

## **An Analysis of Pastoral Counselling Practices for Married Persons among Selected Christian Churches in Gweru Urban**

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**ABSTRACT** The study investigated the effectiveness of pastoral counselling practices for married persons among selected Christian churches in Gweru Urban. The research design adopted for this study was the descriptive survey design. The research used a convenient sample of 70 ordinary church members to respond to the counsellor effectiveness questionnaire, 5 pastors/priests responded to the pastors questionnaire and 12 ordinary church members participated in the focus group discussion making a total of 87 research respondents. Data were collected by use of questionnaires and focus group discussions. Results indicated that church members present marriage issues that are found in any other population for counselling. Marriages within the church are traditional, civil or church based. To deal with issues presented, pastoral counsellors use mostly group counselling and individual counselling to a limited extent. Training of pastors does not include counselling though clients think it is part of the training. These findings agree with reviewed literature though there is conflicting direction as to the influence of culture and how it should be handled within the church. The study therefore recommends that research be conducted into pastoral counselling which should also include observation of how pastoral counsellors do their work in addition to use of other instruments to get a clearer picture of what takes place.