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THE INFLUENCE OF DUAL- CAREER MARRIAGE ON CHRISTIAN FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS AS EXPRESSED BY DUAL-CAREER COUPLES IN MBAITOLI LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, IMO STATE

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
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IN

PASTORAL CARE AND COUNSELING

BY

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ABSTRACT

The study was aimed at investigating some problems facing dual career marriages and their influences on Christian family relationship and how pastoral care can help sustain contemporary families who engage in dual career marriage. In carrying out the work, five research questions and five hypotheses were used. Related literature to this study was adequately reviewed.

The design of the study was expost facto. It was because the variables under consideration were not under the control of the investigator and could not be manipulated. All the Christian couples involved in dual career marriage in Mbaitoli local Government Area of Imo State formed the population. Seventy dual career marriage couples of members of Baptist churches in Mbaitoli Local Government Area comprised the sample. They were selected purposive sampling Technique and also sectioned by gender, male and female respondents respectively. An instrument named Questionnaire on the influence Dual career marriage on Christian family relationship (IDCMCFRQ) was used in data collection which was developed by the researcher. It was face validated by a member of the supervision committee who is a specialist in Measurement and Evaluation. The reliability co-efficient of the questionnaire was established with the test re-test procedure. A co-efficient of .82 was obtained In collecting the data, copies of the questionnaire were administered to couples with dual career marriage only. The data generated

were analyzed with means, standard deviation and t-test. After the data analyses, it was found that the rate at which dual career marriage negatively influenced Christian family relationships is high. The tested variables: communication, Child – care and participation in Church activities were affected with average of 64% while the fourth variable intimacy was ranked 79.45%

It is also discovered that there is no significant difference between the perception of the male and female on the influence of dual career marriage on Christian family relationship likewise, the private and pubic workers. Among the Diploma and Degree holders there was no significant difference in their perception of the influence of dual career on Christian family relationship And it was also verified that both age in Marriage and number of children did not show any significant different in their perception of the influence of dual career marriage on Christian family relationship. Therefore the hypotheses were all accepted.

Based on the findings, the researcher recommends that the church should adequately be sensitized on the issues concerning dual career marriage and be educated on how to balance their work demand with the domestic. The church needs to give more emphasis on pre-marital counselling as to reduce the level of ignorance among couples especially those interested in dual career marriage. The church is also advised to consider members' work time schedules during their programme plannings as to promote high attendance in church activities.

Finally, the church is also encouraged to influence the government in introducing certain policies that will help to promote adequate child care and healthy family relationship especially among couples in dual career marriage.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusion were drawn.

1. Dual career marriage has negatively influenced Christian family relationship with the highest effect on intimacy. While the first three variables, communication, child-care and participation in church activities has average effect of 64%, intimacy is rated 79.45%. for example, the findings show that as a result of fatigue, most couples complained of sexual dissatisfaction and even doubt the possibility of remarrying the same spouse if they are to marry again.
2. There is no significant difference between the perception of male and female on the influence of dual career marriage in Christian family relationship. Although the number of male respondents differs from female with six, the t-calculated is 0.84 which is greater than the required 0.05 alpha level.
3. The perception of private and public workers had no significant difference on the influence of dual career marriage on Christian relationship. With-1.58 as t-calculated, there was no significant difference.
4. Among those whose marriage age are 1-5, 6-10 and above 10 years, their perception on the influence of dual career marriage on Christian

family relationship did not have significant difference. The F-(value) calculated being 0.14 was more than 0.05 alpha level. Hence, the hypothesis was accepted.

5. Variance in education qualification among the perception of those with diploma and degree did not have significant difference on thee influence of Dual career marriage on Christian family relationship.
6. Among the perception of those who have 1-2, 3-4 and above 4 Children, there was no significant difference on the influence of dual career marriage on Christian family relationship. The F-calculated is 0.44 which is also greater than the 0.05 required alpha level.

Recommendations

With much consideration on the finding, and conclusion of this study, the following recommendation were made by the researcher for improvement for further work in the area. The first step to be taken by the church or the pastoral caregiver, is to recognize the existence of dual career marriage situation and chose ways to deal with it. Since the family plays a vital role in the development of the society and the church consists of members from these families, there should be some educative programmes for them in every local church which will include marriage enrichment, couples' retreat, couples night and so forth. These will not only help in identifying with these low-intimate families rather it will create opportunity to educate them on life's best priorities and how they can balance their Job demand with that of domestic and marital life.

As the research shows how couples in dual career marriage are often stricken with fatigue and guilt due to their inability to balance their work demand with domestic challenges, the pastoral caregiver is required to give necessary support and guidance as to help them sustain good marriage relationship rather than accusing them of being passive to church participation and indifference to their home situations.

Taking action before beginning a search is another step that should be taken by the church. Because most dual career marriage problems were traced to premarital ignorance, studies on the implication of dual career marriage should be included and seriously stressed during pre-marital counseling. The church should also consider dual career marriage during their programme planning, whereby, the dates and times would not clash with their work schedule. When this is considered, there will be less excuses on attendance and it will also enhance their participation in church activities and other marital obligations.

As one of the problems affecting the church and other secular institutions, the church should influence the government in implementing some policies that will help alleviate these problems that are associated with dual career marriage. In spite of all the emphases on exclusive baby breast feeding by health agencies, some private and public institutions still frown at mothers who come to work with their newly born babies. Some have either received query for violating the institution's policy or their appointment being terminated. In order to demonstrate her unalloyed support for total baby-care, the church should plead with the government to introduce a policy that will

mandate institutions to provide baby care facilities for their working mothers and also the privilege of attending to their babies at intervals during working hours.

Among other policies that should be looked into includes government intervention in persuading institutions to give quick response to couples that apply for transfer as to enable them live together with their spouses.

Suggestions for Further Research

For subsequent work, effort should be directed on studying similar subject but in other states of the federation with larger sample. The perception of children of dual career marriages should be an interesting audience to include in the research.

Considering the rate at which crime incidents are increasing and divorce suits regularly published in our daily newspapers, a research on the family background of these culprits will be of great interest as to identify the factors responsible for their behaviour and current decisions.