

PASTORAL CARE INTERVENTION WITH DIVORCED PERSONS IN BAPTIST
CHURCHES IN OGBOMOSO METROPOLIS

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the pastoral care intervention with divorced persons in Baptist churches in Ogbomosho metropolis. It was aimed at finding out the level of awareness of Baptist churches in Ogbomosho metropolis on the challenges divorced persons face. In addition, it was to know the means of intervention churches use to care for divorced persons. Descriptive survey was used to carry out the study. The sample for the study comprised 55 pastors and 145 members totalling 200 respondents. It was selected through a simple random sampling. A researcher - constructed questionnaire, structured into two sections, having a reliability coefficient of 0.79 was used to elicit responses on the pastoral care intervention with divorced persons. Findings from the study revealed that Baptist Churches in Ogbomosho metropolis are aware of the challenges divorced persons go through. Social challenges was ranked number one in their awareness, followed by economic challenges. Emotional challenges occupied the third place and spiritual challenges occupied the last place. Besides, the study showed that Baptist Churches' intervention spiritually was a little above average (56.6 percent). In addition, findings showed that the material intervention of Baptist Churches towards the divorced was below average (45.95 percent). The study established that there exists significant difference between pastors' and members' awareness with regard to the social challenges divorced persons undergo. Moreover, the study revealed that male and female pastors differ significantly in their awareness on the economic challenges divorced persons face. Male and female members also differ significantly in their awareness on the spiritual challenges divorced persons experience. Nevertheless, there is no significant difference in the opinions expressed by pastors to that of the members on the intervention of the church towards divorced persons. Besides, the study revealed that no significant difference existed in the view of all male and female respondents on the intervention of the church towards divorced persons. So, based on the findings, some recommendations were made. Concerted efforts should be made by pastors and members to translate their knowledge of the challenges of divorced persons into pragmatic action of love towards these challenged persons. The church should minister to divorced persons in the same manner they minister to widows because of their suffering from the death of a loved one. The church should be the vanguard to promote and educate the society on the right perception and encourage right attitude towards divorced persons. The government should evolve and implement policies that will strengthen the home-tie and thus reduce the rate of divorce.

5.2 CONCLUSION

From the findings, some conclusions could be drawn. It is obvious that Baptist Churches are aware of the challenges that divorced persons go through. However, with the level of the awareness of the Church, it is expected that the Church should have translated it into a better intervention. It could be assumed that a person's awareness of a problem may determine the intervention employed to solve the problem.

In addition, the Church performed a little above average in the spiritual intervention. This is not an excellent performance since the Church was adjudged to be aware of the severity of the problem divorced persons go through. This is evident in table 6 as the remarks of the Church performance on all items under spiritual intervention were "sometimes", meaning that it is done by chance not by plan. The performance of the Church in the area of material intervention is poor, which indicates that the expectation in caring for the material needs of the divorced persons is not receiving adequate attention. This is evident in table 7 as the remarks of the

Church intervention were mostly on “slightly sometimes”. This denotes that attention is not given to the material needs of divorced persons.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the outcome of this study and having discovered that divorce is a universal phenomenon, the following recommendations are made:

1. Concerted efforts should be made by both pastors and members (Church) to translate the knowledge of the challenges of divorced persons into pragmatic action of love towards these challenged persons.
2. The society, and the church in particular should look into having a ministry towards divorced persons and having a paradigm shift from ministrations by chance, to a planned and articulate ministrations towards divorced persons.
3. The Church should stop stigmatization of divorced persons. They should be given equal opportunities of participating in Church activities. Besides, divorced person should be warmly welcomed in the Church at large and by families in the Church.
4. The Church should organize seminars that could cater for the needs of divorced persons.
5. The Church should minister to divorced persons just as they minister to widows who suffer from the death of a loved one.
6. The Church should help to cushion the effects of the financial burden suffered by divorced persons by assisting in their children's education.
7. The church should be the vanguard to promote and educate the society on the right perception towards divorced persons. The church should also encourage right attitude towards divorced persons.

8. The government should evolve and implement policies that will strengthen the family tie and thus reduce the rate of divorce.
9. This study was limited by the scope of investigation, time and money, which did not cover the entire Ogbomoso Baptist Conference. It is, therefore, recommended that a broad study that will include the whole Ogbomoso Baptist Conference be carried out as further studies.