GENDER ROLES AND RESPONSIBLE SEX IN CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE: ASSESSMENT OF THE COUNSELLING SERVICES PROVIDED BY PENTECOSTAL AND CHARISMATIC COUNSELLORS IN THE CAPE COAST METROPOLIS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper was to assess the counselling services given by the Pentecostal and Charismatic marriage and family counsellors on gender roles in a Christian Marriage and family. Thirty seven (37) marriage counsellors from forty (40) Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches in the metropolis were selected for the study. It was a descriptive study where questionnaire was used to collect the data. The study revealed that, majority of the counsellors 31 (83.8%) gave their clients adequate counselling on gender roles in a Christian marriage and family. However, the study revealed that the counsellors did not provide adequate counselling on responsible sex. For example, 24 (64.9%), 21 (56.8%), and 23 (62.2%) did not counsel clients to use lubrication if the wife feels dry, communicate sexual style and preference to each other freely during love making, and take clients through some sexual stimulating techniques respectively. The study also recommended that marriage counsellors are to resource themselves adequately through participation in in-service and training seminars and reading to handle their clients appropriately in the area of responsible sex in a Christian marriage.

Keywords: Gender Roles, Responsible Sex Christian Marriage, Christian marriage and Family Counsellors

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Concept of the Christian Marriage and Family

Oyedepo and Oyedepo (1999) discussed some seven concepts of the Christian marriage and family as follows. First, Marriage is good. Second, Marriage is for better living. Third, marriage is designed for fruitfulness. The fourth concept is termed by Oyedepo and Oyedepo as “The Law of Departure”. It states that married couples must leave the interferences from parents and others, and until couples depart, they cannot cleave; and until they cleave, they cannot know peace. The fifth is the covenant obligation of the husband to love his wife, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it. The sixth concept is the covenant obligation of the wife to submit herself unto her own husbands. The final concept of the Christian marriage and family stated by Oyedepo and Oyedepo (1999) is the concept of mutual obligations which involves romance. They argued that the moment a home becomes deficient in marital affairs or romance, it is beginning to break.

Marriage by the Christian standard is strictly between a man and a woman as from the beginning (Genesis 2:18-25; Mathew 19:4). Also, divorce is not allowed in the Christian marriage except by fornication or adultery (Mathew 19:9).

Cohabitation, which is on the rise in many nations, and even in some churches today (Clayton & Voss, 1977; Forrest & Singh, 1990; Trost, 1979) is clearly below God’s standard. Also, for Christians, the bible only allows monogamy (1 Corinthians 7:2). That is, one husband, one wife.

1.2 Roles of Husbands and Wives in Christian Marriage and Family

The family is a social system with its own unique rules, roles, and power structure of (Golderberg & Goldemberg, 1985). According to Olson and Defrain (2000), a major cause of many marriage and family tensions is conflicting roles between husbands and wives. Davidson and Moore (1992) agreed with Olson and Defrain (2000). Some gender roles of the Christian husband and wife have been highlighted below.

1.3 Roles of the Christian Husband

A major role of the Christian husband is leadership or head of the family. The husband is unambiguously the head of the wife and the family (1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 5:23). He is expected to provide good governance and lead by example (Manual for family and marriage counselling, Assemblies of God Church, Takoradi Central, n.d). The husband does not dominate the family but must stand for what is right (2
Corinthians 5:17). He must have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and be a servant leader like Jesus (Matthew 20: 26-28). He must sacrifice for the family just as Jesus did for the church (Ephesians 5: 25). Husbands are to dwell with their wives with much wisdom (1 Peter 3:7) and teach their wives (spiritual things) at home (1 Corinthians 14:35).

Husbands must also love, respect and honour their wives (Ephesians 5: 25). They must make time to enjoy love, sex and companionship with their wives (1 Corinthians 7:3-4; Proverbs 5:18) and love them unselfishly and unconditionally just as he loves his own body (Ephesians 5: 28-29). The Christian husband should not be bitter towards his wife (Colossians 3:19). He is also not to abuse his wife in any form – physically, emotionally, sexually, financially, verbally or otherwise. The husband must also honour his wife so that his prayers are not hindered (1 Peter 3:7).

The Christian husband must also protect his wife as a weaker vessel (1 Peter 3:7) both spiritually (Ephesians 5:25-27) and physically. He must pray for his wife and family as Christ continues to intercede for the church (Romans 8: 34; Ephesians 6:10-18), help his wife with housekeeping duties and not burden her with too much work. He must follow the example of Jesus, who made the apostles rest when they were tired (Mark 6: 30-31). Provision of cloth, food, and shelter of the family is another responsibility of the Christian husband (1 Timothy 5: 18). Other needs like healthcare and education of the family are the responsibilities of the husband (Omeonu, 2007a). Others include provision of good sex to only the wife (1 Corinthians 7: 3-5; Proverbs 5:15-21), faithfulness to the wife of his youth (Malachi 2:15), and sharing in the training of children (Proverbs 22:6). Deuteronomy 6:7 tasks fathers to teach their children (Proverbs 18), and not burden their children at all times. He must be available for his household.

1.4 Roles of the Christian Wife

The Christian wife’s role is an enormous one. She is referred to as a virtuous woman (Proverbs 31:10-11). She has to depend on God for help. One major role of the wife is to support her husband. She is to be a helper or companion of the husband (Genesis 2:18). She supports her husband in all things – morally (1 kings 19: 2; 21:5-7), intellectually (1 Samuel 25:3-38), emotionally (Genesis 2: 28), spiritually (Exodus 4: 24-26; Acts 18: 2, 18, 26; Romans 16: 3) and even financially (Proverbs 31: 13-25). Christians believe that a wife is therefore a sign of God’s favour to man (Proverbs 18:22). It is also the duty of the Christian wife to submit to her own husband’s leadership (Ephesians 5:22-24, 33). The Bible cited Sarah’s example of obedience and total submission to Abraham to the extent that she called him “lord”. The immutable word of God demands today’s wives to do likewise (1 Peter 3:5-6). Submission to the husband is seen as an act of holiness by God (1 Peter 3:5). Wives should never use abusive words and refrain from nagging and scolding their husbands (Proverbs 31:26).

Other equally important duties of the Christian wife include: loving their husbands and children (Titus 2:4-5) and striking a proper balance between loving husbands and children (Proverbs 11:1, 20:23; 31:28), provision of good sex to their husbands alone (1 Corinthians 7: 3-5), faithfulness to their husbands (Mark 10:12; Proverbs 31:11) and doing their husbands good and not evil all the days of their lives (Proverbs 31:12). Furthermore, the wife is expected to work diligently to keep the home in order (Proverbs 31:13; Titus 2:5). Other duties are budgeting and helping her husband with her resources (Proverbs 31:14, 16, 18), cooking balanced meals on good time (Proverbs 31:15), washing of clothing and making sure the home is generally in good order (Proverbs 31:15). She shares in the training of children. The Christian wife should also protect her husband (Exodus 4: 24-26; 1 Samuel 25:3-38; Jeremiah 31:22) and from strange women (Proverbs 2:16; 5:3, 20; 6:24).

1.5 Responsible sex in a Christian Marriage

Hill (1960) opined that the sexual desire is the most powerful of all human desires with a therapeutic quality of no equal. Collins (2007) highlighted some four biblical positions on sex. First, God created humans as sexual creatures and declared that sex is good. Second, genital sex has three purposes: procreation, union and pleasure. Third, sexual intercourse is intended only for marriage. Fourth, sexual immorality is condemned. Hill (1960) argued further that unfortunately the subject of sex is one about which the majority of people appear to be unpardonably ignorant. Many therefore assert that would be couples must be taught responsible and satisfying sex (Britten & Britten, 2006; Dekagbe, 2011). According to Kirkpatrick (1975), counsellors should not assume that clients are knowledgeable in matters of human sexuality.

It is almost a taboo to talk about sex openly in many cultures, especially in African societies (Omeonu, 2007b). Kirkpatrick admonished counsellors to feel comfortable and avoid using slang but the appropriate term for the genitals or sexual act during counselling. Kirkpatrick also mentioned that, counsellors themselves must be
knowledgeable in matters of human sexuality; or recognise their limitations and make use of referral resources. Tegtmeyer (1980) supports the views of Kirkpatrick (1975).

Omeonu (2007b) asserted that it is very important for couples to satisfy each other during sex as often as possible. A survey to study sexual satisfaction among 100 couples revealed that 80% of the couples were not sexually satisfied (Britten & Britten, 2006). Another study by Jobes (1986) revealed that only 42% of middle-aged wives stated their sexual relations with their husbands were enjoyable. A similar trend exists among Ghanaian married women (Dekagbe, 2011).

Omeonu (2007b) mentioned some five major factors that influence and sexual satisfaction. The first is making sexual advance by both partners. Studies show that assertive women had higher sexual satisfaction (Hurlbert, 1991). The second has to do with communicating sexual style and preference freely. Active communication during sex increases sexual satisfaction (Britten & Britten, 2006). The third factor is proper timing. For most women, desire for sex is linked to monthly cycle (Morrell, Diken, Cater & Davidson, 1984). For most men, sexual urge (testosterone) is highest in the morning and lowest at night (Omeonu, 2007b). Sickness, fatigue, anger, conflicts, etc. may decrease sexual urge. Active communication between couples is an effective way out. The fourth factor is concerned with the physical environment. Privacy should be assured especially for the wives. Omeonu argued further that the senses of touch, smell, hearing, vision, taste and sight have crucial influence on sexual arousal and satisfaction. The fifth factor has to do with the frequency of sex. A study revealed that 82% of 141,210 couples sampled reported that their sex became less frequent and less exciting after marriage, especially for couples who had sex before their wedding (Landers, 1989). A study by Janus and Janus (1993) also revealed that, out of 1552 couples surveyed, only 14% had sex daily. 44% had sex few times a week; 27% had sex weekly; 8% monthly; 7% rarely had sex. Achieving sexual satisfaction is a major challenge of many couples (Dekagbe, 2011).

Davidson and Moore (1992) perceived sexual satisfaction as the discrepancy between the level of aspiration and the level of achievement regarding physiological and psychological sexual fulfilment. Although standards to measure sexual satisfaction differ from person to person (Davidson & Darling, 1988), there are some common factors that enhance sexual fulfilment. In order to enhance sexual satisfaction, some authorities have given some suggestions. Masters, Johnson and Kolodny (1988a) suggested that first; partners should remember that good sex begins while clothes are on and encouraged partners to think about themselves as sexual beings; and each partner should take responsibility for his or her own sexual pleasure. According to Britten and Britten (2006), couples must take time to resolve conflicts since bitterness inhibits sexual arousal and satisfaction. They added that couples should be neat and clean since bad body and mouth odour can turn many people off sexually. They also recommended prolonged foreplay (not less than 30 minutes usually), clitoral stimulation, use of sweet words like “You are beautiful”, “You smell good”, application of water soluble lubricant if the wife remains dry, active communication between couples, and changing sexual positions and venues. Hyde (1986) suggested that couples should develop strong emotional commitment towards each other as well as willingness to learn the partner’s preferences with regards to various stimulating techniques in creating sexual arousal. Studies have shown that factors such as consistency in achieving orgasm, frequency of sexual intercourse, effectiveness of contraceptive techniques and relationship commitment do affect sexual satisfaction (Pinney, Gerrard, & Denney, 1987). Jacobs (1986) opined that other factors such as myths, unrealistic expectation; partners distorted view of sex and sexual dysfunction do account for sexual dissatisfaction.

1.6 Sexual Dysfunctions

Davidson and Moore (1992) consider sexual dysfunction as having difficulty in sexual functioning, which is expressed in impotency or lack of sexual desire. Masters, Johnson and Kolodny (1988b) also defined sexual dysfunction as a condition in which there is impairment of ordinary physiological responses of sexual excitement or orgasm. Some researched sexual dysfunctions of women include frigidity, which is also referred to as inhibited sexual desire (Kroger & Freed, 1976) and very common among women (Kilman, Boland, Norton Davidson & Craid, 1986). It can be caused by anatomical anomalies, feelings of guilt and shame about sex; feelings of not being loved by husband, insistence in sexual practice that the wife finds distasteful and fatigue (Kaplan, 1987; Schover, 1986). Another sexual dysfunction of women is vaginismus, the situation in which the muscles of the outer layers of the vagina fail to respond for penetration, thus making intercourse impossible (Omeonu, 2007b). There is also a common sexual dysfunction known as anorgasmia, which could be primary or situational. Primary
anorgasmia refers to a condition in which a woman has never experienced orgasm either by masturbation, manual or oral stimulation (Davidson & Moore, 1992) whereas situational anorgasmia refers to a condition in which the woman experiences orgasm only under certain stimulations such as masturbation, or oral stimulation (Hyde, 1990). Sex therapists do not perceive a sexual difficulty existing if the woman enjoys sex but does not reach orgasm directly (LoPiccolo, 1985).

Unfortunately, most anorgasmic women have great discomfort in communicating their sexual frustrations to their partners and may sometimes fake orgasm to please their partners (Kelly, Strassberg & Kircher, 1990). Other female sexual dysfunctions are rapid orgasm, which involves reaching orgasm too quickly (Omeonu, 2007b) and dyspareunia, a condition of burning sensation and sharp pain during intercourse (Davidson & Moore, 1992). This dysfunction could be complete (pain during all episodes of sexual intercourse) or situational (pain only when using certain positions or with certain sex partners (Glatt, Zinner & McCormack, 1990). Sexual dysfunction is not limited to women. Men also do suffer from sexual dysfunctions.

One common sexual dysfunction of men is erectile dysfunction, which is the inability to achieve or maintain an erection firm enough for penetration or maintain one, long enough to complete a sexual intercourse (Omeonu, 2007b). There is also premature ejaculation, which is a situation in which a man reaches orgasm very quickly after sexual arousal (Kaplan, 1974). The next is hypoactive sexual desire disorder, which is the deficiency in or absence of sexual fantasies and desire for sexual activity that causes marked distress or interpersonal difficulty (DeGonova & Rice, 2002). Fortunately most sexual dysfunctions often respond to treatment (Masters & Johnson, 1970).

1.7 Differences between Male and Female Sexual Response

Davidson and Moore considered two major differences between male and female sexual response. First, the male sex drive dissipates very rapidly after sexual intercourse (orgasm) whereas that of the female actually increases. It can even result in another orgasm in women (James, 1984). Second, women have the physiological capability of having multiple orgasms during a single sexual episode but men do not (Amberson & Hoon, 1985; Arthanasiou, Shaver, & Tavris, 1970). Britten and Britten (2006) added that generally, men want to sleep after orgasm but women want their husbands to hold and cuddle them while they tell them sweet words like “I love you”.

There are some arguments about the proper sexual intercourse for Christian couples. Many authorities have varied positions. Some churches preach against oral sex, anal sex, the use of sex toys, etc among Christian couples. Some also believe there is nothing that is forbidden as long as marital sex is concern. Different denominations have diverse views on this. Britten and Britten (2006) for instance, asserts that Christian couples should never worry about whether there could be something wrong with their means of achieving sexual satisfaction since no Bible verse forbids married couples from enjoying themselves sexually. They added that Christian couples are free to do whatever both of them enjoys sexually.

Kirkpatrick (1975) opined that counsellors should not be judgemental regarding clients’ sexual values and behaviours. The issue of sexuality is very controversial, particularly among Christians. It is beset with so many questions. Should Christians not be conformed sexually to the standards of this world (Romans 12: 2)? Should they adopt the attitude of “unto the pure, all things are pure” (Titus 1:5), or perhaps adopt the “all things are lawful, but not all things are expedient” approach to sexuality (1 Corinthians 6: 12). However, many agree that active communication between couples, regarding all aspects of their family life is a major factor that influences marital satisfaction in general and promotes harmony, cohesion and development in families (Britten & Britten, 2006; Collins, 2007).

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Divorce has become a common phenomenon, even among Christians in Ghana (Ntreh, 2010). Statistics show a 15% increase in divorce rate out of 2,199 and 1,714 registered marriages by the Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA) in 2005 and 2006 respectively. Prince and Prince (1986) mentioned the wrong view of marriage among many people and inadequate preparation of partners for marriage as main causes of divorce even among Christians. Collins (2007) argued that it is good to offer premarital counselling to would-be couples since it has many benefits. It is therefore expedient to seek proactive measures to save the institutions of family and marriage from collapsing.

Some in the Christian cycles have argued that non-Christians cannot salvage the failing institutions of marriage and family (Ogan & Ogan, 2008). Christians believe that marriage is an institution
established by God and must be sustained by His Word (Oyedepo & Oyedepo, 1999). With about 70% of Ghanaians being Christians (International Religious Freedom Report, 2007; CIA-The World Fact Book, 2009), solving marriage and family problems among Christians could save many Ghanaians marriages and families from failing. Ogan and Ogan (2008) asserted that it is the church that can effectively save failing marriages and families. They however added that unfortunately, most people in the church also do not have a comprehensive view of the origins of problems in marriages and families and therefore cannot completely solve them. De Vogel (1986) asserts that it is becoming clearer that pastors seem to be far less able to take care of themselves and to help others. Studies have revealed that what teachers know and do are the most important influences on what students learn (National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future, 1996). Again, highly effective teachers produce academically successful students and vice versa (Sanders & Rivers, 1996). It appears counsellors’ activities may have a lasting influence on clients’ marriages and families. The question that could be answered now is whether Christian marriage counselling is failing to achieve the purpose for which they are instituted. It appears most marital problems centred on issues regarding to the responsibilities of husbands and wives as well as sexual problems in marriage. The study is therefore geared towards finding out the role of Pentecostal and Charismatic marriage and family counsellors concerning issues relating to responsibilities of couples and sex in marriage.

3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions guided the study.

1. What is the counselling given by marriage and family counsellors of the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches in the Cape Coast Metropolis on roles of husbands and wives in the family?

2. What is the nature of counselling given by marriage and family counsellors of the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches in the Cape Coast Metropolis on responsible sex in a Christian marriage?

4. METHODOLOGY

The study was a survey and therefore the appropriate research design for the study was the descriptive survey. The design involves collecting data in order to test hypothesis or answer research questions concerning the current status of a phenomenon (Debrah, 2003; Gay, 1992). Again the design according to Polit and Hurgler (1995), allows the researcher to describe, observe and document an aspect of a situation as it naturally occurs. They added that the descriptive survey design provides an accurate picture of events. Babbie (1990) recommended that, descriptive survey design for the purpose of generalising from a sample to a population so that inferences can be made about some characteristics, attributes, or behaviour.

The target population comprised all Christian counsellors in the 184 Pentecostal and Charismatic churches in the Cape Coast Metropolis as provided by the headquarters of the Ghana Pentecostal Council (Council of Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches) and the Local Ghana Pentecostal Council of the Cape Coast Metropolis. Forty (40) churches out 184 Pentecostal and Charismatic churches were selected for the sample size and this represented 22% of the churches in the study area. A sample size of 40 churches was selected because, according to Ary, Jacobs and Razavieh (1990), 10-15% of any population constitute a representative sample. The simple random sampling procedure was used to select the churches. According to Sarantakos (1997), this type of sampling gives all units of the target population an equal chance of being selected. The sample unit were selected by using the table of random numbers. However, out of the targeted sample size of 40 marriage and family counsellors, the accessible sample size was 37. This indicates 92.50% return rate and this was due to the fact that three of the counsellors travelled outside the study area and I could not trace them to collect their responses.

The questionnaire was the main research instrument used to collect data for the study. It was used because it is economical to use as far as time and funds are concern (Osuala, 2005). The questionnaire items were grouped into six sections with the first part dealing with the socio-demographic background information of the respondents. The rest of sections catered for each of the research questions.

The descriptive statistics were used to analyse the data collected. Specifically, the data were analysed through the computation of frequencies and percentages. This was done with the use of the computer software called Statistical Product for Service Solutions.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Counselling given by marriage and family counsellors of the Pentecostal and Charismatic
The responses given by the counsellors concerning the roles of the Christian husbands are shown in Table 1.

Generally, it could be concluded from Table 1 that majority of the counsellors, gave their clients adequate counselling on the roles of the husband in a Christian marriage and family. In general, over 30 (81.1%) answered “Yes” to the items that were designed to find out the guidance they gave to their clients concerning the roles of the Christian husband. It is evident from Table 1 that all the counsellors, 37 (100%) helped their clients to understand that it is the duty of the Christian husband to lead his wife or family. This finding agrees with the biblical requirements of the Christian husband. From the Christian viewpoint, the Bible mentions unambiguously that the husband is the head of the wife, and the family (1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 5:23). Also, from Table 1, all the counsellors, 37 (100%) helped their clients to appreciate that it is the duty of the Christian husband to love, respect and honour his wife. This finding also agrees with the recommendation of the Bible. From the Christian perspective, husbands must love, respect and honour their wives (Ephesians 5:25).

Concerning the item of the duty of the Christian husband to provide satisfying and regular sex to his wife, it can be seen from Table 1 that 26 (70%) of the counsellors responded that they encouraged their clients to appreciate that it is also the duty of the Christian husband to provide satisfying and regular sex to his wife whereas 11 (29.7%) answered that they did not do so. In this case, it can be concluded that majority of the counsellors encouraged their clients to appreciate that it is the duty of the Christian husband to provide satisfying and regular sex to his wife.

Again, this finding concurs to the biblical recommendation that the husband must make time to enjoy love, sex and companionship with his wife (1 Corinthians 7:3-4; Proverbs 5:18). Similarly, as reflected in Table 1, all the counsellors, 37 (100%) counselled their clients to understand that it is also the duty of the Christian husband to protect his wife since she is a weaker vessel. This finding also agrees with the biblical demands that Christian husbands must protect their wives since they are weaker vessels (1 Peter 3:7).

It is also evident from Table 1 that majority of the counsellors encouraged their clients to appreciate that it is the duty of the Christian husband to spend quality time with his wife and family. Specifically, as evident in Table 1, 22 (59.5%) of the counsellors responded that they encouraged their clients to understand that it is the duty of the Christian husband to spend quality time with his wife and family during counselling sessions whereas 15 (40.5%) responded that they did not do so. In this case, a larger number of the counsellors encouraged their clients to understand that it is the duty of the Christian husband to spend quality time with his wife and family during counselling sessions. Also, Table 1 shows that 19 (51.4%) of the counsellors answered that they encouraged their clients to understand that it is also the duty of Christian husbands to help their wives with the housekeeping jobs whereas 18 (48.6%) did not do so. It can therefore be concluded that approximately half of the counsellors did not encourage their clients to understand that it is the duty of the Christian husband to help his wife with the domestic chores. The responses given by the counsellors concerning the roles of the Christian wife are shown in Table 2.

Generally, a whooping majority of the counsellors, 30 (81.1%) gave adequate counselling to their clients concerning the roles of the Christian wife. A large proportion of the respondents answered “Yes”
to most of the items designed to solicit information on the roles of Christian wife in marriage. Specifically, Table 2 shows that all the counsellors, 37 (100%) helped their clients to understand that it is the duty of the Christian wife to support her husband. This finding agrees with the biblical requirements of the Christian wife as it is clearly written in Genesis 2:18 that, the wife is to be a helper or companion of the husband.

Similarly, Table 2 shows that all the counsellors, 37 (100%) helped their clients to understand that it is the duty of the Christian wife to submit to her husband’s leadership. This finding is also in line with the demands of the Bible which stated emphatically that “Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord” (Ephesians 5:22).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Yes No.</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support her husband</td>
<td>37 100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submit to her husband’s leadership</td>
<td>37 100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love her husband and children</td>
<td>30 81.1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have equal attention for her husband and children</td>
<td>25 67.6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>32.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share or be active in the training of children</td>
<td>37 100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide satisfying and regular sex for her husband</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work diligently to keep the home in order</td>
<td>27 73.0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cook balanced meals for the family in good time</td>
<td>37 100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protect her husband</td>
<td>27 73.0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>27.0</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 also shows that 30 (81.1%) of the counsellors helped their clients to understand that it is the duty of the Christian wife to love her husband and children whereas 7 (18.9%) did not do so. In this case, majority of the counsellors encouraged their clients to understand that Christian wives are to love their husbands and children. From the Christian circles, the Bible expects wives to love their husbands (Titus 2:4-5).

It is also reflected in Table 2 that 25 (67.6%) of the counsellors helped their clients to understand that it is the duty of the Christian wife to have equal attention for her husband and children whereas 12 (32.4%) responded that they did not do so. It can therefore be concluded that a larger proportion of the counsellors helped their clients to understand that the Christian wife should have equal attention for her husband and children. This finding is also in accordance with the biblical demands of wives to strike a proper balance between loving their husbands and children so that none feels neglected (Proverbs 11:1, 20; 23; 31:28).

From Table 2, again, all the counsellors, 37 (100%) helped their clients to appreciate that it is also the duty of the Christian wife to share or be active in the training of children. This finding is also in harmony with biblical standards. Children are to be trained by both parents (Proverbs 1:8; Ephesians 6:1). Timothy, for instance, was trained by her mother and grandmother (2 Timothy 1:5).

Again, it is reflected in Table 2 that 27 (73.0%) of the counsellors helped their clients to understand that it is the duty of the Christian wife to provide satisfying and regular sex for her husband while 10 (27.0%) responded that they did not do so. It can therefore be concluded that a large portion of the counsellors helped their clients to understand that it also the Christian wife to provide satisfying and regular sex for her husband. This finding corresponds to the biblical demand on Christian wives, (as well as husbands), to render unto their spouses due benevolence (1 Corinthians 7:3).

It can also be seen from Table 2 that, all the counsellors, 37 (100%) responded that they helped their clients to understand that it is the duty of the Christian wife to work diligently to keep the home in order, cook balanced meals for the family in good time, and protect her husband. All these findings are in line with biblical demands of the Christian wife. For instance, Jeremiah 31:22; Proverbs 2:16; 5:3, 20; and 6:24 acknowledge the protection role of the wife over her husband. The duty of the wife to cook balanced meals for the family in good time and working diligently to keep the home in order is supported also by Proverbs 31:13-15. Responsible and satisfying marital sex life has a major influence on the success of a marriage just like partners responsibly play their respective gender roles.

Responsible and satisfying marital sex life is another very important parameter that ensures
Humans were created as sexual creatures (Collins, 2007). Unfortunately, the subject of sex is one about which the majority of people appear to be either unpardonably ignorant or wrongly informed (Hill, 1960). Sex is therefore an act to be learnt and mastered (Britten & Britten, 2006). However, many in African societies think talking about sex openly, even to marital couples is improper (Omeonu, 2007b). The following section tried to examine the guidance given by marriage and family counsellors in the Pentecostal and Charismatic in the Cape Coast Metropolis. Counsellors’ responses to the help they give to their clients concerning responsible sex in a Christian marriage are shown in Table 3.

Counselling given by marriage and family counsellors of the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches on responsible sex in a Christian marriage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engage in enough foreplay before penetration</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vary sexual positions during love making</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use lubrication if the wife feels dry</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain good personal hygiene (bath, brush their teeth, smell good)</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicate sexual style and preference to each other freely during love making</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have sex at a place where privacy is assured</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appreciate sex as a divine provision</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some sexual stimulating techniques</td>
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The responses given by the counsellors concerning responsible sex in a Christian marriage are shown in Table 3. As shown in Table 3, 21 (56.8%) of the counsellors helped their clients to understand that it is good to engage in enough foreplay before penetration during sexual intercourse whereas 16 (43.2%) did not do so. It follows that; a greater proportion of the counsellors helped their clients to understand that it is good to engage in enough foreplay before penetration during sexual intercourse. This finding is in harmony with the recommendation of Kirkpatrick (1975) that, when counselling clients on sexuality, counsellors should not assume that clients are knowledgeable in matters of human sexuality.

This finding is also in line with the view of Britten and Britten (2006) who claimed that prolonged foreplay (not less than 30 minutes usually), with techniques like clitoral stimulation and the use of sweet words like “You are beautiful”, “You smell good”, are known to generally enhance sexual satisfaction. It can also be seen from Table 3 that approximately one-half of the counsellors did not encourage their client to vary sexual positions during love making. Specifically, it is shown in Table 3 that 17 (45.9%) of the counsellors helped their clients to understand that it is good to vary sexual positions during love making while 20 (54.1%) did not encourage their client to vary sexual positions during love making. This finding supports the assertion that unfortunately, many think that it is a taboo to talk about sex openly, especially in African societies (Omeonu, 2007b). Britten and Britten (2006) observed that changing sexual positions and venues generally enhances sexual satisfaction. According to Hill (1960), the subject of sex is one about which the majority of people appear to be unpardonably ignorant. Britten and Britten (2006) argued that sex is therefore an act to be learnt and mastered. According to Dekagbe (2011), the fact that sex is a natural function of the human body does not mean humans know all we need to know to be sexually proficient.

It is also clear form Table 3 that only 13 (45.9%) of the counsellors encouraged their clients to use lubrication if the wife feels dry during sexual intercourse and penetration becomes painful while 20 (54.1%) did not do so. It can be concluded that a larger proportion of the counsellors did not encourage their clients to use lubrication if the wife feels dry and penetration becomes painful during sexual intercourse. This finding does not conform to the admonition of Britten and Britten (2006) who mentioned that couples should be encouraged to use water soluble lubricants if the wife remains dry and penetration becomes difficult. Table 3 also shows that 16 (43.2%) helped their clients to understand that it is good to for spouses to communicate sexual styles and preferences to each
other freely during love making whiles 21 (56.8%) failed to do so. Therefore a larger proportion of the counsellors failed to encourage their clients to understand that it is good to for spouses to communicate sexual style and preference to each other freely during love making. This finding does not conform to the opinion of Britten and Britten (2006) which stated that each partner should feel free to express his or her sexual style and preference. They added that to satisfy each other sexually, couples must learn to know how to communicate love since active communication during sex increases sexual satisfaction. Masters, Johnson and Kolodny (1988a) support the view that couples should be able to talk with each other about their sexual preferences It is again reflected Table 3 that, 34 (91.9%) of the counsellors encouraged their clients to have sex at a place where privacy is assured while 3 (8.1%) did not do so. Table 3 also shows that, 34 (91.9%) of the counsellors encouraged their clients to appreciate sex as a divine provision while 3 (8.1%) did not do so. It can therefore be concluded that a whopping majority of the counsellors were able to encourage their clients to have sex at a place where privacy is assured and also appreciate sex as a divine provision for couples. According to the Manual for family and marriage counselling of the Assemblies of God Church, Takoradi Central Assembly (n. d.), sex is a divine provision for husband and wife and no other activity can replace it.

In contrast, Table 3 shows that only 14 (37.8%) of the counsellors responded that they took their clients through some practical sexual stimulating techniques whiles 23 (62.2%) did not do so. It follows that a larger proportion of the counsellors did not take their clients through practical sexual stimulating techniques even though they encouraged them to appreciate sex as a divine provision. This finding does not conform to the suggestion of Kirkpatrick (1975) which stated that when counselling clients on sexuality, counsellors should not assume that clients are knowledgeable in matters of human sexuality. Kirkpatrick (1975) opined that, counsellors themselves must be knowledgeable in matters of human sexuality; or recognise their limitations and make use of referral resources. According to Hill (1960), unfortunately, the subject of sex is one about which the majority of people appear to be unpardonably ignorant. Kirkpatrick admonished counsellors to feel comfortable and avoid using slang but the appropriate term for the genitals or sexual act during sexuality counselling.

It can also be seen from Table 3 that 18 (48.6%) of the respondents were able to engage their clients in open discussions about sex whiles 19 (51.4%) were not able to do so. It can therefore be concluded that a greater proportion of the counsellors failed to actively engage their clients in open discussions about sex during their counselling sessions. This finding confirms the observation of Omeonu (2007b) that unfortunately, many, especially in African societies, think that it is a taboo to talk about sex openly. According to Kirkpatrick, counsellors must feel comfortable and avoid using slang but the appropriate term for the genitals or sexual act during sexuality counselling.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Majority of the counsellors 31 (83.8%) gave their clients adequate counselling on gender roles in a Christian marriage and family. Most of the counsellors encouraged their clients to appreciate that it is the duty of the Christian husband to: lead the family and provide their needs. Also, most of them helped their clients to appreciate that it is the duty of the Christian wife to submit to her husband’s leadership and support him.

Even though generally the counsellors encouraged clients to have sex, 27 (73.0%) failed to help clients appreciate detailed factors and techniques that enhance sexual satisfaction. For instance, they failed to encourage clients to: vary their sexual positions 20 (54.1%), have enough foreplay 16 (43.2%), used lubricants when the wife feels dry 24 (64.9%), sexual stimulating techniques 23 (62.2%), and help them to know some techniques they can use when one spouse reaches orgasm before the other 24 (64.9%).

A governing body should be set up by the religious organisations to evaluate and oversee the activities of the Christian marriage and family counsellors. Discussions on effective sexual relations should be detailed and practical enough. Counsellors are to resource themselves adequately through participation in training seminars and reading to handle their clients appropriately in the area of responsible sex in a Christian marriage.

REFERENCES


23. Jacobs, B. (1986, August 8). Romance flowers in friendship’s warmth. USA Today, p. 5D.


