Pan Africa Christian University

MFT 500: MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY THEORIES I

FINAL EXAMINATION – AUGUST 2026

Time: 3 Hours

Instructions

1. Answer Question One (Compulsory) and any TWO (2) Questions
2. This examination assesses critical thinking, analysis, synthesis, application, and evaluation.
3. Support your arguments with theory-specific concepts and scholarly reasoning.
4. Biblical integration should be supported by relevant scriptural principles where applicable.

QUESTION ONE (COMPULSORY) – 20 MARKS

(a) Juma and June have been married for six years. June frequently accuses Juma of abandoning her emotionally whenever he works late, while Juma feels overwhelmed by her need for reassurance. **(5 Marks)**

Critically evaluate two problems, one strength, one limitation, and one intervention of how early attachment experiences may contribute to the couple's current interactional patterns (5 Marks).

(b) Jackie experiences intense anxiety whenever disagreements occur in her marriage. During assessment, it emerges that three generations of women in her family coped with conflict by emotional withdrawal. **(5 Marks)**

Analyze two problems, one strength, one limitation, and one intervention of the above case using Bowen's Transgenerational Family Theory.

(c) A family presents with an adolescent son who regularly refuses parental authority. During observation, the mother frequently sides with the son against the father.

Using Structural Family Therapy, explain two problems, one strength, one limitation, and one intervention of the family's functioning. **(5 Marks)**

(d) During family sessions, Musa, the father responds to criticism by blaming others, while his spouse becomes excessively accommodating. Their teenage daughter appears withdrawn and anxious.

Discuss five communication/ survival stances manifested by Musa's family. **(5 Marks)**

QUESTION TWO **10 MARKS**

a) Using object relations theory, explain two reasons why focusing exclusively on one spouse's behavior may be insufficient for understanding the problem. (4 Marks)

b) A Christian couple seeks counseling following repeated marital conflict. One spouse believes the problem is rooted solely in the other's personality flaws, while the other believes family relationships contribute significantly to the conflict.

Evaluate three perspectives how a Christian therapist might integrate individual responsibility and relational interconnectedness in the couple above. (6 Marks)

QUESTION THREE **10 MARKS**

a) Analyze one change process within any classic family therapy model and its contribution to systemic change. (4 Marks)
b) A church-based counseling ministry is considering whether family therapy theories are compatible with Christian teachings.

   Articulate three concepts of Bowen Family Theory that can support biblical understandings of relationships, change, and human responsibility (6 Marks).

QUESTION FOUR **10 MARKS**

a) Select one family therapy theory and formulate an assessment plan for the case above. (4 Marks)
b) A family presents with persistent conflict between parents and an adult child. Discuss three ways how systemic principles would inform intervention while respecting professional family therapy practice. (6 Marks)

QUESTION FIVE – **10 MARKS**

a) Use the Satir Family Growth Model and explain two ways a therapist's culture may influence therapeutic work. (4 Marks)
b) Examine how family generational influence may shape a therapist's understanding of their own family-of-origin experiences. (6 Marks)