

**-AN ANALYSIS OF PREMARITAL COUNSELING IN MITIGATING INTIMATE-
PARTNER VIOLENCE AMONG THE CLERGY IN THE ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF
MAKUENI COUNTY, KENYA**

By

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of Master of Arts in Psychological Counseling in the Department of Counseling Psychology,
School of Humanities and Social Sciences of Africa Nazarene University.**

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DECLARATION

I declare that this document and the research that it describes are my original work and that they have not been presented in any other university for academic work.

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04/06/2024

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This research was conducted under our supervision and is submitted with our approval as

University supervisors

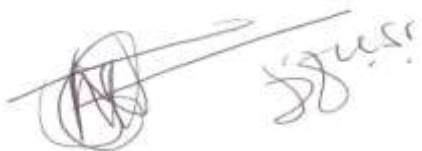
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DEDICATION

To my wife Miriam Mutua for being there for me and taking care of the family while I was doing my studies. To my children Elisha Muuo Mutua, Samuel Kyalo Mutua, Mercy Mutheu Mutua for bearing with me and giving me peace of mind as a parent to concentrate on my studies. Sometimes I could miss important family and school meetings to attend exams and class sessions. I want to dedicate this work to my lovely mother Esther for her encouragement and motivation. Mama may God bless you. My family, before you came to my life, life was uninteresting and not very meaningful. I used to wonder what I might accomplish. You have all motivated me tremendously. May God bless and prosper you all.

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I thank The Almighty God for giving me the opportunity to be in school at my age.

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ABSTRACT

Intimate-partner violence (IPV) is a public health crisis borne mainly by men and women from all socio-economic, cultural, and religious groups worldwide. IPV has severe social and economic impacts on societies and countries. This study aimed to assess the role of premarital counseling in mitigating intimate-partner violence among the clergy in the Diocese of Makueni County. The objectives of the study were to: examine the relevance of premarital counseling programs in relation to marital stability among the clergy, establish the causes of intimate-partner violence among the clergy in Makueni Diocese, identify the effectiveness of premarital counseling in resolving marital conflicts among the clergy, and to determine the competency of the clergy as premarital counselors in preparing couples for marriage responsibilities. The research under study applied social learning and psychoanalytic theory. The study used a descriptive research method to explore the link between the independent and dependent variables. The researcher applied stratified sampling to select a sample of 60 respondents from the target population of 100 clergy. The researcher applied 60 questionnaires with 22 questions categorized into four sections to study respondents and held one focus group discussion comprising 15 clergy. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 28.0 software was used for quantitative data analysis. The researcher analyzed qualitative data obtained through the focus group discussions using thematic analysis. The study results reveal that 74% of the clergy never attended PMC sessions, while only 25% attended PMC sessions. Among those who attended the PMC sessions, none had an idea of the PMC programs that they attended. Respondents indicated that sex-related issues, finances, and use of mobile were the major causes of conflicts. Results also indicated that 59% of respondents experienced physical violence, 64% emotional violence and 63% experienced sexual violence. Men recorded the highest (58%) incidence of IPV, while only 32% for females. The results also indicated that couples who attended PMC sessions had few marital conflicts as compared to those who did not attend. Regarding the competency of the clergy as PMC counselors, results indicate that 49% of the clergy had received some form of training in PMC. 68% of the respondents indicated that they did not use a PMC manual but applied their knowledge and the bible to undertake PMC. The study recommends that the church and other service providers emphasize the importance of PMC to couples intending to marry, and they need to develop PMC programs that instill conflict resolution skills.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Premarital counseling

Premarital counseling is defined as the educational and supportive advice given to people who are planning to enter marriage by a clergy skilled in counseling, a professional therapist or any other skilled individual. It may take the form of guidance and responses to questions on a wide scope of issues that may be present in marriage.

Intimate-partner violence

Intimate partner violence (IPV) is defined as violent behavior between individuals in an intimate relationship that may result in sexual, physical, and psychological harm to those involved in the relationship, and it occurs globally in all societies and cultures.

Clergy

The clergy refers to the entire class of ordained religious leaders, from pastors, priests, bishops, archbishops and beyond, whose duties are to guide people spiritually, preside over religious rituals and offer guidance to members of their congregation. The clergy in this study comprised of both ordained men and women.

Marital conflicts

Marital conflicts are defined as disagreements that couples face as they relate to each other. Marital conflicts are clashes, struggles, disagreements, strife, or quarrels between married couples due to contrasting ideas, beliefs, needs, goals, and values.

ABBREVIATIONS

IPV	Intimate-Partner Violence
KNBS	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
PMC	Premarital Counseling
UN	United Nations
WHO	World Health Organization

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Intimate- Partner Violence (IPV) has recently become a global concern and has been considered a human rights violation affecting women more than men (WHO, 2021). In 1993, the UN Assembly recognized the seriousness of gender-based violence. It passed a declaration on eliminating gender-based violence, which encouraged governments to take measures to safeguard women from all forms of violence (UN, 2021). Despite the widespread recognition of IPV, available statistics still indicate that IPV cases are increasing.

Premarital counseling has been identified as one of the mitigating factors that help reduce violence in relationships by preparing couples for the demands of marriage beforehand (Waititu, 2017). However, very few couples attend premarital counseling, especially in African countries. Counseling is often sought when couples start experiencing marital problems such as IPV. The clergy have been tasked with offering premarital counseling, yet limited research has been done to examine the incidence of IPV among the clergy and their competency as premarital counselors.

This chapter discusses the background information on IPV; it outlines the problem statement, the study's purpose, objectives, research questions, and the significance of the study, scope, delimitations, and limitations of the study, assumptions, theoretical and conceptual frameworks.

1.2 Background to the Study

Violence in relationships has been on the rise in the last ten years. According to Njeru (2021), the rate of marital turmoil is growing at a dangerous rate, and the church has not been absolved either. WHO (2021) observes that Intimate-partner violence (IPV) is a common form of gender-based violence in the world today and encompasses controlling behaviors and sexual, physical, and emotional abuse by one partner.

According to the World Health Organization (2021), globally, one out of every three women has encountered either physical and or sexual violence from their spouse in their lifetime, while 27% of women between the ages of 15-49 reported that they had been subjected to either sexual or physical violence by their sexual partners. The percentages of women, who reported having experienced physical and or sexual violence from their intimate partners, range from 18% in Cambodia to 48% in Zambia for physical abuse and 47% for sexual abuse (UN Women, 2020).

These high rates of IPV in society show the urgent need for implementing premarital counseling, which not only helps to enhance marital satisfaction, but it offers guidance on effective and healthy conflict resolution methods (Waititu, 2017). The World Health Organization, on behalf of UN interagency bodies, carried out several population-based surveys that collected data on IPV from over 24,000 women in 161 countries that represented different cultural, geographical and rural/urban settings found that the prevalence rates of lifetime IPV vary across different nations in the world.

In America, the prevalence rate of IPV was 25%, 22% in Europe, and 33% in Asia, while in Africa, the prevalence rate stood at 38% (WHO, 2021). While studies show the benefits of premarital counseling in mitigating marital discord and improving marital satisfaction (Cobbinah, 2020), available data shows that only a small percentage of victims of IPV across these countries attended premarital counseling.

In the past, the burden of intimate-partner violence was largely borne by women (WHO, 2021). Today, both men and women experience some form of IPV. However, compared to men, women still experience higher levels of violence. Birkley and Eckhardt (2015) note that, though women can be violent in their relationships with men, they often do so in self-defense, nevertheless, in the case of IPV, males are the common perpetrators.

According to Kepler (2015), God ordained marriages for three main purposes: procreation, companionship, and pleasure. However, people rarely prepare adequately for the demands of marriage. Premarital counseling plays an important role in one's view of the intended marriage and presents marital issues. It is done to eliminate marital discord by enhancing effective communication skills and conflict-resolution skills. It strengthens marriages and consequently prevents divorce, affecting couples of all ages, races, and cultural backgrounds and religious men and women at a personal level.

The high incidence of violence today cannot be overlooked and often points to the need for prevention strategies such as premarital counseling. Extensive research has been done on clergies' role in mitigating IPV among married couples in society and among church members (Collins, 2007; carder, 2007; Clinton 2010; Duncan, 2010 and Cobbinah 2020). However, limited research has been done to examine the prevalence of IPV among the clergies, whether the clergy attend premarital counseling sessions and whether they are well equipped to handle premarital counseling.

The clergy serve their congregants in various difficulties such as job loss, death, sickness, relational conflicts, and ministering. The demand of this role leaves the clergy physically and emotionally exhausted and with nothing to offer to their spouses. Additionally, the clergy have few places to share their frustrations, disappointments and anger. Their homes act as their emotional vault, and their spouses must learn to bear the brunt. With time, marital frustrations,

distance and disagreements creep in. If not timely addressed, they often lead to violence and separation.

In Africa, the prevalence of IPV is higher as compared to other more developed regions; this has been attributed to low socio-economic status, social acceptance of violence, low literacy levels, no power in making decisions at the household level and inaccessibility of premarital counseling (UN, 2021). Premarital counseling is not largely embraced in Africa due to cultural beliefs surrounding marriage and counseling. Some couples believe it is unethical to share their marital issues with a stranger. In contrast, others fear revealing their past issues to avoid being judged or ruining the current relationship (Sonja, 2011). This explains the high prevalence of IPV in marriage as couples enter marriage unprepared for its demands.

Studies done in Central and Eastern Africa show that, out of every ten women, more than four reported having experienced IPV over their lifetime. 44% of ever-partnered women in Central Africa and 38% in Eastern Africa between the ages of 15-49 years have been physically or sexually abused by their spouses. WHO (2021) points out that among the African countries, DR Congo leads with 47%, followed by Uganda at 45%, South Sudan at 41%, Burundi at 40%, and Kenya, Tanzania and Rwanda at 38%.

In Kenya, IPV is prevalent, with 47% of women between the ages of 15-49 reporting having been physically or sexually abused by an intimate partner, according to a recent study by the Kenya Demographic and Health Survey in 2022. Incidences of Gender-based violence and murder by intimate partners keep making headlines (National crime research institute, 2014). The Kenyan government has responded by establishing the Gender-Based Violence Recovery Centre at Nairobi Women's Hospital, Kenyatta National Hospital and all level-five hospitals in Kenya. It created a National Framework on Response and Prevention of Gender-Based Violence in Kenya 2009 and shelters homes for abused women (Kabaria et al., 2017). However, these

measures offer intervention after the occurrence of gender-based violence and have not fully invested in dealing with the root causes of violence against women.

Statistics in Kenya show that 44% of clergy marriages fail due to the role's demands and unrealistic societal expectations (Maina et al., 2018). The research under study results from concern about the prevailing and disturbing issues of violence in relationships among the clergy and the silent response of the church on the matter or its non-productive strategies.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

The role played by the clergy in society cannot be overlooked, particularly in moral and spiritual matters. This role is frequently carried out through preaching God's word and exemplary behavior in society. For this reason, the clergy are expected to set a good example by maintaining a high moral standard in their marriages. However, the prevalence of intimate-partner violence in relationships has not left the clergy out. Preliminary observations indicate that the clergy have suffered intimate-partner violence in their relationships, with increased marital turmoil and divorce (Maina et al., 2018). However, this may not be noticed as most of the clergy must conceal their domestic issues to maintain their moral authority and continue ministering. As much as most clergy offer premarital counseling, the most intriguing factor is whether they attended counseling sessions before marriage, whether they are competent counselors and whether the content offered during counseling sessions is ideal for preparing couples for the many relationships challenges they might face. Previous studies have pointed out that most couples experience marital conflicts due to financial issues, sex issues, individual differences, and technology (Waititu, 2017).

Couples have been advised to approach communication in marriage with a problem-solving attitude and negotiate towards a collaborative solution. While these strategies have worked for

some couples, there is still a need to seek a lasting solution considering the marital turmoil being experienced today. Premarital counseling plays a key role in preparing couples for perceived marital conflicts by equipping them with necessary conflict resolution skills like effective communication skills, conflict resolution skills and taking responsibility for their mistakes (Kariuki, 2017). However, despite this input, the cases of violence and murder persist in relationships and have greatly affected the institution of marriage (Njeru, 2021). The research under study sought to assess the role premarital counseling plays in mitigating intimate-partner violence among ordained clergy in the Anglican Diocese of Makueni County.

1.4 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to analyze the role of premarital counseling in mitigating intimate-partner violence among ordained clergy in the Anglican Diocese of Makueni in Makueni County.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were:

- 1) Establish the causes of intimate-partner violence among the clergy in the Makueni Anglican Diocese.
- 2) Examine the relevance of premarital counseling programs' content in enhancing marital stability among the clergy in the Makueni Diocese.
- 3) Identify the effectiveness of premarital counseling in conflict resolution among the clergy in the Makueni Diocese.
- 4) Determine the competency of the clergy as premarital counselors in preparing couples for marriage responsibilities in Makueni Diocese.

1.6 Research Questions

1. What are the causes of intimate-partner violence among the clergy in the Makueni Diocese?

2. What is the relevance of premarital counseling programs' content in building strong marital relationships among the clergy in Makueni Diocese?
3. How effective is premarital counseling in conflict resolution among the clergy in Makueni Diocese?
4. How competent are the clergy as premarital counselors in preparing couples for marriage responsibilities in Makueni Diocese?

1.7 Significance of the Study

One of the major functions of the church is to prepare and equip couples with the necessary information and skills to handle marital issues through premarital counseling. The findings of this research will assist the clergy, church leaders and family therapists in understanding factors leading to IPV and the role premarital counseling plays in mitigating these factors. This information will be beneficial not only to the clergy but also to married couples in society.

It will generate valuable insights into designing appropriate premarital counseling programs and developing content that can be employed to mitigate IPV among the clergy and married couples. With proper premarital counseling programs and content, it is believed that marriages will be enhanced, which will lower divorce and violence in relationships.

The clergy play a vital role in society; they not only offer spiritual guidance to their congregation but act as role models in society. Healthy clergy marriages can act as a model for church members who believe in marriage despite today's social pressures that tend to undermine it and can also add credibility to moral authority as counselors. In addition, the insights and facts generated through this research work could be instrumental in advancing further research in premarital counseling.

1.8 Scope of the Study

The study was conducted in Makueni Diocese in Makueni County in Kenya, where the target group comprised the clergy and their spouses. The area was selected as it depicts a rural setting that may not be influenced by factors affecting couples in urban settings. Compared to other counties, the Eastern Region has the highest number of Anglican churches. There has also been an increase in marital turmoil among the clergy, resulting in divorce.

The study's results can be generalized to other clergy in different counties as the causes of violence in clergy relationships are similar. However, the results of this study cannot be generalized to the general population as the challenges facing the clergy and other couples may not be similar. However, they can form a basis for comparative studies on the factors responsible for intimate-partner violence among wedded couples. Proper premarital counseling and preparation enable unmarried couples to learn the importance of marriage beforehand and be prepared for the many challenges they will encounter in their marriages. Previous research on premarital counseling shows that couples who attended premarital counseling began their marriage with essential tools for marital bliss and satisfaction compared to those who did not.

1.9 Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

Limitations

The study was limited to the clergy and their spouses who serve within the Anglican Church in Makueni Diocese. They completed the questionnaires individually. The study was also limited to partners married for more than five years as it is assumed that they will give relevant information for the research under study. Based on the information being collected and the status of the clergy in society, the respondents may be inclined to give desirable information that may show the non-existence of IPV in their relationships.

Delimitations

The researcher sensitized the respondents before applying the questionnaire on the importance of the study and the need to give relevant information and assure them that their information will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. The study was carried out in the Makueni Diocese, which depicts a rural setup where IPV's causes may differ from those in urban areas. However, the results can be indicative of the situation in rural areas. For the research under study, the researcher presumed that the respondents would answer all the questions accurately.

1.11 Assumptions of the Study

The researcher assumed that some clergy and their spouses had attended premarital counseling while others had not. It was also assumed that the clergy applied the content they taught in PMC to enhance their marriages and that incidences of IPV existed in clergy marriages. The researcher assumed that all the respondents would cooperate and provide reliable information.

1.12. Theoretical framework

According to Vinz (2022), a theoretical framework is fundamental to reviewing existing theories and creating a research basis. Theories are used to explain a phenomenon, make predictions and draw connections between the variables under study. The theories used in this study are the social learning and psychoanalytic theories.

1.12.1 Social Learning Theory

Social learning theory was put across by psychologist Albert Bandura in 1977. The theory proposes that social behavior is acquired through observing and imitating the behavior of others. Social learning theory argues that children can pick violent and aggressive behavior when

they watch others acting aggressively and see how these behaviors are reinforced over time (Bandura, 1978). Bandura tested how learning from the social environment impacted aggression among children by carrying out an experiment where young children watched same-sex and opposite-sex adults acting aggressively, physically and verbally, on a Bobo doll. The children were then allowed to interact with the doll. However, children of both genders exhibited aggression towards the doll (Bandura, 1977).

This theory asserts that behavior is observed. First, it is internalized, imitated, and reinforced positively or negatively. This theory contends with the skinner's operant conditioning. According to operant conditioning, rewards for good behavior and punishment for demeanor determine the association between behavior and reinforcement. Social learning components include definitions, imitations, differential association, and reinforcement.

The theory argues that differential associations focus on social groups that introduce an individual to deviant behavior. These social groups represent one family and peer groups that act as a source of reinforcement. Reinforcement can determine the likelihood of a behavior persisting concerning the rewards and punishments attached to the behavior. The internalized definitions, attitudes and norms of observed behavior label it as good or bad. Lastly, most children will, in most cases, imitate an observed behavior depending on the level of reinforcement attached or anticipated.

Three tests were carried out by Cochran, Jones, and Sellers (2015) on applying social learning theory to IPV, and the tests found that differential association and reinforcement are the most consistent predictors of aggression. The tests also found that gender-based violence can also be influenced by patriarchal norms that often support aggression against females and attitudes that encourage abuse of women can be learned through peer association or groups. Social learning theories emphasize the importance of the social context and hold that people can

learn by observing other people's behavior and whether their exhibited behavior receives positive or negative reinforcement for acting aggressively (Brown et al., 2015).

According to Bandura's research, young children may replicate adults' violent behaviors seen in acted-out social situations and mass media such as video games, movies and television. Therefore, it is argued that an individual's violent behavior develops due to being repeatedly reinforced or modeled. Social learning theory attempts to explain the intergenerational transmission of violence. It proposes that children receive criticism from others regarding their behavior while growing up, and from this feedback; they begin to develop standards for their behavior. The theory maintains that the person and behavior of reciprocal determinism reveal the interaction between thought, affect and action. It maintains that what people feel, believe and think, affects how they behave.

Study findings, support that individuals' behavior alters the environmental condition which is, in turn, altered by the very conditions created by the behavior (Brown et al., 2015). Aggressive persons produce hostile environments whereas friendly individuals generate an amiable social milieu. The social learning theory emphasizes that parents serve as powerful models of social behavior to their children. The strengths of this theory are (Attention, retention, motor reproduction and motivation) and for any effective influence to happen, the person must first pay attention to the role model. Thus, children raised in violent environments learn and imitate those behaviors, then repeat them in future relationships. Studies reveal that children who are abused in childhood are at greater risk of abusing their children in adulthood. In addition, boys who observed their fathers abusing their mothers are highly likely to abuse their wives. Researchers have also found that young adults who experienced or observed violence as children are more likely to be in an abusive intimate relationship as an abuser or a victim. Several research studies observe that social learning theory can be applied in behavior modification

interventions such as gradual therapy techniques, stress management, positive modeling and vicarious reinforcement (Kimber et al., 2018).

Social learning theory can be used by premarital counselors to identify adverse childhood experiences and adequately shape positive new behaviors by changing negative behaviors associated with IPV. However, this theory does not emphasize accountability's importance in an individual's actions. It argues that an individual's behavior is determined by the environment and society as a whole and fails to recognize how an individual processes information. The theory fails to recognize inborn desires and drives that determine a person's behavior. Hence, it will be supplemented by psychoanalytic theory.

1.12.2 Psychoanalytic Theory

Psychoanalytic theory is a systemized study of psychological factors and forces determining human behavior. The theory was put across by Sigmund Freud in 1896. According to Psychoanalytic theory, variables such as internal mechanisms, personality, motivation and desires, and the significance of early childhood experiences should all be considered when studying human behavior. The id, ego, and superego are the three main components that make up an individual's personality.

According to Freud, the id heavily relies on the pleasure principle, meaning that it demands instant gratification without considering the demands of the external environment (Kimber et al., 2018). Individuals who cannot control the id's demands are the major perpetrators of violence against women, specifically sexual violence. Conversely, the ego acts as a medium between the demands of the id and the superego.

The superego is majorly concerned with conscience. It instills moral judgment and societal rules and expectations in the ego. Hence, the ego fulfills the id's demands realistically. Psychoanalytic theorists observe that the superego represents the optimum function of

personality development. It personifies parental principles learned or instilled during early childhood (Olson, 2010).

Psychoanalytic theorists argue that intrinsic desires and drives, which are part of the unconscious mind and largely manifest by people, are inborn. The theory points out that human behavior, especially violent behavior, by and large, is always motivated either by sexual drive or aggressive drive. Sexual drive not only encompasses sexual desires but includes anything an individual considers pleasurable. In some cases, individuals who use physical violence do so as they feel a sexual drive or pleasure out of the act.

The theory argues that human behavior is controlled largely by avoiding pain and seeking pleasure. It observes that low levels of self-control and the inborn incapability to apply dominance over one's behavior are the major causes of deviant behavior. The theory posits that people are inherently motivated towards deviant behavior if it is rewarding and offers instant gratification. However, individuals with high levels of self-control to assess the logical consequences and outcomes of their behavior and make decisions based on a rational calculation of anticipated costs and benefits most likely refrain from engaging in the behavior. Those with low self-control have greater difficulty assessing future consequences, increasing the likelihood of engagement.

According to Freud (indicate the year), the unconscious mind plays a role in linking childhood experience with adult behavior. He argues that adverse childhood experiences play an important role in determining an adult's violent behavior (Brown et al., 2015). The theory opposes the notion that the environment influences human behavior and argues that individuals behave the way they do due to innate drives and desires. Freud believed that human beings are egocentric, self-centered and selfish by nature and, as such, there is always a selfish motive for an individual's behavior.

These theories are linked to the study in that they offer alternative explanations for the causes of IPV. The current study is guided by the principle that many factors lead to IPV, such as technology, early childhood experiences, sexual adjustments, finances, women empowerment, individual differences, and gender roles, among others. However, the theories try to explain the relationship between innate drives and desires and the environment an individual grows in trying to understand the causes of violence. When individuals come together in marriage, they should learn to accept their differences and make necessary adjustments to accommodate each other. However, when they regard marriage as a contest, conflicts and divorce are inevitable.

1.13. Conceptual Framework

According to Sharma (2018) a conceptual framework refers to a collection of concepts and principles drawn from relevant fields of study and are used to structure a research study presentation. When well structured, the conceptual framework can help a researcher make meaningful deductions from subsequent findings and can show connections between dependent and independent variables. The conceptual framework for the research under study depicts the relationship between premarital counseling and intimate-partner violence as shown in figure 1 below.



Figure 1: Relationship between premarital counseling and intimate partner violence

Discussion of the Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 conceptualizes that the independent variable, premarital counseling (programs, sessions, and competency of premarital counselors) has a great impact on mitigating intimate-partner violence as it plays a role in equipping couples with necessary skills for conflict resolution and good communication skills which leads to marital satisfaction. When these skills are applied, they result in reduced cases of marital conflicts, enhance a sound marriage relationship and create a solid friendship between couples which are all ideal in reduced intimate partner violence. The skills will also create awareness and acknowledgement of marital commitment before, during, and after marriage. The dependent variable is reduced intimate-partner violence. The researcher assumed that well-structured PMC programs, sessions, and competent PMC counselors are instrumental in reducing intimate-partner violence among couples as depicted in the figure above.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This section of the research under study sought to provide an overview of theoretical and empirical literature relevant to the study. It examined what other researchers have written on the role of premarital counseling in mitigating intimate- partner violence among the clergy. Unfortunately, there was very limited information on the topic under study.

2.2 Theoretical Review

2.2.1 Overview of Premarital counseling

According to Harway (2005), premarital counseling is a form of training that equips couples with necessary skills that will help them to handle marital issues that may arise during marriage. Doria et al., (2014) observe that, for marriages to thrive then institutions tasked with counseling services must intensify their counseling activities and interventions. Although the purpose of premarital counseling is to minimize marital discord and enhance marital stability (Carlson et al., 2012), there seems to be no empirical data to support the argument as divorce rates are high and the cases of violence in relationships are escalating every other day.

The goal of premarital counseling is to identify and address any potential areas that may cause conflict in a relationship and address those issues early enough before they become serious concerns. It aims at helping couples to identify individual weaknesses, examine unresolved issues that may become a problem later in their marriage, clarify personal values and address marital expectations (Waititu, 2017). Despite available evidence that premarital counseling improves marital stability, relatively few couples attend premarital counseling, especially those

from low-income countries who are at a higher risk of experiencing marital distress and dissolution. More to this argument, both the scholars and the clergy members agree that lack of proper training forms a barrier to performing marriage education services well.

Vail (2012) noted that marriage preparation programs or premarital counseling have existed for more than nine decades, dating back to the early 1930s. The Merrill Palmer Institute developed the first premarital program in 1932. Duncan and Larson (2010) also agree with Vail (2012) that premarital programs in North America is dated in the early 1930s. The Philadelphia marriage council developed standardized programs in 1941 with the aim of creating marital stability among married couples by helping them understand marriage responsibilities and ways to resolve marital conflicts.

In 1977, there was a shift in premarital counseling when Ed Wright developed a premarital program called "before you say I do" whose focus was to equip those intending to be married with skills that would enhance marital stability (Kepler, 2015). These early programs were administered through churches. Later, premarital counseling gained popularity and acceptance. The content has evolved and is taught in various formats, including group therapy, couples counseling, individual counseling, books, online courses, and internet counseling.

Marriage preparation has to be perceived and put into practice as a gradual but continuous process. Ojowa (2005) reports that in traditional African communities, young men and women were taught how to be good husbands and wives by parents, aunts and uncles or community elders. The young people were instructed on marriage expectations and their roles in marital stability. However, following industrialization, rural-urban migration, and globalization, access to premarital counseling diminished with time.

According to Maranga (2021), traditionally, premarital education was conducted through three main channels, namely: apprenticeship- this involves watching others perform a task, and

then doing the activity as observed. Girls, for example, were taught women's roles such as; cooking, home care, child care, and doing farm work. Boys, on the other hand, learned how to take care of domestic animals, making houses and household items for their fathers.

The second channel of marriage preparation was through actual training. Grandmothers and aunts taught young girls were during mealtimes on issues surrounding sexuality, fertility, menstruation, pregnancy, and marriage, how to take care of their husbands, children, and home care (Wambugu, 2006, in Maranga, 2021). These teachings aimed at instilling moral values among the girls and equipping them with skills that were vital for marriage stability.

The third channel of marriage preparation was during initiation ceremonies. For example, during circumcision both boys and girls were initiated on how to men and women and had rights to marry (Kunhiyop, 2008 in Maranga 2021). It was during initialization that young men and women were instructed on their individual roles in the institution of marriage and the community expectations and instructed on qualities to look for when selecting a marriage partner and the families not to marry from.

Compared to other Western and African countries, Kenya may not be experiencing high divorce rates and intimate partner violence, but it has its own dreary picture. In contemporary society, marriage institutions are facing several challenges as compared to traditional society. One of the major challenges in marriage today is IPV. Statistics have shown that approximately 47% of women in Kenya experience physical or sexual abuse by their intimate partner (Equality now, 2021). Premarital counseling can be used to equip couples intending to get married with vital information such as good communication strategies, financial management, and healthy conflict resolution methods.

Currently, premarital counseling falls under three models: the secular counseling model, African traditional model, and religious model. The African traditional model has been discussed

above. The religious model borrows its content and principles from Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, and Buddhism, while the secular counseling model borrows its content and principles from psychology, sociology, and other humanistic disciplines. The current research will focus on Christian premarital counseling model.

In Kenya, the church has been involved in premarital counseling due to its close contact with the believers and the emphasis the church puts on premarital counseling for its members. Stahmann and Hiebert (1980) observe that the motivation for the church's involvement in premarital counseling is both because of sociological and theological factors. The institution of marriage today is facing a number of challenges, such as adultery, intimate partner violence, homosexuality, high rates of divorce among others. The church plays an important role in strengthening marriages by instilling biblical principles in the institution of marriage. Taking this into account, the clergy and other church ministers should consider the role they play in preparing engaged couples for marriages and should be adequately prepared to instill the necessary skills.

Young (2020) observes that the importance placed on premarital counseling has only gained recognition in the last couple of years because people are exposed to marriage complexities. Clergy demonstrated some advantages over university-based program delivery staff, suggesting that since clergy are known to their congregants, some level of authority or credibility to their work as marriage educators' exists. Compared to past generations, today's marriages are more complex due to technological advancement and the changes occurring in social structures. Additionally, the empowerment of women contributes to finances in the homes. Hence, they play a crucial role in decision making, unlike in the past when women did not have a voice in their marriages. Women's empowerment has been one of the major challenges in marriages as men's authority at home is challenged and continues to diminish.

Today, marriage is a choice that people make and, as such, they need to be fully prepared for the demands of marriage before committing themselves to their marriage partners. For this reason, engaged couples should be equipped with enough skills to be able to handle marital issues when they arise without resulting in violence and divorce.

2.2.2 Premarital Counseling Programs and Content in Relation to Building Strong Marital Relationships

Premarital counseling programs and content equips couples with skills that enhance marital stability. It provides a good avenue for learning more about each other which includes developing better communication among couples. Premarital counseling helps to ensure that couples are equipped with critical thinking skills to manage problems that may occur in future through being aware of each other's characteristics. For this reason, premarital programs are extremely significant. Preparation for marriage began with the traditional programs and clergy counseling prior to World War II and grew into systematic pastoral counseling and therapy two decades after the war (Stahmann and Hiebert, 1987).

The premarital period is one of the critical points for the prevention of committed relationship problems. In some developed countries like England and the United States, couples are encouraged to participate in premarital counseling programs. The effectiveness of these programs in increasing marital satisfaction is evident (Stahmann, 2000). In a 2006 study at the University of Denver, Scott Stanley, and his colleagues (as cited in Smith, 2013) found that couples who married in a religious setting were seven times more likely to seek out premarital counseling than those who were married in secular settings.

The main focus of premarital counseling is preparing a couple for a lifelong marriage relationship. Premarital counseling programs are based on two major principles: providing

couples with skills-based training and preventing marital conflicts (Waititu, 2017). Premarital content encompasses skills training, awareness, cognitive change, and feedback.

Awareness focuses on marital expectations in a relationship, such as household, parenting, and financial roles (Maranga, 2021). Feedback focuses on communication between the couples and other social entities such as other family members, community, and church members. Cognitive changes address individual thought processes, situations, and patterns that will occur during their marriage. The counselor simulates a situation and asks the individuals what they think about it, their beliefs, and what they would do if the simulated situation occurred in their marriage. Skills training entails teaching the clients how to handle different situations that may arise in their marriage. It involves giving them skills to solve conflicts amicably, effective communication, and positive expression of respect, affection, commitment, and self-regulation.

Halford et al. (2004) observe that premarital counseling content should cover topics such as commitment and motivations behind the marriage union, willingness to make sacrifices for your partner, virtues such as loyalty to the marital relationship, generosity, the impact of the social environment, and awareness of perceived future challenges and realistic standards of marriage. However, Halford does not address any topic that outlines how to handle marital conflict and, more specifically, IPV.

According to Stahmann (2000), the premarital programs commonly used today include the relationship enhancement program, prevention and relationship enhancement program, the premarital personal and relationship evaluation, the practical application of intimate relationship skills, and the relationship evaluation program.

The Relationship Enhancement Program (REP) is mostly used in premarital counseling programs. This model emphasizes increasing caring, giving, honesty, understanding, trust,

openness, and compassion. The model is applied in group form where different couples gather and impact them with knowledge on minimizing marital distress by teaching them about the above topics.

In the application of REP model, couples required to take inventory, highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of their relationship. The Catholic Church commonly uses this model under its program known as "family life education." However, the model does not address individual and cognitive issues that lead to relationship violence. Therefore, the need for its reliability and validity in marital stability.

Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program

This problem-focused model teaches couples how to elude and manage conflicts. The model advocates the use of active listening, problem-solving, forgiveness, intimacy, gender roles, and core issues of expectations. This program conducted in two different forms: first small groups of 6-8 couples undergo a six-week program in the form of an interactive lecture, and the second one involves a weekend program that offers information to larger groups of 20-40 couples. Although this model was meant to help manage marital conflicts, its validity and reliability in resolving marital conflicts is not clear, and limited research has been undertaken to assess its applicability in conflict resolution. It also does not address childhood experiences and learned behaviors in relation to violent behaviors.

Premarital Personal and Relationship Evaluation

This program focuses on communication, personality issues, financial management, marriage expectations, leisure activities, conflict resolution, children and parents, spiritual beliefs, and family and friends. This program begins by requiring the couples to fill out a questionnaire that contains 195 relationship items which function as a guide for subsequent PMC

sessions. The questionnaire results guided the therapist to create a marriage workbook that targets the couples' strengths and weaknesses. This program lasts three sessions but can extend depending on the couple's needs. The counselor and the couples meet in a traditional counseling therapy setting that includes a counselor and one couple. Among the different counseling programs, this is more effective as it involves a counselor and one couple; hence, they can address issues more precisely and deeply. Although it is the most effective program, no studies show whether its applications helped prevent or reduce intimate-partner violence.

Practical Application of Intimate Relationship Skills

This program focuses on the notion and beliefs about love between couples' emotional efficacy, enables couples to understand themselves and their partners, and teaches couples the skills to help change ineffective behavior. This program begins with a traditional counseling therapy session where the counselor interviews the couples together for four hours and then separately for one hour each. In this program, couples explore their attitudes and beliefs toward marriage. After assessing and teaching necessary skills, the counselor recommends that the couple participates in a four-month course or retreat. This program has shown higher reliability; with subsequent studies showing relationship satisfaction and marital stability among the couples who participated in this program. However, there are yet to be studies done to show its relationship with diminished IPV.

Relationship Evaluation Program

The program focuses on values, personality characteristics, beliefs, attitudes, family background, and relationship experiences. The program starts by giving the couple a 271-relationship item questionnaire, and together with the counselor, they discuss the results. It is provided via a large group lecture format and couples counseling sessions. This program is handled within seven sessions. The program has proved to be reliable in creating marital

stability. However, studies have yet to be done to show its effectiveness in reducing instances of IPV.

PMC programs differ based on factors such as the leader, topics, timing, length, format, and sessions. PMC is delivered by professionals such as the clergy, teachers, clinicians, and paraprofessionals. Studies have shown that the clergy provides the majority of PMC despite having very little training in PMC. They also provide services for the least time compared to other PMC providers (Silliman & Schumm, 1999). The clergy provided PMC services that lasted for ten to twenty hours, whereas therapists provided services that lasted approximately twenty to thirty hours.

There has been inconsistency in showing differences in outcomes based on the methods of delivery (Sonja, 2011). However, PMC delivered via individual counseling was much preferred by couples compared to group counseling. The length of time spent with the counselor also showed positive marital outcomes. Couples who spent four to twelve months in PMC before entering into marriage received the most benefits. PMC sessions vary greatly on the format and outline of each topic.

Although PMC sessions flow in the same order, the timing for each topic differs based on each couple's needs (Maranga, 2021). PMC in the Anglican Church in Makueni is offered at least ten sessions, each lasting two hours, depending on the couple's availability. However, this contact time is minimal in helping couples understand individual differences and equip them with the necessary skills for marital stability.

The churches have different premarital counseling programs. The differences range from one religious group to another, the content given, the number of sessions taken, the types of programs employed, and the qualifications of those who perform the sessions. Christian premarital counseling is programmed based on Christian and biblical principles. However, one of

the major challenges of the Christian model, as applied by ACK, is that they do not have a standardized manual upon which standardized content can be applied during counseling sessions. The clergy use any available manual as long as it has a Christian basis; as such, they do not have a specific guideline to use when doing premarital guidance. The clergy use their previous knowledge, and couples need to decide what kind of counseling they will offer. This calls for creating a standardized manual for the church which covers all key areas to equip couples with the necessary knowledge and skills needed for marital stability.

2.2.3 Causes of Marital Conflicts among the Clergy

Many marriages today face challenges both young and old couples must contend with. Marital conflicts can be defined as continuous tension or stress between married couples. When two people agree to live together as husbands and wives, they do so with different expectations, some of which are fulfilled while others are unfulfilled. Since couples are only humans, it is natural to expect they will have different opinions, needs, desires, habits, values, and behaviors.

Bearing in mind that no human relationship is devoid of misunderstanding and conflict, many families today experience some form of marital conflict which can either be a creative or destructive power. These conflicts act as a threat to marital sustainability. Harmonious marital relationships are linked to the ability of couples to solve conflicts. However, to solve conflicts amicably, couples need to understand the causes of marital conflict or situations that provoke marital conflicts.

Studies carried out in the US show that couples often dispute over the division of housework, alcohol consumption, and relationships with friends, finances, and power at the household level (Cobbinah, 2019). Marital conflicts often arise when one individual's behavior in

undertaking a specific role does not meet the expectations of the other partner. The causes of marital conflicts are diverse and differ from one society to another.

In Africa, the major causes of marital conflicts involve finance, infidelity, roles, power, and alcohol. According to research by Spaumer (2017), most marriages experience conflicts in South Africa due to poor communication, gender roles, finances, and infidelity. In Kenya, according to research by Kimani and Chepchieng (2022), the common causes of conflict among Christian couples were infidelity, poor sex, early marriages, stress, alcohol, and financial problems.

Marital conflicts are inevitable in every relationship and are the major causes of divorce and marriage violence (Ojowa, 2005). Many factors lead to marital conflicts in society today. However, for the purposes of this study, the researcher will concentrate on some of the emerging causes of marital conflicts among the clergy. These factors include:

Sexual Adjustments and Orientation among the Clergy: One of the major challenges that couples must learn how to handle in marriages is sexual adjustments. When people get married, they enter the union with certain expectations concerning their sexual relationship. It is worth noting that men and women have profound sexual differences. Unless they understand their sexual differences, sexual intimacy will remain a common cause of marriage conflict. Misconceptions about sex, dysfunctional sexual organs (when no arousal occurs), and abuse of sex often create anxieties, frustrations, fear, and insecurities among couples.

Sometimes, couples may have different notions concerning the purpose of sex. Some view it as procreation. Hence overindulgence seems dirty or wrong. This may frustrate their sexually active partners, who may feel deprived, resulting in extra-marital affairs or sexual violence. According to (Mbwirire, 2017), it is important for couples to understand the role of sex in marriage and should be well equipped on what to expect regarding sexual intimacy. Today, it

is common to see men advocating polygamy or having several women. When partners feel unloved, lonely, and unwanted, they often seek intimacy and fulfillment in sexual relationships outside the marriage. Sexual issues create anger, insecurity, resentment, and communication breakdown among couples (Ojowa, 2005). Infidelity often weighs heavily on the faithful partner as it creates suspicion, bitterness, and jealousy, often leading to quarrels, fights, and murder.

Most divorces, sexual abuse, and violence occurring in relationships today result from sex-related issues such as infidelity and insecurities. The media has highlighted several cases where couples have been killed due to infidelity (Odhiambo, 2018). These cases have only focused on married couples, and though none has highlighted the clergy, it does not mean that the clergy does not experience IPV. However, there is limited information regarding the relationship between infidelity and IPV among the clergy.

Unfaithfulness among the clergy is not a new thing. Men of cloth have always made headlines in major newspapers and television when caught in illicit affairs. A recent survey shows that 30% of pastors admitted to having a physical affair, while 40% admitted to an emotional affair (Carder, 2017). The clergy's vulnerability to unfaithfulness results from their role as counselors, where they find themselves alone with a woman in the office or sometimes at a woman's place. Additionally, pastors are idealized by women who target them for sexual fulfillment. In a recent study, 50% of pastors who cited unfaithfulness said they had close relationships with church members of the opposite sex. In contrast, others said temptations to talk about personal matters and exchange details often breeds intimacy (Carder, 2017). When these relationships are hidden, they often create distance between couples and breed suspicion and conflicts among the couples.

In society today, the issue of homosexuality has gained momentum and has affected people from all social groups, the clergy included. Cases of homosexuality have been reported

among Catholic priests from time immemorial. In the 11th century, Peter Damian, a cardinal with the Catholic Church, wrote "the book of Gomorrah," which highlighted homosexuality among the clergy in his time and harshly condemned homosexuality (Wayne, 1990). However, in 1102, a philosopher of the Catholic Church, Anselm of Canterbury, advocated for leniency on priests who were practicing homosexuality as the practice was widely spread.

The Anglican Church has struggled with the controversy surrounding homosexuality since the early 1990s. In 1998, the 13th Lambeth Conference of Anglican bishops passed a resolution rejecting homosexuality in the church (Lambeth Conference, 1998). However, this resolution was not legally binding, so Anglican churches in Brazil, South India, New Zealand, Canada, and South Africa have taken steps to approve same-sex marriages (Wayne, 1990). Almost all African Anglican Churches view homosexuality as sinful and strongly oppose the ordination of gay priests and officiating gay marriages. Homosexuality is illegal in at least 36 Countries in Africa, Kenya included. However, despite it being illegal, no laws have been enacted to criminalize the activity in Kenya.

There is limited research on the existence of homosexuality among the clergy in the African Anglican Church due to the strict measures taken by the church against gay priests. As such, cases are usually very well hidden and often go unreported as couples decide to remain silent concerning the issue of homosexuality. In September 2015, the Anglican Church, under the leadership of Ole Sapit, revoked licenses for five priests due to homosexual activity and warned that there was no room for homosexuality in the Anglican Church in Kenya (Otieno & Kajilwa, 2015). Among the clergy, the issue of homosexuality exists. However, it is hidden because of the implications and the role the clergy plays in society; only the partners get to know and suffer in silence, as divorce is not welcomed in the church.

Technology is a powerful tool for connecting people all over the world. However, it has been one of the biggest causes of marriage conflicts since its inception. Mobile phones and social media sites have played a big part in causing relationship violence. Today, people are substituting interactions via technology for real-life interactions, which has led to marriage problems. Social media is linked to increased marital conflicts, divorce, and adultery.

The fundamental problems that the couples face remain the same, but the widespread use of cell phones and social media sites has compounded and amplified on a massive scale. When couples spend too much time on their phones instead of spending quality time together, they get distracted from each other, and suspicion creeps in. According to Daba et al. (2018), a third of all divorces use the word "Facebook" and "WhatsApp" as the channel through which infidelity occurs because Facebook makes it so simple to connect with individuals from previous relationships and also encounter new relationships discreetly.

Research by Daba et al. (2018) showed that married couples preferred using Facebook, mobile phones, and television as entertainment. This results in reduced leisure time between couples, couples' marital discussions about their daily tasks, and the general welfare of the family, and often creates distance between couples. He also found that the relationship between marital conflicts and technology use was positive, confirming that technology was a major cause of marital conflicts. However, he observed that when used for the right purposes, such as sending messages, making calls, and gaining information, without its excessive use, it did not result in marital conflicts. Hence, technology use can increase or decrease marital conflicts depending on its use.

2.2.4. Effectiveness of Premarital Counseling in Conflict Resolution

Premarital counseling is crucial in preparing couples for perceived marital conflicts that may arise by equipping them with necessary conflict resolution skills. Njeru (2021) observes that

premarital counseling helps couples deal with conflicts that may arise during marriage and seek healthy ways to solve them without resulting in violence.

According to Okeyo (2020), in order to equip couples with relevant conflict resolution skills effectively, the counselor must apply the psychodynamic approach as outlined by Sigmund Freud, which shows the relationship between past and present experiences and the unconscious mind that influences an individual's behavior and encourage them to express repressed feelings and emotions. The therapist should consider that unconscious fears, anxieties, impacts, and defenses against them usually cause relationship problems. The objective of the psychodynamic approach is to free the unconscious mind of past images and help the individual to focus on current realities.

A study by Weingarten (1987) established that there are five different levels of marital conflicts, and each level presents its challenges and methods of conflict resolution. However, he observes that for couples to solve conflicts adequately, they must be open and willing to communicate to eradicate the sources of conflict. Waititu (2017) observes that effective communication is the key to solving marital conflicts. Therefore, couples should undergo communication skills programs that equip them with conflict resolution skills when marital tension arises. Despite communication being vital in sustaining marriages, many couples anticipate no communication problems and get caught in marital conflicts, miscommunications, and misunderstandings (Maranga, 2021). This inevitably results in severe differences within the marriage, leading to constant psychological torture that makes the couples feel neglected, culminating in serious marital conflicts.

Conflict resolution methods advocated during premarital counseling often include; having an open mind, which involves dropping any preconceived notions that will prevent an individual from talking or discussing marital issues and resolving them; listening and paying

attention when your spouse is talking and trying to understand their point of view; identifying the root cause of the problems before solving them; taking responsibility for one's actions; forgiving your spouse and finding and implementing appropriate solutions(Aubrey et al ., 2013). However, there needs to be more research done to assess the role of these strategies in conflict resolution among couples.

2.2.5 Competency of Clergy as Premarital Counselors

Historically, premarital counseling services were handled by the clergy, physicians, or mental health professionals. Following the church's establishment of marriage as a sacrament in 1164, the clergy prepared couples intending to get married. However, premarital counseling tended to take the form of initiatory rites where the couples were taught about the nature of Christian marriage, the place of religion in the home, and the rehearsal of wedding rites (Summers, 1989).

After World War Two, there was a shift in psychology and theology. The emphasis of counseling shifted from individual and intra-psychic problems to interpersonal interactions, and from there, the field of marriage and family therapy was born (Vail, 2012). Theoretical orientations also began to change, and attention was given to marital relationships, viewing them as purposeful and not accidental. Hence, the bond between couples before marriage was recognized, and the patterns of this premarital relationship were seen as necessary in setting the stage for marriage patterns (Murray, 2004). Even so, premarital counseling remained an uncommon practice.

The field of theology also experienced some developments when some pioneering clergy initiated the movement of what is referred to today as pastoral counseling (Wango, 2010). This shift created a new dimension for the clergy. In premarital counseling, the services go beyond

education concerning the Christian nature of marriage and wedding rehearsal to include a thorough examination of couples' maturity and readiness for marriage.

The strong connection between families and church society is evident. This link may be through attending church services or rituals related to significant life events such as baptism, marriage, burials, and counseling. Among the church rituals, the most important and universal contact with the church is through the ritual of marriage. According to Cobbinah (2019), about 80% of first-time marriages and 60% of remarriages involve in religious ceremonies. Increasing attention is given to the clergy as facilitators of wedding ceremonies and as premarital counselors. Today the clergy offer about two-thirds of premarital counseling to couples.

The need for premarital counseling is spurred by the increasing levels of divorce and violence in marriages; religious and secular groups have embraced this preventative perspective in marriage (Maranga, 2021). Premarital counseling is designed to reduce the stress that can build up in a crisis. The increasing attention to premarital counseling in society today has been consistent with the growing popularity of counseling. Evidence points to the fact that professionals and lay people support the idea of premarital counseling for engaged couples (Okeyo, 2020). However, researchers have not indulged in the effectiveness of premarital counseling in resolving marital conflicts and enhancing marital stability.

The methods used by the clergy in counseling are often influenced by the expectations of the denominations with which they are affiliated (Wango, 2010). Clergy who follow the guardianship expectations of the church tend to emphasize whether the couple meets the expectations of the church, hence placing the desires of the church above those of the couple. However, clergy who follow pastoral counseling expectations emphasize the couple's desires as individuals and their relationship.

The general public views the clergy as the most available helping professionals to assist those experiencing individual problems or marital conflict. Most people view the clergy as a critical source of information and counseling during difficult times (Okeyo, 2020). One explanation could be the traditional value placed on the church in society and the old age link between the church and the family. Studies on people who received counseling from clergy reported that they sought counseling because they perceived that they genuinely cared for people and not because of their training.

A cross-sectional survey in America to investigate where individuals sought counseling when dealing with personal problems showed that 42% sought help from clergies, 29% from physicians, 17% from psychiatrists, and 10% from other mental health professionals (Jacobi, 2017). Today, most individuals are seeking counseling from professionals. However, even with the increase of professional counselors, the clergy continue to be sought more than any other helping profession. This concurs with a study by Cobbinah (2019), who argues that one out of every 10 Americans contacted a clergy about a personal problem.

According to Kariuki (2017), pastoral counseling is often sought out because it is more unique than other forms of counseling. It helps individuals to face problems centered on religious conflicts, values and ethical dilemmas, and the ultimate meaning of life. A central objective in pastoral counseling is spiritual growth. Because of their expertise in theology, the clergy can meet this need better than other professionals. However, the clergy is sometimes expected to take a public stand on controversial issues, such as advocating separation or divorce in case of IPV, same-gender relationships, and infidelity. Hence, they need more luxury of appearing neutral on ethical issues.

Research conducted by Wango (2010) shows that the clergy sees their counseling role as necessary. Among the participants from the 14 protestant denominations, the clergy perceived

counseling as second to preaching in contributing to their church members' emotional and spiritual well-being. The research also found that the most generic form of counseling rendered by the clergy is marriage counseling, followed by premarital counseling, crisis intervention, and individual counseling. Waititu (2017) observes that much of pastoral counseling is preventive, such as premarital counseling and marriage counseling, which are geared toward preventing divorce.

Despite their role in counseling, the clergy's preparedness for counseling is limited. Research conducted by Kariuki (2018) among Methodist ministers found that 61% reported personal knowledge as their primary source of knowledge during counseling sessions. The clergy also reported not receiving any form of training or information that would be helpful in premarital counseling and only 24% reported having received premarital counseling.

Okeyo (2020) surveyed the clergy's preparedness for premarital counseling and found out that the clergy surveyed felt inadequate and incapable of delivering their counseling roles due to a lack of necessary training and experience in the counseling field. They also felt inadequate as individuals. This study concurs with Cobbinal (2019), who surveyed clergy from several protestant denominations and found that only 7% of the clergy were offering to counsel, and these were the most experienced in the field of premarital counseling and not necessarily the most educated or trained on premarital counseling.

Premarital counseling offered by the clergy remains a significant service in society today. However, despite its significance, limited attention has been given to this role by professionals through education and research. Studies have shown that the clergy are the most sought-after regarding counseling. However, they need more preparation in academic knowledge of counseling techniques, theories, and research related to marriage and family counseling, and much less on premarital counseling. They also receive less supervised clinical experience,

enhancing skill development and refinement. Additionally, they do not receive personal counseling to help them overcome perceived inadequacies as counselors.

Despite many institutions offering marriage and family counseling and premarital counseling courses, studies show that clergy access to these courses is still very low. On the other hand, the church has failed to create relevant and standardized PMC content that can equip the clergy with the necessary skills required to be competent premarital counselors.

2.3 Summary of Literature Review and Research Gaps

From the above literature review, it is evident that various academic scholars (Cobbinah&Osei-Tutu, 2020; Clinton, 2011; DeFrain& Olson, 2000; Duncan et al., 2010) have covered extensively the relationship between marriage stability and premarital counseling. Varied factors have been highlighted as determinants of successful marriages. However, limited research has been undertaken to examine the role of premarital counseling in mitigating intimate-partner violence (Njeru, 2021). Although some studies have been done on the effectiveness of premarital counseling on marital conflict resolution, these studies have only focused on disagreements between couples and have not handled the issue of violence.

The premarital content reviewed lacks relevant information that can be applied to prevent IPV among engaged couples. Furthermore, most of the content and programs applied by the church target married couples (Kepler, 2015). There is limited research on programs targeting engaged couples and their effectiveness in mitigating intimate-partner violence among married couples. The clergy tasked with premarital counseling and whose role is critical in preparing couples for marriage, have been seen to be deficient in the necessary knowledge and skills to be competent counselors. Access to relevant content also needs to be improved. Hence, they result

in their knowledge and experience when handling premarital counseling. Evidence has also pointed out that the clergy rarely attend premarital counseling. Hence, they may not have the necessary skills to prepare couples for marriage.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

The research under study sought to assess the role of premarital counseling in mitigating intimate-partner violence in Makueni Diocese in Makueni County. This chapter discusses the research methodology to be used in the study. The components of the research methodology include research design, research site, target population, study sample and sampling procedure, methods of data collection, processing, and analysis. It will also include legal and ethical considerations that the researcher will adhere to when collecting data.

3.2. Research Design

A research design is a framework of procedures and research methods that a researcher chooses while undertaking research. According to Creswell et al. (2018), a research design includes all parts of a study, including hypothesis, variables, methodology, experiments, and statistical analysis. A well-planned research design allows the researcher to draw trustworthy and valid conclusions. The current research used a descriptive research design.

Descriptive research design can be defined as a type of design whose aim is to collect information that systematically describes a situation, phenomenon, or population (Sharma, 2018). It also helps to answer questions such as what, where, when, and how regarding a research problem. The researcher chose descriptive research design because it explores the relationship between key variables, premarital counseling and intimate partner violence in their natural setting (Creswell et al., 2018). It also attempts to determine different characteristics of subjects, such as opinions, traits, and behavior. According to Pawar (2020), descriptive research

is not only restricted to finding facts but also helps formulate important principles such as policies and programs which offer a basis for solutions to many social problems and the advancement of knowledge in the field of social sciences.

3.3 Research Site

The current research was conducted in Makueni County, in the Eastern region of Kenya. The total area of the County is 8,034.7 square kilometers. Makueni County is divided into six constituencies: Makueni, Kilome, Kaiti, Mbooni, Kibwezi East, and West. According to the 2019 Kenya Census, Makueni County had a population of 987,653 people (KNBS, 2019). More specifically, this study was conducted in the Makueni Diocese, which encompasses the whole of Makueni County. The Anglican Church in Makueni has 92 Parishes/ Mission Areas (M.A) with 100 Priests serving full-time ministry.

The total number of Anglican Christians in the Diocese is about 30,000 worshipping in 150 local churches. The area was selected as it depicts a rural setting that may not be influenced by factors that may affect couples in urban settings. As compared to other counties in the lower Eastern region Makueni County has the highest number of Anglican churches and clergy. There has also been an increase in marital turmoil among the clergy, resulting in divorce. It is against this background that this study seeks to examine the role of premarital counseling in mitigating intimate partner violence among the clergy.

3.4 Target Population

A target population often involves a group of people that the intervention aims to conduct research on and draw deductions. The current research targeted the clergy of the Anglican Church in the Makueni Diocese who had been married for more than five years. The clergy were selected in this study because of their role in society, which involves spiritual guidance for church members, and because they offer premarital and marital counseling to their church

members. They also act as role models to members of their congregation, and as such, they are expected to highlight the highest level of moral standards in society. There are 92 Parishes in the Makueni Diocese with a population of 100 clergy targeted by the research under study.

3.5 Study Sample

3.5.1 Sampling Procedure

According to Creswell et al. (2018), a sample is a small unit of a group of people, items, or objects taken from the larger population for measurement. In research, the sample size should be representative of the study population to enhance the generalization of research findings. Sampling, on the other hand, refers to selecting research participants from the population of interest.

A reasonable sample size ensures that all sources of variations are captured (Creswell et al., 2018). The study sample was selected by use of stratified sampling. Stratified sampling involves dividing the study population into subgroups known as strata based on characteristics such as gender, job role, age bracket, and social status. Then random sampling was used to select a sample from each subgroup.

Stratified sampling classified the target population into two subgroups based on gender and job roles. In this study, the subgroups were clergy and clergy spouses. However, during their July monthly meeting only 60 clergy and clergy wives attended. Of these 60, 43 were clergy and 17 were clergy spouses and they were all included in the study. Stratified sampling was chosen because it is more representative, has greater accuracy, and allows the researcher to draw precise conclusions as each subgroup is represented in the sample (McCombes, 2022)

Table 1: Sampling Frame indicating Sample Size Distribution

Category	Target population	Sampling unit
Clergy	100	50
Clergy's spouses	100	50
Total	200	100

3.5.2 Study Sample Size

According to Weiss (2012), the sample size used to estimate a population means, n , is determined using a confidence level of 95%, an estimated standard deviation of 0.5, and a margin of error of 9.8%, as shown below.

$$\text{Sample size} = \frac{z^2 \times s^2}{d^2}$$

In the above formula:

Z is the z-score. For a 95% confidence interval, the z-score is usually 1.96.

S is the estimated standard deviation of 0.5

D is the desired margin of error of $\pm 5\%$, which is 9.8%

$$S = \frac{(1.96)^2 \times (0.5)^2}{(0.098)^2}$$

$$(0.098)^2$$

$$S = \frac{(3.8416 \times 0.25)}{(0.009604)} = 100$$

$$(0.009604)$$

$$S = 100$$

From the formula above, 100 respondents were targeted. The 100 respondents were to represent 50 clergy and 50 clergy spouses who would be randomly selected during their annual meetings. However, only 60 respondents attended the July meeting and were all included in the study.

3.6 Data Collection

3.6.1 Data Collection Instruments

In this study, a combination of quantitative and qualitative data collection methods were used to help in an in-depth understanding of the effects of premarital counseling in mitigating intimate-partner violence among the clergy in the Anglican Diocese of Makueni in Kenya. Questionnaires and Focus group discussions (FGD) (for the clergy only) were used to gather information from the study respondents. The questionnaires had both open and closed-ended questions.

The 60 questionnaires with 22 questions categorized into four sections. The first set of questions captured respondent demographic factors such as gender, age, and number of years they had been married. The second set of questions assessed whether the respondents attended premarital counseling, the topics they covered, and the impact of this exercise had on their marriage. The respondents were required to name the topics they felt really impacted their marital relationship positively.

The third set of questions examined the causes of marital conflicts and their frequency. Through a Likert scale ranging from 0-5, the respondents were required to pick one. On the causes of marital conflicts, the responses were: 1=always agree, 2=occasionally agree, 3=frequently disagree, 4=always disagree. On the frequency of marital conflicts, the responses were: 5=all the time, 4=most of the time, 3=occasionally, 2=rarely, 1=never. The respondents were then asked to explain the strategies they used in solving marital conflicts and whether these strategies worked.

The fourth set of questions targeted the clergy who offer premarital counseling. The questions aimed to determine their competence as premarital counselors. The respondents were required to state how often they offered PMC, whether they had any form of training in PMC,

the number of years they have been offering PMC, hours, and sessions and whether they had a manual to guide them during PMC. There was a section where respondents were asked to rate the most important PMC topics to the least important. The ratings were: 4=very important, 3=important, 2=least important, 1= unimportant. respondents were requested to explain the strategies they advocated in solving marital conflicts, whether they had applied these strategies in their marriages and whether the strategies had worked.

One focus group discussion was undertaken which comprised of 15 clergy. Of these 15 clergies, there were 10 men and 5 women. The 15 clergy were purposely offering PMC counseling services and were selected from the target population through random sampling.

3.6.2 Pretesting of Research Instruments

Pretesting was conducted to test the reliability of research instruments. According to Cohen et al. (2013), pretesting is an important part of research as it helps a researcher to test the validity, reliability, and practicability of research instruments. It is through pretesting that a researcher is able to get the wording of the questions correctly; know whether the respondents understand the questions to clarify them, and it is through feedback from pretesting that the researcher can construct a manageable number of questions. The current study pre-tested the questionnaires to a sample of 15 people who were randomly selected from a sample of clergy from the bordering Machakos Diocese during their monthly meetings. This pilot test sample was within the recommendation outlined by Cooper and Schilder (2011), who observed that 5-10% of the target sample should be part of the pilot test. The questionnaires were coded and analyzed with SPSS Version 28.0 software for running Cronbach's reliability test.

3.6.3 Instrument Reliability

Reliability measures the degree to which a research instrument gives consistent results after repeated trials. Internal consistency reliability was established by pre-testing the study

instruments to a different population from the main study population. This allowed for modifications of various questions in order to paraphrase, analyze and clear up any shortcomings in the research tools. Machakos Diocese was used in pretesting because it shared the same demographic factors with Makueni Diocese; the two Dioceses share the same policies and often hold joint exercises.

3.6.4 Instrument Validity

The validity of the research instruments was established through cross-checking and scrutinizing information on research instruments to ensure accuracy. The research instruments were also validated by discussing them with two randomly selected senior clergy of the Anglican Church in Makueni Diocese, whose views were evaluated and incorporated into the research instruments. Content validity was established through expert evaluation by having the research supervisors, who are psychologists and one who is also a clergy evaluate the research tool.

3.6.5 Data Collection Procedures

The researcher sought all the necessary approvals before proceeding with the research study. First, the approval from African Nazarene University and the National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI). The researcher then approached the education board of the Anglican Church in Makueni Diocese to seek authorization to conduct the research among the clergy and their spouses. The study used questionnaires and focus group discussions to gather information from the study respondents. The questionnaires consisted of both open-ended and closed-ended questions. Questionnaires have the advantage of eliciting qualitative and quantitative information that is confidential, timesaving, and has less interviewer bias (Pawar, 2020). The researcher administered the structured questionnaires to the respondents during their monthly meetings.

The clergy and their spouses from all the 92 parishes hold regular meetings to discuss church-related matters. During the July meeting, the researcher explained the importance of the research, sought their consent and administered the questionnaires to all the 60 respondents who attended the July meeting. Each respondent was be given a questionnaire, and the researcher clarified questions unclear to the respondents. After completing the questionnaires, the researcher collected and checked them for completion before releasing the respondent. Guiding questions were used for focus group discussions administered to the clergy only. The FGDs comprised of 15 clergy purposively selected for the study. Only five female clergy attended the July meeting and were included in the FGDs while ten male clergy were selected from the target population.

3.7 Data Processing and Analysis

Primary data collected from the field was validated to ensure it was within the required quality parameters without bias. It was then edited to check for missing, invalid, or inconsistent entries within the data records. Data collected was then coded into meaningful and cohesive categories.

Data analysis was done using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 28.0 software. A descriptive and bivariate analysis of data involving frequency distribution, measures of dispersion, and measures of central tendency (such as mean, mode, and median) were done to provide statistics helpful in describing the characteristics of the sample population. Bivariate analysis was used to test the relationship between independent and dependent variables. The study findings were presented in tables, percentages, frequencies, pie charts, bar graphs, and cross-tabulations.

According to Creswell et al. (2018), data analysis involves assembling raw data into meaningful and cohesive categories. Analysis of qualitative data collected through FGDs went

through four stages. The first stage was naïve reading, where the researcher and research assistants read through the whole data to identify themes or patterns. The second stage was structural analysis, where collected data was examined in detail, and sub-themes were identified through coding (Chun et al., 2019). The codes were a critical component of the analysis process as they grouped data according to their similarities based on the FGDs and questionnaire responses before condensing the information into understandable terms.

The third stage of analysis was comprehensive understanding, where themes and sub-themes were synthesized into holistic and coherent interpretations of the phenomena. The process of thematic analysis subscribed to familiarizing, coding, themes generation, themes review, definition, theme naming, and writing up (Cormack et al., 2018). The final stage was critical reflection, where the researcher and research assistants evaluated the interpretation in relation to research questions, literature, and study implications. The information was compared with the study objectives to identify any missing data to make corrections. This final phase of data analysis was prepared for report writing.

3.8 Legal and Ethical Considerations

According to the American Psychological Association (APA), ethics are expected rules of conduct to be adhered to when undertaking research. The researcher should protect the respondents from any form of harm and respect their rights and dignity. According to APA (2010), studies involving individuals may expose them to unpleasant or stressful situations that may affect their lives negatively. This means the researcher should abide by specific rules of conduct and moral principles. Only the clergy who were married for more than five years were included in the study. The unmarried clergy or those married within the last five years were not included in the study.

To adhere to the code of conduct, respondents' consent was sought through an informed consent note which clarified that participation was voluntary and information given would be used for education purposes only, and it would be treated with the utmost confidentiality. No photographs or audio recordings were taken without the respondents' permission. (See the first page of Appendix A for a copy of the introductory consent note)

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the results and their interpretation. The findings of the study are founded on the study objectives. The current study sought to analyze the role of premarital counseling in mitigating intimate-partner violence among ordained clergy in the Anglican Diocese of Makueni in Makueni County. This chapter is divided into six sections. Section one describes the response rate. Section two describes the respondent's demographic characteristics. Section three examines the relevance of PMC program content in enhancing marital stability. Section four presents' findings on the causes of IPV among the clergy. Section five identifies the effectiveness of PMC in conflict resolution, and the last section describes the competency of the clergy as PMC counselors.

4.2 Characteristics of the Respondents

Response rate

The primary data for this study was collected on July 26th, 2023, during the clergy's monthly meeting. All the 60 questionnaires distributed were returned, giving a return rate of 100%. This response rate indicates that the study participants were responsive to the study and that the subject under study was of interest to them. Of the 60 questionnaires distributed, 58 were included in data analysis as they met the inclusion criteria (married for more than five years), resulting to a consistency rate of 96.67%. However, two questionnaires were excluded as the couple had been married for less than five years. The data collected was, therefore, adequate for analysis and concluding about the study population.

Demographic characteristics of the respondents

This section provides respondents background information (refer to table 2). Respondent's demographic information collected included their gender, age, duration of the marriage, number of years of church membership and the number of premarital counseling sessions for those who attended. Regarding respondents' gender, results indicate that 72% of the respondents were male while 27% were female. A higher number(n=24) of the participants were between the ages of 41-50. Concerning the duration of marriage, most (n=43, 74%) respondents reported having been married for 5-15 years. Most (n=33, 56%) of the respondents reported being members of the ACK church for 21-40 years. The respondents (26%) who attended premarital counseling had one to five PMC sessions, while 74% never attended premarital counseling.

Table 2: Demographic Characteristics

Variable	Variable category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	42	72
	Female	16	27
Age	20-30	6	10
	31-40	21	36
	41-50	24	41
	51-60	7	12
Years in marriage	05-15	43	74
	16-25	10	17
	26-35	3	5
	36-45	2	3
Years in church	01-20	13	22
	21-40	33	56
	41 and above	12	20
No. of PMC sessions	None	43	74
	1-5	9	15
	6-10	6	10

Source: primary data

4.3 Participation in Premarital Counseling

The study respondents (refer to figure 4.3.1) indicated whether they had attended or not attended PMC before they got married and the content they covered during counseling.

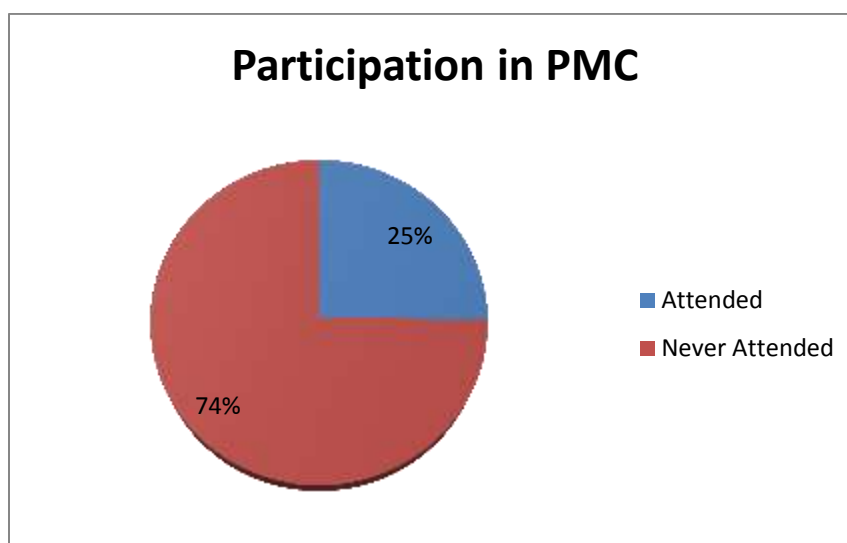


Figure 4.3.1 Participation in PMC

The figure above indicates that 74% of the participants never attended premarital counseling, while 25% attended. Considering the role the clergy play in PMC counseling, the percentage of those who did not attend PMC was relatively high, meaning that they offer counseling without having attended one. Those who attended PMC described the content of PMC as consisting of communication skills, finances, sex, conflict resolution, family life and reasons for marriage. Respondents observed that the major topics in PMC that impacted their marriage included communication, finances, sex and conflict resolution. The respondents were, however, unaware of the PMC programs they went through during counseling. A general consensus was that PMC was typically brief, lasting only a few days and hours.

Concerning the relevance of PMC programs' content in enhancing marital stability, the participants observed that couples who attended PMC were more likely to enjoy satisfactory

marriages than those who did not. Data collected through focus group discussions shows that participants who attended PMC were more likely to enjoy satisfactory marriages than those who did not. For instance, one clergy observed that:

When couples attend premarital counseling, they are equipped with skills to enhance their marriages. Skills such as communication, conflict resolution, managing finances and marriage expectations are essential for marriages to be successful. However, a couple that does not attend premarital counseling means they learn how to handle these issues while already married and are the major causes of conflicts.

Another clergy noted that:

My wife and I have been married for over 35 years. During these years, I cannot say we have not had disagreements, but what has helped is what we learned in PMC. We were well equipped with strategies to solve conflicts amicably without resulting in violence. As for me, I believe without a doubt that PMC is essential in enhancing marital stability

4.4 Causes of Marital Conflicts among the Clergy

Bearing in mind that no human relationship is devoid of misunderstanding and conflict, many families today experience some form of marital conflict, which can either be a creative or destructive power. Harmonious marital relationships are linked to the ability of couples to solve conflicts. However, to solve conflicts amicably, couples must understand the causes or situations that provoke marital conflicts. To understand the causes of marital conflicts among the clergy, the researcher used 10-point metrics. The table below shows respondents' views on situations that often led to marital conflicts.

Table 3: Causes of Marital Conflicts

AA=always agree, OA=occasionally agree, FD=frequently disagree, AD=always disagree

Cause of conflict	AA	OA	FD	AD	N
Use of mobile phones	13 (22.4)	19 (32.7)	10 (17.2)	16 (27.5)	58
Sex related issues	8 (13.7)	13 (22.4)	17 (29.3)	20 (34.4)	58
Finances	11 (18.9)	17 (29.3)	12 (20.6)	18 (31.0)	58
Your partners friends	22 (37.9)	27 (46.5)	4 (6.8)	5 (8.6)	58
Religious matters	35 (60.3)	13 (22.4)	6 (10.3)	4 (6.8)	58
Individual differences	26 (44.8)	19 (32.7)	9 (15.5)	4 (6.8)	58
Prejudice or lack of flexibility	24 (41.3)	17 (29.3)	14 (24.1)	3 (5.1)	58
Fear of spouse	32 (45.1)	16 (27.5)	5 (8.6)	5 (8.6)	58
Relatives	31 (44.6)	13 (22.4)	10 (17.2)	4 (6.8)	58
Raising children	21 (75.8)	15 (25.8)	5 (8.6)	3 (5.1)	58

Source: primary data

From the table above, most participants agreed on several items, such as raising children(75%) religious matters (60%), and 45% observed that they did not fear their spouses. However, a high number of respondents indicated that they often disagreed as a result of sex-related issues (63%), finances (51%) and use of mobile phones (44%).

Considering that the clergy handle the majority of counseling, they encounter warring couples now and then, a factor that improves their knowledge on the causes of marital conflicts. The clergy were asked to identify factors that cause marital conflicts among couples and their marriages. One clergy observed that:

While conflicts are inevitable in marriages, most of these conflicts are avoidable. While undertaking counseling sessions for married couples, the greatest challenge that couples encounter today is the issue of unfaithfulness which is facilitated by the use of mobile

phone and the social media sites such as WhatsApp and Facebook. Couples often come to me with evidence of their cheating partners. Apart from that sex related issues are also a problem, where a couple may complain that they have not been intimate for more than a month. Lastly, it is the issue of finances. Couples often complain of being overburdened with responsibilities while one partner does not do anything to help the other. When these problems are not handled amicably they often result in conflicts and divorce.

4.5 Frequency of Marital Conflicts

Table 4: frequency of marital conflicts

A=All the time, MT= Most of the times, O=Occasionally, R=Rarely, N=Never

	A	MT	O	R	N
How often do you quarrel with your partner	-	6 (10)	32 (55)	20 (34)	-
How often do the quarrels result to violence	-	4 (6)	25 (43)	14 (24)	15 (26)
Do you ever regret getting married to your spouse	-	7 (12)	24 (43)	9 (15)	18 (31)
Have you ever considered divorce or separation due to conflicts	3 (5)	10 (17)	20 (34)	12 (20)	16 (27)
How often have you experienced					
• Physical violence	6 (10)	12 (20)	17 (29)	11 (18)	12 (20)
• Emotional violence	6 (10)	14 (20)	20 (34)	11 (18)	7 (12)
• Sexual violence	3 (5)	13 (22)	21 (36)	11 (18)	13 (22)

Source: primary data

The table above represents the results upon which the frequency of marital conflicts occurred. More than half (59%) of the respondents experienced physical violence, a high number (64%) experienced emotional violence, and a substantial number (63%) experienced sexual violence. Regarding gender distribution of IPV, more (58%) males than females (32%) indicated

to have experienced some form of IPV. Considering the clergy's role in helping couples navigate marital challenges, the study shows that the clergy uses varied approaches to address the issues. When asked about the strategies used to resolve marital conflicts, a thematic analysis of the qualitative data showed that the strategies that worked included silence, prayers, and communication.

Table 5: Bivariate correlation between premarital counseling and marital conflict

		Attended PMC	Marital conflicts
Attended PMC	Pearson	1	-0.134
	Correlation		
	Sig.(1-tailed)		0.215
	N	58	58
Marital Conflicts	Pearson		
	Correlation	-0.134	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	0.215	
	N	58	58

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

The study used the Pearson Correlation Significance tool to test the relationship between PMC and marital conflicts. The result indicates a negative correlation between PMC and the prevalence of marital conflicts. This means that couples who had participated in PMC had fewer marital conflicts than those who never attended, though there was no significant difference in the mean [$r=-0.130$, $n=58$, $p=0.215$]. This indicates that the more couples participate in premarital counseling; the fewer marital conflicts are experienced between them.

4.6. Competence of Clergy as Premarital Counselors

This section of the study targeted the clergy who offer premarital counseling. The clergy were asked to indicate the frequency with which they offered premarital counseling, whether they have received any form of training in PMC, the number of years they have been offering PMC, how many sessions they offer and the duration of these sessions in terms of hours and months

and whether they had a manual to refer to during counseling. They were also asked to link PMC topics from most to least important. The results of the study are presented as below.

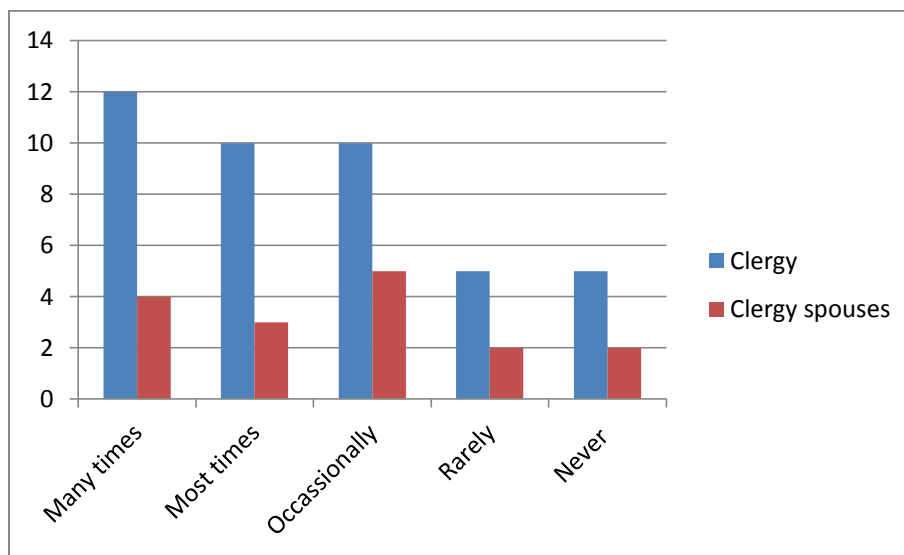


Figure 4.6.1 frequency of offering PMC

The results presented in figure 4.6.1 above indicate that both the clergy and their spouses offer premarital counseling. However, the clergy undertake most of the premarital counseling sessions.

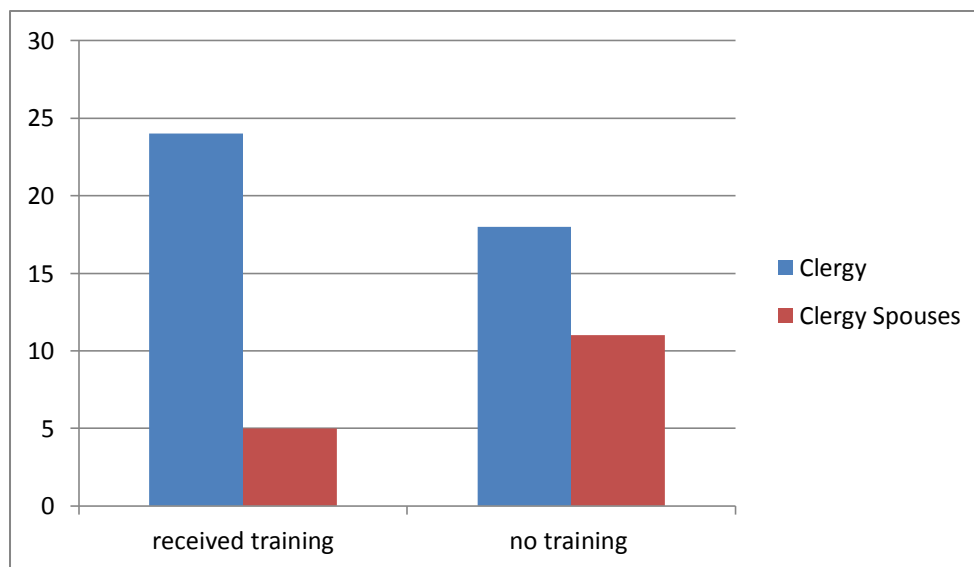


Figure 4.6.2 Training in PMC

Figure 4.6.2 above shows that only a few (n=24, 41%) clergy and clergy spouses (n=5, 8%) clergy spouses had received any form of training in PMC, while another small number (n=18, 31%) of clergy and clergy spouses (n=11, 18%) had no training in PMC. On the kind of training received on PMC, (n=20, 34%) clergy had a certificate in PMC while (n=4, 6%) had a degree in PMC, whereas (n=3, 5%) clergy spouses had a certificate, and 2 (3%) had a degree in PMC.

Results also indicate that most respondents have been offering PMC for over five years for approximately three sessions, each lasting 2 hours. On whether they had a PMC manual, only a small number (n=18, 31%) of clergy indicated that they had a PMC manual, while a large number (n=40, 68%) did not have a manual and they used the bible and their own experience as a guide during PMC counseling. The respondents also indicated that, as Christians, the strategies that have worked in solving marital conflicts in their marriages have been prayers and silence.

Table 6: Important Topics in PMC

VI=very important, IMP= important, LI= least important, UI= unimportant

Topics	VI	freq	IMP	freq%	LI	freq %	UI	freq %	N
		%							
Sexual issues	50	86.2%	6	10.3%	1	1.7%	1	1.7%	58
Communication	52	89.6%	5	8.6%	1	1.7%	-		58
Conflict resolution	47	81.0%	9	15.5%	2	3.4%	-		58
Use of mobile phones	43	74.1%	11	18.9%	4	6.8%	-		58
Individual differences	37	63.7%	11	18.9%	5	8.6%	5	8.6%	58
Finances	46	79.3%	10	17.2%	2	3.4%	-		58
Relatives	28	48.2%	14	24.1%	10	17.2%	6	10.3%	58
Raising children	44	75.8%	10	17.2%	4	6.8%	-		58
Gender roles	38	65.5%	8	13.7%	6	10.3%	6	10.3%	58

Source: primary data

Table 6 above presents the results based on the most important PMC topics to the least important. Respondents indicated that communication was the most important topic to be covered during PMC (89.6%) followed by sexual issues (86.2%) and conflict resolution (81%).

CHAPTER FIVE

MAJOR FINDINGS, DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction.

This chapter discusses the study findings in relation to the literature review. It also highlights the researcher's recommendations, areas of further research and study conclusions. The study analyzed the role of premarital counseling in mitigating intimate partner violence among the clergy in Makueni Diocese Makueni County. The study objectives included examining the relevance of premarital counseling programs in enhancing marital stability among the clergy, establishing the causes of intimate-partner violence among the clergy, identifying the effectiveness of premarital counseling in conflict resolution among the clergy, and determining the competency of the clergy as premarital counselors in preparing couples for marriage responsibilities. The study targeted the clergy who were married for more than five years. Data were collected through questionnaires, which were administered to both the clergy and clergy spouses. Focus group discussions were administered to the clergy only, who gave an insight into the issues of intimate partner violence.

5.2. Major Findings

The research study sought to address four primary objectives that relate to PMC. Regarding the causes of intimate partner violence among clergy in Makueni diocese, the study found that most people do not participate in PMC. In this case, 74% of the respondents indicated that they had never attended the sessions, with only 25% indicating they had attended PMC. The participants who have in the past attended PMC identified the programs as being beneficial in improving people's knowledge on sex, finances, communication and conflict resolution. As

such, the findings show that PMC focuses on the areas due to their potential relationship with intimate-partner violence. The participants also identified the factors as being among the primary causes of intimate partner violence among the clergy. Based on the responses, raising children was the most common cause, followed by religious matters. However, the participants observed that disagreements often arise due to sex-related issues, followed by financial issues and the use of mobile phones being the least common cause.

The findings on premarital counseling programs' content in enhancing marital stability among clergy indicate that communication is the most important content, hence its prioritization in the process. The topic is followed by sexual issues, with conflict resolution being the least common content in the programs. As shown by the bivariate analysis of the relationship between PMC and marital conflict, the study demonstrates that couples who attend PMC are less likely to experience marital conflicts than those who have never attended the programs. The finding shows that the programs' content is reliable in enhancing marital stability among all the participants, including the clergy in Makueni County clergy.

The findings show that the programs positively impact the effectiveness of premarital counseling in conflict resolution among the clergy in the Makueni Diocese. The effectiveness is reflected by the correlation between PMC and marital conflict, presenting the approach as being reliable in addressing the issues. The findings show that PMC programs improve people's knowledge and skills regarding dealing with issues associated with finances, gender roles, and the use of mobile phones and relatives.

Regarding the competency of clergy in premarital counseling, the findings showed that the clergy and their wives have high competence levels in marital counseling, elements that contribute to the effectiveness of the approaches that they apply in addressing the conflicts. Their frequency indicates the high competency in offering the services, such that 12 participants

indicated that they offer premarital counseling many times. However, the findings show that only 41% of the clergy and 8% of their spouses have received some form of training in PMC.

Additionally, only 34% of the clergy have a certificate in PMC, with 5% of their wives having the same qualification. The same is reflected by the number of clergy holding degrees in PMC, such that only 6% of the clergy hold degrees, with 3% of their wives having the same qualification.

5. 3. Discussion.

The discussion section focuses on the elements addressed by the research study. The discussion of the findings is based on the four research objectives. The first objective was to establish the causes of intimate-partner violence among the clergy in the Makueni Diocese. The objective was based on existence of evidence indicating that intimate-partner violence is caused by various factors, hence the need to determine ones that influence the process in Makueni. The second objective seeks to examine the relevance of premarital counseling programs' content in enhancing marital stability among the clergy in the Makueni Diocese. The study will also identify the effectiveness of premarital counseling in conflict resolution among the clergy in Makueni Diocese, with the final objective being to determine the competency of the clergy as premarital counselors in preparing couples for marriage responsibilities in Makueni Diocese.

5.2.1. The relevance of premarital counseling programs'-content in enhancing marital stability among the clergy

The first objective sought to examine the relevance of PMC program content in enhancing marital stability. Notably, only a small percentage (25%) of the clergy attended PMC, while a high percentage (74%) reported not going through PMC. These statistics indicate a low level of PMC experience. Considering that the clergy are the most sought-after regarding

counseling. The findings reveal that couples who attended premarital counseling had more stable marriages than those who did not. Those who attended PMC noted that the topics they handled during PMC, such as communication skills, sex-related issues, finances, conflict resolution and how to handle individual differences, played a critical role in enhancing marital stability as they entered the marriage institution with enough skills and knowledge to handle the complexities of marriage. The results of this study are in tandem with the findings of Futris et al. (2011), who observed that PMC programs have played a significant role in strengthening marriages and contributing to marital bliss and happiness. While the role played by PMC in marital stability cannot be refuted, the fact that a high percentage of the clergy did not attend PMC could be the leading cause of conflicts among the clergy as they enter marriages without a blueprint on how to manage issues that may arise.

Waititu (2017) observes that premarital counseling programs are based on two major principles: providing couples with skills-based training and preventing marital conflicts. Premarital content encompasses skills training, awareness, cognitive change, and feedback. Awareness focuses on marital expectations in a relationship, such as household, parenting, and financial roles (Maranga, 2021). Feedback focuses on communication between the couples and other social entities such as other family members, community, and church members. Cognitive changes address individual thought processes, situations and patterns that will occur during their marriage.

Skills training entail teaching the clients how to manage different situations that may arise in their marriage. It involves giving them skills to solve conflicts amicably, effective communication, and positive expression of respect, affection, commitment, and self-regulation.

Halford et al. (2004) observe that premarital counseling content should cover topics such as commitment and motivations behind the marriage union, willingness to make sacrifices for your partner, virtues such as loyalty to the marital relationship, generosity, the impact of the social environment, and awareness of perceived future challenges and realistic standards of marriage. The statement is consistent with the findings of the study since it presents the need to structure premarital counseling in ways that addresses all potential causes and impacts of the challenges. Based on the findings, it is evident that the clergy is trained to get knowledge and skills that enable them to identify and address the challenges, hence the high likelihood of positively impacting the lives of the affected couples.

5.2.2 The causes of intimate-partner violence among the clergy

This objective sought to establish the causes and frequency of intimate partner violence among the clergy. The study's findings revealed that the causes of conflicts resulted from sex-related issues, finances, and use of mobile phones (indicate the percentage for each). These results concur with the findings of Daba et al. (2018), who observed that a third of all divorces result from mobile phones. The author also found that the relationship between marital conflicts and technology use was positive, confirming that technology is a significant cause of marital conflicts among couples today.

Other research studies presented by Spaumer (2017) and Cobbinah (2019) confirm that the causes of marital conflicts are diverse and differ from one society to another. The key causes were of psychological, gender related, sexual, socio cultural, economic. Some of the consequences were stress, feeling of depression and grief, worry about what others say, separation and divorce. The frequently applied conflict coping strategies were competing, collaborating, compromising, avoiding, accommodation, and third party interference. Finally, it

was concluded that marital conflict is one major social issue in the study area that need involvement of experts in social work, counseling and law to minimize the prevalence of marital conflicts. For instance, in the USA, many couples' conflicts are caused by: division of housework, alcohol consumption, relationships with friends, finances, and power at the household level (Cobbinah, 2019). In Africa, the causes of marital causes were due to poor communication, gender roles, finances, and infidelity (Spaumer, 2017), while in Kenya, research by Kimani and Chepchieng (2022) observed that the common causes of conflict among Christian couples were; infidelity, poor sex, early marriages, stress, alcohol, technology and financial problems.

The study results showed that 63% of the respondents indicated that sex-related issues were the leading cause of marital conflicts. These findings concur with Mbwirire (2017), who observed that it is crucial for couples to understand the role of sex in marriage and should be well-equipped on what to expect regarding sexual intimacy. Most divorces, sexual abuse, and violence in relationships today result from sex-related issues such as infidelity and insecurities. Sexual issues create anger, insecurity, resentment, and communication breakdown among couples (Ojowa, 2005). Infidelity often weighs heavily on the faithful partner as it creates suspicion, bitterness, and jealousy, often leading to quarrels, fights, and murder. The media has highlighted several cases where couples were killed due to sex-related issues (Odhiambo, 2018). This is reflected with the findings of the current study, since the responses from the clergy presents infidelity as among the leading causes of intimate partner violence in Makueni Diocese. In this case, 86.6% presented sexual issues as being the most important factor contributing to the violence, an issue that is commonly associated with infidelity. As such, the current study presents findings that opine to evidence shared in the existing literature, especially on the primary causes of intimate-partner violence.

The findings of this study, regarding the frequency of intimate partner violence, indicated that respondents experienced elevated levels of emotional (64%) and sexual violence (63%), while 59% experienced physical violence. While previous studies have given more emphasis on women as victims of IPV, the result of this study indicates that men also experience IPV. These results concur with the findings of WHO (2021), which indicate that today, the burden of intimate partner violence is not only borne by women, but also both men and women experience some form of IPV. Birkley and Eckhardt (2015) noted that, though women can be violent in their relationships with men, they often do so in self-defense; nevertheless, males are the typical perpetrators of IPV. The findings of this study tend to differ as the cases of IPV among the male clergy are high (58%) compared to their spouses (32%). The findings of this study concur with a study conducted by CDC (2020) which pointed out that male victimization was a significant public health issue. The report indicated that one out of every three men in the US reported to have experienced some form of IPV.

5.2.3 The effectiveness of premarital counseling in conflict resolution among the clergy

This objective sought to identify the effectiveness of premarital counseling in conflict resolution among the clergy. The study found that PMC programs help curb the prevalence of marital conflicts. This means couples who had participated in PMC had fewer marital conflicts than those who never attended. This indicates that the more the couples participated in premarital counseling, the fewer marital conflicts they experienced as they acquired conflict resolution skills.

The findings of this study correlate with the findings of Njeru (2021), who observed that premarital counseling helps couples deal with conflicts that may arise during marriage and seek healthy ways to solve them without resulting in violence. According to Stahmann (2000), marital

education programs such as PREP focus on educating couples on handling marital conflicts. This problem-focused model teaches couples how to elude and manage conflicts. The model advocates the use of active listening, problem-solving, forgiveness, intimacy, gender roles, and core issues of expectations, which have been associated with successful conflict resolution.

5.2.4 The competency of the clergy as premarital counselors in preparing couples for marriage responsibilities.

This objective sought to determine the competency of the clergy as premarital counselors in preparing couples for marriage responsibilities. The findings of this study show that while the researcher expected that only the clergy offered PMC, clergy spouses were also offering PMC. While the clergy play a significant role in PMC, training in the same is quite important. However, the results indicate that only 49% of clergy and clergy spouses had received some form of training in PMC.

The study found that only 31% indicated having a PMC manual, while 68% did not, and they used their own experience and the bible to undertake PMC. Those with a manual indicated they had borrowed from other denominations and professions; hence, it was not a standardized manual. These results concur with research conducted by Kariuki (2018) among Methodist ministers, which found that 61% reported personal knowledge as their primary source of knowledge during counseling sessions. The clergy also reported not receiving any form of training that would be helpful in premarital counseling, and only 24% reported having received premarital counseling.

Other studies that surveyed the clergy's preparedness for PMC found that they felt inadequate and incapable of delivering their counseling roles due to a lack of necessary training and experience in the counseling field (Okeyo, 2020). This study also concurs with Cobbinal (2019), who surveyed clergy from several protestant denominations and found that only 7% of

the clergy were offering to counsel, and these were the most experienced in the field of premarital counseling and not necessarily the most educated or trained on premarital counseling.

5.4 Conclusion

Based on the study's findings, PMC remains a significant strategy in enhancing marital stability. The findings reveal that couples who attended premarital counseling had more stable marriages than those who did not. The couples pointed out that the topics they learned during PMC, such as communication skills, conflict resolution, finances and understanding individual differences, significantly enhanced marital stability. Considering that most couples disagree over these issues, PMC is therefore essential for any couple intending to get married so that by the time they enter the institution of marriage, they have acquired skills that will enable them to handle the many challenges in marriage. The respondents were, however, unaware of the PMC programs they went through during counseling. There was a consensus that PMC was typically brief, lasting only a few days and hours.

Causes of marital conflicts were diverse, and although most couples agreed on various subjects, issues related to sex, mobile phone use and finances were the main factors that led to marital conflicts between married couples. The results of this study concur with the current issues that cause marital conflicts among married couples such as mental, physical, economic or sexual in nature. Incidents are rarely isolated, and usually escalate in frequency and severity. In society today, many marriages are breaking out due to infidelity enabled by mobile phone use. Physical violence and murder are not a new topic in society today. The media has portrayed these issues extensively, especially where gruesome murders have occurred due to finances and infidelity cases. While previous studies have emphasized that IPV is prevalent among women, the study has revealed that men experience IPV as much as women. Many studies have emphasized men as perpetrators of IPV while women are viewed as the victims. However, men

in society today experience some form of IPV in the confines of their homes and, in most cases, are afraid to speak out due to stigmatization and fear of being looked down upon. While a few studies have focused on men as victims of violence in the last few decades, these studies have not been given much emphasis, and no policies have been made to protect men from abuse.

From the study results, PMC has proved to be effective in solving marital conflicts. Most couples who attended PMC observed that they learned essential skills that have worked in solving conflicts. Communication and conflict resolution skills have helped couples handle their differences adequately without resulting in physical or emotional violence. Considering that conflicts are inevitable in marriages; it is vital to encourage couples to attend PMC sessions. However, the church should ensure that the programs that enhance conflict resolution skills are comprehensive and extensive. Previous studies show that programs incorporating individual and group counseling were more effective and impactful among couples than those not.

The findings of this study reveal that the clergy are not well-trained or prepared to handle IPV-related issues. Considering that members of the church view the clergy as a source of information, wisdom and expertise to handle their marital issues, there is a need for the church to invest in training the clergy in PMC and marital counseling, among other areas such as drug abuse.

Overall, the study provides findings that help address the research question and the set objectives. The study sought to examine the role of premarital counseling in reducing intimate-partner violence among clergy in Makueni County. To achieve this, the researcher was guided by four primary objectives focusing on examining the relevance of PMC programs on marital stability, establishing causes of intimate-partner violence among the clergy, identifying the effectiveness of PMC in addressing marital conflicts, and determining the competency of the

clergy as premarital counselors. To sum up, the findings show that most clergy never attended PMC sessions, with only a few of them having PMC degrees or certificates. The percentage is much lower for their spouses, who indicated that they offer PMC counseling less frequently. However, the findings show that couples who attend PMC sessions had fewer marital conflicts than those who do not attend. The study recommends that the church and other stakeholders encourage people to develop PMC programs that focus on conflict resolution skills to help address the issue. As such, the study contributes to knowledge since it has included men as victims of intimate partner violence. The perspective is different from previous studies, which have focused on women as victims of IPV without examining the extent to which the issue affects men. Additionally, the study, through its findings, has identified a solution to the problem by recommending the development of PMC programs that focus on instilling conflict resolution skills

5.5 Recommendations

1. The study's findings reveal that PMC plays a crucial role in marital stability. Therefore, it recommends the need for the church to emphasize the importance of couples engaging in PMC to enhance their marriages and reduce the rate of IPV and divorce, especially among the clergy.
2. The church should develop PMC programs that help couples deal with conflicts that occur in marriages. The recommendation is based on the finding that intimate-partner violence is caused by various factors, hence the need to equip the partners with knowledge of the causes and potential solutions to the challenge. Programs that incorporated both individual and group counseling were found to be more effective. Therefore, the Anglican Church is encouraged to devise a PMC program incorporating

individual and group counseling. The program's content should be aligned with the topics necessary for preventing IPV and conflict resolution, such as communication skills, sex issues, and use of mobile phones, finances, individual differences and gender roles.

3. Since most respondents viewed sex-related issues as the major causes of marital conflicts, more emphasis should be given to handling these issues. Issues such as infidelity, lack of sexual fulfillment and understanding the role of sex in marriages should be addressed adequately during PMC.
4. The results indicate that both the clergy and clergy spouses offer PMC. There was a consensus that the clergy were not well equipped to handle cases of IPV. Therefore, the church is recommended to ensure that both groups undergo PMC training to equip them with the skills necessary to handle marital issues among their church members. PMC skills should be made compulsory for all clergy members in all denominations.
5. The findings also reveal that quite some clergy spouses offer PMC. As such, it is also essential for this group to be offered training in PMC. Involving clergy spouses in PMC is essential as women tend to share much information with a gender, they feel comfortable with. Clergy spouses would also help prepare couples for pregnancy and childbirth issues. The study findings showed that most clergy did not have a manual and those that had indicated that they had borrowed from other churches and professionals. There is a need to involve experts in developing a standardized manual that extensively covers different topics that enhance marital stability.
6. The church is recommended to provide the clergy has channels through which they can receive help, especially for those going through IPV.

5.6 Areas of Further Research.

The current study focused on analyzing premarital counseling in mitigating IPV among the clergy. The findings of this study are crucial in reinforcing approaches and efforts to end IPV among clergy and married couples. The study's findings can apply to other denominations and the society as a whole.

1. The study found that more men than women were experiencing some form of IPV. More studies targeting men should be conducted to ascertain the extent of IPV among this group and understand the causes of these cases and the mitigating factors.
2. While these findings give rich insights critical in fighting IPV, further research will be important in heightening the importance of conflict resolution skills in preventing IPV.
3. Another study area would be examining factors preventing couples from undertaking PMC despite its significance in solving marital conflicts. The reason for this is because the study shows that only 25% of the participants indicated that they attend PMC programs, hence the need to examine the factors that influence their participation.
4. Finally, a study on coping strategies applied by the clergy who experience IPV would be essential in devising and strengthening available coping mechanisms for victims of IPV.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Consent Letter

You are kindly requested to participate in this study: “the analysis of premarital counseling in mitigating intimate partner violence among the clergy in the Anglican diocese of Makueni County. Before being part in the research, kindly read the form given and ask any questions you might have regarding your participation in the study.

What the study is about: This study aims to examine the role that premarital counseling plays in mitigating intimate partner violence among the clergy.

This will take you about 15 minutes.

Risks and Benefits: We endeavor to keep your information anonymous. All the data collected will be treated as confidential. If we include it in any report, we will not provide personal information that can identify you as the source.

Taking part in this study is voluntary: We will not coerce you to take part in this study or influence your responses. You are free to skip questions that you may not want to answer. Even if you agree to be a participant, you still have the right to withdraw from the study. A copy of this form will be provided to you before the study commences.

Statement of Consent: I have understood the information given in this form, and all the questions I had on participating in this study have been well answered.

I give my consent and agree to be a participant in this research.

Subject's Signature: _____

Researcher's Signature: _____ Date: _____

What we will need you to do: If you have given consent to participate in this research, we will ask questions (written and oral) on the causes of IPV, relevance of PMC in enhancing marital stability, the effectiveness of PMC in conflict resolution and the competency of the clergy as PMC counselors.

Appendix 2: Introductory Letter

Dear Participant,

My name is Joel Ndivo. I am a final student at African Nazarene University undertaking a Master of Arts degree in counseling psychology. I am conducting research on the role of premarital counseling in mitigating intimate- partner violence among the clergy in Makueni Diocese in Makueni County. You are invited to be part of this research study as you are part of the target group of this research and your insights will be helpful in understanding the topic under study. There is no direct benefit to you for participating in this research other than helping to provide information and data for my research that will enable me to complete my thesis. However, your participation may benefit engaged couples by giving insights into the benefits of premarital counseling. Please read the questionnaire and feel free to ask any queries that you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

Note that participation in this research project is voluntary. You may decide to participate or not to participate in any question. The research under study is approved by Africa Nazarene University research committee. Information provided in this research will remain confidential.

If you agree to participate in this research, please respond as accurately and as honestly as possible and answer all the questions. This activity should take approximately fifteen (15) minutes. Thank you for your assistance in this important endeavor.

Signature _____ **Date** _____

Appendix 3: QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Participant,

My name is Joel Ndivo. I am a Master's student at African Nazarene University undertaking a Master of Arts in Psychological Counseling. This study aims to assess the role of premarital counseling in mitigating intimate partner violence among the clergy. I believe that your input will contribute greatly to the topic under study. I assure you that the information provided will be treated with utmost confidentiality. I thank you in advance for your time and contribution. All responses will only be used for academic purposes.

Section One: Respondent Demographic Factors

1. Gender (Please tick the correct gender below)

Male..... Female.....

2. I have been married for -----years

3. Age in years (Please put a tick on the correct range)

20 -30.....

31-40

41-50.....

51-60.....

61 and above.....

4. Number of years that I have been a member of the Anglican Church.....

Section Two: Premarital Counseling

1. What do you understand by the term Premarital Counseling? Please give a short

Answer in your own words

2. Did you and your partner attend Premarital Counseling? Yes/No

If Yes, how many sessions?

3. Please Indicate the topics covered during premarital counseling
4. Among the topics covered during premarital counseling, what topics have really impacted your relationship positively?
5. Describe the premarital program you went through during premarital counseling

Section Three: Marital Conflicts

1. Most married couples do experience conflicts and disagreements in their relationships. Below are some statements on some areas of disagreements. Please indicate (by ticking) the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following aspects as causes of conflict between you and your spouse.

Table 1: Causes of marital conflicts among couples

Causes	always agree (1)	Occasionally agree (2)	Frequently disagree (3)	Always Disagre (4)
Use of mobile phones				
Sex related issues				
Finances				
Your partners friends				
Religious matters				
Individual differences (dissimilarity of characters, hobbies				
Prejudice (lack of flexibility)				
Fear (of spouse)				
Relatives				
Raising children				

2. Please indicate the frequency of the following instances in your relationship

Table 2: Frequency of Marital Conflicts

	All the time	Most of the time	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
How often do you and your partner quarrel?					
How often has the quarrels resulted to violence?					
Do you ever regret ever getting married to your spouse?					
Have you ever considered divorce or separation due to conflicts and disagreements?					
how often do you experience					
- Physical violence - Emotional violence - Sexual violence					

3. Briefly explain the strategies you use to resolve conflicts between you and your partner.

4. Have these strategies worked in solving marital conflicts?

Yes

No

Others

Section Four: Competence of Premarital counselors (FOR THE CLERGY ONLY)

1. How often do you undertake premarital counseling in your church?

Many times

Most of the time.....

Occasionally.....

Rarely

Never

2. Have you received any form of training in premarital counseling? Yes / No.....

If yes what kind of training is it?

Certificate [] Degree [] Masters [] Doctorate []

3. How many years have you been offering premarital counseling?

4. How many sessions of premarital counseling do you offer per couple?

5. How long do the sessions take in terms of hours and months?

6. Do you have a content or manual you rely on or guide you while doing counseling? Yes /No.....

b) If no how do you undertake PMC without a manual?

7. The following section has statements regarding relevant topics in premarital counseling that enhances marital stability. Kindly respond with a response that matches your opinion.

Table 3: Relevance of Premarital Counseling in Marital Stability

	Very important	Important	Least important	Unimportant
	(4)		(3)	(2)
(1)				
Sexual issues				
Communication				
Conflict resolution				
Use of mobile phones				
Individual differences				

Finances
Relatives
Raising children
Gender roles

7. As a Christian counselor what strategies do you advocate in resolving marital conflicts?
8. Have you applied these strategies in your marriage? Yes /No
9. Have the strategies worked in solving conflicts? Yes /No

Appendix 4: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Instructions: The focus group discussion will take about one hour. All members are kindly requested to participate. The FGD seeks to answer the following questions:

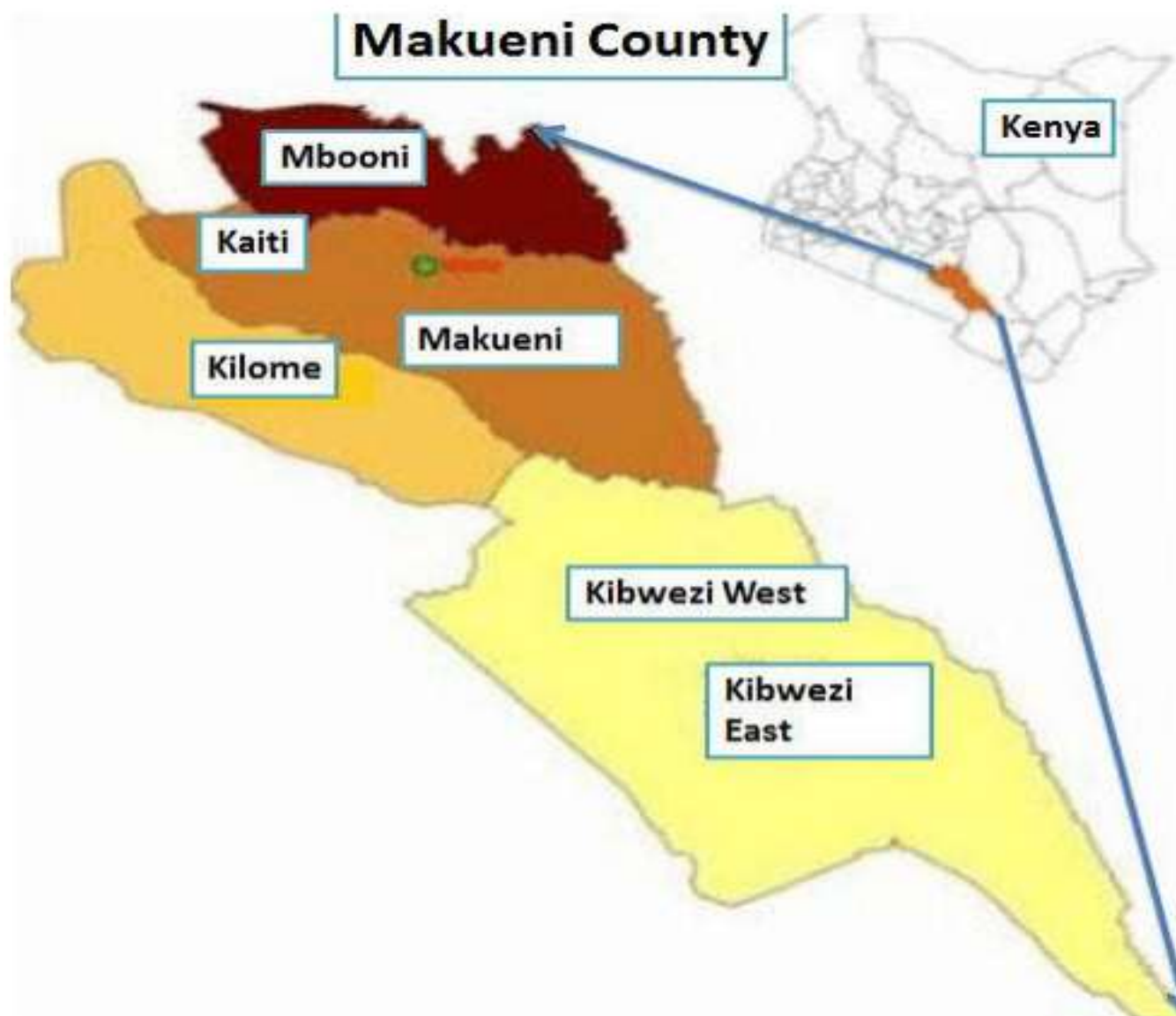
Arrange the following questions according to the study's objectives:

The objectives of the study were:

- 1) Establish the causes of intimate-partner violence among the clergy in the Makueni Diocese
- 2) Examine the relevance of premarital counseling programs' content in enhancing marital stability among the clergy in the Makueni Diocese.
- 3) Identify the effectiveness of premarital counseling in conflict resolution among the clergy in the Makueni Diocese.
- 4) Determine the competency of the clergy as premarital counselors in preparing couples for marriage responsibilities in Makueni Diocese.

1. How have you handled incidences of IPV among couples in your church?
2. What are some of the key factors leading to IPV among couples?
3. What has been challenging to you in resolving marital conflicts and especially IPV among couples?
4. What are some of the challenges you experience during counseling couples experience IPV?
5. How best can the challenges be solved?

Appendix 5: STUDY AREA MAP: MAP OF MAKUENI DIOCESE / COUNTY



(KNBS 2019)



12th June, 2023

RE: TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Ndivo Joel Mutua (**16M03DMCP007**) is a bonafide student at Africa Nazarene University, in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Counseling Psychology Department. He has finished his course work and has defended his thesis proposal entitled: - ***“An Assessment of Pre-Marital Counselling in Mitigating Intimate-Partner Violence Among Ordained Clergy in the Anglican Diocese of Makueni County, Kenya.”***

Any assistance accorded to him to facilitate data collection and finish his thesis is highly welcomed.

Sincerely,

Dr. Simon Obwatho

Ag. DVC, Academic Affairs

Appendix 6: NACOSTI Research Permit

 REPUBLIC OF KENYA	
Ref No: 726290	Date of Issue: 25/July/2023
RESEARCH LICENSE	
	
This is to Certify that Mr. JOEL MUTUA NDIVO of Africa Nazarene University, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Malueni on the topic: AN ANALYSIS OF PRE-MARITAL COUNSELLING IN MITIGATION INTIMATE-PARTNER VIOLENCE AMONG THE CLERGY IN THE ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF MAKUENI COUNTY, KENYA for the period ending : 25/July/2024.	
License No: NACOSTLP/23/27892	
726290	
Applicant Identification Number	Director General NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION
	Verification QR Code
	
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