

International Journal of Family Life and Societal Development
(IJOFALSOD)

Vol. 1, No. 2, December, 2022.

©

Institute of Family Life and Societal Development

ISSN: 2971-5164

Published by
Institute of Family Life and Societal Development
Academic Arm of the Centre for Blissful Home Initiative

Printed by
Johnstar Educational Services
Akure, Ondo State
+234-8035608098, +234-8067746123, +234-8159992030.

International Journal of Family Life and Societal Development
(IJOFALSOD)

Vol. 1, No. 2, December 2022.

©

Institute of Family Life and Societal Development

ISSN: 2971-5164

Published by
Institute of Family Life and Societal Development
Academic Arm of the Centre for Blissful Home Initiative

All rights reserved
No part of this journal may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical including photocopying recording or by any information storage or retrieval system, without prior permission in writing from the copyright owners, Institute of Family Life and Societal Development

Printed by
Johnstar Educational Services
Akure, Ondo State
+234-8035608098, +234-8067746123, +234-8159992030.

EDITORIAL BOARD

Editor-in-Chief

Prof. Benson Ohihon Igboin

Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko.

Editor

Prof. S. Ola. Ayankeye

Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary, Ogbomoso.

Associate Editor

Dr. John Ayo Oladapo

Baptist College of Theology, Igede Ekiti.

+234(0)8035608098. johnayoladapo@gmail.com

General Editors

Ass. Prof. S. O. Ogundipe

NBTS, Ogbomoso.

Email: soluogundipe@gmail.com

Tel: +234(0)8032148967

Dr. A.A. Adeola

Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary, Ogbomoso

Dr. Felix Ajedokun

Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary, Ogbomoso.

Dr. Esther Olajumoke Ayo-Oladapo

Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko.

+234-8067746123. jummie2018@gmail.com.

Abiodun James Aderele

Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary, Ogbomoso.

Email: jamezb4@gmail.com Tel: +234(0)7064588705

Consulting Editors

- Prof. J.K. Ayantayo University of Ibadan.
- Prof. Emiola Nihinlola Nigerian Baptist Theological
Seminary, Ogbomosho.
- Prof. Hannes Knoetze University of Pretoria, South Africa.
- Prof. Babatunde Adedibu Redeemer's University, Ede.
- Associate Prof. Yaw Adu-Gyamfi Christian Service University
College, Kumasi, Ghana.

All correspondence and inquiries concerning publication, subscription and the institute should be directed to: The Associate Editor, Dr. John Ayo Oladapo, c/o Baptist College of Theology Igede Ekiti +234(0)8035608098. familylifeandsociety@gmail.com/johnayoladapo@gmail.com

Table of Contents

PHOTO VIEWING THE CHANGING ROLE OF FAMILY MEMBERS IN YORUBA COMMUNITY, NIGERIA USING ETHICAL LENSES Jacob Kehinde Ayantayo	1-11
MISSIOLOGICAL RESPONSE TO THE IMPACT OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE ON FAMILY AND SOCIETY Akin Alawode and Abiodun James Aderele	12-23
ETHICAL RESPONSE TO CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE Samuel Olusanya Asaolu	24-39
ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS OF DRUG ABUSE AMONG YOUTHS IN DEKINA AREA OF KOGI STATE Gabriel Salifu and Joseph Matthew Hamman	40-54
FLEXIBILITY IN MARITAL RELATIONSHIPS AS A MEANS TO UNDERMINE CULTURE-RELATED CHALLENGES IN CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE AND FAMILY Adedotun A. Adeola	55-68
RESOLUTION OF MARITAL CONFLICT AMONG YOUNG COUPLES AND ITS MORAL CONCERN FOR PASTORAL CARE MINISTRY Abraham Olutoye Odeleye and Michael Oluwole Adeyanju	69-84
ROLES OF PASTORAL CARE AND COUNSELLING IN FORESTALLING SEXUAL INFIDELITY IN CHRISTIAN HOMES IN NIGERIA James Akintayo Oyedele	85-99

**PASTORAL CARE RESPONSE TO THE IMPACT
OF SOCIAL DISTANCING DURING PANDEMIC
AND ITS EFFECT ON AFRICAN COMMUNAL
LIVING**

Janet Adeyanju

100-112

**SOCIOLOGICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL
APPROACH TO SIBLING RIVALRY IN THE
FAMILY**

Bartram Kelechi O. and Elizabeth Oderinu O.

113-127

**CONFLICT IN MARRIAGE AND FAMILY, CAUSES
AND REMEDIES FOR HARMONIOUS
RELATIONSHIP: A PASTORAL COUNSELLING
APPROACH**

S.O. Ogundipe

128-147

**CHRISTIAN PARENTING AS A TOOL FOR
MITIGATING SOCIETAL VICES IN THE
CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY**

Oluwaronke Oguniola

148-164

**THE BIBLICAL CONCEPT OF ONE-FLESH
IN MARRIAGE AS A REMEDY FOR MARITAL
CONFLICTS AMONG CHRISTIAN COUPLES**

Victor Ifatokun

165-181

**SOCIAL MEDIA CONTRIBUTIONS TO MARITAL
CONFLICTS OF YOUNG CHRISTIAN COUPLES**

Helen Ayinde

182-196

Contributors' Biographies

Jacob Kehinde Ayantayo is a Professor of Religious Ethics, Religion, and Society and, Religious matters in Peace and Conflicts in the University of Ibadan, Ibadan. He has published books, chapters in books and journal articles both nationally and internationally.

S.O. Ogundipe is an Associate Professor in the Department of Practical Theology of Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary, Ogbomoso. He specializes in Pastoral Care and Counselling. He has authored Books, chapters in books and journal articles.

Ayinde Abosede Hellen holds Master of Education in Guidance and Counseling and she lectures at Baptist College of Theology Igede Ekiti, Ekiti State where she also coordinates Women Training Department. She has had the opportunities of receiving trainings both within and outside the shores of Nigeria. Her passion includes raising godly children and emancipation of women.

Abraham Olutoye Odeleye PhD is a senior lecturer in the Department of Practical Theology of Nigerian Theological Seminary, Ogbomoso. He specializes in Christian Ethics.

Michael Oluwole Adeyanju Dmin. is the pastor of Christ Baptist Church, Anthony, Lagos. He graduated from Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary, Ogbomoso and specializes in Pastoral Care Ministry.

Abiodun James Aderele is a Baptist minister and theological educator. He is a researcher in the field of World Religions. He is currently a PhD candidate at the Nigeria Baptist Theological Seminary, Ogbomoso and has many publications to his name.

ASAOLU Samuel Olusanya is a lecturer in the Department of Theology of Baptist College of Theology, Igede Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria. He holds a Doctor of Philosophy Degree from the Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary, Ogbomoso, Oyo-State. His area of specialization is Christian Ethics, Pastoral Care & Counseling and Philosophy.

Victor Ifatokun holds Master of Theology in World Religions and Missiology, he is an Adjunct Lecturer in the Department of Theology, Baptist College of Theology Benin City.

Adeola A. A. PhD is a senior lecturer in the Department of Practical Theology of Nigerian Theological Seminary, Ogbomoso. He specializes in Pastoral Care and counselling.

Janet Adeyanju PhD is a lecturer in the at the Nigerian Theological Seminary, Ogbomoso. She has several published academic works.

James Akintayo Oyedele is a Baptist minister. He is a researcher in the field of Pastoral Care and Counselling. He is currently a PhD candidate at the Nigeria Baptist Theological Seminary, Ogbomoso and has many publications to his name.

Akinyemi Oluwafemi Alawode PhD is a lecturer and head of the Department of Intercultural Studies at the Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary Ogbomoso. He holds a PhD in Missiology from the University of South Africa, Pretoria, Gauteng Province, South Africa.

Editorial Note

In this issue, we continue to engage in how social and economic dynamics influence the family. The irrefutable point that the family is the basic unit of every society is made with the fervent belief that it nurtures its members and releases them to society. The failure or success of a society is intricately connected to how the family grooms its members. The inevitable conclusion is that the stronger the family in contemporary society, the better for all. In this light, Ayantayo blazed the trail by arguing that the traditional roles played by members of the family in the past have been affected by the ever-changing socio-economic factors in contemporary society. This dynamic and forward-looking social reality immediately suggests that members of the family must assume new roles that align with the demand and expectations of society. However, he argued that we must holistically develop a family based on blending treasured traditional values with contemporary dynamic values.

Alawode and Aderele examine the causes, effects, and solutions to substance abuse by members of the family. According to them, the rate at which the youth use or abuse substances has become so alarming that it requires deft musicological intervention. They argued that musicologists must take it as a point of duty to engage and minister to youth involved in substance use to restore them to fellowship with their families and Christ. Asaolu argued that although conflict is natural, marital conflict is complex and has serious implications for the family and society. Since conflict is human-made, Asaolu identified natural and potential causes of conflict in marriage and suggested that there are irreducible ethical prescriptions whose adoption and application can help to minimize conflict in the family. Salifu and Hammans's empirical exploration of drug abuse among the youth in the Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State, Nigeria, clearly shows that it has assumed a dangerous trend that requires urgent intervention by government institutions and the family. They suggest that ethical principles are required to address this trend through socialisation as well as the spiritual exercise of

faith. Adeola's article centers on how flexibility is a virtue that couples should cultivate to navigate traditional impositions that might negatively affect the family. He adopts a theological standpoint that argues that consistent and mutual fellowship together in the family helps prevent external infiltration into the family.

Odeleye and Adeyanju examine the necessity of resolving conflict among young couples. As part of the mandate of pastoral care ministry, pastors should ensure that their ministry intentionally cares about the health of young people's marriages. As a result of the potential consequences of failure in early marriages, the moral burden to guide and guard against unnecessary conflict in young homes must be borne by pastors by deploying their spiritual and moral training and authority. Oyedele specifically examines the roles of pastoral care in infidelity in Christian homes. He argues that one of the causes of conflict in the family is sexual infidelity by a spouse. This, he argues, can lead to the breakdown of marriage if pastoral care is not given in such a way as to ensure forgiveness. Still, on pastoral care, Adeyanju unfurls the complexities that COVID-19 imposed on communal coexistence. Social distancing affected the communal setting in that members of the community had to deliberately keep some reasonable distance to be safe. At such a moment, Adeyanju thinks that pastoral care ministry is critical in mitigating the consequences of social distancing and keeping healthy by all.

Kelechi and Oderinus's interest is in unhealthy rivalry among siblings in the family. The adverse effects rivalry has on the family call for critical attention to be paid to it. They suggest that parents must conduct themselves do not suggest that they love one child more than the other. Ogundipe returns to the role of the pastoral care unit in fostering unity and resolving marital conflict. To correctly resolve conflict, each issue that causes conflict must be examined on its own rather than deploy one solution fits all approach. This is where the dexterity of pastoral care comes in. Oluwaronke believes that Christian parenting is a critical means of mitigating social vices that

have continued to plague contemporary society. Oluwaronke itemizes and also proffers solutions to the causes of social vices that require good parenting and counseling to resolve. Victor re-examines the concept of one flesh marital bond as a quintessential measure couples need to take to resolve their conflict. The one flesh approach argues that conflict inflicts self-pain on the couples, and they should see each other as one. And finally, Ayinde explores the impacts of social media on Christian youth couples. She argues that time is essential in developing relationships in marriage. Consequently, when more time is spent on social media to neglect the spouse, conflict is bound to arise. Christian principles are thus recommended to ensure a balanced use of social media for the family's health.

I, therefore, welcome you to explore in detail the arguments and issues raised in this issue.

Prof. Benson Ohihon Igboin
Editor in Chief

ROLES OF PASTORAL CARE AND COUNSELING IN FORESTALLING SEXUAL INFIDELITY IN CHRISTIAN HOMES IN NIGERIA

James Akintayo Oyedele
The Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary, Ogbomosho
oyedeleachieveacad@gmail.com

Abstract

Everything God made was designed to function in a particular order, failure of which leads to various kinds of perversion. Sexual relation as one of those things designed for lawful expression within the confine of marriage, is being perverted. It is, though, not a contemporary trend, it has been an issue since the Bible time. However, there is the need for a kind of examination in the light of the Scripture due to the fact that cases of sexual infidelity are becoming more frequent with consequential effect on perpetrators, families, church, and even society. There is no doubt about the existence of works on human sexuality, marriage and sexual infidelity. Attention on pastoral care and counselling roles in forestalling sexual infidelity in Christian homes is rare. Using the descriptive research method, the paper depends on secondary sources to clarify basic concepts and establish roles of pastoral care and counselling in forestalling sexual infidelity in Christian homes, families, church and society. The study reveals that sexuality and marriage find clear loci within the context of God's intent and design. It has also been identified that fidelity to a one-man, one-woman marriage and sexual union is clearly the affirmed position of the Bible while sexual infidelity is repeatedly regarded as an unprovable practice. The attempt is also made to present some of the causes and consequences of sexual infidelity in Christian homes. The study revealed that sexual infidelity among Christian couples is a mighty sin the devil uses against contemporary families and the church. As the study identifies the consequences of sexual infidelity on Christian homes, church and society, special attention is given to pastoral care and counselling as tools to forestall the situation for blissful marriage and family in contemporary society.

Keywords: sexuality, infidelity, family, pastoral care

Introduction

God desires to see those who enter into a marriage relationship fulfilling the purpose for which it was established. At the same time, failure to pursue divine agenda for marriage have an adverse effect on the individual, family, church and society. Meanwhile, family as a unit and best place for effective evangelism and church growth is no doubt bedevilled by the evil of sexual infidelity with a weakening effect on the church's Great Commission drive to the world. Sexual infidelity as an act of illicit sexual relation between a married person and any person outside the covenant of a marriage relationship is not without crushing effect. For this reason, proactive and redemptive roles of pastoral caregivers are highly required to salvage the situation for a church to fulfil its mandate on earth through marriage and family. In order to find out the roles of pastoral care and counselling in forestalling sexual infidelity in Christian homes in Nigeria, the paper thus looks at sexuality and marriage within the context of God's intent and design using secondary sources. Biblical basis affirming the position that sexual infidelity contravenes biblical injunction is presented even as the causes and consequences of sexual infidelity are highlighted in the paper. In all, special focus is placed on the roles of pastoral care and counselling in forestalling sexual infidelity in Christian homes in Nigeria for blissful marriage and family as God desires, resulting in church growth.

Sexuality and God's Design for Marriage

While sexuality can be viewed from different angles, it is essentially an integral part of being human. It begins in the creation of what Peterson (2021) called the binary of gender – male and female (2). By implication, God is the maker of sexuality because the idea of sexuality is deeply rooted in the original narrative of the male-female relationship found in Genesis 1:27. Therefore, sexuality is what differentiates human beings from other beings, albeit, there gender differences exist. Worthy of note here is that both the male and female are made in God's image, thus, the dignity of being made in God's

image and the dignity of binary of gender – male and female (Gen. 1:26-28). This is why Aben (2020) concisely asserts that Christians should never forget that male and female, equally have the dignity of bearing God's image, and so sharing something of the divine essence (40). There would have been no difference from animals who mate around with no specificity if not the image of God in human beings. The same image that dignifies male and female distinguishes them from all other creation.

It is important to state that God who created male and female, created sexual organs as part of what constitutes human body. By implication, LaHaye (1976) submits that, “God is the creator of sex. He sets human drives in motion, not to torture men and women, but to bring them enjoyment and fulfilment” (14). This indicates that expression of sexual receptivity and sexual activity are parts of God's investment in human sexuality. He designed human sexual organs for their enjoyment to the glory of his name, so that his purpose might be fulfilled on earth (Gen 1:28, 2:25). Peterson (2021) affirms that, Bible clearly indicates that human sexuality was made subservient to the will of God (4). They are also to honour God with their sexuality. God is sacred; therefore, sex and sexuality of human beings should be viewed as God's sacred and perfect work. People made by God have their source and origin from God and must remain connected to the origin for their sustenance and continuity (Kore 1995, 4).

Just as it was God's idea to make human beings in his image and likeness (Gen 1:26), it was his idea also to institute marriage. As recorded in the Bible, “Then God remarked, it is not good for the man to be alone” (Gen 2:18a), highlighting that it was God who discovered the aloneness of man and the possible dangers associated with it (Peterson, and Sprinkle 1981, 11, 742). It was not the man that discovered a vacuum in his life, God did. O' Donovan (1997) submits that, “Adam needed the companionship of another human being like himself” (277). God saw what was not good in the man and proposed and executed his plan to make a help meet for him – a woman/wife.

Human beings made in God's image and likeness is now free to express sexual relations as husband and wife in a marriage

relationship (Gen. 1:26; 2:24). This means that sexual receptivity, expression, enjoyment was established to take place between one male and one female, otherwise known as husband and wife. It should be noted also that the companion created for man is singular not plural (Kore 1995, 8-9). Hendricks (1972) states that marriage is not the product of human plan, rather, the product of a divine plan. God has specifications for the marriage relationship. It is a heterosexual product designed to take place within the covenant of marriage relationship. Therefore, attempting to build a marriage without following the plan invites failure (80). God's design for marriage, therefore, is that a man be united with his wife not wives, and the two will become one flesh (Gen. 2:24). This establishes the fact that marriage union is designed to exist between one man as husband and one woman as wife (Ogundipe 2015, 73). Therefore, marriage becomes a bonding of a male as the husband with a female as wife in a monogamous relationship. Thus, practice of any union with the opposite sex outside monogamous marriage contradicts God's original design.

Furthermore, marriage between man and woman is a sacred relationship that should be shared uniquely and exclusively by the couple in the privacy of their love (LaHaye 1976, 11). In their theological reflection of the purity of marriage, Kisembo, Magea and Shorter (1977) state that marriage is part of the created order and the whole of this created order is sacred (17). It is sacred because it was not an institution created after the fall or as a remedy for sin. It was God who gave the order on when sex should be practiced – which is within the confined of marriage. Kisembo, Magea and Shorter (1977) further submit that, “It is especially through human relationships that man experiences the communication of God's love. Human values such as friendship, sharing, and fidelity are how humans begin to relate to one another in God's infinite love” (17).

A Christian is called to respond to that love through a sacred marriage covenant relationship with his or her spouse. The quality of love and the quality of its expression to one another is an expression of God's love which should be responded to by husband and wife. The

quality of love that a couple should display should not give room for infidelity because marriage is a sacred covenant relationship between a man and a woman as husband and wife. Therefore, man and woman should faithfully and committedly respond to God in this holy estate by being moral and faithful to one another. A marriage that is kept holy serves as a healing agent to the society with direct result on church growth.

Biblical View on Sexual Infidelity

The root of sexual infidelity can be traced to the fall of man. Sprinkle (2003) submits that with the fall in Genesis 3 the ideal sexuality changed. “In place of openness came shame; joy and love were marred by pain, lust and domination (Gen 3:7; 16)” (742-743). This is not to mean that sex or sexuality became evil with the fall, it remains good and holy within the confine of marriage and between husband and wife. However, Sprinkle (2003) further states,

The creator provides instructions by which Israelites would be set apart from the nations (Lev 18:1-5; 20:22-26) and would know how to express their sexuality within their covenant relationship with God. Failure to control one's sexual expression according to those standards was detrimental to that relationship, the integrity of the family, social identity and societal order and the individual's felicity (752).

God gave laws against infidelity, as a preventive measure in consonance with all other warnings and instructions, which clearly indicate what God requires and forbids. Pentateuch generally sees sexuality as good when lawfully expressed but destructive if uncontrolled.

Adultery is sexual infidelity. One strong biblical injunction against sexual infidelity is the seventh commandment, “You shall not commit adultery” (Ex. 20:14 NIV). This clearly spells out that God forbids sexual involvement between two people outside marriage covenant. Sexual infidelity is an act of defilement and uncleanness which introduces contamination that compromises the purity of the marriage union before God. The fact that the Torah forbids sexual

infidelity indicates that covenant children are not to be found in the act. It does not only violate God's covenant with man it also causes uncleanness to the individuals and may ultimately result to death.

One of the most emphasized Old Testament laws in the Gospel has to do with sexual fidelity. The significance of this commandment perhaps made Jesus place it before the sixth commandment (Mark 10:19). As a preventive measure, he warns against lustful look at the opposite sex (Matt. 5: 28). Lust is a powerful and dangerous weapon that causes the mighty to become miserable. Anyone who looks at the opposite sex with lust in the heart is already committing sexual immorality. Christ emphasizes here that the root of every sin is the heart because that is where the processes that becomes action takes place (Matt. 15:19).

In most of the places where Paul addressed sexuality, they were in response to particular questions. In some other places, his reflection revealed an understanding of the Hellenistic society. He stresses the incompatibility between sexual infidelity and the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 6:9) severally. He pointed to sexual infidelity as a sign of lack of sound doctrine and listed it among the works of the flesh (1 Thess. 4:3-5; Gal. 5:19-21). The Bible warns against being sexually yoked with opposite sex outside marriage. It is singled out as the only sin against one's body, the Temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:15-19). As the Temple of the Holy Spirit Christians should be wary of such practice. Anyone who makes it a lifestyle practice has no part in the kingdom of God (Eph. 5:3-5). The Christian's body belongs to Christ and should be lived to glorify him (1 Cor. 6:15).

The church is also the body of Christ which should not allow any member to indulge in sexual infidelity. Wright (1993) declares that sexual infidelity desecrates a Christian's bodily union with Christ. He further states that, "The association between Christ and the believer is regarded as just as close and physical as that between the two partners in the sex act" (872). The "one flesh" of Genesis 2:24 is the core aim of marriage which should not be practiced outside of it. In addition, Wright (1993) submits that, "A couple's becoming 'one flesh,' which entails sexual congress whatever else it may entail, is

comparable to the bonding between Christ and believers (872).” This is why a body belonging to Christ should not be found in sexual infidelity.

Causes of Sexual Infidelity

Infidelity on the part of marriage partners in the society is alarming today. Christian couples as well as church are not spared in the evil of this phenomenon. Various reasons that could be traced as the causes of sexual infidelity today includes the following briefly examined points:

Cultural Influence. Polygamy was an approved practice in Africa before the advent of missionaries. This Kisembo, Magaesa and Shorter (1977) assert that African society generally approves polygamy (81-82). It was practiced as a custom with cultural, social, and economic values. Randee Ijatuyi-Morphe (2011) while citing Desist, affirms the existence of a large family in Africa. Though the basis of large family was to have enough hands “in view of a high infant mortality rate..., a large enough offspring to take care of parents in their old age” (84). Meanwhile, in the process of securing large enough hands was a direct invitation for polygamy. Many people leverage on the fact that, in almost every situation a woman is incapable of giving birth to large enough offspring to engage in multiple sexual relations with polygamy as an outcome. However, every polygamy has its root in sexual infidelity. The result of sexual infidelity is polygamous marriage contrary to God's original design.

Sexual Need. African societal norm generally forbids sexual intercourse during certain periods such as pregnancy and lactation. It is believed in Africa that intercourse during pregnancy and lactation negatively affect the fetus or the baby. Kisembo, Magesa, and Shorter (1977) affirm,

In most African societies there is a traditional belief that the mother's milk will fail, if sexual intercourse takes place during lactation. Since baby's foods did not normally exist, the breast-feeding period was usually two years at least before a baby was weaned. This custom and belief imposed a very long period of sexual abstinence on the husband, and if he was not capable of it, he could only gratify his needs outside of his

marriage, if he was monogamous (71).

In order to ensure total compliance, it was seen as taboo for husband and wife to have sex during pregnancy and the period of lactation (Kisembo, Magesa, and Shorter (1977, 17). The abstinence may last for two-three years from pregnancy to weaning. However, some men who cannot afford long time sexual abstinence, engage in sexual intercourse with other women in order to cater for their sexual needs because their wives are either pregnant or lactating, thus, committing sexual infidelity.

Sexual Dissatisfaction. Sexual dissatisfaction in this sense is inability of the spouse to sexually satisfy their marriage partners which causes the partners to seek for satisfaction outside the marriage. Infidelity due to sexual dissatisfaction is found among both genders. Rather than working through sexual difficulty with their spouses, some people try to find satisfaction elsewhere when their spouses begin to show signs of sexual difficulties. Common causes of sexual difficulties among couples listed by One2one are sexual dysfunction, loss of sex drive, premature ejaculation among men while among women includes reduced sex drive, inability to reach orgasm, pain during sex.

Living Apart. Stability of marriage and family was a central concern in time past, that transferring marriage partners alongside the spouses and family members was almost always the norm. The story is different in today's employment market. Transfer takes place with little or no consideration to the necessity of making sure that husbands and wives stay together for marriage and family stability. Many married couples are now living apart due to the nature of their jobs and businesses. Job and business activities take more and more time, instead of the two living and sharing together, they become lost in their little world. In such situation, it is easy for partners to take each other for granted. The example of the above described situation is seen in the case presented by Augsburg (1971). When he was narrating the importance of confession he presented different cases in which one is relevant to this study. He shared the case of a woman

whose friend engaged in sexual infidelity with her husband due to long time absence from home (294). The wife was not available when her husband needed sex. This kind of situation has caused many to sleep with housemaid, driver and house-guard when the other partner was nowhere to be found, especially, when body chemistry was demanding for intimacy.

Consequences of Sexual Infidelity on Marriage and Family

Infidelity on the part of marriage partners in the society is alarming today, that Christian couples as well are not spared in the evil. Although, various reasons serve as causes of sexual infidelity, however, it should be remarked that sexual infidelity as a detestable sin has negative consequences, notwithstanding the ignorance of the perpetrators. Earley's (2012) emphasis clarifies that infidelity has a crushing effect that no one can bear (38). The crushing effect is not only on the perpetrators; marriage and family, church and society are also affected, however, the focus of this section is to highlight some of its negative consequences on marriage and family.

Disgrace. Sexual infidelity is a disgraceful act worthy of the death penalty in the Bible. The disgrace brought by sexual infidelity elicits more distressing feelings on the path of a faithful partner. Although death penalty may be illegal in contemporary society but sexual infidelity can put an end to family bliss, even if the couple do not consider separation or divorce as an option.

Distortion and Corruption. Perhaps, failure to understand what the holiness of God involves as Barrick (2010) submits is a reason for recorded cases of sexual infidelity among Christians, which inevitably disturbs Christian consecration and personal holiness (181). Sexual infidelity also disturbs marriage covenant and the covenant relationship between God and the perpetrator. Although Nida (1965) focuses on the effect of sexual infidelity on the quality of church members, however, coming to marriage and family, one can also see, among others, spiritual fervor, emotional intimacy and moral quality of members of the unfaithful partners being affected by sexual infidelity (99). Similarly, sexual infidelity can easily expose

innocent family members to evil attacks of any kind due to the corruption.

Lack of Mutual Love. This researcher considers love as the soul of marriage. However, the first devastating effect of sexual infidelity is the termination of mutual love that should exist between marriage partners. Once love is no longer in the family, marriage is no longer in existence. Where there is no mutual love, anything goes.

Lack of Trust. Sexual infidelity as Nida (1965) in the context of the church, is evidence of lack of faithful commitment to the word of God in general, an indication of unfaithfulness to the marriage covenant in particular (99). If the partner is not faithful to marriage covenant, trust will be absent. Worse still, love cannot stand where trust is absent. If trust is destroyed once on the note of sexual infidelity, it becomes difficult to build it again. The devastating effect of sexual infidelity makes it hard for the faithful partner to trust the perpetrator not only on the opposite sex but on every other issue of life.

Separation and Divorce. It can lead to termination of the marriage relationship. While it is true that Bible does not support divorce, at the same time, some marriages have come to an abrupt end due to established cases of sexual infidelity.

The Roles of Pastoral Care and Counseling in Forestalling Sexual Infidelity

Having highlighted some of the consequences of sexual infidelity, attention is shifted to the roles of pastoral care counseling to salvage the situation. No doubt sexual infidelity is one of the weapons devils use to destroy marriage and family and deter effective church growth, which makes the roles of pastoral care counseling crucial, through the following pastoral care functions.

Pastoral care function of guiding. Christian homes are to be models of heaven on earth because the effectiveness of the society begins from home. In the same vein, ability to communicate faith with its commensurate result in the society vitally depends on Christian uprightness before God and faithfulness in sexual

expression and Christian marriage. This is why guiding is very crucial. Guiding in mate selection affords young people opportunity to know appropriate things to look for in the choice of marriage partner (Ogundipe 2015, 45-58). Selecting the right partner is a step in right direction of sexual fidelity. Furthermore, issues that are encouraging sexual infidelity will easily be overcome through guiding function of pastoral care.

Pastoral care function of reconciling and healing. Church is a redeemed community and should do everything possible to restore the erring member and the broken relationship. When talking on the redemptive nature of the church, Oyedele (2011) affirms that the church is not just a redeemed community but also a redemptive fellowship (29). As a visible sign of the reign of God, church has the obligation to discipline the erring member. At the same time, such discipline should be redemptive in nature (Gal. 6:1-2). Furthermore, couple whose partner is found in the web of sexual infidelity should be encouraged to embrace spirit of forgiveness. A home where partner embraces the spirit of forgiveness, restoration of the marriage relationship will not only become possible but it will also become easy, as pastoral care functions of reconciling and healing are being fulfilled.

Pastoral care function of educating. In his discussion of education as a distinct function of pastoral care, Ogundipe (2014, 82) states the purpose of education as making available, principles that will help liberate the church. Without education, people will continue to wallow in sexual sin, thereby incurring God's wrath. Citing Aluko, Ogundipe also identifies "winning and holding people together for the church" as part of the values education proffers. People will be won over and held together for God when pastoral caregiver properly educates the couples about the evil of sexual infidelity.

Pastoral care function of nurturing. Ogundipe (2014) calls it pastoral care function of empowerment (83), and it can also be called equipping, depending on the context. Nurturing is as good for prevention as much as reinventing. People are equipped and empowered when they are nurtured to please God without the

assistance from any caregiver. This is why sex education is required from the early stages of life or before they are being exposed to things that encourage sexual infidelity. The nurturing should be with emphasis on heterosexual practice within marriage relationship as biblically approved practice and legally acceptable sexual relations. Hodges (1965) submits that nurturing new converts as well is very important, though, the effectiveness of this depends on spiritual vitality of each Christian (28). Thus, the church as a redeemed community is duty bound to nurture the next generation and the new converts for the Lord. In the church, people should be nurtured to find their sexuality affirmed as human beings, individuals, and persons created in God's image. They should be nurtured to be sanctified and control their sexuality against any kinds of immorality (1 Thess. 4:1-7).

Pastoral care function of sustaining. Suppose the word "sustain" has something to do with provision of nourishment and/or the necessities of life, as cited by Ogunjipe (2014, 81). In that case, it is used in this context as inclusive function of sustaining original standard of God. Nida (1965) submits that church growth begins in the heart of God and it is committed to Christians today to establish the visible reign of God on earth (27). For God to reign on earth, Christian couples should abstain from sexual infidelity. The task of pastoral caregiver however is to find ways to uphold human sexual dignity in all the stages of human development and relationship. Recognizing the dignity of male and female and sanctity of marriage will promote sexual sanctity in marriage relationship and transform their own lives, with inevitable positive impact on family, church and society.

Conclusion

In order to find out the roles of pastoral care and counseling in forestalling sexual infidelity in Christian homes in Nigeria, the study looked at among other things sexuality and marriage within the context of God's intent and design. The study revealed that sexual infidelity is contrary to divine design. The paper also presented some

of the causes of sexual infidelity. Meanwhile, it is clear in the paper that marriage was instituted to prevent sexual infidelity. As uncovered in the paper, sexual infidelity does not only affect individuals and marriage, it also has negative consequences on family, church and society. The study thereafter presented the roles of pastoral care and counseling in forestalling sexual infidelity in Christian homes in Nigeria for blissful marriage and family as God desires. As pastoral caregivers properly carry out the discussed care functions, the family will be healthy, consequently transforming the church and society.

References

- Aben, Tersur. 2020. "The Trinity and Public Theology" in *African Public Theology*. Sunday B. Agang ed: Bukuru: HippoBooks.
- Augsburger, David. 1971. "Should I Confess" *The Marriage Affair* J. Allan Petersen ed., England: Tyndale House Publishers.
- Barrick William D. 2010. *Sanctification: The Work of the Holy Spirit and Scripture*. MSJ 21/2; 179-191. msj21h.pdf (tms.edu). Assessed on 14/ 11/2021.
- Earley, Dave. 2012. "Pastoral Leadership is...How to Shepherd God's People with Passion and Confidence" in *Leadership Magazine*. Nashville, Tennessee: B&H Publishing Group.
- Hendricks, Howard G. 1972. *Say it With Love*. Wheaton: Victor Books.
- Hodges, Melvin L. 1965. "Creating Climate for Church Growth" in *Church Growth and Christian Mission*. Donald Anderson McGavran ed., London: Harper & Row Publishers.
- Ijatuyi-Morphe, Randee. 2011. *Africa's Social and Religious Quest: A Comprehensive Survey and Analysis of the African situation*. Jos: Logos Quest Publishing.
- Kisembo, Benezeri. Magesa, Laurenti and Shorter, Aylward. 1977. *African Christian Marriage*. No Bibliographic entry.
- Kore, Danfulani. 1995. *Culture and the Christian Home: Evaluation Cultural Marriage and Family in Light of Scripture*. Jos: African Christian Textbooks.
- LaHaye, Tim and Beverly. 1976. *The Act of Marriage*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House.

- Nida, Eugene A. 1965. "Culture and Church Growth" in *Church growth and Christian Mission*. London: Harper & Row Publishers.
- O' Donovan, Wilbur. 1997. *Biblical Christianity in African Perspective*. India: Oasis International Limited.
- Ogundipe, Stephen Oluwafunmilayo. 2014. *Pastoral Perspectives on Caring and Counseling for Humans & Sustainable Nature*. Lagos: Danobish Creative Prints.
- _____. 2015. *Rediscovering Means for Marriage and Family Stability*. Lagos: Awoye Arts Publicity.
- One2One, *Sexual Dysfunction in men and women – Sexual Problems and Solutions*.
- <https://www.one2onekenya.org/> Assessed on 08/01/2022.
- Oyedele, Sam. 2011. *Principles and Practices of Pastoral Care and Counseling: Resources for Effective Pastoral Ministry*. Ogbomoso, Nigeria: Amazing Grace Publications.
- Peterson, Brian Neil. 2021. *The Bible, Sexuality, and Culture: Raising a Family in a Postmodern and Post-Christian World*. Oregon: Resource Publications.
- Sprinkle, J. M. 2003. "Sexuality, Sexual Ethics" in *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch*. England: Intersarsity Press.
- Wright, D.F. 1993. "Sexuality, Sexual Ethics" in *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*. Gerald F. Hawthorne, Ralph P. Martin, Daniel G. Reid ed., England: Intersarsity Press.