

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COMMUNICATION PATTERNS AND
MARITAL SATISFACTION AMONG CHRISTIAN COUPLES: A CASE OF SDA
CHURCHES IN RUARAKA CONTITUENCY, NAIROBI COUNTY, KENYA.

BY
EUNICE AKELO BOLO

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO OFFICE OF GRADUATE SCHOOL IN PARTIAL
FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF
MASTERS OF ARTS IN MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY OF PAN AFRICA
CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

OCTOBER, 2017

Declaration

This Thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree or any other award in any other university.

.....

Date.....

Bolo Eunice Akelo

MFT/0639/15

This Thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as supervisor.

.....

Date.....

Dr. Ruth Kamunyu

Pan Africa Christian University

Table of Contents

Declaration	i
Table of Contents	ii
Dedication	vi
Acknowledgement	vii
Abstract	viii
List of Tables	ix
List of Figures	x
Abbreviations and Acronyms	xi
Definition of Terms.....	xii
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY	1
Introduction.....	1
Background of the Study	1
Statement of the Problem.....	6
Research Objectives.....	7
Research Questions.....	7
Assumptions of the Study	7
Justification of the Study	7
Significance of the Study	8
Scope of the Study	8
Limitations and Delimitations.....	9
Chapter Summary	9
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	11

Introduction.....	11
Literature Review.....	11
Couples’ Daily and Regular Communication	11
Couple’s Communication During Conflict	12
Open and Honest Expression of Thoughts and Feelings.....	14
Empirical Literature	16
Theoretical Framework.....	18
Enhance Your Love Maps.....	18
Nurture Your Fondness and Admiration.....	19
Turn Towards Each Other and Not Away.....	19
Marital Conflict	19
Conceptual Framework.....	22
A Synthesis of Research Gaps	23
Chapter Summary	23
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	25
Introduction.....	25
Research Design.....	25
Population Size	25
Sampling and Sample Design	27
Method of Data Collection.....	28
Validity of the Study	29
Reliability of the Study	29
Data Analysis	30

Ethical Issues	30
Chapter Summary	30
CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION.....	31
Introduction.....	31
Data Analysis	31
Presentation of Results.....	31
Demographic Information	31
Daily and Regular Communication.....	32
Couples' Communication during Conflict	35
Communication of Thoughts and Feelings.	38
Couples' Marital Satisfaction.....	40
Regression Analysis	42
Chapter Summary	45
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH AND CONCLUSIONS.....	46
Introduction.....	46
Summary of Findings.....	46
Implications.....	48
Conclusions.....	49
Recommendations	49
Areas for Further Research	50
References.....	52
Appendices.....	56

Appendixes I: Questionnaire	56
Appendixes II: Focused Group Guideline.....	59
Appendixes III: Pan Africa Christian University Letter	61
Appendixes V: Letter from NACOSTI	63

Dedication

This research is dedicated to my dearest husband, Jared Onyango and our precious gifts (children); Prudence Akinyi, Gloria Achieng', Precious Rose and Israel Jathniel who I denied a lot of time while undertaking my studies and for their support throughout the entire course.

Acknowledgement

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to Almighty God for His abundant grace and strength throughout the entire period of my studies. Special appreciation goes to my husband, children, house manager, parents and entire family for their moral support and understanding during my studies.

Special thanks to Dr. Ruth Kamunyu for guiding me through the process of this thesis and for her patience with me in this journey. I am grateful to my employer for the support accorded me throughout my studies and in particular my heartfelt gratitude goes to my immediate boss Mr. John Kahura for supporting me throughout my studies and my colleague Esther Kariuki for helping me with office work.

Many thanks go to the my fellow students at Pan Africa Christian University, in particular Pauline Wanje and Venoranda Kuboka who walked with me in areas I was lagging behind and consistently helped me throughout my master's studies. Other special people include Wanjiku Waititu always praying for us and Catherine Ochieng'. My special appreciation goes to my best friend Roselyne Lihanda who has been my greatest source of support and encouragement throughout my studies. She has been my cheer person; she cheered me on in times I felt like giving up.

Abstract

Marriage as instituted and ordained by God is a sacred union of a man and a woman and oneness is the true essence of a godly marriage. Communication is vital and occupies an important place in marriage. Communication shows the health of the marriage and also makes the marriage healthy. The best foundation that any partner in marriage can lay regarding good communication is being able to communicate congruently with one another. Amongst many couples communication style or pattern often becomes more of an issue than the issue itself as such couples' communication patterns play a significant role in the achievement of marital satisfaction. This study sought to find out the relationship between communication patterns and marital satisfaction among Christian couples. This study was conducted using exploratory research design in selected Seventh Day Adventist churches in Ruaraka constituency where multi stage sampling was used to arrive at the target population then opportunity sampling used to arrive at the sample size. Primary data was collected using questionnaires and focused group discussions. The quantitative data from questionnaires was analyzed using IBM SPSS software and qualitative data obtained from questionnaires and focused groups were analyzed using thematic data analysis. Statistical findings indicated that daily and regular communication and open and honest expression of thoughts and feeling had a moderate positive significant effect on marital satisfaction among Christian couples while communication in conflict did not have a statistically significant effect on marital satisfaction among Christian couples. This study recommends that counselors should explore aspects such as; individual couple's personality, individual couple's expectation on how communication should be and the attitude with which information is received which affect how couples communicate when offering pre marital counseling or working with couples on their communication. Congruent communication is therefore vital for building and maintaining strong couple relationships.

List of Tables

Table 3.1 Total population size.....	26
Table 3.2 Sample population	27
Table 4.1 Demographic information.....	32
Table 4.2 Daily and regular communication.....	33
Table 4.3 Couples' communication during conflict.	36
Table 4.4 Communication of thoughts and feelings against marital satisfaction	40
Table 4.5 Marital satisfaction	41
Table 4.6 Regression results.	43

List of Figures

Figure 2.1 Conceptual framework	22
Figure 4.1 Effect of daily and regular communication on marital satisfaction.	34
Figure 4.2 Communication in conflict and marital satisfaction.....	37
Figure 4.3 Communication of thoughts and feelings.....	39
Figure 4.4 Couples' marital satisfaction	41

Abbreviations and Acronyms

GSU - General Service Unit

NYS - National Youth Service

SDA -Seventh Day Adventist

SPSS- Statistical Package for Social Sciences

Definition of Terms

Communication – sending and receiving of messages and involves speaking and listening but not limited to words; it can involve words, gestures, facial expression and any other way of expressing meaning (Debasish & Das, 2010).

Congruent communication- a communication where persons communicate freely and genuinely to each other (sends the same message on both verbal and nonverbal levels). To be congruent in communication entails sharing ones feelings in a way that demonstrate ownership of the feelings rather than believing the feelings was caused by ones partner (Carlson et al., 2003).

Couples – a man and a woman in a marriage relationship; heterosexual (Chapman, 2014).

Marital – a relationship between a man and woman who are married (Chapman, 2014).

Marital satisfaction - the mind-set a partner in marriage has toward his or her own relationship which informs how he or she subjectively evaluates the quality of their marriage (King, 2016).

Patterns – a characteristic that is consistently recurring that helps in the identification of a phenomenon or problem (Business Dictionary, 2017).

Satisfaction - fulfillment of one's expectations or needs or the pleasure derived from a thing (Litzinger & Gordon, 2005).

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Introduction

This chapter contains the background to the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, justification, significance of the study, scope of the study, limitation and delimitations.

Background of the Study

A relationship is began, nurtured and sustained through communication (McDonald & McDonald, 2008). As such good communication is the “oil in the marriage engine.” Here good communication entails two things; a loving and accommodating mind-set towards one’s spouse and good communication skills (Larson, 2004). Communication is one important factor influencing the quality of a relationship. In marriage, congruent communication allows each partner to know what the other is feeling without guessing (Carlson, Dinkmeyer, & Dinkmeyer, 2003). Good communication therefore becomes the lifeline to the health of a marriage (Mostamandy, 2012).

Communication is any action that passes information between people (Everett, 2009). Communication being an important component in marriage may influence couple’s happiness, their moods and how they manage their personal life. Communication is clearly an important aspect in relationship and without effective communication, relationships fall apart (Mostamandy, 2012).

Communication in marriage involves self-revelation on the part of one spouse and listening on the part of the other. Communication therefore entails talking and listening but unless talking and listening go together with sincere, loving feedback on the part of the listener,

little communication takes place as such miscommunication and misunderstanding occur (Chapman, 2014).

In addition, communication is more than the ability to pass information, discuss problems and resolving conflicts. It means communication for its sake: the pleasure of being in each other's company, the excitement of conversation, the exchange of touches and smiles and the loving silences (Strong et al., 2016). As such communication is at the heart of marriage, it determines how well the rest of the marriage functions. With good communication skills couples problems can be overcome, stress dealt with in a healthy and efficient manner, differences aired out to both partner's satisfaction, love expressed and other matters discussed openly and objectively (Larson, 2004).

In a marriage relationship the one thing that is needed for a couple becoming one is good communication where couples engage in conversations, reflections and set goals in order to grow and become one in marriage (Saunders, 2011). Intimacy among couples is attained through honest and open communication between two individuals making themselves vulnerable to each other in their exchange of feelings. With this regard intimacy does not occur automatically when a man meets a woman; it develops through self-disclosure (McDonald & McDonald, 2008).

Communication in marriage is two people speaking to one another and two people listening to one another. Good communication in marriage does not hide, distort or evade the truth from the other (Saunders, 2011). In this way effective communication is the successful transmission of information and feelings from one person to the other. It is the assurance that what is stated by the communicator is reasonably similar to what is heard and understood by the listener or recipient (McDonald & McDonald, 2008).

Communication enables one spouse to show love, care, concern, acceptance and other emotions and attitudes that create a positive emotional response in the other spouse (McDonald & McDonald, 2008) and as Larson (2004) observed, the most important predictors of marital satisfaction include: couple communication skills (speaking and listening), conflict resolution, degree of intimacy, degree of consensus or agreement of life major issues, degree of cohesion and fair power sharing.

According to Eggerichs (2008) the biggest problem affecting married couples by far is lack of communication. Strong et al., (2016) also found that communication problem was one of the most common complaints of couple seeking therapy and that partners' satisfaction with relationship is affected by the quality of their communication. When couples have communication problems, they often fear that their marriages are seriously flawed as such negative communication is associated with less relationship satisfaction and greater instability.

Couples in distress have developed communication patterns that are not working for them. Failures in communication usually involve each spouse becoming centered on communicating his or her needs and ignoring the needs of their spouse. These communication patterns must be changed for couple to become more satisfied by helping couples to be more God centered and also accommodate their partner's needs in their communication (Everett, 2009).

Marital satisfaction is simply defined as a partner/ spouse being content and happy within his or her marriage (Bagwell, 2006). Marital satisfaction relates to the mind-set a partner in marriage has toward his or her own marital relationship (King, 2016) and the attributes partners in marriages have which is reflected by how they generally evaluate their marriage (Gayatrivadivu, Poonguzhali, Ofelia, & Vijayabanu, 2014). Marital satisfaction entails couples

having mutual affection, regard, trust and love within the relationship, sharing of values and perspective and a routine source of comfortable interactions and socialization (Nussbaum, 2013).

Marital satisfaction depends on individual couple's needs, expectations, and desires for the relationship (Gayatrivadivu et al., 2014) and may differ not only in degree but also in kind between spouses and couples. Marital satisfaction is related to personal characteristics with a focus on what spouses contribute to the marriage such as generosity, loyalty, sacrifice, friendship, devotion, maturity and goodwill. Additionally the attitude of teamwork and coordination represent a view of the good marriage that is couple centered rather than individual centered (Bengtson, Acock, Allen, Dilworth-Anderson & Klein, 2005).

According to Bengtson et al. (2005) marital satisfaction and stability is largely determined by how well couples handle conflict and exchange positive interactions with each other. King (2016) further noted that among the many contributing factors to marital satisfaction everyday relational maintenance behaviours and the role of conflict styles contribute to the overall marital satisfaction.

Marriage is a sacred union of a man and a woman instituted and ordained by God. Marriage as ordained by God is a covenant; a sacred covenant between a man and a woman. A covenant marriage is a solemn and binding relationship which is meant to be permanent (Chapman, 2014). The attitude of steadfast love is the single most important factor in a Christian marriage and it entails choosing to have positive regard for one's spouse: to think of him or her in positive terms which greatly affect the nature of couple's communication (Chapman, 2003).

Christianity is all about relationships, that is, how we relate with God and with fellow human beings. Christianity relates to the attitude which Christians do the will of God as such the

supreme purpose for getting married should be to glorify God and to be able to know and serve Him more efficiently (Caram, 2015).

God designed marriage to be the most intimate of all human relationships and oneness is the true essence of a godly marriage. Oneness in marriage is attained through open, honest and congruent communication; communication therefore becomes key to marital satisfaction (Chapman, 2003).

Intimacy in Christian marriage is important only as a stepping stone to unity. It gets couples to the point where it can be said literally that if you have seen the husband you have seen the wife. This sort of oneness is the design of God in His infinite wisdom (Uwadiae, 2012). Christian couples should strive in their marriages to say of each other what Christ's bride says of Him in Song of Songs 5:16, "This is my beloved, and this is my friend." In this respect Christian couples must work to build true Christian fellowship with their spouses. Christian fellowship here means couples sharing or communing with each other: sharing each other's joys, bearing each other's burdens, and being involved in each other's lives (Beeke, 2017).

Beeke (2017), quote Richard Baxter (no year) who wrote this about marriage, "It is a mercy to have a faithful friend, that loveth you entirely, and is as true to you as yourself, to whom you may open your mind and communicate your affairs, and who would be ready to strengthen you, and divide the cares of your affairs and family with you, and help you to bear your burdens, and comfort you in your sorrows, and be the daily companion of your life, and partaker of your joys and sorrows". This is a very powerful quote underscoring the importance of open and honest communication among couples.

Seventh Day Adventist Church in Kenya is organized in terms of conferences and is referred to as East Kenya Union Conference which is subdivided into five conferences namely:

Central Kenya Conference, Central Rift-Valley Conference, South Kenya Conference, Nyamira Conference, Kenya Coast Field with a total of 3150 churches and a population of 497,233 members. Central Kenya Conference where Nairobi station is has three hundred and twenty eight (328) churches with a population of sixty three thousand and seven (63,007) members as at 31st December 2016.

Statement of the Problem

Marriage begins, is nurtured and sustained through communication and a couple being able to communicate well with each other is essential. Good communication entails a loving and accommodating attitude towards one's spouse and good communication skills as such communication is very important in influencing the quality of a marriage relationship. Sadly most couples just let their marriage to happen, hoping they will get along and completely ignore the necessity to grow as a person and as a couple by communicating congruently which is meant to enrich their marriage.

Congruent communication among couples is very essential for marital satisfaction. In good marital communication the husband and the wife share thoughts, feelings, experiences, values, priorities and judgments while the other listens empathetically. Both partners share on the same open, honest level and this is Gods divine example.

Daily and regular communication is very important for Christian couples because it fosters mutual understanding of each other. Christian couples need to discover biblical principles for handling conflict, anger, misunderstandings and learn skills of applying these principles. This study sought to explore the relationship between communication patterns and marital satisfaction among Christian couple's given that they are guided by the word of God as written in the Bible.

Research Objectives

- a) To establish whether couples daily and regular communication influence marital satisfaction.
- b) To find out how couples communication during conflict affects marital satisfaction.
- c) To determine whether open and honest expression of thoughts and feelings influence marital satisfaction.

Research Questions

- a) How does couples' daily and regular communication influence marital satisfaction?
- b) How does couple's communication during conflict affect marital satisfaction?
- c) How does open and honest expression of thoughts and feelings influence marital satisfaction?

Assumptions of the Study

This study assumes that marriage is based on deep friendship and couples' friendship is enhanced through open, honest and constant communication which impacts positively on their marital satisfaction.

Justification of the Study

Christians are expected to lead better lives because they are guided by the word of God. The Bible has many teachings on how Christians are supposed to communicate, relate and conduct themselves. Christian couples are therefore expected to be models for other couples. It is on this premise that this study sought to explore the relationship between communication patterns and marital satisfaction among Christian couples.

The study was intended to include the Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) churches in Kenya but due to limited resources and time constraints multistage sampling was conducted and

Ruaraka constituency selected to represent SDA churches in Kenya. As such finding from this study was used to arrive at a conclusion that is representative of all SDA churches in Kenya.

Significance of the Study

According to Chapman (2003), the Christian ultimate call is to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. As such if couples followed biblical guidelines for marriage, their relationships would be more satisfying than others may want to emulate. Christian couples need to understand what the Bible teaches and how it can be applied to their everyday married life. Christianity provides an opportunity for couples to practice principles as servanthood and unconditional love which in turn will draw others to desire such. According to Carlson, Dinkmeyer & Dinkmeyer, (2003) open congruent sharing will produce greater trust, mutual respect and cooperation.

It is from this point of view that this study sought to explore the relationship between communication patterns and marital satisfaction among Christian couples. On understanding the relationship there off then working on communication might be a potent point of intervention for couples experiencing challenges in their marriages. Psycho-educating couples on the importance of adopting constructive and effective communication patterns becomes important and also considering it as a topic in premarital counseling. This information could be useful to marriage and family therapists, relationship educators, pastors, couples and interested individuals.

Scope of the Study

This study targeted couples within the Seventh Day Adventist churches. Couples in SDA churches within Ruaraka constituency were issued with questionnaires and a group of couples engaged in discussions around their communication patterns and how it relates to their marital satisfaction.

Limitations and Delimitations

A major limitation for this study was the use of opportunity sampling to arrive at the sample size. Working with the family life directors of the various churches made it a little easier; having sought permission from the various church boards, the various family life directors helped in identifying couples who were issued with the questionnaires. The only challenge noted was getting the older couples to take part in the research. Focused group discussion was also used to remedy this challenge as some couples were more comfortable in a group setting.

This study was conducted in Seventh Day Adventist churches only. This is because of a special interest of penetrating the SDA churches in terms of reaching out to the family life departments to be active in looking at current issues affecting marriages and families at large.

Chapter Summary

Congruent communication is very important in marriage and it entails talking and active listening by both partners. This should be accompanied with loving positive feedback or else little communication takes place resulting in miscommunication and misunderstanding. Communication is also very important because it may influence couples happiness, moods and how they manage their personal life.

Couple communication also entails talking for the sake of talking, enjoying the conversation and finding pleasure in being in each other's company. Good communication enables couples to express love, show acceptance, care and concern, overcome problems, deal with stress, air out differences and discuss other matters that affect them openly and objectively. Self-disclosure which entails honest and open expression of thought and feelings enhances intimacy in marriage as nothing is hidden, distorted or evaded from the other.

Marital satisfaction relates to how couples are happy and content with their marriage which can be perceived by couples having mutual affection, regard and love within their relationship, sharing congruently, exchanging positive interactions and handling conflict effectively.

The supreme purpose for Christians getting married is to glorify God and serve him better as such steadfast love and oneness are important factors in a Christian marriage and entails choosing to have positive regard for one spouse which in turn affect how couples communicate. This study therefore sought to establish the relationship between communication patterns and marital satisfaction among Christian couples.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter contains review of literature on Christian couple's communication pattern and connection with marital satisfaction, empirical literature, theoretical framework, and conceptual framework. Literature has been reviewed according to the study objectives.

Literature Review

Couples' Daily and Regular Communication

Chapman (2014) noted that regular and consistent communication brings life to a marriage and that to a marriage communication deepens the marriage relationship. Chapman further stated that strong marriages are communicating marriages. Elmore (2011) observed that a couple sharing about the daily experiences of their lives signal that they matter to each other and further observed that couples may talk more to people at the job, to the kids or to their Facebook friends than they talk to their mates. Elmore noted that it is important for couples to get in each other's faces, get each other's language and check each other's moods. Chapman and Elmore here underscores the importance of couples finding time daily or regularly to verbally communicate with each other as this strengthens their marriage and enables them to get closer to one another.

Carroll, Hill, Yorgason, Larson & Sandberg (2013) found that constructive communication is a resource or a capability that a couple can use to cope with work family conflict and that constructive communication accompanied with appropriate resources and coping abilities can help prevent distress in a couple's relationship. In addition Carroll and colleagues found that how a couple is able to engage in constructive communication is an accurate predictor of relationship quality. For example if a mother is faced with a rigid and

demanding work schedule as she attempts to juggle parent-teacher conferences and soccer games, this naturally could be a stressor to her relationship with her husband. Yet if their conversations about the occurrences of the day are filled with understanding and clear sending of messages, then their communication pattern may be the pathway that ameliorates the effects of the work family conflict and provide a buffer to protect her marital satisfaction.

Gottman & Silver (1999) reiterated that the aim of couples engaging in daily stress reducing conversation is to ensure that other stressors do not spill over to their relationship. Carroll et al. (2013) concurs by noting that constructive communication is a resource that spouses may use to cope with the stressors of life and be able to adapt. On the other hand destructive communication that does not offer support or express empathy adds to the stress pile up and is very harmful to a couple's relationship. As such spousal support impacts positively to couples marital satisfaction.

Fryling & Fryling (2009) noted that in every marriage communication takes a life time to learn and that communication in marriage does not revolve just around crisis, it grows out of the way couples relate to each other in daily conversations. This underscores the importance of daily conversations.

Couple's Communication During Conflict

According to Gottman & Silver (1999), there are two kinds of marital conflict: solvable and unsolvable. Sixty nine per cent of marital conflicts fall into the perpetual/ unsolvable category. Perpetual problems are underlying assumptions and issues which cannot be grounded and fixed situationally. Resolving major marital conflicts is not the essential component to happy marriages; many happy couples have not resolved their big issues. The idea is for couples to deal with the problem through communication in such a way that it does not overwhelm them. On the

other hand solvable problems, if not addressed or coped with, can lead to perpetual problems due to resentment kicking in and may lead to couples being entrenched in their positions. If the conflict is about the entrenched resentment due to a situational/solvable issue, then it may be in the realm of perpetual/unsolvable conflict.

According to Strong, DeVault & Cohen (2016) conflict is an expected and normal part of being in a relationship and rather than withdrawing from and avoiding conflict, couples should use it as a way to build, strengthen and deepen their relationship. Chapman (2003) noted that couples need to discover biblical principles for handling conflict, anger, and misunderstandings and learn skills of applying these principles. This means that conflict is normal in couple relationship as such Christian couples should find suitable ways of managing conflict.

Strong et al., (2016) found that couples in satisfying marriages exhibited the following characteristics: willingness to accept conflict but to engage in non-destructive ways, less frequent conflict and less time spent in conflict. Strong and colleagues further noted that couples communication during conflict should be characterized by flexibility, a relationship rather than individual (self-interest) focus, an intention to learn from their differences and cooperation.

In addition Strong and colleagues noted that helpful communication during conflict should include compromise, negotiation and turn talking, calm discussion, listening carefully and trying to understand the others perspective and that couples who talk about conflicting issues with mutual satisfaction and find ways to adopt to areas of conflict tend to be more generally satisfied with their relationship. Here Strong indicated positive communication patterns that Christian couple should adapt during conflict.

Heffner, Loving, Kiecolt-Glaser, Himawan, Glaser & Malarkey (2006) found that couples' ways of communication during conflict relate strongly to marital quality and that

demand/withdraw communication pattern characterized by communication of criticism, blame, and threats by one partner and concomitant withdrawal or avoidance by the other partner, is tied to marital dissatisfaction and divorce. Litzinger & Gordon (2005) also noted that distressed couples report less mutually constructive communication, more demand-withdrawal communication, more avoidance of communication, and more conflict or psychological distance than did non-distressed couples. These indicate negative patterns of communication that Christian couples should avoid.

Papp, Kouros & Cummings (2009) added that communication patterns including demand-withdraw may hinder the resolution of problems and expression of support while increasing partners' anger and other negative emotions, thereby keeping partners engaged in a reciprocal cycle of relationship dysfunction and individual distress. These further explain the effect of couples engaging in negative patterns of communication.

As Chapman (2003) put it, the spirit of forgiveness is as important as the willingness to confront. Chapman explains that confrontation is love's way of trying to have a good marriage; it is sharing one's sense of being wronged and the pain of being hurt which gives a spouse an opportunity either to clarify his actions and thus help their partner understand that his or her action was not wrong or acknowledge the wrongness of his or her behaviour and ask for forgiveness. This is very important for Christian couples. Christian couples should be able to confront one another in a loving way whenever there is conflict and talk about the issue with mutual satisfaction and where necessary forgive one another and forge ahead.

Open and Honest Expression of Thoughts and Feelings

Chapman (2003) reiterated that marriage is designed by God to be the most intimate of human relationships and this is attained by wholesome responsible communication. Chapman

added that couples must identify and build positive patterns of communication that draws them together and build intimacy. Strong et al. (2016) on the other hand found the following characteristics among couples in satisfying marriages: the ability to disclose and reveal private thoughts and feelings especially positive ones to a partner, expression by both partners of equal levels of affection such as tenderness, words of love and touch, and more time spent talking, discussing personal topics and expressing feelings in a positive way.

Carlson & Sperry (2013) define congruent communication as the ability to express what one is actually feeling and experiencing at the moment. They further noted that in congruent relationship a couple can be who they really are and say what they really think and feel with each other. Chapman (2014) also notes that verbal communication is essential for couples to understand another person and that couples will never experience what God had in mind when he ordained marriage if they do not communicate with each other. Chapman further added that when couples do not communicate well, their lives together often lack harmony.

In addition Chapman (2014) explains that biblical oneness involves intellectual, spiritual, emotional and social oneness where intellectual intimacy requires couples to share thoughts and ideas without fear of condemnation, emotional intimacy requires the sharing of feelings both positive and negative, social intimacy entails sharing of life experiences and spiritual intimacy entails sharing ones spiritual journey.

Carlson & Sperry (2013) noted that honest communication is the only avenue to genuine togetherness; here each partner feels psychologically safe and does not worry about the other partner's response, trusting that the partner will strive to understand. Carlson and Sperry added that when couples openly and honestly express thoughts and feelings true intimacy grows and grievances can be revealed and resolved. Beeke (2017) urges husbands to listen to their wives

thoughts and feelings on a regular basis so that they can know that they are important in their lives. In a nutshell Christian couples should be open with each other so as to share freely how they are feeling and thinking at any given time.

Empirical Literature

Holman (2001) found that the quality of couple communication is one of the best predictors of relationship satisfaction. Litzinger & Gordon (2005) also reported that distressed couples report less mutually constructive communication, more demand-withdrawal communication, more avoidance of communication and more conflict or psychological distance than did non-distressed couples.

Gottman (1994) on the other hand found that destructive communication: criticism, defensiveness, contempt and stonewalling to be significantly and negatively correlated with marital quality. Litzinger & Gordon (2005) additionally reported that couples' who lack the necessary skills to regulate their emotional expressiveness and who cannot communicate successfully tend to become defensive or withdraws from a conflict situation and these behaviors in turn predict later marital dissatisfaction and dissolution.

Heffner et al., (2006) found that married couples' communication patterns during conflict relate strongly to marital quality. The demand/withdraw communication pattern characterized by communication of criticism, blame and threats by one partner and concomitant withdrawal or avoidance by the other partner is tied to marital dissatisfaction and divorce.

According to Kelley (2012), daily communication is the mortar between the bricks of marital interactions. Chapman (2014) also added that, couples who have set time for talking each day have a higher level of intimacy; couples who desire closeness must share their daily experiences and the feelings about those events. Chapman further reiterated that for couples to

experience what God had in mind when he ordained marriage couples must communicate with each other.

Healthy marriages were viewed as having partners who could effectively solve problems and who agreed on most issues (Knee, Patrick & Lonsbary, 2003) and healthy relationships were characterized by effective communication between partners (Wright, Simmons & Campbell, 2007). Yoo, Bartle-Haring, Day & Gangamma, (2014) found that partners' communication pattern was significantly associated with the spouses' own emotional intimacy, sexual satisfaction, and overall relationship satisfaction.

Carroll et al. (2013) found that communication skills which include: self-disclosure, accuracy of nonverbal communication, frequency of successful communication, understanding between spouses, and empathy were positively related to relationship quality and that high quality couple communication can be a buffer against factors that would lead to lower marital satisfaction.

Yucel & Koydemir (2015) found that the couples' interactional process was linked to marital satisfaction both for individual partners and couple system. As such working on couples communication by increasing positive and constructive communication, could help address marital satisfaction.

Vazhappilly & Reyes (2016) found that communication had a strong positive correlation with the spouses' sense of overall marital satisfaction. An increase in the level of mutual interaction, free and open sharing and healthy understanding between the couples would ensure greater level of marital satisfaction.

Hunler & Gencoz (2005) found that the association between religiousness and marital satisfaction might be due to the contribution of shared religious beliefs and activities on conflict

resolution, which thereby intensifies marital satisfaction. Marsh & Dallos (2000) found that praying together allowed couples to control their feelings effectively and that the couples' relationship with God helped them to handle marital anger in an appropriate way. Hunler & Gencoz, 2005 further added that some practices such as going to church together or praying together, could be important factors that make couples closer to each other, and higher conflict resolution ability of couples might be important in enhancing marital satisfaction.

Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by Gottman couple theory. Gottman couple therapy is about working to increase friendship by following Gottman seven Principles; what couples do right when they do not argue (Gottman & Silver, 1999).

Marriages should be based on deep friendship: knowing each other's likes, dislikes, quirks, hopes and dreams. The best gifts a couple can give each other is the joy that comes from feeling known and understood. The main important thing in marriage is being able to have a positive attitude towards one's partner and one's marriage which Gottman refers to as positive sentiment override. This way couples can better cope with negative things as the relationship is balanced on the positive (Gottman & Silver, 1999).

Enhance Your Love Maps

Having a love map of one's partner entails knowing him or her deeply which helps in maintaining intimacy and better prepares the couple to deal with stressful events and conflict as the couple are "in touch". This entails being conversant with one's spouse and include: people in partner's life, recent important events in partner's life, triumphs and strivings, injuries and healing, emotional world and basically everything about one's spouse. This can only be achieved

where couples are constantly in touch sharing things that concerns them openly and honestly (Gottman & Silver, 1999).

Nurture Your Fondness and Admiration

This relates to couples' being able to reveal positive emotions in each other and this is a buffer to stress that may come in their relationship as partners basically maintain a positive view of each other. Gottman further reiterated that without fondness and admiration, the relationship has little if any basis. Partners can enhance their fondness and admiration by acknowledging and increasing open discussion of the positives of their partner (Gottman & Silver, 1999).

Turn Towards Each Other and Not Away

This relates to couples working at maintaining positive connection. This can be achieved when couples engage in small interactions which help in building romance and maintain positive connection which further act as a buffer to stresses that may arise in the relationship (Gottman & Silver, 1999).

Marital Conflict

There are two types of marital conflict: solvable and unsolvable. Finding resolution to major marital conflicts is not a crucial factor to happy marriages; many happy couples have not resolved their big issues. What is important is being able to cope with problems that constantly come up through communication in such a way that they do not become a hindrance resulting in couple getting into a gridlock (Gottman & Silver, 1999).

Gridlocks happen when couple's get entrenched in their positions because they are unable to resolve problems thus conflict end up affecting other areas of their lives. Signs of gridlock include: conflict making a partner feeling rejected by other partner; couples continuously talk about problems but make no headways; partners become entrenched in their positions and are not

ready to shift; when talking about a given topic, one feels more irritated and hurt; conversations about problems lack a sense of humor, amusement or affection; partners become more entrenched in their position over time, leading to mutual vilification during conversations; the vilification leads to being more entrenched in their position and polarized, partners hold their views and are not willing to compromise; eventually, they become emotionally disengaged from each other (Gottman & Silver, 1999).

Solvable problems on the other hand if not addressed or coped with, can lead to perpetual problems due to resentment kicking in, and thus entrenchment in their positions. If the conflict is about the entrenched resentment due to issues that can be solved, then it may result in them becoming unsolvable conflict. The ideal for couples is to try to solve their solvable problems by trying something different than unresolved arguments, screaming, yelling or angry silences (Gottman & Silver, 1999).

Five principles of problem resolution were found to be key for happy marriages: softened startup; starting discussions in a soft way, learning to make and receive repair attempts; this relates to couples working hard to ensure that the relationship is not estranged by trying to find conciliatory comments within arguments, soothe yourself and each other; this relate to striving for both partners to remain calm, compromise and being tolerant of each other's' faults (Gottman & Silver, 1999).

An important element in all conflict resolution is basic acceptance of the partner's personality. Finding conciliatory comments within arguments is also very important, especially when couples know how to identify them (Gottman & Silver, 1999). The basic goal in communication during conflict is to break the cycle of negativity and giving natural repair

mechanism a couple has already adopted a chance to work. The idea is to deal with the emotions that conflict stirs (Gottman, 1994).

Couples who help each other cope with daily stressors keep their marriage strong. Couples can make their marriage a place of peace by helping each other cope with stress. In this way the aim of stress reducing conversation is “to ensure that other stressors do not spill over to their relationship”. For these conversations to be effective active listening is required as the conversation is supposed to increase calm and not conflict. This can be attained by regular discussion sessions to speak of what has to be done and regular whining sessions where each partner can complain about any problem while the other is supportive (Gottman & Silver, 1999).

According to Gottman & Silver (1999), elements of stress reducing conversations include: partners taking turns, partners not giving unwanted advice, showing genuine interest, communicating understanding of the matter at hand, taking spouse’s side, being on the same team by taking the ‘we against others’ attitude, expressing affection and validating partners emotions.

Destructive communication also referred to as the four horsemen of the apocalypse are deadly to a relationship and they are criticism, contempt, defensiveness, and stonewalling. Criticism; is any statement that implies that there is something generally wrong with one’s partner, defensiveness; is the attempt to defend oneself from a supposed attack, contempt: is any statement or nonverbal behavior that puts oneself on a higher place than one’s partner, stonewalling: is where one of the partners withdraws from the conversation. Of the four, contempt is the most dangerous to a relationship as it is an outcome of long- standing negative thoughts (Gottman & Silver, 1999).

Gottman & Silver (1999), further gives the four stages that signal divorce (a result of marital dissatisfaction): partner(s) seeing marital problems as severe, partners not seeing the importance of talking about issues that affect them as such each partner resort to solving problems on their own, partners start leading parallel lives and finally loneliness sets in.

Conceptual Framework

This section presents a schematic interpretation of the conceptual framework as shown in the figure below.

Independent variable

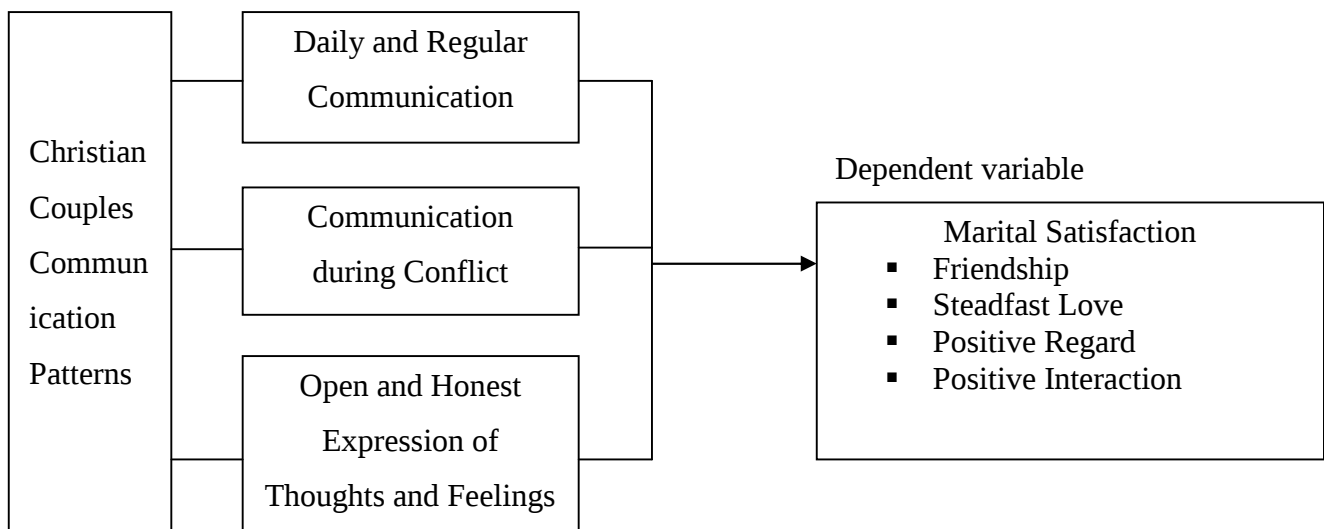


Figure 2.1 Conceptual framework (Bolo, 2017).

Communication patterns which consist of Christian couples being able to engage in daily and regularly conversations, interact in a good way when conflict and problems arise and being able to openly and honestly express their thoughts and feelings should positively affect their marital satisfaction.

A Synthesis of Research Gaps

The studies cited in the empirical literature above [Holman (2001), Litzinger & Gordon (2005), Gottman (1994), Heffner et al., (2006), Knee et al., (2003), Wright et al., (2007), Yoo et al., (2014), Carroll et al. (2013), Yucel & Koydemir (2015) & Vazhappilly & Reyes (2016).] looked at different aspects of communication with respect to their impact or effect on marital satisfaction. Hunler & Gencoz (2005) looked at how religious beliefs and practices helped in management of anger and conflict while Marsh & Dallos (2000) studied the effect of religiousness on marital satisfaction. These studies did not look at how communication patterns relates to marital satisfaction among Christian couples taking into consideration that Christians are expected to be disciples of Jesus Christ as such should exhibit positive communication patterns. There are also other studies which looked at how communication relate to marital satisfaction but they were not focused among Christian couples. This study therefore sought to explore so as to find out how communication patterns relates to marital satisfaction among Christian couples’.

Chapter Summary

Communication in marriage grows out of daily conversations. A couple sharing daily experiences signals that they matter to each other. Couples talking about their daily experiences filled with understanding and clear sending of messages provides a buffer to protect their marital satisfaction.

Conflict in marriage is normal and should be expected. What is important is that couples should be willing to accept conflict and engage in positive helpful communication such that both partners feel listened to, understood and validated. Couples in good communication terms willingly confront each other calmly when wronged or hurt and are able to forgive each other.

Another important factor revolving around conflict is that couples should find ways of adapting to areas of conflict.

The ability to reveal private thoughts and feelings enhances intimacy as it enables couples to get close. A couple being open with each other is the only avenue to genuine togetherness and this in turn increases trust and understanding between couples making them feel good about their relationship thus enhancing their marital satisfaction.

Gottman noted that positive regard and positive interactions amongst couples relates positively to marital satisfaction. This entails being able to talk freely such that couples share openly and honestly what affects them, have regular sessions where they discuss issues that affect their marriage, are able to stir positive emotion in each other by focusing on the positive aspects of their marriage and not allowing conflict to separate them. Couples should therefore talk about conflicting issues in such a way that it does not overwhelm them.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter includes the research design adopted in this study, target population, sampling and sample design, type of data collected, data collection methods including procedures and data analysis.

Research Design

According to Kothari (2004) a research design is the conceptual structure within which research is conducted and it constitutes the blue print for the collection, measurement and analysis of data. Orodho (2003) also define research design as the scheme, outline or plan that is used to generate answers to research problems. It is a master plan that specifies the methods and procedures for collecting and analyzing needed information.

This study was conducted using the exploratory research design. Exploratory research design is a broad, purposive systematic undertaking which help in the discovery of generalizations leading to description and understanding of an area of social or psychological life (Krishnaswamy, Sivakumar, & Mathirajan, 2009). This design was appropriate for this study as it enabled the researcher to get a deeper understanding of the relationship between Christian couple's communication patterns and their marital satisfaction.

Population Size

According to the Central Kenya Conference of the SDA Church (2016) Nairobi station has three hundred and twenty eight (328) churches with a population of sixty three thousand and seven (63,007) members as at 31st December 2016.

This study targeted couples and members of SDA churches in Ruaraka constituency. Ruaraka constituency has a total of nine churches with a population of two thousand five hundred and twenty five (2505) members whose names appear in the church register.

Table 3.1 Total population size

Churches	Population of Church	Population of Couples
Mathare North SDA Church,	1049	121
Ruaraka Central SDA Church	298	62
Babadogo SDA Church	106	16
Survey SDA Church	116	26
NYS SDA Church	106	19
GSU SDA Church	139	28
Kariobangi SDA Church	381	71
Gomongo Central SDA Church	186	38
Gomongo South SDA Church	124	18
Total	2505	399

The population of the church was derived from Central Kenya Conference and represents records as at 31st December 2016 while population of the couples was derived from the church clerks of the respective churches.

Table 3.2 Sample population

Churches	Population of Church	Actual Population of Couples
Mathare North SDA Church,	1049	121
Ruaraka Central SDA Church	298	36
Babadogo SDA Church	106	12
Survey SDA Church	116	18
NYS SDA Church	106	13
GSU SDA Church	139	18
Total	1814	218

The church population remains as above while population of couples relate to the actual couples in the various churches at the time of conducting research.

Sampling and Sample Design

Multi Stage Sampling was used to arrive at the sample size. A three stage sampling design was used which entailed clustering Kenya in the 47 counties where Nairobi county was chosen for convenience purposes. Nairobi County was then clustered in the seventeen constituencies namely: Westlands, Dagoretti North, Dagoretti South, Langata, Kibra, Roysambu, Kasarani, Ruaraka, Embakasi South, Embakasi North, Embakasi Central, Embakasi East, Embakasi West, Makadara, Kamukunji, Starehe and Mathare. Ruaraka constituency was selected randomly using table of random numbers.

Ruaraka constituency has five wards namely Korogocho, Babadogo, Mathare North, Lucky Summer and Utalii. The three wards were conveniently selected because of convenience in data collection with reference to their proximity and accessibility. They include Babadogo, Utalii, Mathare North wards. The best day in this case to get as many couple in church is on

Saturday during divine hour which is between 11:00 am and 1:00pm. Due to time constraint two churches were targeted for every Saturday so as to be able to cover the churches mentioned in three and maximum four weeks. All the SDA churches in these wards constituted the sample to be considered.

Kothari, (2004) stated that sampling frame is a physical representation of the target population which comprises of all units that are potential members of a sample. The sampling frame for this study was couples' who are members of Babadogo SDA Church, Mathare North SDA Church, Survey SDA Church, National youth Service (NYS) SDA Church, Ruaraka Central SDA church and General Service Unit (GSU) SDA church. Opportunity sampling was used to select couples issued with questionnaires and engaged in focus group discussion. Opportunity sampling entails using members of the population who are willing to take part in the research (Martella, Nelson, Morgan & Marchand-Martella, 2013). Couples who were available and willing to take part in the study were used for this study.

Method of Data Collection

Data was collected from primary sources using questionnaires and focused group discussions. The questionnaires were distributed to couples who had accepted to take part in the research. First permission was sought from the various churches through the respective family life directors. After receiving approvals from the various church boards the family life directors helped in identifying couples and issuing them with questionnaires. Questionnaires provided a quick method of collecting data conveniently from respondents. The questionnaires were detailed containing both open ended and closed ended questions.

Focused groups was used to source for information from the respondents. This was useful especially in seeking people's subjective reactions and the many level of meaning important to

human behaviour (Monette, Sullivan, DeJong & Hilton, 2013). Focus group helped in generating information on collective views and meanings that lie behind those views giving a rich understanding of participants' experiences and beliefs (Gill, Stewart, Treasure & Chadwick, 2008).

The study targeted a sample size of 200 respondents from which 157 filled in and returned the questionnaires making a response rate of 78.5%. This response rate was satisfactory and representative to make conclusions for the study. According to Rubin (2011) a response rate of less than 50% is inadequate but 60% or more is considered good for analysis and reporting. 76 married church members were engaged in a group discussion comprising of twelve to fourteen respondents in the six churches.

Validity of the Study

A pilot study was conducted in Zimmerman SDA church to ascertain the practicability of this study and also pretest the data collection instruments. Piloting helped in assessing the respondents willingness to provide the needed information, assess whether the questionnaire were understood and correctly answered by the respondents and also if data collection instruments helped in meeting the research objective.

Reliability of the Study

This study should be able to give consistent result in terms of conclusion made if conducted by other researchers using the same methodology, that is, other researchers should be able to arrive at roughly the same conclusion were they to analyse and interpret the same evidence.

Data Analysis

Data collected were both quantitative and qualitative as such both quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods were used. Quantitative data from questionnaires was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences, IBM SPSS software and presented by use of descriptive statistics in this case percentages. Qualitative data that is, feedback obtained from open-ended questions in questionnaires and focused group was analyzed using thematic data analysis.

Ethical Issues

Research Permit was obtained from National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation (NACOSTI) to enable collection of data. The questionnaire also had no names for the purpose of concealing the identity (anonymity) of the respondents. All information and data collected was treated as confidential (confidentiality) and only used for the purposes this study.

Chapter Summary

This study was conducted using exploratory research design in selected Seventh Day Adventist churches in Ruaraka constituency where multi stage sampling was used to arrive at the target population then opportunity sampling used to arrive at the sample size. Primary data was collected using questionnaires and focused group discussions. The quantitative data from questionnaires was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences; IBM SPSS software and qualitative data obtained from questionnaires and focused groups were analyzed using thematic data analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This Chapter comprises data analysis which entails presentation of results, interpretation of findings and discussion. 157 questionnaires were considered for analysis and 76 respondents ranging from twelve to fourteen engaged in group discussion in the six churches.

Data Analysis

Statistical Package for Social Sciences; IBM SPSS software was used to analyze quantitative data obtained from questionnaires and themes used to analyze qualitative data obtained from questionnaires and focused group discussion.

Presentation of Results

Demographic Information

Majority of the study participants (50.9%) were aged between 31 to 40 years. 47.8% of the participants had attained college training while the minority (3.2%) reported that primary school was the highest level of education attained. Only 9.6% were married for more than 20 years. Those married between 10-20 years comprised 32.50%, those married for 5-10 years comprised 28.0% while those married for less than five years comprised 27.4%. Table 4.1 below presents the above findings.

Table 4.1 Demographic information

Variables		Frequency	Percentage %
Age	20-30	46	29.3
	31-40	80	50.9
	41-50	22	14.0
	51 and above	8	5.1
	Missed entry	1	0.6
Education	Primary	5	3.2
	Secondary	46	29.3
	College	75	47.8
	University	29	18.5
	Missed entry	2	1.3
Length of period Married	Less than 5 years	43	27.4
	5-10 years	44	28.0
	10-20 years	51	32.5
	Over 20 years	15	9.6

Daily and Regular Communication

The first objective sought to establish whether couples daily and regular communication influence marital satisfaction. Seven questions were used to rank participants on experience of their daily and regular communication. Participants scored the degree to which they agree with five statements which indicated positive daily and regular communication. Out of 25 marks, respondents were scored and grouped into three categories.

The negative statements were scored out of ten whereby responses were categorized as shown in Table 4.2 below. Majority of respondents needed improvement in daily and regular communication as assessed from negative statements (46.5%) while the positive statements category indicated majority of respondents had an average performance in daily and regular communication. Table 4.2 illustrates the above findings.

Table 4.2 Daily and regular communication

Assessment	Range of score	Category	Frequency of score	Percentage %
Positive Statements on Daily and Regular communication	20-25 marks	Good	48	30.6
	15-19 marks	Average	60	38.2
	<15 marks	Needs improvement	49	31.2
Negative Statements on Daily and regular communication	2 marks	Good	32	20.4
	3-4 marks	Average	44	28.0
	>4 marks	Needs improvement	73	46.5
		Missed response	8	5.1

A significant number of the couples confirmed that mostly they engage in verbal communication to solve problems that arose in the relationship and other issues affecting them and not necessarily talking for the sake of talking. More than 50% of the couples acknowledge

that their communication is average and there is great need to improve on their daily and regular communication. Some couples noted factors that hindered their communication for instance;

“In most cases sharing life stressors is difficult due to work in different locations. It also depends on our temperaments which sometimes hinder our level of communication.”

The relationship between Couples’ regular communication and marital satisfaction was measured through cross tabulation. Majority of respondents who had good marital satisfaction had good daily and regular communication (48.2%). However, 38.8% of respondents with good marital satisfaction had average regular communication while the 12.90 % had need for improvement on regular communication. Figure 4.1 illustrates the above information.

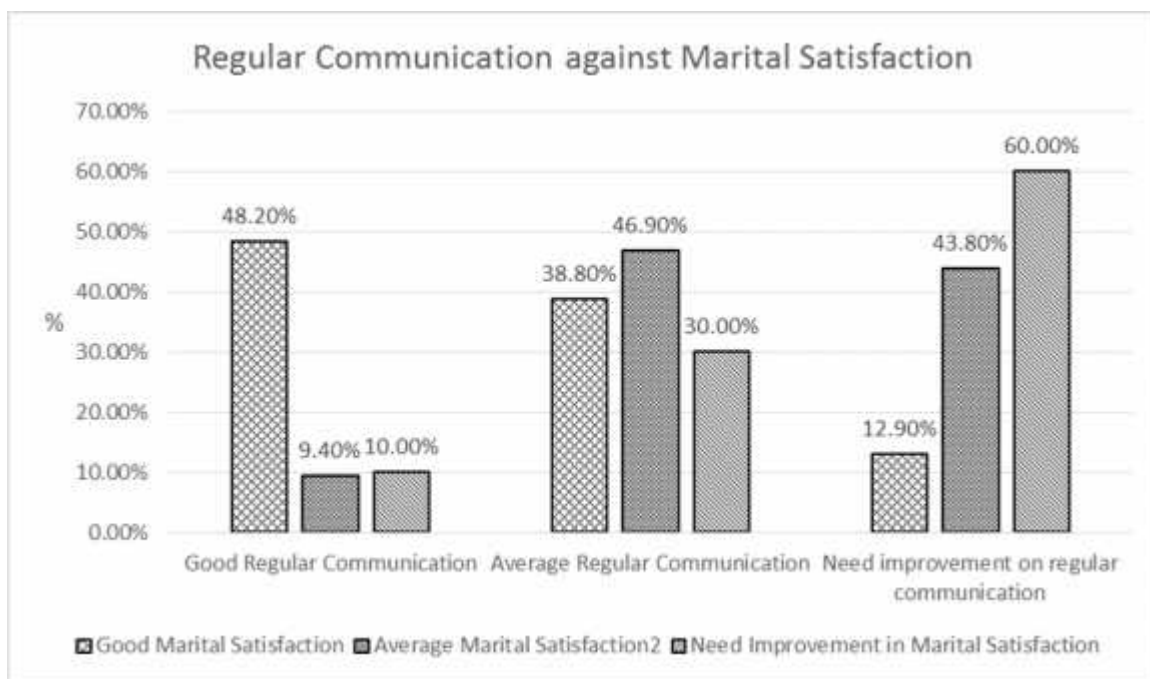


Figure 4.1 Effect of daily and regular communication on marital satisfaction.

Chapman (2014) noted that strong marriages are communicating marriages and that regular and consistent communication brings life and deepens the marriage relationship. Gottman & Silver (1999) also found that regular and open communication allows or make it possible for

partners in marriage to have full knowledge of each other which impacts positively on their relationship.

Carroll et al. (2013) noted that constructive communication is a resource spouses can use to cope with the stressors of life where a spouse offers support or express empathy. Gottman & Silver (1999) also reiterated that the aim of couples engaging in daily stress reducing conversation is to ensure that other stressors do not spill over to their relationship.

Couples' Communication during Conflict

The second objective sought to find out how couples communication during conflict affects marital satisfaction. Assessment for couples' communication was divided into two segments. The first segment had seven statements that had positive ways of communicating in conflict. A score was done based on the extent of agreement/disagreement with the statement. The second segment had three statements that indicated unproductive ways of communication in conflict. Scores were categorized as shown in table 4.3 below. In the first category, majority of respondents had an average performance (40.1%) in communication in conflict while in the second category of assessment, a super majority of people needed improvement (79.0%) as tabulated in table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3 Couples' communication during conflict.

Assessment	Range of score	Category	Frequency of score	Percentage %
Positive Statements on Communication in conflict	28-35 marks	Good	52	33.1
	21-27 marks	Average	63	40.1
	<21marks	Needs improvement	42	26.8
Negative Statements on Communication in conflict	3 marks	Good	26	16.6
	>3 marks	Needs improvement	124	79.0
		Missed response	7	4.5

A majority of couples acknowledge that their communication is average and there is great need for improvement on how they communicate around problems and issues that arise in their marriage. Some couples reported negative communication during conflict for instance;

“How we communicate is not satisfactory, it’s difficult for us to have a common stand on issues, my perspective and hers are always in conflict”

“Generally the communication avenues are blocked or at times the atmosphere not conducive.”

“When angry I try to keep quiet to avoid uttering unpleasant words.”

“We mostly rough shoulders and leave problems unsolved”

“Our communication is very poor for reasons I don’t know.”

“We do talk only after exchanging words”,

“We do not discuss everything.”

Majority of respondents who have need for improvement in marital satisfaction had need for improvement in communication during conflict (47.50%) while the 30% had average communication in conflict and the rest had good communication in conflict (22.50%). On the contrary, majority of respondents who had good marital satisfaction had good communication in conflict (45.90%) and an equal percentage had an average communication during conflict. Figure 4.2 presents the above findings.

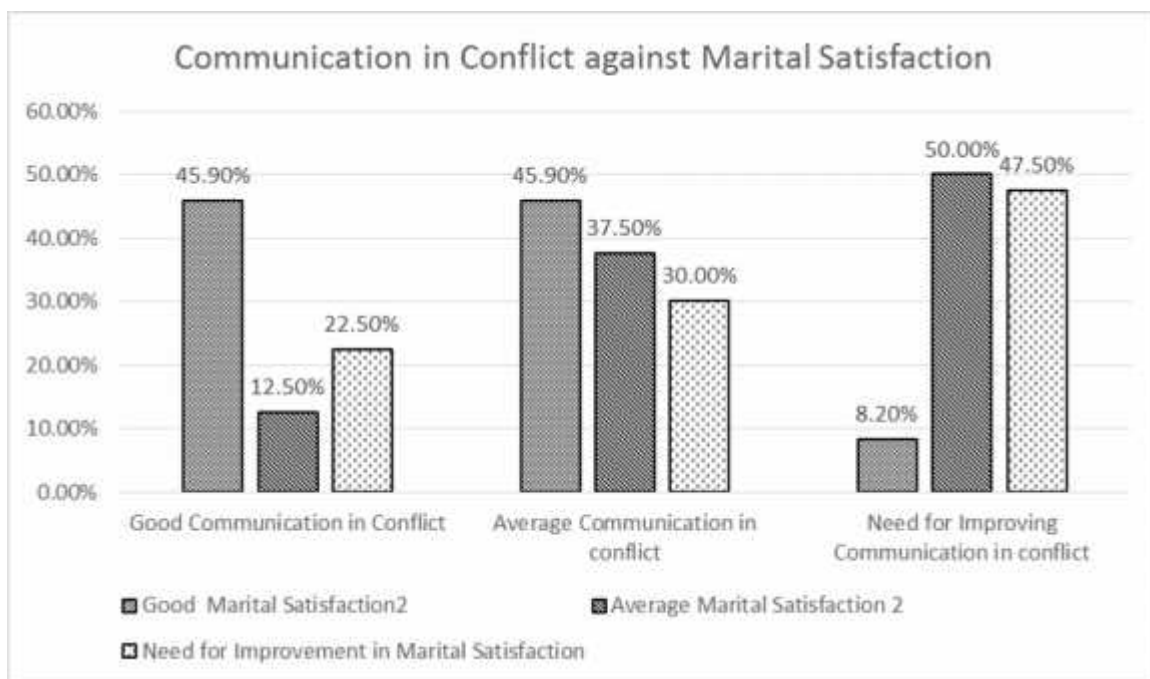


Figure 4.2 Communication in conflict and marital satisfaction

As conflict is inevitable in every couple relationship accepting a partner's personality is important in all conflict (Gottman & Silver, 1999). Most respondent agreed that understanding and accepting their partner for who they are so that they know how, when to and when not to communicate with their spouse helped a lot in their marriage relationship.

In conflicting situations a majority of the problems either were not discussed at all or remained unresolved for most couples. This cuts across those couples who are able to have daily conversation and those who don't, those who are able to communicate their thought and feelings freely and those who do not. As Everett (2009) noted failures in communicating usually result from each spouse being centered on communicating his or her needs and ignoring the needs of their spouse and for couple to become more satisfied they need to be helped to be more God centered and also accommodate their partner's needs in their communication.

Gottman & Silver (1999) also found out that sixty nine per cent of marital conflicts fall into the perpetual or unsolvable category and resolving them is not the critical factor to happy marriages as many happy couples have not resolved their big issues.

Forgiveness and positive attitude towards ones partner are the variable that moderate Christian couples communication patterns enabling them to view their marriage positively. This positive attitude is what Gottman refers to as positive sentiment override which entail seeing things within a more positive light (Gottman & Silver, 1999).

Communication of Thoughts and Feelings.

The third objective sought to determine whether open and honest expression of thoughts and feelings influence marital satisfaction. More than half of the respondents (55%) reported that they had good communication of thoughts and feelings. 22% needed improvement while 23% of respondents reported having an average communication of thoughts and feelings as presented in figure 4. 3.

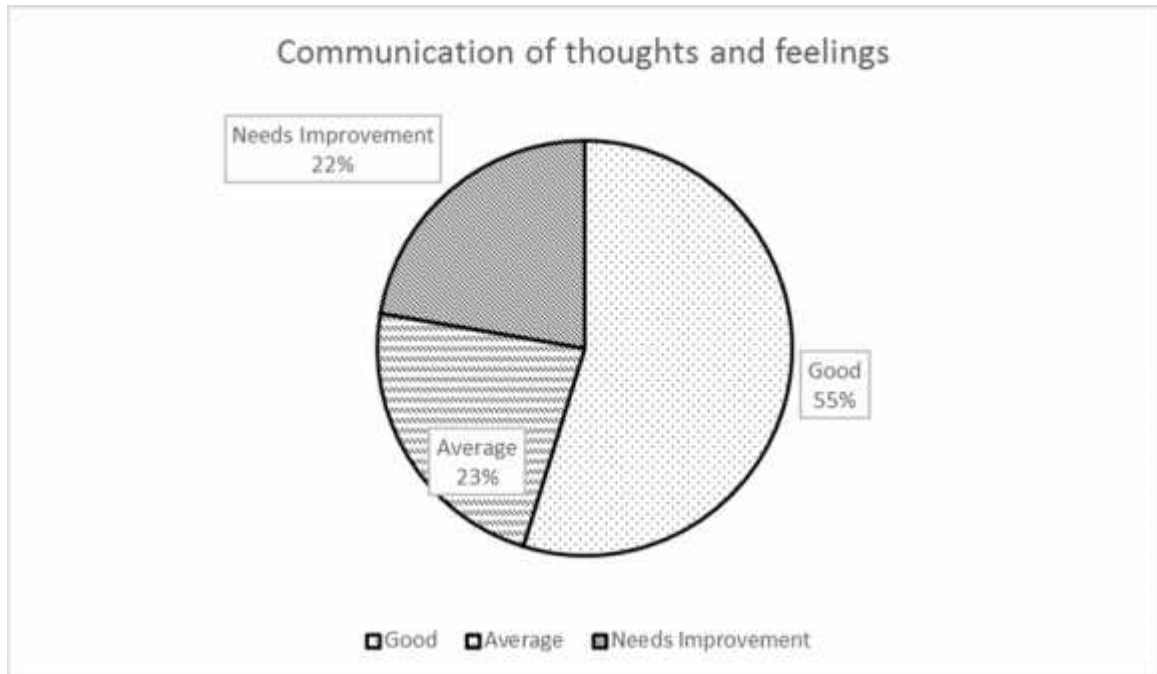


Figure 4.3 Communication of thoughts and feelings.

A considerable number of couples (45%) acknowledge that their communication is average and there is great need for improvement and of significance is their ability to share their thoughts and feelings freely with each other.

Majority of respondents who had good marital satisfaction had good communication of thoughts and feelings (81.2%). In addition, majority of those who had need for improvement in marital satisfaction also had need for improvement in their communication of thoughts and feelings (52.5%).

Table 4.4 Communication of thoughts and feelings against marital satisfaction

Variables		Marital Satisfaction		
		Good	Average	Need improvement
Communication of thoughts and feelings	Good	81.2%	15.6%	30.0%
	Average	12.9%	56.3%	17.5%
	Need improvement	5.9%	28.1%	52.5%

A majority of the Christian couple also agreed that when they communicate their thoughts and feelings openly and honestly with each other their trust for each other grows, they feel deeply connected as such they feel good about their marriage. Carlson & Sperry (2013) also supported this when they noted that when couples candidly and sincerely articulate their thoughts and feelings true intimacy grows and grievances can be revealed and resolved.

Couples' Marital Satisfaction

Majority of couples' marital satisfaction was rated as good (54.1%). A quarter of the respondents (25.5%) needed improvement while one in every five respondents had an average marital satisfaction (20.4%). Figure 4.4 illustrates the above findings.

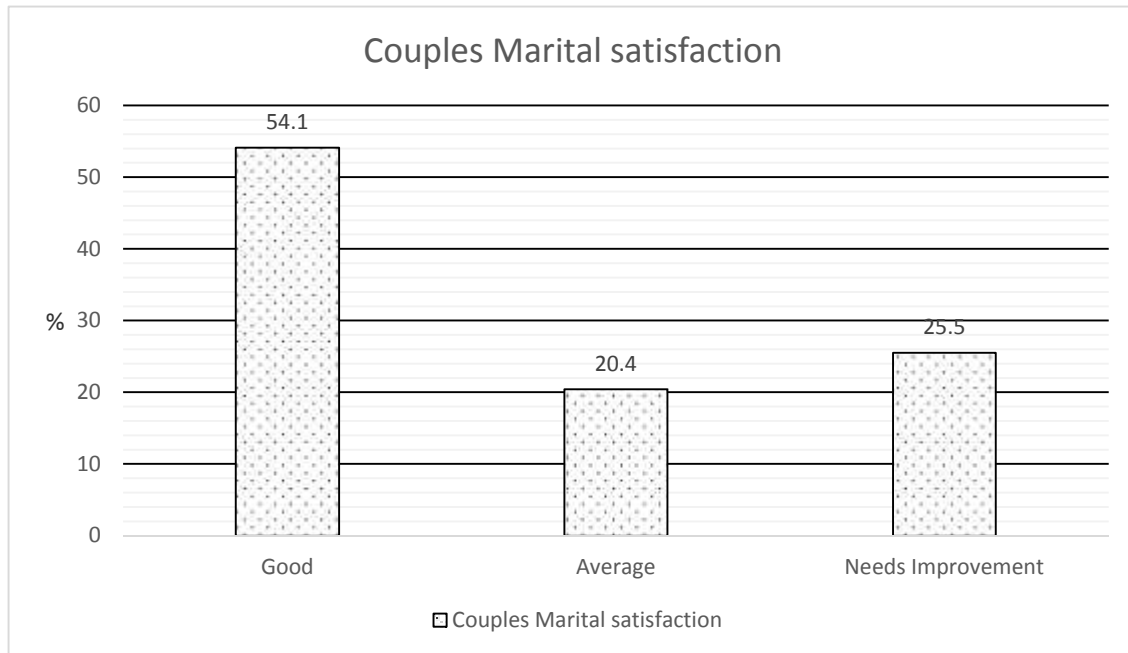


Figure 4.4 Couples' marital satisfaction

In addition, respondents were asked to rate their agreement with the statement that 'I have a lot of angry feelings toward my spouse'. 20.4 % of the respondents did not respond to the question while close to half of the respondents (46.5%) indicated they did not have angry feelings towards their spouse. However, 33.1 % of respondents needed improvement meaning they did have some level of angry feelings towards their spouse. Table 4.5 below demonstrates the findings.

Table 4.5 Marital satisfaction

Rating of Marital Satisfaction	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Good	73	46.5
Needs improvement	52	33.1
Did not respond to question	32	20.4

On couple's communication in relation to their marital satisfaction, of the respondents who answered this question only two felt that their communication patterns do not affect their marital satisfaction. Ninety nine percent of the respondent who answered this question agreed that the way they communicate to each other impacts on how they gauge their marital relationship. Some of the responses include:

"Everything starts with communication; if you do not communicate well there is no quality in marriage. In the event that we quarrel and leave issues unresolved the relationship is affected negatively."

"Communication influences marital quality, being able to communicate on all issues without fear of condemnation."

"If free to express myself I will bring up issues and stress that I have for discussion without fear of being condemned or misunderstood. I get to know what is on her mind, communication helps in explaining inner feelings."

"Poor communication leads to a buildup of emotions which once exploded leads to a miserable marriage."

"Communication is key to a good marriage. Harsh words sometimes make your partner restrain from discussing anything with you."

Regression Analysis

Having observed a pattern of association between dependent and independent variables, a regression analysis was carried out to determine the degree and direction of association using the formula: Marital satisfaction equals communication of thoughts and feelings plus communication in conflict and regular, daily communication.

The results revealed that daily and regular communication had a moderate positive statistically significant relationship with marital satisfaction. An increase in one fold of daily, regular communication would result to 32% increase in marital satisfaction other factors are held constant. Communication in conflict did not have statistically significant effect on the marital satisfaction. Similarly, communication of thoughts and feelings had a moderate positive statistically significant relationship with marital satisfaction. An increase in one fold of communication of thought and feelings would result to 23% increase in marital satisfaction other factors are held constant. Table 4.6 illustrates the above findings

Table 4.6 Regression results.

Independent Variable	Beta	Correlation	p. value	95.0% Confidence interval	
				Lower boundary	Upper boundary
Daily, regular communication	0.325	0.469	0.001	-4.304	1.843
Communication in conflict	0.020	0.374	0.841	-0.199	2.095
Communication of thoughts and feelings	0.226	0.427	0.019	0.048	1.861

Yucel & Koydemir (2015) found that the couples' interactional process is linked to marital satisfaction both for individual partners and couple system. As such working on couples communication by increasing positive and constructive communication styles, could help address marital satisfaction.

In this study most respondents reported that they are not able to talk about their life stressors in a helpful way and even where couples are able to talk daily or regularly, talking about stressors in a helpful way seems to be left out in daily or regular conversations. This could be the reason for the moderate positive relationship with marital satisfaction. Gottman & Silver (1999) and Carroll et al. (2013) observed that where couples are able to help each other cope with the daily stressors it can help prevent distress in a couple's relationship because stressors are not allowed to spill over into their relationship.

Heffner et al., (2006) found that married couples' communication patterns during conflict relate strongly to marital quality. This was however not supported by the findings of this study as there was no statistically significant relationship between communication in conflict and marital satisfaction among Christian couple. This could be due to others factors which can be investigated further for example culture and couples socialization which in turn informs couples expectations in relationship to what affects their satisfaction in marriage.

Vazhappilly & Reyes (2016) found that communication had a strong positive correlation with the spouses' sense of overall marital satisfaction. An increase in the level of mutual interaction, free and open sharing and healthy understanding between the couples would ensure greater level of marital satisfaction. The findings from this study only reported moderate positive statistical significance. This could be due to what Gayatrivadivu et al., (2014) and Bengtson et al. (2005) observed that marital satisfaction depends upon the individual couple's needs, expectations, and desires for the relationship and may differ in degree and in kind between spouses and couples.

Chapter Summary

Generally Christian couples agreed that their communication patterns inform how they evaluate their marital relationship. In this study the first objective sought to establish whether couples daily and regular communication influence marital satisfaction. Statistical findings indicate that daily and regular communication have a moderate positive significance to marital satisfaction among Christian couples. The second objective sought to find out how couples communication during conflict affects marital satisfaction. Findings from this research showed that communication in conflict did not have a statistically significant relationship with marital satisfaction among Christian couples. Lastly the third objective sought to determine whether open and honest expression of thoughts and feelings influence marital satisfaction. Statistical findings also indicated that open and honest expression of thoughts and feelings have a moderate positive significance to marital satisfaction among Christian couples.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

This chapter comprises of summary of findings, implications, conclusions, recommendations, and areas for further research.

Summary of Findings

Generally Christian couples agreed that their communication patterns informs how they evaluate or gauge their marital quality or how satisfied they are with their marriage and therefore communication patterns in general impact on couples marital satisfaction. Christian couples also agreed that when they communicate openly and honestly with each other their trust for each other grows, they feel deeply connected as such they feel good about their marriage as prevailing issues are discussed, experiences shared which in return fostered mutual understanding.

Most couples reported that how they communicate is largely informed by how they started at the beginning and not so much by them being Christians. Those that started well: communicating freely and trying as much as possible to be open and free with each other have continued doing the same. Those that started by only discussing issues that came up in their marriage have continued that way.

Many couples also acknowledged that they are not perfect; they have hurt each other in the way they communicate and repented/ asked for forgiveness. Most respondent agreed that understanding and accepting their partner for who they are so that they know how, when to and when not to communicate with their spouse helped a lot in their marriage relationship. Forgiveness and positive attitude towards ones partner are the variable that moderate Christian couples communication patterns enabling them to view their marriage positively.

A significant number of the couples confirmed that mostly they engage in verbal communication to solve problems that arose in their relationship and other issues affecting them and not necessarily talking for the sake of talking. A majority of couples acknowledge that their communication is average and there is great need to improve on their daily and regular, communication during conflict and communication of their thought and feelings.

A quarter of the respondents (26.8%) reported that their communication patterns were mostly negative. As Everett (2009) noted failures in communicating usually result from each spouse being centered on communicating his or her needs and ignoring the needs of their spouse and for couple to become more satisfied they need to be helped to be more God centered and also accommodate their partner's needs in their communication.

These indicate that negative communication patterns is also present among Christian couples and as some reiterated that though Christians they are fallen human beings who are not perfect hence when they err in their communication with each other they ask for forgiveness and look for opportunities of reconciliation. What is actually harmful is where negative interaction patterns are perpetual and no attempt is made at repairing the relationship (Gottman & Silver, 1999).

The first objective sought to establish whether couples daily and regular communication influence marital satisfaction. Statistical findings indicate that daily and regular communication have a moderate positive significance to marital satisfaction among Christian couples. Gottman & Silver (1999) underscores the importance of couples finding time daily (share experiences of the day) and also setting regular times where they are able to discuss issues concerning them and also complain about things that are not going well in their relationship. This helps couple to know each other deeply and also prevent other stressors from affecting their relationship.

The second objective sought to find out how couples communication during conflict affects marital satisfaction. Findings from this research showed that communication in conflict did not have a statistically significant relationship with marital satisfaction among Christian couples. According to Gottman & Silver (1999) finding resolution to major marital conflicts is not a crucial factor to happy marriages; many happy couples have not resolved their big issues. The idea is for couples to deal with the problems through communication in such a way that it does not overwhelm them. What is important in conflict is accepting a partner's personality, having positive regard for one's spouse, breaking the cycle of negativity and find opportunities to reconcile (turning towards as opposed to turning away) such that conflict does not overwhelm the couple for them to disengage from each other.

The third objective sought to determine whether open and honest expression of thoughts and feelings influence marital satisfaction. Statistical findings also indicated that open and honest expression of thoughts and feelings have a moderate positive significance to marital satisfaction among Christian couples. According to Gottman & Silver (1999) marriages should be based on deep friendship which entails couples knowing each other deeply. Gottman couple therapy is about working to increase friendship and the best gifts a couple can give each other is the joy that comes from feeling known and understood. This can only be achieved where couples are able to express themselves fully without hiding, evading or distorting information concerning them.

Implications

Marriage counselors, relationship educators, pastors, other religious leaders and interested individuals can use this information and therefore put an emphasis in educating their members on the importance of daily and regular communication in marriage and open and honest expression of thoughts and feelings. This may be beneficial to many marriages.

Another important thing noted is that couples who have been married for over twenty years were less receptive and reluctant; most of them did not even want to commit to fill the questionnaires to the end. Those that filled appeared not so much keen in providing the required information. It also came out very strongly in the focused group discussion that they have a feeling that there is nothing new they can learn as they have enough experience.

This is very important for marriage counselors, pastors and other religious leaders to emphasize to their congregants to start right by exploring this topic of communication in premarital counseling. This should entail educating them on the importance of daily and regular communication and open and honest communication expression of thoughts and feelings. Relationship educators and interested person can also take this into consideration.

Conclusions

Daily and regular communication among couples and couples' being able to communicate their feelings and thought freely have a moderate positive statistically significant to Christian couples marital satisfaction and thus positive communication patterns can be said to result in happy marriage life. Majority of the couples also agreed that the way they communicate to each other informs how they gauge their marital relationship as such communication is considered key in a marriage relationship.

Recommendations

This study reported positive moderate statistical significance relationship between daily and regular communication with marital satisfaction as well as positive moderate statistical significance relationship between open and honest expression of thoughts and feeling and marital satisfaction. Counselors can use these findings to emphasize the importance couples having daily

and regular communication as well as open and honest expression of thoughts and feeling when working with couples.

Most couples reported that how they communicate is largely informed by how they started at the beginning. This is very important for marriage counselors, pastors and other religious leaders to emphasize to their members the importance of starting right. This study recommends that churches should come up with a comprehensive pre marital program detailing topics to be covered for members intending to marry. These programs should contain the different aspect of couple communication which should be discussed satisfactorily.

This study recommends that counselors should consider and explore other aspects of the couples make up which affect how couples communicate. These aspects should be considered or explored by counselors when offering pre-marital counseling or when working with couples on their communication. Some of the aspects noted as affecting how couples communicate include: individual couple's personality, individual couple's expectation on how communication should be and the attitude with which information is received within a couple's course of interaction.

This study underscored the importance of couples basing their marriage on deep friendship. When couples are friends they will look out for the interest and the best in each other which in turn will affect all other areas of their lives. This study therefore recommends for marriage counselors and various church leaders to help couples to base their marriage on deep friendship.

Areas for Further Research

Findings from this research showed that communication in conflict did not have statistically significant effect on Christian couples marital satisfaction as supported by various

authors and previous research. This needs to be explored further to find out possible reasons for this.

Factors that contribute to how Christian couples communicate such as couples personality, individual couple's expectation on how communication should be, the attitude with which information is received within a couple's course of interaction and any other can be explored or studied in future and in extension how these factors impact on marital satisfaction.

The sampled churches included lower and middle-class couples in the SDA churches as such future studies can be done broadening the scope to other Christian denominations in Kenya and also involving couples living in upper class areas.

References

- Bagwell, E. K., (2006). Factors Influencing Marital Satisfaction with a Specific Focus on Depression (Senior Honors Theses, Eastern Michigan University, Michigan , USA). Retrieved from <http://commons.emich.edu/honors/38/>.
- Beeke, J. R. (2017). Nurturing intimate communication with your spouse. *Puritan Reformed Journal*, 9(1), 265-278.
- Bengtson V. L., Acock, A. C., Allen K. R., Dilworth-Anderson, P. & Klein, D. M., (2005). *Sourcebook of Family Theory and Research*. Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, California.
- Bernard, H. R., (2000). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE publication.
- Budzinski, K., (2014). *How to build an enduring marriage*. Bloomington, IN: WestBow Press.
- Business Dictionary, (2017). *Definition of pattern*. Retrieved June 24, 2017, from www.businessdictionary.com/definition/pattern.html.
- Caram, P., (2015). *True Christianity*. Zion Christian Publications, Ulysses.PA. USA.
- Carlson, J. & Sperry, L. (2013). *Intimate couple*. Ann Arbor, MI: Routledge.
- Carlson, J. Dinkmeyer D. C. & Dinkmeyer, D., (2003). *Time for a better marriage*. Atascadero, California: Impact Publishers.
- Carroll, S. J., Hill, E. J., Yorgason, J. B., Larson, J. H. & Sandberg, J. G., (2013). Couple communication as a mediator between work–family conflict and marital satisfaction. *Journal of Contemporary Family Theory*, 35, 530–545. DOI 10.1007/s10591-013-9237-7
- Chapman, G. D., (2003). *Covenant marriage: Building communication & intimacy*. Nashville, Tennessee: B&H Publishing Group.
- Chapman, G., (2014). *Now you're speaking my language: Honest communication & deeper intimacy for a stronger marriage*. Nashville, Tennessee: B&H Publishing Group.
- Debasish S. S. & Das, B., (2010). *Business communication*. New Delhi: PHI Learning Pvt. Ltd.
- Derlega, V. J., (2013). *Communication, intimacy, and close relationships*. Orlando, Florida: Academic Press.
- Eggerichs, E., (2008). *Cracking the communication code: The secret to speaking your mate's language*. Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson.

- Elmore, R. (2011). Five minutes that can save your marriage. *Ebony*, 66(9), 64.
- Elmore, R. (2011). How to talk so your mate will listen. *Ebony*, 66(7), 68.
- Everett, L. W. (Jr.), (2009). *Marriage Counseling: A Christian Approach to Counseling Couples*. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press.
- Fryling, A. & Fryling, R. A., (2009). *A handbook for engaged couples*. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press.
- Gayatrivadivu, Poonguzhali, Ofelia, & Vijayabanu. (2014). A study on relationship between forgiveness, resilience and marital satisfaction among married individuals. *Indian Journal of Positive Psychology*, 5(4), 382-387.
- Gill, P., Stewart, K., Treasure, E. & Chadwick, B., (2008). Methods of data collection in qualitative research: interviews and focus groups. *British Dental Journal*, 204, 291-295. doi:10.1038/bdj.2008.192
- Gottman, J. M. (1994). *What predicts divorce? The relationship between marital processes and marital outcomes*. Hillsdale, NJ: Laurence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.
- Gottman, J., & Silver, N. (1999). *The seven principals for making marriage work*. New York: Three Rivers.
- Heffner, K. L., Loving, T. J., Kiecolt-Glaser, J. K., Himawan, L. K., Glaser, R., & Malarkey, W. B. (2006). Older spouses' cortisol responses to marital conflict: associations with demand/withdraw communication patterns. *Journal of Behavioral Medicine*, 29(4), 317-325. doi:10.1007/s10865-006-9058-3
- Holman, T. B. (Ed.). (2001). *Premarital prediction of marital quality or breakup: Research, theory, and practice*. New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum.
- Hunler, O. S. & Gencoz, T. (2005). The effect of religiousness on marital satisfaction: Testing the mediator role of marital problem solving between religiousness and marital satisfaction relationship. *Contemporary Family Therapy*, 27(1), 123-136.
- Kelley, D. (2012). *Marital communication*. Malden, MA: Polity Press.
- King, M. E., (2016). Marital Satisfaction. *The Wiley Blackwell Encyclopedia of Family Studies*. 1-2.
- Knee, C. R., Patrick, H., & Lonsbary, C. (2003). Implicit theories of relationships: Orientations toward evaluation and cultivation. *Personality and Social and Psychology Review*, 7, 41-55.

- Kombo, D. K. & Tromp, D. L. A. (2006). *Proposal and thesis writing: An introduction*. Nairobi, Kenya: Paulines Publications Africa.
- Kothari, C. R., (2004) *Research methodology- methods and techniques*. Mumbai: New Age International (P) Limited.
- Krishnaswamy, K. N., Sivakumar, A. I., & Mathirajan, M. (2009). *Management research methodology: Integration of principles, methods and techniques*. Patparganj, Delhi: Dorling Kindersley.
- Larson, J. H., (2004). *The great marriage tune-up book: A proven program for evaluating and renewing your relationship*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Litzinger, S. & Gordon K.C. (2005). Exploring relationships among communication, sexual satisfaction, and marital satisfaction. *Journal of Sex & Marital Therapy*, 31, 409-424.
- Marsh, R., & Dallos, R. (2000). Religious beliefs and practices and Catholic couples' management of anger and conflict. *Clinical Psychology and Psychotherapy*, 7, 22–36.
- Martella, R. C., Nelson, J. R., Morgan, R. L. & Marchand-Martella, N. E., (2013). *Understanding and Interpreting Educational Research*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- McDonald, C. & McDonald, P., (2008). *Creating a successful christian marriage*. Baker Books.
- Monette, D. R., Sullivan, T. J., DeJong, C. R., & Hilton (2013). *Applied social research: A tool for the human services*. Belmont, CA: Cengage Learning.
- Mostamandy, T., (2012). *The Effect of communication on couples' relationship and happiness*. Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse.
- Nussbaum, P. D., (2013). *Handbook of Neuropsychology and Aging*. Plenum Press, New York.
- Orodho, (2003). *Essentials of educational and social sciences research method*. Nairobi: Masola Publishers.
- Papp, L. M., Kouros, C. D., & Cummings, E. M. (2009). Demand-withdraw patterns in marital conflict in the home. *Personal Relationships*, 16(2), 285-300. doi:10.1111/j.1475-6811.2009.01223.x
- Pawar, M. S., (2004). *Data collecting methods and experiences: A guide for social researchers*. Elgins, IL: New Dawn Press Group.
- Rubin, A. (2011). *Practitioner's guide to using research for evidence-based practice*. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons.

- Saunders, G. M. (2011). *The marriage makeover: Making your marriage the best it can be based on God's promise for marriage*. Victoria, BC: FriesenPress.
- Strong, B., DeVault, C., Cohen, T. F. (2016). *The marriage and family experience: Intimate relationships in a changing society*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning.
- Uwadiae, S., (2012). *Christian marriage companion*, Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse.
- Vazhappilly, J. J., & Reyes, M. S. (2016). Development of emotion-focused couples communication program (EFCCP): A pilot study. *Indian Journal of Positive Psychology*, 7(3), 264-268.
- Worthington, E. L. W., (2009). *Marriage counseling: A Christian approach to counseling couples*. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press.
- Wright, D. W., Simmons, L. A. & Campbell, K., (2007). Does a Marriage Ideal Exist? Using Q-Sort Methodology to Compare Young Adults' and Professional Educators' Views on Healthy Marriages. *International Journal Contemporary Family Therapy*, 29, 223-236.
- Yoo, H., Bartle-Haring, S., Day, R. D., & Gangamma, R. (2014). Couple communication, emotional and sexual intimacy, and relationship satisfaction. *Journal of Sex & Marital Therapy*, 40(4), 275-293. doi:10.1080/0092623X.2012.751072
- Yucel, D., & Koydemir, S. (2015). Predictors of marital satisfaction in North Cyprus: Exploring the gender effects. *Journal of Family Studies*, 21(2), 120-143. doi:10.1080/13229400.2015.1017908.

Appendices

Appendix I: Questionnaire

Section 1: Background Information

a) What age group do you belong to? (Tick)

20- 30 yrs 31 - 40 yrs 41 - 50 yrs 51 and above

b) What is your highest level of education?

Primary Secondary College University

c) How long have you been married?

Less than 5 Years 5- 10 Years 11- 20 Years Over 20 Years

Section 2

I. Couples Daily and Regular Communication

Please indicate with a tick (✓) the extent to which you agree with the statements using a rating scale where 5 = to a very large extent, 4 = to a large extent, 3 = to a moderate extent, 2 = to a small extent and 1 = not at all.

NO		5	4	3	2	1
1	We create time on a daily basis to talk.					
2	We create time regularly to talk about issues that concerns us					
3	We usually talk about our life stressors in a helpful manner.					
4	We help each other reduce daily stresses.					
5	My partner listens with understanding about my stresses and worries.					
6	My partner takes job or other stresses out on me.					
7	We do not talk about our stressors at all					

II. Couples Communication in Conflict

Please indicate with a tick (✓) the extent to which you agree with the statements using a rating scale where 5 = to a very large extent, 4 = to a large extent, 3 = to a moderate extent, 2 = to a small extent and 1 = not at all.

No		5	4	3	2	1
1	We confront problematic issues in a calm way.					
2	I feel listened to and understood in conflicting situations.					

3	We usually have a stimulating exchange of ideas on conflicting issues.					
4	Any of us can bring up a problem in the marriage that needs to be discussed.					
5	Any of us can suggest solutions for problems in the relationship.					
6	The partner on the wrong usually accepts responsibility for the problems in the relationship and asks for forgiveness.					
7	Conflicts are usually resolved with mutual satisfaction.					
8	When we discuss conflicting issues, my partner acts as if I am totally wrong and he or she is totally right.					
9	Most problems and/or arguments remain unsolved.					
10	We do not discuss problems or issues at all.					

III. Couples Communication of Thoughts and Feelings

Please indicate with a tick (✓) the extent to which you agree with the statements using a rating scale where 5 = to a very large extent, 4 = to a large extent, 3 = to a moderate extent, 2 = to a small extent and 1 = not at all.

NO		5	4	3	2	1
1	I can talk freely with my spouse on any subject.					
2	We confide in each other; we do not have secrets between us.					
3	I can discuss any topic or subject with my spouse.					
4	I can share my thoughts and ideas without fear of condemnation.					
5	I can share my life experiences and feelings freely (both positive and negative).					

What is your overall take on how you communicate with your spouse?

IV. Couples marital satisfaction

Please indicate with a tick (✓) the extent to which you agree with the statements using a rating scale where 5 = to a very large extent, 4 = to a large extent, 3 = to a moderate extent, 2 = to a small extent and 1 = not at all.

No		5	4	3	2	1
1	I feel satisfied with our marriage.					
2	Our marriage is based on a deep friendship.					
3	When I have a personal problem, my spouse is the first person I turn to.					
4	My love for my spouse has increased more and more over time.					
5	I have a lot of angry feelings toward my spouse.					

6. Do you think your communication patterns impacts on your marital satisfaction?

a) Yes

b) No

Explain _____

Appendix II: Focused Group Guideline

1. Welcoming

Welcome and thank the volunteers for accepting to take part in this focus group.

2. Introduction

This focus group discussion is designed to assess your thoughts and feelings about the relationship between communication patterns and marital satisfaction among Christian couples.

I would like to assure you that the discussion will be considered confidential and will be used for the purpose of research only.

3. Ground rules

- Only one person speaks at a time.
- There is no right or wrong answers.
- You can speak in any particular order one at a time.

4. Guiding questions

- a) Are you able to find time daily and regularly to talk and what do you talk about?
- b) Are you able to share about your day's experiences and help each other with deal with difficulties encountered? Explore.
- c) How do you confront and deal with problematic issues in your marriage?
- d) Are you able to talk about or discuss problematic issues successfully? Explore.
- e) What do you do when you realize that you have hurt your spouse?
- f) Are you able to share your thoughts and ideas without fear of being condemned? Explore.
- g) Are you able to share your life experiences and feelings freely (both positive and negative)? Explain.
- h) What is your overall take on how you communicate with your spouse?

- i) Does how you communicate with your spouse reflect your Christianity? Explain.
- j) Do you consider your spouse to be your friend? Explore.
- k) Can you rely on your spouse? Explain.
- l) Does how you communication affect how you gauge your marital relationship? Explain.

Conclusion

Thank you for participating. This has been a very successful discussion and your opinion was valuable to this study. I also hope you found the discussion interesting. Thank you once again and God bless you and your marriages.

Appendix III: Pan Africa Christian University Letter

12th July, 2017



P.O. Box 56875, 00200 Nairobi, Kenya
+254 721 932050, +254 734 400694
enquiries@pacuniversity.ac.ke,
admissions@pacuniversity.ac.ke
www.pacuniversity.ac.ke

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: EUNICE AKELO BOLO REG. NO. MFT/0639/15

Greetings! This is an introduction letter for the above named person a final year student in Pan Africa Christian University (PAC University), pursuing a Master of Arts in Marriage and Family Therapy.

She is at the final stage of the programme and she is preparing to collect data to enable her finalise on her thesis. The thesis title is **"The Relationship between Christian Couples' Communication Patterns and their Marital Satisfaction"**.

We therefore kindly request that you allow her conduct research in your organization.

Warm Regards,

Lillian Vikiro

Dr. Lillian Vikiro
Registrar Academics

12th July, 2017

PAN AFRICA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY
P.O. Box 56875, NAIROBI - 00200.
TEL: 0561022 / 0561045 / 0101146

Where Leaders are made

Appendix IV: Certificate of Correction


Pan Africa Christian University
P.O Box 56875-00200
Nairobi, Kenya
Tel: +254 721-932050/734-400694
Website: www.pacuniversity.ac.ke

CERTIFICATION OF CORRECTION OF THESIS PROPOSAL

PART I: RELEVANT DETAILS OF THE THESIS

Department: PSYCHOLOGY Degree Title: MAN.MT
Candidates' Name: ELMICE ANGLO BOLD Registration No. MT/06/115 Signature: [Signature]
Date of Oral Defense: 25th May 2017
Title of Thesis: The Relationship Between Christian Couples' Communication Patterns and their Marital Satisfaction

PART II: DECLARATION BY SUPERVISOR(S) AND THE REVIEWER(S)

I / we, the undersigned do hereby confirm that I / we have closely looked at the corrections as instructed by the Post Graduate Defense Committee and I / we do hereby certify that **ALL** the corrections have been effected as agreed.

NAME: Dr. Ruth Kamukaga SIGN: [Signature] DATE: 12/7/2017
(SUPERVISOR)

NAME: _____ SIGN: _____ DATE: _____
(SUPERVISOR)

NAME: Amos Aluma Keya SIGN: [Signature] DATE: 11/07/2017
(REVIEWER)

PART III: CONFIRMATION BY GRADUATE SCHOOL

Confirmed that the Supervisor and Reviewer appointed to oversee the corrections have done so as per the Instructions of the Post Graduate Committee

NAME: Dr. D. Omyi SIGN: [Signature] DATE & STAMP: 12/7/2017
Kimani
Dean, Graduate School

The Leadership University of Choice

Appendix V: Letter from NACOSTI



**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE,
TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION**

Telephone: +254-20-2213471,
2241349, 3310571, 2219420
Fax: +254-20-318245, 318249
Email: dg@nacosti.go.ke
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke
When replying please quote

9th Floor, Utali House
Uhuru Highway
P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA

Ref. No. **NACOSTI/P/17/39954/18335**

Date: **31st July, 2017**

Eunice Akelo Bolo
Pan Africa Christian University
P.O. Box 56875-00200
NAIROBI.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on *"The relationship between Christian couples' communication patterns and their marital satisfaction,"* I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Nairobi County** for the period ending **28th July, 2018.**

You are advised to report to **the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Nairobi County** before embarking on the research project.

Kindly note that, as an applicant who has been licensed under the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 to conduct research in Kenya, you shall deposit **a copy** of the final research report to the Commission within **one year** of completion. The soft copy of the same should be submitted through the Online Research Information System.


GODFREY P. KALERWA MSc., MBA, MKIM
FOR: DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO

Copy to:

The County Commissioner
Nairobi County.

The County Director of Education
Nairobi County.

COUNTY COMMISSIONER
NAIROBI COUNTY
P.O. Box 30184-00100, NBO
TEL: 341966

National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) - 2008 Certified