

Marriage counselling to pastors in the Igreja Reformada em Moçambique: a practical-theological study

MF Matiquele



Orcid.org/0000-0003-3761-3807

Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree
Doctor of Philosophy in Pastoral Studies at the North-West
University

Promoter: Dr PM Theron

Co-promoter: Prof GA Lotter

Graduation ceremony: May 2019

Student number: 23874198

ABSTRACT

This study is based on the understanding that a biblical marriage counselling programme can be an instrument to pastors of the *Igreja Reformada em Moçambique* to improve the quality of their marriages. It is vital that the programme should be applicable and sensitive to the cultural context of the pastors and their spouses. It has been observed that some of the pastors in the IRM do not have the skills to apply the knowledge they have regarding marriage to their specific situation in order to solve the problems in their own marriages.

In response to the above-mentioned concern, it is presupposed in this study that marriage counselling for pastors offers alternatives in addressing issues about marriage conflicts. It is the aim of this study to determine the need for marriage counselling and to show how it can be done to improve the quality of the marriages of the pastors in the *Igreja Reformada em Moçambique*. In this research it has been argued that the church in Mozambique more especially the Mphatso Synod of the IRM should take action to help pastors who have marriage problems, before the problems become serious and have further negative consequences.

This can be done by following the proposed programme, to be used for marriage counselling of the pastors of the IRM, focusing on the six main areas of marriage conflict found within the marriages of the pastors, namely sex-related issues; cultural influences; childlessness; the issue of submission of wives; money issues and the status of the pastors.

Key words

- Marriage
- Marriage counselling
- Pre-marital counselling
- Pastor
- Marriage conflicts
- Igreja Reformada em Moçambique
- Culture
- Practical theology

PREFACE

May all glory be to God for His grace bestowed on me to succeed with this work.

I also want to give sincere thanks to the following:

- My promoter, Dr. PM Theron and Co-promotor, Prof GA Lotter, for the encouragement, motivation and guidance that you have constantly demonstrated throughout my studies. I have really been blessed by you all and without you I could not have done this study.
- The Bursary Department of the North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus. This research would not have been feasible without the financial support granted me to start this programme.
- My wife, thank you for really being a blessing to me. You never lost patience with me during my absence from home in Mozambique. God bless you.
- The support group members in South Africa, wherever you are, Kempton Kruin Congregation and all who supported me and encouraged me in different ways at Potchefstroom, especially Prof Neil Nelson and Dr Marietjie Nelson. I appreciate each of you for the work of the Holy Spirit in your lives. May God bless you all.
- My language editor, Dr Marietjie Nelson, for her professional service and good advice.
- All the respondents, for sharing their experiences and life stories from their marriages for the success of this thesis.
- My colleagues at Hefsiba Theological Collage and *Igreja Reformada em Moçambique*, I am grateful when I think of your spiritual support and otherwise, and also that you understood when at times I was busy because of my studies. Thank you all.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	i
Preface	ii
 CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	 9
1.1 Background and problem statement.....	9
1.1.1 Background	9
1.1.2 Problem statement	9
1.2 Aim and Objectives	11
1.3 Central theoretical argument	12
1.4 Methodology	12
1.5 Concept clarification	13
1.6 Ethical considerations	13
1.7 Classification of chapters	13
1.8 Schematic presentation	15
 CHAPTER 2: DESCRIPTION OF PASTORS' MARRIAGES IN THE IRM.....	 16
2.1 Introduction	16
2.2 Ethical considerations	17
2.3 Methodology	17
2.4 Analysis of data	20
2.5 Results of the empirical research.....	21
2.5.1 Couple 1	22
2.5.2 Couple 2	22

2.5.3	Couple 3	23
2.5.4	Couple 4	25
2.5.5	Couple 5	26
2.5.6	Couple 6	27
2.5.7	Couple 7	28
2.5.8	Couple 8	29
2.5.9	Couple 9	31
2.5.10	Couple 10	32
2.6	Analysing the research data	33
2.6.1	Sex-related problems.....	33
2.6.2	Cultural influences	34
2.6.3	Childlessness	34
2.6.4	Submission	35
2.6.5	Money issues.....	35
2.6.6	The “status” of the pastor.....	35
2.7	Conclusion.....	36
 CHAPTER 3: PERSPECTIVES FROM LITERATURE ON PASTORS’ MARRIAGES IN THE IRM		
	37
3.1	Introduction	37
3.2	Sex-related issues	38
3.3	Cultural influences	41
3.3.1	Importance and understanding of marriage	42
3.3.2	Particular cultural traditions within marriage.....	43

3.3.3	The role of the extended family.....	44
3.4	Childlessness	45
3.5	Submission of the wife.....	46
3.6	Money issues	49
3.7	The “status” of the pastor.....	50
3.8	The way forward: enabling a strong marital relationship between the pastors and their wives	51
3.8.1	Possible skills for solving marriage conflict	51
3.8.2	Developing good communication	52
3.8.3	Growing a good relationship	53
3.8.4	The role of the church in marriage counselling.....	54
3.8.5	The role of the church in pre-marital counselling.....	55
3.9	Conclusion	56
CHAPTER 4:	NORMATIVE PERSPECTIVES ON PASTORS’ MARRIAGES IN THE IRM	57
4.1	Introduction	57
4.2	General biblical principles regarding marriage from the Old Testament ...	58
4.2.1	Not good to be alone	58
4.2.2	Leaving and cleaving.....	59
4.2.3	“One flesh”.....	60
4.2.4	Marriage is a union between one man and one woman	60
4.2.5	Marriage as a covenant	61
4.2.6	A suitable helper.....	61

4.3	General biblical principles regarding marriage from the New Testament	62
4.3.1	Permanent union	62
4.3.2	Christ and the church.....	63
4.4	Normative perspectives on six issues identified in IRM pastors' marriages	63
4.4.1	Sex-related issues	63
4.4.2	Cultural influence.....	65
4.4.3	Childlessness	65
4.4.4	Submission of the wife.....	66
4.4.4.1	“Submit to one another”	67
4.4.4.2	Wives submit to your husbands as to the Lord.....	68
4.4.4.3	Husbands to love their wives	69
4.4.5	Money issues.....	69
4.4.6	“Status” of the pastor	69
4.5	Conclusion.....	71
CHAPTER 5: PROPOSED MARRIAGE COUNSELLING PROGRAMME FOR PASTORS IN THE IRM		73
5.1	Introduction	73
5.2	Proposed programme for marriage counselling in the IRM	74
5.2.1	Introduction.....	74
5.2.2	Introspection and reflection.....	74
5.2.3	SICSUMOST	76
5.2.3.1	S: Sex-related issues.....	77

5.2.3.1.1	Introduction to the topic	77
5.2.3.1.2	Reading the Word of God	78
5.2.3.1.3	Bible study and group discussions on the scriptural passages.....	78
5.2.3.1.4	Practical application.....	79
5.2.3.2	I: Influence of culture	80
5.2.3.2.1	Introduction to the topic	80
5.2.3.2.2	Reading the Word of God	81
5.2.3.2.3	Bible study and group discussions on the scriptural passages.....	81
5.2.3.2.4	Practical application.....	82
5.2.3.3	C: Childlessness.....	82
5.2.3.3.1	Introduction to the topic	82
5.2.3.3.2	Reading the Word of God	83
5.2.3.3.3	Bible study and group discussions on the scriptural passages.....	83
5.2.3.3.4	Practical application.....	84
5.2.3.4	SU: Submission of the wife	85
5.2.3.4.1	Introduction to the topic	85
5.2.3.4.2	Reading the Word of God	86
5.2.3.4.3	Bible study and group discussions on the scriptural passages.....	86
5.2.3.4.4	Practical application.....	87
5.2.3.5	MO: Money issues	88
5.2.3.5.1	Introduction to the topic	88
5.2.3.5.2	Reading the Word of God	88
5.2.3.5.3	Bible study and group discussions on the scriptural passages.....	89

5.2.3.5.4	Practical application.....	90
5.2.3.6	ST: “Status” of the pastor.....	91
5.2.3.6.1	Introduction to the topic	91
5.2.3.6.2	Reading the Word of God	91
5.2.3.6.3	Bible study and group discussions on the scriptural passages.....	91
5.2.3.6.4	Practical application.....	93
5.3	Conclusion	93
 CHAPTER 6: SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH		
		95
6.1	Introduction	95
6.2	Description of pastors’ marriages in the IRM	95
6.3	Perspectives from literature on pastors’ marriages in the IRM.....	96
6.4	Normative perspectives on pastors’ marriages in the IRM.....	96
6.5	Proposed marriage counselling programme for pastors in the IRM.....	98
6.6	Suggestions for further research	99
6.7	Reflexion	99
ANNEXURE A: Form for Informed Consent		101
ANNEXURE B: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR IRM PASTORS AND THEIR WIVES WHO ARE EXPERIENCING PROBLEMS IN THEIR MARRIAGE RELATIONSHIP		108
ANNEXURE C: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR IRM PASTORS AND THEIR WIVES REGARDING THEIR MARRIAGE RELATIONSHIP		113
Bibliography		119

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and problem statement

1.1.1 Background

This research is done within the Synod of Mphatso of the *Igreja Reformada em Moçambique* (IRM). The church was founded in 1908 by Rev. Murray, a missionary of the Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa, at Mphatso in the north-western part of Mozambique. Mphatso is situated among the cultural group of the Chewa (Gouws, 2005:17, 36). During the Synod meetings of 2009, 2011 and 2013, a total of seven pastors were suspended because of marriage problems (Minutes, 2009; Minutes, 2011; Minutes 2013). All of them had extra-marital relationships. This number is alarming if one considers the fact that the Synod of Mphatso consists of 33 pastors serving in 35 congregations. These circumstances may serve as symptoms of the fact that the IRM does not give enough attention to the marriages of her pastors.

As a pastor of the IRM, the researcher has witnessed and listened to many marriage problems of pastors. Most of these pastors do not have the skills to apply the knowledge they have regarding marriages to their specific situation in order to solve the problems in their own marriages. It is the conviction of the researcher that the Synod of Mphatso should give attention to the marriages of the pastors. Lotter (2010:245) confirms that the church, in general, should have a clear picture of the nature and severity of marriage problems, what the needs are and what should be done to help. In the IRM, much attention is given to the young people in their preparation for marriage and the day of the wedding, but after that, no more marriage counselling is given to the members, especially not to pastors (Kalengo, 2009:11). The researcher is a Chewa himself and knows the cultural context well. He is also a lecturer at Hefsiba *Instituto Superior Cristão* (Hefsiba ISC), the theological school of the IRM (Hefsiba Institute for Christian Higher Education). As chaplain, the researcher has also encountered many theology students with marriage problems. Although Hefsiba ISC has a marriage enrichment programme as part of the training of theology students, it is clear that it is not sufficient to prevent future marriage problems of pastors.

1.1.2 Problem statement

In the New Testament, the apostle Paul writes that “*if anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God’s church?*” (1 Tim 3:5). Andria (2006:1472) comments on the fact that pastors should manage their own marriages well by saying that if their own families do not respect them, the pastors will not gain the respect of the congregations for which they are responsible. If problems arise in the pastor’s marriage, it has consequences for the pastor’s family and for the congregation where he serves. Such difficulties could create doubt about the stability

of the ministry of the pastor if these problems are not solved in time (Force, 2012; cf. Presnell, 1977:272). If a couple does not know how to navigate peacefully through conflict, but rather avoids it or gets into heated power struggles, nothing is resolved, resentment builds up and repairs are never made (Gottman, 2007:2). There is a growing need, say Hebbard (1995:250) and Duif (1992:1), for marriage counselling for pastors as marriage has increasingly become a vulnerable institution. Atieno (2012) confirms that marriage conflicts are a big problem in Africa. More than forty years ago authors already commented on the fact that married people in Africa, including pastors, are experiencing marriage problems because of frequent frustration in sexual relationships and extra-marital relations (Kisembo *et al.*, 1977:41). As indicated earlier, the IRM still struggles, in the 21st century, with the same problems.

The question can be asked why pastors are struggling in their marriage relationships and why, even though they underwent theological training, they don't seem to be able to apply the biblical knowledge regarding marriage to their own marriages. For example, they know that their marriages should reflect Christ's love for the church (Eph 5:25) and they know what God's will and purpose are for marriage and the marital relationship (Wright, 2012:2). Pastors of the IRM also know that marriage is a divine institution and that they should take heed of divine advice (cf. Gen 2:24). Despite this knowledge, pastors struggle with lack of trust, love and respect in their marriages.

It seems as if a lack of good communication is also a serious problem. This often gives rise to conflict and extra-marital relationships. It is the conviction of the researcher that culture plays a significant role in the lives of people. In this study, the influence of culture on the marriages of the pastors in the Mphatso Synod of the IRM will be investigated and how its negative effects can be addressed. Attention will not only be given to pastors, but also to the marriage problems of the theological students, as they will be the pastors of the future.

A further question can be asked regarding the response of the Mphatso Synod to the marriage problems of her pastors. The question is whether discipline is the correct and most efficient way to handle marriage problems of pastors, and if not, what alternative can be offered. One possible alternative could be marriage counselling from a biblical perspective for the pastors of the IRM. There are many models for marriage counselling, for example Wright's model for biblical and cognitive behaviour therapy (1981), Worthington's model based on cognitive behaviour therapy and family-systems therapy (1989), Worthington and McMurry's three-stage model of brief pastoral counselling for marital difficulties (1994), Oliver, Hasz and Richburg's solution-based Christian model (1997) and Worthington's hope-focused marital therapy (Worthington & Ripley, 2002:459-460; Worthington, 2005:28). These models are however, not necessarily applicable and sensitive to the cultural context of the IRM, and more specifically the Mphatso Synod.

In order to determine the state of current research on the marriages of pastors, an extensive electronic search of the following databases has been done at the theological library of the North-West University:

- EBSCO HOST- Academic Search Elite database
- Library Catalogue
- NEXUS DATABASES SYSTEM – Dissertations and Theses
- SABINET – SA Cat – Publications

The electronic search revealed that much research has been done on marriage counselling in general, but not specifically for pastors and not in the context of the IRM (Brown, 2007:117; Helmeke & Bischof, 2011:247-270; Hook, 2010:145; John & Krumboltz, 1979:555-602; Mccourt, 2009:126; Shurut & Paulsen, 2008:163-177; Van Niekerk *et al.*, 2010:395-410; Zuehlke, 2000:292-295).

Therefore, the overarching question in this research is:

Why do pastors in particular need marriage counselling and how can it be done to improve the quality of the marriages of the pastors in the *Igreja Reformada em Moçambique*?

The specific questions to be answered in this study are:

- What is the current state of the marriages of the pastors of the IRM?
- Which factors are responsible for the current state of the marriages of the pastors of the IRM?
- What biblical and ethical principles can be identified to serve as guidelines for pastors' marriages in the IRM?
- How can these guidelines be incorporated in a programme for contextualised and biblical marriage counselling to improve the quality of pastors' marriages in the IRM?

1.2 Aim and Objectives

The main aim of the research is to determine the need for marriage counselling and to show how it can be done to improve the quality of the marriages of the pastors in the IRM.

In order to reach this aim, the following objectives will be pursued:

- to investigate, by means of an empirical study, the current state of the marriages of the pastors in the IRM;

- to provide an interpretation of the current state of the marriages of pastors in the IRM;
- to identify biblical and ethical principles to serve as guidelines for the marriages of the pastors in the IRM; and
- to develop a programme for biblical marriage counselling that will be applicable and sensitive to the cultural context of the IRM, and more specifically of the Mphatso Synod, to improve the quality of the marriages of the pastors in the IRM.

1.3 Central theoretical argument

The central theoretical argument of this research is that the pastors of the *Igreja Reformada em Moçambique* need marriage counselling to improve the quality of their marriages through a biblical marriage counselling programme that is applicable and sensitive to their cultural context.

1.4 Methodology

This practical-theological study will be done from the perspective of the Reformed theological tradition according to the methodology of Osmer (2008:4). His model consists of four tasks, namely the descriptive task, the interpretive task, the normative task and the pragmatic task.

The descriptive task

In order to reach the first objective, to investigate the state of the marriages of the pastors in the IRM, the problems they experience and the influence culture has on marriage relationships, a qualitative empirical study will be done by using structured questionnaires and interviews with ten pastors and their wives. Four of the couples are perceived to experience marriage problems while the six other couples are perceived not to experience serious marriage problems (Osmer, 2008:33).

Interpretive task

In order to reach the second objective, namely to interpret the current state of the marriages of the pastors in the IRM, the results of the empirical study will be interpreted in the light of a literature survey of relevant material in Practical Theology and Social Anthropology (Osmer, 2008:80).

Normative task

In order to reach the third objective, i.e. to identify biblical and ethical principles to serve as guidelines for the marriages of the pastors in the IRM, a grammatical and historical exegetical study of applicable passages of Scripture like Genesis 2:24, Deuteronomy 24:5, Psalm 128:3, Ephesians 5:21-33 and 1 Timothy 3:5 will be conducted (Osmer, 2008:131).

The pragmatic task

In order to reach the fourth objective, i.e. to develop a programme for biblical marriage counselling that will be applicable and sensitive to the cultural context of the IRM, and more specifically of the Mphatso Synod, to improve the quality of the marriages of the pastors in the IRM, a synthesis of the research results of the preceding tasks will be done in hermeneutical interaction (Osmer, 2008:176).

1.5 Concept clarification

The pastor has the important role in the church to help couples to overcome problems and crises in their marriages. Therefore, the pastor's marriage must be a good model of a Christian marriage (Hoff, 2002:12-13). Marriage counselling, also called couples therapy, is a specialised type of counselling in order to help couples, including pastors, to recognise and resolve conflicts in their marriages and improve their marriage relationships (Collins, 1988:16; Anon., 2011). Marriage counselling requires two people, the husband and his wife, to work on understanding their relationship and to make biblical changes which will benefit their relationship with the help of a counsellor (Griffiths, 1999).

1.6 Ethical considerations

The study was done in accordance with the ethical guidelines set by the North-West University. The NWU Ethics Application Form was completed and served before the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Theology and the Health Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Health Sciences of the North-West University (HREC). The study was approved and the following Ethics number was issued: **NWU-00551-16-S6**.

1.7 Classification of chapters

Chapter 1 introduces the research topic and comprises the background, the research problem and the research questions. The aims and objectives of the study, the central theoretical argument, the methodology, ethical considerations and the eventual structure of the research project are given.

Chapter 2 comprises the *descriptive task* with the aim of investigating the state of the marriages of the pastors in the IRM, the problems they experience and the influence culture has on marriage relationships. A qualitative empirical study was done, using structured questionnaires and interviews with four pastors and their wives, who are experiencing marriage problems, and six couples without serious marriage problems.

Chapter 3 reports on the *interpretive task*, to interpret the current state of the marriages of the pastors in the IRM. It is done by looking at the results of the empirical study and interpreting them by means of a literature study of material from the disciplines of Practical Theology and Social Anthropology.

Chapter 4 comprises the *normative task* done by means of a grammatical and historical exegetical study of applicable passages in the Old and New Testament to establish the biblical principles fundamental to pastors' marriages.

Chapter 5 is dedicated to the *pragmatic task* and involves a synthesis of the research results in hermeneutical interaction to propose biblical and practical guidelines for a programme of marriage counselling in order to improve the quality of the marriages of the pastors of the IRM.

Chapter 6 consists of the summary of the conclusions of the different chapters and recommendations for potential future studies in this field.

The schematic presentation is presented on the next page:

1.8 Schematic presentation

Research question	Aim and objective	Research methodology
What is the current state of the marriages of the pastors in the IRM?	To investigate, by means of an empirical study, the current state of the marriages of the pastors in the IRM.	In order to investigate the state of the marriages of the pastors in the IRM, the problems they experience and the influence culture has on marriage relationships, a qualitative empirical study will be done by using structured questionnaires and interviews with ten pastors and their wives.
Which factors are responsible for the current state of the marriages of the pastors in the IRM?	To provide an interpretation of the current state of the marriages of the pastors in IRM.	In order to interpret the current state of the marriages of the pastors of the IRM, the results of the empirical study will be interpreted in the light of a literature survey of relevant material in Practical Theology and Social Anthropology.
What biblical and ethical principles can be identified to serve as guidelines for pastors' marriages in the IRM?	To identify biblical and ethical principles to serve as guidelines for the marriages of the pastors in IRM.	In order to identify biblical and ethical principles to serve as guidelines for the marriages of the pastors in the IRM, a grammatical and historical exegetical study of the applicable passages of Scripture will be conducted.
How can these guidelines be incorporated in a programme for contextualised and biblical marriage counselling to improve the quality of pastors' marriages in the IRM?	To develop a programme for biblical marriage counselling that will be applicable and sensitive to the cultural context of the IRM, and more specifically of the Mphatso Synod, to improve the quality of the marriages of the pastors in the IRM.	In order to develop a programme for biblical marriage counselling that will be applicable and sensitive to the cultural context of the IRM, and more specifically of the Mphatso Synod, to improve the quality of the marriages of the pastors of the IRM, a synthesis of the research results will be done in hermeneutical interaction.

CHAPTER 2: DESCRIPTION OF PASTORS' MARRIAGES IN THE IRM

2.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, facts were given on how many suspensions of pastors because of marital problems happened during the 2009-2013 period in the *Igreja Reformada em Moçambique* (IRM). The objectives of this chapter are to investigate the state of the marriages of the pastors in the IRM, to investigate why some pastors of the IRM are struggling to solve their marriage problems, to discover what the problems are they experience, as well as to understand the influence culture has on their marriage relationships. The researcher is of the opinion that this information can enable him to develop a marriage counselling programme for the benefit of the pastors and eventually for the benefit of the IRM as a whole.

In order to attain these objectives, the researcher did an empirical study to gather information regarding the state of marriages among the pastors, according to the first of Osmer's basic questions, namely "What is going on?" Gathering information from people involved in a specific situation helps to discern patterns and dynamics in the practical theological interpretation process (Osmer, 2008:4, 33). The empirical investigation was done in a qualitative manner in order to study the problem in a more natural environment and to be able to interpret the phenomena and data more critically in a holistic way amongst this specific group in the IRM which is well known to the researcher (Swinton & Mowat, 2006:29). It was done by using two types of questionnaires with the different groups of marriages of the pastors of IRM as was originally classified by the researcher. Over time the researcher identified couples who perceived to have problems in their marriage relationships and provided them with the questionnaire in Annexure B. The questionnaire in Annexure C was given to pastors whose marriages were perceived as not having serious marriage problems.

The qualitative method of research was chosen because it allows the researcher to learn from the general and specific experiences of people who were participating as respondents. Qualitative research also enables the researcher to be actively and effectively involved in the situation experienced by the participants (Creswell, 2003:181). This is in line with Swinton and Mowat (2006:32) who are of the opinion that qualitative research has the advantage that it places the researcher in the society from where he or she can observe from a more natural and holistic perspective. This implies, *inter alia*, learning from the couples' experiences, their mistakes as well as their successes as experienced in their marriages. This also enabled the researcher to investigate the possible cultural influences on their marriages. The researcher also deemed it important to include questions in the questionnaires regarding the existing pre-marital and

marriage enrichment programmes of the Mphatso Synod and of Hefsiba (the training institute for the pastors).

The researcher intends to propose a programme for marriage counselling following from the research. This will be discussed in Chapter 5.

2.2 Ethical considerations

The ethical guidelines of the North-West University were followed in this study as found in the Manual for Master's and Doctoral studies (NWU, 2013:26-28). The respondents were asked to commit themselves voluntarily to collaborate fully. This is according to the Nuremberg Code (2014) that emphasises the importance of voluntary consent. The main ethical concern was not to cause any harm to a participant during or after the research. In order to guarantee the privacy and anonymity of the respondents, their names and other personal data, which might lead to their personal identification, would be kept confidential. The respondents also signed the informed consent form (Annexure A). Care was taken to respect the dignity of each respondent. The participants were informed about the nature, aim, method and manner of this research.

While conducting this research, an attempt was made to maintain objectivity and integrity and to provide a just picture. The researcher committed himself to the "epistemic imperative", that is, the moral commitment to search for truth and knowledge (Mouton, 2004:239). He thus avoided scientific fraud and plagiarism by acknowledging all authors who contributed to this research in one way or another. This is applicable to the scientific literature, but also to the interviews. As some of the pastors' wives are illiterate and not conversant in Portuguese, the researcher had to conduct interviews in Chewa with some of the respondents. This was done according to the same questionnaires which the pastors completed.

2.3 Methodology

Qualitative research was the choice of the researcher because of its potential to produce more in-depth information about the nature and the quality of people's lives and circumstances, or of a specific situation. Smith and Bowers-Brown (2010:112-113) report that qualitative research looks at the world of the research respondents in depth and aims to uncover reality, as seen from their eyes. In other words, it examines life from the inside out. In this way, the researcher is able to examine the social situation of the respondents (Berg, 2001:6). It allows the researcher to build rapport with the respondents, to win their confidence and to enable them to talk about sensitive issues (Smith & Bowers-Brown, 2010:117). The researcher agrees with Mason (2002:7-8) that qualitative research should be conducted contextually. Being himself a Chewa pastor of the IRM,

the researcher was sensitive towards the context of the respondents and the sensitivity of the moral issue researched.

The *modus operandi* of the empirical research was that over time the researcher identified couples who perceived to have problems in their marriage relationships. He identified four couples (Couples 1 – 4) and he developed a questionnaire around them (Annexure B). The researcher also identified six couples (Couples 5 – 10) where there were no obvious, perceived signs of marriage conflict. He then compiled the questionnaire in Annexure C for them. The questionnaires were compiled in such a way as to make sure that the respondents understood the purpose of the questions and were able to respond easily. The questions are open-ended, thus allowing the respondents to give their own opinions on the issues addressed in the questionnaire. In this way, the questionnaire and the interview did not come over as a cross-examination.

The following aspects were covered in the questionnaires:

- the couples' experience of their marriage;
- specific problems they have;
- mechanisms they use to handle these conflicts/problems;
- the kind of help they received from the Synod to solve their marriage conflicts;
- how common the problem of marriage conflict is in pastors' marriages;
- how cultural influences affect their marriage relationship; and
- what impact pastors' marital problems have on their lives and on their ministry.

According to Mason (2010:1), the qualitative samples must be large enough to ensure that most of the important perceptions are covered. The exact number of respondents depends on the subject investigated (Fink, 2000). Qualitative research normally has a smaller number of participants, chosen in a careful, well-thought manner (Janse van Rensburg, 2009:10). The qualitative research method helps the researcher to understand people's thoughts and emotions that cannot be expressed or determined in statistics. Through this method the researcher does not gather information from a distance but through personal contact with participants. One can therefore describe this approach as client-centred (Janse van Rensburg, 2009:9).

The researcher restricted his research sample to 10 couples which is a good representation given the fact that only 33 pastors are in active ministry in the Mphatso Synod. Nine of these 10 couples

are from the Chewa culture and one couple is from the Nyungwe culture. Most of them live in rural areas.

The questionnaires were given to the respondents to complete in their own time. They were urged to be honest and open in their answers when responding to the questions of the questionnaire. In the Chewa culture, a married man should not discuss issues about marriage with a married woman other than his own. For this reason, the researcher's wife accompanied him when interviewing pastors' wives and to assist those who are not able to complete the questionnaire because of literacy limitations. The researcher is aware of the limitations of this *modus operandi* (cf. Mason, 2002:83), especially regarding confidentiality within the Mozambican culture and the IRM Mphatso Synod, but it was important to do it in this way in order to get the necessary information.

During the research, the researcher became aware of the potential of qualitative interviews to obtain more information (cf. Creswell, 2009:181). Qualitative interviews or semi-structured interviews are designed to allow the researcher and the participants to develop unexpected themes about the research topic (Mason, 2002:62). Based on the questionnaires, the researcher, immediately after completion of the questionnaire, interviewed especially those who had had problems completing it, mostly as a result of their level of literacy (cf. Fink, 2000). The researcher was positively surprised by the openness of the participants as they gained confidence. During the qualitative interviews, the researcher followed the guidelines given by Greeff (2011:343):

- asking clear and brief questions;
- asking open-ended questions;
- returning to incomplete points;
- monitoring the effect of the interview on the respondents;
- keeping the respondents focused;
- paraphrasing (stating the respondents' words in another form with the same meaning);
- clarifying;
- returning to something important that the person said in order to get him or her to expand on the idea; and
- probing (deepening the response to a question to increase the richness of the data being obtained).

A deliberate attempt was made not to indulge in “leading” questions or suggestions, but to allow the interviewees to speak for themselves (Gillham, 2002:74). The researcher wanted to understand the world the respondents are living in from their point of view and to unfold the meaning of their experiences, without necessarily any scientific explanations. The questionnaires and the interviews with the respondents assisted the researcher in understanding their life-worlds. It also helped him to discover the social realities of the lives of people and how these may impact on them as individuals, on their families, the communities and their churches (cf. Berg, 2001:10).

2.4 Analysis of data

Before analysing the data, the researcher familiarised himself with the generally accepted scientific *modus operandi* involved in data acquisition and analysis (Strydom, 2011:332–337). This included the following processes:

- selecting the research field (Mphatso Synod);
- gaining permission to enter the field (from the individual couples);
- maintaining good relationships (with the church and the respondents);
- gathering the actual data which included distribution of questionnaires and interviews; and
- analysing the data which included data reduction, presentation and interpretation.

Because a lot of information is not relevant to the study, the researcher had to reduce the data before he actually wrote it down. Reflecting on the information is a very important part of the analysis of data as explained below by Berg (2001:182):

At this stage of the research process, the researcher needs to focus on analysing and interpreting the information that has been gathered. Data analysis involves examination of the data in relation to potential resolutions to the questions or problems identified during the first stage of the research process.

During the process of analysis, the researcher reflects on the data, interprets it and discerns patterns (Fink, 2000; Smith, 2010:153). There are various procedures used to analyse data. Berg (2001:238) mentions three major approaches, namely the interpretative, the social-anthropological and the collaborative. The researcher used a combination of these three approaches.

The first approach is the interpretative approach where the researcher reflects on the data and looks for similarities, differences and certain patterns that emerge.

The second approach is the social-anthropological approach. In this approach the researcher observes the social dynamics of the selected group and takes note of the anthropological circumstances. In the case of this study, the researcher needed to understand the respondents' view on the position of men and women, especially in the marriage context. In the light of this approach, the researcher found it useful to concentrate not only on the data obtained from the questionnaires, but also to observe the social actions of the respondents. The researcher incorporated this approach in the study because it contributes towards a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics and actions that are taking place in the social context of the IRM.

The third approach is called the collaborative social approach. The point of departure here is dealing with the couples as part of the whole social environment. As the worldview of the African people in general is communal more than individualistic, Jensen and Gaie (2010:297) state that the communal notion of the self is considered by many as the cardinal point of the African worldview. Nyasani (2013) agrees that sociality is one of the distinctive characteristics of African philosophy. He quotes African authors such as Leopold Senghor and Sekou Toure, who argue that African societies are in effect 'community societies' where the individual is less important than the group, and solidarity in the group is more important than the needs of the individual. Mutual concern is fundamental to the African way of life. Individuals never think of themselves as standing alone, but always as part of the tribe (Banze 1998:115). Therefore, one should take serious cognisance of this social approach. It enables the researcher to understand a situation within a social context.

2.5 Results of the empirical research

As stated previously, the respondents were 10 pastors and their wives of the IRM Mphatso Synod. Four of the 10 couples were perceived to have serious problems (Couples 1 – 4 filled in the questionnaire in Annexure B) and the other six couples were perceived not to have any serious marriage conflict (Couples 5 – 10 filled out the questionnaire in Annexure C). In each couple, the husband and the wife were distinguished by the letters "H" and "W". The results are given in a narrative form, according to the sequence of the questions on the questionnaires. Although the researcher initially identified six couples who did not seem to have serious problems in their marriages, the results of the empirical study revealed a different reality. During the interviews, when the respondents gained confidence to speak about their marriages, it became clear that the majority of the respondents were experiencing marital conflict. These findings came as quite a shock to the researcher. The magnitude of marriage problems among the pastors of the IRM exceeded his initial anticipation. It is interesting to note that most of the first four couples did not receive any pre-marital counselling or any marriage enrichment counselling.

2.5.1 Couple 1

They married when the husband was in his early 30's and his wife in her late 20's. Respondent H1 was open about the fact that he was facing marriage problems at the time. He explained that they experienced misunderstandings regarding their behaviour towards each other. He was especially upset with the fact that his wife did not want to receive his relatives as visitors. According to H1, his wife was receiving negative advice from other people, including her relatives, not to respect her husband's relatives. He further indicated that the attitude of his wife made other people hesitant to talk to her, even to give them good advice on how to live and what good behaviour entails. As a result, the husband did not have a good relationship with his wife, which means that they lived together as a couple, but they did not enjoy love as husband and wife. Most of the time, she was not open to her husband. H1 felt that tradition and culture had a negative impact on their relationship. Sometimes when there was conflict, the husband just kept calm and did not respond to his wife in order to avoid confrontation. He was of the opinion that other pastors may experience the same situation; they were just not open and honest about it. His advice to such pastors was to ask other people or pastors to help to solve their problems. According to him, he and his wife were at the time still having serious problems in their marriage.

Respondent W1 informed the researcher that she learned how to live a married life through other women and relatives in her village. She had the same problems as her husband and concluded that she did not like being told what to do or not to do in her relationship with her husband. She added three more points of distress:

- Their marriage was still suffering because of the bad relationship between her and her husband.
- In their sexual relationship, it was difficult for her to allow her husband to sleep with her.
- She was not happy with the present relationship with her husband, but she could not find a way out of the situation.

2.5.2 Couple 2

When they married, the husband was in his late 30's and his wife was in her mid-30's. They did not receive pre-marriage counselling or any other marriage counselling.

Respondent H2 confirmed that at the beginning, their relationship was good, but after some time problems started between him and his wife, because of a misunderstanding on moral issues. He experienced that his wife did not respect him as her husband and that her attitude in general was negative. He stopped loving her and they were not working together as a couple. H2 also blamed

his wife for not taking care of the family. His wife decided at a certain stage not to sleep with him again and this situation lasted for a long time. He then started looking for other women, so that he could satisfy his sexual needs.

Respondent W2 complained that they experienced a high degree of marriage problems. Because of marriage conflicts, they agreed to stay in the same house, but in separate rooms. In actual fact, according to her, this implied that they were living as a semi-divorced couple. She confessed that she felt extremely lonely and abandoned by her husband, who was also working for a company in his village. Her husband accused her of adultery and of being a prostitute. On her part, W2 also accused her husband of adultery and as a result she had decided not to have regular sexual intercourse with him. W2 mentioned the following problems in their marriage:

- The marriage experienced social and moral problems and it was affecting their children as well.
- There was no unity between family members.
- Both parents were neglecting the development of the spiritual life of their family members.
- She started looking for help from other people to meet her needs.
- Her husband did not love her the way he should.

Her advice to pastors, who were still serving in the ministry, was that they must look after their spouses well. She felt that the Mphatso Synod of the IRM should take action to help pastors who have marriage problems, before the problems become serious with further negative consequences.

2.5.3 Couple 3

When the couple got married, the husband was in his early 20's and his wife not yet 20. They received pre-marital counselling in the context of their cultural tradition, but not in the church. Respondent H3 said that in the process of traditional counselling, the counsellor was his uncle. The counsellor informed him what marriage is about and how to comply with the marital and family rules within the context of their culture and tradition. The topics covered during the counselling were: home caring, which implies that he as a married man had to look after everything at home; caring for his wife which means loving his wife and being able to know how to solve conflict with his wife. The man should also know how to educate his wife. If she did not obey and respect her husband, she might even be punished by him as the head of the family. This could even go as far as beating the wife to show his authority. The husband should also know how to handle

finances in marriage and how to look after his children. H3 recommended that there should be more pre-marital counselling and that it should be more effective. The church should, in an effort to help the marriages of inter alia their pastors, give more guidance about sensitive cultural issues that have negative influences on the marriages.

The relationship with his wife was good at the beginning, but because of the influence of some of her family members, conflicts arose in their marriage. He was forced by his wife to imitate what other couples did in their village regarding things like the type of food they eat and the clothes they wear. He was asked by his wife to buy her expensive clothes, because her friends wore such clothes. At that point in time he, as a pastor, had no money to buy the things she wanted and this resulted in conflict. From his perspective, his wife did not respect him and did not show love to him. To solve the conflict, he resorted to dialogue with his wife. At times when it was not possible to solve the problem, he went to the family members for advice. If he still did not have any success, he was willing to even go to the judicial court. According to H3, the synod did not help him to solve their marriage conflicts effectively as there are no structures in place for assisting pastors. He was aware that as a pastor, he should not go to court, but he felt that the church had not and was not assisting him in this regard. At the time his marriage still had serious problems. He was of the opinion that problems arise when the following things take place in a marriage:

- when a couple is ruled by parents and influenced by tradition;
- when a couple does not obey God's will in making decisions;
- when faithfulness between husband and wife does not play the important role that it should; and
- when the couple does not have children (it can become a serious problem between the husband and his wife).

Respondent H3 also stated that because of the influence of culture, the parents of his wife were continuing to interfere in their marriage life and the idea of a divorce more and more became a solution to him and also to his wife. He was foreseeing this possibility and that his wife might be marrying somebody else in the future. He was of the conviction that the church did not pay enough attention to help the pastors with their marriage problems. Personally he felt that the church was not taking his problem seriously even after he had spoken privately to some of the leaders. He told the researcher that he would appreciate any constructive help from the church. According to H3, there was in general a big problem with pastors' wives because of the influence of culture and the behaviour of the community around them. Many problems arise, according to him, because the pastors' wives feel that their husbands as pastors cannot do anything against them.

H3 said that the pastors' wives simply thought that if the pastor divorced them, he would be disciplined and then he would be expelled from the ministry and the church. Because of that, pastors are hesitant to confront and correct their wives when they are wrong. According to him, the commitment that these pastors with marriage problems show to their families was only a show, because they did it to put up a front for the IRM and not in the first instance out of their obedience to the Lord. Therefore the synod of the IRM needed to show the pastors and their wives that the Word of God is intrinsically true and does not defend wrong behaviour.

Respondent W3 informed the researcher that her parents arranged a traditional counsellor from her local culture to give her some advice about marriage and how to find a man to marry. According to her, their marriage life was good at the beginning. They loved each other as husband and wife, but she felt after some time that her husband was not showing love to her. She then made a decision to start reacting against her husband by not obeying him. They separated from bed, but kept on staying in the same house. She admitted that she was not as submissive to her husband as before. According to her, her husband had a negative attitude towards her and that was frustrating her. Her parents then decided to take her away from her husband, while they were still working in the congregation. She also felt that she needed more time on her own. Her parents later took her for traditional treatment where they took her to a witch doctor for medicinal treatment at her home village. The relationship between her and her husband became even worse. Her husband was unhappy because she had allowed her parents to take her for traditional treatment. She did it, because she felt that her husband did not love her, while she knew that her parents loved her. She retaliated and did not allow her husband to have sexual intercourse with her. The agreement in the meantime was to stay together in the same house.

2.5.4 Couple 4

This couple got married when the husband was in his early 30's and his wife in her late 20's. The couple had been married for about 9 years and had been in the ministry for about 5 years. They had received pre-marital counselling only a few days before their marriage. After they had been married, they received marriage counselling only when they were studying at Hefsiba Theological College.

Respondent H4 said that at the beginning, the relationship with his spouse was good, but after some time, problems started because of some traditional customs and habits of the area. H4 conveyed the following:

- Cultural influences promoted differences in their marriage. Issues like cooking habits, the way of communicating with the spouse and the fact that the wife did not like to work in close relationship with him, were factors that influenced the quality of their marriage.

- When problems arose, his spouse did not respond in a good manner. She shouted and reacted without respect towards her husband. After some time when she had calmed down, they discussed the problem according to what the Bible recommends for Christian marriages. According to his culture, problems should be handled by the family members of the husband and wife if the couple cannot manage to solve the conflict themselves.
- H4 thought that the influence of some friends and family members who were not Christians and who gave the wrong advice to his wife contributed to the trouble between them.

According to H4, it is normal in his culture for families to arrange marriages for young people even without consulting them on the matter. This sometimes causes problems in the marital relationships. H4 recommended that all pastors should regularly attend marriage enrichment programmes together with their wives so that they could also benefit from these teachings. According to him, most of the pastors in the IRM received marriage counselling only once and that was when they studied at Hefsiba.

Respondent W4 informed the researcher that their relationship had been good at the beginning of their marriage, but after some time things changed. Conflicts developed between her husband and herself because of their differences on certain issues. She mentioned the following issues: They did not agree about money management. When her husband received his salary, she felt he misused the money. The result was that they could not buy food and other basic things needed for the rest of the month. This led to suffering. She felt that her husband did not respect her in making decisions about the future of their marriage. If they could not manage to solve conflict on their own, they asked relatives from her family to assist. W4 confirmed that according to their culture a wife cannot perform tasks which come under her husband. She acknowledged that her husband was the head of the family, and for this reason he should fulfil his duty to provide for the family needs and she as the wife should just make use of what is available at home, like food, clothes and other material.

2.5.5 Couple 5

The couple got married when the husband was in his mid 20's and his wife almost 20 years of age. This couple had received pre-marital counselling before they were married, but they did not attend any marriage enrichment courses afterwards. Respondent H5 said that the pre-marriage counselling was good for them, because it helped them to develop some skills to manage marriage conflicts. He appreciated it that his wife respected and obeyed him and that they followed the marriage norms according to their culture and their Christian faith. As a couple, they sometimes did experience conflict in their marriage, for example: according to their culture, when there was conflict in their marriage, his wife asked other people to come and help to solve the

problems and this was not always helpful. According to H5 this often leads to the situation where couples do not learn to solve their own problems without the help of other people. In their culture, it is normal for families to intervene in solving marriage conflicts. His opinion was that a pastor's marriage should be an example of a good Christian marriage. Spouses should be honest with each other and be willing to solve the problems caused by their personalities. This can ideally be done in marriage enrichment or counselling programmes organised by the church where couples can discuss different marital issues. The topics could include how to be loyal to each other, sex in the marriage, trusting and loving each other as a couple. He and his wife would like to receive marriage counselling on a regular basis.

Respondent W5 confirmed that at the beginning of their marriage they experienced conflict concerning the relationship with relatives, because the relatives wanted to introduce some unacceptable cultural traditions into their marriage. As a Christian couple, they eventually did not accept these negative traditions in their marriage. There had been some personal differences between W5 and her husband in terms of how to use money and other resources of the family, but they managed to solve these conflicts by talking about it as a couple. She said that nowadays they try to become calm before discussing conflicting issues in order to find solutions for a better marriage.

2.5.6 Couple 6

When the couple got married, the husband was in his early 20's and his wife was almost 20. They received pre-marital counselling at their local church, and they attended a marriage enrichment course once as a couple.

Respondent H6 was disappointed that the church did not assist them in solving their marriage problems. He had to find his own ways to deal with the situation he was facing in his marriage. Some of the problems that the couple experienced in their relationship were that his wife was not open to tell him what kind of love she would like to receive from him and they did not feel free to talk about sex, because the wife did not like it. In order to handle these conflicts, H6 was trying to be tolerant towards his wife. He also was careful in the way he spoke to her, trying to balance criticism with positive words.

He believed that pre-marital counselling was very important for pastors in order to help them with their marriage conflicts. The respondent tried to solve the problems with his wife, but some of them were still unsolved. Presently, after a long battle, he was using discussion, prayer and tolerance towards his wife, in order to minimise the marriage conflict. H6 advised that the IRM pastors should develop their communication skills as a tool. According to him the church was not assisting the pastors in their marriage problems. Because of the cultural influence on the

marriages, the couples cannot go and ask any advice even from another pastor. There is a fear that their marriage can be regarded as disgraceful because of their problems. People are more critical of the marriage of their pastor since he is regarded as the minister of God's Word.

Respondent W6 confirmed that when they started their marriage, everything was good, but problems came after a few years. One of the major problems had to do with food. Her husband felt that she did not want to prepare the food that he needed and consequently he was not interested to continue with the marriage. She felt that he did not take responsibility for the family, because he was not interested to stay with her. He often went out in the morning and only came back in the evening. The church did not help them in any way and they had to find ways to solve their own problems. Nowadays they resort to discussions and prayer to sort out their differences.

2.5.7 Couple 7

When they got married, the husband and his wife were in their 30's. As a couple they went for pre-marital counselling organised by the church. They were given instructions on how to treat one another by accepting the weaknesses of the spouse in order to maintain a good relationship. They also once attended a marriage enrichment seminar presented by the church.

Respondent H7 said that during the first years of their marriage, their relationship went well. Then, after some time, problems cropped up in their marriage. As a source of these problems, he mentioned influences of friends of his wife who gave her the wrong advice, for example on how to act during conflict with her husband. W7 was informed that a woman could punish her husband by refusing to give him food and even to refuse to be close to him. According to H7, pastors' wives often think they can do what they want to their husbands. They often argue that their husbands will not react negatively, because they are pastors. A pastor can thus be mistreated by his wife, but cannot go out and ask help from ordinary people, because he is a pastor. To overcome this problem, according to H7, the couple, as Christians, should discuss their problems, asking God to guide them during the time of conflict, because they know that if it is not resolved, it will be disastrous for them and can end up in a divorce.

H7 mentioned another source of problems, namely relatives who are not Christians. They often urge the couple to observe and follow traditions and cultural practices in the marriage which are contrary to their Christian convictions. For example, traditionally, the woman may refuse to have sexual intercourse with her husband when they have visitors or when they are looking after one of the family members at their home. Another example is that the wife should keep her distance from her husband and should spend most of her time among other ladies. The problem is that these lady friends usually do not contribute to a good relationship between husband and wife. H7 said that he tried to convince his wife to be careful with non-Christian advisers who can give the

wrong advice. He also urged W7 to pray with him. H7 handled his marriage conflicts calmly and gently. He tried to get guidance from the Word of God. He recommended that the church should organise more marriage counselling sessions. The programme should include training on topics which can help to build a strong relationship and love between husbands and wives. This training should include guidelines on how to solve conflicts in their marriages, but should also be proactive, giving guidelines on how to prevent problems.

Respondent W7 is of the opinion that the pre-marital counselling that they received, helped them to understand each other better and opened up the possibility to improve their communication and to have, in general, a good relationship. According to her, marriage counselling in the IRM Mphatso Synod is important and should be done several times; not only once before marriage. She referred to the problems they experienced because of the influence of tradition and customs. W7 said that she still did not know how to respond in a good way to her husband when there was conflict, even though they discussed issues which caused conflict in their marriage and they asked the Lord to guide and help them to solve their problems.

2.5.8 Couple 8

When the couple got married, the husband was in his middle 30's and his wife was in her early 30's. They had about 5 years of experience as a couple in the ministry. They had received pre-marital counselling at their local congregation. At their counselling session, they were taught the principles of taking care of and respecting one another in marriage. The couple had also twice attended marriage enrichment programmes together.

Respondent H8 explained that if a pastor's wife responds positively and respects her husband, loving him, including having a good sexual relationship, the problems should be minimised. According to him, some pastors commit adultery as a way to solve their sexual problems. At the beginning, their relationship was good, but problems started after a few years:

- There was misunderstanding on the issue of money.
- His wife did not always behave respectfully towards her husband.
- Sometimes they did not work together as a couple.

H8 confirmed that the relatives, to a certain extent, had a negative influence but that they as a couple tried to solve their own marital problems. According to H8, some of these relatives that acted as counsellors, were not Christians. They did counselling more according to cultural and traditional principles than biblical principles and this often led to problems. H8 went further to give some examples: They told married couples not to sleep together when they received visitors at

their house. It was also against their tradition for a wife to eat with her husband during that time. It was expected of the wife to serve good food to her husband and when this did not happen it was frowned upon. In his evaluation of their traditional cultural customs, H8 said that certain cultural principles contributed to marriage problems. These cultural principles and traditions often lead to arrogance on the husband's side and humiliation of the wife, because of the emphasis in their tradition on the husband being the head of his wife and that she was expected simply to obey her husband and to follow him in everything. Another negative thing of their culture is the emphasis on the fact that a couple must have children. If they do not have children, it normally leads to accusations between the husband and his wife. It is then expected of the husband to leave his wife and marry another woman.

According to H8, the relationship between him and his wife was still "balanced", they tried to solve their marriage problems in order to maintain a good relationship. As a Christian, he is of the opinion that couples should try to solve their problems by trusting in God's power and by putting their faith in Him alone and in nothing else. He confirmed that some church leaders knew about their marriage problems, but that no help was given to solve their problems.

Respondent W8 said that the pre-marital counselling and the marriage enrichment programmes which they had attended were valuable and it helped them initially as a couple to find ways of solving their marriage conflicts. They had learned that communication and mutual respect are very important tools to maintain a good relationship. She recommended that the church should conduct a programme of marriage counselling every year. This would help pastors to increase the ability to handle their own marriage conflicts. Pastors should be assisted by the church to attend these workshops or conferences. Marriage counselling for pastors can be more effective if the church guided the pastors from the very beginning and continued to do so during their ministry. She also recommended that during marriage counselling programmes, intimate relationship issues between husband and wife should be discussed.

In her experience, the pre-marital counselling was done with the men and women in two separate groups. Topics covered in the counselling were what a Christian family is; how to solve marriage conflicts and the importance of a prayer life in a Christian marriage. In order to have the most effective marriage counselling for pastors and their wives in the IRM, W8 recommended the following:

- the church should have well-qualified counsellors or advisers;
- the counsellors must be women and men and they must do the counselling with both the spouses present;

- the period of pre-marital counselling should be at least 2 to 4 days of training before the actual marriage;
- counsellors must have books and literature on marriage life and this should also be available to counselees.

2.5.9 Couple 9

The couple had been married for about 19 years. He was in his early 20's when they got married and his wife almost 20. The husband received pre-marriage counselling once and he regarded it as not enough to help them to solve the problems concerning marriage conflicts. The wife did not receive any pre-marital counselling.

Respondent H9 revealed that the relationship had been good between him and his wife at the beginning of their marriage. They loved each other. The problem started however after 5 months. According to their culture, if a couple has no children, the relatives can arrange another man or woman for procreation purposes. Therefore, some people were advising his wife to have sex with other men, just to get pregnant as they thought that the husband was not able to make his wife pregnant. The husband's reaction was to talk with his wife to be faithful to God and to him as her husband, because children are gifts from God. After a long discussion and much tension she understood that the advice she had received from these people was wrong. An aggravating factor was that the couple as a pastoral couple did not really have close friends in the community, and the relationship with the parents and the other relatives of the couple from both sides also suffered because of the problem. The church did not help to solve the conflict. Fortunately, they could solve this problem on their own, but other issues still caused some conflict in their marriage, things like:

- differences on what to eat or what things to do together as couple; and
- the wife did not want to have regular sex with him; most of the times she complained that she was not feeling well, just to make the practice impossible.

H9 recommended that the church should have a regular programme of marriage counselling for all pastors and their wives in order to help improve the marriages of the pastors of the IRM Mphatso Synod. He also recommended that apart from other topics, it should also include the issue of sexual intercourse between husband and wife as the central part of the expression of love in a marriage. Most of the marriages are affected by this problem. But H9 confirmed that when problems started, he just reminded his wife of God's love in their marriage. He also said

that in order to solve their marriage problems, they discussed their issues; they prayed together and sought God's help as a couple.

According to respondent W9, their marriage began well and without problems, but there was a time when the husband started to have an extra-marital partner. She defended her negative behaviour because she was disappointed with the attitude of the husband. According to her, she decided not to allow her husband to have sexual intercourse with her, as a way of punishing him in time of conflict. W9 recommended that the church should organise conferences for pastors' marriages every year, in order to help and equip couples to solve their marriage problems.

2.5.10 Couple 10

As a couple, they had not received pre-marital counselling and reckoned that they were not prepared for the challenges of married life. The husband was in his early 20's and his wife not yet 20 when they got married. They have been married for almost 20 years now and have been in the ministry for less than 5 years.

Respondent H10 said that during the first four years of their relationship, they had some crises, but after that, the situation became normal. Presently, their biggest issue was their budget and it was sometimes difficult to reach consensus, but they tried to handle the differences by talking about the issues. H10 is of the opinion that a husband is the head and therefore his wife should be submissive to him. According to him, she must show her submission when it comes to the issue of money and all other issues in which they as the couple must take decisions.

It is normal in his culture for families to arrange marriages. This implies that the parents or other members of the extended families can choose a husband or wife for the young man or woman, even without their consent. They are compelled to accept the partner, even if it is not their choice. This sometimes results in a situation where there is no true love between the husband and his wife. Therefore H10 concluded that some cultural practices have a negative impact on marriages.

According to H10, the church should arrange more time for marriage counselling for the pastors and their wives and not wait for problems to arise before action is taken. When there are problems, the church should act faster to intervene and to help solving the problems. H10 was of the opinion that the IRM does not have a good programme of marriage counselling and this also applied to other churches he knew.

Respondent W10 said that the main reason for marriage is to have children, because in her culture, a woman without a child is always treated as a young person. She had in mind that when she married, she would be submissive to her husband as her culture demands. She was prepared to obey and respect her husband. She and her husband sometimes had misunderstandings,

especially on the issue of money. They quarrelled on what they should spend the available money. Fortunately they did not have serious problems at that stage, because they tried to solve the differences by talking to each other about it.

2.6 Analysing the research data

The following is an effort to reflect on some of the results obtained from the empirical research. In the process, the researcher is especially making use of the interpretative approach, but also taking cognisance of the social-anthropological and the collaborative social approaches. In order to analyse the data, the researcher basically went through the following process:

- On reading through the research results, certain patterns emerged.
- According to these patterns, some data were identified and organised into different categories.
- Reflection on the implications of the data in each category. The following questions played an important role in this reflection: What do these data really reveal? What is the real problem in the marriage? Why are pastors, who have undergone theological training, including biblical training regarding marriages, seemingly unable to apply this knowledge to their own particular situation and the context of the IRM in Mphatso Synod?

The following categories were identified. These can be seen as the major kinds of problems that pastors are experiencing in their marriages.

2.6.1 Sex-related problems

- Traditionally, the woman may refuse to have sexual intercourse with her husband when they have visitors or when they are looking after one of the family members at their home.
- Women do not talk about sex with their husbands, because they do not like it.
- Some wives do not allow husbands to have sexual intercourse with them as a way to punish their husbands.
- Wives do not want to have regular sex with their husbands. Most of the time they complain that they are not feeling well, just to avoid it.
- If husbands' sexual needs are not satisfied at home, they might look for other women which may lead to adultery.

- Pastors are of the opinion that many pastoral marriages are affected by sex-related problems. They believe that many marital problems could be minimised if couples had a good sexual relationship as it is the central part of the expression of love in a marriage.

2.6.2 Cultural influences

- Arranged marriages are widely practiced and according to the respondents, not working.
- The cultural and traditional expectations sometimes clash with the principles of Christianity and often cause big problems.
- It seems as if women are more inclined to stay loyal to the traditions of their clan and tribe. There is evidence of pastor's wives who go to witch doctors to help solve their marriage problems.
- Examples of cultural influences that cause problems: cooking habits; communication between a husband and his wife is limited, especially about the more intimate part of married life; eating together or not; punishment/manipulation by means of giving or withholding food; and the fact that the wife associates more with other women than with her own husband.
- From a social-anthropological approach, it is important to note that family and friends are the pillars of marriage and they serve as facilitators in the process of solving marriage problems. The problem though, is that couples run to other people for help too soon and never learn to solve their own problems.
- Advice from friends and family (especially non-Christians) turns out to be a major problem in nearly all of the couples' experiences.

2.6.3 Childlessness

- In the traditional mind of the African people, the main reason for marriage is to have children to prove that you are an adult.
- The emphasis on the perception that a couple must have children causes problems when they do not have children. It is traumatic and often leads to accusations between the husband and his wife. It is frequently expected of the husband to leave his wife and marry another woman, merely for procreation purposes.

2.6.4 Submission

- The researcher found it striking that the couples did not talk about their spouses as their best friends or partners. What is paramount in their minds is who is supposed to be the head in the house and what the respective responsibilities are of the head and of the submissive partner.
- Although all agree that the man should be the head of the family, this standpoint is not always put into practice.
- It seems that men sometimes misuse it to the detriment of their wives.
- The paternalistic view of marriage is also reflected in the fact that men receive advice and counselling how to force their wives to obey them and that they have the right to punish (even beat) them.
- Submissiveness implies that the wives “should give in” to the demands of their husbands.
- The possibility for men to become arrogant and to humiliate their wives increases.

2.6.5 Money issues

- The handling of money and the lack of transparency turn out to be another major problem in many marriages.
- Some pastors’ wives find it very difficult to be considered leaders in the society, but they don’t have enough money to buy good clothes.
- Some women feel left out in the decision-making processes of their husbands. If there are discussions, there is often no consensus, as men tend not to be transparent about financial matters.
- From the social-cultural point of view, the husband’s main role is to provide for all the needs of the family.

2.6.6 The “status” of the pastor

- Some wives take it for granted that their husbands will not divorce them as it will bring the husbands under church discipline and they will run the risk of losing their position as pastors. This sometimes leads to uncalled-for and disrespectful behaviour by the wives.
- Wives sometimes tend to manipulate their husbands by telling them that they cannot act against them as they are pastors. This often results in unhappy marriages that are just keeping

up the pretences. It is tragic to see that some couples live separate lives. One can describe them as semi-divorced couples.

- Other couples just stay together for the sake of the pastor's position in the church and his salary.
- It seems that pastors of the IRM do not have a person or a place where they can get help when they struggle in their marriages.

2.7 Conclusion

Through qualitative empirical research, the researcher identified six major aspects that influence the marriages of pastors of the IRM Mphatso Synod negatively, namely: sex-related issues, cultural influences, childlessness, submission, money issues and the "status" of the pastor. The lack of proper marriage counselling programmes also came to the fore as all the couples were of the opinion that effective pre-marital counselling and continuing marriage counselling programmes could form an important part in forestalling and resolving future marriage problems. All of the couples pleaded for more direct involvement from the side of the synod to try to solve conflict in pastoral marriages. This will receive more attention in Chapter 5. In Chapter 3 the researcher will, by means of a literature study, reflect more in depth on the interpretation and the relevance of the empirical results. This literature study will make use of insights from the disciplines of Practical Theology and Social Anthropology.

CHAPTER 3: PERSPECTIVES FROM LITERATURE ON PASTORS' MARRIAGES IN THE IRM

3.1 Introduction

In Chapter 3 the focus will be on the interpretative task of Osmer (2008:7) that is related to his second question, namely "Why is this happening?" in the practical theological hermeneutical interpretation process. The researcher will endeavour to interpret the results of the empirical study relating to the current state of the marriages of the pastors in the IRM in the light of a literature study. The intention is not to exhaust everything written on marriages, but to limit the focus to the main issues raised by the couples in the empirical study regarding their marriages. These are the factors that lead to conflict. In the process, relevant material in Practical Theology and Social Anthropology regarding marriages of pastors and marriages in general in Africa will be consulted. Because the focus is on the African context, the researcher will mostly use sources by African authors written in the African context.

The following are the six aspects from the empirical study that will receive special attention:

- sex- related issues;
- cultural influences;
- childlessness;
- submission of the wife;
- money issues; and
- the "status" of the pastor.

In order to reach the objective of this chapter, the researcher will investigate each of these six issues in the light of the traditional African way of understanding marriage; the influence of culture on African marriages; the implications of this for the pastors' marriages; and possible solutions to overcome these issues.

The chapter will conclude with pointers from literature on ways to enable couples to grow in their marital relationship, including the importance of proper pre-marital counselling and marriage counselling programmes. This will work towards addressing the research problem namely, why do pastors in particular need marriage counselling and what can be done to improve the quality of the marriages of the pastors in the *Igreja Reformada em Moçambique*?

Phrases like “the traditional African way of understanding marriage” and “the influence of culture on African marriages” are in themselves problematic. The researcher agrees with Theron (2013:3) when she contends that there is no universal culture, neither is there a homogeneous African culture. She agrees with Draper (2006:176) that one cannot synthesise the diversity found on the vast African continent into a generic “Africanness”. However, Theron (2013:3), in her argument, comes to the conclusion that because of certain distinguishing features and fundamental commonalities that can be identified among the majority of African people, that is, despite their different contexts, one can, with caution, refer to “African culture” or in the case of this study, “African marriages”. If the literature refers to a specific African culture, the researcher will handle it accordingly, but when authors use the term “African” or “traditional African”, the researcher will follow suit and use these terms in a more generic way. In what follows, each of the six above-mentioned issues will be addressed in detail.

3.2 Sex-related issues

In a study conducted by Kimani (2004:404-406) in different Kenyan communities, it became clear that sex is central in the life of these communities. Foremost is reflection on the purpose and meaning of human sexuality: the biological purposes, to gratify biological desire and to procreate. Through procreation, the marital relationship is strengthened, but the purpose and meaning of human sexuality also go further than that. Human sexuality is also used for religious, ritual and social obligations and it is this function and meaning of sex that may have negative consequences for the community, as it may contribute to the transmission and spread of HIV and AIDS.

Referring to the biological purpose of sex, Mashau (2006:39) is blunt when he states that in some African countries, men get married purely for the sake of sex and consequently regard their wives as mere sex objects. Infidelity in marriage is then not considered a problem as sex before or outside marriage is not seen as sinful behaviour, except if the woman is married or if it was not arranged beforehand. Masakona (2000:54) confirms that adultery is often acceptable in the Venda culture, especially when it is committed by the man. Rafumbedzani (2001:9, 14-15) suggests that this lack of faithfulness, loyalty and honesty that are evident in Venda marriages may be because of the lack of love and affection.

Rafumbedzani (2001:28, 30) goes further by stating that some traditions in Africa perceive sexual intercourse as a necessity. It is almost like eating and drinking without which a person cannot live. People can have sex whenever they want to and without limitations, even excessively. Men who have the stamina for four or more intercours in one day may even be admired. According to Baloyi (2013:7) and Masakona (2000:27), this is the reason why a woman is never exempted from sexual intercourse whenever the husband needs it, except when she is breastfeeding or

when she is menstruating. Thus Ruppel (2008:37) argues that the human rights of most African women are being violated in their marriages.

Certain polygamous practices further contribute to the oppression of married women and the violation of their human rights. Men are, for example, free to marry other wives and the first wife may not raise any objection (Ruppel, 2008:37). In some traditions in Africa it may even be expected of the first wife to assist her husband in choosing the second wife (Kimani, 2004:407). The researcher has observed this and confirms that this is also true in some cultures in Mozambique. In this way the husband increases the responsibilities that rest on his wives to take care and support their families. Polygamous practices enable men to look for other sexual partners if their wives do not satisfy their sexual desires and needs (Baloyi, 2013:7). Extra-marital sex has numerous negative consequences for the lives of the couple, including the incidence of unwanted pregnancies and the transmission of HIV and AIDS to marriage partners (Baloyi & Manala, 2013:7).

Women sometimes react to injustices committed against them by their husbands by refusing sexual intercourse (Ruppel, 2008:37). It may also happen that wives simply do not want to have regular or sometimes excessive sex with their husbands. They then fabricate excuses to avoid intercourse. Excuses may include that they do not feel well (Baloyi, 2013:7; cf. 2.5.9). They may also argue that the husband is too old or a family member is sick (Rafumbedzani, 2001:29; cf. 2.5.7). When this occurs, men feel that their right to have sex is being violated.

When it comes to the act of sexual intercourse itself, Mwiti and Dueck (2006:197) are of the opinion that couples in Africa are often in too much of a hurry. They are often unwilling or too arrogant to learn about their partners' sexual needs. Some traditional African men are even of the opinion that women cannot feel pleasure during the sexual act (Rafumbedzani, 2001:15). These factors may impact negatively on the quality of sexual intercourse and husbands may feel that their sexual needs are not met at home. It is then justified, according to them, to look for other women to satisfy their needs. The result is adultery as also happened in the case of some pastors of the IRM (cf. 2.5.8). The researcher agrees with Rafumbedzani (2001:14) that sexual intercourse practiced outside the marriage violates human dignity and has a negative impact on the personal lives of the couple. This is clearly seen in the marriages of the pastors of the IRM (cf. Chapter 2). Furthermore, when one of the spouses is not demonstrating love and fidelity towards his/her partner, it is difficult for the partner to fulfil his/her marital duty to the spouse (Rafumbedzani, 2001:14). Fostering and maintaining a happy marital relationship becomes extremely difficult and hinders the creation of a safe and happy environment for the children (Baloyi, 2013:2).

Lack of communication regarding sex seems to be another major issue in traditional African marriages. African couples often find it difficult to discuss marital issues. This is all the more true when the couple experiences challenges regarding sexual intercourse. It often leads to sexual difficulties or the destruction of trust between the couple (Block, 2000:14). As Brannen and Collard (1982:51-52) and more recently Gladding (2011:36) argue, if a wife and a husband are unable to talk about their feelings, sexual intercourse is inhibited (cf. 2.5.3). People are often afraid to tell their spouses what they really feel and desire, especially when it comes to sex. Traditionally, it would be taboo for a woman to ask her husband that she would like to have sexual intercourse for the pleasure of it (Mwiti & Dueck, 2006:192). This is also true in the Chewa and the Ngoni cultures in Mozambique. Women are not open and free to tell their husbands what kind of love they would like to receive (cf. 2.5.6). Most of the couples in Africa continue to experience sexual problems that remain unresolved and it sometimes leads to marriage conflict or divorce (Baloyi, 2013:2). The researcher fully agrees with Baloyi (2013:7) when he states that women should be free to communicate their sexual needs to their husbands. Couples should understand and accommodate each other and meet the sexual needs of their partners.

When there is good communication between husbands and wives, says Worthington (2005:661, 672), it produces trust, love and intimacy. These impact positively on a sense of unity and a good relationship between husbands and wives and they value one another. Louw (2012:88, 95) confirms that sexual intimacy and a deep personal knowledge of the spouse are essential components for a deep personal relationship. The physical body and sexuality are essential ingredients to enhance the quality of intimacy in the marriage. Couples should be encouraged to enjoy their sexuality within their marriages to fulfil and enrich the love and good relationship between them (Worthington, 1989:52, 57).

Couples should further be encouraged to discuss intimate matters with each other, to recall pleasant moments between them, to create times and opportunities to reflect on their relationship and to evaluate the quality of their marriage (Worthington, 2005:68). Such openness and fidelity again promotes a healthy sexual relationship between the couple (Mwiti & Dueck, 2006:197). It is the opinion of Mashau (2005:15-16) that sexual intercourse was given to a husband and wife as the most intimate physical relationship between spouses. They should enjoy it within the marital context and in the oneness of the two.

It is important to remember, argues Crook (2013:120), that sexuality is not isolated from the other aspects of life. As Vorster (2007:70) stresses, sexuality goes deeper than just physical pleasure. It involves various levels of people's lives, including the psychological and spiritual dimensions. It thus influences the way a person responds to other issues in marriage. The author accentuates the importance of sex in the marital relationship as it promotes a mysterious uniqueness and love

between the husband and wife (Vorster, 2007:78). That is why Crook (2013:121) argues that if people do not have good sexual relationships in their marriages, their whole life can be negatively affected. That is why the ministry of the pastor is influenced negatively if the couple has marital problems. Cornell (2008:1) confirms that when a pastor's marriage relationship deteriorates, he/she cannot lead a local church in spiritual growth or even any other development in the congregation. To prevent this, Collins (2001:158) and Hoff (2002:100) urge the church to organise marriage enrichment programmes for all Christians, including the pastors, with a strong emphasis on the sexual aspects of a relationship. In the empirical study in Chapter 2, this need was clearly voiced by many of the respondents when they recommended it as a topic for a marriage counselling programme. They mentioned topics like intimacy, love and trust between the marriage partners.

Leoto (2004:39-42) agrees with Hoff (2002:100-102) that many couples face unexplained problems in the marital relationship and do not realise that the problems are consequences of unsatisfied sexual needs within their marriage. Good sexual relationships have various advantages for both partners in marriage. It reduces tension and personal frustration in the home, it increases the level of love and affection for the spouse and it provides harmony in the marital life and in the home. They learn to make the partner happy, to give themselves to the spouse with affection and pleasure and the partner feels appreciated and respected. A loving husband or wife understands when his/her partner is not ready to engage in sexual intercourse.

Women in African marriages should know their rights, they should experience their husbands' respect, they should have the freedom to express their ideas freely and they should be valued as partners. This is only possible when partners accept the differences between them (Hoff, 2002:155-156). Churches should help to accomplish this and help people to understand the importance of satisfactory sexual relationships in marriages, but it goes further. The church should also assist pastors in understanding the influence of culture on their marriages and how to overcome it. This will be the focus of the next section.

3.3 Cultural influences

As seen in the previous section, African culture regulates people's behaviour and sexual intercourse in marriage (cf. Baloyi & Manala, 2013:1). However, culture does not only influence the sexual aspects of marriage, but also influences a person's lifestyle, the experience of marriage and even the understanding of what marriage is (Lango, 2003:44; Mariano, 2004:1; Whitehead & Whitehead, 2007:133). It is the opinion of Tembe (2010:1) that the strongest influence on many African marriages comes from the community, the family and the parents. That is why the author argues that African culture may even affect Christian marriages negatively. Pastors and their

marriages are thus also subject to these influences, because, as Lango (2003:47) states, culture profoundly affects the way people live, think and act, including their interpersonal relationship. Rutoro (2012:163) confirms that Christians form part of the cultural community in which they live and to which they belong and therefore are subject to these influences. When African Christians are confronted with difficulties in their marriage, they often turn to the traditional methods of trusting in ancestors' intervention, advice from extended families or friends and traditional ways to deal with problems, whether these methods are compatible with biblical norms or not (Ngoy, 1998:27, 101-102; cf. Tembe, 2010:130). This is affirmed by Harawa-Katumbi (2012:112) and the results of the empirical study (cf. 2.5.9). These traditions are often driven by negative views and assumptions about gender and marriage. The manner in which marital partners think and behave toward their spouses are thus negatively influenced. As the focus of this study is on the marriages of pastors, the researcher agrees with Andria (2006:1472) that these negative views and assumptions negatively affect the family members of the pastor's home and subsequently the congregation where he serves.

Looking at the diversity of cultures in Africa, it becomes clear that each tribe or group of people consider their ideas, habits and customs as universally good and correct (Burns & Azevedo, 2005:11). African people are guided by certain cultural values which must be observed by spouses as these are considered to contribute to the stability of and the harmony in the marriage (Mulaudzi, 2013:154).

Tembe (2010:19) in his understanding of culture includes aspects like possessions, ideas, values and attitudes. When Van der Walt (2008:93) writes about culture, he also includes aspects like customs and beliefs. Culture is about how people live life and it is influenced by the different traditions that they have learned from their families and environments. One can say that culture is a comprehensive frame of reference of human thought and conduct. Although there are noteworthy differences between Africans, one can say that in general, Africans are tribally oriented people who respect and honour their culture, traditions and family life.

It is therefore important to look more closely at the effect of culture on African marriages and the way marriage is understood and interpreted.

3.3.1 Importance and understanding of marriage

Williams (2012:2) indicates that people develop their views and values about marriage from different sources which may include their religion, their circle of friends and the culture to which they belong. Their understanding of marriage starts to be formed while they are still young. As they grow up and observe the relationship between their parents and the relationships in the extended family, they realise that marriage is the centre around which all of life revolves (Mashau,

2005:53). It means that marriage in Africa was, and to a great extent still is, viewed as a place where cultural principles are observed, respected and practiced. Marriage is thus not simply a human or natural institution, but it is a cultural and spiritual unit. It forms the basis of the religious, economic and social life of the society (Mwiti & Dueck, 2006:171).

In some Africans' traditions, people get married just for social reasons. They just want to gain or enhance their social status among their family members and their tribe (Mashau 2005:38-39). They may also marry for security, money, but they may also marry because of family pressure. In the Venda culture for instance, love is not important to get married, the family plays a much more important role (Rafumbedzani, 2001:29). The effect is that there is a lot of interference from family members in the marriage and it may affect the couple's decision-making processes. This interference from outside is a dangerous situation and Gushee (2004:416) encourages African churches to provide marriage counselling programmes in order to improve couples' problem-solving techniques. Christian couples should also understand the real foundation for a strong marriage and that strong marriages contribute to a healthy church, community and society at large (Gushee, 2004:416).

3.3.2 Particular cultural traditions within marriage

According to Mashau (2005:59, 62) and Atieno (2012), conflict is one of the outstanding characteristics of marriages in Africa (cf. also Kitembo *et al.*, 1977:41). Because of the cultural influence, Africans cannot deal effectively with their marital problems and conflicts. Rutoro (2012:164) agrees that conflict management often turns out to be more complicated in the African context, because of the general authoritarian and patriarchal nature of marriages. Husbands, without the consideration of the spouses, take decisions unilaterally (cf. Mashau, 2005:14). This paternalistic approach in the majority of African cultures, says Amanze (2000:200), often leads to conflict. In many instances, the wife is considered as merely the property of her husband.

The traditions and values of their community influence the roles of husbands and wives in marriage. Men are traditionally expected to provide for the needs of the family and women should bear children, cook and look after the children (Mulaudzi, 2013:156). In many African cultures women only cook the food, serve it and then retreat to the kitchen to eat with the children. It is against the tradition for a wife to eat at the same table as her husband, especially when there are visitors. She may greet the visitors and then has to disappear until the end of the meal (Mwiti & Dueck, 2006:191; Ruppel, 2008:36-37). Many women in African households live as slaves in their own homes. There can also be cultural differences regarding clothes and sleeping arrangements when there are visitors (cf. 2.5.3; 2.5.9). In traditions in Africa where the emphasis is on procreation and marriages need children, frequent sex may be enforced (Kimani, 2004:406).

In section 3.2 the researcher mentioned the lack of good communication between a husband and a wife with regard to sexual behaviour, but it is not only limited to that specific area of marriage. It may happen that the couple stay together in the same house, but almost live like strangers, because they do not talk openly about their feelings, other matters or their marriage. As Masakona (2000:54) correctly states, without communication, forgiveness is not possible either. There is also a lack of respect for each other, of friendship, faithfulness and honesty which are essential elements for a good marriage relationship (Rafumbedzani, 2001:9, 15).

One can say that, because of cultural influences on the lives of people, even of pastors, pastoral help should be given to couples regarding marriages in order to avoid negative influences by their culture (Baloyi, 2013:9). Husbands should clearly understand that, as marriage partners, women enjoy the same rights as men in marriage and should therefore be treated as having the same value and dignity that men enjoy.

3.3.3 The role of the extended family

The role of the extended family has been mentioned a few times already, but deserves more attention. The concept of the extended family in a marriage is a well-known African tradition (Awodele, 2005:2-4). In many instances, the circle of friends and the extended family have a tremendous, sometimes negative, influence on marriages. When Africans are getting married, the relatives and friends from both sides of the husband and wife get involved as advisers to the couple and they continue to participate in decision-making in the marriage. They believe that marriage does not only exist for two people, the husband and wife, and therefore the extended family should be given an opportunity to intervene in decision-making in the young people's marriages (Baloyi 2014:23). This is also applicable in the context of some Christian marriages in Mozambique (cf. 2.5.3). Some of the conflicts in marriages may arise from the wrong advice by members of the extended family. Mashau (2005:62) argues that the intervention by parents and the extended families often causes more conflict than solving problems. He is of the opinion that the extended family should only become involved when they are asked for assistance in times of specific needs (Mashau, 2005:55).

Baloyi (2014:19) agrees with Mashau (2005:55) that the intervention of extended family members is problematic and believes that the church should educate its members not to become involved in family issues without being asked to do so (Baloyi, 2014:30). The author goes as far as to say that uncalled-for interference of extended families may be considered as a violation of the couple's human rights and dignity (Baloyi, 2014:32). However, the author also believes that the positive intervention of the extended family *on request* can help the couple to solve their marital problems

and resolve conflicts. In this way the extended family can play an important role to strengthen and unite people in Africa (Baloyi, 2014:20, 32).

Another important aspect that emerged from the empirical study that is also closely associated with the extended family is the effect of childlessness on the marital lives of the pastors (cf. 2.5.9). The researcher will focus on this issue in the next section.

3.4 Childlessness

In African countries, especially in rural areas, children are considered very important in marriage and in the community (Vahakangas, 2009:227; cf. Baloyi, 2013:3). Moyo and Muller (2011:2) agree with Masakona (2000:18) that in the minds of African people, one of the main reasons for marriage is to have children and to prove that one is in the real sense of the word an adult. A childless woman is often treated as a young person and she does not receive the same respect in the community as a woman with children (cf. Mariano, 2004:2). All married women are expected to have children and they see it as their destiny. This emphasis on children often stands in the way of a close relationship between husband and wife. A husband is not happy with a wife who cannot provide him with children, as a childless marriage is often regarded as incomplete, even shameful or abnormal (Baloyi, 2014:22; Masakona, 2000:18; Moyo & Muller, 2011:4, 6). Because fertility is regarded so highly in the African community, it is important for men to prove their own fertility. They will thus even get involved in extra-marital sex, just to prove their virility and masculinity if they are in a childless marriage (Kimani, 2004:406; Mashau, 2006:52; Whitehead & Whitehead, 2007:124). Unfortunately it is also applicable to some of the marriages of pastors of the IRM. They admitted in the research that they were involved in extra-marital relationships in order to prove that they too can have children (cf. 2.5.9).

In the Ngoni tribe, living in the Angónia district of the Tete province of Mozambique (the tribe of the researcher) and the Tumbuka tribe, living in the Mzuzu area of Malawi, one finds the following tradition: if a man cannot have children, he makes a secret arrangement. He asks another man, called a *Fisi* (marriage hyena), to enter his house during the night, sleep with his wife and produce children on his behalf (Moyo & Muller, 2011:6).

Rafumbedzani (2001:28, 30) argues that the emphasis on procreation and multiplication in traditional African marriage may be to increase the members of the family or clan. It is through procreation that the life of the community is secured. If a couple does not have children, they do not contribute to the continuity of the family name and the community. This explains why traditional African men may marry many wives – to have many children (Mashau, 2005:55).

If a couple cannot have children, it is conceived as a curse from God for wrongs committed against Him by them or by their ancestors (Amanze, 2000:167). Traditional Venda people view infertility as abnormal (Rafumbedzani, 2001:55). The result is that many African couples are slow to seek medical help for infertility (Mwiti & Dueck, 2006:194). A childless woman in Africa, says Mariano (2004:1), suffers more than a man who is sterile. When she is diagnosed with infertility, she often experiences anger, guilt and despondency. The life of a childless woman is very complicated. It is difficult for a childless marriage to survive in a community where there is such a high premium on children (Rafumbedzani, 2001:30). The couple feels anxious, different and lonely, especially when other couples are celebrating the birth of their children (Mwiti & Dueck, 2006:194). Childlessness may also lead to accusations between husband and wife (Baloyi, 2013:6). If a woman is unable to give birth, the husband can divorce her and marry another woman to give him children (Moyo & Muller, 2011:2).

The researcher agrees with Baloyi (2013:3) and Mashau (2005:67) that African couples should understand that the formation of companionship between a husband and his wife and the satisfaction of intimate sexual intercourse, are the most important objectives of marriage. Couples should therefore not be in conflict if they have no children in their marriage, although, for African marriages, the birth of a child is the accomplishment of sexuality (Mariano, 2004:1). The love between the husband and wife is more important than children in a marriage. Children are only the expression of this love between the couple (Whitehead & Whitehead, 2007:131). The church should organise marriage counselling programmes to help the couples to understand that God is the One who gives children in the marriage as a blessing (Moyo & Muller, 2011:6).

Another issue that is closely related to the marriage relationship is the “power” and control issue, and more specifically, the submission of women to men. This issue may also play an important role in understanding the behaviour of some pastors of the IRM. The researcher will therefore touch on this important issue in the next section.

3.5 Submission of the wife

According to Gillham (2012:95), the problem of oppression of women in African marriages is very common. In order to handle marital issues, Tembe (2010:84) argues, African traditions focus on male domination in everything they do. The result is that women are not respected. The subordination of women is thus legitimated by social conventions. This implies that women’s rights are not observed and respected in their relations with men in their communities, in the churches and in marriages, even in the marriages of some pastors who are leaders in the church (Rutoro, 2012:159, 164-165). The empirical study showed this is also applicable to pastoral couples of the

IRM (cf. 5.2.5). Machingura (2013:223-234) agrees that African culture and religion are favourable to men as the leaders and decision-makers in their families.

Perhaps Mashau (2005:39) makes a valid statement when he describes the submission of women to their husbands as a “thorny” issue in African marriages. In the African context, a woman does not have equal status to her husband. The traditional African understanding of the man as the head in the marriage makes intimate emotional oneness between husband and wife almost impossible. Husbands, says Osinaike (2012:4), often humiliate their wives and justify it as being part of their tradition and customs. Draper (2006:191) considers the patriarchal nature of African culture as a contributing factor to this oppression of women in society. Ruppel (2008:38) refers to the paternalistic view in many of the African marriages and that men use it to justify their actions thereby infringing on the rights of women. This paternalistic view is also reflected in the fact that men receive advice and counselling from friends, advisors or relatives on how to force their wives to obey them. In some instances, they even have the right to punish, even beat their wives (Rutoro, 2012:59). Women often just accept the beating and maltreatment.

Ruppel (2008:41) argues that this superior position of men in marriage often causes the rights of women to be violated. In general, one can say that men in African marriages abuse their power to oppress women and to treat them as subordinates (Mashau, 2005:55; Mwit & Dueck, 2006:191). Paramount in the minds of men are questions like “Who is supposed to be the head in the household?” and “What are the responsibilities of the head and the submissive partner?” The researcher found it striking that the couples, during the empirical study interviews, did not refer to their spouses as their “best friend” or “their partner in marriage”. The researcher therefore agrees with Rafumbedzani (2001:15) that love, a close friendship and a partnership between a husband and his wife are often not visible because of traditions and cultural practices in African marriages.

From the woman’s perspective, says Amanze (2000:200), it is common to accept an inferior position in a marriage as it is a given that the man is the head of the family. He is supposed to take decisions, even without consulting her and just to inform her about his decision. She does not have the freedom to give her honest opinion in the decision-making process (Awodele, 2005:1). The effect of this unilateral decision-making process is that women are relegated to inferior beings (Rutoro, 2012:164). Some women may even be treated as children in the family. Wives “should just give in” to the demands of their husbands. A woman knows that when she marries, her culture demands of her to be submissive to her husband. She must be prepared to obey and respect her husband. Mashau (2005:51) is therefore correct when he concludes that the possibility for men to become arrogant and to humiliate their wives increases in traditional African marriages.

On the other hand, Dauer (2002:77) argues that this negative view of women can be rectified in Africa by reviewing the culture. It is important to change the mental attitude about the position of men in the marriage. It is not sufficient to revise the laws only, but a “culture strategy” needs to be implemented to address the traditional gender roles. The point of departure that women are of lesser status and unequal to men needs to be rectified as it impedes the freedom and development of women. Gillham (2012:103) refers to a social transformation that must accompany legislative changes. The traditional gender roles in African marriages, where males are described as strong and females as weak, need to be addressed as this depiction creates the idea that males are more highly valued and women are inferior.

It is the responsibility of the church to liberate men from the wrong concept that women are lacking in status. This must be done through teaching. Rutoro (2012:168-169) urges the church to address the position of women in communities and in marriages (cf. Bucar, 2005:170). Baloyi (2010:5) and Kapuma (2012:70) encourage the church to support women, emotionally and otherwise, who are victims of oppression in marriage and to liberate them from the domination by men. Any tradition in Africa that promotes gender imbalances, the oppression of women and the promotion of male superiority should be revised for the sake of the wellness of women (Baloyi, 2014:29). Christian couples should be reminded to read the Word of God with an open mind that says before God, men and women are equals and have the same dignity and rights (Van der Walt, 2006:277). The responsibility of the church is also underscored by O'Donovan (2000:190) and Stott (2006:32-36) who state that the church needs to clarify the position of women in marriage and God's plan for women in relation to men. For Chingota (2008:1), husbands and wives should be taught to consider the positive aspects of each other and to give more value to the factors that unite them than those differences that bring conflict and separate them in their relationships. Partners must learn to listen to each other, to consider the opinions of the other, and to think carefully before they respond. They should acknowledge that both partners have the potential to cultivate a supportive and healthy environment and to build a happy home. The church should, however, not only be involved in teaching through marriage counselling and other programmes, but should also support all local, regional, national and continental initiatives directed at eliminating all forms of discrimination and oppression of women (Chingota, 2008:2).

The subordinate position of women and the unilateral decision-making processes by men prevalent in patriarchal marriages often lie at the basis of conflict regarding money issues mentioned in the empirical study (cf. 2.5.10).

3.6 Money issues

The management of money and the lack of transparency regarding it turn out to be another major problem in many African marriages. Mwit and Dueck (2006:193) argue that money can be considered as one of the main sources of marital problems in African marriages. Mashau (2005:60) refers to the love of money as the root cause of all evil that has explosive potential to cause problems in marriages. He goes further to say that money issues can even become a dividing factor between a husband and a wife. Some female respondents confirmed that there is often disagreement on how available money should be spent. They often felt left out in the decision-making process and if there were discussions, it was difficult to reach consensus (cf. 2.5.10). Awodele (2005:3) indicates that money conflicts are in some cases promoted by parents who tell the husband or the wife that he/she should not reveal his/her salary to the partner. There is great sensitivity, says Block (2000:38), if one of the partners is not discussing money matters openly with the other partner. Vargas-Benitez (2014:1) agrees with Mashau (2005:60) that conflict because of money can devastate a marriage. The author urges couples to work together to resolve issues that bring about financial stress.

Amanze (2000:170) draws the attention to another issue that is money-related, namely that many women seem to get married not for love, but for economic security and prestige. Concerning the same issue of money, Mashau (2005:39, 52) also refers to the fact that some African women get married for the sake of money in order to satisfy their material needs. The author argues that if people marry for economic gain, the chances of infidelity in the marriage increase. If the motivation for a marriage is money, and not love, the temptation to choose another who has more money may be great. This may lead to adultery or even divorce. Looking particularly at the marriages of the pastors of the IRM, the likelihood of frustration on the women's side is great as the pastors, in general, are not earning a lot of money. When financial problems start in the marriage, the couple can become frustrated and it affects the level of intimacy (Vargas-Benitez, 2014:3). This was evident during the empirical study. Money, or the lack of it, causes conflict in the marriages of some of the pastors in the IRM. The lack of transparency and the lack of communication about money lead to stress in the marriage relationship (cf. 2.5.10).

Couples need to learn to deal with all issues, including money problems, by means of effective communication, talking openly about matters and being transparent to one another (Gladding, 2011:36). Honesty, says Vargas-Benitez (2014:1), and maturity, indicates Block (2000:38) are important elements in the process. For this to happen, couples in Africa need to make some adjustments in their marital relationships, like recognising the status of women and their ability to participate in budget decisions with their husbands. Mwit and Dueck (2006:195) are convinced that skills to handle money and to do the budget together should form part of a marriage

counselling programme. Good communication skills in order to understand the partner's needs are essential elements. When both partners are earning an income, Gushee (2004:81) suggests that the husband and the wife should share the responsibility of all the expenses of the family.

The last topic that came to the fore during the empirical study is the "status" of the pastors as perceived by their wives and the community and the implications of these perceptions.

3.7 The "status" of the pastor

A pastor is seen as someone who can help other people by praying for them, preaching and teaching the Word of God and leading the people by example (Nkhoma, 2004:41). The pastor and his wife are also expected to participate in society and to work together in the church (Stjerna, 2009:36). Because of these expectations, people in general have the idea that pastors have good marriages and do not experience serious problems. The reality is that a pastor and his wife can also have marital problems and it can become just as destructive as in any other marriage. Cornell (2008:1) mentions destructive emotions and actions like anger, dishonesty, manipulation and other unsolved problems. Osinaike (2012:3) confirms that pastors are also prone to marriage conflict, they also battle with emotional problems in their marriage and they are often also unable to solve it. What makes their situation even more difficult is the fact that they often have no place to go for help when they struggle in their marriages, because they must keep up the pretences (cf. 2.6.6).

During the empirical study among the pastors of the IRM, the researcher discovered that the wives of these pastors sometimes misuse the position of the pastor and his "status" within the church and the community for their own benefit. They sometimes tend to manipulate their husbands by telling them that the husbands cannot act against them because they are pastors who can be put under church discipline. This is serious, because if a pastor is put under church discipline, he can lose his position (cf. 2.5.7). To avoid this, a couple will rather stay in an unhappy marriage and keep up the pretences.

There are African couples who stay in bad relationships. They can be married for 30-40 years, staying together in the same house, but having separate rooms and not having sexual intercourse for many years (Awodele, 2005:3). They practically live separate lives. They just stay together for the sake of the pastor's position in the church and his salary. The researcher agrees with Cornell (2008:3) that the church should realise that pastors also have limitations and may also experience marriage problems. Therefore, the church should create time for marriage counselling for pastors and their spouses to help them to solve their problems, so that they in turn can help others.

3.8 The way forward: enabling a strong marital relationship between the pastors and their wives

As mentioned in the beginning of the chapter, the empirical study revealed the above-mentioned six aspects as the main contributors to conflict in the marriages of the pastors in the IRM. The second part of the research problem deals with the question as to what can be done to improve the quality of the pastors' marriages. The focus of this last part of the chapter is thus on establishing pointers from literature on ways to enable couples to grow in their marital relationship. The researcher agrees with authors like Worthington (2005:66-67), Gladding (2011:184) and Louw (2012:90) when they argue that the church has an important role to play. This can be done by means of marriage counselling programmes where attention is given to conflict-solving strategies and skills, to ways to improve the communication between marriage partners and an emphasis on ways to grow a good relationship between husbands and wives. The need for such programmes was also repeatedly mentioned by respondents during the empirical study.

3.8.1 Possible skills for solving marriage conflict

A suspicious attitude between a husband and his wife may create conflict (Nwoye, 2000:81). A wife can easily suspect her husband that he has a relationship with another woman because of not having a loving relationship with her. Nascimento (2001:68-69) confirms that in some marriages the reason for conflict can be the lack of trust and respect for each other (cf. Hoff, 2002:112-113). The couple has to work hard to cultivate the habit of respecting each other in order to find harmony in the marriage. With the respect comes the unconditional love (Hoff, 2002:155-156).

Conflict in marriages cannot be solved if couples do not understand that being married means a lot of responsibility. With the responsibility also comes unconditional commitment to the partner on a social, sexual and spiritual level. Then the relationship can be characterised by fidelity, trust, love and harmony (Grenz & Smith, 2005:23). Marriage is the most intimate of all human relationships and requires the total surrender of both husband and wife. The couple should learn to demonstrate their emotions in a controlled and constructive way and resolve their differences peacefully, putting selfishness aside (Hoff, 2002:113-115).

Louw (2012:90) draws attention to the important role of cognition in the process of solving conflict. It is natural that when a couple is in conflict, their cognition about their marriage and their spouse is negative. A husband and a wife must be helped to change their negative thinking. Skills like reconciliation and forgiveness are indispensable in this process, also for Christian marriages (Louw, 2012:91-92; cf. Reifler, 2007:154). The attitude of forgiveness plays a big role in solving conflict when one partner blames the other for the failure and conflict in the marriage. Both need

to recognise their own weaknesses, both may be responsible for failure in the marriage relationship and both need to ask forgiveness for mistakes (Nascimento, 2001:113). When couples realise that all people have weaknesses and that they are married to people who are not perfect, they are prepared to accept each other unconditionally and to live in harmony.

From the empirical study, it is clear that deficiencies in communication are an important source of conflict in the pastors' marriages.

3.8.2 Developing good communication

The importance of communication in the marriage relationship and the essential role it plays in solving marriage conflicts cannot be denied (Gladding, 2011:36; Hoff, 2002:118; Leoto, 2004:31, 36; Masakona, 2000:54; Mashau, 2005:64; Mwiti & Dueck, 2006:196; Worthington, 2005:64-65). Without good communication, one partner feels devalued and not loved by his or her spouse, but with good communication comes commitment and satisfaction in the marriage relationship (Worthington, 2005:66-67). Good communication is manifested in two ways, namely verbal communication and non-verbal communication. If a couple struggle with conflict, they need to begin with an exercise that focuses on self-control and cooperation. Emphasis must be placed on the positive aspects of resolving conflicts, on elements needed for fair fighting and on how couples might both win in conflict situations.

The other important ingredient to develop good communication is the attitude of humbleness and confession when mistakes are made. Nascimento (2001:113) argues that instead of pointing the finger to each other, the couple should rather learn to acknowledge their weaknesses and together find ways to solve the problem. Couples must be made aware of the fact that they can expect disagreements, because two people from different backgrounds and with different experiences, feelings and ideas are united in a marriage relationship. They must just learn to address these differences in a healthy manner, supported by good communication (Hoff, 2002:118). Couples should cultivate the habit of talking about family matters and spousal love. African husbands rarely listen attentively to their wives. In general, there is only a list of expectations, like sexual availability, home care, child-rearing and aesthetic services for social esteem. According to Duarte (2008:89), initiatives, ideas and advice of women to their husbands regarding family and community matters are often not welcomed and seldom adhered to. On the contrary, Leoto (2004:31, 36, 57) and Reifler (2007:154) envisage a home where there is an atmosphere of dialogue, where conditions are created for mutual knowledge and awareness of what the other partner thinks, feels, values, likes, respects and expects.

3.8.3 Growing a good relationship

Commitment, says Nascimento (2001:13, 22-23), is one of the foundations upon which a home must be built and it underpins permanency of marriages. Commitment enables couples to grow and remain firm in their love for one another. Worthington (2005:64, 70) concurs with Nascimento and states that commitment between marriage partners is the point of departure to increase satisfaction in the marriage relationship. This commitment must grow and mature daily. As Mashau (2005:16) states it clearly, when a couple gets married, each partner comes with his/her own separate personality, but this needs to be modified. Louw (2012:90) refers to this as the process of creating closeness, to expand the “mutual space” between husband and wife. This expansion means to enhance the quality of togetherness and interconnectedness. The mutual space grows when the quality of understanding and respect towards each other is enriched and when the relationship reflects maturity and human dignity. For Hoff (2002:112), marital respect is maintained when partners treat each other with courtesy, consideration and affection, even when there is disagreement in the marriage. Husbands will know how to respect their wives if they recognise their responsibility towards their wives who need to feel safe at home in the hands of their husbands. As seen in the empirical study, mutual respect is often present during the early years of marriage, but it also often diminishes gradually (cf. 2.5.3.).

According to Louw (2012:90-92), there are stages in the process of marriage growth. First, the couple should have the desire to please each other. The second phase is introduced by contact, when the couple starts to discover and develop their emotions. At this stage the husband and wife must be prepared to share with each other and to serve each other unconditionally. The third stage entails an agreement and a commitment to develop their relationship as a couple by honest communication, by sharing their feelings with each other and by doing things together. The fourth stage is growth, improving their married life. This would mean for instance, that neither the husband nor the wife would leave the house without saying goodbye and telling the partner where he / she is going and for how long. The enhancement of a marriage requires hard work in order to improve the quality of their togetherness and to understand each other. It requires a long-term contribution by both husband and wife to build and establish a good relationship. It needs sacrificial love (being willing to give up something for the sake of the spouse) from both partners without any expectation to be paid back or to be rewarded for their efforts.

For Block (2000:10), trust between a husband and a wife promotes dependability and honest fidelity in marriage. Louw (2012:89-90, 100) agrees and states emphatically that when love is separated from trust and faithfulness, the marriage relationship cannot grow. Both partners should be faithful to each other in everything that relates to marriage, including coexistence, sex, religion, profession, finances, joy and sadness (Reifler, 2007:153). Couples need to understand the ethics

of love and they need to understand that it is a choice and a mutual responsibility. Love is essential for a couple to grow, and it requires unconditional acceptance of each other and a commitment from each partner. Rafumbedzani (2001:12, 15) also urges couples to cultivate real love. For the author, real love signifies close friendship where the two partners feel responsible for each other. Ellen (2007:11) defines love as covenant love and it includes loyalty, service and obedience to each other as husband and wife. Awodele (2005:2) urges Africans to be romantic in their relationships. According to the researcher this would mean paying personal attention to each other as a couple by for instance giving small gifts or spending time together. A good relationship, says Ellen (2007:19), promotes love, trust, respect and loyalty in the life of the couple.

There are certain things that need to be avoided, as it can destroy a good relationship in the marriage. Oliveira (2005:25-26) mentions the misuse of technology like cell phones, internet and Facebook. It can promote infidelity, adultery and disrespect towards the partner. Each husband and wife should avoid the use of information technologies that can promote illicit conversations and destroy good communication between husband and wife. Hendriks (2004:2) argues that globalisation has a negative impact on the family. The way people dress, talk, respond and behave are influenced by outside factors and may increase tension at home.

The researcher fully agrees with the notion of Mosko and Pistole (2010:127) that a positive attitude between husband and wife is central in a successful and happy marriage relationship.

3.8.4 The role of the church in marriage counselling

Spirituality plays an important role in promoting a good relationship and marriage growth (Mwiti & Dueck, 2006:176). That is why Tembe (2010:4-5) argues that the church has a big responsibility to be involved in marriage counselling. The author proposes the following ways in which the church can be involved:

- (a) training of pastors to be able to do marriage counselling and to solve marriage conflicts, because then they will not only be able to serve the members of their congregations, but will also be able to solve their own marital problems;
- (b) the training should also include teaching the skills of good communication;
- (c) the training should also focus on the social changes occurring in African countries; and
- (d) presenting marriage seminars for church members and for pastors.

3.8.5 The role of the church in pre-marital counselling

With premarital counselling, a marriage can start on a more solid foundation (Mwiti & Dueck, 2006:163). Premarital counselling is defined by Joseph and Subhashini (2012:5) as counselling that enables people to have knowledge, skills and guidance for assuming the role of husband and wife in order to have a successful marital relationship. It helps people to face their future marital challenges and conflicts (Joseph & Subhashini, 2012:10). Part of the process is that people must learn to understand each other so that they can complement each other for the edification of their love (Mashau, 2005:51). It is not only important to identify potential problems in time, but also to provide individuals with the necessary skills to handle future challenges. Williams (2007:28) also emphasises the importance of the development of skills to enhance the relationship and to handle conflict. In this process communication is essential.

Premarital counselling should deal with topics like differences in family backgrounds and how to overcome the gap, changes in the family system, the status of the woman, education, employment, misconceptions about sex, family planning, pregnancy and children, role-sharing in marriage, interpersonal relationships and the art of communication. Premarital counselling also gives guidance on how to solve problems and how to address difficult aspects like customs and practices, social values, mutual trust, personal lifestyle and habits, the relationships with the in-laws, the relationships with the extended families, and financial management. For Williams (2007:11-12), it is also important to look closely at the personalities of the future husband and wife, marital expectations, leisure activities, friends and spirituality.

For Mashau (2005:61), the issue of religion should be thoroughly discussed before the couple gets married, because when they have different belief systems and values, it may lead to conflict and may negatively impact on the marriage relationship.

Koch (2016:13-15) agrees that the church has a responsibility to counsel men and women as they approach marriage and discusses the content of such premarital instruction. For the author, Calvin's triangular illustration of marriage, where the bride and the groom form two parts and God the third element, is problematic. The danger is that such a metaphor compartmentalises marriage and God is restricted and relegated to only one third of the marriage. The author believes that Luther's depiction of marriage is more scriptural when he sees God at work in every aspect of marriage, not only in the aspects that can be classified as "religious". Koch (2016:21) concludes his article by saying that God has something to say about a couple's life together and these marital instructions can be found in the Word of God (cf. 1 Pet 3:1-12; Eph 5:21-6:4; Col 3:18-21). Confession and forgiveness should also be part of premarital counselling. This will receive more attention in the next chapter.

3.9 Conclusion

Despite the fact that it is the 21st century, it is clear that tradition and culture still play a major role in African marriages. It also holds true for the pastors of the IRM, despite the many years of biblical teaching on marriages to which they have been exposed. Culture influences not only the sexual aspects of marriage, but also the lifestyle of people, the understanding and the experience of marriage. Every tribe or group of people consider their ideas, habits and customs as universally good and correct. They thus expect their spouses to observe these cultural values. Aspects that came to the fore are an emphasis on procreation and sex, the obsession to get married at all costs and to have children, the problems faced by a couple who cannot have children, the underlying reasons to get married like prestige, social status, financial security, pressure from the family and clan to have children, the influence of the extended family, the subordinate role of women and the lack of transparency when it comes to financial matters.

In this chapter it became evident that in the majority of traditional African marriages, there is not enough consideration for the feelings and the position of women. The traditional gender roles cannot only be rectified by revising laws, but a “culture strategy” is necessary. It also became clear that couples often do not have the necessary skills to handle conflict. When they experience conflict, they opt to live together like strangers, without sharing or discussing the issues in order to forgive each other and to restore the marriage relationship. Trust and faithfulness are often missing elements in the marital relationships.

The fact that the church needs to help couples to address these issues and to become involved in the “culture strategy”, became obvious. Couples should be helped to enjoy positive interpersonal and healthy sexual relationships in their marriages. Pastors of the IRM need to be equipped with skills to solve their own marriage problems. They need to learn that mutual respect, love and fidelity in marriage are cultivated where both partners make a commitment to each other, recognise the importance of communication and realise that they are dependent on each other, also for good decisions. The status of women in the African context needs to be addressed, as well as the influence of globalisation and the danger of technology for marriage relationships. The researcher proposes that the church develops pre-marital counselling programmes as well as marriage counselling programmes to address the above-mentioned matters in seminars and workshops where negative cultural influence on marriages could be revisited and evaluated against biblical principles. The focus of the next chapter will be on establishing some biblical principles for marriages in the African context.

CHAPTER 4: NORMATIVE PERSPECTIVES ON PASTORS' MARRIAGES IN THE IRM

4.1 Introduction

As mentioned in Chapter 1 (cf. 1.5), the methodology followed in this research corresponds with Osmer's model and in this chapter specific attention will be given to the third task of Osmer's model, namely the *normative task* (Osmer 2008:131). The purpose of the normative task is to answer the question: *What ought to be going on?* In his review of Richard Osmer's model, Smith (2015) draws attention to the fact that Osmer describes this task as *prophetic discernment* for the present situation. He then continues to say that three methods can be used to discover God's Word for the present, namely theological interpretation, ethical reflection and good practice. Although Smith points out that Osmer does not necessarily see theological interpretation in the traditional way of biblical studies, biblical theology and studying the Scriptures, the researcher's aim with this chapter is to give a biblical perspective on marriage in general and on the topics identified during the empirical study in Chapter 2 on the marriages of the pastors in the IRM (cf. 2.6).

In order to attain this, specific scriptural passages from the Bible, as the normative standard, will be analysed with the help of commentaries and other exegetical literature. The Bible will form the basis for theological interpretation and ethical reflection. It will also form the basis for the establishment of models of good practice on marriage counselling. The researcher will thus in this chapter endeavour to establish biblical principles that can serve as possible guidelines for the marriages of the pastors of the IRM. It will be done by means of the method described by Janse van Rensburg *et al.* (2015) on applicable passages in the Old and New Testament. Unless otherwise stated, all Bible texts are quoted from the New International Version (NIV). Passages which were chosen are *inter alia* Genesis 2:24, Deuteronomy 24:5, Psalm 128:3, Ephesians 5:21-33 and 1 Timothy 3:5 due to the relevance of these passages for marriage in general and for the issues identified during the empirical study. The researcher chose these verses as a point of departure for reflection on God's original plan for marriage and to address different aspects regarding marriage. Part of the process is also to understand the meaning of specific words or terminology in the Old and New Testament (Janse van Rensburg *et al.*, 2015:171).

In order to reach the aim of this chapter, the researcher will pursue the following objectives:

- to propose general biblical principles regarding marriage from the Old and New Testament;

- to formulate some general biblical principles regarding marriage which in hermeneutical interaction with the previous research may lead to the pragmatic solution and serve as guidelines for a possible marriage counselling programme for the pastors and their wives of the IRM; and
- to establish biblical perspectives on the six topics identified during the empirical study, namely sex-related issues, cultural influences, childlessness, submission of the wife, money issues and the status of the pastor.

4.2 General biblical principles regarding marriage from the Old Testament

4.2.1 Not good to be alone

From the passage in Gen 2:21-24 it is clear that marriage is God's institution (Currid, 2003:113; Mattison, 2011:300). Marriage is part of God's creation and it is good and serves a role in God's creative objectives for human beings. Currid (2003:109) gives two reasons why a man should have a wife as a partner. The first reason is the godly mandate in the passage of Gen 1:28 that Adam was not able to serve and obey God as he should while on his own. He needed a partner to have a horizontal relationship with in order to worship God in a vertical relationship. Secondly, they, as male and female, should procreate: "*be fruitful and increase in number, fill the earth*". In this way, his worship could be good and complete. God is using the negative words "*not good*" for the man who is alone (Gen 2:18). This verse reveals that there is a problem with the solitude of the man in the garden. He would not be able to worship God and fully submit to His Word (Currid, 2003:112). With the establishment of marriage, God intended to solve the problem of the solitude of man by providing a wife, because Adam did not find companionship among the animals. Adam should not have been alone and therefore God made a suitable helper for him (Currid, 2003:109; Longman & Garland, 2008:80).

The researcher agrees with Currid (2003:112) that the words in Gen 2:18 "*It is not good for the man to be alone, I will make a helper suitable for him*", indicate that humankind was incomplete until both man and woman were created. God brings Eve to Adam and by doing this, God gives the man a wife as a precious gift, someone similar to him, with whom he could communicate and who provided companionship (cf. Hoff, 2002:97). According to Longman and Garland (2008:80), the solitude of the first man Adam meant that he had no one like himself who could help him in worship or who could enjoy with him the garden which God had allocated to him. God also saw Adam's need to have another person like himself as a helper (cf. Gen 2:18). Marriage is part of God's creational plan, but it is also a metaphor wherein God's relationship with His people could be understood. It is a relationship characterised by justice, righteousness, love. Hauerwas (2006:169) confirms that marriage is part of God's gift to all people.

Prior to God's evaluation that all He had created was very good, He affirmed that it is not good that man should be alone. This means there had to be a female companion and partner in reproduction. Man could not fully realise his humanity alone. Therefore, God determined to make a helper that would complement him and was suitable for him (Hindson & Mitchell, 2010:19).

4.2.2 Leaving and cleaving

Gen 2:24 states: "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh". (In the KJV – King James Version – it reads: Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh".) The word "leave", according to Hamilton (2012:12), has a spatial sense as the spouses leave their parental homes in order to begin their own home where they meet their own challenges. The man leaves his parents, cleaves to his wife and as a couple, they start a new life together as husband and wife. The word leaving entails that the man and the woman should physically (and also emotionally) move out of the house of their parents. To form a marriage, it is necessary for a man to leave his parents and cleave to his wife. Only when the man leaves and cleaves to his wife, he will have authority within his family (Currid, 2003:113). Without leaving the parents, there cannot be a marriage, because leaving is a confirmation that the husband has taken a decision that he will focus on his wife (cf. Assohoto & Ngewa, 2006:14). The authors Hindson and Mitchell (2010:20) also comment on the importance that the man leaves his parents and establishes a new family with his wife. Living apart from the parents means that they accept their new priorities, e.g. to take care of each other. Leaving does not imply forsaking the parents, but it does imply a new, intimate relationship between the spouses that is closer than any other relationship, including the relationship with the parents (Hamilton, 2012:12).

In Gen 2:24, two words are found, "leaving" and "cleaving", and both are important for marriage. For Currid (2003:113), it is not possible to cleave to a person if that person does not take a decision to leave the parents. The special intimacy God intended in marriage is more than the relationship between parents and their children. "Cleaving" means *to stick to* or *to be glued to*. The husband and wife are glued together like two pieces of paper, but this unity includes more than just physical unity. It also includes the moral, intellectual, emotional and spiritual aspects of the couple. Love is the "glue" that binds the two people together emotionally as husband and wife. "Cleaving" points to the warm and intimate relationship between two people (Currid, 2003:113). It entails the most intimate union between two people where they are joined to enjoy sexual intercourse, but it also entails the full commitment towards each other to support and to respect each other in their marriage. The word "cleaving" indicates that the dependent person can take refuge in the stronger one. It also indicates that the husband and wife are interdependent (Currid,

2003:113-114). Furthermore, it shows the beginning of a new life of genuineness, integrity and honesty towards each other as husband and wife (Hindson & Mitchell, 2010:20).

4.2.3 “One flesh”

The passage in Gen 2:22 relates how God brought Eve to Adam and by doing this, God gave the man his wife and in this bond of togetherness, the husband and wife became one flesh (Gen 2:24). For Hamilton (2012:12), being naked together as husband and wife, is the climax of creation. It creates total transparency between the couple. The researcher wants to stress the importance of this transparency between a husband and a wife, as it is essential to avoid conflict between them.

Sexual intercourse, according to Currid (2003:113), is the most intimate physical relationship that people can experience and enjoy. “One flesh” means that two people become completely one in body, soul and spirit. They share everything they have, including their physical and spiritual lives. It also includes their thoughts and feelings, their joy and sufferings, their hope and fears. Marriage, according to Goldingay (2010:40), refers to a relationship between a man and a woman who have taken a decision to give themselves to each other to live exclusively with one another as one flesh for life. They have to observe the promises they made and make sure that they are faithful to each other. The words “communion” and “companionship” are often used to describe the marital relationship.

The concept “one flesh” in a Christian marriage requires a complete sharing with no boundaries between husband and wife (Soungalo, 2006:14). Marriage is a marriage of “bed and table”, comments Crook (2013:123). This means that in the marriage, the husband and the wife should understand that they have to share their love in total, satisfying the sexual and the physical needs of the partner. God established marriage for man and woman to support one another and to enjoy life together as husband and wife in this world. The husband and his wife should form an inseparable union (Hindson & Mitchell, 2010:20).

4.2.4 Marriage is a union between one man and one woman

From the passage of Gen 1:27-28 it is clear that the biblical viewpoint on marriage is that it is a union between one man and one woman who wish to live together under divine guidance (Reifler, 2007:147-149). The distinction between the sexes, male and female, has its origin in God and it is part of God’s plan for human beings (Hamilton, 2012:10). Furthermore, God created only one wife for Adam. The union of one man and one woman is thus, according to the author, the divine norm for man's welfare. Currid (2003:115) and Snyman (2015:115) agree that monogamy is the Godly norm for marriage. The emphasis in the marriage should therefore be on the intimate

relationship and lifelong friendship between the two spouses (Strong *et al.*, 2008:8). Marriage is a permanent union and a man should know that it is his responsibility to bring happiness to his wife by building a good relationship (Chianeque & Ngewa, 2006:241; cf. Deut 24:5).

4.2.5 Marriage as a covenant

Vorster (2015:8-9) states that the concept of a covenant is one of the major themes in the revelation of God in the Bible. The covenant in the Old Testament context describes the special relationship between God and His people. The same word “covenant” is applicable to marriage. Marriage is a covenant before God between two people, a husband and a wife (Brewer, 2002:19). In the Hebrew language, *mohar* refers to the Jewish marriage covenant. The covenant was part of the legal arrangement of marriage. It was done in addition to the dowry, which was paid to the father of the wife or to the person in authority over her. Marriage thus constituted a contractual arrangement between two people from different families (Hawkins, 2008:812-818).

Hamilton (2012:12-13) also refers to marriage as a covenant and points out that for this reason there should be total transparency between the husband and his wife. The marriage covenant is characterised by intimacy and absolute fidelity between husband and wife (Hawkins, 2008:813). Because marriage is a divine institution, it is a *sacred* covenant (Reifler, 2007:149). It is also a *solemn* covenant, because it unites one man and one woman who promise to be faithful until death. The public commitment made on the day of the wedding, not only changes the way a person thinks about himself / herself and also about the loved one, but it also changes the way the person acts (Crook, 2013:129).

4.2.6 A suitable helper

The Lord God said it is not good for man to be alone and He made a suitable helper for him (Gen 2:18). Adam needed someone who bore the divine image as he did (Longman & Garland, 2008:80). The “suitable helper” is understood by Hamilton (2012:10-12) as “completeness”. God was already a Helper for Adam, but he needed a helper that could be equal to him. The words of Adam in the passage of Gen 2:23 “*This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh*”, show the shared nature of the two (Goldingay, 2010:40). When Adam refers to “bone” and “flesh”, it carries a deeper meaning of strength on the one hand and weakness on the other (Hamilton, 2012:12). God did not take only bone from Adam, but He also took the flesh attached to it. This means that from the flesh the Creator formed the woman’s flesh and from the bone her bones (Longman & Garland, 2008:81).

Marriage partners should realise that their commitment to each other should not be just utilitarian, i.e. what benefit each one can get out of the relationship, but that it also implies obligations and

responsibilities towards the other party. Therefore, both the husband and the wife are instructed to fulfil their marital duty and to be committed to each other. This is the stronghold against immorality. For Goldingay (2010:39), the words "suitable helper" means that the wife is the one who is the first in her husband's eyes. Macdonald (2008:818) argues that the word "helper" should not be interpreted that the wife is inferior or subordinate to her husband, but it refers to the image of God as Israel's helper. It means that the wife should be respected and recognised as an important person by the man. Soungalo (2006:14) states that the couple should consider each other as important for the wellbeing of the marriage. The woman should consider her husband as part of her very being; and the husband should see his wife as the help he needs. Without her presence, he is incomplete.

A suitable helper was given to man in order to help and support him. It requires moral commitment between the spouses. Longman and Garland (2008:8) describe three dimensions of this moral commitment in marriage:

- the commitment to one's relationship;
- remembering the promise one made to one's partner that the marriage would be forever and that each partner would do all that is possible to honour that promise; and
- the desire to be consistent in considering the partner.

4.3 General biblical principles regarding marriage from the New Testament

4.3.1 Permanent union

In Matt 19:6, Jesus Christ states that when two people are married, no one should separate them. It is a permanent union. The perpetual character of marriage excludes any form of divorce. Marriage was established by God as an indissoluble union between a husband and his wife. No one should attempt to separate two people whom God has joined as a couple (Ngewa, 2006b:1149). Jesus Christ quoted the Old Testament passage that God had made one wife for one husband and that they became one and should not be separated (Mattison, 2011:300-301). This union is so serious, that Jesus Christ states that once God has joined the couple together, they are not allowed to be divorced, because God designed marriage to be a lifetime commitment and not a contract for a certain period.

In 1 Cor 7:2 it is written that each man should have his own wife and each wife her own husband. Garland (2003:246) argues that this biblical principle requires that those who are married should fulfil their conjugal obligations, including full sexual relations between husband and wife. The union in marriage is permanent. No one can separate the union of husband and wife, because it

is God's intention that partners should not withdraw from their conjugal relations as a couple (Garland, 2003:255).

The author of the passage in Heb 13:4 states that marriage is worthy of honour. Any sexual relationship *outside* marriage is abhorrent to God. Marriage is a divine institution, and in the divine counsel, purity, integrity, loyalty, and love are the walls that protect this sacred institution from sexual sins. The words "worthy of honour" and "undefiled bed" emphasise that marriage is sacred and deserves exclusive treatment (Kassa, 2006:1507; Oliveira, 1992:1).

4.3.2 Christ and the church

In the book of Ephesians, Paul links the call to love in marriage directly with the love of Christ for His church (Pao, 2012: 267). It is very important to understand the meaning of the profound mystery that the apostle Paul highlights in Eph 5:32. The union between husband and wife reflects the relationship between Christ and the church (Eph 5:31; Heine, 2002:240-241). The relationship between Christ and the church is the great mystery. It describes the model for the relationship in marriage. As the church needs to be subjected to Christ, so the wife has to be subjected to her husband. The husband and his wife are bound to the same order in respect to pre-eminence and subjection which exist between Christ and the church (Heine, 2002:233). It also bears the idea of the coming of Jesus Christ to earth for the sake of His church to become the body of Christ in this world, because of God's love for His people (cf. John 3:16).

The ancient marriage contract included the responsibility of the husband to provide everything his wife needed. In this context, Paul reminds Christians that their relationship in their marriages should portray the relationship between Jesus Christ and his church in the sense that He provided for all the needs of the church (Soards, 2000:451). In Eph 5:25 Paul stresses that marital love between husband and wife is directly linked with the love of Christ for His church for whom He gave up his own life.

4.4 Normative perspectives on six issues identified in IRM pastors' marriages

4.4.1 Sex-related issues

God created Adam and Eve to be one and they received a command to be fruitful and multiply (cf. Gen 1:28; 2:23-25). In Deut 24:5, the words "to bring happiness" could, according to Christensen (2002:568), also be translated as "to gratify", meaning that it is the responsibility of a husband to give conjugal pleasure to his wife. God instructed that the marriage partners should enjoy life together, including sexual pleasure (Hindson & Mitchell, 2010:259). The apostle Paul also uses the word "benevolence" (KJV) as an imperative reminder to the Corinthians that sexual expression is a mutual benefit for both the husband and his wife in the marriage (cf. 1 Cor 7:3-5;

Snyman, 2015:115). There is a connection between love, sex and marriage, says Crook (2013:127), because all three concepts are concerned with and contribute to intimacy and acceptance between husband and wife. The researcher argues that the word “expression” should rather be used than the word “gratification”, because the emphasis in the sexual relationship should always be on the other partner, to express one’s love and commitment to the other partner and to seek to please the other partner.

Solomon writes the following in the passage of Prov 5:18-19

May your fountain be blessed; and may you rejoice in the wife of thy youth. A loving doe, a graceful deer – may her breasts satisfy you always, may you ever be captivated by her love.

From this passage, it is clear that couples should have normal sex in marriage. Permanent abstinence deprives the partners of their natural physical feelings and this can lead to sexual temptation. Moreover, both husband and wife have marital rights and have exclusive possession of each other in their sexual relationship within their marriage. Sex was created by God to be something wonderful for the man and woman to be used in the right way, that is, in marriage (cf. Gen 1:28). Metzger and Coogan (2001:451) state that marriage regulates various areas of the lives of the husband and wife, namely the:

- social area – in order to regulate sexual behaviour;
- psychological and emotional areas – to provide companionship for both husband and wife; and
- economic, religious and theological areas – through the procreation, legitimating and socialisation of children.

In the biblical context, sex is good, since after God had created man and woman, He blessed them and ordered them to be fruitful. This may happen by having sex and man and woman satisfy their sexual desires and increase their love for each other as well as increasing their friendship and companionship with each other. Sex reduces the tension in the home and it gives the spouses more intimate and emotional experiences.

In 1 Cor 7:2, Paul recognises that the sex drive is powerful in a human being. It can negatively influence the lives of people if it is not addressed properly (Garland, 2003:257). Married life should not be characterised by any form of impurity or sexual immorality, confirms Arnold (2010:319) because marriage is a sacred institution. Paul addresses sexual immorality in Eph 5:3 by stating that it should not be part of God’s holy people. Christians should avoid any situation that can

impact negatively on the relationship of the couple and that can open an opportunity for inappropriate sexual behaviour by one of the partners in the marriage (Arnold, 2010:320).

4.4.2 Cultural influence

In Gal 5:6, Paul is addressing issues related to traditions that can have a negative impact on Christians' spiritual lives. Paul says, in Christ, circumcision or no circumcision is not important. What is important, however, is that faith should be expressed in love, and according to the researcher, also in marriage relationships. It is therefore important that negative cultural issues should be addressed according to the Word of God in order to avoid marriage problems (cf. 3.3). When it comes to cultural practices, one needs to be guided by the Spirit of God and seek the will of God (Moo, 2013:328).

Hawkins (2008:815) mentions some practices that increase the complexity of the marriage relationship, e.g. where men are encouraged to take a second wife or where men are involved in extra-marital relationships. These cultural traditions should be addressed and evaluated according to divine norms found as biblical principles. Arnold (2010:381) confirms that in Christian marriages, couples should avoid sinful practices or unlawful behaviour promoted by cultural and traditional principles.

4.4.3 Childlessness

In Gen 1:28 God commanded the first couple to be fruitful and multiply. Assohoto and Ngewa (2006:11) argue that the primary purpose of marriage is found in these words although the researcher indicates later that he does not agree with this statement. The authors continue that in this way, the couple can fulfil the human need and they can enjoy the creation as a gift from God. Moreover, God promises in the passage of Ps 128:3 that He will make those who honour Him, fruitful and that they will have numerous offspring. God says that the wife will be like a fruitful vine within their house. Okorochoa (2006:731) argues that it is a symbol of grace and it makes the heart of man glad. Passages like these make the issue of childlessness very complex in African marriages where the emphasis on children often stand in the way of a close relationship between husband and wife (cf. 3.4). A husband is not happy with a wife who cannot provide him with children and a married woman is convinced that to have children is her natural destination. Therefore infertility is viewed as humiliating and degrading (cf. 3.4; 2.5.9).

In Ps 127:3, the psalm writer says that "*sons are a heritage from the Lord, children a reward from Him*". Snyman (2015:116) argues that children are primarily the result of God's blessing and not only the result of a husband and his wife coming together in marriage. The author is of the opinion that children are not primarily the reason why God established marriage. In Mal 2:15 it is also

emphasised that children are the results of the blessing that God gives to the couple. The husband and wife should know this biblical principle to avoid marriage conflicts which start because of not having children. Couples should realise that they cannot be unfaithful towards their spouses because of the problem of childlessness, but that they need to stand firm and guard their spirits as Christians (Yilpet, 2006:1095).

Couples should understand that children are not the main reason why God instituted marriage. In the passage starting with 1 Cor 7:3, Paul argues that sexual relations in marriage were ordained by God, but not intended primarily to have children. Therefore couples should understand that it is God who gives children as a blessing for marriage (Garland, 2003:259).

4.4.4 Submission of the wife

God created men and women in His image and both have the same obligations and rights before God (cf. 4.2; Longman & Garland, 2008:80). In the passage Eph 5:22-24 Paul teaches women to submit to their husbands because it is part of their duty. Janse van Rensburg *et al.* (2015:175) observe that the biblical words should be analysed according to the contextual meaning. In the New Testament, the issue of submission in marriage includes very important concepts related to spiritual, social, and economic dimensions (Janse van Rensburg *et al.*, 2015:175). It is from these concepts that the husband is considered as a person who has authority over his wife. The New Testament is using a Greek word *gameo* to describe the concept of marriage that represents the cornerstone of the household. It is related to kingship, because the husband has authority over his wife and the whole family. The husband has exclusive sexual access to his wife (Hawkins, 2008:812; Louw & Nida, 1989:119).

The researcher agrees with Alexander that to understand the meaning of submission better, it is important to follow what Paul writes in Eph 5:23, namely that “*the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church*”. The submission should be understood in the context of love within the marriage where both partners do everything together in the name of the Lord (Pao, 2012:267). People in African marriages need to understand the concept of headship in the light of biblical passages like 1 Cor 11:3 where Paul says that “*the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God*”. The meaning of the text Eph 5:21 (*Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ*) is that authority and submission have *reciprocal* meaning. It means that a wife has to share the role of patron or authority in her marriage with her husband (Hawkins, 2008:812-818). For Arnold (2010:381), the words “the husband is the head of the house and his wife” means that the husband is the source of his wife because she was created from him (cf. Gen 2:22). Martin (2012:70) agrees with Arnold and continues that both

have equal rights before God to rule, control, make decisions and taking leadership in the marriage. Therefore headship does not primarily refer to the issue of authority.

Paul is using a literal sense to speak about the conjugal relationship between husband and wife. It means that the reciprocity experienced as each believer submits to the other in the church, is found in a similar way among marriage partners, who love each other as their own flesh/body (Cohick, 2010:87). It is important that wives should be subject to their husbands as the church is subject to Christ (Heine, 2002:234). The researcher wants to encourage women to submit to their husbands even if they are not able to live holy, passionless and sinless lives as their head, Christ, did.

Men in African marriages should understand that they may not misuse their authority over their wives and other members of the family. Husbands have to show love and be a good model of headship in the marriage. In order to overcome this problem of submission in African marriages, men should recognise the rights, values and dignity of women as partners in their marriages. Africans generally have the wrong conception that a woman is weak and cannot have power to rule in the home or in society. For them, only a man can command and has the ability to give orders and the woman should simply be submissive. The couple must consider and respect each other. It is the opinion of Bucar (2005:170) that the churches in Africa should help to change the minds of their members through marriage counselling, so that the human rights and dignity of women can be observed and respected in their marriages. The researcher believes that the church should assume the responsibility to teach pastors and all other members of the congregation that men should not oppress their wives as the head of the family as tradition often requires. They must be reminded, as Kelly (2006:80-84) states, that according to the Bible, men and women are all equal before God. Longman and Garland (2008:80-81) also emphasise the importance of passages like Gen 1:27 and Gen 2:18-23 where man and woman are portrayed as belonging to the same pattern of creation as they both bear in themselves the image of God.

“Submit to one another”

According to Balswick and Balswick (2006:278-279), a good model for the marriage relationship is found in the passage Eph 5:21-33. The emphasis is on Christ's relationship to His church. Couples should seek to be Christ-like in their relationships. Then, says Ngewa (2006a:1431), they will demonstrate sacrificial love to each other despite their imperfection, just as Christ did for the church. Their mutual self-sacrifice will be evident as they follow the example of Christ. This attitude will destroy any desire to rule and to be first in the family group (Heine, 2002:231).

In Eph 5:21, Paul explains that the husband and his wife should know that they complement each other as a couple (cf. Heine, 2002:231). In Eph 5:28-30 he states that the wife is like her husband's

own body. The Greek word for "contract" means "one's own flesh". The ancient marriage contract always involved an obligation of the husband to take care of his wife in providing clothing and nourishment (Soards, 2000:451). In Eph 5:21 Paul recommends submission to each other. It means that there should exist a mutually supportive relationship between husband and wife. The two are in a complementary relationship as a couple (Heine, 2002:231). It is clear that a woman should always be loved and protected by her husband (Metzger & Coogan, 2001:339).

4.4.4.1 Wives submit to your husbands as to the Lord

In Eph 5:22 Paul addresses the wives advising them to be submissive to their husbands as to the Lord. This does not mean that wives must be submissive the same way that they do to God (Arnold 2010:379). Paul gives instructions to the women for them to consider how they respond to their husband and to the Lord as Christians. According to the Word of God, man and woman have the same rights and they are equal partners in Christ as a couple (Gal 3:28). It is clearly written that "*there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female*". This means that in a Christian marriage, husband and wife have the same dignity in Christ Jesus. The wife has to submit to her husband only insofar as the will of the husband aligns with that of the Lord Jesus Christ (Pao, 2012:267). It means that the Lord is the centre of a person's attention, as He alone is the criterion through which one can determine what is appropriate and acceptable. Pao (2012:270) calls the will of God the centre of good obedience.

The verse Eph 5:22 brings a better understanding of the Greek verb "let them be subjected". This means in general that the idea is to appeal to the wives to be subjected to their husbands as to the Lord. The husband and wife are bound to the same order in terms of the pre-eminence and subjection that exist between Jesus Christ and his Church. The wives being subject to their husbands as the church is subject to Christ means that they should be living a holy life as a couple committed and subjected to one another (Heine, 2008:234). The subjection of a wife to her husband has to reveal God's glory through their relationship (Pao, 2012:266). If the wives have to be subjected to their husbands as the church to Christ, it means that the wives should be subjected to their husbands according to the will of God. They should live an obedient life as they obey the Lord in a holy and loving manner, just as the church is subjected to Jesus Christ (Heine, 2008:233-234). Marriage brings union between husband and wife and therefore husbands should love their wives despite the imperfections they have, just like Jesus Christ does with the church. The relationship between the husband and his wife should thus be motivated by sacrificial love (Ngewa, 2006a:1431).

4.4.4.2 Husbands to love their wives

This metaphor of Christ's love finds its concrete manifestation in the marriage relationship between husband and wife, as it is written in Eph 5:25: "*Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her*". Jesus Christ demonstrated his love to the church when He gave his own life on the cross. Arnold (2012:267) states that the love of the husband for his wife in marriage should imitate the love of Christ for his church. The husband should love his wife unconditionally with sacrificial love. The love mentioned here is not sexual love, but the divine love, as God loves the church unconditionally. The husband must care for his wife as for his own body (Heine, 2002:236-237). The love between the married partners should be a symbol of the love of Jesus Christ for his church.

4.4.5 Money issues

In 1 Pet 5:2, Peter indicates that pastors should not use their position in the church to enrich themselves (Muriithi, 2006:1523). Pastors should avoid such an attitude because an excessive love of money causes the person to love and trust money, rather than trust God (Arnold, 2010:321). This is also true of the marriages of some of the pastors in the IRM. Money, or the lack of it, is a cause of conflict. The lack of transparency and communication regarding money can easily lead to stressful marriages (cf. 2.5.10). According to Arnold (2010:321), people should avoid the desire to acquire more and more money for themselves, because their attention will be more on wealth, than on trusting in God. The husband and wife should not only be united sexually, but they should also cooperate on economical level. Paul states clearly in the passage of 1 Tim 6:10 "*for the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil*". Christians should not have a strong desire to acquire for themselves more and more money and possessions because then they trust in wealth rather than in God. It is important to note that Paul does not mean that Christians should remain poor, but they should be content with what they have in their homes (Andria, 2006:1476).

The author of the book of Hebrew says: "*Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have*" (Heb 13:5). Christians, church leaders and pastors are called to guard against the excessive love of money, because it is an impediment to cultivate a good and hospitable lifestyle in the church and in marriage between husband and wife (Kassa, 2006:1507).

4.4.6 "Status" of the pastor

The apostle Peter writes in his letter that when the Chief Shepherd appears, the elders will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away (1 Pet 5:4). The pastors (called elders in the text) are thus also seen as shepherds. This illustrates the status of the pastor. The pastor should be an example to other people in the family and in the congregation (Kelly, 2006:79; Muriithi,

2006:1523). Church leaders are called and encouraged to lead the church with humility so that God will receive the glory and not they themselves. All the pastors should know that on the last day God will evaluate everything they did in their ministry in the church (Muriithi, 2006:1523). Therefore, pastors are to submit themselves to God, remaining faithful to the Lord as their Master.

In his letter to Timothy, Paul also addresses the characteristics and requirements of pastors. It is clear from the passage in 1 Tim 3:4-5 that pastors should be a good model for others in their marriages. Andria (2006:1472) draws the attention to the following three aspects:

- Pastors should be blameless in the community where they serve God.
- Pastors should not be involved in vices that can enslave them and render them unable to serve God freely in the church.
- Pastors should be able to manage their own families and help the church to grow spirituality and in numbers.

The author comments on Paul's instructions by describing the pastor as a person who should be married to one spouse, who should be good-tempered, prudent, respectable, hospitable, peaceable, free from the love of money, who should be able to teach others and who can manage his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity (cf. 1 Tim 3:3-5). Andria (2006:1472) adds that if a pastor is not respected in his own family, he cannot earn the respect of the church members. Scheffer (2009:21) states that a well-managed family can be seen as a measuring sign for maturity in the ministry of the pastor as a church leader.

Pastors are called by God into ministry to equip and make disciples in this world. According to Croft (2013:102), the pastor should always be committed to do his life-changing work in the community or congregation where he is serving. People have expectations of the pastor's position as a minister of the word of God, that he should have one wife, that he should act as a shepherd, taking responsibility in teaching, mentoring, encouraging, exhorting and leading his own family and the congregation to understand the grace and the truth of the Word of God (Croft, 2013:103; Kelly, 2006:79; 85). When the pastors have problems in their marriages, they must remember God's love. In order to solve their marriage problems, they must discuss their issues, pray together and seek God's help as a couple. Pastors should always remember that God is not only interested in their church ministry, but also in their ministry to their spouses (Chianeque & Ngewa, 2006:241).

4.5 Conclusion

Couples should be reminded that God instituted marriage as good and holy, so that people can enjoy the glory of God. All that He created was very good. He affirmed that it is not good that man should be alone. Man could not fully realise his humanity alone. Therefore, God determined to make a helper that matches him and is suitable for him.

Marriage is ordained by God and it is confirmed by a public ceremony. The man and the woman must take leave of their parents; the marriage is consummated in sexual union and supported by a partnership between husband and wife. Only when the man leaves his parents and cleaves to his wife, he will have authority within his family. By the process of leaving and cleaving, the husband and the wife are glued together like two pieces of paper. This unity includes more than just physical unity. It also includes the moral, intellectual, emotional and spiritual aspects of the couple's life. The husband and his wife should form an inseparable union. God created only one wife for Adam. The union of one man and one woman is the divine norm for man's welfare. It is important for Christian couples that the emphasis in their marriage should be on the intimate relationship and lifelong friendship between husband and wife. The marriage covenant is characterised by intimacy and absolute fidelity between husband and wife.

Because marriage is a divine institution, it is a *sacred* and a *solemn* covenant, since it unites one man and one woman who promise to be faithful until death. Couples should keep in mind that the love of Christ for His church is directly linked with marital love between a husband and a wife. Purity, integrity, loyalty, and love are the walls that protect this sacred institution from sexual sins.

Cultural traditions should be addressed and evaluated according to biblical principles. Men should understand that women are not slaves of men, but they are there to support their husbands in order for both of them to serve God. Husbands should not oppress their wives as the head of the family as tradition often requires. According to the Bible, men and women are equal before God and they are in a complementary relationship. Both have equal rights before God to rule, to take control and leadership and to make decisions in the marriage. Therefore, headship does not primarily refer to the issue of authority. It is important that wives should be subject to their husbands as the church is subject to Christ.

In order to overcome this problem of submission in African marriages, men should recognise the rights, values and dignity of women as partners in their marriages. Couples should always seek to be Christ-like in their relationships. They have to demonstrate sacrificial love to each other despite their imperfection, just as Christ did for the church. Husband and wife should know that they complement each other as a couple. Subordination of the wife to her husband in the marital relationship does not mean that she is inferior to her husband, but that they are partners.

God intended sexual relations in the marriage not primarily to have children, but if there are children, it may be a way God blesses the marriage. There is thus no room for marriage conflict if there are no children in the marriage. Couples should realise that they cannot be unfaithful towards their spouses in order to solve the problem of childlessness.

Pastors, in order to solve their marriage problems, should discuss their issues with their wives, pray together and seek God's help in the process of solving marriage conflict. Pastors should be good role models in their marriages. Pastors should be able to manage their own families, should be even-tempered, prudent, respectable, hospitable, peaceable, and free from the love of money. Pastors should be able to teach others. Pastors as leaders are called and encouraged to lead the church with humility so that God will receive the glory.

CHAPTER 5: PROPOSED MARRIAGE COUNSELLING PROGRAMME FOR PASTORS IN THE IRM

5.1 Introduction

In the first chapter of this study, it was mentioned that pastors are struggling in their marriage relationships, even though they have undergone thorough theological training, because they are not able to apply their biblical knowledge regarding marriages to their own marriages (cf. 1.2.1). Pastors know that their marriages should reflect Christ's love for the church (cf. Eph 5:25) and they also know what God's will and purpose for marriage and for the marital relationship are. Likewise they know that marriage is a divine institution and that they should take heed of divine advice (cf. Gen 2:24). However, despite this knowledge, many pastors and their wives struggle in their relationships with a lack of trust, love and respect. The fact that there are pastors who are suspended due to marital problems at almost every Synod meeting, serves as a proof of this stark and wretched reality (cf. 1.2.2).

The findings of the empirical study, given in Chapter 2, clearly indicate the main causes of conflict in the marriages of the pastors of the IRM, namely sex-related issues; cultural influences; childlessness; the issue of submission of wives; money issues and the status of the pastors (cf. 3.3; 4.4). These aspects will form the basis for the marriage counselling programme that will be developed in this chapter.

The focus of this chapter is to answer the fourth question of Osmer (2008:7), namely "What should be done?". It is stated as the fourth task of the practical theological hermeneutical interpretation process, namely the *pragmatic task* (Osmer, 2008:176). In order to reach the fourth objective of this study, i.e. to develop a programme for biblical marriage counselling that will be applicable and sensitive to the cultural context of the IRM, and more specifically the Mphatso Synod, a synthesis of the research results of the preceding tasks will be done by way of a hermeneutical interaction between the different parts of the study (cf. 1.5). The researcher will focus on the issues that surfaced during the empirical study in order to address the second part of the research problem, namely to show what can be done to improve the quality of the marriages of the pastors in the IRM. The researcher will also integrate the findings of the literature study (cf. chapter 3) as well as the normative part (cf. chapter 4) in developing a model to provide guidelines for a marriage counselling programme to show how the quality of the marriages of the pastors in the IRM may be improved. The aim of the researcher with this proposed model is to indicate how to enable the IRM to guide their pastors to sustain and enrich their marriages and also to help solve possible marriage conflicts. Initially, the researcher will act as facilitator and conduct the marriage counselling sessions, but once pastors have gone through it, they can become facilitators, using

this model in their congregations for marriage counselling and marriage enrichment. In this way, the church members as a whole can also grow in their marital relationships. As mentioned in chapter 1 (cf. 1.1.1), the current marriage enrichment programme at Hefsiba ISC, where theology students are being trained to become pastors, is not sufficient to prevent future marital problems when they are serving as pastors. The proposed marriage counselling programme could thus also be used in their training. It will then not only benefit the Mphatso Synod, but the IRM nationally.

5.2 Proposed programme for marriage counselling in the IRM

5.2.1 Introduction

Through marriage counselling for pastors, knowledge can be gained in order to build a good relationship between husband and wife and reduce problem areas in their marriages. Christian couples, including the pastors of the IRM, should be characterised as God-fearing people who live according to biblical guidelines, also in their marriages. From the passage in Gen 2:21-24, it is clear that marriage is instituted by God and is part of God's original plan for humankind. It is good and plays an important role within God's creative objectives for human beings to live together as husband and wife (cf. 4.2.1; Gen 2:18). Therefore, every aspect of the husband's and wife's lives in marriage should be guided by Scripture as it is written: *"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path"* (Ps 119:105).

By doing Bible study and group discussions on scriptural passages, couples could learn how to overcome the existing problems in their marriages. In order to make it easier for the participants to talk, to do introspection and to tell each other how they think it is going in their marriages, the programme involves some discussions in separate groups of men and women where they may be free to talk. After the discussions, the couples should come together to share the conclusions and what they learned during the Bible studies and discussions.

The marriage counselling programme will consist of seven workshops, starting with an introspection and reflection workshop and followed by six workshops covering the six identified issues that mainly cause marriage conflicts.

5.2.2 Introspection and reflection

Couples must be helped to reflect on the current state of their marriages. It was clear in this research that in some African traditions the couples are unable to talk about their feelings and that sexual intercourse is also inhibited (cf. 2.5.3). Because of cultural influences, couples are often afraid to tell their spouses what they really feel and desire, especially when it comes to sexual intercourse (cf. 3.3). This is also happening among the pastors from the Chewa and the Ngoni cultures in Mozambique. Women are not open and free to tell their husbands what kind of

love they would like to receive (cf. 2.5.6). It is very common in Africa that couples are experiencing difficulty in communicating and discussing marital issues. The result is that most Africans, including pastors of the IRM, are governed by fear and are not able to talk openly with their spouses about marital issues, including sexual matters. Many couples face unexplained problems in the marital relationship and do not realise that sometimes such problems are the consequences of unsatisfied sexual needs within their marriages. This is the reason why many couples continue to experience sexual problems that remain unresolved and that sometimes lead to marriage conflict and even divorce (cf. 3.2).

During the first workshop, the couples could be helped to reflect on the current state of their marriages. This should be done in the big group, with all the participants together where the facilitator leads the discussion. The facilitator could give enough time for individual reflection and challenge the participants to evaluate their own marital relationship. The following general themes could guide the process:

- The necessity of marriage: human kind was incomplete until both man *and* woman were created (cf. 4.2.2). It is important to emphasise the interdependence between the husband and his wife in the marriage relationship (Gen 2:18).
- The mind-set and approach of couples: the husband and wife should share their complete love, satisfying sexual, physical, emotional and other needs of the partner as they are one flesh (cf. 4.2.3).
- Marriage as a permanent union: it is not only an intimate relationship, but also a lifelong friendship between two people as it is stated in Matt 19:6b: *“Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate”* (cf. 4.3.1).
- Responsibility: each partner should understand that he/she is responsible for building a good relationship with his/her spouse (cf. 4.2.4; Deut 24:5).
- Marriage as the foundation of society: God created man and woman; He blessed them and ordered them to be fruitful. This is part of God’s design (cf. 4.4).
- Conjugal obligations: each partner should understand that he/she has the responsibility to fulfil his/her conjugal obligations, including sexual relations (cf. 4.3.1; 1 Cor 7:3-5).
- Love: the couple should understand that to love each other is God’s command. The love between a husband and wife should reflect the love of Christ for His church (cf. 4.3.2; Eph 5:25).

- Sex drive: the couple should understand that sex is good as it satisfies each other's sexual instinct and increases one's love for one's partner. It also increases their friendship, companionship and love. As a couple, they should understand that sex reduces tension at home and contributes to more intimate and emotional experiences towards each other (cf. 4.4.1).
- Immorality: the couple should understand that as Christians and as pastors in the Kingdom of God, their marriage life should not be characterised by any form of impurity or sexual immorality (cf. 4.4.1; Eph 5:3).

5.2.3 SICSUMOST

During the research, it became clear that tradition and culture play a major role in African marriages. It is also the reality in the marriages of the pastors of the IRM. The emphasis of the proposed marriage counselling programme will thus be on the six specific issues identified during the empirical study (cf. 2.5; 3.7). Perspectives from all the research results of the preceding chapters will be incorporated in the programme. The acronym **SICSUMOST** refers to the six important aspects identified in this research that cause conflict in pastors' marriages.

SICSUMOST stands for:

S – Sex related issues

I – Influence of culture

C – Childlessness

SU – Submission of the wife

MO – Money issues

ST – Status of the pastors

During the next six marriage counselling workshops, the facilitator has to ensure that each of these aspects are addressed in the light of biblical principles.

The researcher proposes that the following structure could be followed in each of the six workshops:

1. Introduction to the topic: the facilitator can do this by addressing all the participants attending the workshop together.
2. Reading the Word of God: it may be done in groups of six people, women and men apart. The facilitator should ensure that in each woman's group there is a participant who can read.

3. Bible study and group discussions on the scriptural passages: it is also done in the groups of six people, women and men apart. Each group could perhaps choose one person as the leader to give the feedback from the group discussion, speaking to all the participants on behalf of the group. After the Bible study all participants gather again for the feedback.
4. Practical application: as couples find it so extremely difficult to talk openly with each other about marital issues, including sexual matters, the opportunity is created for them to break the ice and to talk to each other in private by sharing the insights they gained from the group discussions. By means of some guiding questions, they are compelled to become very practical, to think about the mistakes they make and how they should act and think differently in their relationship. This session should not only provide guidelines on how to solve conflicts in marriages, but should also provide guidelines on how to prevent problems and in that way, perhaps be more pro-active.

5.2.3.1 S: Sex-related issues

5.2.3.1.1 Introduction to the topic

Couples should be encouraged to enjoy their sexuality within their marriage to fulfil and enrich the love and good relationship between them.

The facilitator could address the following topics in the big group:

- Need for good communication: when there is good communication*** between husbands and wives, it produces trust, love and intimacy. These impact positively on a sense of unity and a good relationship between husbands and wives and as a couple they value one another more (cf. 3.2).
- Importance of sexual intercourse in the marital relationship: good sexual relationships have various advantages for both partners in the marriage. It reduces tension and personal frustration at home, it increases the level of love and affection for the spouse and it provides harmony in the marital life and in the home (cf. 3.2).
- Positive impact of a good sexual relationship in the marriage: each partner should learn how to make the other partner happy, how to give him/her to his/her spouse with affection and pleasure so that the partner feels appreciated and respected.**How?** A loving husband/wife understands when his/her partner is not ready to engage in sexual intercourse (cf. 3.2).

- Sexuality is not isolated from other aspects in marriage: sexual intimacy and a deep personal knowledge of the spouse are essential components of a deep personal and intimate relationship (cf. 3.2).

5.2.3.1.2 Reading the Word of God

The following passages from Scripture could be read in the separate groups of women and men: Gen 1:27-28, 2:23-25; Deut 24:5; Prov 5:18-19; 1 Cor 7:3-5 and Eph 5:3.

5.2.3.1.3 Bible study and group discussions on the scriptural passages

The participants could discuss the following questions based on the scriptural passages in their separate groups of women and men:

- What do you understand from the passage of Gen 1:27-28? What does this passage teach about marital rights and sexual relationship between a husband and his wife within marriage?
- What is God's command for the couple according to Gen 1:28 and Gen 2:23-25?
- Talk about the responsibility of a husband towards his wife according to the passage in Deut 24:5? What is God's instruction to marriage partners according to this passage?
- From the passage in Prov 5:18-19, what do you learn about marital rights and the sexual relationship between a husband and wife?
- By referring to what Paul wrote in 1 Cor 7:2-5, how should the sexual relationship be in the marriage?
- What should never be part of a marital relationship between Christians according to the passage in Eph 5:3? Why should anything that can negatively impact the relationship of a couple be avoided?

The participants could discuss the following questions on the implications of the scriptural passages and what they learned from it:

- How can you make your partner sexually happy?
- How can you give yourself to your spouse with affection and pleasure so that your partner feels appreciated and respected?
- How could you communicate to your partner that you are not ready to engage in sexual intercourse?

- How could you respond when your partner is not ready to engage in sexual intercourse?
- Are there any specific problems relating to sex that you would like to discuss?

Topics for further discussion:

- Love and openness: the ability and freedom to communicate regarding their sexual needs to their spouses in order to understand and accommodate each other and to be able to meet the sexual needs of their partners (cf. 2.5; 3.2).
- Good sexual relationship: the importance of good sexual relations for good relationships between husbands and wives (cf. 2.5.3). God established marriage for husband and wife to enjoy life together, including sexual pleasure. Sexual expression is a mutual benefit for both partners in the marriage. The emphasis in the sexual relationship should always be on the other partner, to express one's love and commitment to the other partner and to seek to please him/her (cf. 4.4.1). Good sexual relationships are central in one's expression of love in a marriage (cf. 2.6.1).
- Cultural influence on sexual intercourse in marriages: some couples have sexual relationship problems when they have visitors or when they are looking after one of the family members at their home (cf. 2.6.1).
- Using sex as an instrument of punishment: some wives do not allow husbands to have sexual intercourse with them as a way to punish their husbands (cf. 2.6.1). What wives should understand is that, by having sex, the husband satisfies his sexual instinct and increases his love for his wife. Sex increases friendship, companionship and love between them (cf. 4.4.1).
- The results of unsatisfied sexual needs: if husbands' sexual needs are not satisfied at home, they might look for another woman (cf. 2.6.1).

5.2.3.1.4 Practical application

The couples could now come together and be encouraged to discuss intimate matters with each other.

They could discuss the following topics/questions:

- Share with your partner the things that stood out in the previous discussions.
- Recall pleasant moments between you.

- Plan opportunities when you can reflect on your relationship and to evaluate the quality of your relationship.
- How will you ensure openness and fidelity in your marriage?
- How can you ensure enjoyment in your sexual relationship?
- What can you do to prevent unsatisfied sexual needs in your marriage?

5.2.3.2 I: Influence of culture

5.2.3.2.1 Introduction to the topic

Couples should understand that culture must be addressed and evaluated according to divine norms based on biblical principles in order to minimize the negative influence of culture on pastor's marriages. They should be encouraged that when it comes to cultural practices, they as Christian couples should first seek the guidance of the Spirit of God and seek His will on how to handle it.

The facilitator could address the following topics in the big group:

- Negative cultural practices: couples need to reflect on some of the influences of culture that negatively affects their marriage relationship, for example the lack of good communication between a husband and a wife with regard to sexual behaviour; cultural differences regarding clothes and sleeping arrangements when there are visitors (cf. 3.2; 2.5.3; 2.5.9).
- Place of extended families in the marriage: some of the conflicts in marriages often arise from the wrong advice by members of the extended family. Couples should understand that the intervention of parents and the extended families or friends, often cause more conflict than solving problems. Couples should understand that the extended family may only become involved when they are asked for assistance in times of specific needs in the marriage (cf. 3.2; 3.3.3).
- The general authoritarian and patriarchal nature of marriages: husbands, without the consideration of the spouses, take decisions unilaterally and this leads to marriage conflict. Husbands should involve their wives when they take decisions about marriage issues. The wife should not be considered as mere property of the husband (cf.3.3.2).
- Gender equality: husbands should understand that, as marriage partners, women enjoy the same rights as men in marriage and should therefore be treated as having the same value and dignity as men (cf.3.3.2).

5.2.3.2.2 Reading the Word of God

The following passages from Scripture could be read in the separate groups of women and men: Gen 2:18; Gal 3:28 and Gal 5:6.

5.2.3.2.3 Bible study and group discussions on the scriptural passages

The participants could discuss the following questions based on the scriptural passages in their separate groups of women and men:

- Look again at the passage in Gen 2:18, why do you think should a man have a wife as a partner?
- What does Paul say about cultural differences in Gal 3:28? What is Paul's conclusion?
- According to Gal 5:6, discuss how cultural issues could be addressed in marriage in order to avoid marriage problems?
- What biblical principle do you learn from Gal 5:6 when it comes to cultural practices?

The participants could perhaps discuss the following questions on the implications of the scriptural passages and what they learned from it:

- Give examples of cultural traditions and practices that cause problems in marriages.
- How could Christian couples react towards cultural traditions that have a negative effect on their marital relationship?
- How could Christian couples avoid sinful practices or unlawful behaviour promoted by cultural and traditional principles?
- If a husband and wife come from different cultures, how could they overcome the differences?
- Why is it not good to ignore difficulties just for the sake of peace in the house?
- What are the potential problems you see in your relationship with your partner?

Topics for further discussion:

- Conflict: sometimes, when there is conflict, husbands and wives are not open and honest about it. Couples should understand that being open and talking with their spouses, can help to solve the conflict (cf. 2.5.1).

- Cultural influence: in order to minimize negative influence of culture on Christian marriages, culture should be addressed and evaluated according to divine norms based on biblical principles.
- Different cultural backgrounds: the couple needs to adjust to their new environment and understand and accept each other in these different circumstances that surround their marriage (cf. 4.4.2).
- Cultural practices in the Christian marriage: couples should understand that some cultural traditions increase the complexity of the marriage relationship, e.g. when men are encouraged to take a second wife or when men can get involved in extra-marital relationships (cf. 4.4.2).
- Perceptions and assumptions: the manner in which marital partners think and behave toward each other are negatively influenced by traditions. Couples should not consider their ideas, habits and customs as universally good and correct, but should evaluate it according to biblical principles (cf. 3.3; 4.4.2).

5.2.3.2.4 Practical application

The couples could now come together and be encouraged to discuss intimate matters honestly and openly with each other.

They could discuss the following topics/questions:

- What aspects in your culture cause marriage problems?
- How do you handle cultural differences between the two of you?
- How could you handle cultural principles that are destructive in your marriage?
- What is the best way to handle conflict in your marriage?
- How can you overcome negative cultural influences and cultivate respect, love and fidelity in your marriage?

5.2.3.3 C: Childlessness

5.2.3.3.1 Introduction to the topic

Couples should be encouraged to understand that children are not the first and only purpose of marriage. What is more important is when there is companionship, respect and support for one

another and when a husband and wife can give themselves to each other in an intimate sexual relationship, satisfying the needs of each other.

The facilitator could address the following topics in the big group:

- Love: this is more important than children in a marriage, because it is God's commandment to love each other in the marriage as one flesh (cf. 4.4.3; 3.4; 2.5.9).
- Priorities in marriage: children are the blessing that God gives to the couple.
- Faithfulness: when the couple experience childlessness, they cannot resort to unfaithfulness to solve the problem. They need to stand firm and support each other in this difficulty (cf. 3.4).
- The place of children in a marriage: children are only the expression of the love between the husband and wife (cf. 3.4). Children are a heritage and a reward from the Lord. Children are primarily the result of God's blessing and not only the result of husband and his wife coming together in marriage.
- God's purpose for marriage: it is a relationship between two people where both partners enjoy their fellowship as a couple (cf. 4.4.3; 3.4).

5.2.3.3.2 Reading the Word of God

The following passages from Scripture could be read in the separate groups of women and men: Gen 1:28; Ps 127:3; Ps 128:3; Mal 2:15 and 1 Cor 7:3-5.

5.2.3.3.3 Bible study and group discussions on the scriptural passages

The participants could discuss the following questions based on the scriptural passages in their separate groups of women and men:

- What does God say to couples in Gen 1:28? How could couples who do not have children, think about this verse?
- How could couples who are not able to have children, think about verses like Ps 127:3 and Ps 128:3?
- If you are in a childless marriage, how could you understand the passage in Mal 2:15?
- What does the Bible teach in 1 Cor 7:3-5 about the place of sex in the marriage? Is it primarily to have children?

The participants could discuss the following questions on the implications of the scriptural passages and what they learned from it:

- The traditional understanding of African people is that the main reason for marriage is to have children to prove that you are an adult. According to the Word of God, what is wrong with this way of thinking?
- When a couple cannot have children, they will traditionally accuse each other and it is frequently expected of the husband to leave his wife and marry another woman, merely for procreation purposes. According to the scriptural passages, how should a couple react when they struggle to get pregnant?
- Do you agree that the purpose of marriage is procreation?
- How can a marriage be complete and fulfilled without children?
- What can the extended family do to support a childless couple?

Topics for further discussion:

- Importance of love: love between a husband and wife is more important than children in a marriage. Children are only the expression of this love between the couple (cf. 3.4) and a blessing that God gives to the couple (cf. 4.4.3).
- Influence of culture: a childless woman in the community is often treated as not important and she does not receive the same respect in the community as a woman with children.
- Supporting childless marriage: convey the message that couples with no children can have a fulfilled marriage and can experience companionship in their relationship. They can experience complete satisfaction of their intimate sexual relationship and they can be happy, successful and blessed by God (cf. 3.4).

5.2.3.3.4 Practical application

The couples could now come together and be encouraged to discuss intimate matters honestly and openly with each other. If the couple is not childless, they can perhaps think how they can

respond to the questions of people in that situation and help them to think correctly about marriage and children and support them.

They could discuss the following topics/questions:

- How do you handle the problem of childlessness in your marriage?
- What does the Bible teach about childlessness?
- How can you love, respect and honour your partner more, even if the two of you cannot have children?
- How can you resist the pressure put on you by your family to continue faithful and without children?
- How can you live positively and proudly in a community who thinks that all couples must have children and that childlessness is seen as a curse?

5.2.3.4 SU: Submission of the wife

5.2.3.4.1 Introduction to the topic

Couples should understand that even though they live in a community where women do not have equal status to men, they, as Christians, should demonstrate another kind of marriage relationship. They should demonstrate a relationship where husbands and wives consider their spouses as their “best friends” and their “partners in the marriage”. Their support, love and respect for each other should be clear for everyone to see.

The facilitator could address the following topics in the big group:

- Equality: when couples do not change their view that a woman does not have equal status to her husband, intimate emotional oneness in their marriage is almost impossible (cf. 3.3.2).
- Importance of a complementary relationship: husband and wife have the responsibility to make their unique contribution to jointly cultivate a supportive and healthy environment and to build a happy home.
- Mutual self-sacrifice: it will be evident as each one follows the example of Christ.
- Universal dignity and human rights: it is applicable to all human beings without discrimination of gender. There is no place for husbands to rule over their wives and their families.

5.2.3.4.2 Reading the Word of God

The following passages from Scripture could be read in the separate groups of women and men: Gen 1:27; Gen 2:18-23; 1 Cor 11:3; Gal 3:28 and Eph 5:21-33.

5.2.3.4.3 Bible study and group discussions on the scriptural passages

The participants could discuss the following questions based on the scriptural passages in their separate groups of women and men:

- When you read Gen 1:27, what does it tell you about the nature of a man and a woman? What does it mean that both man and woman are created in the image of God? Does this imply equality for men and women?
- What does Gen 2:18-23 teach about the relationship between husband and wife?
- How should one understand what Paul is saying in 1 Cor 11:3? What are the implications when you as a couple must make decisions?
- How can you respect, honour and treat your partner with dignity according to the apostle Paul in the passage of Gal 3:28?
- What is the meaning of submission in the passage of Eph 5:21?
- What does Paul teach women regarding submission to their husbands in Eph 5:22-24?
- What does it mean for the relationship of a man to his wife if he should love his wife as Christ loved the church (Eph 5:25-30)?
- What are God's recommendations to the husband and wife in Eph 5:31-33?

The participants could discuss the following questions on the implications of the scriptural passages and what they learned from it:

- Keeping the scriptural passages in mind, how should a husband and wife behave towards each other?
- According to the Word of God, how should a couple make decisions?
- What can you learn from these passages about equality between a husband and wife?
- What does it mean that both man and woman bear in them the image of God?

- What may perhaps be done so that men do not misuse their authority in the marriage relationship to the detriment of their wives?
- What does Scripture say about the current paternalistic view of marriage where men force their wives to obey them by even punishing them?
- How should one understand what Paul writes in Eph 5:21-22 “for the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head”? What does Paul say about submission?

Topics for further discussion:

- Openness between husband and wife: this is possible if they see each other as their best friend and partner.
- Roles in marriage: wrong understanding of submission will be perpetuated as long as people fight about who is supposed to be the head in the house and what are the responsibilities of the head and the submissive partner.
- Mutual submission: this means that there should exist a mutually supportive relationship between husband and wife (cf. 3.5).
- Obedience to Christ: the wife can only submit to her husband if he is acting according to the will of God.
- Headship of husband: it refers to his responsibility to support his wife and to provide for his family (cf. 4.4.2).
- Sacrificial love in marriage: husband and wife should be more like Christ, demonstrating Christ’s sacrificial love to each other, despite their imperfections, just as Christ did for the church.
- Is it appropriate for a husband to help his wife with the following activities: milling, baking, cooking food, carrying water and taking care of the children?

5.2.3.4.4 Practical application

The couples could now come together and be encouraged to discuss intimate matters honestly and openly with each other.

They could discuss the following topics/questions:

- Who is playing the superior role in our marriage?

- How do we consider each other in our marriage?
- What can we do to learn to listen better to each other?
- What can we do to become each other's best friend and partner?
- How can I, as your husband/wife, help you in your daily activities, to make your load lighter?
- What are the positive aspects in each other that unite us?

5.2.3.5 MO: Money issues

5.2.3.5.1 Introduction to the topic

Couples should understand that the lack of transparency regarding money could be a source of marital problems. They should be encouraged to commit to deal with issues, including money problems, through effective communication, talking openly and honestly about matters.

The facilitator could address the following topics in the big group:

- Transparency on financial issues: one of the sources of marriage conflict is the handling of money and the lack of transparency between husband and wife (cf. 3.6).
- Reason for marriage: it is not for economic gain and security. Pastors, in general, are not earning a lot of money. If their wives marry for money, the likelihood of frustration on the women's side is great (cf. 3.6).
- Lack of financial management: couples could work together to make ends meet and to manage their budget together. Both partners have the obligation to use their limited money responsibly (cf. 3.6).
- Good communication: open communication is essential to determine which are the essential household needs (cf. 3.6).
- Unity: the husband and wife should not only be united sexually, but they should also be united and cooperate on the economic level.

5.2.3.5.2 Reading the Word of God

The following passages from Scripture could be read in the separate groups of women and men: 1 Tim 3:3; 1 Tim 6:10; Heb 13:5 and 1 Pet 5:2.

5.2.3.5.3 Bible study and group discussions on the scriptural passages

The participants may discuss the following questions based on the scriptural passages in their separate groups of women and men:

- In 1 Tim 3:3 Paul states that a pastor (overseer) should “not be a lover of money”. What does it mean? How should Christians think about money?
- What does Paul mean when he speaks about “the love of money” in 1 Tim 6:10? Why should pastors avoid the desire to acquire more and more money?
- The author of the passage in Heb 13:5 gives an alternative to “the love of money”. What is it? Why can one, according to Heb 13:5, be content with what you have?
- Describe what the attitude of a pastor should be according to Peter (1 Pet 5:2). What should be the pastor’s attitude towards money?
- What are the implications of the words “eager to serve” (1 Pet 5:2)? Describe the position of pastors in the church.

The participants may perhaps discuss the following questions on the implications of the scriptural passages and what they learned from it:

- What could couples do to avoid conflict over money? Be practical in your answer.
- What could a couple do if there is an urgent need, and there is no money?
- What does “the love of money” mean practically?
- What are the consequences if someone loves money?
- How can one learn to be content with what one has?
- How can “being content with what you have” help a couple to avoid “money conflicts” in marriage?
- What can we learn from the *Great Servant* on how to be servants?

Topics for further discussion:

- Pastors' attitude: they should not use their position in the church to enrich themselves. Pastors should guard their hearts against the love of money. One's trust should be in God, and not in money (cf. 4.4.5).
- To be satisfied: pastors' wives often find it difficult to be considered leaders in the society, but they don't have enough money to buy good clothes. It is necessary to be content with what one has.
- To be content: Paul does not mean that Christians should remain poor, but they should be content with what they have in their homes (cf. 4.4.5).
- Decisions in spending of money: wives often feel left out in the decision-making processes as the husbands decide on their own.
- Lack of transparency: lack of communication regarding money between a husband and wife can easily lead to a stressful marriage (cf. 3.6).
- Men's frustrations: from the social and cultural point of view, the husband's main role is to provide in the needs of his family, but with a small income, they often feel inadequate.
- Motive for getting married: some African women get married for the sake of money in order to satisfy their material needs. Others marry for security as they want to ensure that they are looked after (cf. 3.6; 4.4.5).
- Temptations: if a woman marries for money and not love, the temptation is to choose another partner who has *more* money. This may lead to adultery or even divorce (cf. 3.6).

5.2.3.5.4 Practical application

The couples could now come together and be encouraged to discuss intimate matters honestly and openly with each other.

They could discuss the following topics/questions:

- How can we ensure that we are open and honest in our relationship about the use of money?
- How could we handle money issues differently to avoid conflicts in our marriage?
- How could we get rid of (or prevent) financial debt?
- How are we going to do our budget together?

- How can we prevent an excessive love of money in our marriage?

5.2.3.6 ST: “Status” of the pastor

5.2.3.6.1 Introduction to the topic

Couples should understand that in Africa, pastors are seen as people who always have the answers and who can help others by praying for them, preaching and teaching the Word of God and leading by example. However, a pastor and his wife can also struggle in their marriage.

The facilitator could address the following topics in the big group:

- Reality of the marriage problems: people often have the idea that pastors have good marriages and that they do not experience marital problems. The truth is that their marital problems can become just as destructive as in any other marriage (cf. 3.7).
- Keeping up the pretences: because of the expectations of society, pastors do not feel free to acknowledge that they are struggling in their marriages and they must just go on as if there are no problems (cf. 2.6.6).
- No help available: whereas people go to pastors when they need help, pastors often do not have a place to go if they are struggling in their marriages (cf. 2.6.6).

5.2.3.6.2 Reading the Word of God

The following passages from Scripture could be read in the separate groups of women and men: 1 Tim 3:2-5 and 1 Pet 5:2-4.

5.2.3.6.3 Bible study and group discussions on the scriptural passages

The participants may discuss the following questions based on the scriptural passages in their separate groups of women and men:

- In 1 Tim 3:2-3 Paul gives a few characteristics of and requirements for a pastor (overseer). Mention and discuss each one of them.
- In the passage of 1 Tim 3:4-5, Pauls speaks about the family of the pastor. Mention the main points and discuss it. How can respect be seen in a family?
- What does “lording” over people mean and what is the opposite of “lording” (1 Pet 5:3)?

- Why should a pastor be an example to other people in the family and in the congregation (1 Pet 5:4)?
- How should church leaders lead the church (1 Pet 5:2)?

The participants may discuss the following questions on the implications of the scriptural passages and what they learned from it:

- What does it mean that pastors should be able to manage their own families well?
- How can pastors be good models for others in their marriages?
- What should pastors do when they are experiencing problems in their marriage?
- Is it possible for a pastor to be a leader, but at the same time do it in humility? Motivate your answer.

Topics for further discussion:

- Behaviour of pastors' wives: they sometimes misuse the position of the pastor and his "status" within the church and the community for their own benefit. They threaten their husbands with church discipline and the fact that he can lose his position (cf. 2.5.7; 3.7). Some wives take it for granted that their husbands will not divorce them for this reason, and this sometimes causes uncalled for and disrespectful behaviour by the wives (cf. 2.6; 3.7).
- Living as semi-divorced: fear of church discipline and losing his position cause the couple to stay in an unhappy marriage and to keep up the pretences in order to receive the salary, but actually they live separately in their home.
- Expectation of the community: there is pressure on pastors always to be good models for others in their marriages (cf. 4.4.6).
- Pastor as helper: the pastor is seen as someone who can help other people by praying for them, preaching and teaching the Word of God and leading by example (cf. 3.7). They have thus no place to get help for their own problems.
- Calling to be a pastor: pastors should know that they are called by God into ministry to equip the disciples in this world (cf. 4.4.6).

- Pastors and vices: pastors should know that they have an enemy prowling around to entice and enslave them and render them unable to serve God freely in the church and community (cf.4.4.6).

5.2.3.6.4 Practical application

The couples could now come together and be encouraged to discuss intimate matters honestly and openly with each other.

They could discuss the following topics/questions:

- What does God expect of a pastor?
- What does God expect of a pastor's wife?
- What does God expect from our marriage?
- What are the mistakes we made up to now in our marriage?
- How can we act differently from now on?

5.3 Conclusion

The proposed programme, to be used for marriage counselling of the pastors of the IRM, looks at the six main areas of conflict found within the marriages of the pastors, namely sex-related issues; cultural influences; childlessness; the issue of submission of wives; money issues and the status of the pastors. Each area of conflict is addressed by using the following structure of activities: introductory open discussion on the topic; reading the Word of God on the topic; Bible study and group discussions on the scriptural passages and the practical individual application of what was learned as each husband and wife share their insights with each other. The aim of the programme is not only to provide guidelines on how to solve conflicts in marriages, but also to provide guidelines on how to prevent problems in a pro-active manner.

After attending a marriage counselling programme, each partner should understand that he/she is responsible to build a good relationship in their marriage. The couples should understand that as Christians and as pastors of the IRM, their marriage life should not be characterised by any form of impurity or sexual immorality. They should understand that culture or tradition must be addressed and evaluated according to divine norms based on biblical principles. When it comes to cultural practices, they need to be guided by the Spirit of God and seek the will of God. The couples should understand that children are only the expression of love between husband and wife. When they experience childlessness in their marriage, they should understand that they

cannot be unfaithful towards their spouses because of it, but they need to stand firm in the Lord. Husbands should learn to listen to their wives, to consider their opinions, and to think carefully before they act or respond. They should acknowledge that both partners have the potential and the responsibility to build a happy marriage. Couples should understand that a husband and wife should not only be united sexually, but that they should also cooperate on how to use their money by doing the budget together.

Marriage counselling programs could be done regularly to help pastors to solve their own marriage conflicts so that they can experience a fulfilling marriage to the honour of God. Then they will also be able to use this marriage counselling programme in their congregations so that the church members can also grow in their marital relationships.

CHAPTER 6: SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

6.1 Introduction

The main focus of the study was to address the situation of pastors' marriages in the *Igreja Reformada em Moçambique* (IRM), especially in the Synod of Mphatso. The marriages of the pastors should be a good model for Christian marriages, but the reality is that pastors generally do not have the skills to apply the knowledge they have regarding marriage to their specific situation in order to solve the problems in their own marriages.

The overarching question of the study was formulated as follows: Why do pastors in particular need marriage counselling and how can it be done to improve the quality of the marriages of the pastors in the *Igreja Reformada em Moçambique*?

The main question was divided into different specific questions:

- What is the current state of the marriages of the pastors in the Synod of Mphatso?
- How can the current state of the marriages of the pastors of the IRM be understood and explained?
- What biblical and ethical guidelines can be identified to assist and enrich the pastors' marriages in the IRM?
- How can these guidelines be incorporated in a programme for contextualised and biblical marriage counselling to improve the quality of pastors' marriages in the IRM?

6.2 Description of pastors' marriages in the IRM

Chapter 2 focused on Osmer's first question (*what is going on?*) regarding the pastors' marriages. The objective was to find the most important aspects that could be the source of marriage problems of the pastors of the IRM in the Mphatso Synod. The researcher approached pastors and their wives who are based in the Tete province where the majority of the congregations of the Mphatso Synod are situated. These couples were interviewed according to a questionnaire. Each spouse responded individually and gave their opinions about their own marriage and also marriages in general. This whole process was done according to strict ethical guidelines.

Through qualitative empirical research, the researcher identified seven major aspects that influence the marriages of pastors of the IRM Mphatso synod negatively, namely: **sex-related**

issues; cultural influences; childlessness; submission of wives; money issues and the “status” of the pastor.

6.3 Perspectives from literature on pastors’ marriages in the IRM

The focus of chapter 3 was based on the interpretive task of Osmer (2008:7) that is related to his second question, namely “Why is this happening?” in the practical theological hermeneutical interpretation process.

Despite the fact that it is the 21st century, it became clear that tradition and culture still play a major role in African marriages. Culture influences not only the sexual aspects of marriage, but also the lifestyle of people, the understanding and the experience of marriage. Every tribe or group of people consider their ideas, habits and customs as universally good and correct. They thus expect their spouses to observe these cultural values. Aspects that came to the fore are an emphasis on procreation and sex, the obsession to get married at all costs and to have children, the problems faced by a couple who cannot have children, the underlining reasons to get married like prestige, social status, financial security, pressure from the family and clan to have children, the influence of the extended family, the subordinate role of women and the lack of transparency when it comes to financial matters.

In this chapter, it became evident that in the majority of traditional African marriages, there is not enough consideration for the feelings and the position of women. It also became clear that couples often do not have the necessary skills to handle conflict. When they experience conflict, they opt to live together like strangers, without sharing or discussing the issues in order to forgive each other and to restore the marriage relationship. Trust and faithfulness are often missing elements in the marital relationships.

Couples should be helped to enjoy positive interpersonal and healthy sexual relationships in their marriages. They need to learn that mutual respect, love and fidelity in marriage are cultivated where both partners make a commitment to each other, recognise the importance of communication and realise that they are dependent on each other, also for good decisions.

6.4 Normative perspectives on pastors’ marriages in the IRM

Chapter 4 corresponds with Osmer’s third task, namely the *normative task*. The purpose of the normative task is to answer the question: *What ought to be going on?* This dealt with the origin of marriage from a biblical perspective based in the Old and New Testament. In this chapter it became clear that marriage was designed by God, which means that it is God who joins the husband and wife in order to begin a family. Couples should be reminded that God instituted marriage as good and holy, so that people can enjoy the glory of God. All that He created was

very good. He affirmed that it is not good that man should be alone. This means there should be a female companion and partner in reproduction. Man could not fully realise his humanity alone. Therefore, God determined to make a helper that matches him and is suitable for him.

Marriage is confirmed in a public ceremony. The man and the woman must take leave of their parents. The marriage is consummated in sexual union and supported by a partnership between husband and wife. Only when the man leaves his parents and cleaves to his wife, he will have authority within his family. By the process of leaving and cleaving, the husband and the wife are glued together like two pieces of paper. This unity includes more than just physical unity. It also includes the moral, intellectual, emotional and spiritual aspects of the couple. The husband and his wife should form an inseparable union. God created only one wife for Adam. The union of one man and one woman is the divine norm for man's welfare. It is important for Christian couples that the emphasis in their marriage should be on the intimate relationship and lifelong friendship between husband and wife. The marriage covenant is characterised by intimacy and absolute fidelity between husband and wife.

Because marriage is a divine institution, it is a sacred and a solemn covenant, since it unites one man and one woman who promise to be faithful until death. Couples should keep in mind that the love of Christ for His church is directly linked with marital love between a husband and a wife. Purity, integrity, loyalty, and love are the walls that protect this sacred institution from sexual sins.

Cultural traditions should be addressed and evaluated according to biblical principles. Men should understand that women are not slaves of men, but they are there to support their husbands in order for both of them to serve God. Husbands should not oppress their wives as the head of the family as tradition often requires. According to the Bible, men and women are equal before God and they are in a complementary relationship. Both have equal rights before God to rule, to take control and leadership and to make decisions in the marriage. Therefore, headship does not primarily refer to the issue of authority. It is important that wives should be subject to their husbands as the church is subject to Christ.

In order to overcome this problem of submission in African marriages, men should recognise the rights, values and dignity of women as partners in their marriages. Couples should seek always to be Christ-like in their relationships. They have to demonstrate sacrificial love to each other despite their imperfection, just as Christ did for the church. Husband and wife should know that they complement each other as a couple. Subordination of the wife to her husband in the marital relationship does not mean that she is inferior to her husband, but that they are partners.

God intended sexual relations in the marriage not primarily to have children, but if there are children, it is God who blesses the marriage. There is thus no room for marriage conflict if there

are no children in the marriage. Couples should realise that they cannot be unfaithful towards their spouses in order to solve the problem of childlessness.

Pastors, in order to solve their marriage problems, must discuss their issues, pray together and seek God's help in the process of solving marriage conflict. Pastors should be good role models in their marriages. Pastors should be able to manage their own families, should be even-tempered, prudent, respectable, hospitable, peaceable, and free from the love of money. Pastors should be able to teach others. Pastors as leaders are called and encouraged to lead the church with humility so that God will receive the glory.

6.5 Proposed marriage counselling programme for pastors in the IRM

Chapter 5 proposed a programme for marriage counselling that can be used for the marriages of the pastors of Mphatso Synod within the IRM. This marriage counselling programme should be implemented by a qualified counsellor who knows the context of these pastors and their marriages. It could be implemented by doing seminars with all pastors and their wives to discuss issues that may cause conflicts, namely sex-related issues; cultural influences; childlessness; submission of wives; money issues and the "status" of the pastor. The acronym **SICSUMOST** refers to the six important aspects identified in this research that cause conflict in pastors' marriages.

Each area of conflict is addressed by using the following structure of activities: introductory open discussion on the topic; reading the Word of God on the topic; Bible study and group discussions on the scriptural passages and the practical individual application of what was learned as each husband and wife share their insights with each other. The aim of the programme is not only to provide guidelines on how to solve conflicts in marriages, but also to provide guidelines on how to prevent problems in a pro-active manner.

After attending a marriage counselling programme, each partner should understand that he/she is responsible to build a good relationship in their marriage. The couples should understand that as Christians and as pastors of the IRM, their marriage life should not be characterised by any form of impurity or sexual immorality. They should understand that culture or tradition must be addressed and evaluated according to divine norms based on biblical principles. When it comes to cultural practices, they need to be guided by the Spirit of God and seek the will of God. The couples should understand that children are only the expression of love between husband and wife. When they experience childlessness in their marriage, they should understand that they cannot be unfaithful towards their spouses because of it, but they need to stand firm in the Lord. Husbands should learn to listen to their wives, to consider their opinions, and to think carefully before they act or respond. They should acknowledge that both partners have the potential and

the responsibility to build a happy marriage. Couples should understand that a husband and wife should not only be united sexually, but that they should also cooperate on how to use their money by doing the budget together.

Marriage counselling programs should be done regularly to help pastors to solve their own marriage conflicts so that they can experience a fulfilling marriage to the honour of God. Then they will also be able to use this marriage counselling programme in their congregations so that the church members can also grow in their marital relationships.

6.6 Suggestions for further research

Further research on related matters may be necessary to investigate spiritual direction for pastor's marriages in the African context and the following topics may be addressed:

- a pre-marital counselling programme;
- preparing and equipping new pastors and spouses on how to deal with spiritual battles;
- counselling pastors and their wives regarding marriage issues like unfaithfulness to the partner, the effect of polygamy in the marriage and within the ministry;
- counselling pastors and their wives regarding abuse of finances and material resources belonging to the church for personal gain;
- preparing and equipping pastors and their wives for child rearing within the ministry;
- supporting pastors and their families after the pastor has been suspended or completely relieved from his duties.

6.7 Reflexion

One of the biggest problems while doing the empirical study was that some of the female respondents were illiterate. In the Chewa culture a married man should not discuss issues about marriage with another married woman on his own. I thus had no choice but to ask my wife to accompany me while interviewing these pastors' wives. I am aware of the limitations of this *modus operandi*, especially regarding confidentiality within the Mozambican culture and the IRM Mphatso Synod, but it was unfortunately the only way to get the necessary information.

While I was doing the research, I really felt that pastors and their wives need a great deal of help through marriage counselling to improve their marriage relationships, their family life and their pastoral ministry. I also became aware of other burning issues that need to be addressed, like

raising children as a pastor of a congregation and counselling pastors on managing and using the congregation's financial resources. I became aware of the tremendous impact that tradition and cultural practices have on marital relationships and how the love between a husband and his wife can be spoiled and weakened. It really broke my heart. The lack of skills to solve conflict in marriages indeed leads to pain, brokenness, adultery and divorce.

The study was very beneficial to me and the ministry in which I am involved as it offered more skills to assist pastors and evangelists together with their wives in their ministries in the church in Mozambique. The study empowered me with scientific and practical knowledge that I can use in my work as a pastor in the IRM and a lecturer at Hefsiba.

I trust that the proposed programme will help to strengthen the relationships of the pastors and eventually all members of the IRM, including my own relationship with my wife. It is a programme based on biblical principles and I believe that it will result in peace and unconditional love between couples to the honour and glory of God.

ANNEXURE A: FORM FOR INFORMED CONSENT

Part 1: General Project Information

The following part provides you as a participant in this project, with more information, so that you can make an informed decision about your voluntary participation or not.

1. Title of the Project:

Marriage counselling to pastors in the *Igreja Reformada em Moçambique*: a practical-theological study

2. Institution / School / Subject group / Institute:

North-West University, Faculty of Theology, School of Biblical Counselling and Church Ministry, Practical Theology

3. Names & contact details of Project Staff:

(These persons are your first line of contact for enquiries, help and complaints related to the project or your participation in the project. If you need any help, feel uncertain or have any questions regarding the project, or if you experience any unwanted effects of the project interventions, feel victimised or have any other complaints related to the project, or wish to terminate your participation in the project, you may contact these persons at any time.)

Contact Person

Title, name & surname	Dr P.M. Theron
Full names	Petria Magdalena
Function in Project	Promoter
Qualifications	PhD in Pastoral Studies
Profess. Registr.	Not applicable
Telephone (home)	018 290 8267
Telephone (work)	018 299 1841
Cell phone	072 390 3767
Emergency No.	072 390 3767
Postal address	Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom, 2520

4. Names & contact details of Independent Patrons:

These persons are usually your second line of contact for complaints. They are not involved in the project (i.e. they protect the rights of participants) and handle serious complaints that, in your opinion, are not handled appropriately by the first line of contact (i.e. the project staff), or if you are of opinion that the project staff discriminate against you or fear that they will discriminate against you if you complain. If you therefore feel victimised or have any other complaint related to the project, and you feel that the project staff did or will not handle your complaint appropriately, or if you have reason to fear that there will be discriminated against you by any members of the project staff, you may contact these persons to lay complaints regarding any matter related to the project.

	Faculty of Theology Ethics Committee	
Title, name & surname	Prof JJ Janse van Rensburg	Prof HG Stoker
Full names	Johan Jacob	Hendrik Gerhardus
Function in Project	Dean	Manager M & D Programmes
Qualifications	ThD	ThD
Profess. Registr.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Telephone (home)		
Telephone (work)	018 299 1849	018 299 1596
Cell phone	082 870 2656	082 327 8921
Emergency No.	082 870 2656	082 327 8921
Postal address	Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom, 2520	Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom, 2520

5. You are approached to take part in this project and may now have the the following questions:

5.1 What are the set requirements that persons must meet to be able to take part in the project? Why and how was I chosen?

The participant must be a pastor or a pastor's wife serving in IRM Mphatso Synod.

5.2 What is the purpose of this project?

The purpose of this study is to investigate the state of marriage counselling of pastors in the *Igreja Reformada em Moçambique*.

5.3 What will be expected of me as participant? In which interventions / procedures will I have to take part? What exactly will it involve?

The participant will participate in one, and if necessary, a second semi-structured interview.

5.4 What are the potential discomforts and/or potential dangers and/or potential permanent consequences (however negligible) that participation in this project holds?

Not applicable

5.5 What precautions have been taken to protect me as a participant?

The researcher guarantees anonymity. The data will be securely stored for five years.

5.6 How long am I expected to be involved in the project (e.g. number and duration of visits)?

One, and if necessary, two visits.

5.7 What direct benefits can I expect from the project? What remuneration (monetary or services) can I expect for my participation?

Not applicable

5.8 What potential general benefits are there for the broader community, which may arise from the project?

The findings of the study may promote the quality of the marriages of the pastors in the *Igreja Reformada em Moçambique*, which can be improved through biblical marriage counselling.

5.9 How will the findings of the project (general results, as well as individual that is, about me) be made available or conveyed to me?

The findings of the study will be published.

5.10 What measures have been taken to handle and store my data confidentially?

The data gathered will be stored securely for five years.

5.11 What restrictions are there to ensure the confidentiality of data?

The data will be presented in such a way that the identity of the participant will be protected.

5.12 If applicable, what is the policy for the handling of results of genetic tests and familial genetic information to ensure its confidentiality?

Not applicable

5.13 If applicable, where drugs are tested and if they appear to be effective, will they continue to be made available to me after the project, or will I have to pay for them myself?

Not applicable

5.14 If applicable, how will biological samples that are not used immediately be destroyed, stored or used later?

Not applicable

5.15 How will I and other participants or the community share in any future commercial use of the profits generated by the data?

Not applicable

5.16 If I suffer any detrimental effects from the project, to what extent is free treatment available and are there sufficient funds to finance the treatment? If any injury, medical disability or death follows from participating in the project, to what extent will I, my dependents and/or next of kin be compensated?

Not applicable

As researcher, I confirm to participants that the above information is complete and correct.

Signature of Researcher

Place of Signature

Date

PART 2: General Principles

To the signatory of the consent contained in Part 3 of this document:

You are invited to take part in the research project as described in Part 1 of this informed consent form. It is important that you also read and understand the following general principles, which are applicable to all participants in our research projects:

1. Participation in the project is completely voluntary and no pressure, however subtle, may be placed on you to take part.
2. It is possible that you may not derive any benefit personally from your participation in the project, although the knowledge that may be gained by means of the project, may benefit other persons or communities. In exceptional cases where you do receive personal financial benefits, these are usually for transport to participate and for personal sustenance (e.g. meals) during your participation. You may not be bribed to participate.
3. You are free to withdraw from the project at any time, without stating reasons, and you will in no way be harmed by so doing. You may also request that your data no longer be used in the project and/or that any biological materials must be destroyed. However, you are kindly requested not to withdraw from the project without careful consideration, since it may have a detrimental effect on, inter alia, the statistical reliability of the project.
4. By agreeing to take part in the project, you are also giving consent for the data that will be generated to be used by the researchers for scientific purposes as they see fit, with the caveat that it will be confidential and that your name will not be linked to any of the data without your consent.
5. The NWU Ethics Committee, Medicines Control Council, Department of Health and/or a Court of Law may request access to information to ensure/inspect the ethical responsibility of practices, in the interest of participants and the public.
6. You will be given access to your own data upon request, unless the Ethics Committee has approved temporary non-disclosure (in the latter case, the reasons in Part 1 will be explained to you).
7. A summary of the nature of the project, the potential risks, factors that may cause you possible inconvenience or discomfort, the benefits that can be expected and the known and/or probable permanent consequences that your participation in the project may have for you as a participant, are set out for you in Part 1 hereof.
8. You are encouraged to ask the Project Head or co-workers any questions you may have regarding the project and the related procedures at any stage. They will gladly answer your queries. They will also discuss the project with you in detail.
9. If you are a minor, the written consent of your parent or legal guardian is required before you participate in this project, as well as (in writing if possible) your voluntary assent to take part – no coercion may be placed on you.
10. The project objectives are always secondary to your well-being and actions taken will always place your interests above those of the project.

11. No project may be commenced before it is approved by the Ethics Committee. Furthermore, the Project Head must report any detrimental effects experienced during the implementation of the project in full and without delay to the chairman of the Ethics Committee. If any unforeseen serious detrimental effects are observed during the project, it may be necessary to terminate the project immediately.

PART 3: Consent

Title of the Project:

Marriage counselling to pastors in the *Igreja Reformada em Moçambique*: a practical-theological study

I, the undersigned

Full names & Surname

have read the preceding premises in connection with the project, as discussed in **Part 1** and **Part 2** of this informed consent form, and have also heard the oral version thereof and I declare that I understand it. I have also initialled every page of **Part 1** and **Part 2**. I was given the opportunity to discuss relevant aspects of the project with the Project Head and I hereby declare that I am taking part in the project voluntarily.

Signature of Participant

Place of Signature

Date

WITNESSES

Signature of Witness 1

Place of Signature

Date

Signature of Witness 2

Place of Signature

Date

ANNEXURE B: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR IRM PASTORS AND THEIR WIVES WHO ARE EXPERIENCING PROBLEMS IN THEIR MARRIAGE RELATIONSHIP

1. Gender: _____

2. Number of years' experience in the ministry: _____

3. Age: _____

4. Culture group: _____

5. How old were you and your spouse when you got married? _____

Pastor: _____

Wife: _____

6. How long have you been married? _____

7. If you and your spouse received pre-marital counselling, describe how it was done and give the topics that were covered.

8. Do you think pre-marital counselling helped you in your marriage relationship? Elaborate.

9. What recommendations can you give so that pre-marital counselling can be more effective?

10. Describe your marriage relationship at the beginning.

11. What were the things that you appreciated and adored about your spouse at the beginning?

12. When did the problems in your marriage start? Give a full description of the problems that you are experiencing.

13. How did you respond when the problems started?

14. How did your spouse respond when the problems started?

15. How do you handle conflict in your marriage?

16. How do you think your marriage problems could have been prevented?

17. How are marriage problems handled in your culture?

18. What aspects in your culture could possibly cause marriage problems?

19. Is it normal in your culture for families to arrange marriages? If it is, how does it influence the marriage relationship?

20. How do people in your culture respond to a couple who cannot have children?

21. In your culture, what role does family and friends play in a marriage relationship?

22. How is an extra-marital relationship perceived in your culture?

23. Does the church know about your marriage problems? If not, why not? If the church knows about it, what has been done so far to help?

24. If the church intervened, was it helpful and effective? Elaborate.

25. What kind of help would you have appreciated?

26. How can marriage counselling for pastors be more effectively implemented in the IRM?

27. How many times did you attend marriage enrichment programmes with your spouse? If you did, what did you learn from it?

28. What would you have liked to be discussed there in order to be more effective?

29. Any other remarks or comments:

ANNEXURE C: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR IRM PASTORS AND THEIR WIVES REGARDING THEIR MARRIAGE RELATIONSHIP

1. Gender: _____
2. Number of years' experience in the ministry: _____
3. Age: _____
4. Culture group: _____
5. How old were you and your spouse when you got married? _____

Pastor: _____

Wife: _____

6. How long have you been married? _____
7. If you and your spouse received pre-marital counselling, describe how it was done and give the topics that were covered.

8. Do you think pre-marital counselling helped you in your marriage relationship? What did you and your spouse learn from it?

9. What recommendations can you give so that pre-marital counselling can be more effective?

10. Describe your marriage relationship at the beginning.

11. What were the things that you appreciated and adored about your spouse at the beginning?

12. Describe your marital relationship now.

13. Do you sometimes experience problems in your marriage? Describe what kinds of problems occur in your relationship.

14. How do you respond when problems arise?

15. How does your spouse respond when problems arise?

16. How do you handle conflict in your marriage?

17. According to your culture, how should marital problems be handled?

18. What are the cultural expectations regarding submission in marital relationships?

19. Is it normal in your culture for families to arrange marriages? If it is, how does it influence the marriage relationship?

20. In your culture, what role do family and friends play in a marriage relationship?

21. Did you ever receive marriage counselling? If you did, how did you experience it? How did you and your spouse benefit from it?

22. What advice would you give to pastors and their wives regarding problems in their marriages? What are the things they must do and not do when they are experiencing problems in their relationship?

23. What are the most important lessons you have learned in your marriage relationship?

24. How can the church assist pastors and their wives who are experiencing marriage problems?

25. How can marriage counselling for pastors be more effectively implemented in the IRM?

26. How many times did you attend marriage enrichment programmes with your spouse? If you did, what did you learn from it?

27. What would you have liked to be discussed there in order to be more effective?

28. Any other remarks or comments:

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Amanze, J. 2000. African Christianity in Botswana. Gweru: Mambo.

Andria, S. 2006. 1 Timothy. (*In Adeyemo, T., ed. Africa Bible commentary. Nairobi: Word Alive. p. 1469-1476*).

Anon. 2011. Marriage counselling. <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/marriage-counseling/MY00839> Date of access: 16 Apr. 2012.

Arnold, E.C. 2010. Ephesians. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan. (Zondervan exegetical commentary on the New Testament, 10).

Assohoto, B. & Ngewa, S. 2006. Genesis. (*In Adeyemo, T., ed. African Bible commentary. Nairobi: WordAlive. p. 9-84*).

Atieno, E. 2012. Pastoral tips for marriage counselling.
http://www.ehow.com/info_8292403_pastoral-tips-marriage-counseling.html Date of access: 16 Apr. 2012.

Awodele, F. 2005. Divorce rates – Africa vs Western countries.
<http://nigeriaworld.com/articles/2005/may/021.html> Date of access: 18 Feb. 2015.

Baloyi, E. 2010. An African view of women as sexual objects as a concern for gender equality: a critical study. *Verbum et Ecclesia*, 31(1), a380.

Baloyi, M.E. 2013. Wife beating amongst Africans as a challenge to pastoral care. *In die Skriflig/In Luce Verbi*, 47(1), a713.

Baloyi, M.E. 2014. The impact of the extended family on one's marriage: an African study. *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, 148:18-32.

Baloyi, M.E. & Manala, M.J. 2013. Pastoral care to or with sex-extorted pregnant women in an African context. *In die Skriflig/In Luce Verbi*, 47(1), a109.

Balswick, J.O. & Balswick, J.K. 2006. A model for marriage: covenant, grace, empowerment and intimacy. Grand Rapids, Mich.: InterVarsity.

Banze, M. 1998. An evaluation of the impact of Christianity on the socio-cultural life in the Congo since colonization: A church-historical study. Potchefstroom: PU for CHE. (Dissertation – MTh).

- Berg, B.L. 2001. Qualitative research methods for the social sciences. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Block, J.D. 2000. Broken promises, mended hearts, maintaining trust in love relationships. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Brannen, J. & Collard, J. 1982. Marriages in trouble: the process of seeking help. London: Tavistock.
- Brewer, D.I. 2002. Divorce and remarriage in the Bible: the social and literary context. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans.
- Brown, N.P. 2007. Long term effectiveness of faith based marriage intensive therapy for distressed marriages. California: North Central University. (Thesis – PhD).
- Bucar, M.B. 2005. Does human rights need God? Grand Rapids: Mich.: Eerdmans.
- Burns, B. & Azevedo, D. 2005. Costumes e culturas: uma introdução a antropologia missionaria [Customs and culture: an introduction of anthropology]. São Paulo: Vida Nova.
- Chianeque, L.C & Ngewa, S. 2006. Deuteronomy. (*In* Adeyemo, T., ed. African Bible commentary. Nairobi: WordAlive. p. 209-254).
- Chingota, F.E. 2008. A report of gender audit of the churches in Malawi. (Unpublished).
- Christensen, L.D. 2002. Deuteronomy 21:10-34:12. Nashville, Tenn.: Thomas Nelson. (Word biblical commentary, 6B).
- Cohick, L.H. 2010. Ephesians: a New covenant commentary. Eugene, Oreg.: Cascade.
- Collins, G.R. 1988. Christian counselling: a comprehensive guide. Rev. ed. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House.
- Collins, G.R. 2001. Christian counselling: a comprehensive guide. Rev. ed. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House.
- Cornell, S. 2008. Troubled marriages in the church – how to respond.
<https://thinkpoint.wordpress.com/2008/02/13/troubled-marriages-fill-the-church-how-to-respond/>
 Date of access: 22 Jun. 2015.
- Creswell, J.W. 2003. Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches. 2nd ed. London: Sage.

- Creswell, J.W. 2009. Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches. 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage.
- Croft, B. 2013. The pastor's family: shepherding your family through the challenges of pastoral ministry. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan.
- Crook, R.H. 2013. An introduction to Christian ethics. New York, N.Y.: Pearson.
- Currid, D.J. 2003. A study commentary on Genesis. Vol. 1. New York, N.Y.: Evangelical Press.
- Dauer, S. 2002. Indivisible women's human rights in the public and private sphere. (*In* Agosin, M., ed. A global perspective. London: Rutgers. p. 66-77).
- Draper, J.A. 2006. Africa. (*In* Sawyer, J.F.A., ed. The Bible and culture. Malden, Mass.: Blackwell. p. 176-197).
- Duarte, L. 2008. A razão porque deve haver casamento [The reason why there must be marriage]. São Paulo: Vida.
- Duif, R. 1992. A meta theory for marital counselling. Johannesburg: Rand Afrikaans University. (Dissertation – MA).
- Ellen, T. 2007. Marriage in the Bible. (*In* Scott, K. & Warren, M., eds. Perspectives on marriage. New York, N.Y.: Oxford University Press. p. 7-20).
- Fink, A.S. 2000. The role of the researcher in the qualitative research process: a potential barrier to archiving qualitative data. <http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1021/2201> Date of access: 17 May 2014.
- Force, R. 2012. Pastor's wife needing advice for marital and personal issues. <http://freechristianmarriagecounselingalternative.com/marriage-problems/pastors-wife-needing-advice-for-marital-and-personal-issues> Date of access: 19 Oct. 2012.
- Garland, D.E. 2003. 1 Corinthians. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic. (Baker exegetical commentary on the New Testament).
- Gillham, B. 2002. The research interview. New York, N.Y.: Continuum.
- Gillham, S. 2012. Combating gender-based violence: the Bible's teaching on gender complementarity. (*In* Hendriks, J.H., Mouton, E., Hansen, L. & Le Roux, E., eds. Men in the

pulpit, women in the pew?: addressing gender inequality in Africa. Stellenbosch: Sun Press. p. 93-103).

Gladding, S.T. 2011. Family therapy: history, theory, and practice. Boston: Prentice Hall.

Goldingay, J. 2010. Genesis for everyone. London: John Knox.

Gouws, W.J. 2005. Not by might nor by power: a history of the Igreja Reformada em Moçambique. Mossel Bay: Mosprint.

Greeff, M. 2011. Information collection: interviewing. (*In* De Vos, A.S.; Strydom, H.; Fouché, C.B. & Delport, C.S.L., eds. Research at grass roots. Pretoria: Van Schaik. p. 341-375).

Grenz, S.J. & Smith, J.T. 2005. Dicionário da Ética [Ethics Dictionary]. São Paulo: Vida.

Griffiths, P.G. 1999. What is marriage counselling? <http://www.lib.sk.ca/DH-What-Is-Marriage-Counseling> Date of access: 19 Oct. 2012.

Gushee, P.D. 2004. Getting marriage right: realistic counsel for serving and strengthening relationships. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker.

Hamilton, P.V. 2012. Genesis. (*In* Burge, M.G. & Hill, E.A., eds. The Baker illustrated Bible commentary. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker. p. 10-12).

Harawa-Katumbi, C. 2012. The Bible, gender equality and teaching theology in Malawi. (*In* Hendriks, J.H., Mouton, E., Hansen, L. & Le Roux, E., eds. Men in the pulpit, women in the pew?: addressing gender inequality in Africa. Stellenbosch: Sun Press. p. 105-114).

Hauerwas, S. 2006. Brazos theological commentary on the Bible. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Brazos.

Hawkins, R.K. 2008. Marriage contract in OT. (*In* Alexander, M.N. The New Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible. Vol. 3. Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon. p. 812-818).

Hebbard, D.W. 1995. Family life ministry in the church. Nashville, Tenn.: Thomas Nelson.

Heine, R.E. 2002. The commentaries of Origen and Jerome on St Paul's epistle to the Ephesians. New York, N.Y.: Oxford University Press.

Helmeke, K. & Bischof, G. 2011. Couple therapy and the integration of spirituality and religion. New York, N.Y.: Haworth

- Hendriks, H.J. 2004. Studying congregations in Africa. Wellington: Lux Verbi.
- Hindson, E.E. & Mitchell, D.R., eds. 2010. Zondervan King James Version commentary: Old Testament. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan.
- Hoff, P. 2002. O pastor como conselheiro [The pastor as counsellor]. São Paulo: Vida.
- Hook, J.N. 2010. The effectiveness of religiously tailored couple counselling. Worthington: Virginia University. (Thesis – PhD).
- Janse van Rensburg, F., De Klerk, B.J, De Wet, F.W; Lamprecht, A., Nel, M. & Vergeer, W. 2015. Conceiving a sermon: from exegesis to delivery. Potchefstroom: Potchefstroom Theological Publications.
- Janse van Rensburg, J. 2009. Seminar on research methodology. (Unpublished).
- Jensen, K. & Gaie, J.B.R. 2010. African Communalism and Public Health Policies: the relevance of indigenous concepts of personal identity to HIV/AIDS policies in Botswana. *African Journal of AIDS Research*, 9(3):297–305.
- John, D. & Krumboltz, F.B. 1979. Counselling psychology. Stanford: Stanford University.
- Joseph, C. & Subhashini, R. 2012. Premarital counselling: function of sustaining marital life. *Rajagiri Journal of Social Development*, 4(1):5-10.
- Kalengo, G.H. 2009. Counselling book. Nkhoma: Nkhoma Press.
- Kapuma, G.A. 2012. A story of pain, a need for healing. (In Hendriks, J.H., Mouton, E., Hansen, L. & Le Roux, E., eds. Men in the pulpit, women in the pew?: addressing gender inequality in Africa. Stellenbosch: Sun Press. p. 61-70).
- Kassa, T. 2006. Hebrews. (In Adeyemo, T., ed. African Bible commentary. Nairobi: WordAlive. p. 1489-1508).
- Kelly, J.N.D. 2006. Introduction and commentaries on Genesis. São Paulo: Vida Nova.
- Kimani, V.N. 2004. Human sexuality: meaning and purpose in selected communities in contemporary Kenya. *The Ecumenical Review*, 56(4):404-421.
- Kisembo, B., Magesa, L. & Shorter, A. 1977. Christian family power in Africa. (In Shorter, A. ed. Christian family power in Africa. Eldoret: Gaba. p. 36-43).

- Koch, P.C. 2016. Premarital instruction: a Lutheran perspective. *Logia*, 25(2):11-21.
- Lango, C. 2003. Race, culture and counselling: the ongoing challenge. Sheffield: UKRC.
- Leoto, S.M. 2004. Casamento reavaliação para crescer [Marriage revaluation to grow]. São Paulo: Abba.
- Longman, T. & Garland, D.E. 2008. Genesis-Leviticus. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan. (Expositor's Bible commentary, 1).
- Lotter, G.A. 2010. Pastoral care of marriage and the family. Potchefstroom: NWU, Potchefstroom campus. (Study guide for PAST221).
- Louw, D.J. 2012. Network of the human soul: on identity, dignity, maturity and life skills. Stellenbosch: SUN Media.
- Louw, J.P. & Nida, E.A., eds. 1989. Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament based on semantic domains. Vol. 1: Introduction & domains. New York, N.Y.: UBS.
- Macdonald, M.Y. 2008. Marriage, Old Testament. (In Alexander, M.N. The New Interpreters dictionary of the Bible. Vol. 3. Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon. p. 818-819).
- Machingura, F. 2013. A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. Edinburgh: University Press.
- Mariano, C.E. 2004. Involuntary childlessness among the Shangana (Mozambique). <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/02646830412331298314> Date of access: 16 March 2015.
- Martin, W.T. 2012. Performing the head role, man is the head of woman (1 Cor 11:3 and Eph 5:23). London: Bookend.
- Masakona, N.J. 2000. The traditional Venda marriage: a theological ethical evaluation. Potchefstroom: PU for CHE. (Mini-dissertation – MTh).
- Mashau, T.D. 2005. Love, courtship and marriage: biblical solutions to problems confronting African youths in the 21st Century. Potchefstroom: Potchefstroom Theological Publications.
- Mashau, T.D. 2006. Unlocking the mystery of marriage: issues in premarital counselling. Potchefstroom: Potchefstroom Theological Publications.
- Mason, J. 2002. Qualitative researching. London: Sage.

Mason, M. 2010. Qualitative social research. Oxford: Marston.

Mattison, W.C., III. 2011. Marriage. (*In* McFarland, I.A., Fergusson, D.A.S., Kilby, K. & Tarrance, I.R., eds. The Cambridge dictionary of Christian theology. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p. 300-301).

Mccourt, A.J. 2009. Spiritual in marital therapy: a phenomenological approach. Chicago: Loyola University. (Thesis – PhD).

Metzger, M.B. & Coogan, D.M. 2001. The Oxford guide to ideas & issues of the Bible. New York: Oxford University Press.

Minutes. 2009. *Igreja Reformada em Moçambique*, Mphatso Synod. Vila Ulónguè: IRM.

Minutes. 2011. *Igreja Reformada em Moçambique*, Mphatso Synod. Vila Ulónguè: IRM.

Minutes. 2013. *Igreja Reformada em Moçambique*, Mphatso Synod. Vila Ulónguè: IRM.

Moo, D.J. 2013. Galatians. Baker exegetical commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Baker.

Mosko, J.E. & Pistole, M.C. 2010. Attachment and religiousness: contributions to young adult marital attitudes and readiness. *The Family Journal: Counseling and Therapy for Couples and Families*, 18(2):127-135.

Moyo, N. & Muller, J.C. 2011. The influence of cultural practices on the HIV and AIDS pandemic in Zambia. *HTS Theological Studies*, 67(3), a770.

Mouton, J. 2004. How to succeed in your master's and doctoral studies: a South African guide and resource book. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Mulaudzi, P.A. 2013. Cultural perceptions and linguistic terminology regarding traditional marriage within indigenous South African communities. *South African Journal of African Languages*, 33(2):153-158.

Muriithi, S.M. 2006. 1 Peter. (*In* Adeyemo, T., ed. African Bible commentary. Nairobi: WordAlive. p. 1517-1524).

Mwiti, G.K. & Dueck, A. 2006. Christian Counselling: an African indigenous perspective. California: Fuller Theological Seminary.

Nascimento, A.C. 2001 Oficina de casamento [Marriage workshop]. São Paulo: Apoio Pastoral.

Ngewa, S. 2006a. What is the church? (*In* Adeyemo, T., ed. African Bible commentary. Nairobi: WordAlive. p. 1431).

Ngewa, S. 2006b. Marriage, divorce and remarriage. (*In* Adeyemo, T., ed. African Bible commentary. Nairobi: WordAlive. p. 1149-1150).

Ngoy, M.B. 1998. An evaluation of the impact of Christianity on the social-cultural life in the Congo since colonization: a church-historical study. Potchefstroom: PU for CHE. (Mini-dissertation – MTh).

Nkhoma, CCAP. 2004. Malongosoledwe aza mumpingo [The church liturgy]. Blantyre: Christian Literature.

Nuremberg code. 2014. Importance of voluntary consent.
<http://www.cirp.org/library/ethics/nuremberg> Date of access: 22 Mar. 2014.

Nwoye, A. 2000. Framework for intervention in marital conflicts over family finances: a view from Africa. Nairobi: Kenyatta University. (Thesis – PhD).

NWU (North-West University). 2013. Manual for Master's and Doctoral studies.
https://libguides.nwu.ac.za/ld.php?content_id=949986 Date of access: 8 Dec. 2014.

Nyasani, J.M. 2013. The ontological significance of “I” and “we” in African philosophy, viewed 23 Augusts 2013, from <http://www.galerie-inter.de/kimmerle/frameText8.htm>

O'Donovan, J.W. 2000. Biblical Christianity in modern Africa. Carlisle: Paternoster.

Okorochoa, C. 2006. Psalms. (*In* Adeyemo, T., ed. African Bible commentary. Nairobi: WordAlive. p. 605-746).

Oliveira, S. 1992. Um guia para viver bem [A guide to live well]. São Paulo: Cristã Evangélica.

Oliveira, S. 2005. Um guia para viver bem [A guide to live well]. São Paulo: Cristã Evangélica.

Osinaike, O. 2012. One out of three pastors has problems with their marriage.
<http://www.churchtimesnigeria.net/one-out-of-pastors-has-problems-with-their-marriage/> Date of access: 16 Mar. 2015.

Osmer, R.R. 2008. Practical theology: an introduction. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans.

Pao, D.W. 2012. Colossians & Philemon. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan. (Zondervan exegetical commentary on the New Testament, 12).

Presnell, W.B. 1977. The minister's own marriage.

<http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2F978-1-4020-1153-7?LI=true#page-2> Date of access: 29 Oct. 2012.

Rafumbedzani, K.P. 2001. Marriage, divorce and remarriage among believing Venda couples: a practical theological exploration. Potchefstroom: PU for CHE. (Mini-dissertation – MTh).

Reifler, H.U. 2007. A ética dos dez mandamentos: um modelo da ética para os nossos dias [Ethics of the Ten Commandments: a model of ethics for today]. São Paulo: Nova Vida.

Ruppel, O.C. 2008. Women and custom in Namibia: cultural practice versus gender equality? Windhoek: Macmillan Education.

Rutoro, E. 2012. Gender transformation and leadership: on teaching gender in Shona culture. (In Hendriks, J.H., Mouton, E., Hansen, L. & Le Roux, E., eds. Men in the pulpit, women in the pew?: addressing gender inequality in Africa. Stellenbosch: Sun Press. p. 159-169).

Scheffer, S.E. 2009. A pastoral study focusing on the influence of fulltime ministry on marital wellness. Potchefstroom: NWU. (Dissertation – MA).

Shurut, S. & Paulsen, M.A. 2008. Cultural issues in couple therapy. New York, N.Y.: Worth Press.

Smith, K.G. 2015. Review of Richard Osmer, *Practical Theology: an introduction*. <https://www.sats.edu.za/pastor-practical-theologian/> Date of access: 11 Sep. 2015.

Smith, M. 2010. Qualitative data analysis. (In Dahlberg, L. & McCaig, C., eds. Practical research and evaluation: a start-to-finish guide for practitioners. London: Sage. p. 150-156).

Smith, M. & Bowers-Brown, T. 2010. Different kinds of qualitative data collection methods. (In Dahlberg, L. & McCaig, C., eds. Practical research and evaluation: a start-to-finish guide for practitioners. London: Sage. p. 111-125).

Snyman, S.D. 2015. Malachi. Leuven: Peeters. (Historical commentary on the Old Testament, 20).

Soards, L.M. 2000. The New Interpreters Bible. Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon.

- Soungalo, S. 2006. New family relationships. (*In* Adeyemo, T., ed. African Bible commentary. Nairobi: WordAlive. p. 14).
- Stjerna, K. 2009. Women and reformation. Hong Kong: Blackwell.
- Stott, J.R.W. 2006. Issues facing Christians today. 4th ed. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan.
- Strong, B., Devault, C. & Cohen T.F. 2008. The marriage and family experience. Intimate relationship in a changing society. Belmont: Thomson.
- Strydom, H. 2011. Information collection: participant observation. (*In* De Vos, A.S.; Strydom, H.; Fouché, C.B. & Delport, C.S.L., eds. Research at grass roots. Pretoria: Van Schaik. p. 328-340).
- Swinton, J. & Mowat, H. 2006. Practical theology and qualitative research. London: SCM.
- Tembe, M.M. 2010. An investigation into the causes of divorce amongst the evangelical church members in Namakgale Township. Sandton: SATS. (Dissertation – MTh).
- Theron, P.M. 2013. Corruption in Sub-Saharan Africa: a practical-theological response. *In die Skriflig/ In Luce Verbi*, 47(1), a676.
- Vahakangas, A. 2009. Christian couples coping with childlessness: narratives from Machame. Kilimanjaro: Pickwick.
- Van der Walt, B.J. 2006. When African and Western cultures meet: from confrontation to appreciation. Potchefstroom: Institute for Contemporary Christianity in Africa.
- Van der Walt, B.J. 2008. Understanding and rebuilding Africa from desperation today towards expectation for tomorrow. Potchefstroom: Institute for Contemporary Christianity in Africa.
- Van Niekerk, P.J.M., Fradgley, R.A. & Van Niekerk, R.L. 2010. The influence of social components in marriage counselling. *The Journal for Transdisciplinary Research in Southern Africa*, 6(2):395-410.
- Vargas-Benitez, J. 2014. How does financial stress affect a marriage?
http://www.ehow.com/how-does_4705552_financial-stress-affect-marriage.html
- Vorster, N. 2007. Restoring human dignity in South Africa. Potchefstroom: Potchefstroom Theological Publications.

Vorster, J.M. 2015. Marriage and family in view of the doctrine of the covenant. *HTS Theological Studies*, 72(3), a3218.

Whitehead, E.E. & Whitehead, D.J. 2007. The meaning of marriage. (*In* Scott, K. & Warren, M., eds. *Perspectives on marriage*. New York, N.Y.: Oxford University Press. p. 124-133).

Williams, L. 2007. *Premarital counselling*. San Diego: San Diego University Publications.

Williams, L. 2012. *Two churches, one marriage*. San Diego: San Diego University Publications.

Worthington, E.L. 1989. *Marriage counselling a Christian approaches to counselling couples*. Downers Grove, Ill.: Intervarsity.

Worthington, E.L. 2005. *Hope-focused marriage counselling: a guide to brief therapy*. Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Academic.

Worthington, E.L. & Ripley, J.S. 2002. Christian marriage and marital counseling: promoting hope in lifelong commitments. (*In* Clinton, T & Ohlschlager, G, eds. *Competent Christian counseling*. Colorado Springs, Colo.: Waterbrook. p. 455–474).

Wright, C. 2012. *The ministry of marriage: for the pastor*.
<http://www.marriagemissions.com/the-ministry-of-marriage-for-the-pastor> Date of access: 16 Apr. 2012.

Yilpet, Y. 2006. Malachi. (*In* Adeyemo, T., ed. *African Bible commentary*. Nairobi: WordAlive. p.1093-1098).

Zuehlke, T.E. 2000. Marriage communication. (*In* Zuehlke, T. ed. *Christ centered therapy. The practical integration of theology and psychology*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan. p. 292-295).