

## DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

Doctor of Ministry  
Emphasis in Marriage and Family

Adventist University of Africa

Theological Seminary

Title: A STRATEGY FOR REDUCING MARITAL INFIDELITY AMONG  
YOUNG COUPLES IN HEAVEN BOUND DISTRICT, SOUTH  
ZIMBABWE CONFERENCE

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Marital infidelity among church members seems to be a perennial problem. However, this problem is so hidden that one might assume it is non-existent. Seemingly, it is more prevalent than many believe. This is evidenced by the number of couples seeking counselling, separating, divorcing and at times being involved in serious squabbles. In the majority of cases, marital unfaithfulness is the main cause of the dysfunction in the families. This realisation prompted the research on this particular area.

Furthermore, the social media posts on a daily basis the social problems affecting marriages in the country and how the people are flooding the courts seeking restitution. Whatever is happening in the social world is reflective of what is occurring in the church.

In view of the above recognition, this paper sought to discover the risk factors associated with marital infidelity. Furthermore, a strategy will be developed that would be useful in restoring dysfunctional marriages among young Christian couples.

In the minds of many people, there is a common belief that those who have “been saved” are free from temptations and sin. This research meant to disprove the fact that Christians are immune to temptation. Like the rest of the human society, Christians are subjected to situations that test their faith on a daily basis.

Temptations do assail everyone but the outcome determines the difference. Therefore, this research examined the risk factors associated with marital infidelity and suggested remedial actions to reduce this phenomenon. The strategy that was adopted was that of a purposive seminar based on the responses of the respondents. Young couples were engaged in this exercise and they gave insightful responses to the problem.

The Bible served as one of the sources of the research. The writings of Ellen G. White and other literature were used to define the biblical interpretation of a covenantal marriage and determine the risk factors associated with infidelity. The mixed method approach was used in the acquisition of data. Heaven Bound district (a pseudonym) was selected as the research area of concentration. There were 24 respondents—eleven men and thirteen women who formed the basis of the investigation. A survey was done using questionnaires and interviews. As a result, an intervention program was developed that followed a progressive sequence for a period of nine months. Six seminars were held for all the couples in the district. The seminars were open to all who wanted to participate.

It was discovered during the seminars that some people engage in either one form or the other of marital infidelity. The main focus was on sexual, emotional and

cyber forms of infidelity. Ways of curbing the spread of unfaithfulness were discussed. All this was in a bid to save the marriages from imminent collapse.

Resultantly, the research concluded by stating the need for having periodic check-ups in the marriages. The recommendation was made for more seminars to be conducted not only at district level, but at conference level as well. Partners were encouraged to be faithful to their spouses and to maintain a high level of spirituality. The final recommendation is that pastors and leaders of the church be professionally trained as counselors and lead exemplary lives.

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AMONG YOUNG COUPLES IN HEAVEN BOUND DISTRICT,  
SOUTH ZIMBABWE CONFERENCE

A dissertation

presented in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree  
Doctor of Ministry

by

Alvern Wabile Ndhlovu

August 2016



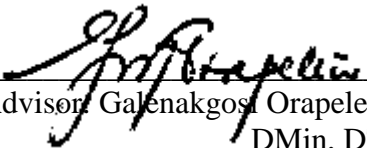
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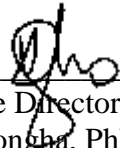
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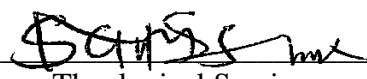
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Dedicated to  
my dear wife and children  
and  
all couples in Heaven Bound District

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The main feature of this introductory chapter is to give a brief description of the ministry context and the statement of the problem. It further gives out the statement of the purpose and a justification for the study. In addition, the chapter gives the delimitations of the study and the methodology adopted to carry out the study. Finally, it outlines the expectations and defines the common terms that will be used in conducting the study.

#### **Description of the Ministry Context**

South Zimbabwe Conference is located in the southern part of Zimbabwe. Its territory consists of the provinces of Matabeleland South, parts of Bulawayo, Matabeleland North, Midlands, and Masvingo provinces.<sup>1</sup> This conference was formed in 2015 after a realignment exercise. It consists of 23 districts. Heaven Bound District, was selected for the research purposes.<sup>2</sup> It is a suburb that has an estimated population of 4,000 people. There are several denominations in this constituency such as Roman Catholic, Methodist, Anglican, Pentecostals and Lutheran.

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<sup>1</sup>The West Zimbabwe Conference, *Conference Realignment into Two Conferences: Preparation Document* (Bulawayo, Zimbabwe: Communication Department, 2014), 5.

<sup>2</sup>Heaven Bound District is a pseudonym. This has been done in recognition of the sensitive nature of the research and the need to protect the individuals from any misconstrued assumptions.

Notably, many people approach pastors for counselling. Pastors deal with a lot of challenges that members face in their marriages. These problems concern unfaithfulness, delinquency, disgruntlement, and abuse among many others. Resultantly, the pastor has to find ways of assisting the different people to solve their problems. Between 2009 and 2015, eighteen people approached the researcher seeking counsel on the acts of unfaithfulness occurring in their marriages. It is from this background that the researcher developed an interest in looking at marital infidelity. A few notable cases are being cited for clarification.

In 2011, a case was brought to the attention of the local pastor. A certain woman came to see the pastor concerning the unfaithfulness of her husband. She indicated that she had caught her husband committing adultery with the maid. The wife was working outside town and only came home, fortnightly. However, in this instance, she returned unexpectedly and caught them committing adultery. In spite of all the apologies the husband made, the wife would have none of it. Both of them were invited for counselling sessions.

The revelations that came out of this meeting were shocking. The wife revealed that this was not the first time that this had happened. The husband did not deny any of the allegations and was apologetic. The wife indicated that this had now become a habit that was gnawing her. After a series of consultations, the couple stopped coming for further sessions. Unfortunately, they divorced while in the process of being assisted to resolve their marital problems amicably.

In another instance, a young lady revealed that one of the elders in the church, a married man, was proposing love to her. She said, "Pastor, I am confused. How can this happen to me. Is there something wrong with me? I respect the elder's family."

These revelations prompted a research to find out the reasons for such behavioral tendencies among professed Christians.

These are just a few of the reported cases. One can wonder how many of such cases go unreported. The situation is so pathetic that it calls for immediate intervention by the responsible parties.

In the selected district, there are six people who either divorced or separated within the past four years. The reasons attributed to the failures are varied. General discussions with the divorcees indicated that they had been victims of adultery.

Similarly, statistics reveal that divorce cases are on the increase in Zimbabwe. According to the editor of *The Chronicle*, the upsurge in divorce cases in Bulawayo is worrying as 519 divorce summonses were issued in 2012 compared to 406 in 2011.<sup>3</sup> This is an increase of 113 cases within a year. The majority of the divorce cases were resulting from infidelity acts. The worrying exposition is that these occurrences are not limited to the world but includes church members.

This view is reiterated by Ellen G. White, who, conclusively states that adultery is a universal problem that affects the church members as well. She says,

A terrible picture of the condition of the world has been presented before me. Immorality abounds everywhere. Licentiousness is the special sin of this age. ... Many men and women who profess the religion of Christ are guilty. Even some who profess to be looking for His coming are no more prepared for that event than Satan himself.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Editorial Comment, "Upsurge in Divorce Cases Worrying," *Chronicle* (Zimbabwe), January 16, 2013, accessed 17 July 2014, <http://www.chronicle.co.zw/editorial-comment-upsurge-in-divorce-cases-worrying/>.

<sup>4</sup>Ellen G. White, *The Adventist Home* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1952), 328.

Indeed, the issues of licentiousness have given the church a wrong image within the community. During visitations, one family retorted that they had stopped coming to church because of the way their daughter had been treated by one prominent member. They revealed that their family had been affected by the immoral behavior of some members.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The church in South Zimbabwe Conference is facing a lot of moral challenges among its membership through the perversion of God's law. It is from this context that this paper addresses one of these problems that have besieged the church. Licentiousness, in particular, marital infidelity prevails among church members and has led to separations and in some instances to divorce. These disturbing trends have affected the church and its mission to the community of non-believers. The community has a negative perception of the church because of these immoral tendencies.

### **Statement of Purpose**

The purpose of this study was to develop, implement and evaluate a strategy to reduce marital infidelity among young couples in Heaven Bound District in the South Zimbabwe Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

### **Justification of the Research**

There is a lot of distress in families and the church over issues of infidelity. Firstly, the number of people seeking counselling services on issues of infidelity is on the increase. The majority of these people indicate marital infidelity as a major concern in their marriages. It is in this context, that this research seeks to alleviate the problems besieging marriages and restore families to the expected standards.

Secondly, there are church members who are cohabiting and have been given offices of responsibility in the church. This is tantamount to the acceptance of such irregularities. The church members are even questioning the credibility of the church over such issues of unfaithfulness.

Thirdly, no study of a similar nature has been carried out in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Zimbabwe and probably elsewhere. Studies have been carried out on infidelity on a general basis but without particular reference to infidelity among church members. There is a need to be realistic and live beyond assumptions.

Last but not the least, the purity, integrity and spiritual tone of the church has been negatively compromised by the engagement of some members of the congregation in illicit affairs. Violation of the commandment of God that forbids the committing of adultery seems rampant in the churches. This short background validates the reason for researching on this topic.

### **Delimitations**

This study is confined to one district out of 23 districts in South Zimbabwe Conference. The chosen district is Heaven Bound and is found in Bulawayo metropolitan. It was selected because of its proximity to the researcher and its accessibility. Its closeness to the researcher minimised the costs of travelling and time. This district also has a significant number of married people within the anticipated age range of less than fifteen years in marriage. There are 27 couples in this category.

### **Methodology and Procedures**

Chapter 1 introduces the reader to the subject of marital infidelity within the church. It has always been generalised that infidelity exists in the community and no

one has really ventured into the investigation of how widespread it is in the church. The chapter begins by giving a short description of the ministry context. This is followed by the statement of the problem and purpose of the study. Subsequently, the chapter presents a justification for the study, delimitations, methodology, expectations and definition of terms.

Chapter 2 provides a biblical and theological study on God's ideal for the family institute and marital infidelity. It includes the word study of such words as "marriage" and "infidelity." Genesis 2 and Matthew 19 provides the basis of this study. In addition, the writings of Ellen G. White give analytical support. Marriage is viewed from the angle of being an institution established by God. Various Bible concordances and dictionaries were used to explain the theological perspectives.

Chapter 3 deals with literature from other sources other than the Bible. The main purpose of reviewing the literature is to show how the subject of infidelity has been handled in the past. The literature is reviewed so as to get a clearer and deeper understanding of marriage and the causes of marital infidelity. In essence, an analysis of the study was made on a comparative basis. Internet resources were also used to acquire more information.

Chapter 4 gives a detailed description of the ministry context and the methodology that was used in carrying out the study. The chapter begins with the macro and micro description of the ministry context. Secondly, the mixed method of research was used to collect data from the respondents.

Carol M. Roberts opines that the combination of these two methods complement each other as they provide results with greater depth and breadth. She explains that the blending of these two approaches adds power and richness to the

explanation of the data.<sup>5</sup> This research method helps identify the causes of marital infidelity from the respondent's perspective.

In addition, structured and unstructured surveys are used in the research process. Structured surveys are those that follow a formal list of structured questions that require minimal thinking on the part of the respondent. On the other hand, unstructured surveys use open-ended questions that allow the respondent to think before giving a response. This helps in ensuring that the research follows guided principles without negating other factors that may evolve. In this context, questionnaires, personal interviews, observation and focus groups were used extensively to determine the causes of unfaithfulness.

Thereafter, the research design was formulated. The Logframe and Gantt Chart were used to describe the strategy to be used and detail the project tasks. This was followed by data analysis. All the collected data on infidelity was presented, described and then analysed. The development of the initiative on how to combat infidelity followed after the analysis. A curriculum was set for married couples and those contemplating marriage.

Chapter 5 gave a detailed description of the implementation of the initiative. It describes the research process in detail and includes the evaluation process of the research.

Lastly, Chapter 6, concluded the whole research process. It also gave conclusions and evaluated the findings. The chapter concludes by making recommendations for further research in the area of marriage and infidelity.

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<sup>5</sup>Carol M. Roberts, *The Dissertation Journey: A Practical and Comprehensive Guide to Planning, Writing, and Defending Your Dissertation*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, 2010), 145.

## **Expectations**

First and foremost. The researcher expects that support of the research will be gained from the respondents and that the responses will be truthful. As a result of this program, it is anticipated that the rate of unfaithfulness will be reduced as spouses will become faithful. More so, the dignity of the family should be restored. Hopefully, the church will have a new outlook as the community witnesses a dramatic change in the way the couples conduct themselves.

Further, it is envisaged that a “Devoted Couples” seminar package would be developed so as to expose others to the prospects of healthier relationships that are free from malice. Hopefully, the strategy will assist the pastors, marriage officers and church leaders with invaluable data for pre and post counselling of the couples.

Finally, the researcher’s academic experience will be enriched by interacting with research scholarship. The researcher will be well equipped to authoritatively assist families that are in dire problems.

## **Definition of Terms**

This section defines some key terms that have been used in this study.

### **Infidelity**

An act of having a sexual or emotional relationship with someone beside the legal partner. This term will be used interchangeably with the following words: adultery, extra dyadic, unfaithfulness, lasciviousness, licentiousness, dyadic and extra-marital.

### **Sexual infidelity**

A type of infidelity that involves a voluntary sexual relationship between a married individual and someone else besides the spouse. This can either be male or female engaging in this activity.

### **Emotional infidelity**

Another kind of infidelity that involves an emotional and psychological connection with someone of the opposite sex that is secretive or unknown by the other spouse. In this case, there is no sexual connectivity, but this type of relationship may lead to sexual infidelity.

### **Cyber infidelity**

A third common type of infidelity that can either be sexual or emotional involves the watching of the internet and achieving sexual satisfaction through the media. In most cases, it does not involve the actual physical act. Similarly, this can result in the development of a sexual relationship.

### **Young couples**

This refers to those couples that have been legally married under the Zimbabwe Marriage Act, Chapter 5:11 for a period not exceeding 15 years and those who have been customarily married, under the Customary Marriage Act, Chapter 5:07, for no more than fifteen years.

### **Marriage**

A legal union between two consenting adults, that is, male and female.

### **Moral decadence**

A decline in expected moral behavior between a married man and a woman.

**Monogamy**

A marriage relationship that involves one person of the opposite sex.

**Heterosexual**

A marriage relationship between two people of different sexes, that is, male and female.

**Endogamy**

A marriage relationship between two people of the opposite sex that belong to similar backgrounds.

## CHAPTER 2

### BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF MARRIAGE AND INFIDELITY

The previous chapter gave an overview of the whole research paper. It covered the ministry context, statement of the problem and purpose of study. Furthermore, it highlighted the delimitation of the study, a chapter by chapter outline and definition of common terms used throughout the study. Furthermore, this chapter reviews and discusses marriage principles as presented in the Bible and the writings of Ellen G. White. The whole discussion focuses on the biblical and theological understanding of marriage and infidelity. Possible causes of infidelity will be discussed.

#### **Biblical View of Marriage**

In Hebrews 13:4, the Bible defines marriage as honorable among all. This definition shows the dignity God places on marriage. An honourable event is usually treated with great respect and high esteem. Reference to marriage as honorable indicates its purity and chastity.

The biblical teaching of marriage as an institution is founded on the narrative in Genesis 1 and 2. In Genesis 1, God created male and female in His own image and gave them dominion and responsibility over the Garden of Eden (Gen 1: 26-29). In Genesis 2, God provided a detailed framework of the creation process and laid the foundation of marriage. This chapter discusses the concept of marriage as instituted

by God at Creation. God explains that His purpose of creating male and female was to fulfill the need of companionship for a lonely man.

The realization of man's loneliness compels God to curb it by ensuring that a suitable helper is made for him. Matthew Henry opines that God knew that man as a sociable creature needed to "exchange knowledge and affection with those of his own kind."<sup>1</sup>

The statement of Adam's loneliness shows God's sensitivity to the needs of mankind. God knows that Adam has a dire need for a companion. It is from this observation that God declares that while everything created is good, there is one thing that is not good. God expresses this lack of companionship with a solution of making Adam a helper. He says, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him" (Gen 2:18).

God addresses Adam's lack of companionship by bringing to him a suitable companion, "an help meet for him" (Gen 2:22). A suitable helper is neither a slave nor someone inferior. It is someone who assists and stands by the side in equal worthiness. The idea of God bringing the woman to Adam indicates His involvement in the establishment of marriages. Adam could have just woken up and seen a woman by his side, but God's ways can never be man's ways. God actually brings the woman and hands him over to the man.

In his excitement, Adam announces his joy of having an intimate friend by proclaiming, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man" (Gen 2:23). Notably, God only brought

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<sup>1</sup>Matthew Henry, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible*, vol. 1, *Genesis to Deuteronomy* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991), 15.

one female helper to Adam. By this act God was setting an example that has to be followed in the institution of marriage. One woman is designed for one man.

The biblical description of the marriage institution is grounded in Genesis 2:24 when God pronounced, “Therefore, a man leaves his father and mother and cleaves to his wife and they become one flesh.” These sacred words are ratified by Christ in Matthew 19:5 and by Paul in Ephesians 5:31. Wenham states that the principle of leaving, cleaving and becoming one flesh is given by God to every marriage without exception.<sup>2</sup>

Samuelle Bacchiocchi implores that the description of the nature of marriage as a covenant is grounded on the premises of leaving, cleaving and becoming one flesh.<sup>3</sup> A close analysis of these three crucial steps helps in gaining an understanding of God’s intentions about marriage.

According to Lysant Tembo, “Leaving, cleaving, and becoming one flesh” are three essential steps that have to be followed indiscreetly if marriages are to be successful. These three steps were given by God at the inception of marriage. These steps denote physical, psychological and emotional detachment and attachment.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>G. J. Wenham, *Genesis*, Word Bible Commentary 1 (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1987), 69.

<sup>3</sup>Samuele Bacchiocchi, *The Marriage Covenant, A Biblical Study on Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage* (Berrien Springs, MI: Biblical Perspectives, 1992), 26. Bacchiocchi has been used as a reckoned Seventh-day Adventist scholar.

<sup>4</sup>Lysant M. L. Tembo, “The Art of Maintaining a Successful Marriage in the Seventh-day Adventist Church” (MTh diss., University of South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa, 2008), 27, accessed 17 July 2014, University of South Africa.

## **Leaving**

Leaving denotes a transition from one point to another. The environment and the conditions change from the usual. The act of leaving refers to the physical element of detachment and abandonment of all previous relationships and concentration on the newly established family.

Abandonment does not necessarily mean severing ties with the former family. It simply means a reversal of allegiance to former associates and refocusing on the new relationship. The family ties are maintained but operated from a distance. One learns to be independent and depend fully on his or her spouse.

Leaving is not an easy move but necessary for the maturity of the marriage. Bacchiocchi opines that abandonment does not mean the evasion of responsibilities toward our parents. Instead, he explains that when people become adults and decide to marry, allegiance is shifted to the new life and responsibility is assumed for our parents rather than to them.<sup>5</sup>

In addition, leaving gives way to the marriage and cements the covenant relationship. Bacchiocchi likens this to the calling of the disciples in Luke 5:11 who left everything to follow Christ.<sup>6</sup>

Simon Peter, James and John after heeding the call by Jesus, forsook everything, that is, the draught of fish they had caught and the boat. They left everything and followed Christ wholeheartedly. Actually, Christ says, “No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of heaven” (Luke 9:62).

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<sup>5</sup>Bacchiocchi, 26.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

Furthermore, Calvin Rock opines that marriage calls for a disconnection from all previous connections and attachment to a new environment. This implies that one has to wholly separate from the accustomed environment and focus on the new relationship.<sup>7</sup>

### **Cleaving**

The second component of the marriage institution is that of cleaving to the other party. This is a period of attachment that follows the detachment phase. It is a serious emotional attachment entered into between two parties. This attachment is inseparable as they will have first abandoned everything behind. The Hebrew mind views cleaving as sticking, fastening, joining together and holding on to.<sup>8</sup>

The Bible exemplifies cleaving with a goldsmith who smites the anvil saying, “It is ready for the soldering: and he fastened it with nails, that it should not be moved” (Isa 41:7). Soldering is a process that is used to join pieces of metal together using the heating process. When the pieces of metal are soldered they form a strong bond that cannot be separated except by reheating. This is similar to gluing together two people in such a manner that they are inseparable.

The glue or solder that is used in creating a strong marital bond is commitment, loyalty and respect for each other. Bacchiocchi describes this fusion as “wholehearted commitment” and “unswerving loyalty to one’s marital partner.”<sup>9</sup> He uses the Hebrew

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<sup>7</sup>General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2000), 729.

<sup>8</sup>General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Ministerial Association, *Seventh-day Adventists Believe: A Biblical Exposition of 27 Fundamental Doctrines* (Hagerstown, MA: Review and Herald, 1988), 297.

<sup>9</sup>Bacchiocchi, 27.

word, *dabaq*, which suggests the idea of being permanently glued or joined together. Cleaving denotes the element of permanency rather than being temporary.<sup>10</sup> God is the solder and the man and the woman are the two pieces joined by God. Christ reiterated this thought in Matthew 19:6 when he indicated that “whatever God has joined together, no man should put asunder” (Matt 19:6).

### **Becoming One Flesh**

The third essential step in a marriage relationship is that of becoming one flesh. The Bible states that after leaving the parents and cleaving to one another, the two become one flesh. This portrays the idea of total attachment. It completes the circuit of cleaving and the bonding that takes place.

John Wesley explains the phenomenon of oneness between a man and a woman. He avers that the act of bonding the man and the woman is a sign of disdaining polygamy and divorce.<sup>11</sup> Becoming one flesh is a mystery that humankind cannot understand. In marriage, the male and female become bonded and inseparable. It takes a lot of effort to separate what has been glued together. Actually, the separation process totally destroys by tearing apart the bond.

The act of marriage unites two different personalities with different backgrounds. As these two become one flesh they bring their differences together, not with the intention of changing each other, but with the view of collaborating the differences. The two reserve each other for themselves and do not share any aspect of their marriage with others.

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<sup>10</sup>Bacchiocchi, 27.

<sup>11</sup>John Wesley, “John Wesley's Notes on the Whole Bible: The New Testament,” accessed 17 July 2014, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/wesley/notes.txt>.

Bacchiocchi in his definition of becoming one flesh indicates that this last stage involves the two partners becoming one functioning unit. He says that the act of becoming one flesh involves complete identification with the other. This involves “becoming one in mind, heart and spirit.”<sup>12</sup> Bacchiocchi concludes by stating that by becoming one flesh, the husband and wife should accept the fact that they are different. These differences complement the oneness of the partners. More so, sexual exclusivity should be reserved for each other.<sup>13</sup>

### **Biblical Type of Marriage**

Having looked at the biblical definition of marriage, it is imperative to have an analysis of the nature of marriage as highlighted in the Bible. The Bible gives a view of what marriage should entail. Marriage is made honourable by virtue of God instituting it for man in paradise on the pretext that man should not be alone.<sup>14</sup> The biblical marriage is viewed from four different angles, namely, monogamous, heterosexual, endogamous and covenantal. Each of these categories will be detailed in the following explanations.

#### **Marriage is Monogamous**

God desires that marriage should be monogamous in nature. A monogamous affair involves a relationship between two differentiated persons that engage in a

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<sup>12</sup>Bacchiocchi, 29.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 31.

<sup>14</sup>Matthew Henry, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible*, vol. 1, *Genesis to Deuteronomy* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991), 15.

permanent marital relationship. God's plan is that only death should separate a couple. Anything else besides this is unacceptable before God.

There are a number of texts that reveal the practice of monogamy during biblical times. These texts are indicative of the fact that God has always desired a relationship between a male and a female. From Creation, the Bible indicates that God created male and female and gave Adam one woman to be his constant companion and helper (Gen 2: 23, 24). Adam confirms God's plan of monogamy by plainly stating that "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man (Gen 2:23). The use of the words 'woman and man' indicate the singular form thus implying monogamy.

A few illustrations will help in giving an understanding of God's intention in marriage. Noah and Isaac, are exemplified as having had only one wife each (Gen 7:7; Gen 24:67). Paul mentions that a bishop and a deacon should be husband of one wife (1 Tim 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6).

Galenakgosi Orapeleng supports the notion of singularity and indicates that monogamy has always been part of God's plan. He observes the use of four singular nouns and pronouns in Genesis 2:21-24. These singular terms are a helper, the man, a woman, and his wife. The use of these terms suggest that the original marital form is monogamous.<sup>15</sup> Orapeleng further elaborates by stating that "the creation account of Genesis writes of the first marriage clearly in monogamous terms."<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>Galenakgosi Orapeleng, "Chastity among Adult Seventh-day Adventists in Botswana: A Psycho-spiritual Study," (DTh. diss., University of South Africa, 2008), 66, accessed 19 March 2015, University of South Africa.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

Raymond Brown, S. S. Joseph and A Fitzmyer support the above thought on monogamy. They opine that it is in God’s will that human beings practice monogamy in their relationships. Actually, they state that “It is a theological conviction that the unity of marriage and its monogamous nature are God willed.”<sup>17</sup>

This view is supported by Ellen G. White who opines that the first marriage should serve as an example of what all marriages should be. She explains that God brought to the man one wife. She further says that if it had been God’s plan to bring more than one wife to Adam, God could have easily given him more than one.<sup>18</sup>

### **Marriage is Heterosexual**

The Bible also sees marriage from a heterosexual perspective. Heterosexual is viewed as sexual attraction between members of the opposite sex.

This finds its explanation in Genesis 2:18 – 24. Summarily, these verses indicate that God, at Creation, realized the need for human companionship and made a woman to be Adam’s helper. These verses clearly articulate God’s expectations of marriage.

According to Richard M. Davidson, “heterosexuality is at once proclaimed to be the order of creation. Human sexuality according to the Edenic divine paradigm finds expression in a heterosexual form.”<sup>19</sup> God never instituted other forms of marriages as existent in today’s world.

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<sup>17</sup>Raymond E. Brown, S. S. Joseph, and A. Fitzmeyer, eds., *The Jerome Biblical Commentary* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1968), 1:12.

<sup>18</sup>Ellen G. White, “Marriages, Wise and Unwise,” *The Youth’s Instructor*, August 1899, 1-2.

<sup>19</sup>Richard M. Davidson, “Homosexuality in the Old Testament,” in *Homosexuality, Marriage and the Church*, ed. Roy E. Gane, Nicholas P. Miller, and Peter H. Swanson (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2012), 5,6.

There are many instances where the Bible refers to the act of one man and one wife. Such passages include (Gen 7:7), “And Noah went in, and his sons, and his wife.” (Prov 5:18), “And rejoice with the wife of thy youth.” (Mal 2:14), “Yet is she thy companion and the wife of thy covenant.” (2 Sam 11:11), “Shall I then go into mine house, to eat and drink, and to lie with my wife?” among many others.

Lastly, Paul in I Timothy 3:2, 12, places emphasis on the fact that leaders have to be of one wife if they are to be exemplary. He says, “A bishop must be blameless, the husband of one wife,” and “Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife.” It is notable that God’s standard is that of heterosexuality.

### **Marriage is Endogamous**

One of the major principles that is evident from the Bible is that of endogamy. Endogamy refers to the practice of marrying within one’s fraternity or domain. God duly instructed the Israelites not to intermarry with their neighbors but to preserve their identity. God gives a reason for this intervention when he plainly says, “Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods.” (Deut 7:3, 4).

The dangers of alignment with foreign tribes is depicted through Samson who aligned himself with a non-Israelite. The Lord was displeased with this act of Samson as it was a digression from the commandment given to him. Samson paid the price of disobedience to God’s plan. His eyes were gouged out and died a miserable death (Judg 14-16).

Ezra describes the fall of the children of Israel. In Ezra 9:2, Ezra bemoans that the holy seed has mingled with the people of those lands by taking their daughters for

themselves and their sons. From the few Old Testament biblical passages examined above it is evident that intermarriage is prohibited by God.

In the New Testament, Paul places emphasis on endogamy by saying, “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?” (2 Cor 6:14, 15)

Calvin B. Rock supports this thought by stating that differing religious understandings make marriages dysfunctional. In this case, dysfunctional refers to the operations of marriage that become abnormal and non-operational. Rock concludes by saying that different religious beliefs bring divergent views of reality and lifestyle that increases the challenge to oneness.<sup>20</sup>

### **Marriage is Covenantal**

Covenanting refers to the act of making lasting promises between people. A covenant is viewed as “The most solemn and binding agreement known in God’s Word.”<sup>21</sup> A covenant is an agreement or contract signed between consenting parties based on a commitment.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>Calvin B. Rock, “Marriage and Family,” in *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology*, ed. Raoul Dederen, Nancy Vyhmeister and George W. Reid, (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2000), 728.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

<sup>22</sup>General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Ministerial Association, *Seventh-day Adventists Believe: Exposition of the Fundamental Beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church* (Silver Spring, MD: Pacific Press, 2005), 332.

Malachi confirms the fact that marriage is between male and female. Malachi instead of referring to the female as a suitable helper uses the terms, a companion and a wife. These two terms signify the dual role played by the woman in a marriage. Malachi enjoins in that the “Lord hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth ... yet is she thy companion, and the wife of the covenant” (Mal 2:14). From this text, Malachi defines marriage as a holy covenant made by two consenting people of the opposite sex before God. In this instance, God serves as a witness between the husband and the wife.

This biblical thought portrays the presence of God in the institution of marriage. David confirms the presence of God in building up a family by saying, “Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it” (Ps 127:1). Furthermore, David indicates that a covenant is a permanent feature that God neither breaks nor alters (Ps 89:34). According to Bacchiocchi, God’s intention for marriage has always been that it should be a sacred and a permanent covenant. He also indicates that the characteristics of a marriage covenant are love, compassion and faithfulness and that the Bible has always upheld marriage as a sacred and permanent covenant that is witnessed and protected by God.<sup>23</sup>

### **The Theology of Sexuality**

While marriage is viewed as monogamous, heterosexual and endogamous, it should also be noted that there is also the sexuality perspective of marriage. Sakae Kubo states, “Any theology of sex must begin with the theology of the body.”<sup>24</sup> By

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<sup>23</sup>Bacchiocchi, 25.

<sup>24</sup>Sakae Kubo, *Theology and Ethics of Sex* (Nashville, TN: Review and Herald, 1980), 9.

this, Kubo indicates that there is a need to see the body as God intended it to be and how the body ought to be treated.

Kostenberger and Jones portend that a theology of sex begins with an understanding of the meaning and purpose of sex from a biblical perspective. In their view, sex is a gift from God that needs not to be idolized and that it is “part of man’s calling to live his life to the glory of God.”<sup>25</sup>

They qualify this statement by stating that God’s intention for sex is threefold, namely, procreational, relational and social.<sup>26</sup> This is manifested through God’s statements, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it (Gen 1:28), and “It is not good that man should be alone. I will make him a helper fit for him (Gen 2:18), and “Therefore, shall a man leave his father and mother and shall cleave unto his wife and they shall be one flesh (Gen 2:24).

In addition, Kostenberger and Jones posit that sex has been marred by impurity that emanates from the people’s sinful hearts. They conclude by saying that sex should give great pleasure to the couple if done according to God’s standards. They opine that “Sexual stimulation, the sexual climax and the sexual fulfillment are God’s gracious gifts for humanity, to be gratefully enjoyed without shame, guilt or fear. Within the marriage bond, sex becomes the ultimate physical expression of deep, committed and devoted love.”<sup>27</sup>

The story of Creation covers the whole concept of sexuality. Man was made in the image of God (*imago dei*). Genesis 1: 27, reads, “So God created man in his own

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<sup>25</sup>Andreas J. Kostenberger and David W. Jones, *God, Marriage and Family: Rebuilding the Biblical Foundation*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 79, 80.

<sup>26</sup>*Ibid.*, 80.

<sup>27</sup>Kostenberger and Jones, 82.

image, in the image of God created he him, male and female created he them.” This implies that man should resemble God in all his doings as he is made in his image.

Furthermore, Balswick and Balswick, state that God is at the centre of sexuality as he created sexual beings with sexual desires. They go on to explain that “God did not mean for man and woman to be alone; instead, God created them in similar but uniquely different ways so that they could engage soul to soul and flesh to flesh.”<sup>28</sup>

The attributes of God should be evident in mankind. One of the main attributes of God is that he is relational and looks forward to relational beings. It is in this context that God creates both male and female to complement each other fully. Kubo opines that this verse means that the world is not made up of male alone but male and female. Kubo conclusively states that “One sex alone does not constitute the image of God in its totality. The sexual duality of male and female is necessary for our full understanding of the image of God.”<sup>29</sup>

Furthermore, the Bible states that in marriage the two become one flesh. “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife and they shall be one flesh. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed (Gen 2:24, 25). This is the pivot of the theology of sex. The relationship between husband and wife transcends everything. Kubo states that the implication of these verses is sexual union or sharing between the two.”<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>Jack O. Balswick and Judith K. Balswick, *Authentic Human Sexuality: An Integrated Christian Approach*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2008), 63.

<sup>29</sup>Kubo, 24.

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*, 28.

Balswick and Balswick declare that sexual interaction should bear no shame. In actual fact they state that “It is entirely natural and good for the man and woman to respond wholeheartedly to each other. Sexual attraction, desire and engagement are part of God’s sovereign plan.”<sup>31</sup> Conclusively, Balswick and Balswick opine that sexual intimacy can be deepened by openness to one another and loving each other and accepting each other. They say, “When covenant love permeates every aspect of life, it permeates marital sexuality as well.”<sup>32</sup>

### **New Testament Teachings on the Exclusivity of Marriage**

Having explored the Old Testament teachings on marriage it is expedient that the New Testament be reviewed as well. Equally important, the New Testament is not silent on the issues pertaining to marriages. Generally, the issues are discussed in the Gospels and Pauline writings.

#### **Teachings of Jesus**

Jesus Christ speaks profoundly on the issues of marriage. First and foremost, He indicates His mission on this earth by saying that He has not come to change anything that God initiated. He points out, “Think not that I am come to destroy the law: I am not come to destroy but to fulfill” (Matt 5:17). It is in this context that Christ speaks eloquently on the marriage aspects. According to Christ everything, including marriage, is to be read as it were at Creation.

In one of his discourses with the Pharisees over divorce, Jesus refers to Genesis 2:24 as the basis of the teaching that marriage is indissoluble. He explains that Moses

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<sup>31</sup>Balswick and Balswick, 63.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., 198.

gave out that decree because of the hardness of the hearts of the people and that it was never like that in the beginning. He describes the original plan by stating what takes place in marriage. He says,

Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore, they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder (Matt 19: 4-6; Mark 10: 5-9)

Christ quotes the words of the Lord in Genesis 2. Without reference to the word ‘covenant’ Christ explains the permanency of the marriage institution as instituted by God. Christ brings to light the idea of a monogamous and heterosexual relationship. Christ reverts to the creation narrative in Genesis 2 and reveals God’s purpose in making man. Subsequently, Christ points out the cleaving perspective by indicating that what has been joined together by God should not be separated by men.

### **Pauline Views**

Paul echoes the words of Christ on the nature of marriage in Ephesians 5:25-31. In these verses Paul reveals God’s purpose for marriage, that is, companionship and avoidance of evil. Furthermore, Paul admonishes the husband to love his wife and the wife to reverence and submit to her husband. He acknowledges this perspective as the foundation and essence of a blissful marriage.

Paul indicates that unless a marriage institution is initiated by God, humankind is bound to fall prey to lustful temptations. He says, “Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband” (1 Cor 7:2).

Paul shows that God desires the best for humankind by laying out contingent measures to be followed for the success of the marriage institution. From the very

beginning, God renounced intermarriages with unbelievers as He knew the price that would be paid in the long run.

### **Ellen G. White and Marriage**

The Seventh-day Adventist Church believes that one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is prophecy. According to the *Ministerial Association of the Seventh-day Adventist Church*, the gift of prophecy is “an identifying mark of the remnant church and was manifested in the ministry of Ellen G. White.”<sup>33</sup> It is in this context that Ellen G. White’s writings are viewed as a “continuing and authoritative source of truth which provide for the church comfort, guidance, instruction and correction.”<sup>34</sup>

### **Establishment of the Marriage Institution**

Ellen G. White views God as the originator of the marriage institution as highlighted in Genesis 2. She opines that the first marriage was put in place by God as a gift to mankind and has not been replaced by anything. She states, “God celebrated the first marriage. Thus the institution has for its originator the Creator of the universe. “Marriage is honorable.” It was one of the first gifts of God to man, and it is one of the two institutions that, after the fall, Adam brought with him beyond the gates of Paradise.”<sup>35</sup>

**Ellen G. White and monogamy.** White indicates that marriage as God’s institution needs to follow the standard set by God. “God himself united the holy pair and this first marriage is an example of what all marriages should be. God gave the

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<sup>33</sup>General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Ministerial Association, *Seventh-day Adventists Believe*, 247.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid.

<sup>35</sup>White, *The Adventist Home*, 25-26.

man one wife.”<sup>36</sup> Additionally, she opines that the Creator enunciated the law of marriage by joining Adam and Eve in holy wedlock. The statement about a man leaving his father and mother and becoming one with the woman signifies the monogamous state of the marriage institution.

According to Ellen G. White, from onset, God gave man one wife, “thus showing His order. He never designed that man should have a plurality of wives.”<sup>37</sup> As far as White is concerned, a practice contrary to monogamy is a departure from God’s wise arrangement and order and results in distress to the family.

**Ellen G. White and intermarriages.** Likewise, Ellen G. White has something to say about intermarriages. She states that intermarriages have not received the heavenly blessing. She opines that God strictly forbids the intermarrying of His people with other nations. She emphasises that this prohibition was made to prevent the Hebrews from marrying idolaters and forming connections with heathen families.<sup>38</sup>

Ellen White emphasizes the fact that the Lord forbids marriage between believers and unbelievers and that many marriages that take place are unsanctioned by God. She says, “Never should God’s people venture upon forbidden ground. Marriage between believers and unbelievers is forbidden by God.”<sup>39</sup> She details this statement by saying, “Unless you would have a home where the shadows are never lifted, do not

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<sup>36</sup>Ellen G. White, “Marriages, Wise and Unwise,” *The Youth’s Instructor*, August 1899, 1-2.

<sup>37</sup>Ellen G. White, *The Spirit of Prophecy* (Battle Creek, MI: Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, 1870), 1:93.

<sup>38</sup>Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1881), 4:508.

<sup>39</sup>White, *The Adventist Home*, 63.

unite yourself with one who is an enemy of God.”<sup>40</sup> White encourages young women and men to know that engaging in marriages with unbelievers places them on Satan’s playground. This connection results in the grieving of the Spirit and forfeiting of his protection.<sup>41</sup>

**Ellen G. White and the marriage covenant.** Ellen G. White’s views on marriage as a covenant are wide and varied. She likens the marriage covenant to a promise made between two people to love and obey each other in the presence of the Lord. She depicts that a blessing is bestowed upon a home where a covenantal union takes place. She writes, “The blessing of God in the home where this union shall exist is as the sunshine of heaven, because it is the Lord’s ordained will that man and wife should be linked together in holy bonds of union, under Jesus Christ, with Him to control, and His spirit to guide.”<sup>42</sup>

She further states that the marriage covenant should be entered into intelligently, in the fear of God and with due considerations for its responsibilities.<sup>43</sup> By this, she means that a covenant cannot just be entered into without deep thought as it is binding for eternity. The important aspect of a covenant is the involvement of God in its enactment.

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<sup>40</sup>White, *Testimonies*, 5:363.

<sup>41</sup>White, *The Adventist Home*, 67.

<sup>42</sup>Ellen G. White, *Counsels for the Church* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 1991), 130.

<sup>43</sup>Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1905), 357.

## Seventh-day Adventist Church View of Marriage

The SDA Church views marriage as a lifelong union that should exist between a man and a woman in loving companionship.<sup>44</sup> The Church believes that God originally established and instituted marriage in the Garden of Eden. In addition, the SDA Church firmly believes that marriage is a commitment to God and the spouse and that it should be entered into between people who share the same faith.<sup>45</sup> Furthermore, marriage is described as “a decisive act of both detachment and attachment: One shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall become one flesh” (Gen 2:24).<sup>46</sup>

The church strongly believes that without the process of leaving and cleaving there can be “no firm foundation for marriage.”<sup>47</sup> Detachment from former primary relationships serves as a firm foundation for stable marriages

It is worth noting that the SDA Church position on marriage is that it should be solemnised among people of the same religion. According to the *Church Manual*, no Adventist pastor can solemnise a marriage between people of differing beliefs. It reads, “For these reasons the Church strongly discourages marriage between a Seventh-day Adventist and a member of another religion and strongly urges its pastors

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<sup>44</sup>General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Ministerial Association, *Seventh-day Adventists Believe*, 329.

<sup>45</sup>*Ibid.*, 295.

<sup>46</sup>*Ibid.*, 297.

<sup>47</sup>*Ibid.*

not to perform such marriages.”<sup>48</sup> This is in agreement with the instructions from the Bible that discourages intermarriages.

More so, the Seventh-day Adventist Church upholds the biblical view of adultery and espouses that God loathes and condemns it in no uncertain terms. The church believes that adultery or infidelity bears “far-reaching and long-lasting effects” on the marriage such as defrauding “the legitimate sexual partner, and may harm him or her physically, emotionally, financially, legally and socially.”<sup>49</sup> The church also notes that infidelity often results in the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases, falsification, dishonesty, injury to the children and the extended family.

### **Risk Factors of Marriage**

Risk factors can be defined as characteristics that have the potential of causing a havoc in a given situation. In this case, risk factors are possible causes of marital infidelity. The Bible and writings of Ellen G. White are fraught with a number of elements that may lead to infidelity. A brief description of the factors will be exemplified and illustrated.

#### **Selfishness**

In many instances, infidelity is tantamount to selfishness on the part of the doer. Selfishness can best be viewed as being more concerned about one’s own welfare to the detriment of others. The idea of selfishness can best be exemplified in

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<sup>48</sup>General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, *Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual* (Silver Spring, MD: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2015), 154.

<sup>49</sup>General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Ministerial Association, *Seventh-day Adventists Believe*, 336.

the life of Potiphar's wife, who, despite having everything at her disposal, lusted after Joseph. She had no other desire but to satisfy her ego (Gen 39).

A selfish person rarely thinks of others and disregards the golden rule which reads, "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them" (Matt 7:12). On the other hand, Paul describes selfishness as focusing on one's own things and ignoring others (Phil 2: 3, 4). It reads, "Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind, let each of you regard one another as more important than himself; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others." James indicates that selfishness results in "disorder and every vile practice" (James 3:16).

Ellen White alludes to selfishness as an act of being possessed by the spirit of Satan. This spirit motivates people to always have a desire of accumulating more and more. The assumption is that by getting more, happiness and ease will be secured while neglecting the end result of "misery and death."<sup>50</sup>

### **Early and Immature Attachments**

This refers to marriages that are conducted before people have fully matured. When people fall in love they assume that they have to be married and rush into marriage. Such people are reluctant to accept any advice and would want to do what they think is legally legitimate. For example, in Zimbabwe the legal age of marriage is eighteen years for boys and sixteen years for girls. This age is rather too early for a commitment such as marriage.

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<sup>50</sup>Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1911), 339.

Ellen White posits that hasty and immature marriages have brought untold miseries in families and the church. She states, “In consequence of hasty marriages, even among the professed people of God, there are separations, divorces, and great confusion in the church.”<sup>51</sup>

Furthermore, White indicates that early marriages should be avoided as much as possible. She says, “The young affections should be restrained until the period arrives when sufficient age and experience will make it honorable and safe to unfetter them. Those who will not be restrained will be in danger of dragging out an unhappy existence.”<sup>52</sup> This statement from Ellen G. White advises young people against engaging in illicit relationships and indulgences. She encourages the young people to exercise patience in all the activities and wait until the right moment.

Furthermore, Ellen G. White states that marriages that are immaturely arranged are “productive of a vast amount of the evils that exist today.”<sup>53</sup> She further says that little attention is given to pre-marital counselling. She observes, “Upon this subject altogether too little reason is exercised. Many youth act from impulse. This step, which affects them seriously for good or ill, to be a lifelong blessing or curse, is too often taken hastily, under the impulse of sentiment.”<sup>54</sup>

She summarizes this perspective by indicating that the world is full of misery and sin today as a result of ill-assorted marriages.<sup>55</sup> Additionally, she says that a lot of

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<sup>51</sup>White, *The Adventist Home*, 80.

<sup>52</sup>Ellen G. White, *Messages to Young People* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1930), 453.

<sup>53</sup>White, *Messages to Young People*, 453.

<sup>54</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup>*Ibid.*

people have sacrificed themselves, soul and body, by engaging in unwise marriages and by so doing have gone down in the path of perdition.<sup>56</sup>

Conclusively, she discourages early attachments and calls for development of the mental and physical powers on the part of the spouses. She declares that “A relation so important as marriage ... should not be entered upon hastily, without sufficient preparation, and before the mental and physical powers are well developed.”<sup>57</sup>

### **Unequal Yoking**

Another reason for the causes of infidelity has to do with being unequally yoked on the pretext that one will be able to convert the other. God’s commands are very plain in this matter. God commanded the Israelites to shun intermarriages with the idolatrous nations they conquered as they would lead them away from Him. Ellen White categorically states that Christians should never venture into such marriages as it is quite dangerous to form worldly alliances. She notes that many form worldly alliances because they follow the inclinations of their unconverted hearts which manifests a desire to restrict liberty of conscience.<sup>58</sup>

Actually, Paul puts it succinctly when he asks, “And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel” (2 Cor 6:15)? Paul in this text clearly demonstrates the ills of mismatching. Belial and Christ have never been in agreement, no matter what happens. Paul means that the Christ who dwells in the believer cannot co-exist with Belial in the unbeliever.

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<sup>56</sup>Ellen G. White, “Marriages, Wise and Unwise,” *The Youth’s Instructor*, August 1899, 1-2.

<sup>57</sup>White, *The Ministry of Healing*, 357.

<sup>58</sup>White, *The Adventist Home*, 64.

White concludes with an admonition to all Christians not to think like Solomon, who, engaged himself with foreign women and forsook the Lord. She says, “Many professed Christians think, like Solomon, that they may unite with the ungodly because their influence over those who are in the wrong will be beneficial; but too often they themselves, entrapped and overcome, yield their sacred faith, sacrifice principle, and separate themselves from God.”<sup>59</sup>

### **Covetousness**

Covetousness is defined as a strong desire and passion to possess something that does not belong to one self. Again, covetousness can be viewed as a strong sexual desire for someone other than your spouse. It can also be noted as greed that leads to self-gratification. Greed denotes selfishness and one’s desire to possess something for self - gratification. In this regard, adultery can be defined as selfish lust to possess what is not duly solemnized.

The Decalogue points out that people should not covet anything that is not theirs. It says, “Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's” (Exod 20:17).

Luke 5: 27, 28 expounds on lust. Christ says, “Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.”

Adultery is not only in committing but also in seeing and wishing. No wonder Christ had to admonish the people that were following him to be content with what

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<sup>59</sup>White, *The Adventist Home*, 64.

they had. Luke 12:15 reads, “And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, “And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages.”

Christ says in Luke 12:15, “Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.” Infidelity stems from covetousness, greed and lust. The bottom line of every sinful act is selfishness born through greed and covetousness. The writer of Hebrews further states that “Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have.” (Heb 13:5)

Ellen White states that the desire to accumulate “more, more, more” leads to covetousness.<sup>60</sup> A covetous person is never content with what he or she possesses and it is not easy for one to “withdraw himself from his accustomed pursuits.”<sup>61</sup> Ellen White further stipulates that the sin of adultery is so prevalent in all sectors and especially in the church. In fact, it is very discouraging to note that the sin of adultery has affected to a large extent, even the very elect. It is a sin that respects no boundaries. Newspapers are filled with stories of respectful individuals who have fallen prey to infidelity. It is to this extent that Ellen White retorts, “Adultery is one of the terrible sins of this age. This sin exists among professed Christians of every class.”<sup>62</sup>

In Acts of the Apostles, Ellen G. White clearly points out that covetousness is abhorred by God and warns “All who give themselves up to hypocrisy and

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<sup>60</sup>Ellen G. White, *Our High Calling* (Washington DC: Review and Herald, 1961), 182.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 188.

<sup>62</sup>Ellen G. White, *Testimonies on Sexual Behaviour, Adultery, and Divorce* (Silver Spring, MD: Ellen G. White Estate, 1989), 99.

covetousness may be sure that they are destroying their own souls.”<sup>63</sup> According to Ellen G. White, the sin of pride, selfishness and covetousness normally goes unnoticed, whereas, “These are sins that are especially offensive to God, for they are contrary to the benevolence of His character.”<sup>64</sup>

### **Mistrust**

Proverbs 5:15 plays a big role in influencing human behavior. Solomon advises people to drink from their own cisterns and wells. It does not pay for one to go round drinking from various cisterns and other people’s wells. This is sound advice and counsel to those in marriage or those contemplating marriage. Additionally, Solomon encourages the man to be blessed and content with the wife of his youth. The writer refers to one wife, not wives.

A few illustrations will be cited in order to give a clearer picture of the prevalence of sexual infidelity from ancient times. Reuben in Genesis 35:22 is cited as having committed adultery with Bilhah. Furthermore, Gilead the father of Jephthah in Judges 11:1 is recorded as a son of harlotry. Another illustration is that of the sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas who slept with the women that had assembled at the door of the tabernacle (2 Sam 2:22). The most cited infidelity act is that conducted by David and Bathsheba, consequently resulting in the murder of Uriah, a trusted and faithful general.

People engage in illicit relationships because they have set it in their hearts. It is important to take a decisive step like Daniel who purposed in his heart that he would

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<sup>63</sup>White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 76.

<sup>64</sup>Ellen G. White, *Mind, Character and Personality* (Nashville, TN: Southern, 1977), 2:452.

not defile himself.” (Dan 1:8). Most issues emanate from the heart and therefore, the heart needs taming. Jeremiah 17:9 explicitly puts it, “The heart is deceitful above all things.” This is echoed by Solomon who says, “For as he thinketh in his heart so is he” (Prov 23:7).

### **The Bible and Infidelity**

God has always been against infidelity. He views infidelity as an act of unfaithfulness and disobedience on the part of the offending spouse. God reveals his displeasure on illicit relationships by the issuance of laws against infidelity.

### **The Ten Commandments**

The Ten Commandments are a reflection of God’s plan for mankind. On the issuance of these commandments, God expressly denounced adultery. God says, “Thou shall not commit adultery,” and “Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s wife.” (Exod 20:14, 17). In these verses God points out that adultery comes as a result of covetousness.

Ellen G. White posits that the seventh commandment “forbids not only acts of impurity but sensual thoughts and desires, or any practice that tends to excite them.”<sup>65</sup> She also points out that the tenth commandment “strikes at the very root of all sins, prohibiting the selfish desire, from which springs the sinful act.”<sup>66</sup>

Ever since mankind fell into sin the practice of infidelity has become so common among those who profess to be Christians and those who are not. The after effects of the fall of Adam and Eve have been felt ever since the day they transgressed

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<sup>65</sup>Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets* (Washington, D.C: Review and Herald, 1890), 308.

<sup>66</sup>*Ibid.*

against the law of God. It should be noted that disregarding the law of God has dire consequences for humankind.

As far as the Bible is concerned, sexual activity outside marriage is regarded as sin and should not be tolerated at all. There is need to note that infidelity brings multiple problems into families. Examples of families that involved themselves in these extramarital affairs paid the price.

God does not condone adultery in both the Old and New Testaments. Throughout the Bible God speaks sharply against infidelity. In Leviticus 20:10 -12, God declares that adultery is not right and should be condemned. He says, “And the man that committeth adultery with another man’s wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbor’s wife, the adulterer and the adultress shall surely be put to death.”

As indicated above, infidelity cannot go unpunished. All who engage themselves in these acts of unfaithfulness have to face the wrath of the Lord. In actual fact, the punishment for adultery in the Bible is death. This fact is further augmented in Deuteronomy 22:23 when God says,

If a damsel that is a virgin be betrothed unto an husband, and a man find her in the city, and lie with her; Then ye shall bring them both out unto the gate of that city, and ye shall stone them with stones that they die; the damsel, because she cried not, being in the city; and the man, because he hath humbled his neighbour's wife: so thou shalt put away evil from among you.

Even in Jesus’ time a woman purportedly caught in adultery was brought before him for judgment according to the Mosaic Law. John 8 records this incident. The woman had been caught in the act and was subject to death, by stoning. Adultery in the eyes of God is a big issue. Most of the prophets speak of spiritual adultery as getting carried away by something contrary to one’s belief systems.

This idea shows how God distastes infidelity. As indicated by God the punishment to be meted out to those who misbehave in this manner is death. Infidelity in the ancient time was punishable by death. Both the adulterer and the adulteress were guilty of an offence in the sight of God.

Proverbs 6:32 states that “whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul.” Two things are evidenced in this text. The adulterer lacks understanding and destroys his own soul. Infidelity is a sure way of destruction. The writer further points out the dangers of falling into the snares of a prostitute. He strongly advises against illicit relationships in a family.

The writer compares the life of an infidel to someone who takes fire in his bosom and moves upon hot coals. The fire and coal will burn this person completely. Furthermore, the person who engages in acts of infidelity is likened to a person who is void of understanding. A person of such nature is someone who has no reasoning capacity and someone who just does things without giving much thought to it.

Additionally, Solomon encourages the man to be blessed and content with the wife of his youth. The writer refers to one wife, not wives.

This is further augmented by Job who says in Job 31: 10, 11, “Then let my wife grind unto another, And let others bow down upon her. For that were a heinous crime; Yea, it were an iniquity to be punished by the judges.” As a crime, justice ought to take place. A heinous crime is one that could be best described as loathsome, despicable and abominable. Like all criminal activities it has to be judged.

Christ also indicated that adultery is not only in the act but also in the mindset. Matthew 5:27- 28, “Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt not commit adultery: but I say unto you, that every one that looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.” Ellen G. White confirms this

statement by saying that Christ declared that “the evil thought or look to be as truly sin as is the unlawful deed.”<sup>67</sup>

The Bible views adultery as a violation of God’s plan as outlined in Genesis 2:23. After Creation, God pronounced that man and woman were now “one flesh.” It is a marriage bond that needs not to be violated. The Lord spoke through Moses in Leviticus 18:20 saying that “Moreover thou shalt not lie carnally with thy neighbour’s wife, to defile thyself with her.”

Christ in His earthly ministry gave a warning against covetousness when He said, “Take heed and beware of covetousness” (Luke 12:15). Additionally, Paul admonishes the people to guard against covetousness being named among them as this will bar them from inheriting the kingdom of God (Eph 5:3; 1 Cor 6: 9).

Adultery destroyed a lot of homes in the Bible and even in our own times. If there is one sin that the devil has managed to use as a tool for man’s destruction, it is adultery. There are a lot of examples in the Bible that confirm the wickedness of infidelity. A few of the examples are cited herewith. Samson, the Nazarite, lost his sight and dignity at the foot of infidelity (Judg 16:21); King David, “a man after God’s heart” fell victim to the wiles of the devil; King Solomon’s many wives and concubines turned away his heart after the worldly gods (1 Kgs 11:4).

### **Ellen G. White on Infidelity**

The Spirit of Prophecy has a lot to say about licentiousness. Licentiousness is another word used for infidelity. Actually, Ellen White describes it as a sin that is prevalent to an alarming extent among many Christians. She notes that the transgression of the seventh commandment is so severe in that it is “largely committed

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<sup>67</sup>White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 308.

by professed Christians. Both clergymen and laymen, whose names stand fair upon the church record, are alike guilty.”<sup>68</sup>

This is a shocking revelation. In the truest sense, adultery is not to be heard of among God’s people. The church boards are ever dealing with issues of this nature. The world now looks at the church with a sarcastic eye because of the stories that make headlines on a daily basis. The church has seemingly ceased to be a model to the world. She further emphasizes this point by saying, “Both of these institutions “Sabbath” and “marriage” of divine appointment have been disregarded and set at naught by men and women whose hearts are fully set in them to do evil.”<sup>69</sup>

Ellen White describes David’s fall to infidelity as one of the worst sins ever committed by David. She indicates that his plurality of wives embittered his life and led him to depart from God’s wise arrangement.<sup>70</sup> Furthermore, the consequences of David’s misdemeanors were evidenced by the “unhappy discord, rivalry, and jealousy among his numerous wives and children.”<sup>71</sup>

Ellen G. White plainly states that mistrust causes one to disengage from a marital relationship and engage in an extramarital affair. She says, “He doubts her constancy and purity and tires of her and seeks new objects to arouse and intensify his hellish passions.”<sup>72</sup> In Ellen White’s view, engagement in an illicit affair is a result of circumstances occurring within the marriage.

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<sup>68</sup>White, *Testimonies on Sexual Behavior, Adultery, and Divorce*, 99.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid., 98.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., 93.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid.

<sup>72</sup>White, *The Adventist Home*, 126.

## **Biblical Model of Intervention**

The Bible is clear on what is expected in a covenantal relationship. It suggests remedies for any sexual perversions in a marriage relationship.

Firstly, Job states that he has made a covenant with his eyes not to look upon a young woman as this has led to the destruction of many (Job 31:1, 3). This statement is re-echoed in Psalm 101:3 when the psalmist says, “I will set nothing wicked before my eyes, I hate the work of those who fall away. It shall not cling to me.”

In addition, Daniel 1:8 reveals the determination of Daniel who “purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portions of the king’s delicacies.” This calls for a strong willpower and a deep relationship with God. Daniel had been rightly taught by his parents and he clung to those teachings even in bondage.

Furthermore, the Bible suggests that couples should not defraud each other, sexually, as this may lead to temptations. It reads, “Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time ... and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency” (1 Cor 6:3).

God encourages humankind to live sober lives where the thoughts are closely guarded. Wrong kind of thinking has destroyed many homes. God says, “For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he (Prov 23:7). It is imperative that people guard their thoughts jealously since they are bound to lead one to sin.

Paul encourages people to be loyal to their spouses at all times. The idea of having several partners is unbiblical and is highly discouraged. “Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband” (1 Cor 7:2).

## **Summary**

This chapter presented biblical and theological perceptions of marriage and infidelity. It also presented views on marriage and unfaithfulness from the writings of Ellen G. White. Likewise, it brought out the Seventh-day Adventist Church views concerning the same. It presented a review of literature on marriage and the causes of marital instability. At the end, the chapter presented a biblical model for intervention.

The following chapter will review literature on marriage and infidelity. It will bring out some models of infidelity and conclude by reviewing the impact of infidelity on marriages.

## CHAPTER 3

### LITERATURE REVIEW

The previous chapter dealt with marital infidelity as is found in the Bible and the writings of Ellen G. White. It is evident that God desires marriage to be a lifelong commitment to each other and that no one should separate what God has joined together. However, the ideal is not the real on the ground.

However, this chapter will review contemporary literature that deals with marital infidelity so as to provide a solution to the diversion of God's ideal. Some models of risk factors associated with infidelity will be surveyed. Summarily, the chapter will conclude by reflecting on the impact of adultery in a marriage relationship.

### **Marriage**

Marriage has been defined in different ways by many people depending on their perceptions. For the purposes of this study, the researcher focuses on marriage issues as indicated by various authors. Various authors have submitted their thoughts and conclusively agree that marriage should be monogamous and heterosexual in nature. This is in accordance with biblical expectations. Unfortunately, the society has introduced many types of marriages like same-sex, polygamy, and polyandry. All these are a deviation from the original plan by God. It is from the biblical context that marriage will be discussed in this chapter.

Kostenberger and Jones view marriage as rooted in “God’s creative act of making humanity in his image as male and female.”<sup>1</sup> In their view, marriage is based in God’s will and cannot be looked at in isolation of Genesis 1-2. Accordingly, the two authors indicate that marriage parameters should be maintained between a male and a female as originally designed by God. This dimension agrees with the biblical perspective that was highlighted in Chapter Two. The authors’ opinions are supported by Balswick and Balswick who assert that the ideal marriage should be monogamous and heterosexual in nature.<sup>2</sup>

These different authors concur that marriage is God’s design. As the designer, God has expectations on how marriages should be managed. These parameters are established in the Bible and are meant to bring joy to the family. They all agree that marriage should be a monogamous, heterosexual and a lifelong commitment.

### **Marriage Models**

For marriages to succeed there is a need to follow certain models. These models help people to understand the nature of marriage. Kostenberger and Jones postulate that marriage should be viewed from three angles, that is, sacramental, contractual and covenantal.<sup>3</sup> For the purposes of this paper, only the covenantal and contractual models will be discussed as they relate more to the ideal marriage.

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<sup>1</sup>Kostenberger and Jones, 22.

<sup>2</sup>Jack O. Balswick and Judith K. Balswick, *The Family: A Christian Perspective on the Contemporary Home* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014), 43.

<sup>3</sup>Kostenberger and Jones, 69.

## **Covenantal Model Perspective of Marriage**

The covenantal model views marriage as sacred and bound between two people of the opposite sex. It is an act that is entered into through the mutual agreement and understanding of two people. Kostenberger and Jones view the covenantal model as a sacred bond that is made between a woman and a man. This bond is instituted and publicly entered before God and is normally consummated through sexual intercourse.<sup>4</sup> In addition, they indicate that the covenantal marriage is rooted in the divine law as revealed in Genesis 2:24 and Malachi 2:14. They conclusively state that the theological meaning of the word covenant is grounded on five characteristics, namely, permanence, sacredness, intimacy, mutuality and exclusiveness.<sup>5</sup>

Bacchiocchi echoes similar sentiments on the theological meaning and adds that the covenant is the heart of the marriage that needs to be maintained at all costs. He states that the covenant is made in faith by people who believe that God is able to sustain their marriage for as long as they live. Furthermore, Bacchiocchi, unlike Kostenberger and Jones, summarises the characteristics to four. He views these four as total, exclusive, continuing and growing commitment.<sup>6</sup>

This fact is authenticated by the oath taken by the couple on the wedding day. Part of the vow reads, “In sickness, in health, in riches, in poverty, till death do us part.” The use of these vows reveal “the idea of a solemn covenant, guaranteeing promises or obligations undertaken by one or both covenanting couples.”<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Kostenberger and Jones, 73.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 77, 78.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., 74.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

## **Contractual Model of Marriage**

The contractual model views marriage from a different perspective. This differs from the covenantal model in the characteristics it portrays. The word contract indicates that the agreement is formal and legally binding between two or more people as long as it is convenient. As a contract it can be annulled at any given time when the situation demands otherwise.

Kostenberger and Jones indicate that the contractual model does not invoke scripture as its authority on marriage but that it is “formed, maintained and dissolved by two individuals.”<sup>8</sup> In other words, contractual marriages thrive on the civil law to institute marriage.

Kostenberger and Jones proceed to list five general characteristics of contracts, namely, that contracts are limited in time frame, deal with specific actions and that their continuance is based on the performance of the contractual obligations by the other partner. Furthermore, they indicate that contracts are entered into for one’s personal benefits and mostly are unspoken and implicit.<sup>9</sup> These characteristics indicate that there is no permanency in the relationship. Failure to adhere to expectations may lead to a separation at any time.

What is realised from these definitions is the fact that legitimate couples in marriage are male and female. In addition, marriage is entered into voluntarily by

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<sup>8</sup>Kostenberger and Jones, 71.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., 72.

either party and is supposed to be a permanent feature. Accordingly, marriage is a voluntary act between consenting parties. In other words, no one should be forced to marry outside one's will. This is common practice in most African states where marriages are pre-arranged.

### **Marital Infidelity**

The two words, marital and infidelity, have been combined to have meaning in this context. These two words depict a wrong that is occurring in a marriage. It is imperative to understand what infidelity entails. Infidelity has been defined in different ways and has been reflected in numerous activities. In order to understand the factors associated with marital infidelity, there is need to define infidelity and its major components. Infidelity involves a breach of mutual trust and commitment. Generally, it is viewed as voluntary and consensual sexual or emotional intercourse by a married person with someone of the opposite sex. It is characterised by a number of concepts such as making a choice to engage in a relationship without coercion and involves a person of the opposite sex.

Tremper Longman III views adultery as infidelity. He notes that infidelity is a sin that is forbidden by God in the Ten Commandments.<sup>10</sup> According to Tremper, adultery involves the establishment of an extramarital relationship with someone besides the original wife or husband. Tremper makes it clear that this does not only involve sexual relations but includes other sexual perversions. This definition identifies infidelity as a transgression of God's law.

Victoria Thornton and Alexander Nagurney view infidelity as "involvement in

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<sup>10</sup>Tremper, Longman III, ed., *The Baker Illustrated Bible Dictionary (BIBD)* (2013), s.v "Adultery."

romantic relationships outside of one's active committed relationship which result in a sense of relational betrayal."<sup>11</sup> In their view, infidelity is breaking the marriage covenant of exclusivity. They further indicate that infidelity can be revealed in having an affair, cheating, emotional connections beyond friendship, use of pornography and sexual intercourse.

Notably, Christopher Daniel Chuick, in his thesis reveals that infidelity has been defined in different ways that lack consistent operational definitions. Chuick further posits that marital infidelity has been narrowly defined as containing some form of sexual contact.<sup>12</sup>

This view is supported by Adrian J. Blow and Kelley Hartnett. They indicate that infidelity consists of variables such as having an affair, extramarital relationship, cheating, emotional connections, fondling, internet relationships, pornography and many others.<sup>13</sup>

This view is further shared by Bahareh Zare who states that infidelity is a "breach of the expectation of sexual exclusivity," and "unfaithfulness by virtue of being unreliable and the cheating on a relationship that takes place despite a

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<sup>11</sup>Victoria Thornton and Alexander Nagurney, "What is Infidelity? Perceptions Based on Biological Sex and Personality," *Psychology Research and Behavior Management* 4 (May 2011):51-58, accessed 17 July 2014, <https://doi.org/10.2147/PRBM.S16876>.

<sup>12</sup>Christopher Daniel Chuick, "Gender and Infidelity: A Study of The Relationship between Conformity to Masculine Norms and Extrarelatonal Involvement," (PhD Thesis, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa, 2009), 2, accessed 17 July 2014, Educational Psychology Commons.

<sup>13</sup>Adrian J. Blow and Kelley Hartnett, "Infidelity in Committed Relationships 1: A Methodological Review," *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy* 31 (April 2005): 183-216, accessed 17 July 2014, doi.101111/j.1752-0606.2005.tb01555.x .epdf.

commitment to exclusiveness.”<sup>14</sup> In addition, Zare posts four categories of marital infidelity, namely, sexual, emotional, combination of both and internet.<sup>15</sup>

Mao and Raguram indicate that infidelity is understood to be a violation of the “marital agreement, a betrayal of one's trust, and a threat to the marital bond.”<sup>16</sup> Three crucial issues are revealed in this definition, that is, infidelity involves a failure by one of the couples to observe the marriage vows, a betrayal by one of the spouses and threatens the marital union.

Balswick and Balswick broaden the concept of infidelity to “include emotional as well as sexual involvement.”<sup>17</sup> They explain that research should not be limited to sexual intercourse only as this tends to minimize the devastating effects that other types of sexual involvement and emotional connection can have on relationships.<sup>18</sup>

Bagarozzi views marital infidelity as a multifaceted problem that can either be “symptomatic of an axis II personality disorder, reflects less severe characterological weaknesses, or is due to other considerations.”<sup>19</sup> This means that infidelity has many determinants. Bagarozzi portrays infidelity as a disorder in one’s personality.

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<sup>14</sup>Bahareh Zare, “Review of Studies on Infidelity,” accessed 17 July 2014, <http://www.ipedr.com/vol19/34-ICAMS2011-A10054.pdf>.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>A. Mao and A. Raguram, “Online Infidelity: The New Challenge to Marriages,” *Indian Journal of Psychiatry* 51, no. 4 (December 2009):302-4, accessed 17 July 2014, doi:10.4103/0019-5545.58299.

<sup>17</sup>Balswick and Balswick, *Authentic Human Sexuality, An Integrated Christian Approach*, 202.

<sup>18</sup>Balswick and Balswick, *Authentic Human Sexuality, An Integrated Christian Approach*, 202.

<sup>19</sup>Dennis A. Bagarozzi Sr, “Understanding and Treating Marital Infidelity: A Multidimensional Model,” *The American Journal of Family Therapy* 36, no.1 (May 2008):1-17, accessed 7 July 2014, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01926180601186900>.

Joan D. Atwood and Limor Schwartz view infidelity as a breach of the marital covenant by one of the partners and is deceptive in nature. Ultimately, one of the partners believes that all is well within the camp when it is on the contrary. They say, “Infidelity occurs when one partner in a relationship continues to believe that the agreement to be faithful is still in force, while the other partner is secretly violating it.”<sup>20</sup>

### **Types of Marital Infidelity**

It is worth noting that there are several types of infidelity. These include sexual, emotional, cyber, obligatory, flings, opportunistic and romantic, among many others. However, this study delimits itself to the investigation of the first three, that is, sexual, emotional and cyber.

### **Sexual Infidelity**

According to Mark, Janssen and Milhausen sexual infidelity can be defined as engaging in an “extradyadic sex within the context of a monogamous relationship.”<sup>21</sup> They are purporting that infidelity does not occur in a vacuum. Extradyadic refers to a situation where the normal is excelled. The norm in a monogamous relationship is that there are two people involved. The deviation includes the interference of a third party.

Thornton and Nagurney support this view by stating that sexual infidelity

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<sup>20</sup>Joan D. Atwood and Limor Schwartz, “Cyber-Sex: The New Affair Treatment Considerations,” *Journal of Couple and Relationship Therapy* 1, no.3 (October 2008):37-56, accessed 17 July 2014, doi: 10.1300/ J398v01n03\_03, 2008.

<sup>21</sup>Kristen P. Mark, Erick Janssen and Robin R. Milhausen, “Infidelity in Heterosexual Couples: Demographic, Interpersonal and Personality-Related Predictors of Extradyadic Sex,” *US National Library of Medicine*, October 2011, accessed July 17, 2014, doi: 10.1007/s 10508-011-9771-z.

involves the engagement of an external party in a sexual manner.<sup>22</sup> Sexual intimacy is a prerogative reserved for those betrothed legally.

These authors concur to the fact that infidelity involves an extra person or a third party that interferes with the exclusive relationship. The writers further assert that sexual infidelity occurs outside an established relationship that involves two people, that is, male and female. What is notable about this kind of relationship is that in most cases, infidelity occurs among two people who have consented. It cannot be likened to rape. These people have a mutual understanding and cannot blame anyone for their activities. The ultimate purpose of their excursion is to achieve sexual satisfaction.

Furthermore, Bahareh Zare views sexual infidelity as “unfaithfulness by virtue of being unreliable and the cheating on a relationship partner that takes place despite a commitment to exclusiveness. Sexual infidelity by a marriage partner is commonly called philander, adultery or an affair.”<sup>23</sup> Additionally, Zare points out that the motive that drives a person to engage in sexual infidelity is sexual satisfaction with the other partner. There is no love in it. The desire is to satisfy one’s ego. That is why Zare further notes that sexual infidelity consists of having a sexual relationship with anyone, including sex workers.

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<sup>22</sup>Victoria Thornton and Alexander Nagurney, “What is Infidelity? Perceptions Based on Biological Sex and Personality,” *Psychology Research and Behavior Management* 4 (May 2011):51-58, accessed 17 July 2014, <https://doi.org/10.2147/PRBM.S16876>.

<sup>23</sup>Bahareh Zare, “Review of Studies on Infidelity,” accessed 17 July 2014, <http://www.ipedr.com/vol19/34-ICAMS2011-A10054.pdf>.

## Emotional Infidelity

Emotional infidelity refers to an affair that is non-sexual in nature but has a possibility of later developing into a sexual relationship. In most cases, it excludes physical intimacy but is based on emotional intimacy. It is worth noting that emotional infidelity stems from the heart and impacts heavily on the level of intimacy in a marriage. It may possibly take some time before it develops into a full time relationship. According to Stephen O. Watters, emotional infidelity is characterised by three elements that are “secrecy, intimacy and sexual chemistry.”<sup>24</sup>

Julie Fricker refers to emotional infidelity as “expending resources, such as spending time with someone other than one's primary partner.”<sup>25</sup> This might include talking, going out and developing a romantic relationship with no sexual activity involved. In this instance, the people share thoughts that are suggestive but limit themselves to that only. They may touch each other suggestively, go to places that are secretive, kiss and cuddle but just end there.

Similarly, Thornton and Nagurney, describe emotional infidelity as “falling in love” or sharing a deep emotional bond with someone other than one’s partner,”<sup>26</sup> but without going engaging in sexual activities. These people are in love but it is only that there is no sexual intimacy. Satisfaction is derived from their interaction less sexual

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<sup>24</sup>Elizabeth Schroeder, *Taking Sides: Clashing Views in Family and Personal Relationships*, 7<sup>th</sup> ed. (Dubuque, IA: McGraw Hill, 2008), 226.

<sup>25</sup>Julie Fricker, “Predicting Infidelity: The Role of Attachment Styles, Lovestyles, and the Investment Model” (PDP thesis, Swinburne University of Technology, 2006), 11, accessed 17 July 2014, Swinburne University.

<sup>26</sup>Victoria Thornton and Alexander Nagurney, “What is Infidelity? Perceptions Based on Biological Sex and Personality,” *Psychology Research and Behavior Management* 4 (May 2011):51, accessed 17 July 2014, <https://doi.org/10.2147/PRBM.S16876>.

penetration.

William D. Barta and Susan M. Kiene illustrate the above point by giving an example of a cyber affair. A person tends to spend quality time with a person in an Internet chatroom. This creates a development of an intense emotional bond “without visual or physical contact between partners and without the participants being overtly engaged in the goal of seeking a sexual partner.”<sup>27</sup>

Emotionally, this kind of relationship is disastrous as it may begin in innocence but culminate in a deep relationship. In this regard, the primary home is ignored as the offending spouse turns more attention to the new relationship. This may also be visible in the number of delays in coming home and acting out. Falsification becomes the order of the day.

### **Cyber Infidelity**

This is one of the most recent types of infidelity that has emerged with the development of the social media. Stephen O. Watters defines cybersex as a destructive connection established through the internet. He states that cybersex,

involves two (or more) people using instant-messaging capabilities to write erotic messages to each other online, leading to arousal and orgasm in some way ... is most often used as an exchange between strangers – where both people can create and seek out what they see as ideal persona on-line and have intimate experiences with no strings attached.<sup>28</sup>

Atwood and Schwartz describe cybersex as one of the most difficult types of extra marital sex to define. They purport that internet sex is prone of sapping out all

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<sup>27</sup>William D. Barta and Susan M. Kiene, “Motivations for Infidelity in Heterosexual Dating Couples: The Roles of Gender, Personality Differences, and Sociosexual Orientation,” *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships* (1 June 2005): 339-360, accessed 17 July 2014, <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0265407505052440>.

<sup>28</sup>Schroeder, 224.

the energy needed in a committed relationship such as thoughts, feelings and behaviors and causes severe damage to the relationship.<sup>29</sup>

Balswick and Balswick describe cybersex as the “consumption of pornography on the internet.”<sup>30</sup> An understanding of pornography will assist in getting to an understanding of cybersex. The same authors define pornography as the viewing of sexually graphic material that exposes sexual depravity and arouses the sexual appetite. The intention of such viewing is to stimulate sexual excitement on the part of the observer. They further elaborate that pornography is degrading, offensive, unacceptable and dehumanizing. They say, “dehumanizing is a violation of the value God places on human life and sexuality.”<sup>31</sup>

Cybersex has some adverse effects on marriage. According to Atwood and Schwarz, cybersex is addictive in nature and leads to dependence on the on-line partner. Seemingly, that person on the other side of one’s marriages offers “understanding and comfort for hurt feelings.”<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup>Joan D. Atwood and Limor Schwartz, “Cyber-Sex: The New Affair Treatment Considerations,” *Journal of Couple and Relationship Therapy* 1, no.3 (October 2008):37-56, accessed 17 July 2014, doi: 10.1300/ J398v01n03\_03, 2008.

<sup>30</sup>Balswick and Balswick, *Authentic Human Sexuality, An Integrated Christian Approach*, 278.

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*, 275.

<sup>32</sup>Joan D. Atwood and Limor Schwartz, “Cyber-Sex: The New Affair Treatment Considerations,” *Journal of Couple and Relationship Therapy* 1, no.3 (October 2008):37-56, accessed 17 July 2014, doi: 10.1300/ J398v01n03\_03, 2008.

Zare adds a dimension to the definition of cybersex. Zare defines it as a “process whereby individuals involved in a long-term committed relationship seek computer synchronous interactive contact with an opposite sex member.” It is not a one-off incident but is developmental.

### **Causes of Marital Infidelity**

Extra marital affairs are seemingly a result of many variables. Research has alluded to many factors and has not really come up with one possible cause. All the risk factors have a possible high contribution to infidelity. Several risk factors will be discussed in this paper as seen by several researchers. The factors have been divided into three models, that is, conceptual, multifactor and narcissism.

#### **Conceptual Model**

The conceptual model is derived from Ajzen and Fishbein’s theory of reasoned action or theory of planned behavior. This theory predicts that human behavior can be deliberative and planned. Simon Moss opines that the theories main emphasis is that human behavior is not only governed by personal attitudes but by social pressures as well.<sup>33</sup> In other words, some activities are psychological in nature.

This model views infidelity as a component of mental thoughts and can be engaged from a premeditated perspective prior to implementation. In this regard, an individual engages in acts of infidelity deliberately and knowingly. The individual sits down and calculates all the costs and moves before making a decision. In other words, the individual premeditates and plans out a strategy to maintain the affair a secret.

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<sup>33</sup>Simon Moss, “The Theory of Planned Behavior,” accessed on 12 July 2016, <http://www.sicotests.com/psyarticle.asp?id=69>.

Treas and Giesen concur with this assertion and indicate that extradyadic affairs are not spontaneous but are a result of considered decisions. Treas and Giesen, after conducting a survey in 1992 concluded that engagement in an extramarital affair comes as a result of a rational decision that is neither spontaneous nor a consequence of overwhelming romantic passion.<sup>34</sup>

In other words, they postulate that a person who involves in an affair does this knowingly and deliberately. In their view, sexual infidelity is a result of considered decisions and demands calculated behavior by the individual. In the actual sense, the individual goes through a process before embarking on the act. The authors state that a person asks three crucial questions before indulging in an affair. These questions are 'Why am I doing this? What will I get out of it? How does this affect the status quo?'<sup>35</sup>

Balswick and Balswick confirm that involvement in an extramarital affair is a moral choice and progresses from thought to action by the individual. They state that some people may regard infidelity as a spur of the moment but "the extramarital affair is often a premeditated act."<sup>36</sup>

### **Multifactor Model**

As the name suggests, the reasons for engagement in an extra-marital affair are multifaceted and cannot be viewed from one perspective. This model emphasizes the fact that there is no one reason that can be attributed to indulgence in infidelity.

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<sup>34</sup>Judith Treas and Deirdre Giesen, "Sexual Infidelity among Married and Cohabiting Americans," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 62 (February 2000): 49, accessed 17 July 2014, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1566686>.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid.

<sup>36</sup>Balswick and Balswick, *Authentic Human Sexuality, An Integrated Christian Approach*, 206.

Treas and Giesen state that there are multivariates that inform sexual decision making and that these can be divided into three categories. These three domains are, “the personal values of the individual, the opportunities for extramarital sex, and the couple's relationship.” In their view, sexual indulgence is resultant of a combination of factors.<sup>37</sup>

On the other hand, Kristen Mark, Erick Janssen and Robin Milhausen view these three categories as demographic, interpersonal and intrapersonal.<sup>38</sup> Close analysis of the factors indicate the psychological and sociological angle of marital infidelity.

Michelle M. Jeanfreau, Antony P. Jurich and Michael D. Mong share the thought of engagement in extramarital relationships as psycho-social. This infers that marital infidelity has a psychological and social aspect. They indicate that marital infidelity is complex and has to be understood from the internal happenings in a marriage and the predisposing factors.<sup>39</sup> These factors are occurrences outside the

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<sup>37</sup>Judith Treas and Deirdre Giesen, “Sexual Infidelity among Married and Cohabiting Americans,” *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 62 (February 2000): 49, accessed 17 July 2014, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1566686>.

<sup>38</sup>Kristen P. Mark, Erick Janssen and Robin R. Milhausen, “Infidelity in Heterosexual Couples: Demographic, Interpersonal and Personality-Related Predictors of Extradyadic Sex,” *US National Library of Medicine*, October 2011, accessed July 17, 2014, doi: 10.1007/s 10508-011-9771-z.

<sup>39</sup>Michelle M. Jeanfreau, Antony P. Jurich, and Michael D. Mong, “Risk Factors Associated with Women’s Marital Infidelity,” *Contemporary Family Therapy* 36, no. 3 (September 2014): 327-332, published online 4 June 2014, accessed 19 July 2014, doi: 10.1007/s10591-014-9309-3.

marriage that influence behavior in marriage. An analysis of the three domains will be made forthwith.

**Demographic causes.** Demographic factors are psychological in nature and focus on the engaging spouse. Some of the demographic factors include gender, religiosity, education and income.

**Gender.** Mark, Janssen and Milhausen reveal the fact that gender is one of the most studied factors on marital infidelity. It is worth noting that many people are of the notion that men tend to engage in acts of sexual unfaithfulness while women are involved in emotional infidelity. However, current research is proving on the contrary. Some researchers have even indicated that infidelity has become so common that “25% of married men and 20% of married women engage in extra-marital sex over the course of their relationships.”<sup>40</sup>

In their various studies, researchers have somewhat concluded that men and women have the potential of cheating in a marital relationship, either sexually or emotionally.<sup>41</sup> Most researchers have concluded that men engage in sexual infidelity while women engage in emotional infidelity to a large extent. However, this does not exonerate any group.

Julie Fricker supports the above presumptions and states that gender is one of the variables of infidelity. She suggests that men have a greater frequency of infidelity than women, although this is lessening with the current age groups.<sup>42</sup> She cites the

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<sup>40</sup>James K. McNulty and Laura Widman, “Sexual Narcissism and Infidelity in Early Marriage,” *US National Library of Medicine*, accessed July 17, 2014, doi: 10.1007/s10508-014-0282-6.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid.

<sup>42</sup>Julie Fricker, “Predicting Infidelity: The Role of Attachment Styles, Lovestyles, and the Investment Model” (PDP thesis, Swinburne University of

results of the National Health and Sexual Lifestyle Survey that indicated that “in the United States, 25% of men and 15% of women reported ever having had extramarital sex,” and that, “4% of married participants stated having had extramarital sex in the previous year.”<sup>43</sup>

It is worth noting that these figures may be far from being correct as there are limitations to the responses from the respondents. Most will not answer truthfully in fear of stigmatization.

Similarly, Mark, Janssen and Milhausen in a study of 506 men and 412 women with a mean age of 32.86 and 27.66 years respectively concluded that 23.2% of men and 19.2% of women have at one time cheated in their current relationship.<sup>44</sup> The difference between men and women who engage in extramarital affairs is very minimal.

All these sources opine that infidelity cuts across all genders and cannot be ignored. The fact that remains outstanding is that marital infidelity is a psycho-social problem that cuts across all genders.

***Deeper spiritual commitment.*** This is the second demographic factor that is associated with infidelity. According to Mark, Janssen and Milhausen, infidelity is commonly reported among individuals who have no religious affiliation at all.<sup>45</sup> This is a suggestion that is somehow weird in the sense that religion is defined from

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Technology, 2006), 3, accessed 17 July 2014, Swinburne University.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid.

<sup>44</sup>Kristen P. Mark, Erick Janssen and Robin R. Milhausen, “Infidelity in Heterosexual Couples: Demographic, Interpersonal and Personality-Related Predictors of Extradyadic Sex,” *US National Library of Medicine*, October 2011, accessed July 17, 2014, doi: 10.1007/s 10508-011-9771-z.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid.

someone's perspective. In fact, infidelity prevails across all sectors of people. They argue out that irreligious people lack conscience and are not bound by any limitations, hence they are more prone to infidelity.

Mark A. Whisman, Yael Chatav and Kristina Coop Gordon are of the view that lower religiosity acts as a great predictor of infidelity. They state that, "Religion appears to be an important involved-partner variable that serves as a constraint on sexual infidelity."<sup>46</sup> Summarily, they opine that marital dissatisfaction as a predisposing factor is greater for people in low religiosity as compared to those in high religiosity. This statement suffices to say that infidelity exists among those in high religiosity though at lower levels. This could possibly be caused by the strict prohibitions of the church that translate into attitudes and behaviours by the religious.

This view is augmented by Samuelle Bacchiocchi who says that spiritual differences and religious differences are prone to cause conflict in marriage and eventually lead to infidelity.<sup>47</sup> An affiliation to different religious groups breeds antagonism toward each other. Two people of varying opinions are bound to have differences that will tend to be manifested through acts of infidelity. It is imperative that people be equally yoked. However, this does not mean that there are no problems amongst those equally yoked. It simply means that the problems are minimized.

**Education.** Bacchiocchi refers to this as intellectual or educational tensions. He gives the following illustration. "A man with a graduate degree and a high IQ marrying a woman with a high school diploma and a lower IQ may be tempted to

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<sup>46</sup>Mark A. Whisman, Yael Chatav, and Kristina Coop Gordon, "Predicting Sexual Infidelity in a Population-Based Sample of Married Individuals," *Journal of Family Psychology* 21, no. 2 (June 2007): 320-324, accessed 25 August 2016, doi: 10.1037/0893-3200.21.2.320.

<sup>47</sup>Bacchiocchi, 96.

think he is “stuck” with an intellectual weakling.”<sup>48</sup> In this regard, the man may lose his respect for the woman and possibly look for those in his “class.”

One’s level of education possibly contributes much to the committing of infidelity in the homes as the people become more liberal in their thoughts. Janssen and Milhausen state, “Several studies have found that education is associated with infidelity, in that highly educated persons are more likely to report engaging in infidelity than less educated individuals.” This is a disputable fact as the reverse may also be true. The less educated may be having low self-esteem and look down upon oneself. This view is shared by Alfred DeMaris who states that “higher education exposes individuals to more liberal views of sexuality.”<sup>49</sup>

**Income.** High income earners are suspected to have more opportunities of engaging in extradyadic affairs. Blow and Hartnett are of the opinion that income and extramarital indulgence are inseparable. They state that a person with a high income has a high possibility of engaging in acts of infidelity. They suggest that the distribution of income in a family is likely to influence infidelity.<sup>50</sup>

The assertion is that it is not the high income that is the issue but the individual with the high income. This individual has many privileges and opportunities which, if, unattended may open up opportunities for unfaithfulness.

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<sup>48</sup>Bacchiocchi, 94.

<sup>49</sup>Alfred DeMaris, “Distal and Proximal Influences on the Risk of Extramarital Sex: A Prospective Study of Longer Duration Marriages,” *The Journal of Sex Research* 46 (April 2009): 597-607, accessed 17 July 2014, doi: 10.1080 /0024490902915993.

<sup>50</sup>Adrian J. Blow and Kelley Hartnett, “Infidelity in Committed Relationships 1: A Methodological Review,” *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy* 31 (April 2005): 183-216, accessed 17 July 2014, doi.101111/j.1752-0606.2005.tb01555.x.pdf.

Mark, Janssen and Milhausen support the above notion by indicating that income is somehow related to infidelity. They say, “Individuals with higher incomes are more prone to engage in infidelity and this may be because their professional and personal lives include more opportunities to engage in extradyadic relations.”<sup>51</sup>

**Interpersonal causes.** Interpersonal factors refer to the causes that are related to the quality and satisfaction of the relationship. It answers to the question, “How is the relationship between the husband and the wife?” This view is based on the various perceptions of each individual in the affiliation. In this instance, there could be some areas the other partner is unhappy about in a relationship, hence seek for satisfaction elsewhere. There are quite a number of significant factors that contribute to the interpersonal causes and a few of them will be discussed in this paper.

**Sexual dissatisfaction.** One of the greatest contributors to marital infidelity is sexual dissatisfaction. It is paramount that partners engage each other in meaningful responses in the sexual act. The absence of sexual aggression during the sexual act compounds negatively to a relationship and can lead to sexual frustration.

Bagarozzi opines that sexual dissatisfaction is bred by unmet and unfulfilled sexual desires in a couple.<sup>52</sup> He gives an example of someone seeking the services of a prostitute or another partner because the other partner lacks responsiveness and refuses to participate in some sexual acts. As a result, the offending spouse will seek satisfaction elsewhere.

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<sup>51</sup>Kristen P. Mark, Erick Janssen and Robin R. Milhausen, “Infidelity in Heterosexual Couples: Demographic, Interpersonal and Personality-Related Predictors of Extradysadic Sex,” *US National Library of Medicine*, October 2011, accessed July 17, 2014, doi: 10.1007/s 10508-011-9771-z.

<sup>52</sup>Dennis A. Bagarozzi Sr, “Understanding and Treating Marital Infidelity: A Multidimensional Model,” *The American Journal of Family Therapy* 36, no.1 (May 2008):3, accessed 7 July 2014, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01926180601186900>.

Julie Fricker indicates that marital dissatisfaction cannot be undermined as one of the greatest causes of sexual infidelity. Fricker states that “commitment to a relationship is dependent on an individual's perceived level of satisfaction, the availability of attractive alternatives, and the degree of investment an individual has made in the relationship.”<sup>53</sup> It is imperative that couples be open-minded and express their feelings in the sexual act. An old adage mentions that variety is the spice of life. The traditional method should be coupled with other love styles, otherwise, this may lead to boredom and acts of chastisement.

Lamanna and Riedmann refer to sexual dissatisfaction as “lower satisfaction” that cannot be surpassed by anything.<sup>54</sup> This means that a person who lacks satisfaction from whatever perspective is bound to engage in acts of unfaithfulness. It is a fact that should not be ignored.

Lack of quality time within the marriage relationship may precipitate dissatisfaction. The first love wanes off as other concentrations take place, especially with the birth of children. In most cases, the mother’s attention refocuses on the child at the expense of the other spouse. This may result in dissatisfaction and the other partner may opt out.

It is imperative that courtship should run through life. Neglecting this perspective has dire consequences on the relationship. It is worthwhile that couples make time for each other and be readily available so as to minimize risks.

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<sup>53</sup>Julie Fricker, “Predicting Infidelity: The Role of Attachment Styles, Lovestyles, and the Investment Model” (PDP thesis, Swinburne University of Technology, 2006), 7, accessed 17 July 2014, Swinburne University.

<sup>54</sup>Mary Ann Lamanna and Agnes Riedmann, *Marriages, Families, and Relationships: Making Choices in a Diverse Society* (Florence, KY: Wadsworth, 2011), 134.

**Sexual deprivation.** Sexual deprivation refers to a situation whereby there is lack or denial of a sexual necessity. Sexual inactivity and abstinence in a married couple can be fatal. There is need for open communication in this regard. Failure to communicate and adhere to laid out agreements may force one of the partners to engage in a sexual encounter with others who are readily available and willing to share the sexual journey. Fricker found out that the decline in sexual frequency has the potential to lead to extramarital involvement with those who are willing and that dissatisfaction with the primary relationship acts as a precursor to a decrease in sexual frequency.<sup>55</sup>

These views are further shared by Bagarozzi who expounds that prolonged absences can lead one to seek fulfillment elsewhere.<sup>56</sup> On the other hand, Lamanna and Riedmann indicate that decline in frequency is associated with affairs, particularly among men.<sup>57</sup>

Accordingly, Bagarozzi indicates that sexual deprivation can be treated by seeking therapeutic assistance. The therapist should be able to assess a number of inter-related factors in order to ascertain what kind of help is necessary.<sup>58</sup>

**Quality time.** Quality time is of great necessity in marriage. Lack of good time will lead one to search for it elsewhere. In most cases, concentration is misplaced.

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<sup>55</sup>Lamanna and Riedmann, 111.

<sup>56</sup>Dennis A. Bagarozzi Sr, "Understanding and Treating Marital Infidelity: A Multidimensional Model," *The American Journal of Family Therapy* 36, no.1 (May 2008):3, accessed 7 July 2014, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01926180601186900>.

<sup>57</sup>Lamanna and Riedmann, 134.

<sup>58</sup>Dennis A. Bagarozzi Sr, "Understanding and Treating Marital Infidelity: A Multidimensional Model," *The American Journal of Family Therapy* 36, no.1 (May 2008):14, accessed 7 July 2014, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01926180601186900>.

Jeanfreau, Jurich and Mong conducted a qualitative research where they concluded that quality time is compromised by one of the spouses being gone all the time, working a great deal and spending time with friends. Summarily, the authors state that other commitments take precedence over the marital relationship.<sup>59</sup>

**Poor conflict management.** It is notable that unresolved conflicts in a marriage can bring disaster on the relationship. While conflict is inevitable in every situation, the way it is handled bears a lot of impact. In marriage, there is a need to resolve all conflicts in an amicable manner if infidelity is to be curbed. However, in most cases, couples either ignore the conflict to their own peril. In some instances, the couple fails to reach a solution because of the drive of self-interests.

Garland implores for empathy and compassion for each other in situations of conflict.<sup>60</sup> She also implores for establishment of a communication link regardless of who is wrong and tackles the problem head on.

Gangel and Canine summarize the issue of conflict management by stating that any conflict needs prompt addressing. If conflicts are not solved as early as possible they can balloon to inexpressible heights.<sup>61</sup> In actual fact they say, “When conflict occupies most of our time, energy, or vision, we will experience more destructive conflict.”<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>59</sup>Michelle M. Jeanfreau, Antony P. Jurich, and Michael D. Mong, “Risk Factors Associated with Women’s Marital Infidelity,” *Contemporary Family Therapy* 36, no. 3 (September 2014): 327-332, published online 4 June 2014, accessed 19 July 2014, doi: 10.1007/s10591-014-9309-3.

<sup>60</sup>Diana S. Garland, *Family Ministry: A Comprehensive Guide* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2012), 352.

<sup>61</sup>Kenneth O. Gangel and Samuel A. Canine, *Communication and Conflict Management in Churches and Christian Organizations* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Sock, 2002), 263.

<sup>62</sup>*Ibid.*

**Intrapersonal.** Intrapersonal causes are innate, meaning that they originate from the mind. These have no relationship at all with what is occurring in the relationship. The relationship may be flowing so well but because the person has other ulterior motives, he or she seeks for another partner for interests' sake. Such a person takes advantage of any opportunity to fulfill their mind's desire.

***Stronger sexual interest levels.*** Lamanna and Riedmann also point out that there are some individuals who have a stronger sex interest. These people think about sex every day and have more permissive values and more past sex partners. These individuals are more likely than others to engage in extramarital affairs.”<sup>63</sup>

***Globalization/ Emigration.*** The world is fast becoming a global village and this has a huge impact on the family structures. Men and women are leaving their homes in search of employment and in the process leave families behind. As nature would portend, new family structures are established in the cities to the detriment of the one remaining at home.

Betty Bigombe and Gilbert M. Khadiagala support this view by stating that one out of ten Lesotho married men working in South Africa have abandoned their families and taken new ones in South Africa.<sup>64</sup> This is not a small figure to be trifled with. What this means is that families are in trouble.

***Previous sexual exploits.*** In this regard, people who have had previous sexual encounters are more prone to engage in infidelity. Either, one may look for the past sexual relationships or develop new ones in the process. In addition, previous sexual

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<sup>63</sup>Lamanna and Riedmann, 134.

<sup>64</sup>Betty Bigombe and Gilbert M. Khadiagala, *Major Trends Affecting Families in Sub-Saharan Africa*, accessed 23 June 2014, <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/family/Publications/mtbigombe.pdf>.

experiences may influence sexual immorality as the person will tend to compare the past and the present. According to William D. Barta and Susan M. Kiene, such people are said to be exhibiting an ‘unrestricted’ socio-sexual orientation.’<sup>65</sup>

Blow and Hartnett indicate that there is some evidence that suggests prior sexual excursions are linked with infidelity. They opine that if one had four or more partners before marriage, the likelihood for continued engagement is high.<sup>66</sup> The more partners one had prior to marriage leads to a comparison with the present. Failure to meet the standards set by former lovers leads to dissatisfaction and infidelity.

***The Five Factors Model.*** The Five Factors Model, also, known as The Big Five Personality Traits is the one that is widely used to describe personality variables. The major traits of this model hinge on openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism.

According to Mark, Janssen and Milhaussen, extraversion, low agreeableness, high neuroticism, low conscientiousness and high psychoticism or neuroticism contribute to a greater likelihood of engaging in extradyadic relations.<sup>67</sup> This is equally shared by Zare who confirms this assertion by stating that low agreeableness

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<sup>65</sup>William D. Barta and Susan M. Kiene, “Motivations for Infidelity in Heterosexual Dating Couples: The Roles of Gender, Personality Differences, and Sociosexual Orientation,” *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships* (1 June 2005): 339-360, accessed 17 July 2014, <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0265407505052440>.

<sup>66</sup>Adrian J. Blow and Kelley Hartnett, “Infidelity in Committed Relationships 1: A Methodological Review,” *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy* 31 (April 2005): 183-216, accessed 17 July 2014, doi.101111/j.1752-0606.2005.tb01555.x .epdf.

<sup>67</sup>Adrian J. Blow and Kelley Hartnett, “Infidelity in Committed Relationships 1: A Methodological Review,” *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy* 31 (April 2005): 183-216, accessed 17 July 2014, doi.101111/j.1752-0606.2005.tb01555.x .epdf.

and low conscientiousness correlate negatively with greater sexual risk.<sup>68</sup>

Schmitt further explored the way in which the Five Factors Model is related to infidelity. Schmitt carried out a study on 16,363 men and women in 32 countries. The conclusion that was drawn from this study is that “relationship infidelity is universally associated with low levels of agreeableness and low levels of conscientiousness.”<sup>69</sup>

Comparatively, Schmitt and Buss indicated that those with high agreeableness and high conscientiousness were less likely to be unfaithful to their partners.<sup>70</sup>

Richard Kilmann and Jennifer Vendemia posit that “partners with wide personality differences are at risk for marital distress.”<sup>71</sup>

**Opportunity.** Opportunity affairs refer to situations that are not predetermined and occur spontaneously. In such instances, an individual finds himself or herself entangled in this affair that is convenient and alluring for that particular duration. Normally these are brief, accidental, exploratory and situationally specific affairs that end there.<sup>72</sup> The factors that contribute to such an engagement could be resultant from

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<sup>68</sup>Bahareh Zare, “Review of Studies on Infidelity,” accessed 17 July 2014, <http://www.ipedr.com/vol19/34-ICAMS2011-A10054.pdf>.

<sup>69</sup>D. P. Schmitt, “The Big Five Related to Sexual Behavior across 10 World Regions: Differential Personality Associations of Sexual Promiscuity and Relationship Infidelity,” accessed 19 July 2015, [www.interscience.wiley.com](http://www.interscience.wiley.com), doi: 10.1002/per.520.

<sup>70</sup>Bahareh Zare, “Review of Studies on Infidelity,” accessed 17 July 2014, <http://www.ipedr.com/vol19/34-ICAMS2011-A10054.pdf>.

<sup>71</sup>Peter Richard Kilmann and Jennifer M. C. Vendemia, “Partner Discrepancies in Distressed Marriages,” *The Journal of Social Psychology* 153 (August 2012): 197, accessed 17 July 2014. doi: 10.1080/00224545.2012719941.

<sup>72</sup>Dennis A. Bagarozzi Sr, “Understanding and Treating Marital Infidelity: A Multidimensional Model,” *The American Journal of Family Therapy* 36, no.1 (May 2008):2, accessed 7 July 2014, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01926180601186900>.

excess intoxication of alcoholic beverages or drugs, absence from home, work place environment, combating loneliness, seminars and peer pressure.

Treas and Giesen view opportunity as having a big role to play as a risk factor. In the authors view, couples leading separate lives or having jobs that require frequent absences from home are at risk of opportunity factors. In their view, they speculate that opportunity often arises at a low point in the marriage.<sup>73</sup>

### **Sexual Narcissism**

Narcissism is an act of selfishness practiced by one partner to achieve an end. A narcissist tends to have a sexual orientation that motivates him or her to engage in illicit relationships with others beside the spouse. Furthermore, this kind of person has a permissive attitude toward sex and bears a belief that they perform better than anyone else.

James K. McNulty and Laura Widman describe it as “a multifaceted personality style characterized by tendencies toward exploiting others, a general lack of empathy for others, and a pervasive confidence in one’s abilities.”<sup>74</sup> These traits underscore the selfish part of the narcissists and their need for personal fulfillment and satisfaction elsewhere other than their spouse. A narcissist cares less of other people’s feelings as long as his or her demands are met. Additionally, sexual narcissism has four facets, namely, “sexual exploitation, grandiose sense of sexual

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<sup>73</sup>Lamanna and Riedmann, 134.

<sup>74</sup>James K. McNulty and Laura Widman, “Sexual Narcissism and Infidelity in Early Marriage,” *US National Library of Medicine*, accessed July 17, 2014, doi: 10.1007/s10508-014-0282-6.

skill, sexual entitlement and lack of sexual empathy.”<sup>75</sup>

They further explain that narcissists have an orientation toward sexual relationships and feel unsatisfied with one partner, hence, will seek for satisfaction outside marriage. More so, narcissists are believed to have an unrestricted socio-sexuality, more permissive attitudes toward sex, hold positive beliefs about their skills and abilities. They are also characterized by high levels of exploitativeness, low levels of empathy, deceitful and less remorseful. Finally, they indicate that narcissists tend to have lower levels of relationship commitment.<sup>76</sup>

### **Impact of Marital Infidelity**

Marital infidelity has adverse and traumatic effects on the family systems. In many instances it affects both the offender and the offended. It also affects the innocent like the children and community. The effects are endless but this paper will address some of them that are related to the factors listed above. It should also be noted that infidelity has more negative impacts, though some people believe that it has positive implications as well.

Howard Iken opines that infidelity has a big psychological and legal impact on a marriage. Iken goes on to say that “infidelity is the result of living too much in the present at the expense of future consequences.”<sup>77</sup> This view indicates that infidelity affects the person’s psycho-domain and has legal implications. A person who engages

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<sup>75</sup>James K. McNulty and Laura Widman, “Sexual Narcissism and Infidelity in Early Marriage,” *US National Library of Medicine*, accessed July 17, 2014, doi: 10.1007/s10508-014-0282-6.

<sup>76</sup>Ibid.

<sup>77</sup>Howard Iken, “The Long Lasting Legal and Psychological Effects of Infidelity,” accessed 19 July 2015, <http://divorcedmoms.com/articles/the-long-lasting-legal-and-psychological-effects-of-infidelity>.

in an extramarital affair tends to focus on the present and forgets what may be the outcome.

### **Acute Distress Disorder**

The discovery of an extra-marital affair is a heart breaking experience that causes emotional and psychological problems leading to an acute distress order on the part of the faithful partner. Acute distress disorder is referred to as a diagnosis following a traumatic experience and can lead to disengagement from the society on the part of the aggrieved. This could be resulting from a lot of questions going through the mind on what could have gone wrong. This distress disorder can be manifested on the victim rather than the victimiser, through detachment from reality, sadness and despair, intense feelings of rage, hatred and the need for revenge, fear and anxiety and low self-esteem.<sup>78</sup>

### **Divorce**

Marital infidelity ranks as the highest contributor to divorce. Discovering that one's partner is having an affair is heartbreaking and causes emotional and psychological problems. In many instances, the other spouse feels betrayed and is left wondering on what could have caused that relationship to take place. The wronged partner may decide to opt out of the relationship and begin life afresh, elsewhere.

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<sup>78</sup>Howard Iken, "The Long Lasting Legal and Psychological Effects of Infidelity," accessed 19 July 2015, <http://divorcedmoms.com/articles/the-long-lasting-legal-and-psychological-effects-of-infidelity>.

Jeanfreau, Jurich and Mong indicate that research has shown that marital infidelity has negative effects on the marriage and this can lead to divorce.<sup>79</sup> In many instances, when the infidelity is discovered the chances of survival are limited.

### **Binds Couples**

Lamanna and Riedmann view extramarital affairs as having positive and negative components. They state that extradyadic affairs can encourage closer relationships and actually improve relationships. In their view, an extramarital relation improves a sour relationship between two people.<sup>80</sup>

This point is disputed by Balswick and Balswick who refer to this as mythological thinking. They say, “In truth, while affairs can bring about a crisis in which an enduring marital problem can be solved, affairs are dangerous and often inadvertently end marriages.”<sup>81</sup>

### **Jealousy**

Lamanna and Riedmann also state that an affair triggers elements of jealousy and creates a crisis that seeks to resolve the marital problems. The main characteristics of jealousy in infidelity are anger and fear of losing the loved one. In this case, the offended partner will resort to some ways of ensuring the marriage is secure. Jealousy usually results in intimate partner violence, stalking, emotional

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<sup>79</sup>Michelle M. Jeanfreau, Antony P. Jurich, and Michael D. Mong, “Risk Factors Associated with Women’s Marital Infidelity,” *Contemporary Family Therapy* 36, no. 3 (September 2014): 327-332, published online 4 June 2014, accessed 19 July 2014, doi: 10.1007/s10591-014-9309-3.

<sup>80</sup>Lamanna and Riedmann, 134.

<sup>81</sup>Balswick and Balswick, *Authentic Human Sexuality: An Integrated Christian Approach*, 208.

manipulation, restrictions, withdrawal of benefits and may at times end with murder.

### **Loss of Trust**

Infidelity breeds distrust between the couples. At this stage the loss of trust is not only by the spouse but by the children, workmates, community or any people that will come to know of the relationship. The adulterer loses touch with the whole community, feels isolated and small, and at times wishes to resign to fate. The aggrieved party remains with a lot of unanswered questions. Bagarozzi asserts that involvement in an extramarital affair violates the trust one has about an individual.<sup>82</sup>

Discovery of an affair of a supposedly faithful partner leads to discouragement and loss of trust. In many instances the offended spouse goes through a lot of trauma as one thinks over and over again on the possible causes of the relationship. The spouse who has been wronged seeks for answers on questions that have no answers and also goes through a process of guilt searching. Carla Leone sums this up by saying that infidelity causes emotional and relational trauma in a marriage.<sup>83</sup>

### **Financial Implications**

Marital infidelity also has a serious bearing on the financial capacity of the family. In some instances the person might lose the job. Loss of the job may impact heavily especially if the person was a breadwinner. At times, the infidel re-channels all the resources to the affair to the detriment of the family. It is assumed that in most

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<sup>82</sup>Dennis A. Bagarozzi Sr, "Understanding and Treating Marital Infidelity: A Multidimensional Model," *The American Journal of Family Therapy* 36, no.1 (May 2008):10, accessed 7 July 2014, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01926180601186900>.

<sup>83</sup>Carla Leone, "Helping Couples Heal from Infidelity: A Self Psychological, Intersubjective Approach," *International Journal of Psychoanalytic Self Psychology* 8, no. 3 (June 2013):282-308, accessed 17 July 2014, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15551024.2013.796608>.

cases, some family funds are redirected towards the maintenance of the relationship. Child neglect and family neglect are also imminent in an extradyadic affair as more time is spent with the established relationship. The offenders may start cohabiting to the detriment of the family. As long as they start cohabiting the family will be abandoned and led to abject poverty especially if the offender is the breadwinner.

### **Sexual Transmissions and HIV/AIDS Threat**

Involvement in extramarital affairs exposes both partner to these sexually transmitted infections and HIV/AIDS. Excellent Chireshe and Regis Chireshe opine that infidelity poses a great risk of attaining HIV/AIDS.<sup>84</sup> An infection accrued from outside a relationship may seriously affect the other partner and the children. Incidentally, infidelity poses as a high risk factor for HIV/AIDS and intimate partner violence.

Suffice to say, infidelity impacts heavily on the family structure and has dire consequences for the family. If it can be avoided or abandoned, it would save a lot of marriages.

### **Possible Solutions to Infidelity**

The chapter has highlighted the risk factors that cause marital discontinuity. It is imperative that these negatives be turned into positives. In spite of the type of cause remedial action has to be taken. All the variables that were discussed focus on behavioral tendencies by an individual.

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<sup>84</sup>Excellent Chireshe and Regis Chireshe, "Monogamous Marriage in Zimbabwe: An Insurance against HIV and AIDS?" *Agenda* 25, no. 1 (July 2011): 93-101, accessed 17 July 2014, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10130950.2011.575588>.

All these risk factors can be eliminated by the development of a positive relationship with God. High religiosity is a great necessity in the fight against infidelity. Kostenberger and Jones suggest that putting God first in marriage will solve a lot of problems for the couple. They state that God's purpose is "to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ."<sup>85</sup>

An understanding of God's irrevocable plan in marriage has to be clearly articulated. Having sinful tendencies and engaging in the sin itself does not change God's design for marriage. All couples should bear in mind that God expects exclusiveness from them. God's law on infidelity has not changed. According to the fundamental beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, any sexual relations outside of marriage is sin and God's people have to maintain the purity of marriage by following God's commands. In this case, couples have to jealously guard the marriage relationship.<sup>86</sup>

Risk factors can be minimized by knowing and remembering that God's standard of marriage is characterized by "monogamy, fidelity, heterosexuality, fertility, complementarity and durability."<sup>87</sup> Further, Kostenberger and Jones opine that couples should always bear in mind that a marriage bond is marked by the following factors: permanence, sacredness, intimacy, mutuality and exclusiveness.<sup>88</sup>

In addition, Balswick and Balswick state that the success of a marriage is determined by the recognition that people are vulnerable. They highlight five essential

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<sup>85</sup>Kostenberger and Jones, 249.

<sup>86</sup>General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Ministerial Association, *Seventh-day Adventists Believe*, 336.

<sup>87</sup>Kostenberger and Jones, 270.

<sup>88</sup>*Ibid.*

antidotes to protection from the looming dangers of extra marital engagements.

Firstly, there is the need to stay on the alert. People need to know that the darts of the evil one can be thrust in any direction at any given time. Being alert means being aware of the potentials that may hinder progress.

Secondly, they encourage openness in marriage. There should be no secrets among couples. Everything ought to be done above board and transparently. This will destroy elements of mistrust that might aggravate unfaithfulness. Thirdly, couples have to determine the state of their marriage by taking and maintaining the temperature at desired levels.

Fourthly, they promote that couples ought to remain faithful with their eyes, thoughts and actions. In other words, they have to make a covenant with their eyes that they will not set anything evil in their sight (Job 31:1). Lastly, they encourage the couples to set their priorities right at all times. They should know what they desire of their marriage and seek to maintain the standard.<sup>89</sup>

### **Summary**

Marital infidelity among the young couples in this generation is a perennial problem. Most researches indicate the prevalence of the problem in different magnitudes. This study mainly focused on the issues related to marriage from what authors have said. Furthermore, the paper sought to define what infidelity entails and its possible risk factors. Finally, the impact of infidelity on the family structure was discussed. It is imperative to note that a lot of research still needs to be done from the African perspective.

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<sup>89</sup>Balswick and Balswick, *Authentic Human Sexuality: An Integrated Christian Approach*, 216 -218.

Chapter 4 will look at the description of the ministry context and develop an intervention built upon the theological foundation, literature review and field research. It will also give a brief description of the research and evaluate it. Finally, it will give directions for further research.

## CHAPTER 4

### DESCRIPTION OF THE INITIATIVE

The preceding chapter focused on the views expounded by various authors on issues regarding marital infidelity. The main focus of the chapter was to present enlightenment on marriage, marital infidelity, contributing factors to infidelity and the impact extra-marital affairs have on the family circle and society at large. It was noted that infidelity affects not only the individual concerned but the entire family, church and community at large.

Chapter 4 describes the macro and micro contexts of the research. This is meant to give a brief background on the research area of study. This description will be followed by the research design. The chapter will describe the type of research and the rationale for its selection. An analysis of the population sample, sampling procedures and the research techniques employed will be discussed.

After the description of the research design, the data collection procedures to be used will be discussed. This will be followed by the presentation and description of the findings, analysis of the data, the designing of the intervention and limitation.

#### **Description of the Ministry Context**

This short section gives a description of the country of Zimbabwe and its views on marriage principles. Furthermore, it highlights on the constitution of the country and its relation to marriage. The section will conclude with an overview of the applicable marriage.

## **Macro Context - Geographical Description of Zimbabwe**

Zimbabwe is a sovereign state that is located on a plateau in Southern Africa. It is a landlocked country that has South Africa, Botswana, Mozambique, Namibia and Zambia as its neighbors. It is divided into ten political provinces, namely, Bulawayo, Harare, Manicaland, Mashonaland East, Mashonaland West, Mashonaland Central, Midlands, Masvingo, Matabeleland North and Matabeleland South. The capital city is Harare.

## **Historical, Political Perspective and Governance**

The word, Zimbabwe derives its meaning from these words “dzimba dza mabwe” which means houses of stone or venerated houses. These houses were the ones that our ancestors used to dwell in and some of the structures are still there up to today at a place called Great Zimbabwe.

Zimbabwe is a multilingual state that has three official languages namely, Ndebele, English and Shona. Muzi Mlambo articulates that there are other minority languages which are dialects of either Ndebele or Shona. These minority tribes are small ethnic groups that are scattered throughout Zimbabwe.<sup>1</sup>

According to the census results of 2012, Zimbabwe has a population of 13 061 239. This consists of 6 280 539 males and 6 780 700 females. This indicates that there are more females than males in the country. Additionally, 67% of the population resides in rural areas while 33% stay in urban areas.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Muzi, Mlambo, “A Survey of the Language Situation in Zimbabwe,” *English Today* 25, no.2 (June 2009): 18-24, accessed 27 July 2016, doi: 10.1017/S0266078409000145.

<sup>2</sup>Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency, “Zimbabwe Population Census 2012,” accessed 14 July 2016, [www.zimstat.co.zw/sites/default/files/img/national\\_Report.pdf](http://www.zimstat.co.zw/sites/default/files/img/national_Report.pdf).

The country attained its independence from British colonial rule and became a Republic in 1980 after the “Chimurenga” war.<sup>3</sup> It is governed by a President, who is the Head of State. The Parliament of Zimbabwe assists in the formulation of the various statutory instruments that are used in administering the country.

The country has a constitution that helps in the governance system. The constitution upholds God as the sovereign. It reads, “We, the people of Zimbabwe, ... Acknowledging the supremacy of Almighty God, in whose hands our future lies, ... And, imploring the guidance and support of Almighty God.”<sup>4</sup>

### **Marriage Clauses in the Constitution**

One of the clauses of the Constitution refers to the marriage institution. It states that marriage should be entered into willingly and with the full consent of the intending spouses. It also propounds that marriage should be constituted between members of the opposite sex and not same sex.<sup>5</sup> In other words, homosexuality is discouraged and is not condoned in the country.

Further, the Government of Zimbabwe has two major marriage acts, that is, the civil and customary. These two acts emphasise on the solemnisation of the marriages by the government. In other words, the government is the custodian of all marriages.

**The Civil Marriage Act, Chapter 5:11.** This Act makes marriage a legal institution in Zimbabwe. It is solemnised by either a Magistrate, Church pastor or

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<sup>3</sup>Chimurenga war – the name of the liberation struggle that was held in former Rhodesia from 1965 until the ceasefire in 1980.

<sup>4</sup>The Constitution of the Republic of Zimbabwe Amendment (No. 20) 2013, Harare, Zimbabwe: Government Printer, 15.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 15.

anyone deemed to be a marriage officer by the Minister of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs. It allows a man to marry only one wife and a woman one husband. Anything on the contrary becomes a criminal offence that can lead to arrest and imprisonment, payment of a fine or both. Every marriage has to be registered with the Registrar of Marriages. Revocation of this kind of marriage is a High Court jurisdiction.<sup>6</sup>

Before the solemnisation of any marriage, there is a need to have it publicised for a period of 21 days either through marriage banns, notice of intention to marry or marriage license issuance. This is done in order to ensure that there is no lawful impediment to the proposed.<sup>7</sup>

**The Customary Marriage Act, Chapter 5:07.** This is the second kind of marriage that is recognised in Zimbabwe. It is different from the Civil Marriage Act in that it legitimises the marrying of more than one wife. However, polyandry is not accepted in the country. This marriage is contracted according to customary law and is presided over by a customary marriage officer of the concerned district, in this case, a magistrate or a chief appointed to the said office.

This kind of marriage subsists within Africans only. Notably, the marriage becomes valid when it is solemnised and registered under the provisions of the Act. More so, a marriage granted under this provision can only be dissolved by “order of a court of competent jurisdiction in terms of the Matrimonial Causes Act.”<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>The Marriage Act, Chapter 5:11, Harare, Zimbabwe: Government Printer, S.I. 666/1983.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>The Customary Marriage Act, Chapter 5:07, Harare, Zimbabwe: Government Printer, S. I. 666/1983.

Marriage in Zimbabwe is accorded high status and a violation of any of its acts is tantamount to a criminal activity. The Government of Zimbabwe upholds the monogamous type of marriage. Anything besides these two acts is not recognised. In spite of such legislative acts in place, infidelity and polygamy do exist to the detriment of the society. Courts are inundated with such related cases on a daily basis. According to Desire Ncube, infidelity is so rife and is one of the major leading causes of divorce in Zimbabwe. Other causes that have been cited are abuse and failure to access counselling.<sup>9</sup>

### **Micro Context of the Research**

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Zimbabwe began in 1894 and the work has grown tremendously since then. It has one union conference, known as Zimbabwe Union Conference. A union conference is defined as a group of local conferences in a defined geographical area. It consists of six different conferences for administration purposes. In this instance, these conferences are: East Zimbabwe, North Zimbabwe, North-West Zimbabwe, Central Zimbabwe, West Zimbabwe and South Zimbabwe. The latter conference served as the research base of this project.

**South Zimbabwe Conference.** The focus area of study is the South Zimbabwe Conference of Seventh-day Adventists which is a part of the Zimbabwe Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. The conference consists of the

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<sup>9</sup>Desire Ncube, "Infidelity wrecking marriages," *The Sunday Mail*, January 17, 2016, accessed July 14, 2016, <http://www.sundaymail.co.zw/infidelity-wrecking-marriages/>.

provinces of Matabeleland South and parts of Bulawayo, Matabeleland North, Midlands, and Masvingo provinces.<sup>10</sup>

Administratively, it is led by an Executive Committee through elected executive officers and departmental directors for three years. At the expiration of the triennial period a session is held to elect new officers and to map the way forward.

Currently, there are three officers and five departmental directors. Family Ministries form one of these departments. Its major function is to “strengthen marriage and the family” through “premarital guidance for couples, marriage strengthening programs, and the education of parents.”<sup>11</sup>

There are 23 church districts in South Zimbabwe Conference. Nine of these districts are within the City of Bulawayo and the rest are outside Bulawayo. These districts are manned by 22 pastors. This reflects that there is one district that has no pastor for now. However, the Conference administration has put a contingent plan to have one pastor supervising the two districts. The researcher chose one of the 23 districts to conduct the research and gave it a pseudonym of Heaven Bound District. The description of the territory is outlined below.

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<sup>10</sup>West Zimbabwe Conference, “Conference Realignment into Two Conferences Preparation Document” (Bulawayo, Zimbabwe: West Zimbabwe Conference, 2014) 5.

<sup>11</sup>*Church Manual* (2015), 93.

**Heaven Bound District.** This district is located in one of the suburban areas within South Zimbabwe Conference. Generally, the district is composed of various ethnic groups such as Ndebele, Shona, Kalanga, Tonga, Ndebele, English and Coloreds. However, the district is predominantly Ndebele. It is in this regard that Ndebele is used as a means of communication in all the services that are conducted by the church.

Heaven Bound District served as the research area for this particular research. Permission to conduct the research was sought from the newly organized South Zimbabwe Conference and was granted. Furthermore, district participation had to be enlisted from the leadership and the young married couples. The young married couples became the main focus group and had the task of supporting and contributing their perspectives on what should be done to help families.

### **Research Design**

The research process of this paper used the Logframe and Gantt Chart to describe the strategy and detail the project tasks respectively. It also employed the combined qualitative and quantitative approach. Observations and surveys were conducted as a means of acquiring data and reaching out to the affected individuals.

### **The Logical Framework Analysis**

The Logical Framework Analysis (LFA) is used in implementing the research. Its purpose is to design a strategy, plan, implement, and monitor a project. The LFA summarises the projects aims and the methodology to be used to achieve the end.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>N. J. Grove and A. B. Zwi, "Beyond the Log Frame: A New Tool for Examining Health and Peace Building Initiatives," *Development in Practice* 18, no.1 (January 2008): 66-81, accessed 19 July 2015, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09614520701778850>.

Likewise, Michael Adomako states that the logframe gives a summary of the whole project based on the aims and activities that will be used to achieve the desired end result. It indicates the resources required and envisages the “potential problems which could affect the success of the project, and how the process and ultimate success of the project will be measured and verified.”<sup>13</sup>

In addition, the logframe defines how the inputs will determine the output. M. D. Ingle supports the above views by stating, “If the inputs are managed properly, then the outputs will be produced. If the outputs are produced, then, the purpose will be achieved. If the purpose is achieved, then this will contribute to the achievement of the goal.”<sup>14</sup> Summarily, the logframe aids in ensuring that the objective is achieved by following a system that moves from the input to the attainment of the desired end. This thought is illustrated by the following diagram.

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<sup>13</sup>Michael K. Adomako, “Model for Training, Empowering, and Organizing Churches in the Mampong-West District for Shared Leadership in the Central Ghana Conference of Seventh-day Adventists,” (DMin thesis, Andrews University, 2014), 81, accessed 19 July 2015, Adventist Digital Library.

<sup>14</sup>M. D. Ingle, “Managing Programs and Projects for Effectiveness and Sustainability: The Logical Framework Approach,” accessed 19 July 2011, [www.pdx.edu/files/managing%20programs%20logicql%20frameworkapproach.pdf](http://www.pdx.edu/files/managing%20programs%20logicql%20frameworkapproach.pdf).

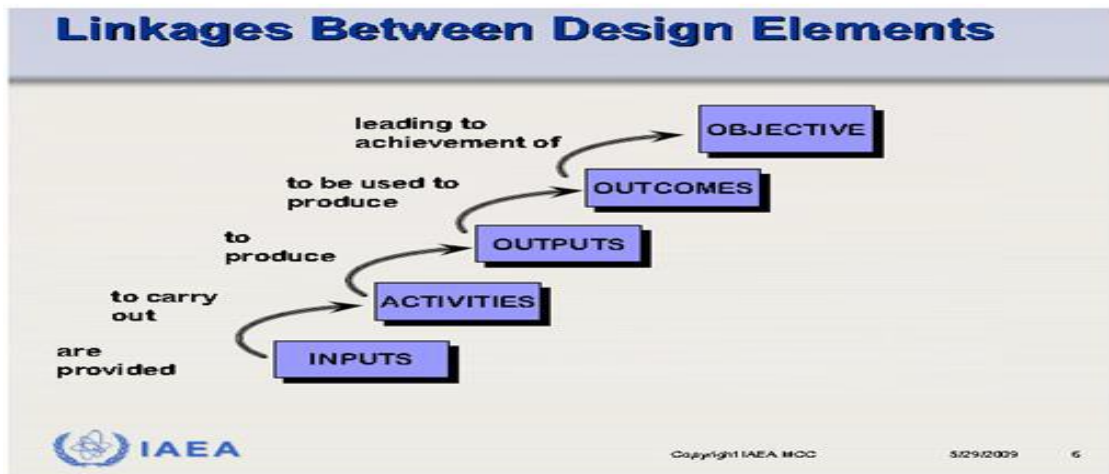


Figure 1. Illustration of a Logframe Matrix.

Note: From <http://www.iaea.org/technicalcooperation/documents/Region-Announce Docs/europe/ Training-for-new-NLO/story391-1-1. pdf>.

According to the above linkage, the proper management of inputs determines the outputs. These outputs will lead to the achievement of the purpose thus enabling the attainment of the goal. This view is explained more clearly by Tom Ogal who defines outputs as “tangible and intangible materials and resources.”<sup>15</sup>

The logframe is divided into the horizontal and vertical sections. The four vertical columns give a description of the desired goal, purpose, output, and activities of the project while the four horizontal rows indicate the narrative, identifiable indicators, means of verification, and assumptions. The table next page illustrates an example of a logframe.

<sup>15</sup>Tom Ogal, “A Biblical HIV/AIDS Mitigation Strategy in the Oyugis Central Adventist Church, Kenya,” (DMin diss., Andrews University, 2014), 70, accessed 15 July 2015, Digital Commons.

Table 1. Logframe Matrix Example

Project Description		Objectively Verifiable Indicators of Achievement	Sources and Means of Verification	Assumptions
Goal	What is the overall broader impact to which the project will contribute?	What are the key indicators related to the overall goal?	What are the sources of information for these indicators?	What are the external factors necessary to sustain objectives in the long term?
Purpose	What is the immediate development outcome at the end of the project?	Which indicators clearly show that the objective of the action has been achieved?	What are the sources of information that exist or can be collected? What are the methods required to get this information?	Which factors and conditions are necessary to achieve that objective (external conditions)
Outputs	What are the specifically deliverable results envisaged to achieve the objectives?	What are indicators to measure whether and to what extent expected the action achieves the required results?	What are the sources of information for these indicators?	What external conditions must be met to obtain the expected results on schedule?
Activities	What are the key activities to be carried out and in what sequence in order to produce the expected results?	Means	What are the sources of information about action progress?  Costs What are the action costs?	What preconditions are required before the action starts?
		What are the means required to implement these activities eg. personnel, equipment, supplies?		

Note. Typical logical framework matrix. Source: <http://www.sswm.info/sites/default/files/toolbox/BARRETO%202010%20Typical%20Logical%20Framework%20Matrix.jpg>.

**Goal:** The goal, refers to the end product of the purpose of the project. It predicts the future from the present circumstances. Adomako explains that the goal is the end product that encapsulates and epitomises the preferred future.<sup>16</sup>

**Purpose:** The purpose is the overall objective that is set out to be achieved by the project in tandem with the desired goal. In this case, the purpose of this research is to develop, implement and evaluate a strategy to reduce marital infidelity among young couples.

**Outputs:** Ogal refers to outputs as the specific products of a projects activities that can either be quantifiable, qualitative or attitudinal.<sup>17</sup> The outputs of this study are to ensure that married people gain more insights on the attributes of faithfulness and remain faithful to the marriage covenantal vows.

**Inputs:** This implies the materials and resources available for use in order to achieve the desired end. Inputs cover human and material resources. According to Adomako, inputs include “personnel, equipment, training, facilities, technical assistance, funds for contracted services, and other items.”<sup>18</sup> The horizontal rows show the narrative, identifiable indicators, means of verification, and assumptions.

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<sup>16</sup>Michael K. Adomako, “Model for Training, Empowering, and Organizing Churches in the Mampong-West District for Shared Leadership in the Central Ghana Conference of Seventh-day Adventists,” (DMin thesis, Andrews University, 2014), 81, accessed 19 July 2015, Adventist Digital Library.

<sup>17</sup>Tom Ogal, “A Biblical HIV/AIDS Mitigation Strategy in the Oyugis Central Adventist Church, Kenya,” (DMin diss., Andrews University, 2014), 70, accessed 15 July 2015, Digital Commons.

<sup>18</sup>Michael K. Adomako, “Model for Training, Empowering, and Organizing Churches in the Mampong-West District for Shared Leadership in the Central Ghana Conference of Seventh-day Adventists,” (DMin thesis, Andrews University, 2014), 81, accessed 19 July 2015, Adventist Digital Library.

Objectively Verifiable Indicators (OVI): These are indicators that express the degree of achievement. Ogal refers to this as the “thermometer of the project,” that measures the success of the project on whether the desired goals are being met.<sup>19</sup> Summarily, the OVI should give the same measurements regardless of who sees them.

Means of Verification: The Means of Verification (MOV) verify the location of the evidence that the project has been done. It implies the visible aspects of the research. For instance, Marriage Recommitment Vows certificates should be the end result of this project.

Assumptions: This category looks at the external factors that may influence the implementation of the project. This refers to factors that the researcher has no control over but should seek to overcome for the success of the program.

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<sup>19</sup>Tom Ogal, “A Biblical HIV/AIDS Mitigation Strategy in the Oyugis Central Adventist Church, Kenya,” (DMin diss., Andrews University, 2014), 70, accessed 15 July 2015, Digital Commons.

Table 2. Logframe Matrix

Objectives	Measurable/Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification	Important Assumptions
<b>Goal:</b>			
Decrease the prevalence of infidelity among young couples in the church	50% of couples in Heaven Bound District are aware of risk factors that affect marriages by September, 2015.	Issuance of Marriage Renewal Certificates	The South Zimbabwe Conference will support the research project.
	Issuance of a Clearance Letter		Attendance at meetings
<b>Purpose:</b>			
Develop, implement and evaluate a strategy to reduce marital infidelity among young couples.	Renewal of marriage vows among couples in the district	Completed report on the project	Families will renew marriage vows
<b>Outputs:</b>			
1. Discussion on problematic areas faced by the young couples and formation of an association	Answered questionnaires on the topic	Seminars will be held and results posted	Assume that people will respond positively to the questionnaires
2. Seminars on marriage on a monthly basis	Held 5 seminars on marriage related issues	Seminar presentations	That couples and facilitators will attend as per expectation
3. Conduct interviews and dispatch questionnaires	Dispatched questionnaires	Interview responses	The questionnaire and interviews will be answered honestly
4. Evaluation and analysis of project		Marriage renewal program	Income to conduct the Marriage renewal ceremony
<b>Activities:</b>			
1. 6 monthly seminars	6 seminars held	Seminars and outings held	Local church programs will not affect the plans
2. Construct and administer questionnaires and interviews		Available questionnaires	Members will be willing to respond in a truthful manner
3. Develop, implement and evaluate a program		Program outline	
4. Final evaluation			

## **Gantt Chart**

This is another tool that is functionally used in the research process to monitor progress from start to finish. It is through the Gantt Chart that the action plan of the project will be outlined, monitored and evaluated for remedial action. In other words, the Gantt Chart serves as the compass that gives direction to the project and illustrates the project schedule.

A Gantt chart is viewed as “a graphical representation of the duration of tasks against the progression of time,” and is useful for “planning and scheduling projects.”<sup>20</sup> Additionally, a Gantt chart shows the flow of the project from the beginning to the end, inclusive of its duration.

The advantages of using a Gantt chart are varied. Firstly, it assists the project planners and implementers to operate against a time frame. Secondly, it places the tasks according to priority and sequence. Thirdly, it assists in monitoring the progress of the project and provides remedial action where necessary. Accordingly, a Gantt chart illustrates the start and finish dates of the terminal and summary elements of a project.

Outlined below is the Gantt chart for this project from 2015 when it was reviewed due to the realignment that took place in the West Zimbabwe Conference. A new chart had to be designed since the circumstances were no longer the same. This is highlighted in the description of the ministry context.

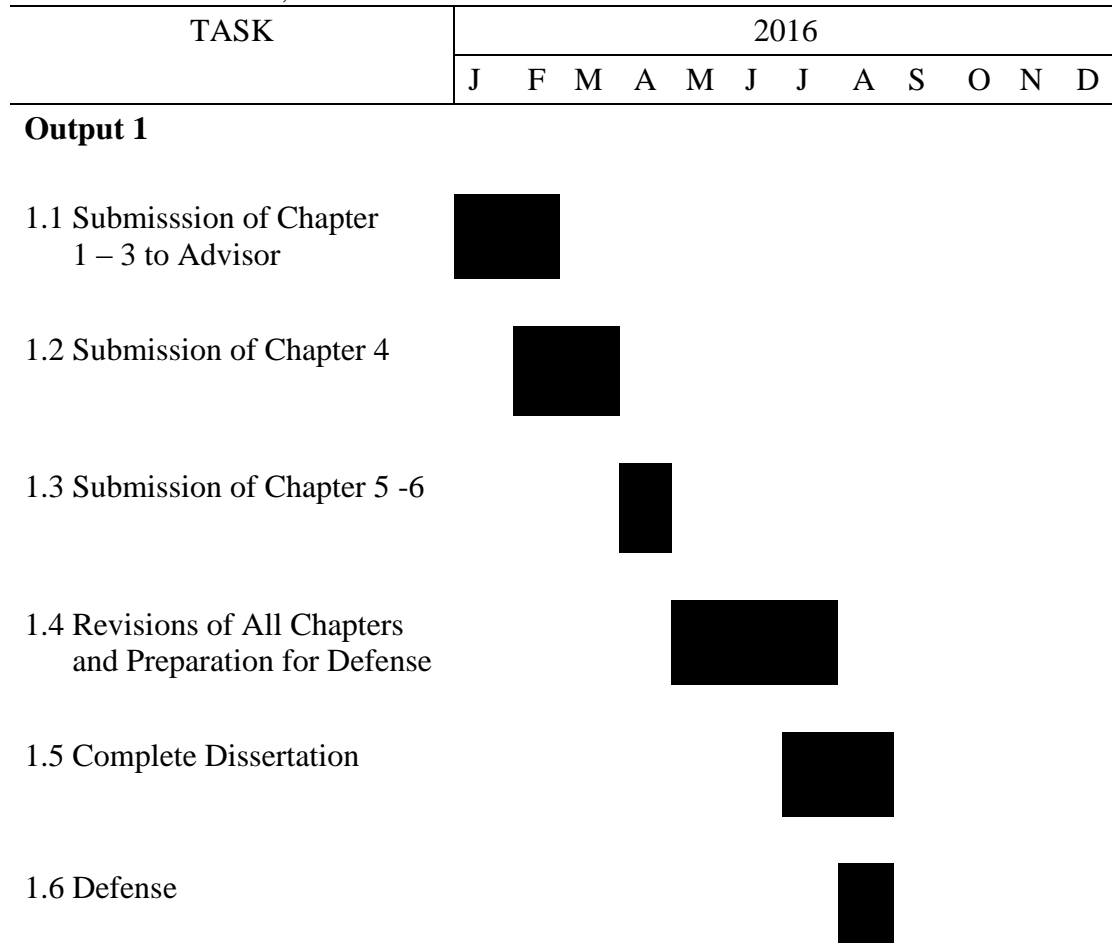
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<sup>20</sup>Michael K. Adomako, “Model for Training, Empowering, and Organizing Churches in the Mampong-West District for Shared Leadership in the Central Ghana Conference of Seventh-day Adventists,” (DMin thesis, Andrews University, 2014), 84, accessed 19 July 2015, Adventist Digital Library.

Table 3. Gantt Chart, 2015

TASK	2015											
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
<b>Output 1</b>												
1.1 Ensure Conference Clearance is Established												
1.2 Ensure District Clearance												
<b>Output 2</b>												
2.1 District Launch												
2.2 Formation of Young Couples Association												
2.3 Marital Pre-survey Questionnaire												
2.4 Signing of Informed Consent Forms												
<b>Output 3</b>												
3.1 Marital Infidelity Questionnaire												
3.2 Marital Infidelity Presentation												
3.3 Structuring of Topics to Be Covered												
<b>Output 4</b>												
4.1 Family Life Seminars												
4.2 Surveys and Interviews												
4.3 Interpretation of Data and Analysis												

Table 4. Gantt Chart, 2016



### Type of Research

This research is motivated by developments and changes occurring in the society, particularly in marriages. Alan Bryman indicates that reflections on the happenings in the society influence research in the area of concern.<sup>21</sup> It takes into cognizance the interrelations between the social and psychological factors that influence human thought and behavior.

<sup>21</sup>Alan Bryman, *Social Research Methods*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 15.

In addition, Anol Bhattacharjee, indicates that social science infers patterns of behaviours within specific populations. More so, the inferences derived from the sample can be generalized back to the population of interest.<sup>22</sup>

### **Mixed Method Approach**

The mixed method approach was used to carry out the study on finding out why married people engage in infidelity. This approach is an integration of the qualitative and quantitative approach to research. Instead of using one of the methods, the mixed method taps from the two approaches.

Carol M. Roberts opines that the blending of the two approaches in a single study complements each other by providing results with greater breadth and depth. It also helps in overcoming biases that might be inherent in each method.<sup>23</sup>

Roberts, also opines that the amalgamation of these two methods adds power and richness to the explanation of the data. Roberts explains that the quantitative method summarizes large amounts of data and reaches generalizations based on statistical projections. On the other hand, the qualitative approach relates the story from the participant's viewpoint since this provides rich descriptive details. It is from this realization that the mixed method was used in the collection of data.<sup>24</sup>

As already indicated this method has several advantages over other methods.

Uwe Flick, is of the opinion that the blending of these two methods assists in

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<sup>22</sup>Anol Bhattacharjee, *Social Science Research: Principles, Methods and Practices* (Tampa, FL: Global Text Project, 2012), Chapter 1, accessed 18 July 2016, [http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/oa\\_textbooks/3](http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/oa_textbooks/3).

<sup>23</sup>Carol M. Roberts, 142.

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*, 145.

converging, confirming and supporting similar conclusions. Further, the method assists in complementing each other and leading to a fuller picture.<sup>25</sup>

Similarly, Bryman, gives some reasons for the adoption of the method. He indicates that the combination of the two helps in explaining findings generated by the other and that this gives credibility to the research.<sup>26</sup>

### **Population Sample**

Purposive sampling was employed in the selection of the respondents. Bryman refers to purposive sampling as a strategic way of selecting participants who are relevant to the research questions that have been posed. This way of selecting respondents enables the researcher to be more relevant as the respondents would be knowledgeable in the selected area.

Selecting the respondents from a homogenous circle in Heaven Bound district means that these young couples have similar backgrounds and experiences that might resemble a bigger entity. The participants in this research had to be married in a monogamous marriage for a period of not more than fifteen years, reside and worship in any of the churches within Heaven Bound District and that participation should be voluntary.

The study population comprised of couples only. A total of eleven couples participated in the initial survey and two women were without their husbands. However, for the purposes of this research they were considered as couples as they represented their absent spouses. Discriminating against them would have been futile

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<sup>25</sup>Uwe Flick, *An Introduction to Qualitative Research*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2001), 30.

<sup>26</sup>Bryman, 634.

as they gave invaluable information as well. The responses were characterised as male and female.

### **Research Instruments**

The survey approach was used to collect the data from the respondents. The survey strategies used were questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussions.

Surveys: Bhartacherjee describes surveys as a research method that involves using standardized questionnaires or interviews to collect data. Furthermore, Bhartacherjee states that data is collected about people and their preferences, thoughts, and behaviours in a systematic way.<sup>27</sup>

Surveys can either be structured or unstructured. In structured surveys respondents are asked to respond to questions with predefined answers. These questions require lower levels of thinking from the respondent and lead to more accurate reports. On the other hand, unstructured surveys respond to questions that are at a higher level of thinking and allows free expressions of thought.

Questionnaires, focus groups and personal interviews were utilized in the research process. These approaches were used interchangeably so as to draw much information from the respondents. Where the respondents were hesitant to answer directly, they were able to respond better in the questionnaire.

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<sup>27</sup>Anol Bhattacharjee, *Social Science Research: Principles, Methods and Practices* (Tampa, FL: Global Text Project, 2012), Chapter 1, accessed 18 July 2016, [http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/oa\\_textbooks/3](http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/oa_textbooks/3).

Questionnaires: Bryman defines a questionnaire as a collection of questions that are administered to respondents with the aim of gathering information.<sup>28</sup> This is a type of research instrument that is commonly used to solicit information from people for analysis. The data acquired from the respondents in the questionnaire instrument is changed to information after close analysis. Self-administered questionnaires were used to gather the initial data that would help understand the need to carry out the research. Three questionnaires were used in this study to establish the facts on marital infidelity.

The questionnaires included both open and closed-ended questions. Bryman differentiates the two types of questions by saying, “With an open question the respondents are asked a question and can reply however they wish. Closed questions are presented with a set of fixed alternatives from which the respondents have to choose an appropriate answer.”<sup>29</sup> Similarly, Bryman indicates the advantages and disadvantages of using either.

The advantage of using the open – ended questions is that the respondents reply in their own terms and bring out what the researcher might have overlooked in designing the question. Furthermore, the questions are not suggestive of certain answers but leave room for independent thought.<sup>30</sup>

On the other hand, closed-ended questions are easy to fill as they are short and precise. More so, it helps the respondent to remain focused on what the researcher intends to find. Bryman states that comparability of responses is easier when using

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<sup>28</sup>Bryman, 715.

<sup>29</sup>Bryman, 246.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., 247.

closed-ended questionnaires.<sup>31</sup> The closed-ended questions cover some variables based on a Five-Point Likert Scale. According to Bhattacharjee, the Five-Point Likert Scale is an ordinal and summated rating scale that is used to measure data from the respondents following simply worded statements that range from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.”<sup>32</sup>

Bryman lists the disadvantages of open-ended questions as difficult to apply to any kind of scale and incomparable. He also asserts that this type of questioning is time consuming as it requires more time and effort from the respondents view. He further describes the disadvantages of closed-ended questions as questions that do not offer the respondent a chance to give personal expression. More so, the responses may not be mutually exclusive and can be irritating when the respondents find no suitable responses.<sup>33</sup>

Focus Groups: Focus group refers to a group of people that are invited to join a discussion. This method seeks to understand people’s thoughts and feelings. A group-centered questionnaire is used. In this instance, a group of people (6-12) are brought together at a common place and time. Bhattacharjee states that the respondents are issued with a questionnaire that has to be answered there and there,

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<sup>31</sup>Bryman, 248.

<sup>32</sup>Anol Bhattacharjee, *Social Science Research: Principles, Methods and Practices* (Tampa, FL: Global Text Project, 2012), Chapter 1, accessed 18 July 2016, [http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/oa\\_textbooks/3](http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/oa_textbooks/3).

<sup>33</sup>Bryman, 252.

without interacting with each other.<sup>34</sup> The focus group in this research were married couples. In this regard, there were thirteen couples who formed the main focus group.

Interviews: Personal interviews are interactions with selected individuals. In this case, interviews were conducted with a few selected individuals from the couple's respondents.

### **Presentation and Analysis of Data**

Firstly, permission was sought from the South Zimbabwe Conference to conduct the research within its constituency. This enabled the co-opting of the leadership support of the project. Permission was duly granted. Thereafter, liaison with the district was done through the head elders and the directors of the Family Ministries departments. The Family Ministries Directors were key elements as the couples fall directly under their department.

Secondly, a database of young couples was established through the Family Ministries Directors. This was done as a pre-sampling exercise to know the anticipated audience and to determine the number of questionnaires to prepare. Heaven Bound district has about 75 couples. These couples are divided into senior and junior couples. The junior couples are those who have been married for less than fifteen years while the senior couples are those in the sixteen and above years in marriage. The junior couples are 27, thus constituting 36% of the total number of couples.

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<sup>34</sup>Anol Bhattacharjee, *Social Science Research: Principles, Methods and Practices* (Tampa, FL: Global Text Project, 2012), Chapter 1, accessed 18 July 2016, [http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/oa\\_textbooks/3](http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/oa_textbooks/3).

Following the establishment of the data, an invitation was extended to all the couples in the junior category to attend a social function organized at a selected venue. A total of thirteen young couples attended the first session. This represented 48% of the young couple's populace.

At the meeting, the purpose of the project was outlined so that the people could make informed decisions on whether to participate or not. The presentation was on PowerPoint, highlighting the main objectives of the study. Some of the questions and statements included the justification of the study. The main areas of focus were:

- i) What is the basic understanding of infidelity?
- ii) Is infidelity existent amongst the Christian fraternity?
- iii) What are the risk factors associated with infidelity?
- iv) What should be done to reduce or eliminate infidelity among the Christians?

Twelve couples indicated a willingness to participate in the research and were requested to sign the Informed Consent Form. One couple declined to participate indicating personal reasons. Emphasis was made on confidentiality. The 24 respondents were encouraged to answer truthfully and to refrain from responding to questions they thought infringed on their privacy. The respondents were also asked not to share their responses as this would encourage misrepresentation of facts.

A committee that comprised the chairperson, secretary, treasurer and two committee members was elected. Their terms of reference were to organize future meetings for the association inclusive of facilitators and topics to be covered. The topics would be guided by the research demands and the groups needs as the association would outlive the research and become a permanent feature.

## **Presentation and Description of Findings**

The researcher adopted and adapted two questionnaires and interview questions that were used to gather information. The questions were both open-ended and closed. In addition, the questions were short and precise as they focused on the intentions of the research. These were the Marital Survey Questionnaire (MPQ) and the Risk Factors Questionnaire (RFQ). These questionnaires were supposed to be answered peremptorily. This was to ensure the return of all the questionnaires and that the responses were without due influence from the other party. Confidentiality was maintained through all the questionnaires.

### **The Marital Survey Questionnaire**

This questionnaire covered the demographic aspects as well as the social background of the respondents. It had sixteen questions that called for a selection of the correct answer from a given selection. The questions were meant to help the researcher identify with the client's background in relation to infidelity. This questionnaire was administered at the inaugural meeting of the couples and the responses are indicated herewith.

Age range mean: Notably, more men are in the +41 years range compared to the women who are in the 31 – 40 range. This shows a disparity in the age ranges. This could possibly suggest mismatches in the marriage pattern. Three of the female respondents were in the 21-30 years range.

Average years in marriage: Secondly, four men indicated that they had been married for less than five years while seven women indicated the same. This indicates that eleven of the 24 respondents are fresh in their marriages. Cumulatively, it shows that 40% of the respondents have not been long in marriage. On the other hand nine of the respondents had been married within the six to ten years range. Five of the

respondents were in the eleven to fifteen years range while only two had been married for more than fifteen years.

Children outside marriage: The third question sought to establish how many of these individuals had children with other people beside the current spouse. Six (25%) of the 24 respondents reported having children outside their current marriages. Accordingly, it seems more women had children outside marriage.

Premarital engagement: On the other hand, those who responded that they had engaged in premarital sex were six (25%). This notion indicates that a quarter of them entered into marriage with previous experience. The assumption here is that if one was actively involved before then one can easily engage with other people in marriage.

Conflict management: The marital survey questionnaire also sought to establish whether the couples had marital conflicts that necessitated their separation. Six of the respondents indicated that they had separated with their spouses at a certain stage. This represents 25% of the entire group. They indicated that the reasons for the separation were anger, poor conflict management and unfaithfulness.

Two of the three respondents indicated that anger and conflict management were the highest factors that led to their temporary separation. However, they had managed to resolve the conflicts amicably and been reunited.

In the ensuing discussion, it emerged that one of the couples had failed to resolve their problems and were on the verge of divorce. One of them indicated that the reconciliation was for the sake of the children only, otherwise, the marriage was on the collapsing end. An audience was arranged with them for the sake of maintaining confidentiality.

Happiness in Marriage: Thirteen (54%) of the respondents indicated that they were very happy in their marriages. They stated that this did not mean that there were no challenges but that they ensured that solutions were applied immediately. On the contrary, two showed that they were very unhappy about their situations, while three indicated that they were unhappy. Five of them stated that they were happy. The following table illustrates the above findings:

*Table 5. Marital Pre-survey Questionnaire*

Description	Male	Female
Sex	11	13
Age Range Mean		
a. 20 and below	0	0
b. 21 – 30	1	2
c. 31 – 40	4	10
d. 41 and above	6	1
Average Years in Marriage		
a. 1 – 5 years	4	7
b. 6 -10 years	4	5
c. 11 – 15 years	2	3
d. 16+	1	1
Children In Current Marriage		
a. 0	1	1
b. 1	1	1
c. 2	6	5
d. 3+	2	8
Children Out of Wedlock		
a) 0	8	10
b) 1	3	6
c) 2	0	0
d) 3	0	0
Highest Level of Education		
a. Primary	0	0
b. High School	3	2
c. Tertiary	5	5
d. University	3	4
Ever Separated With Spouse		
a. Yes	3	3
b. No	7	12
Cause For Separation	a. Anger b. Conflict Management	a. Anger b. Unfaithfulness c. Conflict Management
Happiness in Marriage		
a. Very Happy	6	7
b. Happy	2	3
c. Unhappy	2	2
d. Very Unhappy	1	1

## **Risk Factors Questionnaire**

The couples were asked to list the possible causes of marital infidelity as individuals. The questionnaire was based on a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents had to select an appropriate response. The responses were supposed to be picked from the following, strongly disagree, disagree, unsure, agree and strongly agree. In addition, they had to add other causes they thought were left out.

The questionnaire was completed and there was a list of 30 possible causes. These possible risk factors were mixed up but expressing the deep thoughts of the individuals. The table next page indicates the revelations from the couples.

*Table 6. Causes of Marital Infidelity – Risk Factors Questionnaire*

Description	1	2	3	4	5
1. Sexual Dissatisfaction/Boredom	4	0	1	5	9
2. Sexual Infrequency/Deprivation	4	2	3	9	7
3. Previous Experience	2	2	1	6	7
4. Marital Dissatisfaction	2	2	4	6	4
5. Low Religiosity	2	3	3	7	3
6. Peer Pressure/ Influence	2	1	2	7	3
7. Alcoholism/Drug Abuse	4	1	1	9	2
8. Low Self-esteem	2	3	4	5	2
9. High Interest in Sex	3	1	2	5	4
10. Abusive Behavior	2	3	3	3	5
11. Lust/Covetousness	0	1	2	6	5
12. Opportunities/Circumstances	3	0	1	6	5
13. Boredom	2	0	1	8	5
14. Exploitation	2	1	6	5	1
15. Education Levels	0	3	5	2	6
16. Insecurity	2	1	1	6	1
17. Forced Marriages	0	3	2	3	7
18. Selfishness	0	1	6	5	3
19. Globalization	2	2	1	6	6
20. Frequent Absenteeism From Home	1	2	2	4	6
21. High Differentiation	2	3	2	5	4
22. Family Pressure	0	3	2	4	6
23. Jealousy	0	2	4	5	3
24. Poor Conflict Management	0	2	2	5	4
25. Unequal Yoking	2	2	4	3	5
26. Income	0	3	2	6	6
27. Fixation	1	1	3	6	6
28. Poor Communication in Marriage	0	1	1	4	6
29. Immaturity	0	3	2	6	5
30. Narcissism	0	1	2	6	4

Not all the respondents answered the questionnaire. However, it was evident from the responses that sexual dissatisfaction ranked highest among those who agreed that it was a major cause of infidelity. Sexual depravity and forced marriages also

scored high. Notably, nine people indicated that alcoholism and drug abuse are some of the major contributors to licentiousness.

Apart from selecting possible causes from a given list, the respondents were asked to add any other causes that might have been omitted. This was from a general discussion that was followed by a hand vote. Seven additional reasons were given as follows: peer influence, dressing, childlessness, impotence, courtship decline, clumsiness and demon possession. The results of the discussion are indicated in the following table.

*Table 7. Additional Causes as Indicated by the Couples*

	Cause	Frequency
1.	Peer Influence	8
2.	Dressing	6
3.	Childlessness/Barrenness	3
4.	Impotence	5
5.	Courtship Declines	3
6.	Cleanliness	6
7.	Demon Possession	8

A brief discussion on each of the 37 factors ensued and the findings were reduced from 37 to six for purposes of being able to deal effectively with the responses and to come up with an effective program. This does not mean that the other reasons were invalid but that more research has to be done in each area. One will discover that sweeping statements by most researchers have been done on these causes. There is need for deliberate in-depth studies to be done on each cause.

*Table 8. Shortened Causes of Marital Infidelity*

Causes	Number of Responses
Financial instability	15
Sexual dissatisfaction and depravity	13
Lack of communication in the couple	12
Covetousness	11
Former sexual expeditions	10
Cyber influence	9

### **Causes of Marital Infidelity**

The compressed factors were discussed at length and are herewith listed in the order of sequence. The greatest cause of marital infidelity was financial instability in the homes. Fifteen of the 24 respondents were of the view that management of financial resources was critical in the catastrophes in the families. Despondent families were resultant from financial mismanagement. Sexual depravity and dissatisfaction ranked second with thirteen of the respondents confirming this. Twelve respondents viewed lack of communication as another cause of infidelity. Also topping the list were covetousness, sexual experiences and cybersex. These six components were discussed in the group and the following revelations emanated.

#### **Financial Instability**

The greatest cause highlighted by the respondents was financial instability in the homes. In the views of the respondents, financial instability is caused by mistrust, greediness and lack of transparency. Eleven women indicated that they never knew their husbands income and had to ask for money from their spouses for everything. They felt they had been reduced to beggars in their own homes. Even groceries were done by the husbands. Lack of transparency in the use of funds often led to indulgence in extra marital affairs as people have personal needs to meet. The women

highlighted the following hypothetical points:

- a) All financial decisions are made by the men as they have a better vision and women are reckless spenders. According to the women, this is not a true notion. In the actual fact, men tend to be more reckless than the women and spend money on useless items. This is subjective and needs to be analyzed deeper.
- b) Men have a tendency of issuing out funds out to their relatives without consensus and then blame the wives for extravagance.
- c) Most women are not allowed to work as they will meet other men out there who may meet their needs.
- d) Ownership of the funds in the home is patriarchal, meaning, that final decisions hinge on the man. This shows the poor conception of the marriage circle.
- e) Women are blamed for lacking vision hence their non-involvement in financial issues.

All these misconceptions may force someone to indulge in an affair in order to meet the personal needs that are not being satisfied at home.

### **Sexual Dissatisfaction and Deprivation**

Thirteen respondents rendered sexual dissatisfaction and deprivation by one of the couples a great cause for marital infidelity. Various reasons were given for the dissatisfaction and deprivation.

**Sexual dissatisfaction.** According to Bagarozzi sexual dissatisfaction refers to the unmet and unfulfilled sexual desires in a couple. Everybody enters marriage with an expectation but when this is neglected the person feels dissatisfied and looks for satisfaction elsewhere. One respondent echoed this statement, “marriage should be an

adventure where one finds joy in participation.” It is worth noting that dissatisfaction acts as a precursor to a decrease in sexual frequency.<sup>35</sup> The factors that were listed as acts of sexual dissatisfaction were the following:

*Quality time.* Lack of quality time with each other especially during pregnancy and the birth of children in the family causes a lot of distress. When children are born in a family the affection changes and most of the attention is focused toward the children rather than the spouse. One man said, “Conjugal rights are deprived for the sake of the children, hence the option of an affair.”

Failure to go through the three phases of the sexual response cycle, that is, desire, arousal and orgasm has a contributing effect towards engaging in illicit relationships. The desire cycle is characterized by thoughts, fantasies and motivation. What is it that pushes one to have sex? In many instances, the sexual act is just a fulfillment of a fixture. There is nothing that motivates one to engage. The absence of a positive attitude necessitates one to engage in a dyadic affair. Many just plunge into the act without due consideration of the others concerns.

Secondly, the arousal phase may create a lot of dissatisfaction among the couple. The arousal phase takes cognisance of the arousal of the other partners’ feelings to an extent of smooth flow of the sexual act. As one respondent put it, “It’s like someone just diving into the sea without taking precautionary measures and not even knowing how to dive.”

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<sup>35</sup>Julie Fricker, “Predicting Infidelity: The Role of Attachment Styles, Lovestyles, and the Investment Model” (PDP thesis, Swinburne University of Technology, 2006), 11, accessed 17 July 2014, Swinburne University.

Lastly, 55% of the women alluded failure to reach orgasm as a major cause of infidelity. They indicated that this failure is attributed to the failure to respond to the desire and arousal phases. In most cases, the sexual act is just rushed into, in spite of the feelings of the other party. Dissatisfied people tend to look for opportunities when they can engage meaningfully and be satisfied.

***Mistrust.*** Lack of trust in each other is another possible cause for infidelity. For example, suggesting a new sexual idea brings a lot of suspicion on the new skill acquired. This is differentiation in thought that leads to guilt and monotony in engaging in different sexual acts.

***Poor love techniques and lack of variety.*** Twenty three (95.8%) of the respondents agreed that the use of one sexual method was outdated and monotonous. They called for the adoption of new techniques to spice up the sexual act. In other words, people look for satisfaction, elsewhere, because of the monotonous love experiences.

***Sexual deprivation.*** In this case, one is deprived of conjugal rights for a prolonged period for various reasons. The respondents indicated that at times they can go without engaging in sex for as long as one month. Various reasons were attributed for deprivations such as fatigue and anger. Prolonged absences of sexual activity is prone to lead one to seeking sexual satisfaction elsewhere. According to Fricker, “The greater the decline in sexual frequency, the more likely is the occurrence of extramarital involvement.”<sup>36</sup>

Three of the respondents indicated that they had not had a sexual encounter

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<sup>36</sup>Julie Fricker, “Predicting Infidelity: The Role of Attachment Styles, Lovestyles, and the Investment Model” (PDP thesis, Swinburne University of Technology, 2006), 11, accessed 17 July 2014, Swinburne University.

with their spouse for more than three years. This is likely problematic as sexual engagement is part of the marriage expectation.

Two critical reasons that were forwarded were that of failure to resolve conflict amicably and fixation. Once there are unresolved issues there is bound to be some controversy and then denial. When one is denied for a lengthy period, he or she will look for acceptance elsewhere from those with a willing disposition.

### **Poor Communication**

The majority of the respondents indicated that communication absence in families was evident and disastrous. They indicated that communication was either verbal or non-verbal. In most marriages communication is absent. One of the partners withdraws into a shell and remains there for a long time without sharing one's thoughts. The respondents indicated that lack of communication destroys intimacy. Balswick and Balswick state that communication is the heart of family life and that lack of effective communication destroys relationships.<sup>37</sup>

### **Covetousness**

As previously alluded, covetousness has an element of possessiveness and can lead to marital and emotional dissatisfaction. 42% of the respondents alluded to covetousness as a cause for marital infidelity. They indicated that covetousness is resultant of a desire to accumulate beyond measure and shows lack of contentment. Furthermore, one of the respondents retorted that covetousness is hypocritical.

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<sup>37</sup>Balswick and Balswick, *The Family: A Christian Perspective on the Contemporary Home*, 239.

### **Former Sexual Experiences**

Twenty six percent of the respondents admitted that previous sexual experiences have a large bearing on the marriage. They were of the view that previous experiences act as a base for the new marriage. The spouse compares and contrasts the two situations and then opts for what is considered desirable. Failure to meet the standard set by the former lovers discredits the present situation and renders the person useless. There is an old myth in the African context that stipulates that one's first sexual partner will always be there for you. One feels obligated to that individual for the rest of his/her life.

### **Internet Influence**

More than half of the respondents interviewed (62%) disclosed that they have been victims of internet infidelity. They postulated that they have watched pornographic material and that this has had adverse effects on their marriages. In most cases, the pornographic viewers lose interest in their relationships as they compare what is happening on the screen and on the ground. Having watched internet sex one would then want to practice the same with the spouse. Failure to meet the standard leads to discontentment and search for aggressive partners. More so, one loses interest on the spouse as satisfaction is derived from the internet. Similarly, it exposes one to acts of masturbation and search for prostitutes.

## **Designing of Intervention Program**

### **Intervention Program**

Having gone through the questionnaires it was now inevitable that an intervention program be put in place. It was scheduled that monthly meetings be held with the couples to cover a series of lessons on selected topics. The seminars would

run for nine months at selected venues. In addition, personal visitations would be done during the process, so as to acquire more information that might not have been reflected on the questionnaire.

The intervention program was entitled “Devoted Couples Marriage Seminar,” with the theme of ensuring that courtship lasts through marriages. It is a holistic package that covers a total of six topics. The following topics were selected and duly covered in the presentations.

**God’s ideals on marriage.** This topic looks at the definition of marriage and what it takes to have a Christian home. It lays out God’s plan for marriages. This topic was selected because it responds to the foundation of all institutions and the parameters that surround it. A marriage with Christ as the head is bound to flourish. The emphasis here is to make Christ the security and head of all marriages.

**The negative impact of infidelity on marriage.** The focus of this seminar is to ensure that marriages are anchored in Christ. Infidelity leaves a lot of scars on individuals and the society at large. Some people engage in infidelity without considering the costs thereof. Therefore, this seminar sought to describe the evil nature of infidelity and assess its impact on the family.

**The contribution of marital abuse to infidelity.** This presentation was meant to reveal the ill effects of intimate partner violence among couples. Domestic violence is a silent destroyer of marriages. Men and women mostly live a pretentious life when marital abuse is rampant in the homes.

**Specified factors of infidelity engagement.** The basis of this discussion was to establish the reasons of engagement in marital infidelity. The cause and effect principle was presented. An elaboration was sought on each cause.

**The impact of diet on sexuality.** One of the contributors to infidelity is diet. It is imperative for people to follow principles of healthful living if they are to overcome some lustful temptations. Some foods are stimulants and aid a person in having lustful ideas. This seminar sought to enlighten people to follow God's plan.

**Marital vaccines against infections.** Having looked at all the possible risk factors, it became necessary that a plan be developed to immunize marriages against deadly infections. This session was meant to assist couples to be proactive than reactive.

### **Summary**

This chapter presented a detailed description of the ministry context with emphasis on the macro and micro contexts of the area of study. It further discussed the research methods used in the collection of data. Furthermore, the chapter presented and described the data. It concluded by giving out an outline of the intervention program.

Chapter 5 will describe the implementation of the designed program. It will draw a conclusion and forward recommendations for further studies.

## CHAPTER 5

### NARRATIVE OF INITIATIVE IMPLEMENTATION

The previous chapter looked at the detailed description of the ministry context, the research design and data analysis. Further, it presented and described the findings of the research. Lastly, it designed the intervention program.

Chapter 5 gives a chronological and concise description of the implementation of the developed initiative. It presents a detailed implementation process of the strategy of assisting couples maintain marital purity by remaining faithful to their vows and reduce marital infidelity among themselves. The strategy that was adopted for the implementation was the use of a progressive seminar that would last up to nine months. A progressive seminar is a type of meeting that is scheduled to cover a certain period of time. Unlike other seminars that cover a short period, like a day or so, this one extends for a longer period but covering a number of significant areas.

The seminar participants were drawn from all the married couples in Heaven Bound district. An open invitation was sent to all the couples to attend the seminars. This was done through the general announcements in the church. An elder would announce to the church whenever a meeting was scheduled. The venue and meeting times would also be announced. This method was done so as to ensure that the message got to everyone. An encouragement was also made to invite their friends and neighbors to the seminars.

## **Purpose of Study**

It is imperative to reflect on the purpose of this study and discover how it was fulfilled. The reason of this research was to develop, implement and evaluate a strategy on how to combat marital infidelity in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

This was to be done through a discovery path of the risk factors that influence acts of unfaithfulness in marriages. This was influenced by the “cause to effect” principle which emphasizes on the cause and effects of a particular problem. More so, the couples were meant to understand the harmful effects of engaging in adulterous affairs and how to avoid its occurrences among themselves.

Realizing the desired purpose calls for a deliberate attempt to explore various avenues. There are indeed many ways of attaining the expected end. However, this study had to focus on one of the many ways in the fight against infidelity.

Based on the purpose of study, the researcher came up with three goals that would help determine the setting up of the intervention. These goals would assist in ensuring that there was no deviation from the desired practice.

The three goals of the study were:

- a) To establish vaccines against marital infections that might end up being viral and cause a lot of problems for the family. Marriages, like children, need to be vaccinated if they are to survive.
- b) To assist couples to open up and see their marriage from a different worldview. They were to understand that being closed or remaining in a secluded position has adverse effects on the marriage. Most African marriages are so oppressive that many people suffer quietly instead of searching for help. In some instances, the victims do not know what to do and where to go.

- c) To help the leadership of the church realize the potential dangers looming around families and come up with ways of assisting the married people.

Leadership is to come up with a deliberate program that is more proactive than reactive.

It is from this context that the research meant to determine the existence of infidelity within Christian marriages. Notably, being a Christian does not exempt people from being tempted. In the actual sense, the Devil's darts are targeted on those who follow Christ. Seemingly, many marriages are facing various problems such as parenting, manipulation, financial disequilibrium, and marital infidelity, among many others.

This study sought to bring an awareness that marital infidelity exists within the church, even if it is to a small degree. This was no easy feat as many would want to pretend that all is well in their homes.

Ellen G. White states a dreadful statement concerning Christians. She says, "If all who profess to obey the law of God were free from iniquity, my soul would be relieved; but they are not. Even some who profess to keep all the commandments of God are guilty of the sin of adultery."<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, she indicates that adultery is one of the terrible sins that have ravaged many professed Christians in this age. She refers to adultery as a sin that is practiced by all people, including the followers of Christ.

Lastly, the researcher developed a program that would fully assist in the curtailing and reduction of infidelity within the church. This program was meant to be a rescue plan on how to hedge marriages from the wiles of the devil. The program would also address the key issues that disrupt family life to a great extent.

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<sup>1</sup>Ellen G. White, *Testimonies*, 2:252.

## **Implementation of the Initiative**

The implementation started with a design of the curriculum that is highlighted below. It showed the goals of the seminars and how everything was to be done.

### Devoted Couples Curriculum Development

Theme: Courtship Lasting Through Marriage

#### Purpose of Seminar

To equip couples for effective and affective marriages using scriptural and scientific based information on marriage and human sexuality.

#### Duration

The whole seminar should cover a period of six months. This can be done over a weekend or over a certain period of time. Each session should last about one and a half to two hours.

#### Facilitation

The researcher would serve as the chief facilitator but would also invite others to assist. The facilitators should provide biblical strategies and practical ways on how to overcome marital infidelity.

#### Benefits of the Seminar

- i. Improved family relations and establishment of protective hedges around the marriage. Rekindle the flames of marriage that are somehow extinguishing.
- ii. Attain a certificate of attendance and marriage renewal.
- iii. Creation of a social network among the couples so that they assist each other through prayers and advice.

### Objectives of the Seminar:

By the end of the seminar, couples should be able to:

- i. Define the biblical marriage principles and arrange to ensure that their marriages are in accordance.
- ii. Discover the risk factors associated with marital infidelity and how to manage them.
- iii. Provide appropriate interventions for the risk factors associated with marital infidelity.
- iv. Develop an awareness of an integrative worldview shaped by Christian values and standards.
- v. Manage sexual issues in couple relationships.
- vi. Provide guidelines on addressing issues of sexuality.
- vii. Relate well in their marriages and exercise exclusivity in all areas.

### Teaching Methods

PowerPoint presentations, lecture presentations, group work, films and family visitations.

### Topics to be Covered

- i. God's Ideal of a Marriage
- ii. The Negative Impact of Infidelity on Marriage
- iii. The Contribution of Marital Abuse to Infidelity
- iv. Specified Factors of Infidelity Engagement
- v. The Impact of Diet on Sexuality
- vi. Marital Vaccines Against Infections

## Seminar Presentations

The seminar was codenamed *Devoted Couples* after the realisation that marriages need devoted people. The seminars were meant to be interactive and allow couples to share their experiences and how they have overcome them. The seminars also aimed at promoting openness among couples. One of the reasons attributed to the discord in the families is lack of devotion and commitment to the marriage. The Devoted Couples seminar was divided into six sessions.

### Seminar One: God's Ideal of a Marriage

The first seminar was held in March 2015 at one of the homesteads organised by the Family Life directors. It was an evening event and ran for two hours. Its main focus was to look at the biblical view of marriage and see if the marriages at hand were really following God's ideals. From the introductions given it became evident that some of the marriages fell short of God's and societal expectations.

Thirteen couples attended this inaugural seminar. Eight of these couples were legally married while three of them were customarily married. The remaining two were cohabiting and had been in that state for an average of four years. This revealed an anomaly on the happenings. The last two segments did not see any wrong in either being customarily married or cohabiting. The table below indicates the nature of the first respondents to the seminars.

*Table 9. Seminar Attendees Classification*

Type of marriage	Number	% Response
Civil Marriage	8	61
Customary Marriage	3	23
Cohabitation	2	16
Total	13	100

The main purpose of this seminar was to ensure that all marriages in the church are biblically and socially compliant. Each couple was supposed to rate their marriage on the biblical principles that were outlined and find ways of realigning to the desired heavenly standards.

Marriage was defined as God's institution that has four prerogatives, namely, monogamy, heterosexuality, endogamy and permanency. The biblical principles were enunciated from the teachings of both the Old and New Testaments. The Bible references used were Genesis 2:22-24, Matthew 19: 5-6, Mark 10: 7. These texts helped in giving out God's ideal on a marriage.

Additionally, a citation of the Zimbabwean Marriage Acts was discussed in view of the above. The Marriage Act, Chapter 5:11 was explained and differentiated with the Customary Marriage Act, Chapter 5:07. The benefits of the former act were discussed and upheld as the standard accepted by the SDA Church. The advantages and disadvantages of the latter were also discussed. The couples were asked to measure their marriages against these two principles.

The Marriage Acts discussion brought a lot of debate. The facial expressions said it all. Some of the women stated that they had never known of such acts and terms of reference. The bottom line was that there was a need to ensure the stability and security of the marriages through the right kind of marriage for Christians. The couples were encouraged to go through the study and make relevant decisions. This seminar served as an eye opener to many couples. It was resolved at this meeting that such a lesson should be taught to the church at large as many people were unaware of their obligations in marriage.

The seminar concluded with a homework exercise given to the couples. This exercise covered the following topics:

- i. As a couple, compare and contrast the ideals of marriage as presented by God and the Marriage Acts of Zimbabwe.
- ii. What can be done to make your marriage a happy entity in terms of the set standards?

The session concluded with a dinner that was organised by the owners of the place. The discussions went on during the dinner and people advised each other. The seed had been planted and the germination and growth of the relationships was left in the hands of the couples and God.

Before separating, a couple sought audience with the facilitator and indicated a willingness to stabilise their marriage according to the statutes of the country. An arrangement for consultation was made with them. The seminar had started to bear fruit. After the consultations and referrals, the couple was finally married according to the provisions of the Marriage Act, Chapter 5:11.

This is one of the proofs that such seminars should not be taken lightly. The seminars coupled with visitations play a big role in securing marriages.

### **Seminar Two: The Negative Impact of Infidelity on Marriage**

The marriage camp is facing multiple challenges in the South Zimbabwe Conference, particularly, in Heaven Bound District. Marriages are threatened by many variables and are at the brink of collapse. The goal of this seminar was to identify the dangers that are threatening the future of marriages. This seminar was designed to address the issue of marital infidelity and how it impacts on the family circle. This was held in May, 2015.

The venue of the meeting was at a house within the community. The number of couples who attended had increased from thirteen to sixteen. Those who had come previously were ten. Notably, six of the couples were coming for the first time.

Included in this group were three couples that were non-members of the church. They had been invited by their friends as promoted in the churches. It should be noted that some people came without their spouses. These were not counted as they would give an incomplete picture of the study. They were most welcome to participate in the discussions.

Another point to note about the seminar attendees was that the age range had now increased. There were four senior couples who graced this occasion. It was a blessing to have the elderly couples among us. The argument brought forward was that marriage is marriage despite the period in marriage.

The facilitator for this meeting was the researcher. The person who had been invited gave a last minute apology. The fortunate part was that a preliminary discussion had been held before and the host was aware of the structure of the lesson. This had been done so that the lessons would always be congruent with the issues of marital faithfulness.

The seminar started with the definition of the word infidelity. People were divided into two groups for ten minutes and were supposed to come up with biblical and social definitions. The groups came up with the following explanations.

**From a biblical perspective.** The groups said that infidelity was an adulterous sin against God that involved sexual intercourse between two people that are not married. They cited the example of Joseph who said to Potiphar's wife, "How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God" (Gen 39:9). They also indicated that it is adultery. Jesus called it "sin" in John 8: 11, when He said to the woman caught in adultery, "Neither do I condemn thee: go and sin no more."

**From a social perspective.** The groups, in this case, came up with several expressions. Summarily, they all agreed that it was an act of unfaithfulness and selfishness on the part of one spouse who engages in a sexual relationship with another person besides the partner. They also referred to infidelity as sexual intercourse undertaken between a married person and someone not espoused to them. Both definitions were focusing on adultery as a sexual act only and none referred to it as emotional infidelity.

Furthermore, the group used a common term in Zimbabwe to describe infidelity, “small house.” A “small house” refers to an illicit adulterous affair with someone not legally married to and is highly secretive. This is highly prevalent in Zimbabwe and in most cases, affects the affluent people in the society.

After the group presentation, the presenter focused on the discussion of the day. Based on the definitions of infidelity by the group, the facilitator led the discussion on expanding God’s views on adultery. The main gist of the discussion was Exodus 20: 14 and 17 which reads, “Thou shalt not commit adultery” and “Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s wife.”

Additionally, Matthew 5:27 and 28 was used as a reference. Jesus’ admonition in this instance was that adultery includes thought actions. Jesus said, “Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery, but I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.” In this context, infidelity was defined as including both emotional and sexual activities.

Another text used was Galatians 5: 19 which indicates that the works of the flesh are “Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness ... and such like; of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such

things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” Therefore, infidelity reflects the lusts of the flesh and is a sign of spiritual immaturity.

The main point that was being highlighted in this manner was the form that adultery takes. The assumption by many people was that adultery only involved the physical act whereas it also included the issues of the heart. The presenter further elaborated on the fact that infidelity is both emotional and sexual in nature.

After this discussion, the couples were divided into two groups and were asked to point out the threats of infidelity on marriage. The question was, “In what ways does infidelity pose a danger to the marriage circle?” They were given fifteen minutes to discuss and bring out their views. Each group had a secretary who did all the recordings and was supposed to report back.

After the discussions the secretaries presented their findings which were then consolidated into one perspective. The results of the group discussions were narrated as described below:

- i. Infidelity breeds mistrust between the couple
- ii. Infidelity lowers the self-esteem of the couple
- iii. Infidelity brings disharmony in the family
- iv. Infidelity disrupts the flow of the marriage pattern and affects the financial attributes as funds are misdirected to the detriment of the family
- v. Infidelity creates tension in the couples
- vi. Infidelity may cause divorce depending on the circumstances and depth of the relationship. Divorce necessitates emotional instability in the children and community as they become destitute
- vii. Infidelity brings mental depravation

- viii. Infidelity brings embarrassment to the family, church and community at large.

Having listed these attributes, the couples were asked to rethink on their marriages. They were encouraged to find ways of avoiding infidelity within their circles of marriages. The meeting ended on a positive note with a short devotion by one of the participants. It was entitled, “Rather leave the jacket than leave your character.” The devotion was based on the aspect of fleeing from temptation, no matter what it takes. Joseph fled the scene that was conducive for sin and suffered the consequences. He was accused falsely and imprisoned but remained with his character.

The group was given an assignment to do before the next meeting. The assignment was for them to discuss at home the possible risk factors of infidelity.

### **Seminar Three: Specified Factors of Infidelity Engagement**

This meeting was held in August, 2015 at a selected venue. The point of discussion on this day was based on why people engage in acts of infidelity. After having defined infidelity in the previous seminar, and established that it was a common societal problem, it became necessary to find the possible risk factors that necessitate this kind of relationship.

The attendees on this day were reduced as only eleven couples attended. There was no newcomer couple in this seminar. In other words, it was the same group that had come previously except for those who had not come.

The introduction to the topic was done by the facilitator. The presenter started by using a quotation from the writings of Ellen G. White which said, “It would be more appropriate to let some of the hours of courtship before marriage run through the

married life.”<sup>2</sup> The essence of this quote was to establish the fact that failure to put to practice what one used to do becomes a cause of infidelity. In other words, deviation from the norm has catastrophic effects on a marriage. This was put as risk factor number one.

Firstly, the couples sat and wrote to each other five things the other one used to do and was no longer doing. They also wrote five things they would want to see occurring in their marriages. The couples were supposed to share their thoughts and implement the issues at home. This was a private discussion and the couples were requested to archive this information for future reference. One of the respondents said, “For the first time, I’ve expressed my feelings to my friend and we seem to be in agreement that the fire in our marriage was gone. Wait and see.” This was a revelation that communication was not alive in the homes.

Having defined the purpose of the day’s discussion, the presenter divided the house into two groups. This time the ladies went on their own while the men were alone. They were given thirty minutes to deliberate on the risk factors that affect marriage. The people were given the leeway to express their true feelings without fear as no names would be mentioned. Emphasis was also made on the fact that this whole discussion was about saving marriages.

The revelations that came from the groups were disturbing a great deal, but it was the truth. If infidelity had to be curbed, the truth had to be told. The women were the first to report. They had chosen an orator to represent them. She started by saying, “Friends, if you have tears prepare to shed them now.” She proceeded to quote Scripture by saying, “You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free”

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<sup>2</sup>White, *The Adventist Home*, 56.

(John 8:32). The facial expressions on the men betrayed them and one could tell that they were disturbed by the statement. Some started whispering among themselves. There were a few murmurings among the men. A moment of silence prevailed and then the lady continued with her presentation.

She indicated that they had come up with fifteen risk factors and would have increased them had the time been extended. Again, the men expressed shock at how the women could come up with such a big list in such a short time. The whole list of reasons is attached herewith.

- i. Loss of original love. It was cited that as people continue staying together, they get so acquainted and disregard a lot of essential things they used to do. This brings a lot of tension and leads one to finding solace elsewhere.
- ii. Greediness. Nothing but greed can push someone to finding satisfaction elsewhere.
- iii. Love of things. There is nothing that motivates a person to engage in an affair besides being overzealous and ambitious. This is a sign of lack of contention on the part of the perpetrator.
- iv. Selfishness. They opined that a person who engages in extra marital affairs is very egocentric and has no feelings whatsoever on how the other person feels. Such a person lives in his or her own world. The motive behind this is self-centeredness.
- v. Lack of trust. Unresolved family problems cause a lot of distrust.
- vi. Wrong associates. Friends were blamed for the influence they exert on the marriages. The ladies gave an example of a husband who declared that Friday evenings were his days to be with his friends. They would go out with their friends and come back on Saturday morning. Whatever

happened there is left to imagination. They also gave an example of another man who came home with a muddy car and clothes claiming that he had got stuck in the mud. The women indicated that these were just stories the men gave but in actual sense they would have gone out philandering.

- vii. Use of aphrodisiacs. The women also claimed that the men used concoctions to boost themselves and when they were denied access at home, they would seek for solace elsewhere.
- viii. Unconverted. This was the greatest reason. When a Christian participates in such things, that person is not a Christian. He has a form of godliness but the behavior says otherwise. Women appealed to the men to be thoroughly converted.
- ix. Lack of spirituality. Almost similar to the above except that they stated that those who engage in acts of unfaithfulness follow the dictates of the body and do not walk circumspectly.
- x. Misconceptions about the other party assuming that that one has a better value. All women are the same in spite of their geographical backgrounds. It was indicated that this was only a battle of the mind and a myth. The women encouraged the men to put their minds into the act and see the dividends.
- xi. Desperation. They indicated that anyone who falls into the sin of adultery is desperate for something. There is something this person yearns for but is failing to receive it, hence the need to look for someone else to quench the desire.

- xii. Misconstrued cultural beliefs. Many men believe that it is culturally acceptable for a man to have more than one wife. They are of the opinion that one would have failed in life if they stuck it out with one wife. In other words, it is a sign of prestige among men to have several affairs.
- xiii. Family influence. Some families do not like their daughter-in-law and will do anything to annoy the wife so that they can get another woman for the man. The ladies gave an example of one lady whose marriage almost crumbled because of family influences.
- xiv. Unemployment. The women also pointed out that if a man is unemployed he is bound to have a relationship with someone since he has all the time and hence, attention is focused elsewhere.
- xv. Frequent absenteeism from home. The women encouraged the men to be always at home at the expected times. These constant absences opened opportunities for the development of extramarital affairs and made the person more vulnerable.

All these points were supported with facts. The women indicated that the greatest of all these evils was the absence of love in the family. They concluded with a text and a question. The text was, “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” Then the question they gave as a challenge was, “How do you love yourself?”

These presentations took a long time. A lot of debate ensued during the discussions. The men were being defensive and felt that the women had gone to extremes. They indicated that some of these things were best not said in public.

It was agreed that at a convenient time another lesson of this nature would be done. The men would be given the privilege to report on their findings, then.

The presentations ended with a brief lecture by the facilitator. The presenter gave shocking statistics on the occurrences of marital infidelity from a global perspective. This was according to research studies that have been done. Furthermore, the presenter looked at the various types of infidelity. Summarily, these extramarital affairs were categorised as spontaneous, deliberate and situational. The presentation concluded with a look at the demographic, interpersonal and intrapersonal risk factors.

As a norm, the meeting ended with a meal. Instead of eating and leaving, couples continued deliberating on the issues of the day. The discussion was now between the men and the women and was livelier. The men were asking why the women had to tell it so plain. This was now out of the main discussion and was exhilarating.

One lady approached the presenter and said, “How I wish you could come to my work place and address my workmates. We have a serious problem of promiscuity and unfaithfulness among workers and unless it is addressed we will have a cyclonic experience.” A meeting was arranged with them in November, 2015, at a local preschool within the city centre. The responses of the twelve couples who attended the seminar were so disturbing and unlike the initial sample; these were very open and indicated the need for help. They were led by their chaplain.

#### **Seminar Four: The Contribution of Marital Abuse to Infidelity**

One of the major causes of infidelity is intimate partner violence instigated on one partner by the domineering one. This is a silent risk factor that many people do not recognize. During the previous discussion, the women had indicated it as one of the risk factors, hence, it became pertinent that this subject be included in the curriculum. This seminar looked at the issue of domestic violence in the homes.

The seminar, as usual was handled at a designated home and was facilitated by the researcher. It covered the following areas;

- i. Defining intimate partner violence
- ii. Types of violence
- iii. Signs of abuse in the family an
- iv. Causes of violence
- v. Barriers to violence

Intimate partner violence or domestic abuse was described as an act of violence perpetrated on an individual within a family circle. The common factor is that the women are the most affected victims although some men have been victims, too. It is a common phenomenon among groups of people. Particularly, in some cultures it is an acceptable norm of behavior that can never be tolerated. Notably, sexual violence is a common phenomenon among all social and religious groups

The three types of domestic abuse were discussed, namely the physical, sexual and psychological aspects. The team was divided into three mixed groups and each one took one of the types of infidelity and discussed on it. The ideas were shared amongst the whole group before the lesson proceeded.

The presenter articulated on each aspect. The facial expressions said it all. Some could not contain their emotions and expressed that this was a necessary topic as many of them were experiencing such volcanic eruptions. They expressed that these were real issues that had been left unattended for a long time and had crippled many families.

This discussion was followed by a talk on why people do such things and why others hold on in spite of. Some of the reasons attributed to the prolonged stay despite the abuse were, fear of victimisation, the children, nowhere to go as parents tend to

send you back, stigmatisation, and faith that one day things will change. This was a brief discourse that was filled with emotions. Lastly, barriers to intimate partner violence were discussed at length. This was a rather tense discussion.

### **Seminar Five: The Impact of Diet on Sexuality**

This was another intriguing lesson that focused on what should be done in order to control sexual appetite. The lesson, as usual was conducted at a selected venue and was run by the facilitator and his wife. Twelve couples attended this meeting. Among them was a couple that was non-Adventist that had been invited by their landlords.

As the tradition was, the session began with a devotion from Genesis 1. The focus was on God's intention for humankind from the beginning. A deliberate effort was made to interpret the text, "And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed, to you it shall be for meat" (Gen 1:29).

Linked to this discussion was the inspiration acquired from the writings of Ellen G. White which says, "In order to know what are the best foods, we must study God's original plan for man's diet. ... God gave our first parents the food He designed that the race should eat ... the fruit of the trees in the garden, was the food man's wants required."<sup>3</sup>

This was followed by a PowerPoint presentation on appropriate foods. Various types of foods were highlighted. Some health professionals proved an asset to this discussion. The question and answer session was very beneficial to the group.

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<sup>3</sup>Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Diet and Foods* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1938), 81.

One man retorted, “I have always shunned and avoided such types of food. There is a need for me to have a retrospect of my life and make necessary amendments.” Another lady commented, “We know these things but we choose to ignore them to our own peril. We prefer nicer things that cost us dearly.”

An appeal was made for reconsiderations by the couples. To this end, one lady stated, “We hear and understand everything that has been said. But wait a minute, pastor.” This was interpreted to mean that she was not prepared to discard her eating habits. Indeed, old habits die hard. Asked to elaborate on her statement, she said, “I can stop everything but meat eating, wait a minute.” This prompted a discussion on Adventist health recommendations, which, unfortunately, could not be dealt with at that stage as further clarifications had to be done in order to give the appropriate response. A request was made for a prompt response.

The lesson ended with a biblical traditional meal that was provided by the host family. Amazingly, they had not been informed of the topic but God’s providence prevailed in this instance.

### **Seminar Six: Marital Vaccines against Infections**

Eleven couples attended this closing session. Only two of the couples were new. When the project started there were thirteen couples and now there were only eleven. As usual it was on a Saturday evening. This meeting was conducted at the church at sundown. The purpose of this meeting was to determine whether the lessons had paid dividends. Two methods were adopted in the summarisation process of the program that is the oral and written. Orally, the couples were supposed to share their experiences of the program. Then, they were asked to complete a questionnaire

The oral assessment preceded the written one. The researcher used three questions to determine the success of the program and to see if there were areas that still needed to be addressed. The questions were asked in the following sequence:

- i. How do you view your marital position at this stage?
- ii. Are there some areas that need improvement in order for the marriages to be happy?
- iii. What is your objective assessment of the whole program?

The responses to the questions were very interesting. The answers were as varied as the people present. The respondents were asked to share their thoughts as couples before making a presentation to the class. This was a moral building program. The couples were not asked to share everything. They were supposed to pick one major idea they thought was important to share as a group. The rest of the other facts were for their own consumption.

The original marital survey questionnaire was distributed. This time they were not responding to all the questions. They were answering questions 1 – 5 and 10 – 16 only. These questions were meant to check the temperature of the marriages at this level.

Sixteen respondents indicated much happiness, two were happy, two very unhappy and two remained cautious of their response. The results show that 73% of the couples are very happy about their current status in marriage. However, the two (9%) that indicated much unhappiness showed that there is need for an intervention program to assist them to move up the ladder. The people were now much happier in the marriage because of the implementation of some of the strategies learnt during the seminars. The table below shows the rankings as they were before and after the seminars.

*Table 10. Happiness in Marriage*

	Before	After
Very Happy	13	16
Happy	5	2
Unhappy	4	0
Very Unhappy	2	2
No Comment	0	2
Total	24	22

Fourteen (64%) of the respondents indicated that they do not watch any cyber activities. This was revelation of a positive attitude towards the ill nature of internet infidelity. Five (23%) indicated that they have problems with watching cyber activities. Three (13%) decided to remain neutral. The above descriptions are illustrated in the graph below.

*Table 11. Emotional infidelity*

	Response	% Response
Yes	5	23
No	14	64
No response	3	13
Total	22	100

Thirdly, the revelations from the sexual infidelity column indicated that 64% of the respondents shun sexual immorality, that is, sexual indulgences with someone outside marriage. It is a positive move on the couples to be more loving and caring to their partners.

*Table 12. Sexual infidelity*

	Response	% Response
Yes	3	14
No	14	64
No response	5	22
Total	22	100

The above representations show that sexual and emotional infidelity exist to a small degree in the church. However, it should be noted that the few that participate in such activities reveal a need for assistance. This figure may rise if no precautions are taken to assist them. More so, it is evident from the disclosures above that sexual and emotional infidelity exists among the members of the church. However it seems to be at its lowest level. Emotional infidelity stands at 23% while sexual infidelity is pegged at 14%.

These were the six seminars that were held with the couples as a means of ensuring total devotion to the marital covenant. These discussions were also meant to improve relations between the couples and reduce acts of unfaithfulness. It is evident that this list of seminars is inexhaustible.

### **Narrative of the Final Evaluation**

The implementation of the initiative followed a series of presentations by the facilitators. Most of the deliberations were on PowerPoint. The lecture method was extensively used. Furthermore, group discussions were conducted using guided questions. The use of guided group discussions necessitated interactive participation by all and sundry. The other benefit of group discussions was that it encouraged relationship building among the couples. In some instances, the couples were asked to work as partners in trying to solve some problems. The couples were also given

exercises to do at home. This was meant to promote and encourage couple discussions at home.

The implementation exercise did not only focus on the sampled group of young couples but on all the couples in the church. This was influenced by the fact that the respondents among the desired group were few. In spite of this arrangement, the majority of the respondents were young couples within the expected years range.

The life span of the research implementation was nine months from March to December, 2015. It should be noted that the meetings were not run as per scheduled times for various reasons. This necessitated some changes on the application of the program. The Logframe and Gantt Chart had to be changed to flow with the current state of affairs. Some of the seminars had to be done in 2016.

Generally, all the meetings were held on Saturday evenings after the church services. The meetings were announced during the services of the day at the local churches. This was to ensure that people would not be under the pressure of work since most of them do not work on Sundays. The duration of each gathering was two hours at most, though, in most instances, it would go up to three hours.

Additionally, the forums were conducted in people's homes. The people were requested to volunteer the use of their homes. A number of people were willing to have their homes as venues for the meetings. The host family was also asked to provide refreshments for the day. However, some people did not attend the meetings because of the venues selected. Some people prefer their privacy and would rather not attend a function than act against their conscience.

The facilitation of the whole program was centered on the researcher and partner. They were working together as a team. This assisted a great deal and

encouraged the group members positively. Two couples had been invited as facilitators but failed to honor their appointments due to varied reasons.

The seminars were spiritual in nature. In all instances, the programs started with a devotional session. Relevant songs had been selected for use. Some of the songs were: Holy Spirit Faithful Guide, Love at Home, Wait and Murmur Not and many others. All this was done to maintain the spiritual tone of the meetings. The devotional speaker was selected from the panel in advance so that he or she could prepare meaningfully. At the end of it all, a prayer session would be held. People would submit their prayer requests. The lessons always followed after this procedure had been done.

Lastly, attendance was rather erratic and inconsistent. In each gathering there would be new people. These people would need an orientation on what happened previously. This would take some time from the discussion of the day. Averagely, there were eleven couples who always came for each session. 80% of the participants were those who consistently came. The remaining 20% were those who would be coming for the first time or so.

### **Summary**

Summarily, this chapter gave a synopsis of the development of the initiative. Firstly, it focused on the purpose of this study, which was to develop, implement and evaluate a strategy on reducing marital infidelity among young couples. The strategy that was implemented had been developed in Chapter 4. It also emphasised that there are risk factors that influence unfaithfulness in marriages. A search of these factors assisted in the easy implementation of the strategy.

Having defined the purpose of the study, this section went on to lay a preamble to the implementation of the initiative. This focused on all the activities that were done as a prelude to the implementation exercise.

The implementation of the initiative began with a development of a curriculum for young couples that was codenamed Devoted Couples. It gave a detailed description of the syllabus coverage including its objectives and aims. This was followed by the conducting of the seminars and the observations that arose from the seminars over a stretch of time. A total of six seminars were held. These sessions were meant to last two to three hours.

After the seminars, a narrative of the final evaluation was done. This started with a description of the research instruments that were used in the final implementation of the exercise. The chapter ended with an evaluation of the whole program and checking whether the developed program had worked.

The following chapter gives a summary of the whole study and draws conclusions on the project. It will also make some recommendations for future studies and developments.

## CHAPTER 6

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### **Introduction**

This chapter presents a condensed description of this research and provides a conclusion to the study. It also brings out recommendations that can be adopted to ensure that marriages are happy and free from outside influences. Further, this chapter will bring out a synopsis of the five chapters in this research.

#### **Summary**

Chapter 1 revealed the purpose of this study, that is, to develop, implement and evaluate a strategy of reducing marital infidelity in Heaven Bound District in South Zimbabwe Conference. Its major goal was to enlighten the church on the nature of infidelity and the risk factors associated with it. An awareness of the risk factors would empower the couples against being victims of acts of unfaithfulness.

This study was born out of a realisation of a need for counselling by affected church members who continuously sought counselling services concerning their marriages. Out of the many cases brought to the pastor, marital infidelity ranked the highest. Between 2009 and 2015, eighteen people approached the researcher seeking counsel on the unfaithfulness occurring in their marriages.

The statement of the problem focused on the perversion of God's law and the immorality that is existent in the society. The church in South Zimbabwe Conference is challenged by a number of disturbing issues such as, homosexuality, atheism,

divorce, premarital sex and infidelity. These issues have impacted negatively on the marriage structure and have led to separation and at times even, divorce.

Chapter 2 reviewed and discussed marriage principles from the Bible, writings of Ellen G. White, Bible commentaries and concordances. The main thrust in this context was the revelation that marriage was instituted by God in the Garden of Eden as a form of providing companionship to Adam, who was lonely. It was also established that God's design for marriage is that it should be monogamous, heterogeneous, endogamous and covenantal. The concepts of leaving, cleaving and becoming one flesh were emphasized in the design of marriage and that they indicated elements of detachment and attachment.

Furthermore, Chapter 2, focused on the emphasis Christ used to endorse marriage as God's original plan. Christ indicated that He had not come to alter the law of God and that whatever had been joined by God no one could separate. The Ten Commandments were confirmed as eternal and could not be changed by any one. The chapter also defined adultery in two perspectives as: an act of commission and a manifestation of a thought pattern.

Ellen G. White portrayed infidelity as a sin that is practiced by many Christians in today's society. She noted that the transgression of the seventh commandment has been made so common that people no longer shudder at the thought of it. Unfortunately, Ellen White confirmed that while this sin should not be heard of among Christians but it has become so common. The risk factors of infidelity were also tabulated as selfishness, covetousness, lust, greed, immaturity, unequal yoking and mistrust.

Lastly, the Seventh-day Adventist Church position was presented as in concurrence with the biblical interpretation. The SDA Church's perception of

marriage is that it should be a lifelong union that should exist between a man and a woman in loving companionship. This is in compliance with the biblical interpretation. In addition, the church firmly believes that marriage is a commitment to God and should be exercised on the parameters set by God.

Chapter 3 focused on contemporary literature that dealt with marriage and issues of infidelity. Firstly, the selected writers defined marriage as enshrined in the biblical interpretation. They portend that marriage should be monogamous and heterosexual in nature.

The authors indicate that the success of a marriage hinges on the understanding of some models. In this instance, they look at two models, namely, the covenantal and the contractual. The covenantal model is viewed as the one that upholds marriage as a sacred institution that is entered into between a man and a woman before God. This model promotes the sanctity of marriage and its permanent feature.

On the other hand, the contractual model visualises marriage as a formal and legal binding contract that is entered into by two people. Its major difference with the covenantal is that it can be annulled at any time without much ado. Furthermore, as a contract it is limited in its time frame and based on a compromise situation. Failure to comply to one's desires may catapult the relationship at any time.

Marital infidelity was further looked at as an indicator of something amiss in a relationship that makes the other partner look elsewhere. The authors view infidelity as a breach of an understanding, trust and commitment in a loving relationship. It is further seen as voluntary and consensual sexual intercourse between a married person and someone who is not legally espoused to the individual.

The authors also indicate two types of infidelity, namely sexual and emotional. Sexual infidelity refers to an affair that is sexual in nature and involves a male and a female who have consented to engage in the sexual act. In most cases, there is a mutual understanding that all they need is sexual satisfaction.

On the other hand, emotional infidelity is not sexual in nature but takes the form of psychological attachment. In this case, a woman and a man become emotionally attached that they do almost everything together except the act of penetration. They can kiss, hug, fondle each other but avoid going to extremes. However, there is a notion that most of these affairs end up becoming sexual in nature over time. In most cases, an emotional affair is clouded in secrecy and intimacy. Family resources can be rechanneled to this affair to the detriment of a family.

Chapter 3 also looked at models that constitute the risk factors on marital infidelity. The various authors cite the conceptual and multifactor models. The conceptual model stipulates that engagement in an affair is resultant from considered decisions. The proponents of this school of thought subscribe to the theory of planned behavior or the theory of reasoned action that says that everything is a result of a plan that was conceived and brought to maturity. In other words, there is no one who can say this was an accident. The authors also point out that in most cases it is a deliberate action for whatever purpose.

In contrast, the advocates for the multifactor model say that involvement in an illicit affair is determined by different variables. They argue that there are multivariate that push a person into doing whatsoever the person does depending on the circumstances and opportunities. The reasons can be divided into demographic, interpersonal and intrapersonal. There is no one reason for engagement. This is the

reason why in a court of justice one is asked what motivated the person to act in that manner. The reason can fall in either of the categories.

Conclusively, Chapter 3 assessed the impact of marital infidelity. It is worth noting that infidelity does not affect the perpetrator alone but has adverse effects on others. It affects the family, the community, the work place and the society at large. It may even result in the acquisition of sexually transmitted infections including HIV/AIDS.

Chapter 4 began with a description of the ministry context. The researcher gave a brief historical and geographical narrative of the country of Zimbabwe. Further, the governance system was highlighted with emphasis being placed on the Constitution of the country and the Marriage Acts. The Constitution of Zimbabwe upholds God as the Almighty and stipulates the marriage boundaries. The country has the Civil Marriage Act, Chapter 5:11 which promotes the monogamous nature of a marriage. It also has the Customary Marriage Act, Chapter 5:07 that legitimises the marrying of more than one wife. Both types of marriages have to be solemnised.

The micro context of the research was given in Chapter 4. The location and description of Heaven Bound District was done. This district falls within South Zimbabwe Conference that is made up of 23 districts. The district has three churches within its domain.

Following the description of the macro and micro context, the chapter focused on the research design used to conduct this research. The use of the Logframe and the Gantt Chart was explained. As a social science paper, the researcher advocated for the use of the mixed method approach to gather data. The purposive type of sampling was used to select the respondents. In this case, it was the married young couples. Young couples referred to those who have been married for less than fifteen years. Research

instrumentation was also discussed. The survey method is the one that was effectively used in the collection of data.

The chapter concluded with the data analysis process and how the research was conducted and progressed. The findings were presented and described accordingly. A total of 37 risk factors of marital infidelity were identified and then streamlined to six as follows: financial instability, sexual dissatisfaction and depravity, poor communication, covetousness, premarital engagements and cyber influences.

These factors became the basis of the designing of the strategy to combat marital infidelity. The appropriate authorities were approached and permission was granted to conduct the research in the designed territory. The intervention program was entitled, Devoted Couples, and was to be implemented through the seminar approach. A curriculum was developed that would be followed in the implementation of the initiative.

Chapter 5 gave a concise but detailed description of the implementation of the strategy to reduce infidelity among married people. The purpose of study was re-emphasized. The main reason for embarking on this study was to develop, implement and evaluate a strategy to help in reducing cases of infidelity in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Six progressive seminars were held at different times and places. These seminars covered the following disciplines: God's ideal of a marriage, the negative impact of marital infidelity, reasons for engaging in infidelity, the contribution of marital abuse to infidelity, the impact of diet on sexuality and marriage vaccines. These topics were covered as designed and conclusions drawn from the findings.

A narrative of the final evaluation was carried out. The type of research instruments used was detailed. The program followed a lecture method that was dominantly focused group discussions. The presentations were done on PowerPoint. This narrative also described the population strata and the venues that were used for the seminars.

The final evaluation of the program ended with a summary of the findings from the study. The evaluation was done orally and in written form. Within the period of study, some couples approached the researcher for counseling and noted the positive changes occurring in their marriages.

On the other hand, the oral submissions indicated a decline in the problems the couples were facing previously. The written responses showed a marked change in the behaviors at home. A summary of the findings was presented.

### **Lessons Learned**

A number of lessons were drawn during the investigations and implementation of this study. First, I learnt that marital infidelity exists within the Christian fraternity, although, it is very inconspicuous. In the beginning, it was an assumption but as the development of the study continued it became evident that infidelity is existent among married couples.

Secondly, from the biblical and literature review studies, one realizes that infidelity is quite an old issue. Some characters in the Bible were victims of acts of unfaithfulness. A lot of literature has been written on this topic indicating that it is a perennial problem. However, I learned that people have no time to read the moral guidelines, hence a need to develop a curriculum that will assist them in learning about these issues.

Thirdly, I learnt that not all people are forthcoming with information that relates to their private lives. As one respondent put it, “These issues are swept under the carpet. No one should expose his dirty linen in public.” This is the stance that many people have taken, and, unfortunately, it does not help solve the problem.

Another lesson learnt from this experience is that a lot of work still has to be done in the area of infidelity. Most of the available resources have a culture that is akin to the African context and tends to neglect some critical issues. Resources have to be developed from an African mindset that focuses on African background.

I also learnt that adultery brings chaos and discord into the family circle. Involvement in dyadic affairs has a lot of side effects and does not only affect the perpetrator but a lot of other people like the family, community and church. It leaves scars that are not easy to hide.

I also learnt that many people have no desire to talk about this topic in public. Many people shun discussions on the topic. People would rather talk about other issues but not infidelity. It is a taboo among many people.

Finally, I learnt that a deviation from the standards set by God brings disharmony into the marriage circle. God has set guidelines in the Bible that have to be followed indiscreetly by all married couples. Some of the problems encountered in marriages can be solved by following the precepts laid out by God.

### **Recommendations**

Notably, the researcher has made some observations during the course of the study on some areas that might need attention. I recommend the following observations for future research and study on issues affecting marriage.

For any project to succeed there is need of a systematic budget. Sponsorship for research on marriage issues should be established so that more research can be done within the African context. The absence of funds delimits a lot of activities.

In addition, the church, through the Family Ministries department should focus on marriages that are breaking up. The directors need to come up with deliberate programs to combat acts of infidelity among couples. They could adopt and modify this curriculum to the taste of the clientele base and ensure that members are taught and reminded of these issues on a frequent basis.

Thirdly, the program needs to be extended to the youths, particularly, in the area of social media and fornication. The media is wreaking havoc on the youths as they seem to be more engrossed in it. Some have been addicted to the internet. Parents should also be encouraged to guard against what their children watch.

Furthermore, the teaching of such studies should be done by experts in the area. I have noticed that anyone who is married can be tasked to lead the department and discussions. There is a need to be deliberate in the selection process of facilitators and leaders of this ministry.

Even more, the marriage and family curriculum for graduate and post graduate studies should include marital infidelity. Currently, it seems it is not part of the syllabus. A deliberate ploy should be done to include it as part of the package. Additionally, the institutions have to research more on the spiritual aspects of marriage and publish literature that will assist in developing happy marriages.

Finally, I recommend that all pastors be trained in counseling as part of their on-going education program. It should be noted that all pastors encounter such challenges and have to be prepared for these eventualities.

## **Conclusion**

Marital infidelity can be reduced if the people have an inclination toward the change. The findings of this study indicate that if couples are constantly reminded of their marital obligations, marriages can be saved from ultimate collapse. Religiosity plays a big role in ensuring the validity of marriages. When people realise the sinfulness of sin then they will turn their focus on Christ, the Redeemer of lost marriages.

The sure fact of this study was the need to realize that successful marriages hinge upon Christ, without whom, we can do nothing. The sin of infidelity can only be conquered by the couple's dependence on him, who is able to sustain all people from falling. The whole strategy focused on these key principles: knowledge of what is right, doing right, eating right and vaccinating against sinful infectious tendencies.

## APPENDICES

APPENDIX A  
FAMILY LIFE DIRECTOR

Name of Church: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Family Life Director: \_\_\_\_\_

Alvern Wabile Ndhlovu is a Doctoral Candidate with Adventist University of Africa, Kenya. He is currently undergoing a research on a topic entitled “Marital Infidelity Among Young Couples in Heaven Bound District in South Zimbabwe Conference.” This research will not only enable the researcher to successfully complete his DMin. studies, but will also help the pastors and local leaders in ensuring that marital infidelity is curtailed in Christian homes.

Please complete the enclosed questionnaire as truthfully as you can and return them to the researcher expediently. Everything contained in the questionnaires will be treated confidentially and used for academic purposes only.

**FOR FAMILY MINISTRIES DIRECTORS ONLY**

- i) How many married couples are in your organization? Please complete the attached couples list.
- ii) How many of these couples are in their first 15 years of their marriage?  
Please indicate with a star on the attached list you have completed.

Thank you for your time and earnestness in responding to this short survey

**List Of Couples \_\_\_\_\_ Church**

	<b>Full Name of Couple</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Dom</b>	<b>Yim</b>
1.				
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Key:

DOM --- Date of Marriage

YIM --- Years in Marriage

APPENDIX B

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

**Title:** Marital Infidelity Among Young Couples: A Cause For Concern

**Purpose of this study:** The purpose of this study is to identify the risk factors that are associated with marital infidelity in the Seventh-day Adventist families in South Zimbabwe Conference and to develop intervention strategies that will minimize the occurrences of marital infidelity among members.

**Inclusion Criteria:** In order to participate, I recognize that I must be an adult that has been legally married for less than fifteen years.

**Risk and Discomforts:** I have been informed that there are no physical or emotional risks to my involvement in this study.

**Benefits and Results:** I accept that I will receive no benefit or remuneration for my participation, but that by participating, I will help the researcher and the Seventh day Adventist Church arrive at a better understanding of the issue of marital infidelity and that this would help the Church to develop strategies that will encourage mutual understandings within the family and avoid engaging in unfaithful activities that tear down families and render the Church inefficient.

**Voluntary Participation:** I understand that my involvement in this survey is voluntary and that I may withdraw my participation at any time without any pressure, embarrassment, or negative impact on me. I understand that participation is anonymous and that neither the researcher nor any assistant will be able to identify my response to me.

**Contact Information:** In the event that I have any question or concerns with regard to my participation in this research project, I understand that I may contact either the researcher Alvern Wabile Ndhlovu at ndlovua@aua.ac.ke (Cell, +263 712541256), or his advisor Dr. Galenakgosi Orapeleng (gmorapeleng@gmail.com).

I have been given a copy of this form for my own records.

-----  
Signature of Subject

-----  
Date

-----  
Signature of Witness

-----  
Date

Signed at -----

## APPENDIX C

### MARITAL SURVEY GENERAL FORM

Please feel free to respond to this questionnaire by ticking the appropriate. All information will be treated confidentially.

1. Sex                      Male/Female
2. Age Range    A. 20 and below    B. 20 -30    C. 31 -40    D. 41 and above
3. Age Difference With Your Spouse    A. 1 – 5    B. 6 – 10    C. 11 – 15    D. 16+
4. Years in Marriage                      A. 1 – 5    B. 6 – 10    C. 11 – 15    D. 16+
5. How Many Children Do You Have Outside Your Current Marriage?  
A. 1    B. 2    C. 3    D. 4+
6. What is the Highest Level of Your Education?  
A. Primary    B. High School              C. Tertiary    D. University
7. Have You Ever Separated With Your Current Spouse For A While? Yes/No
8. If yes, what was the cause of the temporary separation?  
A. Failure to resolve conflict    B. Anger              C. Avoidance    D. Unfaithfulness
9. How happy are you in your current marriage?  
A. Very happy    B. Happy              C. Unhappy    D. Very unhappy
10. Have you ever had sex outside your marital relationship? (Yes/No)
11. At least how many times have you engaged in sex with others besides your partner in the past three years?  
A. Never              B. Once                      C. Twice                      D. Uncountable
12. How many people have you engaged in sex with in the past three years?  
A. 0                      B. 1                      C. 2                      D. More than 3
13. Do you ever watch internet sex? (Yes/No)
14. How do you feel as you watch internet sex?  
A. Nothing              B. Excited              C. Very Excited              E. Sexually Aroused
15. Have you ever been emotionally involved with someone? (Yes/No)

## APPENDIX D

### RISK FACTORS OF MARITAL INFIDELITY

Questionnaire on Risk Factors of Marital Infidelity. Please feel free to add other causes that might not be listed on the questionnaire. Please tick the appropriate answer using the Likert Scale (1 – 5)

1. Strongly Disagree    2. Disagree    3. Unsure    4. Agree  
5. Strongly Agree

		1	2	3	4	5
1)	Sexual Dissatisfaction/Boredom					
2)	Sexual Infrequency/Deprivation					
3)	Previous Experience					
4)	Marital Dissatisfaction					
5)	Low Religiosity					
6)	Peer Pressure/ Influence					
7)	Alcoholism/Drug Abuse					
8)	Low Self-esteem					
9)	High Interest in Sex					
10)	Abusive Behavior					
11)	Lust/Covetousness					
12)	Opportunities/Circumstances					
13)	Boredom					
14)	Exploitation					
15)	Education Levels					
16)	Insecurity					
17)	Forced Marriages					
18)	Selfishness					
19)	Globalization					
20)	Frequent Absences' From Home					
21)	High Differentiation					
22)	Family Pressure					
23)	Jealousy					
24)	Poor Conflict Management					
25)	Unequal Yoking					
26)	Income					
27)	Fixation					
28)	Poor Communication in Marriage					
29)	Immaturity					
30)	Narcissism					

APPENDIX E  
DEVOTED COUPLES CURRICULUM

**Preamble**

Devoted Couples (DC) is a curriculum that is designed with the couples in mind. Its main purpose is to bring joy, relief, encouragement and encouragement to couples who desire true happiness in their marriage. It is all about rekindling a dying flame. Marriage is a continuous journey that no one has never and will ever graduate from. Like marriage, DC is a journey with so many topics. Come experience the joy of marriage from a true biblical perspective.

**Theme:** Courtship Lasting Through Marriage

**Purpose of the Seminar**

To equip couples for effective and affective marriages using scriptural and scientific based information on marriage and sexuality.

**Duration**

The whole seminar should cover a period of six to nine months. This can be done over a weekend or over a certain period of time. Each session should last about one and a half to two hours.

**Facilitation**

The researcher would serve as the chief facilitator but would also invite others to come and assist.. The facilitators should provide biblical strategies and practical ways on how to overcome marital infidelity

### **Benefits of the Seminar**

- iv. Improved family relations and establishment of protective hedges around the marriage. The flames of marriage will be rekindled.
- v. Attain a certificate of attendance and marriage renewal.
- vi. Creation of a social network among the couples.

### **Objectives of the Seminar**

By the end of the seminar, couples should be able to:

- i) Define the biblical marriage principles
- ii) Discover the risk factors associated with marital infidelity and how to manage them
- iii) Provide appropriate interventions for the risk factors associated with marital infidelity
- iv) Develop an awareness of an integrative worldview shaped by Christian values and standards
- v) Manage sexual issues in couple relationships
- vi) Provide guidelines on addressing issues of sexuality
- vii) Relate well in their marriage and exercise exclusivity in all areas

### **Methodology**

PowerPoint presentations, lecture presentations, group work, and visitations

### **Topics to be Covered**

- vii. God's Ideal of a Marriage
- viii. The Negative Impact of Infidelity on Marriage
- ix. The Contribution of Marital Abuse to Infidelity

- x. Specified Factors of Infidelity Engagement
  - xi. The Impact of Diet on Sexuality
  - xii. Marital Vaccines Against Infections
-

## SEMINAR 1

### God's Ideal of a Marriage

#### Objectives

- a) Describe the Edenic experience of creation of humankind (Old Testament)
- b) Describe the endorsement of the marriage by Christ (New Testament)
- c) Define the marriage acts in view of the divine plan

#### Lesson Outline

- a) Read Genesis 2: 18 – 24
- b) Group discussion focusing on the following questions:
  - i. What does it mean that Adam was lonely?
  - ii. Why did God provide a partner for Adam?
  - iii. What specific function did God define for Adam about Eve?
  - iv. What does it mean to leave, cleave and become one flesh?
  - v. What lessons can be drawn from this creation episode?
- c) Marriage Acts in Zimbabwe – similarities and differences with the divine plan
  - i. Civil Marriage Act – Chapter 5:11 (Its Provisions)
  - ii. Customary Marriage Act – Chapter 5:07
- d) PowerPoint presentation

## SEMINAR 2

### **The Negative Impact of Infidelity on Marriage**

#### **Objectives**

- a) Outline the major threats affecting marriages in Zimbabwe and particularly in the church in South Zimbabwe Conference
- b) Describe how these threats are impacting on the family circle
- c) Define adultery from a biblical and social dimension

#### **Lesson Outline**

- a) Divide the couples into two groups of males and females.
  - i) Outline the threats that are affecting their marriages
  - ii) Impact of the threats on the marriage ring
  - iii) Define adultery from a biblical and social perspective
- b) Group discussion based on Galatians 5:19

## SEMINAR 3

### **Specified Factors of Infidelity Engagement**

#### **Objectives**

- a) Describe the two types of infidelity: Sexual and Emotional
- b) Identify the risk factors that may precipitate marital infidelity
- c) Develop a master plan of thwarting the risk factors

#### **Lesson Outline**

- a) Read Exodus 20:14 and Matthew 5:27, 28
  - i) Why does God bring this as one of the commandments?
  - ii) What causes one to commit adultery
  - iii) How does Christ view adultery?
  - iv) Compare and contrast sexual and emotional infidelity
- b) Divide the couples into two groups as in Seminar 1 and to list all the possible risk factors that necessitate promiscuity
  - i) List all the possible risk factors
  - ii) Place a remedy against each risk and explain each category
- c) PowerPoint presentation by the facilitator

## SEMINAR 4

### **The Contribution of Marital Abuse to Infidelity**

#### **Objectives**

- a) Define intimate partner violence/domestic abuse or violence and how it contributes towards marital infidelity
- b) Describe the three types of infidelity
- c) Describe the signs of an abusive couple
- d) List the causes of IPV

#### **Lesson Outline**

- a) Short film on abuse
- b) Discussion on the observations in the film
- c) Analysis of the three types of IPV
- d) General discussion on IPV

## SEMINAR 5

### **The Impact of Diet on Sexuality**

#### **Objectives**

- a) Describe the effects of diet on a marriage
- b) List the advantages and disadvantages of some foods in relation to marital happiness
- c) Identify the essential foods necessary for true happiness

#### **Lesson outline**

- a) Read Genesis 1: 29
- b) Read a quote from Counsels on Diet and Foods, 81, “In order to know what are the best foods, we must study God’s original plan for man’s diet. ... God gave our first parents the food He designed that the race should eat,... the fruit of the trees in the garden, was the food man’s wants required.”
- c) The presenter to make a presentation on the nutritional value of some foods
- d) Group discussion on the necessary foods and how they impact on one’s sexuality

## SEMINAR 6

### **Marital Vaccines Against Infections**

#### **Objectives**

- a) Identify the factors that can make their marriages secure
- b) Provide hedges for their marriages

#### **Lesson Outline**

- a) As couples they list the habits they must discard and adopt to make their marriage safe
- b) Complete a questionnaire on what they desire to see changing in their relationship and what they have benefitted from this seminar
- c) Make suggestions and recommendations for future programs
- d) Arrange for a Marriage Renewal Sabbath Vespers
- e) Certification

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### ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

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BED Educational Leadership, Planning, and Policy Studies (Zimbabwe Open University)	1994 – 1998
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### PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

Bellevue District Pastor	2015 – present
Ministerial Secretary, Spirit of Prophecy Director, Human Resources Director (West Zimbabwe Conference)	2011 – 2014
Queens Park District Pastor	2007 – 2010
Hwange District Pastor	2004 – 2007
Nata District Pastor	2003 -- 2004
Teacher/ Headmaster	1989 – 2003