

Current Marriage Stability of Couples Who Took Premarital Counselling and Those Who Did Not, In Langata and Dagoretti South Constituencies of Nairobi County, Kenya

Marang'a LW^{1*}, Ngumi O², Macharia SM³

¹Mount Kenya University Thika, Kenya

²Egerton Universities

³Mount Kenya University Thika, Kenya

DOI: [10.36347/sjahss.2019.v07i08.003](https://doi.org/10.36347/sjahss.2019.v07i08.003)

| Received: 06.08.2019 | Accepted: 13.08.2019 | Published: 25.08.2019

*Corresponding author: Leah W. Marang'a

Abstract

Original Research Article

Marriage stability is anchored on spousal connectivity, commitment and agreement to how the couple prepared for their new life together. Though not all couples undertake premarital counselling before they start sharing their life together, good preparation is important. Lessons on running a home, handling finances, raising children, dealing with in-laws, romance, solving conflicts, gynaecological issues and family planning, among other issues, become necessary. The study surveyed current marriage stability of couples who undertook premarital counselling and those who did not. The study surveyed stability among the married men and women, guided by Bazizomenyi-Nagy's Contextual Family Therapy and Ellis's Rational Emotive Behaviour theories. This study is aimed at finding current marriage stability of couples who had taken premarital counselling and those who did not, in Langata and Dagoretti South constituencies, of Nairobi County, Kenya. Out of a total population 355,005 in two constituencies, a sample of 416 married men and women participated in the study. The study revealed that gaps that exist due to lack of premarital counselling are being addressed through trained counsellors, counselling psychologists and trained clergy. Further, findings revealed that couples who participated had received different types of premarital counselling, which they credited to their current stability and cohesion in their union.

Key Words: Premarital counselling, stability, longevity, divorce, family cohesion.

Copyright © 2019: This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution license which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium for non-commercial use (NonCommercial, or CC-BY-NC) provided the original author and source are credited.

INTRODUCTION

This article presents the findings of a study that assessed the stability of marriages between couples who undertook premarital counselling and those who did not, in Langata and Dagoretti South constituencies of Nairobi County, Kenya. The findings demonstrated that premarital counselling is important and is an integral part in influencing and contributing to marital stability in the area of study. Premarital counselling can be said to contribute positively to marriage stability, satisfaction and longevity of marriage.

Background

Among all human relationships, marriage is regarded as the most profound and central feature of co-existence, established with the consent of both partners. It is looked at as the glue that holds all human societies together in nurturance and continuity. It is an institution composed of a culturally accepted agreement, between a man and a woman, in a husband-wife relationship; as

well as roles that recognize an order of sexual behaviour, and finally legalizes the function of parenthood [1]. Collins [2] asserts that the traditional marriage includes a socially recognized sexual union which is begun with a public announcement or ceremony, defined by an explicit contract, and undertaken with the intent of permanence. It might be added that marriage provides the social legitimization for bearing children. Bird and Melville [3] purports that the reasons that make people marry vary widely and cover a wide spectrum. In a stable, rational society, marriage is valued for its ordering of relationships. Through it, property is allocated and passed on to the heirs. Further, marriage includes coupling two people with different interests, desires and needs; a special association given shape by social rules and laws and significantly affects individuals' development and self-realizations [4].

There is a lot of discussion and debate regarding marital compatibility, but this is not a new debate. In Baker Encyclopaedia of Psychology, Benner [5] elaborates on what marital compatibility means and defines it as a term describing the character of the relationship fit for the two spouses. In a highly compatible marriage, both spouses act, think, and behave like their needs and expectations are being met and few blockages exist to interfere with the relationship. However, even in such a marriage, significant blockages are present that prevent one or both spouses from obtaining satisfaction of their needs and fulfilment of their expectations.

Quoting a study in Germany, Klann, Halweg, Baucom, and Kroeger [6]; Lebow [7], shed light that relationship and marital counselling and education could be instrumental in preventing and addressing the most common divorce determinants and risk factors. Couples therapy has been largely considered as an effective approach in mitigating both determinants and generic risk factors that contribute to marriage instability. The study concluded that communication is one of the determinants. Therefore, capacity, skills and abilities to communicate effectively, assertively, tactfully and openly, together with ability and will to solve problems and avoidance of escalation, should be included in premarital couples' therapy. Further, if couples are able to negotiate, and consequently prevent escalation of problems, marital stability could be achieved. In addition, sound financial and resource management and proper planning could also help a lot. In reference to sexuality, premarital couples in therapy may be empowered to build capacity and competence, which may enable them to consistently satisfy their spouses, maintain passionate and exciting sexual lives, have intimacy under control and be masters of their sexuality.

Statement of the Problem

The institution of marriage has raised numerous concerns in relation to pathological functioning of many married men and women, in the context of their life together, within their home environment. Spousal fights including, and not limited to, battering, verbal and physical abuse, threats to life, suicidal tendencies or death, characterise this institution. Traditionally, in many societies, husbands were regarded as custodians and protectors of their families while wives were regarded as nurturers and care givers. Unfortunately, child abandonment manifested in quiet detachment from parents, is experienced in many homes. Divorce has become an easy option in ending marital relationships instead of working on conflict in an effort to achieve a stable environment to rear children and achieve personal effectiveness. Communication between husbands and wives, with efforts to create cohesion, goodwill and harmony, is no longer a priority. Frequently there are many couples who do not engage in affective

reconstruction to improve or work on the shortcomings within their marriage. Apparently, dissatisfaction within marriage and subsequent divorce, seem to be a frequent behavioural occurrence. In Nairobi County, mental strife is common as evidenced by the number of concluded divorce cases and those seeking separation: (21,573 individuals divorced and 34,272 separated) according to Kenya Bureau of Statistics, 2015. This study confirmed that there is a lot of marital dissatisfaction among couples and premarital counselling has encouraged married men and women to seek interventions when needed, as indicated by 73% of the participants. It was also confirmed through the questionnaires and interviews that couples who had gone through premarital counselling related respectively, after marriage. However, focus group discussions and interviews confirmed that quite a large number of couples have separated and divorced over family disagreements on various issues.

Research Questions

The study endeavoured to answer the following questions:

- To what extent does premarital counselling contribute to marriage stability?
- To what extent do married men and women solve their conflicts amicably leading to marriage stability?
- To what extent do married men and women encourage each other in creating conducive environments that would create stability in their homes?

LITERATURE REVIEW

By marriage, intimate companionship between a man and a woman is defined, progeny are provided for and protected and families become cohesive and organized. Functions such as meeting the need for love and being loved, meeting both individuals' biological, social, psychological and motivational needs is fulfilled. Bringing new generations to the world, gaining a place in society, the feelings of being safe and protected, the sense of cooperation and confidence about the future, feeling proud of each other and a healthy functioning of sexual life make marriage universal and significant for societies [8]. Although its dimensions and contents have changed in human history, the institutions of family and marriage have maintained their universality and are still the core units of societies [9].

In many societies, marriage is acknowledged as the institution in which intimacy and fellowship exist and also children are raised in safety which allows individuals to provide an emotional developmental opportunity [10]. For purposes of this study, marriage is limited to unions between two heterosexual partners (a man and a woman).

According to Erik Erikson's theory of psychosocial development, adulthood is divided into three stages starting with early adulthood, at seventeen years to forty five years: 17- 45; middle adulthood: 40-

65; and late adulthood: 60 years and above [11]. During early adulthood, according to Erikson's developmental stages, wellbeing is achieved and manifested in establishing a relationship, with a strong sense of emotional attachment, and personal commitment. Many people get married during this stage (18-45). In Kenya adulthood starts at 18 years of age. The years 40-45 are described as the mid-life transition stage and at 45 years of age, people are said to start experiencing the midlife crisis as couples restructure for middle adulthood (40-65), consciously or otherwise. Middle adulthood has its challenges for many couples as children enter high school and colleges and parents start retiring from workplace. At this time O'Leary & Smith [12] aver that success of a marriage depends on certain factors, for example, similarity in personality, age, religion, ethnicity, attitudes, intelligence, and educational level. At such age, Erikson says, it is a time of intimacy or isolation, and openness is an important component of intimacy and spouses who have successfully resolved the intimacy versus isolation crisis, show enhanced ability to maintain their marriages, in part because they are more willing to engage in self-disclosure. Prager [13] agrees with Erikson's view.

There is a lot of discussion and debate regarding marital compatibility, but this is not a new debate. In Baker Encyclopaedia of Psychology, Benner [5] elaborates on what marital compatibility means and defines it as a term describing the character of the relationship fit for the two spouses. In a highly compatible marriage, both spouses act, think, and behave like their needs and expectations are being met and few blockages exist to interfere with the relationship. However, even in such a marriage, significant blockages are present that prevent one or both spouses from obtaining satisfaction of their needs and fulfilment of their expectations.

PREMARITAL COUNSELLING

In the field of marriage and later pre-marriage, what is popularly referred to as premarital counselling was a precursor for family therapy and is based on the concept that psychological disturbances arise more from conflicts between persons than from conflict within a person. Goldenberg & Goldenberg [14], focusing on some of the unique problems of this special form of coupling, say that early marital counsellors (gynaecologists and sometimes other physicians, lawyers, social workers, psychologists, and college professors who were family-life specialists), viewed as "experts", attempted to provide answers for people with sexual and other marital difficulties. At that point in time, the church ministers and priests were prominent in offering formal premarital counselling, often as part of an optional or mandatory preparation program, before a wedding. However, it may be correct to assume that informal premarital counselling has been there for as long as the institution of marriage has existed.

In the year 2001, the State of Minnesota, initiated a bill sponsored by Senator Dill and Representative Elaine Harder, was approved and signed into law effective August 1, 2001. Thereafter, the state continued to encourage couples planning to get married to go through premarital preparation programs for twelve hours, take a premarital couple inventory, and learn communication skills and conflict resolution skills. Proponents of the bill insisted that the ultimate goal of this bill was to help strengthen marriage and reduce the rate of divorce. At that time the divorce rate was about 50% in Minnesota and nationally; the goal was to improve the quality of marriage so that people might be satisfied and less interested in divorce [15].

The main benefit of premarital counselling is that it prepares couples for marriage and is also expected to address communication, conflict and resolution, financial management, romance and sexuality, roles in addition to parenting. In some countries, this tuition is often referred to as premarital education. One of the topics that should always be taught is communication skills, which addresses emotional engagement and support, with the aim of providing benefits to a relationship partner. Collins [2], guides that the supportive behaviour that an individual enacts accounts for only a fraction of the support his or her partner perceives. However, the benefit goes a long way to create cordial co-existence. The use of the term Marriage Education here rather than Relationship Education is to capture both the relational and institutional dimensions of marriage, with a life course perspective to facilitate covering issues of importance, to youth and unmarried adults. Hawkins, Carroll, *et al.* [16] avers that the pre marriage education to be given should be geared towards creation of a healthy marriage which displays generosity, respect, equality co-existence that is free of abuse.

Three sub-dimensions of content are emphasized: relational skills; awareness, knowledge and attitudes; motivation and virtues. Relational skills include communication patterns, problem-solving behaviours that sustain and strengthen marriages [17]. Spouses expect marriage to bring lifelong joy, companionship, growth, and sexual fulfilment. Couples need better skills to achieve their vision of marital success. Browning [18] argues that a skills education perspective tends to see marriage in a therapeutic worldview, that is less attentive to the institutional features of marriage, and the virtues that undergird healthy marriages, including and not limited to awareness, knowledge and attitudes where spouses are willing to make sacrifices. Commitment to the marriage is crucial and important to sustain healthy, stable marriages [19]. Also newlyweds could be assigned a mentor couple to walk with them in the marriage journey.

METHODOLOGY

Mixed methods research approach was applied to address qualitative and quantitative data. The researcher collected, analyzed, interpreted, and reported both data in the research process, within a single study, in order to understand the research problem more completely. Qualitative information was sought in reference to social and behavioural aspects, including personal expressive open interactions with couples, as well as marriage counsellors and clergy. Quantitative data or numerical/statistical information was obtained through the questionnaire. The two data bases were analyzed concurrently in assessing the influence of premarital counselling (independent variable) in sustenance to marriage stability (dependent variable). This enabled the researcher to actualize the study in assessing the influence of premarital counselling on marriage stability, in Langata and Dagorretti South Constituencies of Nairobi County, Kenya.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Manifestations of marriage stability include marriages where divorce is discouraged and marriage longevity is embraced, conflict resolution endeavours are in place, mutual consensus between the couple would be experienced. Stability is manifest where resolutions of marital conflicts in communication, romance and financial management, among others, are handled peacefully. In addition, CFT concepts of individual psychology would be easily understood because a person still displays personal characteristics even after marriage, meaning they still manifest a steady way of relating before and after the marriage. Another important component of CFT is "facts", for example, things that are historical and are not changeable, such as medical conditions, age and others. Behavioural traits manifested through REBT include irrational beliefs which influence both men and women while relating with spouses. These traits are due to early childhood experiences and training, and are difficult to change even after marriage. This may necessitate couples' therapy before marriage.

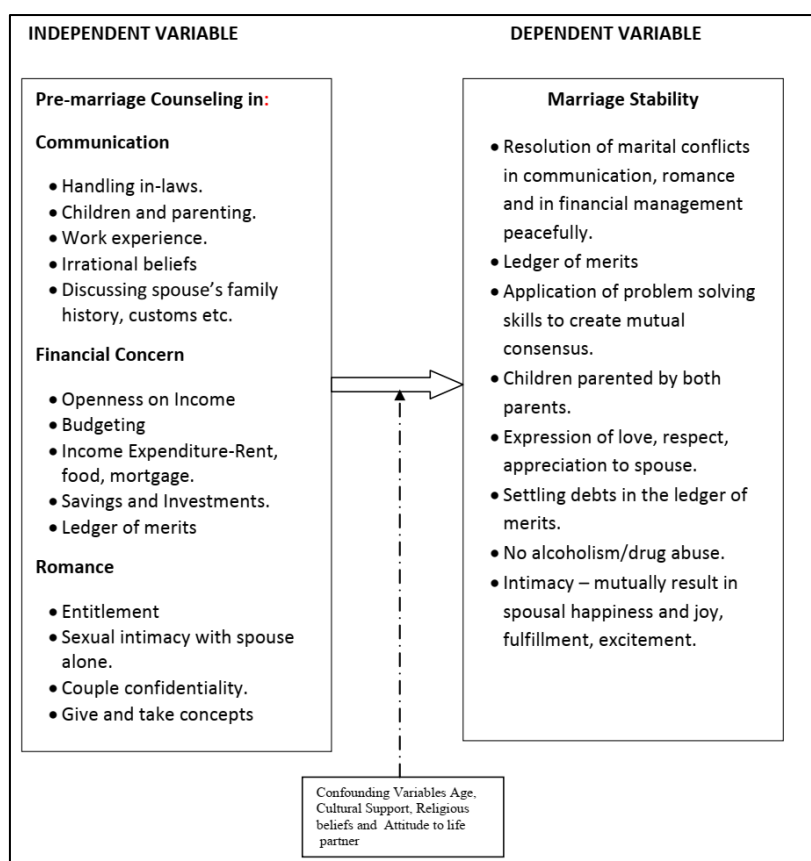


Fig-1: Conceptual framework

Source: Marang'a (2019)

Premarital counselling status of participants

The study targeted 360 married men and women in the area of study. Out of these 175 (48.6%) were male while 185 (51.4%) were female. It may be noted that not all participants had taken premarital counselling for various reasons. Data in Table 9 reveals

that about 70% of the participants went through PMC conducted by church ministers while 22% was done by marriage counsellors. This shows that most of the PMC to married men and women was done by the church through the church ministers and marriage counsellors.

Table-1: Specific Conductors of Premarital Counselling (N=302)

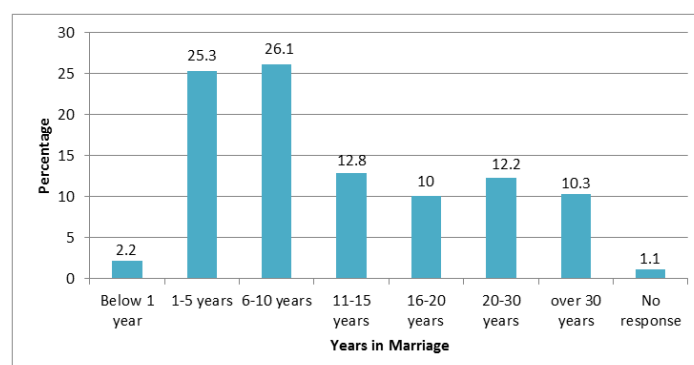
Facilitator	Frequency	Percent
Church Minister	210	69.5
Marriage Counsellor	66	21.9
Father	5	1.7
Mother	22	7.3
Both parents	28	9.3
Relatives	25	8.3
Friends	26	8.6
Best couple/experienced couples	5	1.7
Lawyer	3	1.0

Source: Researcher (2018)

Halford [20] and Carrol & Dahortey [21], emphasize that PMC is a recognized undertaking worldwide; it requires both the development of well-structured programs, adjusted to the complexity of marital relationships and the education or training of facilitators to lead those programs. Horvath-Szabo, *et al.* [22] emphasize that such kind of programs should not only aim at behavioural changes but also at modifying deeper motivations and the nature of relationship dynamics. This is in line with Ellis [23] assertion that rational emotive behaviour family therapy follows the same principles and practice of individual

REBT because it exposes the fundamental premises that underlie family members' disillusionment with themselves and family arrangements, in addition to using cognitive, emotive, and behavioural methods, in trying to improve relationships.

Further, the participants were asked to indicate the number of years they had been married and the responses were as summarized in Figure 2. As for the duration of their marriage, most of the participants (46%) were married for 11 years and above while over 50% were married for 10 years and below.

**Fig-2: Length of marriage in years**

Source: Researcher (2018).

The data displayed in Figure 2 shows that it was collected from married men and married women whose duration of marriage was varied from as low as one year to over 30 years.

Premarital Counselling Status of Participants

In as far as premarital counselling among married men and women was concerned; the study explored numerous aspects so as to unearth the true position of the participants in the study. The participants were asked to indicate whether or not they had gone through any form of PMC and the responses gathered were as shown in Table 2. Data depicted in Table 2 shows that a majority of the participants who took part in the study had gone through some form of PMC (84%) while 16% had not.

Table-2: Married Men and Women who had gone through Premarital Counselling

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	302	83.9
No	58	16.1
Total	360	100.0

Source: Researcher (2018)

Data displayed in Table 3, depicts that majority went through church PMC (65%), followed by 23% who went through both traditional and church PMC while 15% went through traditional PMC only. This is possible since about 17% of the participants were customarily married. It is important to express the fact that at this point in time; many countries encourage couples to go through premarital counselling. There has been much discussion in the United States about the

proposal of making marriages harder to dissolve. Some of these issues are complex as stated in a paper presented at the Revitalizing Marriage Conference in Brigham Young University [24]. A common belief is that some increased delay might be valuable if couples

are thinking about such a significant step like divorce. Rational Emotive Behaviour theorists would prescribe a lot of rational thinking and behaviour before taking steps towards marriage dissolution.

Table-3: Specific Premarital Counselling each Participant went Through (N=302)

Premarital Counselling	Frequency	Percent
Traditional	44	14.6
Church plus psychological counselling	197	65.2
Both traditional and Church/psychological	70	23.2

Source: Researcher (2018)

Table-4: Premarital Counselling Contribution to Current Marriage Stability

SD=Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, N=Uncertain, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
Due to premarital counselling we relate respectfully to date	14 (3.9)	25 (6.9)	68 (18.9)	156 (43.3)	97 (26.9)
Premarital counselling empowered us to consult each other regularly	10 (2.8)	30 (8.3)	60 (16.7)	166 (46.1)	94 (26.1)
Knowledge gained influences exhibition of positive emotions to each other	10 (2.8)	20 (5.6)	67 (18.7)	188 (52.2)	75 (20.8)
Premarital counselling encouraged us to seek interventions when needed	6 (1.7)	15 (4.2)	71 (19.8)	182 (50.6)	86 (23.9)
After a few years of marriage we recommend post marital counselling	13 (3.6)	21 (5.8)	78 (21.7)	105 (29.2)	143 (39.7)
Due to informal advice given by relatives we relate respectively to date	17 (4.7)	43 (11.9)	116 (32.3)	134 (37.2)	50 (13.9)
Nobody talked to us in regard to regular consultations	66 (18.3)	98 (27.2)	87 (24.2)	75 (20.8)	34 (9.4)
With passage of time we both learnt to handle negative emotions	10 (2.8)	11 (3.1)	55 (15.3)	178 (49.4)	106 (29.4)
Parental and peer advice has enabled us to seek interventions often	20 (5.6)	54 (15.0)	106 (29.5)	129 (35.8)	51 (14.2)
I would recommend teachings on stability in post marital counselling every five years	7 (1.9)	14 (3.9)	62 (17.4)	99 (27.5)	178 (49.4)

Source: Researcher (2018)

In terms of marriage stability, the study reveals that majority of the participants were in total agreement that premarital counselling encouraged them to seek interventions when needed (73%), empowered them to consult each other regularly (72%), while the knowledge gained during PMC influenced their exhibition of positive emotions to each other (72%). In addition, the participants acknowledged that due to the premarital counselling they had received, they relate respectfully to each other to date (70%). Table 4 clearly brings out the fact that men and women who had undertaken PMC indicated that due to the learning they had received, they relate respectfully to one another from the time they got married to date. This clearly portrays stability in their marriage. Lack of consultation is one of the issues facing many couples currently as reported during the group focus discussions with the marriage counsellors. The table clearly indicates that nearly 50% of the married men and women consult regularly.

However, about 30% did not consult regularly which calls for concern and indicates poor quality relationships. Amindu, Quiredu *et al.* [25] intimate that quality of marriage is characterized by happiness, pleasure, affection, intimacy, tenderness and love; together with communication, commitment and marital satisfaction associated with the level of these characteristics. This is in line with Contextual family therapists' assumption that the key ingredient of any relationship is trustworthiness, which is achieved by all family members having mutual consideration of each other [26]. Contextual therapists further assume that accountability and fairness are the essential connecting powers in relational associations [27]. This leads to the assumption that couples recommendations that there is need for post marital counselling should be emphasized, not only in this area of study but also everywhere else.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study revealed that a majority of the participants in the study were in

agreement that premarital counselling influenced marriage cohesion and cordial relationship among the couples. This also encourages couples to display positive emotions to one another leading to mutual respect within marriage as indicated by 73% of the participants. In line with these occurrences, this study is in agreement with Curan and Utley, *et al.* [28] sentiments as expressed and concluded in an International Study: that marriage primarily signifies commitment to spouse, in addition to love, fellowship, trust, giving promise and honouring the family.

Considering the fact that the meanings spouses attribute to marriage affect their expectations, it is generally believed that determination of these meanings, are of vital significance. Therefore, there is need to explain the true meaning as well as actualizing that those men and women understand the importance of premarital counselling. This informs the prospective men and women preparing to marry to address many areas including, and not limited to, communication, romance, finances, in-laws, parenting, gynaecological issues, and challenges of everyday life, among others.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion it is correct to state that the research unearthed a lot of positive and negative occurrences within marriage. This made it clear that having foreknowledge on the institution of marriage, through premarital counselling, encourages both married men and women to take their roles and responsibilities seriously and to honour one another as they share life together. Establishment of reliability on another should be actualized as soon as the man and woman decide to live together as husband and wife. Finally it can be concluded that men and women who undertake premarital counselling before marriage, enter the institution well informed and forearmed for the union with spouse. This would be actualized in ways that indicate love, sharing of life's burdens and expectations, and doing all they can to ensure that they experience good coexistence, harmony, happiness, and accountability.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and the above conclusion, a number of recommendations have been made. Firstly, it should be emphasized that counselling psychologists and trained clergy should carry out structured premarital counselling, that embrace openness between spouses, in addition to giving both physical and emotional support to one another. This would ensure family stability where both man and wife and their children will feel loved, appreciated and protected.

Secondly, whenever misunderstandings occur, and they do occur often, both man and wife should be in a position to address the cause of the issue that is wrong. They should be able to deal with the conflicts

and hard issues of life including parenting children, living within their means, being faithful to one another, among other challenges. For any family to thrive, the husband and wife may need to consult regularly and be open to whatever could create misunderstandings within the home.

Thirdly, it is recommended that subjects covered during premarital counselling sessions should be increased in addition to encouraging the adoption of spirituality and mutual understanding, which embraces openness as a way of life.

Finally, after a couple of years there should be tuition on post marriage counselling. This should include midlife crisis and how to cope with the situation. Concepts on dealing with adult children, career choices, job changes and self-employment. This would not only be in the area of study but in other locations as well.

REFERENCES

1. Hunter RD. *Dictionary of Pastoral Care and Counselling*. Nashville. Abingdon Press.1990.
2. Collins GR. *Christian Counselling. A Comprehensive Guide. 3rd Edition*. Nashville, USA. Thomas Nelson.2007.
3. Bird GW. & Melville K. *Families and intimate relationships*. McGraw-Hill Humanities, Social Sciences & World Languages.1994.
4. Ersanli K & Kalkan M. *Improvement of marriage relations. Theory and Practice*. Ankara, Turkey: Nobel Yayincilik.2008.
5. Benner DG. *Baker Encyclopedia of Psychology*. Grand Rapids, MI. Baker Book House.1993.
6. Klann N, Hahlweg K, Baucom DH, Kroeger C. The effectiveness of couple therapy in Germany: A replication study. *Journal of marital and family therapy*. 2011 Apr;37(2):200-8.
7. Lebow J. Editorial: Couple therapy and family therapy. *Family Process*.2013; 52(1): 1-4.
8. Canel AN. *Marriage and Family Life*. Istanbul, Turkey: Ail eve Sosyal Politikalar Bakanligi. 2012.
9. Qzguven IE. *Communication and Life in Family*. Ankara, Turkey: PDREM Yayinlari.2001.
10. Yalcim I. Premarital Counselling. In M. Kalkan & Z Hamamci. (Ed.). *Premarital Counselling*, Ankara, Turkey. 2012: 41-70
11. Sdorow LM. *Psychology*. Oxford. WCB Brown & Benchmark Publishers.1993.
12. O'Learly KD & Smith DA. Marital Interactions, *Annual Review of Psychology*. 1991; 42: 191-212.
13. Prager KJ. Intimacy status and couple communication. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*.1989; 6: 435-449.
14. Goldenberg H & Goldenberg I. *Family Therapy: An Overview*. Belmont, CA.2008.
15. Olson DH & DeFraubn J. *Marriage and Family, Diversity and Strengths*. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing.2000.

16. Hawkins AJ, Carroll JS, Doherty WJ, Willoughby B. A comprehensive framework for marriage education. *Family Relations*. 2004 Oct;53(5):547-58.
17. Gottman JM, Notarius CI. Decade review: Observing marital interaction. *Journal of Marriage and Family*. 2000 Nov;62(4):927-47.
18. Browning DS. *Marriage and Modernization*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.2003.
19. Stanley SM, Whitton SW, Markman HJ. Maybe I do: Interpersonal commitment and premarital or nonmarital cohabitation. *Journal of Family Issues*. 2004 May;25(4):496-519.
20. Halford WK. 'The Future of Couple Relationship Education: Suggestions on How It.2004.
21. Carroll JS, Doherty WJ. Evaluating the effectiveness of premarital prevention programs: A meta-analytic review of outcome research. *Family relations*. 2003 Apr;52(2):105-18.
22. Horvath-Szabo K, Petik KS, Herezeg-Kezdy A, Elekes S. *European Journal of Mental Health* 10. 2015; 212-221.
23. Ellis A. *New directions for rational emotive behavior therapy: Overcoming destructive beliefs, feelings, and behaviors*. Amherst, NY: Prometheus. 2001.
24. Stanley SM. Making a case for premarital education. *Family relations*. 2001 Jul;50(3):272-80.
25. Amidu N, Owiredu WK, Gyasi-Sarpong CK, Woode E, Quaye L. Sexual dysfunction among married couples living in Kumasi metropolis, Ghana. *BMC urology*. 2011 Dec;11(1):3.
26. Bosormenyi-Nagy I & Krasner B. *between Give and Take: A Clinical Guide to Contextual Therapy*. New York, NY: Brunner/Mazel.1986.
27. Soyez V, Tatrai H, Broekaert E, Bracke R. The implementation of contextual therapy in the therapeutic community for substance abusers: A case study. *Journal of Family Therapy*. 2004 Aug;26(3):286-305.
28. Curran MA, Utley EA, Muraco JA. An exploratory study of the meaning of marriage for African Americans. *Marriage & Family Review*. 2010 Jun 30;46(5):346-65.