
**Adoption of Family Therapy by Female Counselors: A Panacea of the Issues of
Divorce and Separation**

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ABSTRACT

The study sought to examine the adoption of family therapy by female counselors: a panacea of the issues of divorce and separation. The study was conducted in Akwa Ibom State. Expost-facto research design was adopted for the study with the population comprising of all registered counselors in Akwa Ibom State. Stratified sampling technique was used to select 60 respondents that constituted the sample size used for the study. The Instrument used in this study for data collection was a questionnaire titled "Adoption of Family therapy by Female Counselors in Akwa Ibom State Questionnaire (AFPFCAKSQ)". Face and content validation of the instrument was carried out by an expert in test measurement and evaluation from University of Uyo to ensure that the instrument has the accuracy, appropriateness and completeness for the study. Cronbach Alpha technique was used to determine the level of reliability of the instrument. The reliability coefficient obtained was 0.80 and this was high enough to justify the use of the instrument. The researcher subjected the data generated for this study to appropriate statistical techniques such as independent t-test analysis. The test for significance was done at 0.05 alpha levels. It was observed in the study that as research sheds light on effective treatments, new therapies will emerge. The study concluded that there are several approaches to psychotherapy including cognitive-behavioral, interpersonal, and other kinds of talk therapy that help individuals work through their marriage problems. One of the recommendations made in the study was that couples should desist from domestic violence or any other related behaviour that may lead to divorce or marriage separation rather embrace the initial love that brought them together as a therapy to live happily.

KEYWORDS: Family, therapy, Female Counselors, Divorce, Separation, Akwa Ibom State

Introduction

Divorce is a long-term process which begins with dissatisfaction, turmoil, desire for marriage separation, and ends with separation (Ferraro, Oehme, Bruker, Arpan, & Opel, 2018). The decisions to divorce are three, which are cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions. The cognitive dimension encompasses the person's perception of divorce. Emotional dimension includes positive and negative emotions of the individual towards divorce. Behavioral dimension entails an individuals' behavioral readiness for divorce (Wilder,2016). Families need more self-efficacy in their divorce management. Self-efficacy in divorce management helps divorcing couples, to make the right decision in continuing

their marriage life. Marriage is an integral part of man's social life that involved covenant and commitment between a man and woman. At a particular stage in life, people are questioned if they are not married. Yet, some people see the cure for unhappy marriage as separation or (divorce), it's often rather a problem than a solution; meanwhile, the society is heavily affected. Divorce remains a severe crisis; it inflicts pains on people concerned, children and the society. Many have seen the marriage covenant "till death do us part" as an unrealistic and obsolete phrase. Majority of homes (especially the Christians) are faced with the threat of divorce, and marriage separation in the contemporary society (Oladotun,2018). People no longer take marriage serious with commitment for life.

Divorce is the order of the day; people even say it with pride and without remorse. In view of this, the research presents a discourse on the subject matter from a biblical evaluation, revealing the true identity of divorce as a problem to Christian home. One of the things that man's disobedience in the beginning of trauma is divorce which is deadly to marriages. One cannot be surprised to see many marriages both within and outside the Christian fold hitting the rock of divorce and separation. It is as a result of the imperfect nature of man after the fall. Divorce will always want to come through marital challenges. There should be mutual agreement by both the husband and the wife to prevent it. According to Abolarin, (2003) it is good to clarify the fact that God made nothing like divorce and separation when marriage was instituted. Many have the notion that marriage is a road without gallops. These notions may not be incorrect because the coming together of people of different ideas, background, perspectives and worldview cannot be without flaws. Leslie (2001) stated that no marriage is immune to social vices, no matter how good it is. It is not possible for divorce and separation to happen without marriage. Thus, marriage is a standard through which divorce and marriage separation takes place. Divorce is a social vice that affects the stability of any married life, yet many Christian couple views it as a panacea (solution).

Statement of the Problem

Over the years, spouses usually work hard toward handling the difficulties in marriage to avoid divorce and marriage separation but some marriages end a scenario. When marriages fail, divorce and marriage separation is the resultant effect on the marriage. Some major causes of divorce and marriage separation includes financial problems, sexual incompatibility, problems from in-laws, religious incompatibility, cultural differences, lack of parental skills, poor communication, barrenness (mostly in the African system and even the issue of a male child in the family). Marriage counseling is not yet as effective as is therapy or counseling directed at non-marital problems. The absence of pre-marital and marital counseling may be the reason why homes are breaking at an alarming rate today. Divorce and marriage separation in Nigeria has serious implications in the society. Divorce and marriage separation therefore affects the society. Hence the study investigates on the adoption of family therapy by female counselors.

Objectives of the Study

The study sought to examine the adoption of family therapy by female counselors in Akwa Ibom State. Specifically:

1. Assess the extent of divorce and separation among families in Akwa Ibom State.
2. Find out the types of family therapies practiced by counselors in Akwa Ibom State.

3. Examine the effect of family therapy on mitigation of divorce and separation in the Akwa Ibom State.

Research Questions

1. To what extent is divorce and separation among families in Akwa Ibom State?
2. What are the types of family therapies practiced in Akwa Ibom State?
3. What is the effect of family therapy on mitigation of divorce and separation in Akwa Ibom State?

Research Hypothesis

H01: There is no significant influence of family therapy on mitigation of divorce and separation in Akwa Ibom State.

Conceptual Review

Concept of Family therapy

Family therapy, also referred to as couple and family therapy, marriage and family therapy, family systems therapy, and family counseling, is a branch of psychology that works with families and couples in intimate relationships to nurture change and development (Wikipedia 2020). Family therapy tends to view change in terms of the systems of interaction between family members (E.C.H.F. 2019). Family therapy is a type of psychotherapy that involves all members of a nuclear family or stepfamily and, in some cases, members of the extended family (e.g., grandparents). A therapist or team of therapists conducts multiple sessions to help families deal with important issues that may interfere with the functioning of the family and the home environment. Family therapy is based on the theory that family is a system, a unit in which the members are acting and reacting to one another. Imagine your automobile engine. If one part is not functioning properly, other parts in the engine will be affected. But, if all parts are working well, the engine will be at optimum performance (Study.Com 2020). Family therapy is a form of psychotherapy that focuses on the improvement of interfamilial relationships and behavioral patterns of the family unit as a whole, as well as among individual members and groupings, or subsystems, within the family

Family therapy or family counseling is a form of treatment that is designed to address specific issues affecting the health and functioning of a family. It can be used to help a family through a difficult period, a major transition, or mental or behavioral health problems in family members. Family therapy refer to a type of psychotherapy designed to identify family patterns that contribute to a behavior disorder or mental illness and help family members break those habits (Stöppler, 2019). Family therapy involves discussion and problem-solving sessions with the family. Some of these sessions may be as a group, in couples, or one on one. In family therapy, the web of interpersonal relationships is examined and, ideally, communication is strengthened within the family. Family therapy is a type of psychological counseling (psychotherapy) that can help family members improve communication and resolve conflicts (Mayo clinic 2021). Family therapy is usually provided by a psychologist, clinical social worker or licensed therapist.

Types of family therapy

According to North Brooklyn Marriage & Family Therapy (2021) there are four types of family therapists most often utilized by professionals: supportive family therapy, cognitive-behavioral therapy, psychodynamic ideas and systemic family therapy. Family therapy can be useful when you encounter the following issues:

- ❖ Family relationships and changes in family life
- ❖ Adult mental health
- ❖ Parenting issues
- ❖ Couple relationships
- ❖ Trauma
- ❖ Work stress
- ❖ Parenting skills
- ❖ Chronic health problems, such as asthma or cancer
- ❖ Supporting family members through separation, mediation and divorce
- ❖ Child and adolescent behavior
- ❖ Emotional disorders including anxiety, depression, loss and grief
- ❖ Anorexia, bulimia and other eating disorders
- ❖ Supporting family members in step-family life
- ❖ Emotional abuse or violence
- ❖ Financial problems
- ❖ Self-harm
- ❖ Drug, alcohol, and other substance misuse

According to premier mind institute (2021) family therapy is a branch of psychotherapy that is meant to help initiate change and nurture development in intimate relationships between family members and couples. The job of the family therapist is to facilitate conversations that act as catalysts to strengthen and improve existing connections between family members and/or loved ones. Family and couple's therapy is considered to be a very effective method of treatment for several mental health concerns.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) is a type of psychotherapeutic treatment that helps people learn how to identify and change destructive or disturbing thought patterns that have a negative influence on behavior and emotions (Hofmann, et al 2012). Cognitive behavioral therapy explores the links between thoughts, emotions and behaviour (Fenn, & Byrne, 2013). Cognitive behavioral therapy encompasses a range of techniques and approaches that address thoughts, emotions, and behaviors. These can range from structured psychotherapies to self-help materials. There are a number of specific types of therapeutic approaches that involve Cognitive behavioral therapy:

- ❖ *Cognitive therapy* centers on identifying and changing inaccurate or distorted thinking patterns, emotional responses, and behaviors (Rnic, Dozois, & Martin 2016).
- ❖ *Dialectical behavior therapy* (DBT) addresses thoughts and behaviors while incorporating strategies such as emotional regulation and mindfulness.
- ❖ *Multimodal therapy* suggests that psychological issues must be treated by addressing seven different but interconnected modalities, which are behavior, affect, sensation, imagery, cognition, interpersonal factors, and drug/biological considerations (Lazarus, & Abramovitz, 2004).

- ❖ **Rational emotive behavior therapy (REBT)** involves identifying irrational beliefs, actively challenging these beliefs, and finally learning to recognize and change these thought patterns.

Each type of cognitive behavioral therapy takes a different approach, all work to address the underlying thought patterns that contribute to psychological distress.

Psychodynamic Psychotherapy

Psychodynamic psychotherapy is a form of therapy that promotes self-expression and insight through a variety of techniques. Psychodynamic therapy relies on the interpersonal interactions between therapist and client to reveal the content of the person's unconscious, including their deepest fears and wishes, along with defenses that guard inner conflicts from the individual's awareness (Michael 2021). Psychodynamic therapy is a "global therapy," or form of therapy with a holistic focus on the perspective of the client. The alternative, "problem-based" therapies, such as cognitive behavioral therapy, aim to reduce or eliminate symptoms instead of exploring the client's deep-seated needs, urges, and desires (McLeod, 2014). Psychodynamic therapy involves the interpretation of mental and emotional processes rather than focusing on behavior (Strupp, Butler, & Rosser, 2008). Psychodynamic therapists attempt to help clients find patterns in their emotions, thoughts, and beliefs in order to gain insight into their current self.

Narrative Therapy

Narrative therapy is a style of therapy that helps people become and embrace being an expert in their own lives. In narrative therapy, there is an emphasis on the stories that you develop and carry with you through your life (Wallis, Burns & Capdevila 2011). Narrative therapy is a method of therapy that separates a person from their problem. It encourages people to rely on their own skills to minimize problems that exist in their lives (Good Therapy 2018). Throughout life, personal experiences become personal stories. People give these stories meaning, and the stories help shape a person's identity. Narrative therapy uses the power of these stories to help people discover their life purpose. This is often done by assigning that person the role of "narrator" in their own story.

Supportive Family Therapy

Supportive family therapy is an alternative approach that provide information, emotional support, and recognition that family members have their own needs (Bernhiem 2019). Supportive family therapy is often used to help family member's expression their feelings regarding a problem that is affecting the entire family. This type of family therapy provides a safe and open environment in which everyone can express who they feel.

Systemic Family Therapy

Systemic Family Therapy puts emphasis on the entire family's feelings. It attempts to identify the problems within a family dynamic, as well as the ideas and attitudes of the entire family to uncover what may be going on with the family as whole. Once the therapist has a full understanding of these areas, he or she may attempt to shift the problem(s), attitudes, relationships, to a position that is more beneficial, less damaging, or simply more realistic. According to Good Therapy (2017) Systemic family therapy are people who follow to systems thinking, or the systemic perspective, believe it is impossible to truly understand a phenomenon by breaking it up into its basic components. They believe, rather, that a global perspective is necessary for comprehending the entire phenomenon.

Systemic therapy has its roots in family therapy, although these days it doesn't need a family focus to be called systemic. With this approach, what's important is the relationship: the process of interaction between people and not so much observation of the isolated individual (Exploring your mind 2018). The Systemic model refers to the type of therapy that focuses on the unconscious communications and meanings behind family members' behaviors. The therapist in this form of treatment is neutral and distant, allowing the family members to dive deeper into their issues and problems as a family.

Structural Therapy

Structural therapy focuses on adjusting and strengthening the family system to ensure that the parents are in control and that both children and adults set appropriate boundaries. In this form of therapy, the therapist "joins" the family in order to observe, learn, and enhance their ability to help the family strengthen their relationships. Structural family therapy is a theory developed by Salvador Minuchin. The focus of the therapy is based on five specific principles. The five specific principles include:

- ❖ The structural therapist focuses on the interactions between people rather than their individual psyches "Matrix of identity" based on personal interactions within the family
- ❖ Family structure based on social interactions "Well-functioning family" based on how family responds and develops according to family needs
- ❖ The position of a family therapist is to help the family outgrow constraining growth patterns and develop as a stronger entity

Strategic Therapy

This form of therapy is more brief and direct than the others, in which the therapist assigns homework to the family. This homework is intended to change the way family members interact by assessing and adjusting the way the family communicates and makes decisions. The therapist takes the position of power in this type of therapy, which allows other family members who may not usually hold as much power to communicate more effectively (King, 2017). Strategic therapy is a theory that has evolved from a combined number of a variety of psychotherapy practices. There are five different parts to strategic therapy including a brief social stage, the problem stage, interactional stage, the goal-setting stage and the task-setting stage.

Transgenerational Therapy

Transgenerational or intergenerational family therapies typically attend to dynamics across more than two generations. Although other family therapies, such as structural or strategic, may attend to dynamics across two generations (e.g., parent-child) in the present, transgenerational therapies are more interested in how the past affects the present. These therapies are not interested in learning about individual pathology. Rather, they are interested in how families, across generations, develop patterns of behaving and responding to stress in ways that prevent healthy development in their members and lead to predictable problems (Ramisch & Nelson 2015). Transgenerational family therapy invites counselors to examine the interactions of clients across generations as a mechanism for understanding and explaining current problems within the family, as well as predicting future difficulties.

Communication Therapy

Communication therapy is a collection of techniques that prioritize the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of patients. Nurses provide patients with support and information while maintaining a level of professional distance and objectivity. With therapeutic communication, nurses often use open-ended statements and questions, repeat information, or use silence to prompt patients to work through problems on their own. According to Ntshuntshe, Gqeba, & Gqeba, (2019) Communication is the act or process of using words, sounds, signs or behaviours to express or exchange information or to express your ideas, thoughts, feelings.

Psychoeducation

The practice of educating those with mental health conditions and their families to help empower and support them with their condition is referred to psychoeducation. Psychoeducation is a strong tool against the stigmatization of mental health conditions and those who face those challenges on a day-to-day basis. Psychoeducation is defined with four broad goals in mind:

- ❖ Transfer of information
- ❖ Medication and treatment support
- ❖ Training and support in self-help
- ❖ An available a safe place to vent

Relationship Counseling

Relationships are not easy and simple problems in your daily life can cause stress or add strain to any relationship. Additional problems that can contribute to the stress include chronic illness, a lack of communicating effectively, cultural differences, infidelity and mental health issues. Couples may also face issues of sexual intimacy, emotional distancing, financial difficulties and a general lack of trust. Relationship counseling begins usually when a couple is trying to decide whether to work out their problems and continue to be together or if they should move on.

Concept of Divorce

Divorce (also known as dissolution of marriage) is the process of terminating a marriage or marital union. Divorce usually entails the canceling or reorganizing of the legal duties and responsibilities of marriage, thus dissolving the bonds of matrimony between a married couple under the rule of law of the particular country or state (Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018). Divorce laws vary considerably around the world, but in most countries, divorce requires the sanction of a court or other authority in a legal process, which may involve issues of distribution of property, child custody, alimony (spousal support), child visitation / access, parenting time, child support, and division of debt (Wikipedia 2018). In most countries, monogamy is required by law, so divorce allows each former partner to marry another person. Divorce is severance, surrender or separation. In matrimonial makers' divorce means the termination of marital relations, dissolution of the marital bond, permanent separation of the spouses from board to bed. Technically speaking, divorce means a decree of dissolution of marriage (Nitisha, 2018). Divorce is a process of un-marrying wherein the spouses come back to the status as if they are not married and become free to marry again. Through divorce, marital bond ceases to be in existence as per law and the couple can no more be called the husband or the wife. Divorce is an institutional device for the dissolution of a marriage and social invention.

Divorce is the final outcome of a prolonged process of family disorganization. Divorce is a certificate that the marriage has failed and hence the parties are free to marry again. Thus in divorce, the spouses lose all the opportunities to maintain the wed-lock in future. Divorce occurs when a marriage does not succeed. The end of a marriage can feel like a relief. It can also be extremely stressful. Even the partner who chooses to leave may feel a range of emotions. They may experience grief, guilt, anger, confusion, fear, shame, and anxiety. If children are involved, the stress of divorce may be more intense (Good Therapy 2010). Divorce is the act by which a valid marriage is dissolved, usually freeing the parties to remarry? Divorce is a legal termination of marriage between a husband and wife. But why do marriages fail? It may be due to certain marital problems such as aggressiveness of one of the partners, physical or emotional abuse, alcohol or drug addiction, family stress and strain or infidelity of a partner. Whatever might be the reason, but divorce and separation is definitely painful for both the partners. And it's not all only about the couple; it also affects the entire family, especially the children.

Concept of Marriage Separation

Marriage separation occurs when spouses in a marriage stop living together without getting divorced. Married couples may separate as an initial step in the divorce process or to gain perspective on the marriage and determine whether divorce is warranted. Other couples may separate as an alternative to divorce for economic or religious reasons, for tax purposes, or to ensure continuing retirement and/or health insurance benefits for both spouses (Spanier & Anderson, 2009). Marriage separation can be initiated informally, or there can be a legal separation with a formal separation agreement filed with the court. As for a divorce, the latter may include provisions for alimony, whether to have sole custody or shared parenting of any children, and the amount of child support (Fitzpatrick, 2007). A legal separation does not dissolve the marriage contract but merely adjusts the couple's obligations under it in light of their desire to live separately. Practically, however, separation is often a prelude to divorce. Such agreements usually contain provisions on the care and support of children. Marriage separation isn't the same as a divorce. Marriage separation means that you are living apart from your spouse, but you're still legally married until you get a judgment of divorce from a court (even if you already have a judgment of separation). However, generally a marriage separation does affect the financial responsibilities between you and your spouse before the divorce is final (Doskow, 2019). There are three different types of separation. In most states, only one (legal separation) changes your legal status but all three of them have the potential to affect your legal rights

The roles of family in mitigation of divorce and marriage separation

Divorce

Divorce is an impactful and life-changing event for all parties involved. Whether you're the one getting the divorce or your parents are divorcing, it affects everyone differently unfortunately, sometimes relationships don't work out. Among all new marriages, somewhere between 40 and 60% end in divorce, and the rate is 10% higher among remarriages. With such staggering statistics, it's likely that you or someone you know has been affected by divorce at some point in their life (Thatcher, 2019). Couples and family counseling or psychotherapy is a helpful and healthy method for coping with divorce, both before and after the marriage. These types of counseling are helpful to the couple, as well as the children. Divorce is a serious and sometimes traumatic event, so it's helpful to know what to expect and how to get through this difficult time. Finally, it is worth noting that the

majority of both men and women attribute the blame on their former spouses rather than themselves, which precludes the chances that the couple could save the marriage.

Divorce is a difficult life-altering experience that is mentally, emotionally, and financially agonizing for both partners. In many ways, divorce is a recovery process that nobody should have to endure on their own (Clarity Clinic 2020). A person going through a divorce may experience feelings of guilt, fear, anxiety, depression and grief. For those that previously struggled with mental health issues, specifically anxiety and depression, the process of a divorce can exacerbate these problems as they may view the divorce as a personal failure. Working with a therapist will provide divorcees with the strength and necessary skills to whether the storm of the divorce by equipping them with an outlet to a rational and objective perspective. The purpose of divorce therapy is to aid people in their journey of self-rediscovery. It will help them to see the opportunities for personal growth and development that this new life-transition presents them with. Amato & Previti, (2003) stated that former spouses who attributed blame to themselves or to external factors had the poorest [post-divorce] adjustment, whereas former spouses who attributed blame to the relationship had the best adjustment. Additionally, spousal attachment was directly related to the post-divorce adjustment, and that victims of extra-marital relations had the strongest attachments to their former spouses.

Marriage separation

Marriage separation involves letting go of your marital life or home. Despite the psychological pain associated with an unhappy relationship, it is rarely easy to let go. The partners' psychological worlds are enmeshed to the point that the experience of marriage separating is analogous to tearing apart a piece of fabric, a jolting experience leaving rough and raw edges. Intense ambivalence is natural, for there is a strong desire to end the difficult relationship and, simultaneously, anxiety and fear associated with the unknown territory ahead (Weiss, 2005). Powerful feelings are aroused during the marriage separation phase. There is a sense of failure and guilt, with the end of the relationship often perceived as being caused by personal incompetency and fault. The person becomes self-deprecatory and often compensates for the inner-directed negative feelings by blaming the partner. A hallmark of the marriage separation phase is confusion and disorganization, which creates considerable anxiety. There is a fear of loneliness and isolation, which emerges as the person begins to think about living as an individual rather than as a couple. The most common emotion expressed toward the partner at this time is anger. The intense resentment felt towards the partner is partly a way of avoiding self-responsibility and partly an accumulation of the many previous hurts and disappointments.

Marriage separation phase provokes a series of reactions associated with loss, similar to the stages of dying as noted by Kubler-Ross (2009) denial (withdrawal and avoidance); anger (blame partner, act-out hostility); bargaining (hopes of reconciliation), depression (self-pity, despair, fear of unknown) and acceptance (dealing with reality). The psychotherapist who is aware of the foregoing reactions to marriage separation will realize that the client needs both support and clarity. Therapeutic support in the form of empathy, acceptance, and allowing for temporary reliance on the psychotherapist's strength, is crucial during this difficult time. The psychotherapist provides clarity and order by helping the client understand what is occurring and what might be expected in the near future. The person involved in the process of marriage separation should learn how to be confident about being alone. Developing personal and social competencies increases the chances for successful social contacts, thereby enhancing self-esteem and increasing one's capacity to function effectively as an individual.

Methods

The study was conducted in Akwa Ibom State. Expost-facto research design was adopted for the study with the population comprising of all registered counselors in Akwa Ibom State. Stratified sampling technique was used to select 60 respondents that constituted the sample size used for the study. The Instrument used in this study for data collection was a questionnaire titled “Adoption of Family Psychotherapy by Female Counselors in Akwa Ibom State Questionnaire (AFPFCAKSQ)”. Face and content validation of the instrument was carried out by an expert in test measurement and evaluation from University of Uyo to ensure that the instrument has the accuracy, appropriateness and completeness for the study. Cronbach Alpha technique was used to determine the level of reliability of the instrument. The reliability coefficient obtained was 0.80 and this was high enough to justify the use of the instrument. The researcher subjected the data generated for this study to appropriate statistical techniques such as independent t-test analysis. The test for significance was done at 0.05 alpha levels.

Results

Research Questions One: The research question sought to find out the extent of divorce and separation among families in Akwa Ibom State. To answer the research question, percentage analysis was performed on the data, (see table 1).

Table 1: Percentage analysis of the extent of divorce and separation among families in Akwa Ibom State

EXTENTS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
VERY HIGH EXTENT	24	40**
HIGH EXTENT	18	30
LOW EXTENT	12	20
VERY LOW EXTENT	6	10*
TOTAL	60	100%

** The highest percentage frequency

* The least percentage frequency

SOURCE: Field survey

The above table 1 presents the percentage analysis of the extent of divorce and separation among families in Akwa Ibom State. From the result of the data analysis, it was observed that the highest percentage (40%) of the respondents affirmed that the extent of divorce and separation among families in Akwa Ibom State is very high, while the least percentage (10%) of the respondents stated that the extent of divorce and separation among families in Akwa Ibom State is very low.

Research Questions Two: The research question sought to find out the types of family psychotherapies practiced in Akwa Ibom State. To answer the research question, percentage analysis was performed on the data, (see table 2).

Table 2: Percentage analysis of the types of family therapies practiced in Akwa Ibom State

TYPES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Cognitive Behavioral Therapy	23	38.33**
Supportive family therapy	17	28.33
Systemic family therapy	11	18.33
Psychodynamic Psychotherapy	9	15*
TOTAL	60	100%

** The highest percentage frequency

* The least percentage frequency

SOURCE: Field survey

The above table 2 presents the percentage analysis of the types of family psychotherapies practiced in Akwa Ibom State. From the result of the data analysis, it was observed that the highest percentage (38.33%) of the respondents affirmed that the Cognitive Behavioral Therapy is the most practiced family therapy by them in Akwa Ibom State, while the least percentage (15%) of the respondents went for Psychodynamic Psychotherapy.

Hypothesis Testing

The null hypothesis states that there is no significant influence of family therapy on mitigation of divorce and separation in Akwa Ibom State. In order to test the hypothesis, regression analysis was performed on the data, (see table 3).

TABLE 3: Regression Analysis of the influence of family therapy on mitigation of divorce and separation in Akwa Ibom State

Model	R	R-Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. error of the Estimate	R Square Change
1	0.81	0.66	0.65	1.28	0.66

*Significant at 0.05 level; df= 58; N= 60; critical R-value = 0.279

The table shows that the calculated R-value 0.81 was greater than the critical R-value of 0.279 at 0.5 alpha levels with 58 degree of freedom. The R-Square value of 0.66 predicts 66% of the influence of family therapy on mitigation of divorce and separation in Akwa Ibom State. This rate of percentage is highly positive and therefore means that there is significant influence of family therapy on mitigation of divorce and separation in Akwa Ibom State. It was also deemed necessary to find out the influence of the variance of each class of independent variable as responded by each respondent (see table 4)

Table 4: Analysis of variance of the influence of family therapy on mitigation of divorce and separation in Akwa Ibom State

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	181.68	1	181.68	110.57	.000 ^b
Residual	95.30	58	1.64		
Total	276.98	59			

a. Dependent Variable: Divorce

b. Predictors: (Constant), Therapy

The above table 4 presents the calculated F-value as (110.57) and the critical f-value as (.000^b). Being that the critical f-value (.000^b) is below the probability level of 0.05, the result therefore means that there is significant influence exerted by the independent variables (family therapy) on the dependent variable which is mitigation of divorce and separation. The result therefore means that there is significant influence of family therapy on mitigation of divorce and separation in Akwa Ibom State. The result therefore is in agreement with the research findings of Thatcher (2019), couples and family counseling or psychotherapy is a helpful and healthy method for coping with divorce, both before and after the marriage. These types of counseling are helpful to the couple, as well as the children. Divorce is a serious and sometimes traumatic event, so it's helpful to know what to expect and how to get through this difficult time. As marriage separation phase provokes a series of reactions like denial, bargaining, depression, etc., psychotherapist who is aware of the foregoing reactions to marriage separation will realize that the client needs both support and clarity. Therapeutic support in the form of empathy, acceptance, and allowing for temporary reliance on the psychotherapist's strength, is crucial during this difficult time (Kubler-Ross, 2009). The significance of the result caused the null hypotheses to be rejected while the alternative was accepted.

Conclusion

The study concluded that there are several approaches to psychotherapy including cognitive-behavioral, interpersonal, and other kinds of talk therapy that help individuals work through their marriage problems. It was observed that as research sheds light on effective treatments, new therapies will emerge. Finally, through divorce marital bond ceases to be in existence as per law and the couple can no more be called the husband or the wife. Divorce is an institutional device for the dissolution of a marriage and social invention.

Recommendation

The study recommended that:

1. Couples should desist from domestic violence or any other related behaviour that may lead to divorce or marriage separation rather embrace the initial love that brought them together as a therapy to live happily.
2. Couples should engage in marriage ethics at least quarterly to help them manage their marriages or families.
3. Couples should be reformed to take a comprehensive approach toward reducing the risks in children's lives, including parental separation/divorce.
4. Divorce and marriage separation can be a stressful and confusing at times, filled with emotion and anxiety. The best thing couples should do is to have patience, follow instructions and communicate with their counselor.

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