



PASTORAL CARE APPROACH ON YOUTH PERCEPTION OF PRE-MARITAL
COUNSELING IN AMAZING GRACE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

ATERIGBADE CHARLES KUNLE B.ED,B.TH,M.ED & ODESOLA ADEDAYO
HND, MDIV.,M.TH,PHD
BAPTIST COLLEGE OF THEOLOGY,
IGEDE- EKITI. NIGERIA

ABSTRACT

The researcher was prone to research into the Pastoral Care approach on Youth perception of Pre-marital Counseling in Amazing Grace Baptist Association because of the negative attitude of some youth in relation to pre-marital counselling. The aim of this study is to investigate the perception and participation of youth on pre-marital counselling in Amazing Grace Baptist Association. Descriptive survey was adopted, a questionnaire was used in the process of data collection. The population was youth of the Amazing Grace Baptist Association in Ekiti Conference. The sample was ninety members and ten pastors drawn from 13 local churches in the Association. The data collected were analyzed using simple percentages. The findings of research revealed that sexual immorality is common among our youth and some pastors contributed to it due to their negligence at duties. The result also revealed that pre-marital counseling builds the needed foundation for a healthy and blissful home. The contribution of this study to knowledge is that It will help churches, youth, parents and individuals in solving marital problems and reduce the issues of divorce that are common in some OF Christian marriages today. Also, it will open the youth to the danger of not partaking in pre-marital counselling. This researcher recommends that the youth should come to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, pre-marital counseling should start from courtship period and churches should ensure that personnel involved in pre-marital counseling should be well trained.

Key Word: Youth, Counseling, and Approach

Word Count: 236

INTRODUCTION

Marriage is an aged long thing as it dates back to creation. It is an institution that is ordained by God as written in the Bible. The definition of marriage in Genesis 2:24 states that 'a man will vacate his father and mother and be integrated to his wife, and they will turn out to be one flesh'¹ implies that marriage is a union between husband

¹ Akomolafe Adegoroye Sunday. Students and Teachers Perception of Guidance & Counseling Programmes in Schools, B.Ed, University of Ilorin, Kwara State, Unpublished Project.

and wife and the two shall become one flesh. Ojo sees marriage as the first institution established by God after the creation.² Similarly, Babatunde opined that marriage is a covenant between a man and a woman who voluntarily decide to come together from different family background to fulfil God's mandate in a legal union meant to be sealed by blood and separate only by death.³

Christians and non-Christian marriage in our contemporary society often face the threat of divorce, sexual immorality, infidelity and all kind of unfaithfulness. Hence, the need for pre-marital counselling arises in order to find lasting solutions to the problems Christians and non-Christians face in their various homes.

Statement of the Problem

This study is designed to examine the Pastoral Care Approach on Youth Perception of Pre-Marital Counseling. In recent years, various individuals, pastors, parents, guardians have decried divorce rate and this increases at alarming proportions despite faith-based interventions or secular counselling. Pre-marital sex is rampant among youth from broken homes as youth from divorced homes lack proper upbringing, and it is observed they are physically and emotionally deficient, and this has resulted in a dependency syndrome. Girls from such divorced homes are noted to be promiscuous. Therefore, there is an urgent need to see to the implications of premarital counselling to avert these looming dangers, a gap this study is out to fill since premarital counselling will help couples to avoid conflicts that could lead to divorce.

Purpose of the Study

The objective of this study work is to survey the experience of pastors in pre-marital counselling

- To examine youth perception of pre-marital counselling
- To explore how youth participate in pre-marital counselling
- To explain and discuss the benefits of pre-marital counselling
- To point out some challenges of marriage
- To offer intended couples in the church the insight and upstanding into their temperament.

Research Questions

1. What are the factors responsible for pre-marital sex?
2. Are Christian youth in Amazing Grace Baptist Association committed to pastoral care approach to pre-marital counselling?
3. What are the roles of Church and ministers of the gospel on pre-marital counselling?
4. What are the perceptions of youth towards pre-marital counselling and pastoral care and counselling?
5. What are the effectiveness of pastoral care and counselling on pre-marital counselling?

² Thomas Niyi Ojo. *Building a Purpose-Driven Marriage: Guiding Principles for Successful Christian Homes* (Ogbomoso: Hirise Celebrity Publishers, 2014), 17.

³ Mike A. Babatunde. *Marriage Covenant* (Lagos: Revelation Printers, 2012), 8.

Significance of the Study

This study will:

1. It will help churches, youth, parents and individuals in solving marital problems and reduce the issues of divorce that are common in some Christian marriages today.
2. Help counsellors, churches, parents and schools to handle pre-marital counselling issues effectively
3. It will open the youth to the danger of not partaking in pre-marital counselling
4. It will help pastors on the need of pre-marital counselling
5. It will add to the already existing knowledge in the field.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Concept of pastoral care approach on youth perception of premarital counselling began with how God shows interest in caring for the church, in order to ensure these happenings, God put things in place for the church, he showed great concern of love and compassion for His children and many that come to Him and this is epitomized by the way he deals with His people. Jesus is the epitome of God's care, and He deals with people and associations. He deals with sinners and the outcasts, and many others. Jesus never discards anyone who comes to Him, some ministry He committed to the hands of pastors. Pastoral care and counselling are about seeing to the social, relational, physical, emotional and most importantly the spiritual aspect of the members or counselees by visiting, praying for them, providing both in cash and in-kind to both poor and rich giving godly counsels to his members, parishioners or counselees.

Clinebell opined that the bible is the basis for wholesome nurturing truths of rightful attitudes and growth. Couples roles clarification must not ignore biblical teaching. He also affirmed that the scripture informed both the Christian husband and the Christian wife to be filled with the Holy Spirit daily, confession of sin, giving thanks and praying for the Holy Spirit to control each of their lives. The biblical concept of marriage is essential for the intending couple, and it will help them to discover and develop God-given standard in a relationship as husband and wife.⁴ Jesus taught that, marriage is between a man and a woman. For this purpose, a man will leave his mother and father and be united to his wife, and both shall become one flesh. (Matt. 19:4-6). Oladeni explained that marriage is designed and given by God. The Bible contains adequate information on how a successful home could be built. Marriage was instituted by God as a sacred union between a man and a woman who have decided to remain together as husband and wife as long as they live.⁵

⁴ Howard Clinebell, *Basic types of Pastoral Care and Counselling: Resources for the Ministry of Healing and Growth* (Nashville: Abingdon Press).

⁵ Esther Oladeni, *Divine Path to a Successful Marriage* (Lagos: Jesus Counseling Clinic, 2003), 6

This researcher agrees with what Clinebell stated because pastoral care and counselling really involves utilization by person as this is one-to-one, small group and even group relation as pastoral care and counselling engenders healing through the use of therapeutic means. It is pertinent to note that pastoral care and counselling modeled to lives of the parishioners or counselees with the aid of the word of God. Pastoral care and counselling looks at the behaviour, attitude, thoughts and beliefs of the counselees or parishioners but not ruling out the leading of the Holy Spirit and Bible in attending to the issues facing the counselees. Benner opined that good counselling always involves a balance of structure and freedom.⁶

Many books, articles, seminars and pre-marital counsellors tend to overlook whether pre-marital preparation is really capable of improving marriages, reduces the incidence of family disintegration, and prevent divorce. It has been discovered that married individuals who went through pre-marital counselling often report that it is beneficial. Josh Mc Dowell and Hostetler in their research work attested to this fact, the result of their findings revealed that average persons who participated in a pre-marital counselling reported that their life and relationship improved and better than seventy-eight per cent of people who did not participate. They concluded that pre-marital counselling is generally effective in producing immediate and short term gains in interpersonal skills and overall relationship quality. Their findings also revealed that marriage quality is significantly better in people who experienced pre-marital programmes than in couples who did not have the experience.⁷ Collins' findings corroborate that more of those who receive pre-marital counselling affirmed that the teaching and application of scripture had helped their marriage relationship positively than those who did not receive pre-marital counselling.⁸

Perception according to Adeniji and Oladeji is the interpretation of sensory stimuli, which reach the sense organ and brain.⁹ They also see perception as a process by which brain selects, organizes and interprets the sensations.¹⁰

Perception is the ability to perceive especially to understand.¹¹ It could also be described as awareness created by interacting with objects and events of the environment.¹²

There are various perception of people to premarital counseling as the view of people differ based on their understanding attitudes and beliefs on the services rendered by pastoral counselor during pre-marital counseling. Willoughby in his view discussed

⁶ David Benner, *Strategic Pastoral Counselling* (Nashville: Hope of Denver Press, 2015), 56.

⁷ John Mc Dowell & Bob Hostetler: *Counseling Youth* (Lagos: Publication, 1996), 531.

⁸ Collins R. Garry, 44.

⁹ Adeniji, D.O. and Oladeji, M.O. *Psychology for Professionals* (Ibadan: Real Success Consults, 2011), 58.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Riper, B.W.V Students Perception: The counselor is what he does. (2001)

¹² Denga D.L. Student Counseling: A major Solutions to Compus unrest (Egwa; 1982).

young adult attitudes towards marriage, he concluded that during premarital counseling developmental period of an individual have important implications for an individual's relational future and as well as in decision making.¹³

METHOD

Research Design

The study was a descriptive survey type. It involved, the collection of information from a group of targeted respondents, and the outcome is used as a specimen. Descriptive method was chosen so as to serve as a means of collecting and interpreting data involved in order to proffer solution.

Population

The population of this study comprises of Amazing Grace Baptist Association, Ado-Ekiti. The association comprises of thirteen (13) churches. It consists of both male and female and youth who are single in the association within the age range of thirteen and above.

Samples and Sampling Techniques

One hundred respondents were selected. The procedure for the selection of respondents is random sampling. This implies that the number of samples was picked from each church, depends on the numbers of youth in each church. One hundred questionnaires were distributed to 13 churches.

Research Instrument

The instrument for this work is a questionnaire. It was chosen because it was suitable for this study. The questionnaire consists of two sections, and it contains twenty-nine items requesting for the ages of the respondents, their educational level, section A consists of personal data of the respondents. While section B, which consisted of 29 items, were structured in Likert 4-strongly agreed (S.A); 3-Agree (A); 2-Disagreed (D); and 1-Strongly Disagreed (S.D).

Data Analysis

The data collected were analyzed using frequency count and percentages.

Research Question 1

What are the factors responsible for pre-marital sex?

Table 1 . Factors Responsible for Premarital Sex

S/ N	Items	SA	A	D	SD

¹³ Willoughby, B.J. □The role of marital beliefs as a component of positive relationship functioning □ Journal of Adults Development, (2015) 86. <http://doi.org/10.1007/s/0804-014-9202-1>

		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
1	Many youth engage in pre-marital sex	60	60	20	20	7	7	3	3
2	One of the factors that is responsible for pre-marital sex is peer group influence	20	20	50	50	5	25	25	25
3	Children from broken homes can fall into the wrong hands due to their situation	45	45	35	35	15	15	5	5
4	Technology advancement has made sexual activities save and free for both young and old people	65	65	20	20	8	8	7	7
5	Poverty and lack of basic needs is a common factor	79	79	7	7	4	4	10	10

The table above table shows factors that are responsible for premarital sex, item 1 indicates that many youths engage in pre-marital sex as 60 percent of respondents chose strongly agree, 20 percent choice Agree, while 7 percent and 3 percent of respondents chose to disagree and strongly disagree respectively. Item 2 shows that 20, representing 20 percent strongly agreed, 50 respondents representing 50 percent agreed, 5 representing 5 percent disagreed and 3, which is 3 percent of the respondents strongly disagreed. Respondents response on item 3 shows 45 respondents representing 45 percent chose strongly agree, 35 respondents who indicate 35 percent agreed, 15 respondents which represent 15 percent disagreed while 5 respondents representing 5 percent strongly disagreed that children from broken homes can fall into the wrong hands due to their situation.

Also, Item 4 attests to the fact that technology advancement has made sexual activities save and free for both young and older adults as this is supported by the responses of respondents which indicates 65 representing 65 percent strongly agreed, 20 respondents representing 20 percent agreed. In comparison, eight respondents representing 8 percent disagreed and 7 respondents representing 7 percent strongly disagreed. The outcome of the last item in the table above reveals that 79 respondents are indicating 79 percent strongly agreed, 7 respondents representing 7 percent agreed, 4 respondents representing 4 percent disagreed, and 10 respondents representing 10 percent strongly disagreed.

Research Question 2.

Are Christian youth in Amazing Grace Baptist Association committed to pastoral care approach to pre-marital counselling?

Table 2
Commitments of Youth towards Pastoral Care Approach and Pre-Marital Counseling

S/ N	Items	SA		A		D		SD	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
1	The youth and the pastors are always at the longer hedge	40	40	30	30	20	20	10	10
2	Youth will always want to do things in their own way	70	70	10	10	18	18	2	2
3	The vices in the counselling room, such as booking time to see the pastor, sexual immoralities, etc. are enormous and these are the reasons people do not visit counselling room	30	30	20	20	40	40	10	10
4	Some church pastors did not apply good caring and counselling in pre-marital counseling	20	20	45	45	23	23	12	12
5	Some pastor always reprimand youth whenever the youth shared their pre-marital experience, so there is no need of visiting counselling room	45	45	50	50	5	5	-	-
6	Some pastors are not practical when it comes to some issues in pre-marital counselling, so there is no need of visiting such pastors for counselling	60	60	20	20	7	7	13	

Table 2 above shows commitments of youth towards pastoral care approach and pre-marital counseling. Item 1, indicates that youth and the pastors are always at the longer hedge. In the sense that 40 respondents representing 40 percent strongly agree, 30 respondents representing 30% agree, 20 respondents representing 20 percent while the remaining 10 respondents representing 10 percent disagree to this fact. Item 2, shows that 70 respondents representing 70 percent agreed that youth will always want to do things in their own way. 10 respondents representing 10 percent strongly agreed, while 18 respondents representing 18 percent disagreed and the last 2 respondents representing 2 percent strongly disagree with this fact. Item 3, shows that 30 respondents representing 30 percent strongly agreed, 20 respondents representing 20

percent agreed, while 40 respondents representing 40 percent disagree and 10 respondents representing 10 percent strongly disagreed to the statement the vices in the counselling room, such as booking time to see the pastor, sexual immoralities, etc are enormous and these are the reasons people do not visit counselling room.

Furthermore, in item 4, 20 respondents representing 20 percent strongly agreed, 50 respondents representing 50 percent agreed, while the 23 respondents representing 23 percent disagreed to the fact that Some church pastors did not apply good caring and counselling in pre-marital counselling.

In item 5, it was very clear that 45 respondents representing 45 percent strongly agreed, 50 respondents representing 50 percent agreed, while the remaining 5 respondents representing 5 percent disagreed to the fact that some pastors always reprimand youth whenever the youth shared their pre-marital experience, so there is no need of visiting counselling room. Item 6 shows that some pastors are not practical when it comes to some issues in pre-marital counselling, so there is no need of visiting such pastors for counselling as 60 respondents representing 60 percent strongly agreed while respondents that agreed are 20 representing 20 percent, 7 respondents representing 7 percent disagreed and only 13 respondents representing 13 percent strongly disagreed with this item.

Research Question 3

What are the roles of Church and ministers of the gospel on pre-marital counselling?

Table 3 Responsibilities of Minister on pre-marital Counselling

S/ N	Items	SA		A		D		SD	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
1	The church and ministers should act as sex marriage and educators to youth	70	70	20	20	2	2	8	8
2	Youth should be guided against evil and negative vices of this modern society	60	60	13	13	17	17	10	10
3	The Christian educators working with youth should help in teaching practical sexual purity.	55	55	35	35	4	4	6	6
4	Pastoral counsellors should challenge parents and equip them theologically to educate their children on sex.	63	63	30	30	3	3	4	4
5	Youth should be taught dangers of pre-marital sex.	71	71	5	5	13	13	11	11
6	Church should organize programmes that will catch youth while they are still young.	68	68	25	25	5	5	2	2

7.	Minister of gospel should recognize adolescents sexuality	55	55	30	30	5	5	10	10
8	Church should teach youth sound doctrine that will make them demonstrate godly behaviours in the society.	57	57	40	40	3	3	-	

Table 5 above shows the result of the responsibilities of Minister on pre-marital Counselling . Item 1, indicates that the church and ministers should act as sex marriage and educators to youth. In the sense that 70 respondents representing 70 percent strongly agreed, 20 respondents representing 20 percent agreed, 2 respondents representing 2 percent disagreed, while the remaining 8 respondents representing 8 percent strongly disagreed with this fact. Item 2, shows that 60 respondents representing 60 percent strongly agreed that youth should be guided against evil and negative vices of this modern society. While 13 respondents representing 13 percent agreed, 17 respondents representing 17 percent disagreed and the last 10 respondents representing 10 percent strongly disagree with this fact. Item 3, shows that 55 respondents representing 55 percent strongly agreed, 35 respondents representing 35 percent agreed, 4 respondents representing 4 percent disagreed, and the last 6 respondents representing 6 percent strongly disagreed to the statement that the Christian educators working with youth should help in teaching practical sexual purity.

Also, item 4, reveals that 63 respondents representing 63 percent strongly agreed, 3 respondents representing 30 percent agreed, 3 respondents representing 3 percent disagreed, and the last 4 respondents representing 4 percent strongly disagreed to the statement that ppastoral counsellors should challenge parents and equip them theologically to educate their children on sex. In item 5, it was very clear that 71 respondents representing 71% strongly agreed 5 respondents representing 5 percent agreed, while 13 respondents representing 13 percent disagreed and the last 11 respondents representing 11 percent strongly disagreed to the fact that youth should be taught dangers of pre-marital sex.

Furthermore, item 6 indicates that 68 respondents representing 68 percent strongly agreed, 25 respondents representing 25 percent agreed, 5 respondents representing 5 percent disagreed, and the last 2 respondents representing 2 percent strongly disagreed to the statement that Church should organize programmes that will catch youth while they are still young. The result in item 7 shows that Minister of gospel should recognize adolescents sexuality as 55 respondents representing 55 percent strongly agreed, 30 respondents representing 30 percent agreed, 5 respondents representing 5 percent disagreed, and the last 10 respondents representing 10 percent strongly disagreed.

Lastly, item 8 which is the Church should teach youth sound doctrine that will make them demonstrate godly behaviours in the society shows that 57 respondents representing 57 percent strongly agree, 40 respondents representing 40 percent agreed, 3 respondents representing 3 percent disagreed, while respondent strongly disagreed with this statement.

Research Question 4

What are the perceptions of youth towards pre-marital counselling and pastoral care and counselling?

Table 4.

Perceptions of Youth towards Pre-Marital Counselling and Pastoral Care and Counselling.

S/ N	Items	SA		A		D		SD	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
1	Pre-Marital counselling is a waste of time	13	13	7	7	50	50	30	30
2	Pre-marital pastoral care and counselling is a way of trusting God in the life of the pastors to direct ones part or choice	51	51	20	20	15	15	14	14
3	Pre-marital care and counselling is only meant for babies in Christ and not for all believers in Christ.	20	20	10	10	50	50	20	20
4	Those who decide on marital issues on their own without pastoral pre-marital care and counselling often regret at the end	40	40	14	14	30	30	16	16

Table above shows perceptions of youth towards pre-marital counselling and pastoral care and counselling. Item 1, indicates that Pre-Marital counselling is not a waste of time as 13 respondents representing 13 percent strongly agreed, 7 respondents representing 7 percent agreed, 50 respondents representing 50 percent while the remaining 30 respondents representing 30 percent disagreed to the statement that Pre-Marital counselling is a waste of time. Item 2, shows that 51 respondents representing 51 percent strongly agreed that Pre-marital pastoral care and counselling is a way of trusting God in the life of the pastors to direct ones part or choice , 20 respondents representing 20 percent strongly agreed, while 15 respondents representing 15 percent disagreed and the last 14 respondents representing 14% strongly disagreed with this fact. Item 3, shows that 20 respondents representing 20 percent strongly agreed, 10 respondents representing 10 percent agreed, while 50 respondents representing 50 percent disagree and 20 respondents representing 20 percent strongly disagreed to this statement.

Lastly, in item 4, 40 respondents representing 40 percent strongly agreed, 14 respondents representing 14 percent agreed , while the 30 respondents representing 30 percent disagreed and the remaining 16 respondents representing 16 percent strongly disagreed to the fact that those who decide on marital issues on their own without pastoral pre-marital care and counselling often regret at the end.

Research Question 5

What are the effectiveness of pastoral care and counselling on pre-marital counselling?

Table 5
 Effectiveness of Pastoral Care and Counselling on Pre-Marital Counselling

S/N	Items	SA		A		D		SD	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
1	Do you consider pastoral pre-marital counselling helpful in building successful marriage	45	45	20	20	22	22	13	13
2	Pre-marital counselling helps in managing marital problems better	52	52	24	24	13	13	11	11
3	Pastoral pre-marital counselling has no benefit at all	3	3	2	2	35	35	60	60
4.	A couple who went through pastoral pre-marital counselling is more committed to marital vows	72	72	13	13	8	8	7	7
5	Couple with pastoral counselling enjoy better intimacy	70	70	16	16	9			5
6	Pre-marital counselling brings success in homes	60	60	29	29	7			4

Table 7 above shows the result of the effectiveness of pastoral care and counselling on pre-marital counselling. Item 1, indicates that pastoral pre-marital counselling helps build a successful marriage. In the sense that 45 respondents representing 45 percent strongly agreed, 20 respondents representing 20 percent agreed, 22 respondents representing 22 percent disagreed, while the remaining 13 respondents representing 13 percent strongly disagreed with this fact. Item 2, shows that 52 respondents representing 52 percent strongly agreed that pre-marital counselling helps in managing marital problems, while 24 respondents representing 24 percent agreed, 13 respondents representing 13 percent disagreed and the last 11 respondents representing 11 percent strongly disagree with this fact.

In item 3, the responses of the respondents shows that 3 respondents representing 3 percent strongly agreed, 2 respondents representing 2 percent agreed, 35 respondents representing 35 percent disagreed, and the last 60 respondents representing 60 percent

strongly disagreed and This implies that pastoral pre-marital counselling is beneficial to the youth.

Also, item 4, reveals that 72 respondents representing 72 percent strongly agreed, 13 respondents representing 13 percent agreed, 8 respondents representing 8 percent disagreed, and the last 7 respondents representing 7 percent strongly disagreed to the statement that Couple who went through pastoral pre-marital counselling are more committed to marital vows.

Furthermore, item 5, it is evident as 70 respondents representing 70 percent strongly agreed, 16 respondents representing 16 percent agreed. In comparison, nine respondents representing 9 percent disagreed and the last five respondents representing 5 percent strongly opposed to the fact that couple with pastoral counselling enjoys better intimacy. Item 6 indicates that 60 respondents representing 60 percent strongly agreed, 29 respondents representing 29 percent agreed, seven respondents representing 7 percent disagreed, and the last four respondents representing 4 percent strongly disagreed to the statement that pre-marital counselling brings success in homes.

Discussion

The finding in Table 1. revealed that sex is rampant among youth in our society as youth are greatly influenced by peer group, youth who are products of broken homes also engage in pre-marital sex and poverty is also a cause of pre-marital sex in our society. So it was observed that many youths misused sex against the concept of God who is the originator.

In Table 2 it is indicated here that larger percentage of youth in Amazing Grace Baptist Association are not committed to the services and approach of pastoral care to pre-marital counselling. This is evident in the sense that, a larger percentage of the youth are always at the larger hedge with their pastors as they are not ready to be corrected. It is pertinent to note that, youth always want to prove that they are always right and are not prepared to be led and be reprimand by their Pastors.

Moreover, it was also revealed that there are vices in the counselling room, and this has made youth not to be interested in visiting pastoral counsellors.

Furthermore, pastors are not practical in the way pre-marital counselling are handled, and as such, the youth felt there is no need of visiting pastoral counselling for pre-marital counselling.

One of the revelations from the findings in Table 3 is that ministers of the gospel should teach practical sexual purity to all youth and also teach them the antidotes of the fear of the Lord to divert their minds from engaging in pre-marital sex. Finding also revealed that cognitive re-structuring should be given to the youth through the use of sound biblical teaching and sound doctrine for youth to live a godly life and life that is worthy of emulation through Christ Jesus.

The result of the findings in Table 4 revealed that larger percentage of respondents are of the opinion that pre-marital counselling is not a waste of time and that pre-marital counselling is a way of trusting God for direction in marriage and that pre-marital counselling is not meant for babes in Christ but all youth that is going into marriage.

Lastly, it was revealed that youth who decide on their own without the involvement of pastoral care and counsellors usually regret at the end as most of them do not have marital bliss as regrets are often their songs.

The findings of Table 5 revealed that pastoral care and counselling is effective on pre-marital counselling. This is because a larger percentage of respondents believed that pre-marital counselling helps in building successful marriage as significant problems that are likely to fear the couple apart in marriage would have been handled and discuss during pre-marital counselling. The findings also revealed that premarital counselling is beneficial to all those who pass through them.

Summary

The concentration of this research is to examine pastoral care approach on youth perception of pre-marital counseling in Amazing Grace Baptist Association. The study made use of descriptive survey method and the population of this study was churches in Amazing Grace Baptist Association, Ekiti Conference. Random sampling techniques were employed to select the respondents and information gathered were analyzed with the use of a simple percentage

The findings of the study revealed that youth engage in pre-marital sex as this act is caused by factors such as peer group influence, technological advancement, broken homes and poverty. It was also revealed in this study that pre-marital counseling is not a waste of time as such pastors should not take it with a levity hands. The ministers of God shall endeavor to teach raw sound doctrine and godly characters as means of distracting the youth from immoral act of pre-marital counseling.

Conclusion

From the findings of this study it is obvious that sexual immorality among youth is common in our society and that some pastors contributed to the menace in our society. This is because, negligence of duties on the part of some pastors made this immoral of pre-marital counseling rampant among youth.

This research work also reveals that pre-marital counseling builds the needed foundation for a healthy and blissful homes. Youth are encouraged to put into practice the biblical guidelines and instructions concerning marriage, relationship as pre-marital counseling helps the intending couple to gain fair understanding of each other and are guided by pastors and not peers whose influence are always negative according to the findings of this work.

Recommendations

Based on the discovery of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Youth must come to the saving knowledge of Christ by confessing their sins and forsaking them for this is the way to receive forgiveness and abstain totally from pre-marital sex.
2. The pastoral care giver should educate young people of the biblical perspective of marriage from their young age.

3. The pastoral care giver should endeavor to organizer structured pre-marital counseling for all intending couples.
4. Various seminal, symposia and workshop should be organized for singles so as for them to be taught the nitty-grity of godly homes and what it takes.
5. Female pastors should be co-opted into pre-marital counseling to avoid vices in the counseling room
6. Churches should ensure that personal involved in pre-marital counseling are well trained for the job.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BOOKS

Adeniji, J.A. *Tract to a Happy Marriage*. Lagos: Merilus Publications, 1994.

Aderonmu, Samuel A., *The Bedrock for Lasting Wedlock*. Lagos: Golden Rule Baptist Church, 2014.

Adigun, Noah A. *Communication Breakdown in Marriage: Causes, Effects and Solutions*. Lagos: Praise Publication, 1999.

Alan & Donna Goerze. *A Pre-Marriage Counselling Hand Book* (Ghana: Challenge Enterprises, 1999), 2.

Akomolafe Adegroye Sunday. *Students and Teachers Perception of Guidance & Counseling Programmes in Schools*, B.Ed, University of Ilorin, Kwara State, Unpublished Project.

Amalorparades, D.S. *Church and Culture in the New Dictionary of Theology Ed.* (1999), 202.

Babatunde, A. Mike. *Marriage Covenant*. Lagos: Revelation Printers, 2012.

Clinebell I.T, *Basic Types of Pastoral Care and Counselling Resources for Ministry of Healing and Growth*. London: SCM, 1984.

Clinebell, Howard. *Basic types of Pastoral Care and Counselling: Resources for the Ministry of Healing and Growth*. Nashville: Abingdon Press.

Collins, G.R. *Christian Counselling: A Comprehensive Guide*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2007.

David Benner. *Strategic Pastoral Counselling*. Nashville: Hope of Denver Press, 2015.

Dwight, Herry Small. *Desiring for Christian Marriage*. London: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1952.

Eugene Brand. *Ministry, Ministerial Office*. Fahlbush: Publishing, 2003.

Historical Perspective of Churches in Ekiti Baptist Conference 1999 to 2019. Ado-Ekiti: Ekiti Baptist Conference, 2019.

John McDowell & Bob Hostetler: *Counseling Youth.* Lagos: Publication, 1996.

Kolawole, S.A. and Oladeji, M.O. *Theological Education and Ministerial Training in the Nigerian Baptist Convention.* Lagos: Fire Print and Manufacturing Limited, 2012.

Leigh, S.M. *Marriage Meant to be Enjoyed.* Ibadan: Scripture Union (Nig) Press and Books Ltd., 1987.

Obaniyi, Nathaniel Tade. *The Walk of a Shepherd.* Osun: Solnuply Nigeria Limited, 2015.

Odunze, Don. *Effective Family Relationship.* Union, Enugu: Odunze Family Circle Publications, 1981.

Oladeni, Esther. *Divine Path to a Successful Marriage.* Lagos: Jesus Counseling Clinic, 2003.

Osuolale, B. Obaloluwa. *Before You Say I Do and After.* Lagos: Life Force Publications, 2007.

Oyedele S.O. *Principles and Practices of Pastoral Care and Counselling,* Ogbomoso: Samak Publishers, 2011.

Oyekan, Emmanuel Oyewole. *Happy Married Life Guidelines from the Bible* Ibadan: Gbola Best Nigeria Enterprises, 2012.

Stewart C.W. *The Minister as Marriage Counsellor.* Nashville, 1979.

Thomas Niyi Ojo, *Building a Purpose Driven Marriage.* Ogbomoso: Hirise Celebrity Publishers, 2014.

Tim Darly, (ed.). *The History of Christianity.* Texas: Lion Publishing, 1977.

Uche Enyioha, B. *Seminar on Marriage and Family Enrichment.* Ogbomoso: Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary, 1997.

Ukaeke, I. Benson. *Marriage and Family Life.* Obiaruku, Delta: Oludare Obielum (Nig) Enterprises, 2006.

DICTIONARIES AND COMMENTARIES

Hornby, A.S. *Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary,* ed by Wehnieieretal: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Oxford English Dictionary

Rodney J. Hunter ed. Dictionary of Pastoral Care and Counseling. United State of America: Abingdon Press, 1990.

ENCYCLOPEDIA

David B. Barrett, John Mbiti, Jaroslav Jan Pelikan. *The Encyclopedia of Christianity* Erwin: Eerdmans Publishing, 2003.

Orr, James. *Entry for Ministry. International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*. Bingham: Harper & Cross, 1915.

INTERNET SOURCES

Jason Jackson, *What is a Pastor? Christian Courier.com*, 2018.
<https://www.christiancourier.com/articles/1178>.

Ogundipe, S.O. Adolescent Sexuality Education in Contemporary Nigeria and its Implication for Pastoral Counselling in International Journal of Scientific and Research Publication, Vol. 5 Issue 8, 2015. www.ijsrp.org.56.

www.etymonline.com. *Definition of Pastor* Retrieved 15th November, 2019.

www.gotquestions.org, *Why is Pre-Marital Counselling Important?* Accessed 02/01/2020.

JOURNALS AND NEWSPAPERS

Barbarea McDougal, *Happy Life Publication* November 1990.

Holy Weldon and Donald K. Routh, *The Effect of Child on Marital Relationship* *Journal of Marriage and Family*, November 1981.

Odunze, *A Handbook in Counselling*.

Oyeleye Oluwarotimi Iyanda, *Effect of Pre-Marital Sex Among Christian Youth in Ajogun Kristi Baptist Association* Unpublished B.Th Project, Baptist College of Theology, Igede-Ekiti, 2018.