crises (Ibid 1967).

Collins suggested that the purpose of pastoral counseling is to help people achieve lasting change through a time –limited relationship that is structured to provide comfort for troubled persons by enhancing their ability to live their lives more fully and independent (Collins 1988).

2.3. Distinction of pastoral counseling from other forms of counseling

What distinguishes pastoral counseling from other forms of counseling is the role and accountability of the counselor, his understanding and expression of the pastoral relationship. Pastoral counselors are representatives of the central images of life and its meaning affirmed by their religious communities. Thus, pastoral counseling offers a relationship to that understanding of life and faith. Pastoral counseling uses both psychological and theological resources to deepen its understanding of the pastoral relationship. Membership in several organizations that combine theology and mental health has grown in recent years. Some pastoral counselors have developed special training programs to encourage cooperation between religious professionals and counseling professionals on treatment of issues like addiction, since spirituality is an important part of recovery for many people (Ibid, 1988).

Pastoral Counseling is a unique form of treatment which uses spiritual resources as well as psychological understanding for healing and growth. It is provided by certified pastoral counselors, who are not only mental health professionals but who have also in-depth religious and theological training and prepared themselves to help people through religious communities. Religious communities are one of the principal gateways for individuals seeking assistance with depression, grief, marital conflict, substance abuse,

family violence, juvenile delinquency and among other issues and societal problems (Clinebell, 1984).

2.2.4. The pastoral counselor

2.2.4.1. Becoming a pastoral counselor

According to Evangelical Churches' tradition, the calling of the pastors for the spiritual ministry is divided in to two main parts; the first one is the inward calling, in this kind of calling, one who becomes a pastor is expected to recognize why he is called or chosen for the ministry; once the pastor understands his calling and his gift whatever the problem comes he can easily overcome the challenge unless he may frustrates and gives up his service. According to Clebsch, the inward calling may includes; being religious man, spirituality, commitment and devotion to serve the people, knowledge, ethics, holistic approach and other criteria are included. The more the pastors strive to fulfill the criteria the more their spirituality will enhance through time and they become good pastors for themselves and also for others. The second kind of calling for the pastoral activities is the out ward calling this is divided in two, that is horizontal and vertical calling, vertical calling mean the witness that the pastor receives from God and the other is that the witness of the people both are their own significance for the good service of the pastors. Healthy, good physical appearance this is not to say beauty but to say strength (Habte Mariam, 1959).

2.2.5. Characteristics of Pastoral Counselors.

The first and foremost characteristic of a pastoral counselor should be a clear calling from God to the purpose and goal of pastoral counseling service. Beyond calling, a pastoral counselor should be a person who portrays several important qualities which include: “a genuine interest in people, empathy, personal, self-awareness, awareness of values, tolerance of ambiguity, demonstrate integrity, courage and care” (Collins, 1988). His motivations should be genuine and not based on the need for relationships, the need for control, the need to rescue, the need for information, the need for affirmation and acceptance (Collins, 1988). Because the counseling relationship is at the core of the helping process, aspects of the relationship will influence how the counselor should help

the counselee, or whether or not, the counselor should be counseling a particular individual at all (Sisay, 2015).

Collins also affirms that all counseling service is cross-cultural, and thus everything must come under scrutiny to ensure it is in fact helping the counselee. This is true all the way down to the terminology the counselor uses, since theological or psychological terms may not be understood (Collins, 1988). Pastoral counselors must also be able to identify when they should not counsel a certain person, and instead refer them to another counselor who is better able to assist. This is not a sign of failure, but recognition that “no counselor can work effectively with every kind of personal problem”. Furthermore, every counselor will inevitably feel a sexual attraction for a counselee or when the counselee feel sexually attracted to the counselor, thus necessitating the end of the helping relationship, since great care must be taken to protect oneself from increasing vulnerabilities that leads to a fall (Ibid, 1988).

2.2.6. Skills of Pastoral Counseling

According to Nyandro, skills are defined as capacities to perform a set of tasks developed through the acquisition of experience and training. In the context of Evangelical Church, pastors practice counseling in their congregations based on traditional experience. Minor number of church counselors may know about different approaches but these were not so known in the pastoral counseling service. That is why majority of church counselors are still giving counsel in informal and in the traditional way.

Even though many traditional practices can also be useful and provide valuable answers yet in many places workable solution may require going beyond tradition that is seeking help from variety of sources. The world view of Ethiopian in large and all Africans is similar on the subject of belief in the omnipotence of the divine or supernatural power to solve the problem of a person. Both the counselor and the counselee expected readymade solution from the external supernatural being rather than helping the person to work through his/her problem to get a solution with the belief that the divine is helping him or her in the process (Nyandro, 2010).

Collin also states that many Christian approaches are built on the theorist views of Biblical teaching. The ongoing debate on whether the pastor should use the secular skills and techniques of the many schools of counseling and whether there is such a discipline as “Christian counseling” continues. On the other side currently there are many forms of Christian approaches and each Christian counselor seeks to apply his understanding of the Scripture and secular counseling principles to his ministry (Collins, 1988).

2.3. Process of Pastoral counseling

The counseling process is the technique in which to obtain information, identify the problem and to formulate a plan of action. Counseling methods which bring about change, or deal with a person, will grow out of view of man. One's methodology, model in counseling, or method of counseling will come from his presuppositions, of what he believes to be true. No matter how good a counseling personality one has, it will not be effective without some counseling skills. Ministers lacking adequate preparation in psychology and counseling may not know how to gather basic information, how to make a referral, or how to terminate an overly long appointment (Robertson, 1969).

In order to be an effective counselor Shertzer and Stone stressed that one must use the following techniques: acceptance, clarification general lead encouragement, advice information giving, silence, poise, listening. “The average minister is likely to assume a directive attitude in counseling. By directive we mean guiding the interview through questions, making interpretations and offering solutions and answers. It fits in with the commonly accepted idea as to the minister's task and function (Shertzer and Stone, 1980).

2.3.1. Relationship Building

In pastoral counseling service, a proper relationship between the counselor and the client is very important. Van Arkel supports the idea of strong relationship between a client and a counselor. According to Egan, Rapport and Structuring the counselor spends some time with the client making him/her comfortable and the process of counseling begins with building relationship that paves the way for intake. During this relationship building

discussions, the pastoral counselor may lead the counselee to talk about his or her expectations of counseling establishing working relationship is very important. However, the counselor has to take note of the reasons given against establishing a working relationship. Some reasons given can help the counselor to be cautious and critical when establishing a working relationship with clients. The respondents saw the great need of establishing a working relationship in counseling, taking into consideration the biases that might be created. (Kebede, 2004) stated “In Ethiopian culture, secret things are not disclosed for someone not personally known. Self-disclosure to a strange person is scary and shameful. One way of dealing with fear of self-disclosure of a counselee may be postponing initial information gathering to next sessions until a person is ready and feels safe for self-disclosure.” (Van Arkel,2005).

2.3.2. Gathering Information

The data gathered necessitate getting data over a number of sessions to learn either general or specific facts about the client. It involves specific skills such as observation, inquiry, associating facts, recording information; forming hypotheses. According to (Egan, 2007:40), gathering data and identifying assets: The counselor focuses on the family of the client or his/her community. It is important that a counselor know how to ask questions in order to get as much information as possible.” Questions help greatly in giving insight, bringing interaction, and helping toward solutions. Use questions to gain information and to uncover thinking that is below the surface (Watke, 1992).

Kebede (2004) stated the pastoral counselor should use open-ended questions unless he or she needs specific information because Ethiopians are defensive to respond to specific questions. They usually ask, “Why?” before responding to such question.

Listening:- Listening refers to the therapist’s ability to capture and understand the messages communicated by clients. Total listening includes: listening to and understanding the clients verbal messages; observing and reading the client’s nonverbal behavior- posture, facial expressions, movements, tone of voice and the like. The

counselor should listen to the whole person in context of social settings of life, listening to slants or distortions or things that need to be challenged at a later stage (Egan, 2007).

2.3.3. Defining the Problem in Counseling

Information gathered from the various sources must be worked together. What the counselee said must be reviewed in the light of subsequent statements and their body language to arrive at a Biblical diagnosis and present that diagnosis to the counselee information received is correct and relevant. Accurate information is vital for subsequent problem solving, as you interact; find the evidence, if any, for then beliefs which they hold.” (Watke, 1992).

Once the information collected is assimilated or analyzed, the counselor must be able to define the immediate problem. Then can go onto further aspect of the problem solving. Listen selectively (relative to needs), listen responsively, empathetically, not proposing a solution until you have understood the problem.

2.4. Determining Changes

Egan states that the goal of counseling is usually achieved if the counselee is involved in the counseling process. Hence it is important that the counselee wants to make the desired change. It is the counselor’s role to match the desired change with the felt and real needs of the counselee (Egan, 2007).

2.5. Resources of pastoral Counseling

Compared to other forms of counseling, pastoral counseling is unique that it has its own resources which aren’t formal; however the faith community has potential for counseling. Some of them are the following: Religious resources: prayer, Bible studies, the sacraments, anointing with oil, the laying of hands, the exercise of spiritual gifts, devotional religious literature and the fellowship (unity) of believers. These resources for counseling are used in an informal sense in the faith community. Matured ministers

concerning human resources of counseling in church it can be divided in two parts; the first are those who are full time ministers including the pastor, evangelists, teachers, elders, and others in different ministry divisions. (Kebede, 2004). There are also experienced and spiritually matured ministers in faith communities though they do not have training in counseling. They are willing to work with the pastoral counselors. A pastor can call upon the resources of a supernatural God that is interested in the daily working of our life. He can also utilize the gifts of the Holy Spirit such as the gift of knowledge, gift of discernment and gift of wisdom in his counseling service (Tang, 2006). The laity counselors while the scope and type is limited it still encompasses the large amount of the counseling that is done in Church. Jay Adams pointed out that counseling as the work of every Christian: he quote from scripture in “Romans 15:14; 15:1; Galatians 6:1; Colossians 3:16” to show every Christian, who is spiritual, who is Spirit-filled should be involved in the work of counseling, he reasoned that since counseling is the process by which one Christian restores another to a place of usefulness to Christ in His Church. The command in the Word of God is very clear that we "restore" any brothers or sisters whom God providentially places in our pathway day by day.”(Adams, 1981:1).

2.6. Referrals

When one going to encounter some things that needs the help of someone with more wisdom and experience, referring may be important. Referring can be a great damage when it is done by someone who doesn't know what they are doing. However, referral is very important when things become beyond our capacity. We need to refer our client to another person or trained professional or just more experienced than us who is able to help the person in crisis. If the presenting concern is beyond your clinical training, time and expertise, a good referral may be the most effective and efficient intervention.

To whom should we refer our counselee, is the second key question. The answer is to wise people whom we trust to keep confidentiality and legally recognized professionals or centers. According to Collins, it's important to remember that within each counseling

profession, there is an ethically and legally recognized scope of practice based on education, training and experience.(Collins, 1988).

Sometimes our best referral will be to a counseling center. In many group practices, psychologists serve as clinical directors guiding their teams of social workers, marriage and therapists and professional counselors, while retaining consulting psychiatrists on their medical staffs. How should you go about making a referral? Our ability to make a wise referral rests on how well-informed we are about the counseling services available in our community or closest major city. A wise referral involves information-gathering. This will require us to make personal contact with various therapists and group practices in our area. We'll be glad if we take these steps before we need to refer (Lulu, 2006).

2.7. Challenge in Pastoral Counseling

Counseling is one of the things pastors are obliged to do, but most of them have inadequate training in it (June, 2010). Yet, pastoral counseling is simultaneously less and more than psychotherapy, as the pastor is more than a counselor, but less involved in a long-term, in-depth helping process that attempts to bring fundamental change in the counselee's personality, spiritual life, and ways of thinking. However, most religious leaders have neither the time of the training in psychotherapy to do extensive in depth work. If a situation or crisis requires more than a few informal sessions, it's time to see a certified pastoral counselor (Collins, 1988).

2.8. Some Common Types of Pastoral Counseling Delivered in the church

According to Clinebell (1984) the following are some of the common types of pastoral counseling practiced in the evangelical churches.

2.8.1. Multicultural Counseling

Multicultural counseling is a type of therapy which takes into account both racial and diversities of the client, further taking into consideration their cultural belief, sexual orientation, spirituality, ability and any disabilities, social class and economics and the

potential for any cultural bias, by the practitioners (Clebsch and Jaekle, 1967). It takes place when a counselor and client are from differing cultural groups in multicultural counseling. The counselor and the client need to discuss techniques that will be beneficial to the client. The counselor needs to be more aware of his or her limitations in counseling skills. It is vital to have cultural skills in order to serve multicultural populations in the most productive way to facilitate rapport. By being culturally aware and recognizing how culture will affect the counseling process, this cultural awareness will support the counselor in developing an empathic understanding towards clients. Therefore, cross-cultural awareness facilitates the counselor's knowledge, understanding, and respect for culturally diverse clients will make the counselor a multicultural competent counselor.

Pedersen (1993) suggest that counselors adopt a culture centered " or a culture within the person" perspective. This perspective involves an awareness of the broad spectrum of similarities and differences in society's norms that govern interpersonal behavior as well as the many social systems variables that contribute to a client's worldview. By maintaining the notion of "culture in the person," counselors are better able to identify the relevant social variables that influence a client's behavior. To effectively do this, counselors need to develop culture –centered counseling competence.

Ahmed, Wilson and Jones (2011) also believed that the main features of cultural competence are counselor self-awareness, knowledge about culture, and skills. This belief is consistent with the multicultural counseling competence. To become culturally competent, it is imperative to have cultural knowledge. Their second important ingredient for multicultural competence is cultural skill; A skilled counselor utilizes the interventions that are client based and which serve client's needs (Ahmed, Wilson, Jones, 2011).

Accordingly, Multiculturalism is a constitution of all these heterogeneous values together by honoring to each other. Consequently, people who are coming to the church are with such personal identities and backgrounds. Therefore, the church as a multicultural institution or the group of people with diversified ethnicity should give counseling to all

without partiality based on their identity and their backgrounds. To apply this, it is very important to the church leaders and pastors as counselors they need to understand how the characteristics of counseling may clash with the values of some cultural groups, and recognize the norm biases inherent in assessment instruments. They also should advocate creating positive change for the delivery of counseling services to culturally diversified clients (Stewart, 2001). In addition, as multicultural counselor they need to take into account both racial and ethnic diversities of the client, further taking into consideration their sexual orientation, spirituality, ability and any disabilities, social class and economics, and the potential for any cultural bias by the practitioner. Simply this means taking into consideration to their client's cultural beliefs and the effect that can have on their treatment.

2.8.1.1. Jimma Evangelical Churches as Multicultural Church

According to Yonas Seifu since the early 1800s thousands of people were migrated to Jimma in addition to Oromo people from Gibe kingdom due to its attractive market from neighboring and distant regions like: Amhara from Gojam, Showa, Gonder, Wollo and other linguistic/ ethnic groups like: Dawro, Konta, Timbaro, Kanbata, Hadiya, Qabena, Kaffa, Gurage, Tigre from Tigray and Eritera and some other ethnic groups. This made Jimma is the home for diversified inhabitants and multicultural community (Yonas, 2007) Likewise the members of evangelical church are diversified ethnic groups and a multicultural community.

2.8.4. Individual counseling

Individual counseling is the type of counseling focused on the individual's immediate or near future concerns. Individual counseling may encompass career counseling and planning, grief after a loved one dies or dealing with problems at a job before they become big. Individual counseling is a one-on-one discussion between the counselor and the client, who is the person seeking treatment (Clinebell, 1967).

1.8.3. Group counseling

Group counseling is the type of counseling with multiple individuals facing a similar concern. The strength in group counseling is that if you have 3, 5 or 10 people together all facing the same issue or similar issues, then they can work together. For example, group counseling is common for those in the midst of a divorce. The individuals in the group act as a source of insight and support while reinforcing the idea that each individual is not the only one experiencing these problems (Clinebell, 1967).

1.8.4. Family counseling

Family counseling is the type of counseling focused on family dynamics, immediate concerns, and the near future. Family counseling, which brings together the members of a family as a group, is similar to group counseling. An issue that affects a family, like disease, death or simply people not getting along, may all warrant family counseling (Collins, 1988).

CHAPTER THREE

3. Research Methodology

This section presents the research design, the study area, the scope of the study, the target population, sampling and sampling technique, instruments of the data collection, procedure of the data collection, method of the data analysis, and ethical consideration.

3.1 Research Design

Since this research is focusing on pastoral counseling practices among Jimma evangelical churches, the researcher used a qualitative research method and it employed the descriptive design in which qualitative data was utilized. Because it allows the researcher to understand about the population, based on a purposive sampling and the study employ a qualitative method involving pastors those who serve in the church and members who are counseled.

According to Cresswell, qualitative research is a research design focuses on natural setting where human behavior or events occur where it focuses on the perception and experience of participants (Cresswell, 2009). It is also interested in the depth of the data rather wideness and supplemented by detail description of events to in depth understanding (Hanna, 2014).In addition, it helps to investigate the problem from the words of the participants.

This qualitative research is employing descriptive method. Descriptive method is used to obtain information concerning the current status of the phenomena to describe what exists with respect to variables or conditions in a situation and it is useful where it is not possible to test and measure the large number of samples needed (Afari, 2011). In the case of this research, qualitative descriptive method was chosen by the researcher because the main focus of this research is to assess what kind of counseling is practiced; to explore how the church gives counseling, to see professional aspect of the pastors and to identify the opportunities and challenges of counseling. Therefore, qualitative descriptive method is appropriate for this study.

3.2 Study Area

The researcher conducted this research in Jimma town. Jimma town is the capital of Jimma zone which is found in Ethiopia Oromia region located at South-West of Ethiopia in a distance of 335 Kms from Addis Ababa the capital of Ethiopia. Its geographical location is approximately 7 & 41 N latitude and 360 & 50E longitude (Yonas, 2002).

3.3. Scope of the Study

This research is conducted in Jimma town Evangelical Churches. The study was focus on the counseling practice of Jimma Evangelical churches. In addition, the study was delimited to the selected pastors and members /clients in Jimma town due to time and financial constraints.

3.4. Target population

The study was conducted in Jimma town Evangelical churches which are organized under Evangelical Church Fellowship. There are about 34 congregations under Jimma Evangelical fellowship office. 16 of them are main churches and the rest 18 are duplications of main churches with the same name and the same doctrine. Therefore, the researcher selected 10 churches purposively among 16. The target groups of the study were pastors who are giving counseling service and members who were counseled among Jimma Evangelical churches. Thus, the researcher selected 10 pastors who are giving counseling services all of them are male since there are no female pastors at all in the selected churches. He also selected 10 members who are counseled by the pastors in those 10 selected churches. The selection was based on gender and educational status. Accordingly, 6 of 10 were females and 4 of 10 were males.

3.5 Sampling and Sampling Technique

The researcher used pure qualitative method and he also employed purposive sampling technique to select informants who were available, interested, and gave consent to get

relevant information which can serve the purpose. This sampling technique helps the researcher to reach the target sample quickly because it is a non-probability sample that is selected based on the Characteristics of a population and the objective of the study (Crossman, 2017).

3.6. Instruments of Data Collection

In order to gather data, only primary sources were used because no congregation has secondary document since they do not have any recording documents of personal information of the client when they were giving counseling. They do not have such experience since they do not follow formal counseling procedure. So, interview guide and open ended interviews were administered. In addition, the study was conducted by using open ended interview both for pastors who are working as pastoral counselors in the selected churches and for the selected members who are counselee.

3.7. Procedure of Data Collection

Letter was written from Jimma University College of education and behavioral science, Department of psychology to Evangelical churches fellowship office and permission was secured from Jimma Evangelical churches Fellowship office to the selected congregations. The informants were selected with a balanced gender.

3.8. Method of Data analysis

Qualitative method was employed, information was collected from the target group and it was analyzed by qualitative description. The qualitative data collection was analyzed by using qualitative techniques such as: thematic data analysis, direct quotations, in-depth word description and narration.

3.9. Ethical Consideration

First the administrative ethical procedure was followed and then willing, available and volunteer informants were selected. Consent and interview guides were prepared in

English and were translated in Amharic. The consent agreement and gathered information were secured. The direction was told to participants in such a way that their response has no rights or wrong answer for the interview questions so that they could answer it based on their own opinions. No harmful situation was created due to interview questions. Time was given to ask questions and was answered before they began answering the interview questions. After each informant had finished answering interviews they were given thank respectfully. Confidentiality of participants was kept.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

This chapter discusses on the major findings of the study obtained from the interview of pastors who are serving as counselors and members who were counselees. The chapter has five sections: the first section is profile of participants and the rest four are findings based on four specific objectives. Those specific objectives are: to assess counseling practices, to explore how the church gives counseling to the members, to identify professional aspect of pastoral counselors working in the church and to identify challenges and opportunities of counseling that churches faced.

4.1. List of Tables

Table 1. Pastors as counselors

No.	Name	Sex	Age	Educational Level	Marital status
1	Participant 01	Male	27	BA	Unmarried
2	Participant 02	Male	60	BA	Married
3	Participant 03	Male	38	Diploma	Married
4	Participant 04	Male	44	Certificate	Married
5	Participant 05	Male	29	MA	Unmarried
6	Participant 06	Male	36	Diploma	Married
7	Participant 07	Male	45	BA	Married
8	Participant 08	Male	45	BA	Married
9	Participant 09	Male	34	MA	unmarried
10	Participant 10	Male	40	Diploma	unmarried

Table 2. Profile of Counselees

No.	Name(Code)	sex	Age	Educational Level	Marital Status
1	Participant 11	Male	30	BA	Married
2	Participant 12	Female	40	BA	Married
3	Participant 13	Female	26	12	Married
4	Participant 14	Male	34	BA	Married
5	Participant 15	Female	22	Diploma	Unmarried
6	Participant 16	Female	23	College	Unmarried
7	Participant 17	Male	32	BA	Married
8	Participant 18	Female	17	10 th	Unmarried
9	Participant 19	Male	42	BA	Married
10	Participant 20	Female	35	BA	Married

4.2. Accessibility of Pastoral Counseling

Informants responded that there is counseling service in the church but the accessibility is less due to two reasons. These reasons are the lack of awareness about counseling and the number of counselors is not fitting with the number of counselees.

4.2.1. Awareness about Counseling

Participants answered the question ‘How do you define counseling on your own opinion?’ Most of the participants defined counseling as sharing the problems to someone who is trusted and getting solution from that person through his advice. But, one discussant from Wongel Arinet church said ‘*counseling is the service of helping individuals, families, institutions to make them fruitful in their life.*’ In addition, participant from Misgana church stated that ‘counseling is getting knowledge from elders and wise men.’ Likewise one informant from Meserete Kiristos Church defined ‘*counseling is life changing discussion with wise people by sharing my burden and getting solution from that person.*’

The above definition indicates that there is the lack of awareness about counseling among Evangelical Churches because it opposes the professional definition.

4.2.3. Number of Clients and Counselors

Counseling is one of the church services that should be delivered for all in the church. But due to the limited number of pastors, churches cannot deliver it properly. In most churches there is only one pastor to oversee, more than three hundred members. So this number of counselors made counseling difficult to address all the members. Accordingly, participant from Genet church among pastors responded the following:

“Counseling in the church is not yet properly started. For 1000 members only 2 pastors are ordained in our congregation. This indicates that the church is not giving due attention to counseling as other ministries. Therefore, we need to have more counselors among member and counseling should not be considered as only the pastor’s duty since the pastor is busy with other services.”

Participant from Mekane Yesus Congregation in addition explained his experience. He said that the number of counselors is not fitting with the number of counselees. How can one pastor give counseling for more than 600 members? Therefore the church should look for another solution. Similarly, the rest of the pastors also believed that few pastors cannot cover the need of counseling for all members in the congregation.

4.3. Counseling Practices in the Church

Pastors and counselees were asked about the problems raised during counseling session and they responded that problems the clients experienced as follows.

Participant from Genet church responded that he came to the pastor due to conflict between him and his wife. He said:

I came to the pastor and told him about the problem created between me and my wife. Then he first counseled me alone and then he called both my wife and me together. He gave us guidance to exercise bold discussion in our marriage life. After three sessions we realized that our problem is sexual dissatisfaction. Finally we got solution for our problem by ourselves.

Another participant from Amanuel Church explained that “she came to the pastor for counseling due to hopelessness because of HIV aids.” After she knew that there is HIV in her blood, she felt hopelessness. After she came to the pastor for counseling the pastor helped her by sharing her story from the Bible and prayed. Then her attitude was changed. Likewise one participant from Wongel Arinet church stated that she was set free from experiencing emotional problems like stress, fear not trusting males, hating males because she was raped by her relative at the age of 10. The pastor took many sessions for counseling including preaching and prayer until she gate rid of those emotional problems. Finally her behavior was changed and she witnessed that she is satisfied with the counseling she got.

One participant from Muluwongel church also stated that she got solution for stress due to disconnection of relationship between her and her boy friend and through intervention of the pastor after three sessions. Similarly the other respondent from Mekane Yesus church answered that she has got pre-marriage counseling to prepare herself for marriage. In addition, a participant from Misgana Church due to spiritual instability came to the church and got counseling from the pastor and he witnessed that he got change in his life through counseling and prayer of the pastor. But, one of the respondents from Adis Kidan church complained that counseling he got was insufficient because when he came to the pastor for counseling due to the bankruptcy of his trade, he explained to the pastor that he could not sleep well; he had emotional disturbances like anxiety and fear. The pastor considers the problem is satanic and he laid his hand on his head starting rebuking Satan saying “leave him in Jesus Name” repeatedly and he thought that the counselee is unconscious, but he was conscious. This made the counselee so irritated. He responded

the following when the researcher asked him about how counseling session was going on. He said:

I believe that God can heal from any bondage through prayer but relating every problem with satanic attack is wrong in my opinion. I could be happy if the pastor gave me time to hear my problem first and then if he pray. He immediately started prayer without listening the detail of my problem. I was so irritated. Then I decided not to come again. Finally I went to Jimma hospital and got treatment from psychiatry and clinical counselor. Now I am very well.

He also indicated his view in such a way that pastors should get additional psychological trainings on counseling in addition to theology. Because most of them are connecting emotional and mental problems with satanic attack. Such problem may be created due to the lack of knowledge about psychology and counseling.

4.3.1. How counselees come to the Church

Concerning how counselees come to the church the participants of the study answered according to their opinion. Few participants believed counselees were coming to the church by hearing announcement from the pulpit every Sundays. Others stated that some people were coming to church for counseling by hearing witnesses from people who were benefited by church counseling. Some answered; counselees are coming to church because they expect there is a solution for their problem from church since they believe that there is supernatural power that sets them free from their problem. Most participants also replied; members were getting counseling by calling the pastor to their home or through phone call when they face the problem.

4.3.2. Effectiveness and Impact of Counseling

In this regard the researcher delivered a question “Do you think is the counseling delivered sufficient?” and counselors all except participant from Adis Kidan church responded that their clients were with diversified results after counseling. Some are

changed in their life, some are not; few came back with reoccurred problem, some came back with new problem. But participant from Adis Kidan church explained; in his experience one client complained the delivered counseling was not effective. He said that his client who came with the problem of the loss of trade after he delivered him counseling he prayed for his loss, emotional and spiritual problem, the counselee complained with ineffectiveness of the delivered counseling. The reason was rebuking the problem as if it was satanic attack.

On the part of counsees they gave the answer for the interview question in terms of self-esteem and spiritual well being. All except one participant explained that they have got attitudinal changes, they felt they are the person of worth, they decided to attend fellowship programs, forgiving people who hurt them. But one participant said that *“I am not pleased with the counseling delivered to me because the counselor did not listen to me properly and he did not give me attention and enough time as a counselor instead he immediately started prayer. That made me sad.”*

4.4. Professional Aspect of Church Counseling

4.4.1. Pastors as Counselors

Pastoral counselors are expected to be psychologically trained ministers who provide therapy services by integrating modern psychological method with traditional religious training as an effort to address psycho spiritual issues in addition to the religious field of counseling services (Clebsch, 1969).

Accordingly, in some theological seminaries courses like introduction to psychology and counseling were given to the pastors. But in the case of Jimma Evangelical churches not all pastors have joined seminaries. Among ten respondent four pastors have got their degree in theology and have taken psychology and counseling courses but still they do not apply it while they are giving counseling services. The rest six are with different kinds of diploma and degrees. One pastor is the graduate of civil engineering in degree, the other one has Masters of Business Administration, three pastors have diploma in

theology and one pastor has certificate in theology. Those who got diploma and certificate in theology did not take psychology and counseling courses. The above responses indicated that there were lacks of professionally trained counselors in the church.

4.4.2. Counseling Process

Robertson defines counseling process as the technique in which to obtain information, identify the problem, and formulate a plan (Robertson, 1969). Shetzer and Stone also believe that one counselor must use counseling techniques to provide effective service (Shetzer and Stone, 1980). This issue is responded by the participants under the following four main counseling processes.

4.4.2.1. Relation Building

According to Kebede relation building is a very important part of counseling process. If the relationship is built properly, the counselee can be bold enough to express himself and the counseling service could be easy (Kebede, 2008). In this regard, participants of this study responded their experiences as follows.

Among pastors (counselors); Participant from Mekane Yesus church explained that he accepted counselee in a lovely approach and prepared suitable time according to his will. Then he invited the counselee for prayer before starting the session. Another participant from Wongel Arinet church also said when the counselee comes to him for counseling, he let counselee speak his problem and the counselor listen. Then the counselor shares the counselee the same experience from the Bible by reading the scripture. All the counselors have similar experiences in the relation building.

In counselee's side only one participant from Adis Kidan church complained that he was not treated well by his counselor. His counselor did not listen to him well and not accepted him in a lovely approach. Due to this, he decided not to come again. But the rest

participants responded similarly that their counselors have accepted in lovely and respectful manner.

4.4.2.2. Planning and documenting

Kebede stated that, to give successful counseling service the counselor needs to have a plan and a format for documenting the information which is collected from the client (Kebede, 2008). Accordingly, all counselors except one participant responded that they are not using any documentation format and the researcher could not find any documented secondary data. They explained that they do not have such experiences. They are only using the session for discussion when the client comes to them for counseling. But they said that they are making oral appointment with the client. Few participants responded that they are taking a note on their personal note book. But one participant explained that he used some different experience. He said that he was using recorder and video while he was giving counseling to his client but he did not allow the researcher to watch and listen to it for the sake of keeping confidentiality.

4.4.2.3. Making the Counselee Part of the Solution

The main objective of counseling is helping the counselee to make him the part of the solution by providing different alternatives. But there is different experiences among Jimma Evangelical churches. Most of the pastors were not providing alternatives to the clients and they are not trying to make the clients the part of the solution. The counselors are providing solution to their clients. Only two counselors responded that they provide alternatives to their clients to make them the part of the solution.

Very few participants responded that they were encouraging their clients to look for solution by him/her and they were providing different kinds of alternatives to him. When the researcher asked them how they could use this method they answered that they have taken informal training by Jimma University hospital on HIV AIDS prevention and health care in different times and they also read books written by professional counselors.

But the rest responded that they are experiencing traditional way of counseling that is reading Biblical verses, praying and giving advice.

The researcher asked counselors why they do not make their clients the part of solution and they responded focusing on three reasons:

Some of the participants responded clients have a misunderstanding of counseling. They understood it as something that the client brings problem with him and their duty is providing biblical verses and preaching those verses and praying with the person and giving him advices to do and not to do finally sending him back to his home. They also said that pastors have not taken any training in this regard.

Others responded that their clients expect the counselor has better knowledge than the counselee. They believe that this hinders them to make the counselee part of the solution. The rest also informed that the clients were coming to them with the expectation of finding solution from counselor.

Consequently, the above responses may indicate that there was gap of skill among counselors in the church. That is why the church counselors were looking for solutions by themselves without counselee's involvement. Egan states that the goal of counseling is usually achieved if the counselee is involved in the counseling process. Hence it is important that the counselee wants to make the desired change. It is the counselor's role to match the desired change with the felt and real needs of the counselee (Egan, 2007).

4.4.2.4. Referral

Concerning referral, counselors responded six different answers according to their own experiences. These are:

- “I am sending my clients to psychiatrist”,
- “ I am sending my clients to lawyers”,
- “I am sending my clients to Women affairs office”,

- “I am sending my clients to someone who has more wisdom than me”,
- “I am sending my clients to professional counselors”,
- “I am sending my clients to hospital”.

Accordingly, the researcher provided the following question ‘Where do you refer when the problem became beyond your capacity?’

One participant from Kalehiwot church responded that he referred to women affairs office. He said *“Once I have been counseling one girl from university who faced problem of sexual harassment from her teacher, I took her to Women affairs office and the office found the solution by accusing the teacher at court”*

Most participants answered that they referred to hospital. Specially, participant from Genet church explained his experience that he counseled a person with sexual impotence and referred him to hospital. Some also said that they referred to psychiatry when the problem is related to mental problem. Others explained that they referred to lawyer. One participant from Mekane Yesus Congregation in addition shared his experience that he referred couples who wanted to be divorced due to conflict to Christian lawyers since he expected that those lawyers can help these couples both with law and Biblical knowledge. Few of the participants again gave additional answer that they sometimes referred to person whom they expect that he is more experienced than them and have more wisdom. Finally, one participant from Arinet church in addition answered that he referred one of his client who was raped at the age of 10 by her relative to professional counselor.

4.6. Opportunities and Challenges

4.6.1. Opportunities

The researcher asked the question ‘What are the opportunities and the challenges of counseling in the church?’ for the participants. Participants reported the type of challenges according their experience.

Accordingly, participants indicated four points as opportunities for the church to give counseling service. Some participants believed that the church is being opened for all who are troubled and who wants holistic solution both spiritual and physical. Participant from Mekane Yesus congregation said

“My church has a motto which is called serving holistic personality of human being, According to this motto Mekane Yesus gives service for soul and body of all human beings without religious partiality. This church built rehabilitation centers and hospitals in many places in Ethiopia.”

Few of the participants revealed that every people trusts spiritual leaders so that they do not afraid to share their life secretes. So, this could be one of the opportunities for church counseling services.

Others also answered that availability of professionals among believers is one of the best opportunities for the church. There are professionals in the church among believers. If the church uses these professionals, they can give training to pastors and can give counseling services at church for who are troubled by integrating scientific counseling method with religious method.

Participants from Muluwongel and Amanuel churches believed that the availability of referral hospital in the town is an opportunity to the church counseling service in two ways. The first one is church counselors can refer when they faced mental and physical problems and the second benefit is the church can invite professionals to give counseling trainings for her ministers so that she can give the better spiritually and psychologically integrated counseling to the members.

The above responses indicated that there are favorable conditions in the church for counseling but the church has not yet use them properly.

4.6.2. Challenges

The respondents answered different kinds of issues as a challenge for church counseling.

One participant from Mekane Yesus church said

“There is wrong perception about counseling both among counselors and counselees. Most counselees are coming to us to find solution from us. When we are delivering them different kinds of alternatives, they are not accepting it and they are also expecting immediate solution. That is a great temptation in my counseling ministry. On the other hand I have been discussing with my colleagues about counseling they understand that counseling is something that counselors are giving advice and finding solution for their clients.”

Likewise, one discussant from Genet church also believed that there was a wrong perception about counseling in such a way that he understood counseling as giving instruction to counselee to do and not to do.

Some participants explained one of the challenges in counseling service was inability of clients to express their problem because most of their clients were not bold enough and unable to express their problem so that this hinders counselors to give proper counseling. one participant from Meserete Kiristos church in addition said

“This is the great challenge in our counseling ministry. That is why sometimes our counseling is becoming ineffective and our clients were not being stable in one church they going here and there from church to church to find solution from the minister they expect that he will give them solution.”

Skill gap among counselors was informed as a challenge in the church counseling. Because only three counselors replied that they have taken introduction to counseling and psychology courses in addition to theology and they have not yet applied it properly. Participant from Adis Kidan church informed that he is the graduate of civil engineering

who has not taken any training in counseling and participants from Hiwot Berhan and Amanuel churches explained that they have got their MA in Business Administration. The rest three participants replied that they have diploma in theology but did not take counseling related courses. The last one participant from Meserete Kiristos church told that he has got certificate in theology but he did not take counseling courses at all.

Lack of counseling room was also a challenge mentioned by the participants. All participants replied that there was no separated and attractive room prepared for counseling service. They said that they use pastor's office for counseling. But they believed that separate attractive counseling room is needed for counseling. They also complain that this indicates the church was not giving attention for counseling as other services.

Lack of sufficient attention for counseling in the church was another challenge informed by the participants. All counselors complained that church did not give due attentions for counseling serves. Participant from Mekane Yesus church said the church did not consider this service as one of the spiritual gifts even though it is mentioned in the scripture (Romans 12 Verse 8). That is why proper counseling room was not prepared for counseling but for other services like prayer, teaching and the like the church provided rooms. Participant from Misgana church also complained that the church missed one very useful ministry that is counseling and not giving attention to it. She did not allocate budget for this serves as she did for other ministries. This might be due to the lack of knowledge. He also said we can save many youths through this serves from different kinds of addictions and bad life. One participant from Amanual church also mentioned that she shared her problem with HIV aids to the counselor, and the counselor told her to stop taking CD4 then she went to the doctor and the doctor told her to continue taking CD4 otherwise she will die.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. DISCUSSION

The purpose of the study is to examine the practice of pastoral counseling in Jimma town Evangelical Churches. The study includes the kind of counseling practiced in Jimma town evangelical Churches, the way how the church gives counseling to the members, the professional skill of pastoral counselors working in Jimma town Evangelical churches, opportunities and challenges of counseling service in the Evangelical churches and related issues are discussed.

The research findings were discussed based on the research objectives and research questions. Accordingly, findings of the research were discussed under four major issues. The first one is the accessibility of counseling in the church, the second one is the practice of counseling in the church, the third one is the professional aspect of church counseling and the last one is opportunities and challenges that the churches faced in their counseling ministry.

Accessibility of Counseling in the Church

It is reported that there is counseling service in the church but the accessibility was less due to two reasons. These reasons were the lack of awareness about counseling and the number of counselors is not fitting with the number of counselees.

Awareness about Counseling: most of the participants defined counseling as sharing the problem to someone to get solution from that person through his advice for the question. Therefore, this response indicates that there is lack of knowledge about what counseling is among pastors and members.

They also didn't realize that counseling is a professional relationship that encourages people. Instead they think that it is a kind of advice giving done by every spiritual leader. They also define counseling as sharing personal problem to someone who is a close

friend or relative and getting immediate solution from that person. This definition opposes the definition that is accepted by American Associations of counseling. According to these associations, “Counseling is a professional relationship that empowers diverse individuals, families and groups to accomplish mental health, wellness, education, and career goals” (APA, 2001). But none of my respondents understood counseling as a professional therapy.

Number of Clients and Counselors

Counseling is one of the church services that should be delivered for all in the church. But due to the limited number of pastors, churches cannot deliver it properly. In most churches there was only one pastor to oversee more than three hundred members. So this number of counselors made counseling difficult to address all the members. Most of the respondents believed that few pastors cannot cover the need of counseling for all members in the congregation.

Afari (2011) stated that inadequate professional in the counseling institutions contributes to the inaccessibility of counseling to the counselees. If the number of counselors is inadequate the counseling would not address deeper aspects of situations and would not lead to self-actualization (Afari, 2011).

Counseling Practices in the Church

Both pastors and counselees responded that problems the clients experienced were: emotional problems like fear, anxiety, disturbance and other issues such as hopelessness due to HIV/AIDS, inter-relation problems, spiritual instability, sexual dissatisfaction between couples and economic problem.

Most respondents suggested that pastors should get additional psychological trainings on counseling in addition to theology. Sometimes some pastors were not allowed medical treatment others were allowing medical treatment with prayer and most are connecting

emotional and mental problems with satanic attack. Such problem may be created due to the lack of knowledge.

How counselees come to the Church: participants responded that there are four ways counselees are coming to the church for counseling. The first one was the church's announcement on Sundays worship time, the second one was members have expectation of getting solution for their problem when they are coming to the pastor, the members are calling the pastor by phone when they face problem and the fourth one is when they hear witness from someone who is benefited from counseling.

Effectiveness and Impact of Counseling: As it was stated in interview, counselors reported that their clients were seen with diversified results after counseling. They mentioned four results. Those were:

1. Some were changed in their life, some were not;
2. Few came back with reoccurred problem,
3. Some came back with new problem and
4. Very few Clients complained the delivered counseling was not effective.

On counselees' part, it was reported in terms of self-esteem and spiritual well being. Most of them explained that they had got attitudinal changes, they felt they were the person of worth, they decided to attend fellowship programs, forgiving people who hurt them. But few complained that it was not effective.

Professional Aspect of Church Counseling

Pastors as Counselors

According to Clebsch pastoral counselors are expected to be psychologically trained ministers who provide therapy services by integrating modern psychological method with traditional religious training as an effort to address psycho spiritual issues in addition to the religious field of counseling services (Clebsch, 1969).

Accordingly, the educational background of the pastors was mentioned as one of the problem for the church counseling because all the pastors of Jimma Evangelical churches have not joined seminaries. Among ten respondents four pastors have got their degree in theology and have taken psychology and counseling courses but still they do not apply it while they were giving counseling services. The rest six are with different kinds of diploma and degrees. One pastor is the graduate of civil engineering in degree which has no relation with counseling service, the other one has Masters of Business Administration, three pastors have diploma in theology and one pastor has certificate in theology. Those who got diploma and certificate in theology did not take psychology and counseling courses. The above responses indicate that there is the lack of professionally trained counselors in the church.

Counseling Process

Robertson defines counseling process as the technique in which to obtain information, identify the problem, and formulate a plan (Robertson, 1969). Shetzer and Stone also believe that one counselor must use counseling techniques to provide effective service (Shetzer and Stone, 1980). This issue is discussed under the following four main counseling processes.

a. Relation Building

According to Kebede relation building is a very important part of counseling process. If the relationship is built properly, the counselee can be bold enough to express himself and the counseling service could be easy (Kebede, 2008).

In this regard, participants of this study reported their experiences as follows.

All pastors reported they are building good relationship in such a way that they accept counselees in a lovely approach and prepares suitable time according to the will of the counselee. Then they invite the counselee for prayer before starting the session and they

listen to client. They shared the counselee the same experience from the Bible by reading the scripture. All the counselors had similar experiences in the relation building.

Most counsees also reported that counselors were showing a lovely approach and making good relationship but few complained that they were not treated well. The counselors did not listened to them well and they considered the counsees problem something from Satan so that they prayed for the client without listening them. Due to the fact, client decided not to come again.

b. planning and Documenting

Counselors reported that they were not using any documentation format and the researcher could not find any documented secondary data. They explained that they did not have such experiences. They were only using the session for discussion when the client came to them for counseling. But they said that they were making oral appointment with the client.

Few of the participants reported that they were taking a note on their personal note book. Only one counselor explained that he used some different experience he is using recorder and video while he was giving counseling to his client but he did not allowed the researcher to watch and listen it to keep confidentiality.

Kebede stated that, to give successful counseling service the counselor needs to have a plan and a format for documenting the information which is collected from the client (Kebede, 2008).

c. Making clients as part of counseling

The study showed that most of the pastors were not providing alternatives to the clients and they are not trying to make the clients the part of the solution. They provided three reasons why they did not let the counsees involved in counseling session as part of the solution. These are:

1. Counselees had a misunderstanding about counseling. They understand it as something that the client brings problem with him and counselors' duty is providing biblical verses and preaching those verses and praying with the person and

2. Then counselor is giving advices to do and not to do finally sending client back to his home.

3. Counselors have not taken any training in this regard.

Consequently, the study indicated that there is the gap of skill among counselors in the church. That is why the church counselors are looking solutions by themselves without counselee's involvement. Egan states that the goal of counseling is usually achieved if the counselee is involved in the counseling process (Egan, 2007).

d. Referral

Concerning referral, the study showed that there was referral in the church and counselors reported they refer their clients to six different places according to their own experiences. These are:

1. to psychiatrist,
2. to lawyers,
3. to Women affairs office,
4. to someone who has more wisdom,
5. to professional counselors,
6. to hospital.

Opportunities and Challenges

Opportunities

As the study pointed out there were many favorable conditions that make the church counseling service possible in the church. These were, the church is being opened for

those who are troubled and the service is free, trust of people on spiritual leaders, availability of professionals among members, availability of referral hospital in the area.

Challenges

The study revealed six different issues as a challenge for church counseling. These are:

- a. *Wrong Perception about Counseling:* It was reported that there is wrong perception about counseling in such a way that they understand counseling as giving instruction to counselee to do and not to do.
- b. *Inability of Clients to express their Problem:* Most participants reported that most of their clients were not bold enough and unable to express their problem so that this hinders counselors to give proper counseling.

Egan believes in counseling, client's participation as very important because client is the main actor to look for the solution by using the alternatives provided by the counselor (Egan, 2007)

- c. *Lack of Counseling Skill:* It was reported that there is a skill gap among counselors because most counselors were not trained in related subjects.
- d. *Lack of Counseling Room:* All participants replied that there was no separated and attractive room prepared for counseling service. They said that they use pastor's office for counseling. But they believed that separate attractive counseling room is needed for counseling.
- e. *Lack of Sufficient Attention for Counseling in the Church*

As the study stated that church did not give due attentions for counseling serve. So, counseling was not consider as one of the spiritual gifts even though it is mentioned in the scripture (Romans 12 Verse 8), no proper counseling room was prepared for counseling but for other services like prayer, teaching and the like rooms were provided. Therefore, the church missed one very useful ministry that is counseling and due to the lack of giving attention to it.

- f. *Connecting Emotional and Psychological Problems with Demonic Attack:* It was known that the church believes that demons are the source of evil. But the bible does not say every problem comes due to demonic attack. But most pastors were relating every problem with demon. So, they take only prayer as the solution. But scripture tells us emotional and psychological problems can also come due to restlessness, due to social and family destruction and this can be treated by both spiritual and wise people who have the gift of counseling. Lord Jesus counseled marginalized and despised people and the people got relief in their life (Gospel of John chapter 4). Having been all such evidences in the scripture, pastors were not applying it properly.

CHAPTER SIX

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. Conclusion

The main objective of the study was to examine the practice of pastoral counseling in Jimma town Evangelical Churches; kind of counseling that was practiced in Jimma town evangelical Churches, the way how the church gives counseling to the members, the professional skill of pastoral counselors, opportunities and challenges of counseling service in Jimma town Evangelical churches and related issues were discussed.

The data was collected from pastors who were serving as counselors and members who benefited as counselee by using interview guide and open-ended interviews. Secondary data was not gathered; because counselors have no documents that they kept during counseling sessions. Researcher used pure qualitative research method and employed purposive technique.

The major finding of the study showed that even though modern counseling was not practiced, there was a traditional type of pastoral counseling based on biblical verses. Additionally, there was lack of professional pastoral counselors. Due to this fact there was a skill gap among counselors in the church; there was the lack of counseling room in all churches. The lack of sufficient attention for counseling in the church and wrong perception about counseling and no practice of modern counseling processes were identified.

6.2. Recommendations

The following were some of the recommendations based on the result obtained from the respondents:

- Since the church is opened always for all of the people for those who want relief, she needs to have a well trained minister.
- The counselors need to be well equipped both with spiritual and modern kind of counseling Services.
- Pastors should integrate spiritual counseling with scientific method to serve people in the church and outside the church since the church is being opened to all and spiritual leaders are trusted by all people in the church and outside the church.
- There are many favorable opportunities to render counseling service in the church. Therefore the church should use those opportunities.
- The church should prepare different counseling room that is convenient and attractive both for counselor and counselee
- The church should also give special attention to counseling as other ministries
- Beyond the use of Holy Bible, the church must integrate scientific counseling methods and material in performing the service to address the need of new generation.
- The pastoral counselors should exercise referral system when the problem is beyond their capacity to solve and when it is important.
- Church pastors and leaders need to work closely with professional counselors to work effectively.
- The church should make linkage with Jimma University Department of Psychology so that the department can provide capacity building trainings on the identified skill gaps for the church pastors.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Interview guide line

Dear Respondents: I am a post graduate (Master) student of Jimma university. I am carrying out a study on the topic: pastoral counseling practice employed among Jimma Evangelical Churches. Thus, the main purpose of this interview is only to collect relevant information to compliment this research work. You are, therefore, kindly requested to answer the questions in order to give necessary information on the issue related to the study. The success of this study directly depends upon your honesty and genuine response to each question. Each data you supply will be used only for the purpose of academic issue and also treated with the most confidentiality.

Interview for pastors

1.1. Age-----

1.2. Educational status-----

1.2.1. Spiritual -----

1.2.1.1 Theology-----

1.2.1.2 Traditional-----

1.2.2. Secular-----

1.2.2.2. High school-----

1.2.2.3. Diploma-----

1.2.2.4. Bachelor Degree-----

1.2.2.5. Master and above-----

1.3 Ethnicity-----

1.4 Marital Status-----

1.4.1. Single-----

1.4.2. Married-----

1.5. Concern in the church

1.5.1. Leading spiritual section-----

1.5.2. Teaching and preaching-----

1.5.3. Administering Sacraments-----

1.5.4. Taking care of members-----

Visiting -----

Counseling -----

Praying -----

Part one : Types of counseling and how multicultural acounseling is employed

1.What king of counseling are you giving to the members ?

2. Based on your experience what do you say about the need of counseling in the church that you serve in terms of counseling seekers, with diversified problems?-----

3. What are the barriers to counsel your members with multicultural backgrounds?

4. How people know and come for counseling?

Part two : Questions related to profession

5. How could you become counselor and how did you choose this ministry? Have you got any training on counseling?

6. How do you create a relationship with counselee?

7. How do you gather information about the problem of the counselee?

8. How do you understanding the problem of your client and make your client the part the solution?-----

9. What do you do for the counselees to take an action for change?

10. What is your main guide (material resource) for your counseling?-----

11. How do you make use of the material resource?

Parte Three: Challenges

12. What are the challenges and opportunities that you faced during counseling?

13. How do you examine whether there is favorable condition or not for counseling in the church compound?

Part Four: Referral

14. Where do you refer the counselee when a professional help is needed?

Thank you!

Appendix B: Interview for counselees

Part One

1.1 Age _____

1.2 Sex _____ Ethnicity _____

1.3 Educational status _____

1.3.1 Spiritual

1.3.1.1 Theology _____

1.3.1.2 Secular _____

1.3.1.3 Primary _____

1.3.1.4 High school _____

1.3.1.5 Diploma _____

1.3.1.6 Bachelor Degree _____

1.3.1.7 Master and above _____

1.3.2.6. Other _____

1.4. Marital status

1.4.1 Married _____

1.4.2 Single _____

1.4.3 Divorced _____

1.4.4 Separated _____

Awareness for counseling

2. What is your understanding about counseling service? Why is Counseling?

Part Three: Type of counseling

3. What kind of counseling does your counselor give you?-----

4. How does he give counseling for you? How does he approach you? -----

5. What kind of challenge you faced in the time of counseling?

6. For what kind of problems are you coming to your counselor?-----

-----Tank you

Agreement to Consent

I understand that I have the right to withdraw from the research at any point before the 20th April 2017 any data would be destroyed, I do not need to give a reason and there will be repercussion as a result.

I understand that the sources used in the final thesis will be anonymous, and I will not be personally identifiable.

I understand my participation in this research is entirely voluntary

I understand that any tape recordings would be kept safely and securely and destroyed after the completion of the thesis.

Signature_____

Date_____