Perils of Inter-Denominational Conflict: Challenges of Young Christian Adults in Choosing Life Partners

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 Abstract : *This study focused on the challenges encountered by young Christian adults in choosing life partners. The research was carried out using descriptive survey design. A sample of forty (40) respondents was used in this study. The researcher administered questionnaires and held interviews to gather data. The data collected was systematically presented in form of a pie chart, graphs and tables. Interpretation and discussion of data gathered was systematically done in relation to relevant literature citations. This study established that the propinquity effect is the main challenge that impact early adults' choices about marriage. Also, because of the law of attraction and attitude similarity, interdenominational marriages are inevitable. The study recommends that early adults must in earnest be wise enough to fill the gap between principles of interpersonal attraction and their church doctrine. Also, denominations should feel duty bound by their own teaching and example, to so mould the character of the young adults from their earliest years that they will be pure and noble and will be attracted to the good and true. Society should allow mate choices as afforded in choices of denominations.*
Keywords: *Affinity, Interpersonal attraction, Church Doctrine, Denominations, Intermarriage*

I.   Introduction

When we single out ecumenical problems, we are dealing with intercommunity and intercultural suspicion and hostility as well as theological issues. Ansell (2001) states that the view of Christianity as a single, coherent, and undivided entity is erroneous. Antagonism and hatred between fellow Christians can be so virulent and divisive, no universal concord exists among Christian denominations that would allow them to unite into one, indivisible entity. Courtship and marriage are not spared the brunt of intra- Christian conflict. The institution of marriage is the natural instinctive demand of each individual to continue the process of reproduction and protection and continuation of humanity (Durkheim, 1948 qouted in Baron et al. 2010). Humanity is thus protected from extinction due to this great institution. Equally, religion plays an important role in group values and norms and religiosity may be manifested in various levels and forms of religious participation (attendance at religious services within a congregation, family observance, and individual devotion). Religion and marriage, as social institutions, are both clearly on everyone's short list of "most important institutions." The proliferation of Christian denominations in Zimbabwe should have seen the movement of the country towards a uni-christian culture, but this clearly is not the case. However, when dealing with the institution of marriage and religion, we are dealing with intercommunity and intercultural suspicion and hostility as well as theological issues.

There has been a rapid rate of intermarriage among people of different denominations in the country but these young men and women have not been spared the prejudice of marrying outside the fold. Interdenominational conflict, especially on the aspect of choice of marriage partners is less understood. Often, this is taken as evidence of the declining role of faith and religious identity in the minds of many young, causing anxiety about the continuity of denominations.

The most stated reason for marrying is love—that is, a man and a woman perceive a mutual emotional and/or physical attraction that is satisfying enough to both that they decide to contract a lifelong relationship. While sharing one religious tradition in marriage does not guarantee success in this endeavour (as the divorce statistics indicate), it at least increases the likelihood that two people have a certain mutual understanding because they share a common ethnic or religious background (Watson, 1969). The word intimacy refers to the state of two people being close, familiar, affectionate and loving. It reflects a deep understanding and love for the other, with feelings of passion. Marriage based on sexual love is by its nature individual marriage, religion on the other hand is exclusively a group cohesion activity as Buss and Burns (1986) points out and therein lie the conflict that has been perilous to the young, marrying generations.

Sociologists have always maintained that for any small community to survive in a sea of people from different backgrounds, it must practice certain exclusive rules, preferably based on religion. As long as young Christian adults remain in their own denominations or churches, they may hopefully understand the prevailing values and decide on the extent to which they will conform. According to Prakash (2003) cited in Baron et al (2010), the problem for each denomination as it protects it interests, cultures and belief systems, is a failure to accept and accommodate the new social realities. The potential for individual abuse becomes significant in these "imagined communities" as coined by Bryne (1971). On the other hand many would agree that the host denomination may be permitted to stipulate the basic tenets of their precepts upon whoever wishes to live in their church. The above contra lateral issues are equally relevant and should be true for dealing with the double character of the human social as propounded by Best and khan (2008).

Miller (2006) propounded a dichotomy of marriage phases beginning with love, courtship, physical and mental attraction. In this phase, nothing seems important to young people other than their sentiments and emotions toward each other. They have no way of knowing what they will feel like ten years later, and no way of knowing what moral and personal problems will arise in the course of time. Young adults keeping company with partners from other denominations may fail to understand why everybody would make a fuss about it. Simply, they could suggest that they were better morally than many a non-Christian they could go out with. They aptly posit that they are not interested in the partner's religion and in the same vein are perfectly respectful toward the belief of fiancés. The second phase of marriage starts within a year or two years or five years after the wedding, when sentiment and emotion have simmered down, and the couple have to rely on a deeper sense of unity than feeling. Only the experience of older people can tell youngsters just getting married what problems will arise after this second phase has set in. Toward this end, denominational intervention before marriage is putting the cart before the horse and this study is primarily interested with sizing up the impact of older people's experience and church doctrine on interpersonal attraction.

1.1 Background to the Study

It has been said that the most important events in a person's life are his birth, marriage and death (Estates, 1983). A person has no control over the first and little over the third. With respect to the second, he may if he will exercise considerable control. It is a freedom of moral choice between the two contrary paths of goodness. But alas, the church is often allowed to take its course with little thought of consequences. Most Christian denominations prohibit mixed marriages and enjoin the young to marry exclusively within the fold. Every single one of them is aware, by strong oral tradition, that marrying outside the fold is a "taboo." According to Singh and Ho (2000), this provides a moral dilemma for a decision to be made between any two alternatives, one being good/right and the other wrong and supposedly evil. Thus arises the state of cognitive dissonance as Intermarriage is governed by interdenominational laws, and not by social factors or by the youths' personal opinions and inclinations.

When marriage within the fold is a commandment, it has all already been decided by an authority higher than selves! Hence, the only freedom of choice young people have is the choice of being faithful, or not faithful, to religious denomination. Many a young adult has asked 'how will I know when I am really in love and whether I have made the right choice?' To that end, different Christian denominations place undue emphasis on religio- emotional factors and to neglect sane judgement. Ideally, more effort has been directed on encouraging them (young Christian adults) to marry especially from their denomination. In the same vein, religious precepts compel every member not to be unequally yoked in the bond of marriage. Nevertheless, intermarriages are increasingly becoming popular and Bennet (2009) suggests that it is because the transcendental social is not all there is to human society. Bennet further alludes that there is plenty of the transactional social in human society. Members of groups often act towards each other in terms of essentialised individual selves and roles. Love is simply a state of emotional exhilaration which has been stimulated by social and physical appeal (Miller, 2006). Erick Erickson aptly posit that the young adult period is conceptualised as intimacy vis- a- vis isolation. Erickson delineated intimacy in terms of the ability to experience an open, supportive, tender relationship with and another person without fear of losing identity in the process (Yang 1965). Coupled by the principles of interpersonal attraction and attitude similarity, the correlation between the dictates of the church doctrine and the behavioural standards exhibited by the young Christian adults prompted the researchers to study the resultant phenomena.

As one matures physically, sexual desires make their way in the individual and gradually both girls and boys start getting attracted to each other which slowly develops into some sort of psychological pressure. This natural and undirected emotion gradually seeks solace in whatever possible form as stated by frenkel and Wallen (1996).The sacred contract of marriage, which according to the laws of nature is the most pleasurable, has not absolved men and women of their responsibilities in religious sub communities. However, along with the rise of youth autonomy in mate choice, the nuclearization of the family, and the decline of parental power and authority, marriage transactions will inevitably undergo radical changes. For most denominations,

Individualism is still understood as a selfish and hedonistic ethic that places self-interest above the needs of the group, and one must pursue it at the expense of other people's interests (Wang 2002). Precisely due to the religion's intrusive influence in everyday life interdenominational partnerships may be so desirable for the young , yet unattainable.

A close examination of 484 marriages entered into by male villagers from 1949 to 1999 in Xiajia village reveals a gradual yet constant shift from arranged marriage to free-choice marriage   (White et al. 2007). Arranged marriages declined from 73 per cent in the 1950s to none at all in the 1990s; virtually all engagements since the 1970s have been based on mutual consent of two young individuals after a period of romantic love or intensive interactions following an initial introduction through a third party. Moreover, intimacy has become an integral part of the courtship process, and nearly 20 per cent of engaged couples admitted to having engaged in premarital sex by the mid-1990s (Yan, 1996).

The present research focused on four denominations in particular. Seventh Day Adventist Church and End Time Messages are mainstream churches that seem to have a radical approach, that in essence operate like a closed systems about marriage. Conversely in the realm of Pentecostal Churches, for instance, AFM is a bit flexible with regards to intermarriages. In sharp contrast to the above, the Independent African Traditional Churches for example Zion, marriage is a predetermined event especially for ladies. To this end, polygamous families inevitably characterise their marriages, yet posing some undesirable conditions of unprecedented magnitude contradicting with the established psychological principles of interpersonal attraction.

1.2 Statement of the Problem
Choosing a partner, in a majority of cases, is a most challenging endeavour for Christians. There are thousands that are mated by the church but not matched. Many young Christian adults are bound by the denominationally conditioned marriage chains that they dare not break. Are these denominationally determined marriages able to attain perfect bliss, or they are leading to heartaches for many young Christian adults. This study seeks to unravel the challenges faced by young Christian adults in choosing life partners.

1.3 Hypothesis
There are no significant challenges on individual young adults on choosing life partners across christian religious denominations.

1.4 Aims of the Study
1.4.1 To investigate the relationship between church doctrine and choice of marriage partners.
1.4.2 To evaluate the impact of church doctrine on established psychological perspectives particularly interpersonal attraction.
1.4.3 To describe the primary considerations of young Christian adults about mate selection.

1.5 Objectives of the Study
 The study seeks to:
1.5.1 Assess the relation between church doctrine and choice of marriage.
1.5.2 Analyse the impact of the church doctrine on established psychology perspectives on interpersonal interaction.
1.5.3 Establish whether the Church doctrine is outweighed by personal values

1.6 Assumptions of the Study
1.6.1 The shackles of tradition in every Christian denomination are impaired by intermarriages.
1.6.2 Intermarriage is a brain child of approach-approach conflict.
1.6.3 Young Christian adults of the day are ignorant about collective conscience such that they solve their issues through rationale.

1.7 Delimitations
The researcher carried out the study concentrating on Masvingo urban Ward four (4). Main effort was directed on Mainstream Churches (Targets Kopje SDA Church and End Time Messages), Pentecostal Church (AFM Pangolin Assembly) and Independent African Traditional Church (Zion).

II.   Literature Review
2.1 Conceptual Framework
Many factors leading to interpersonal attraction have been studied. The most frequently studied are physical attractiveness, propinquity, familiarity, complementarily, reciprocal liking and reinforcement.

According to Miller (2006) the propinquity effect can be defined as the more one sees and interact with a person, the more he/she is to become our friend or intimate partner. This effect is very similar to the mere exposure effect in that the more a person is exposed to a stimulus the more the person likes it, however, there are a few exceptions to the mere exposure effect.As mentioned above the mere exposure effect also known as the familiarity principle states that the more one is exposed to something, the more he/she comes to like it. This applies equally to both objects and people (Miller, 2006).

The proverb 'birds of same feather flock together' points out that similarity is a crucial determinant of interpersonal attraction. According to Elisabeth (2004) there is a lay belief that people with actual similarity produce initial attraction. In view of the above, perceived similarity develops for someone to rate others as similar to themselves in on-going relationships. Such perception is either self-serving (friendship) or relationship-serving (romantic relation). Ryan (2004) pointed out that people tend to change perceived similarity to obtain blame in a relationship. Additionally, perceived similarity was found to be greater than actual similarity in predicting interpersonal attraction.

2.2 Theoretical Framework
2.2.1Social Homogamy Theory
According to Wohnen and Luo (2003) social homogamy refers to 'passive, indirect effects on spousal similarity.' The theory states that age and education are crucial in affecting the mate preference. People with similar age study and interact more in school and this leads to the propinquity effect, the tendency of people to meet and spend time with those who share the common characteristics. This plays a significant impact in spousal similarity.

The perspective shows that there is a greater effect on political and religious attitudes than on personal traits. The couples may be idiosyncratic (that is different individuals have different mate preferences) and consensual (thus a consensus of preference on some prospective mates to others) in mate preference.
In the same vein, mate preference on political and religious bases tend to be idiosyncratic, for example a Catholic would be more likely to choose a mate who is also a Catholic as opposed to a Buddhist. Such Idiosyncratic preferences produce a high level of active assortment which plays a pivotal role in affecting spousal similarity.

2.2.2 Attitude Similarity
According to the 'law of attraction' by Byrne (1971) attraction towards a person is positively related to the proportion of attitudes similarity associated to that person. Clore (1976) claim that individuals with similar attitudes are more agreeable on perception of things. Therefore the same attitude becomes the basis of their click. Based on the cognitive consistency theories differences in attitudes and interest can lead to dislike and avoidance (Singh and Ho,2000). Whereas similarity in attitude prompts social attraction. Miller (1972) aptly posits that attitude similarity activates the perceived attractiveness and fever-ability information from each other, whereas dissimilarity would reduce the impact of the cues. Watson (1984) alludes to the view that attitude similarity could predict how people evaluate their respect for each other and social intellectual first impressions which in terms of activity preference similarity and value-based attitude similarity respectively.Upon reflection, however, although attitudinal similarity and attraction are linearly related, attraction may not contribute significantly to attitude change (Simons et al, 1970)

2.3 Review of Similar Studies
2.3.1 Attraction Friendship
Goldmen (1980) suggest that attraction is the result of the propinquity and similarity effects and the status of each party involved. Their study was about the tracking program that organizes students according to their level of ability to learn. This is mostly implemented in middle and almost of all high school. Their goal is to prove that students on the same track have a higher probability of becoming friends compared to those in different tracks. Other organisational based groupings should also follow these factors. The propinquity creates an ideal environment where students are in close physical proximity with each other and have a chance to build familiarity that leads to friendship. Similarity in tracking students is important because they found that track students tend to become friends with others who have the same academic achievement and expectations as themselves. They also found that students on the same level of status concerning grades will likely name them than those who are on lower level than their own. They concluded that although the factors mentioned do have great influence on friendship, they are not exclusive for organised program like tracking.

Familiarity and similarity in the secular world is totally divorced from the one proclaimed by the shackles of Christianity precepts. In a sense, all the forces that draw individuals together remain intact yet of little value in terms of religious circles. To that end, young Christian adults are bound into undesirable marriages simply because they have little or no depth understanding of their suitors.

2.3.2 Attraction Romantic Friendship Relationship The triangular theory of love is based on intimacy, passion and commitment. The strongest type of love, consummate love consists of these three parts. The idea of this theory is that love can consist of one component alone or combination of the three parts thus intimacy, passion and commitment.There are many factors taken into account when a relationship turns into love. One big factor is culture. This is a common issue among two people who come from very different cultural backgrounds. In a study done by Shaves et al (1995) they interviewed participants from different parts of the world and found that love has similar and different meanings cross-culturally. The Chinese participants had several different love concepts such as 'sorrow-love,' 'tenderness pity' and 'sorrow pity.' This ties into another study done by Rothbaym and Tsang (1998) in which they researched popular love songs from American and Chinese artists. The difference was that the Chinese love songs had significantly more references to suffering and negative outcomes than American love songs. This may be due to the beliefs that interpersonal relationships are predestined, and thus have no control over love lives.

Interpersonal similarity and attraction are multidimensional constructs in which people are attracted to others who are similar to them in demographics, physical appearance, attitudes, interpersonal style, social, cultural background, personality, interest activities preferences, communication and social skills. A study conducted by Newcomb (1961) on college dorm roommates suggests that with shared backgrounds, academic achievements, attitudes, values and political views become friends. Goldman et al (1980) has shown that interpersonal attraction is positively correlated to personality similarity. People are inclined to desire romantic partners who are similar to themselves on agreeableness, conscientiousness, extroversion, emotional stability, openness to experience and attachment style (Wohnen and Luo, 2003).

2.3.3 Impact of interpersonal attraction on choosing a mate
The phenomenon of interpersonal attraction has fascinated poets, philosophers and people in general since time immemorial. The intriguing questions are: why do individuals became smitten with one person and feel indifferent about another? What makes us fall in love? Accordingly, women should play hard to get and men should woo their interest. Dating becomes a game people must win at all costs. This and other notions that focus on how to snare a potential partner by employing deceit, manipulation and control are anathema to anyone who strives to operate from integrity in establishing a social base for a loving relationship, (Elizabeth, 2004).

According to Ryan (2004) although individuals might aim to develop a health union, they are somewhat hampered in doing so because they are yet to have attained perfection. The maturity of people around attraction, falling in love and relating in general, therefore it is dependent on the degree of their emotional development. Individuals need to accept this notion without self-criticism or a sense of defeat. Many of the forces that motivate the attraction are unconscious. One of the ways individuals can raise their emotional development is by increasing their awareness. When people are better informed they tend to make better choices. Therefore people should uncover some of what is known about what sets their hearts racing when they are interacting with potential mates so that they might make more informed decisions.

The literature reviewed did not cover some of the factors that are inherent in the realm of religion. The explanation is that, in as much as religion set out to be a common denominator, the researchers made a further analysis. People in the Christianity domain are further classified in to different denominations. In this vein, different denominations have rules and regulations that normally seem to pose challenges on early adults especially with regards to the choice of mate.

III. Methodology
3.1 Research Design
Selltiz et al (1981) defined design as the deliberately planned arrangements of condition for analysis and collection of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy of procedure.

The researchers used the survey method to collect data.This method allowed a direct interaction of both the researcher and the respondents. A questionnaire was used to gather quantitative data while interviews were held as a source of qualitative data. Questionnaires were favoured for they assured confidentiality and they place less pressure on the subject for immediate response. With interviews, the clarifications of questions were possible and assured greater data accuracy. The method therefore permitted the researcher to summarise characteristics of different group or to measure their and opinions towards the same issue. Again the researchers relied on both secondary and primary data.

3.2 Primary and secondary data
Primary data is discovered first-hand knowledge. It involves collection of new data to be used specifically for this research. Secondary refers to the data that has already been gathered in relation to research

in question. The researcher used this data from other sources such as published texts, church records as well as other writings on the subjects to provide a broader dimension.

3.3 Sampling procedure

Robinson (1993) defined a sample as a special subset of population observed for purpose of making inferences about the nature of the total population itself. The researchers targeted the young Christian adults and elders of Masvingo urban ward four considering gender and different age groups. Stratified sampling was resorted to in order to make sure that each group had an equal opportunity of being selected. The researcher divided the population into sub- populations (strata) on basis of supplementary information. The population is divided on the basis of gender age groups (that is early adults and the aged). The researcher then drew a random sample from sub-population. Stratified sampling was favoured since it controls the relative size of each stratum. It produces samples that are more representative of the population.

3.4 Research Procedure

Having formulated the research problem, developed a study design, constructed a research instrument and select a sample, the researchers then collected the data from which they drew inferences and conclusions for the study. Quite simple, interviews, mailing out a questionnaire,and observations facilitated information gathering. Interviews were carried out after the questionnaires had been collected. Information recorded from the interviews was recorded and used to verify the consistence and validity of the information obtained from the questionnaires. Collecting data through any of the methods involve some ethical issues in relation to the participants and the researcher. In this regard, the researchers first obtained the respondents' informed consent. During the course of data collection, the researchers were careful about sensitivities of their respondents, for instance questions on income, drug abuse, age, marital status because they are intrusive. The researchers avoided questions that would trigger discomfort, anxiety, and harassment, invasion, of privacy or demeaning statements. Maintaining confidentiality was also a virtue.

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

The researchers employed interview and questionnaire as data collection tools.

3.5.1 Interviews

Inteiws were used for individual early adults and the aged. The interview was structured to enable conformity. With interviews, clarification of questions is possible and this assures greater data accuracy. Again this instrument allows gestures, facial expressions and signs of non-verbal responses that could be observed and taken note of.

3.5.2 Questionnaire

The earmarked population for questionnaires was early Christian adults and church elders of Masvingo urban Ward four. The researcher personally asked the questions on the questionnaire. The credit to questionnaire is that use of close-ended questions gets people to commit themselves to concentrate opinions hence responses will be easy to analyse.

3.5.3 Observation

Investigating the challenges encountered by young Christian adults about interpersonal attraction vis avis church doctrine was difficult. The only way around this was to observe where the respondents or participants did not know that they were being studied. The researchers preferred observation because it ensured that the behaviour being observed is not distorted by artificiality.

3.6 Standardization Procedure

The questionnaire used was adapted from "the Top Ten Questions to Ask a Potential Life Partner" coined by Bennett (2009), however, the researcher modified it with the bias to fit the phenomena in question.

3.6.1 Pilot Study

The researchers conducted a preliminary test on both interviews and questionnaires using the Christians of Masvingo Seventh Day Adventist church. The pilot allowed the researchers to get a chance to familiarise with the research study environment. Furthermore, the pilot test was done so that the researcher would carry out preliminary analysis on whether the wording and format of questions presented difficulties when the main data is analysed.

3.7 Data Analysis and Interpretation

Data collected was analysed using tables, graphs as well as a pie chart, a simple descriptive statistical analysis was used. Responses from qualitative interviews data and questionnaires were analysed in relation of how they answered the research questions, confirmed with the assumptions and related to supportive literature citations.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

The researchers first requested for permission to solicit research information from the respondents before every study. The issue of confidentiality was assured to the respondents.

IV. Data Presentation And Analysis
4.1 Biographical Data
4.1.1 Table 1 Showing Sex of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	18	51.4	51.4	51.4
Female	17	48.6	48.6	100.0
Total	35	100.0	100.0	

The table above reveals that there were more males than females who contributed to this research. This is shown by male respondents constituting 51.4% of the total sample and female respondents constituting 48.6% of the sample. This shows that males had the privilege to answer more questionnaires than their female counterparts. In the same vein, the result could be attributed to the criteria employed by church leaders of different denominations during the distribution of the questionnaire.

4.1.2 Table 2 Showing Age of Respondents

| Age Range	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
18-21	8	22.9	22.9	22.9
22-24	9	25.7	25.7	48.6
25-27	5	14.3	14.3	62.9
28-31	8	22.9	22.9	85.7
32+	5	14.3	14.3	100.0
Total	35	100.0	100.0	

From the table above, it is revealed that the majority of respondents were below the age of 24, n=17, constituting about 48,6% of the sample. As the age falls the age falls, the percentage decreases revealing that early adults gradually leave their denominations. Also this could be attributed to the fact that early adults in that range are committed to church business in anticipation for success, job opportunities and getting life partners through divine power.

4.1.3 Table 3 Showing Distributions of Respondents According to Marital Status

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Single	22	62.9	62.9	62.9
Married	13	37.1	37.1	100.0
Total	35	100.0	100.0	

Table 3 above reveals that, out of the total sample, the single covered 62.9%, and the married 37.1%. Again it could be established that from the table, the selected sample has the highest number of singles who constitute the highest percentage. Table 3 also reveal an important factor about the impact of marriage on early adults. This entails that, probably when early adults get married either they live the church due to intermarriages or by church policy discipline. Also the unmarried were the major of the research since they are the ones facing those challenges.

4.1.4 Pie chart 1 showing respondents by denominations
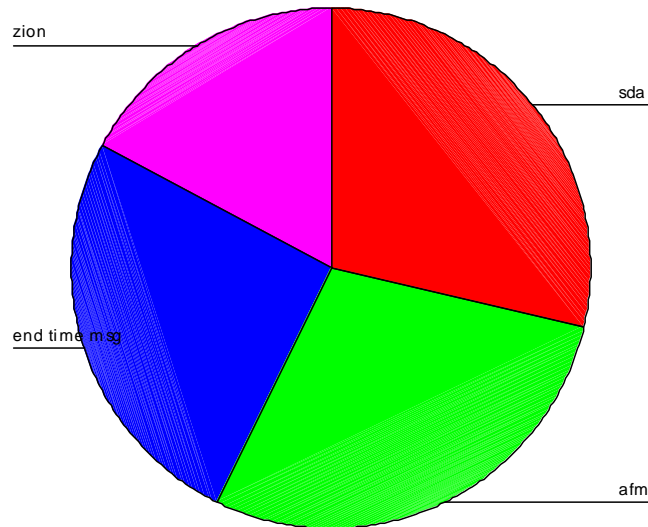
Key
SDA – Seventh Day Adventist Church
AFM – African Faith Mission
ZION – Zion Christian Church
END TIME MSG – End Time Message

From pie chart 1 above, it is clear that two denominations were able to return all the questionnaires. Thus the SDA and AFM churches, constituting a total of 57.1% of the total sample. It could be inferred that a 100% contribution was elicited by the interest vested in the respondents with regards to the phenomena in question. Moreover, it could be due to the fact that the respondents attend church services regularly. The respondents from the End Time Msg contributed 25%.7 of the total sample simply because one of the respondents did not return the questionnaire. The 17.1% contribution done by ZION was a pure reflection of the respondents' behavioural standards displayed during the preliminary stages of administering the questionnaires. Upon reflection however, the researcher was of the opinion that had it not been for the contributions made by those faithful respondents, the information obtained would still be intact but regrettably eligible.

4.2 FINDINGS
4.2.1 Respondents' View on the Influence of Church Policy on Personal Goals

Table 4 showing responses with regard to how church policy help early adults to attain personal goals about marriage.

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	34	97.1	97.1	97.1
No	1	2.9	2.9	100.0
Total	35	100.0	100.0	

From table 4 above most all of the respondents subscribed to the view that their personal goals were being favoured by the church policy as reflected by a 97.1% of the total sample. Because individuals are not a homogeneous group, other respondents viewed their church policy as prohibitive (2.9% of the total sample).

4.2.2 Respondents' View on the Relationship between Church System and Intimate Relationships.

Table 5 showing responses on whether there is a positive relationship between church system and intimate relationships.

Response		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Strongly agree	8	22.9	24.2	24.2
	Agee	8	22.9	24.2	48.5
	Neutral	8	22.9	24.2	72.7
	Disagree	7	20.0	21.2	93.9
	Strongly disagree	2	5.7	6.1	100.0
	Total	33	94.3	100.0	
Missing	System	2	5.7		
Total		35	100.0		

Table 5 above shows responses made by the respondents pertaining the influence of the church policy on personal goals about choosing a mate. With absolute clarity it could be inferred that church policy does not really encourage early adults to engage into intimate relationships as conspicuously shown by 72.7% of the total sample. While on the other hand a total of 25.7 subscribe to the view that church policy substantially gratify their needs. To this end, it seems safe to suggest that, because most of early adults do not subscribe to the precepts of the church doctrine, they weeded out of the church on or soon after marriage. This indicates that most of the early adults do not solve their problems on the basis of value conscience but through rationale. This may also mean that the realm of religion is set out to further probably the spiritual growth of individuals, in that forces that draw individuals together are hid in other circles of life where they spend much of their time.

4.2.3 Respondents' Perception about Interpersonal Attraction in Their Denomination.
Table 6 showing respondents' perception about interpersonal attraction in their denominations

Response	Frequency	Percentag	Valid Percenta	Cumulative Percentage
Agee	1	2.9	2.9	2.9
Neutral	4	11.4	11.4	14.3
Disagree	15	42.9	42.9	57.1
Strongly disagree	15	42.9	42.9	100.0
Total	35	100.0	100.0	

In this research, the term 'attraction' has been proven beyond reasonable doubt that it is relative. In this vein, it seems safe to suggest that same facts are perceived differently depending on the specific frame of reference. Only one respondent, all the time he or has been in the church, could not probably get attracted to a single potential suitor. This was reflected 2.9% of the total sample. According to the understanding of the researcher, every individual must either be attracted or not. To this end, the researcher was mesmerized to discover that some respondents were indifferent. This was clearly indicated by 11.4% of the total sample. 85.8% of the total sample was of the opinion that in their denomination were attractive potential suitors. Be that as it may, the intriguing question remains unanswered. If people can be bound in a bond of marriage on the pretext of interpersonal attraction, and there are a lot of attractive boys and girls in the church, why is it that intermarriages are rampant? It could be plausibly argued that when it comes to the choice of mate, 'attraction' on its own is relegated at the background while other factors come to the fore.

4.2.4 The Relationship between Commitment to Religion and Choice of Marriage.
Table 7 showing the relationship between commitment to religion and choice of mate.

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percenta	Cumulative Percentage
Agee	2	5.7	5.7	5.7
Neutral	8	22.9	22.9	28.6
Disagree	15	42.9	42.9	71.4
Strongly disagree	10	28.6	28.6	100.0
Total	35	100.0	100.0	

The wisdom of psychology entails that in the realm of social perception, same facts are perceived differently. The evidence of the above claim is reflected by table 7 above in that 5.7% of the total sample views the potential suitors in their church as not being devoted. It is probable that due to this lack of commitment, early adults end up choosing a mate from a different denomination. The researcher also noted that a 22.9% neutral response could be the indifference of individuals and their failure to make informed choices. 42.9% of the total sample agrees to the view there are devoted early adults in their denomination. 28.6% also subscribe to the later view. Accordingly, the researcher cogently suggested that a denomination is only a sphere that has little influence with regards to choice of marriage. In a sense, it does not take one to be devoted in order to become a prospective mate.

**4.2.5 The Influence of Church Leaders on the Choice of Mate.**
Table 8 Showing the Influence of Church Leaders on the Choice of Mate.

Response		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percenta	Cumulative Percentage
	Neutral	4	11.4	11.8	11.8
	Disagree	9	25.7	26.5	38.2
	Strongly disagree	21	60.0	61.8	100.0
	Total	34	97.1	100.0	
Missing	System	1	2.9		
Total		35	100.0		

Table 8 above shows that all respondents indicated that youths willingly engage in relationships as indicated by their responses, save for 11.4% of the total sample who were indifferent. The 2.9% of the sample did not respond to the foregoing item probably because they were transfixed in terms of the influence leaders have with regards to the choice of mate. In view of the above representation, what could be thought of as a challenge here is what usually follows intermarriage. Some denominations like Main Stream Churches charge every member who breaches the fundamental belief of marriage.

**4.2.6 Responses about Choosing a Mate of One's Choice**
Graph 1 Showing Responses about Choosing a Mate of One's Choice.
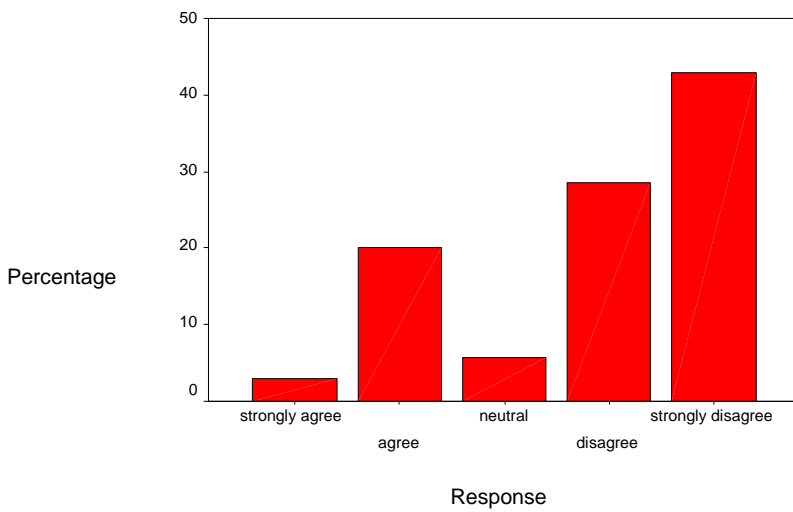
Graph I above shows that some respondents conceptualise the denomination as not being a safe base to explore their will of marriage. This was clearly by 2.9% strongly agree of the total sample and 20% of the total sample also subscribing to the idea of leaving the church. The findings also furnished the researcher with the idea that because when two people get married, they leave their parents such that in the process if they not of the same denomination, one will leave their church. Quite evidently, it is crystal clear that a denomination whose marriage fundamental belief prohibits intermarriages seems to enslave early adults with regard to their will about choice of mate. On the other hand, 71.5% of the total sample suggested to have purposed in their hearts not to liberate themselves from their faith. Rather they are prepared to face the discipline in case they breach the fundamental belief of marriage. In the same vein, it could be inferred that, the religious precepts could not receive a universal appreciation, thereby posing a challenge on early adults.

4.2.7 The Role of a Chaperone on Marriage and Courtship.
Graph 2 Representing the Role of a Chaperone on Marriage and Courtship
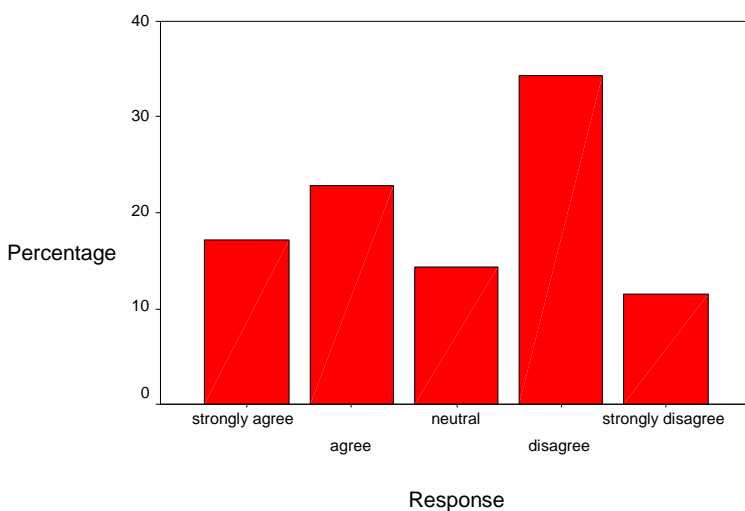

The research findings as represented by graph 2 above shows that a parent or guardian plays a pivotal role on helping early adults choose life partners. 17.1% of the total sample acknowledged that parent and the church policy play a collaborative role in denying early adults to marry outside their denomination. In the same vein, 22.9% also allude to the above view and this translates to 40% of the total sample. During the period of dating

and courtship, a couple chooses a chaperone who is of sound judgment and old enough to give advice. The rationale behind setting out a mentor is anchored on the principle that; if there is any subject which should be carefully considered and in which the counsel of older and more experienced persons must be sought, it is the subject of marriage. Ideally, if ever the bible was needed as a counsellor and if ever divine guidance should be sought in prayer, it is before taking a step that binds together for life. Therefore, 40% response reflects the calibre of the Main Stream churches' policy that is radical in nature. In sharp contrast to the dictates of the church doctrine and what is being pursued by early adults of the day even among professed Christian. Early adults too often feel that the bestowal of their affections is a matter in which self alone should be consulted, and a matter that neither God nor their parents should in any wise control. Long before they have reached manhood or womanhood they think themselves competent to make their own choice, without the aid of their own parents. To this end the challenge here is the friction that exists between the doctrine counsel and the will of early adults who solve their issues through rationale. 14.3 % of the sample was indifferent with regards to the subject under study probably because they had not yet gone through the mentorship of a chaperone. The results are crystal clear that some denominations allow early adults to marry where their interest may fall. This is shown by a 45.7% response of the total sample acknowledging the influence of the chaperone in their church.

4.2.8 Response Regarding Whether one's Mate Has an Income Generating Project.
Graph 3 Showing Responses Regarding Whether One's Mate Has an Income Generating Project or Not.
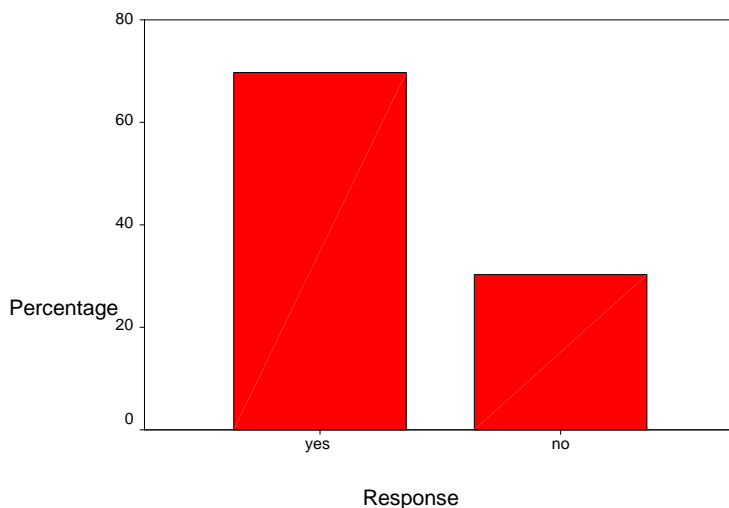
The graph above shows that early adults of the day want mates who are industrious. This is probably so because they also place value on gifts as an important faculty that prompts the sphere of romantic life.

4.3.0 Interview Report on The Impact of Church Doctrine on Personal Will About Marriage.
Interviews were carried out after the questionnaires had been collected. Information recorded from the interviews was recorded and used to verify the consistence and validity of the information obtained from the questionnaires. Most of the factors noted on the questionnaires were highlighted from the interview with only a few factors added. 3 questions were asked to 40 respondents and different views were given to different questions. The first question requested for the respondents opinions on their perception of the church doctrine and the chances it forces early adults into marriage. Respondents from Pentecostal and African Traditional Churches aptly posit that their policy was flexible about the choice of marriage. The result proved a 47% of the total sample in that the remaining 3%, from their tone of answering were conservative to their religious belief regardless of the flexibility of the church doctrine. 50% of the respondents from the mainstream churches acknowledged that their church doctrine compels every individual member not to engage into intermarriages. Accordingly, 80% of the subjects clarified that interpersonal attraction accounts for the looming intermarriages. 75% of the sample said many early adults are bound into bonds of marriage with unbelievers simply because they are associated with them. It is said that this mainly affect the youth, hence, the church policy charges them. 37% states that early adults often fail to fail to control their emotions and feelings especially when they are acquainted to many potential suitors. However, 25 % of the total sample argues that young christian adults subscribe to the church doctrine if they are attracted to the one they really love in the same denomination. One of the interviewees claimed that some early adults no longer stay with their parents even though they are not old

enough to live alone. This has resulted in peer pressure eclipsing the fundamental belief of marriage in different denominations.

4.4.0 Regression Analysis
The researcher analysed the correlation between church doctrine and how it influences the youths in making a decision on a mate.

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.016^a	.000	-.030	1.27

a. Predictors: (Constant), church policy helping you to attain your personal goals about marriage

b. Dependent Variable: for the sake of dating the one i really love its worth leaving the church

Since R=.016 is well below 1, it shows that there is a weak correlation between church doctrine and the decision of early adults on choice of marriage.

V. Discussion
5.1 The Impact of Interpersonal Attraction on Choosing a Mate.
From the findings in chapter 4, it could be cogently concluded that, interpersonal attraction has a great impact on the selection of a life partner. According to the research findings, the church doctrine in some churches interferes with the principles of interpersonal attraction and attitude similarity. This finding conform to Miller (2006)'s assertion that the propinquity effect can be defined as the more individuals see and interact with other persons, the more they are to become friends or intimate partners. This effect is very similar to the mere exposure effect in that the more a person is exposed to a stimulus the more the person likes it, however, there are a few exceptions to the mere exposure effect. While this is so, it is noted that when people become members of the certain denomination, they are indoctrinated such that they succumb to the precepts thereof. Watson et al (2004) also confirms this where he states social homogamy refers to 'passive, indirect effects on spousal similarity.' The perspective shows that there is greater effect on political and religious attitudes than on personal traits. The literature review clearly indicated that, mate preference on political and religious bases tend to be idiosyncratic for example an Adventist would be more likely to choose a mate who is also an Adventist as opposed to a Buddhist. The research findings also allude to this view as conspicuously shown by 85.8% results of the respondents. Byrne (1971) postulated the 'law of attraction' in terms of a person being positively related to the proportion of attitude similarity associated to that person. Some church doctrines especially from the Pentecostal churches in view of the foregoing assertion, entertain intermarriages anchored on two basic premises. The first one is the fact that an individual is regarded as a free organism that should express their full potential and will about marriage so as to curb approach-approach conflict. The second factor is attributed to cognitive reduction process. This was clearly reflected on graph (1) by 22.9% of the respondents expressing that they are ready to join hands with whosoever fills their heart. In this view, because intermarriage is undesirable in respect to the bible, here it is conceptualised as a way of evangelising the mate who is subsequently enlisted among other believers. Accordingly, converts by marriage are also referred to as 'lost sheep.' Toward this end, it could be plausibly argued that marriage between believers and unbelievers is forbidden by God. But too often the unconverted heart follows its own desires, and marriages unsanctioned by God are formed. Because of this many men and women are without hope and without God in the world. Their noble aspirations are dead by a chain of circumstances they held in Satan's net. Those who are ruled by passion and impulse will have a bitter harvest to reap in this life, and their course may result in the loss of their souls. In this view, the cases of young christian adults who profess to believe the truth who have made a great mistake by unbelievers (intermarriage) are miserable. Upon reflection however, the cherished hope by them that the unbelieving party would embrace the truth, but after his object is gained he is further from the truth than before. And then begin the subtle workings, the continued efforts of the enemy to draw away the believing one from the faith. Therefore, it seems logical to cogently argue that marriage in part is a most galling yoke in that thousands are mated but not matched, thereby the foregoing thought is one of the challenges faced by young christian adults in choosing a life partner of their denomination.

Findings from the interviews confirm that because of the law of attraction, Independent African Traditional churches have a church doctrine that is flexible enough to allow for intermarriages. The foregoing analysis was clearly represented on graph (2) by 45.7%. It is within this context of interpersonal attraction that Clore (1976) claim that individuals with similar attitudes are more agreeable on perception of things, such that the same attitude becomes the basis of their click. In sharp contrast, early adults of the Main Stream churches

conspicuously indicated that, in spite of the principles of attitude similarity, complementarity and propinquity effect, the church doctrine radically relegates all the variables at the background at any given time they contravene its precepts. This was evidently proved on by 40% response of the total sample. In the same vein, their policy goes on to punish whosoever breaches the fundamental belief of marriage. Be that as it may, the intriguing question always comes to the fore. What is love into which a person is said to 'fall?' accordingly, the research findings aptly posit that, even in the Main Stream churches interpersonal attraction principles outweigh the precepts of the church doctrine. Byrne et al (1966) suggests that people with similar economic status are likely to be attracted to each other.

The research also proved that highly qualified professionals across the board had also married or were dating someone of their calibre despite their religious orientations. Buss and Burnes (1986) claims that people prefer their romantic partners to be similar in certain demographic characteristics, including religious background, political orientation and socio-economic status. Upon reflection however, the socio-cultural factors are not always out of range of a denomination's spectrum of beliefs. At some point early adults happily get married in their denomination and this was shown on table (6) by 85.8% of responses from the questionnaires and also some respondents alluded to the same view on interviews. To this end , in view of the above dichotomised explanations, it seems safe to suggest that it is relative to come up with a pure ideology that guides when choosing a mate because individual perception of the factors that bind them in the bond of marriage is not controlled by religion alone, hence, it happens unconsciously. The most probable reason for the weakening of the shackles of tradition in churches about marriage could be attributed to individual's feelings towards a potential suitor largely dependent on their perception of rewards and costs. At the risk of oversimplification, graph (3) clearly shows a 65.7% reflection of mates who have an income generating source. Rewards are delineated as part of the relationship that makes it worthwhile and enjoyable. From the tone of respondents' answering, it shows that people have a higher anticipation of enjoying the bliss of marriage more than enduring its blisters. Accordingly, because individuals compare alternatives, satisfaction is conditional on the chance that a person could replace the relationship with a more desirable one. In a sense, it was noted that the foregoing exercise does not subscribe to the fundamental precepts ascribed by a denomination.

Entrenched on the pretext of young christian adults' primary considerations about mate selection it seems safe to suggest that great care should be taken by the young in the formulation of friendships and in the choice of companions. The foregoing evaluation feeds into Estates (1983)'s assertion; "take heed, lest what you now think to be pure gold turns out to be base metal." Accordingly, most young men and women have acted in entering the marriage relation as though the only question for them to settle was whether they loved each other. But they should realise that a responsibility rest upon them in the marriage relation further than this. They should consider whether their offspring will possess physical health and mental and moral strength. Upon reflection however, a few have moved with high motives and elevated considerations which they could not lightly throw off that society has claims upon them that the weight of their feeling's influence would tell in the upward or downward scale.

If those who are contemplating marriage would not have miserable unhappy reflection after marriage they must make it a subject of serious, earnest reflection and life becomes a burden and a curse. It is from the marriage hour that many and women date their success or failure in this life and their hopes of the future life. On one more practical level, affection may be clear as crystal and beauteous in its purity, yet it may be shallow because it has not been tested and tried. Family education (1994) contend that ideally, love is not a tissue fabric but a texture that will bear, wear and test and trial. Heart will be bound to heart in the golden bonds of a love that is enduring.

5.2 Conclusion

It is argued that both marriage and religiosity generally have far-reaching, positive effects; that they influence similar domains of life; and that there are important parallels in the pathways through which each achieves these outcomes. There are psychological benefits for both marrying the one you are attracted to and marrying within the fold of a denomination group. Like marriage, the institution of religion is an integrative force. Religious congregations offer regular opportunities to socialize and interact with friends who share similar values; they offer assistance to members in need; they foster a sense of community through which participants help one another. However, the long-term commitment implied by marriage and in thinking about the role of religion in the lives of married people, a good point of departure is the concept that religion should be treated as a complementary trait within marriage. Thus there would be greater efficiency and less conflict in a household if the relationship evolved out of genuine interpersonal attraction and spouses share the same religious beliefs. Some interfaith marriages, such as those involving members of different ecumenical Protestant denominations, are quite stable. Difference in religion between partners may be a destabilizing force within a marriage, albeit only when being used as an excuse to justify a dysfunction.

Recent studies based on longitudinal data have found that getting married (and staying married to the same person) is associated with better mental health outcomes. Horwitz et al. (1996), Marks and Lambert (1998), and Simon (2002) present evidence of improvements in emotional well-being following marriage, and declines following the end of a union. Many biologically adaptive traits in many species are far from optimally designed because evolution never starts with a clean slate. It is always working with preexisting structures and must make do with what is available. Evolutionary advantage frequently involves tradeoffs, and thus the key question is whether a trait or structure yields more benefits than costs. As long as a religion's denominational entities provide more love and nurturance than fear and punishment, that religion is operating adaptively. Atran and Boyer(2002) say that we cannot explain religion as an anxiety-reduction system because religion often creates anxiety.

Wilcox (2000) points out that although mainline protestant denominations talk a great deal about forbidding interdenominational unions, such views lack adaptive continuity. First of all, endogamy allows both the father and mother of the same denomination so that they can both teach the same religion to their children. But the point in intermarriages among Christian denominations is that they serve one deity and claims of superiority among denominations are misguided.

The present study shows that Social exchange, attraction romantic relationship, complementarity, attitude similarity and the propinquity effect have been found to be the most common impact agreed upon by 75% and above of the total sample. Generally most of the variables did tally with those from literature review as evidenced by 60% and above of the respondents agreeing with the literature review. Interviews revealed that Marriage is honourable, when the divine principles are recognised and obeyed in this relation amongst early adults be it in the same denomination or otherwise. Marriage is a blessing, it guards the purity and happiness of the race, it provides for man's social needs, it elevates the physical, the intellectual and the moral nature. Many youths stated that they are destitute of the qualifications necessary for the proper regulation of family and hence essential to its happiness. They talk of elevated sphere and rights to choose a mate which they state are the costs of globalisation and expense for the denominations. Quite interestingly, the church doctrine always preserve such laws for the young Christian adults even though studies would indicate most elders married outside the fold and turned partners into the fold later. While the above explanations have support, choosing a life partner requires that one be a good detective. Although chemistry and attraction contribute to a relationship's foundation, singles should be sure to investigate mutual interests, values, experience, habits, priorities and life goals.

The following outcomes surfaced in view of the findings which have emerged in the research: The "propinquity effect" is the main challenge that impact early adults' choices of marriage rather than on what they believe. Principles of interpersonal attraction sometimes contravene the church doctrine, such that early adults do not conform to church policy. Entrenched on the law of attraction and attitude similarity, intermarriage is inevitable. This is why early adults cannot resist the forces that set their hearts racing when they are interacting with potential mates. The weakening of shackles of tradition in mainstream churches is equated to changes in trends of democracy in government, brotherhood in society, equality in rights and privileges, and universal education, and as sexual love is by its nature exclusive and most young adults take the decision of who to marry for personal reasons and defy denominational values. Marriage is influenced by similarity or complementarities and not by church doctrine. While the survival of our religious community rests in numbers. Interfaith marriages can and do succeed.

The phenomenon of "interpersonal attraction" has fascinated poets, philosophers and people in general since time immemorial (Elizabeth, 2004). Quite evidently, the majority of individuals' agree that behaviour around attraction, falling in love and relating in general, therefore is dependent on the degree of their emotional development. Many of the forces that motivate people's attraction are unconscious; the researchers felt compelled to explore the challenges encountered by young Christian adults in choosing life partners of their denomination. As an institution, marriage represents a significant set of values which helps to define how each denomination or church wishes to constitute the family unit. It is hoped that the study suggested solutions to the challenges encountered in choosing life partners. The recommendations should enable the church Elders to value the decisions made by young Christian adults about marriage. It will also assist in counselling the young pertaining to marriage choice. This study gives an insight to young Christian adults so that they could be able to size up the impact of their marriage choices on what they believe. It is also hoped that the study will be a guide for future researchers who would be charged with the responsibility for studying the same or similar cases.

However, human organisms are complex beings to explore in that, many a times they inhibit important information especially that which concern their personal choices. In the process of conducting the study, the researchers encountered a number of limitations which include that the researchers could not be participant observers in all targeted Christian denominations. However, in-depth survey and qualitative methods curbed the impediment.

Denominations should accept that there is "no one true road to salvation." Nevertheless, a revolution of tremendous significance has occurred. A large number of Catholics, Protestants, and Orthodox now recognize one another as Christians— Christians who have embraced some serious theological errors and belong to faulty churches, no doubt, but Christians nonetheless. We would not necessarily extend that recognition to all the members of each other's churches, nor would we agree on where to draw the line; but we do take the perspective that a large number of members of all the other churches are, in fact, Christians. According to Judith Wallerstein, (in Warner Books, 1996), for a marriage to succeed, the young couple must psychologically and emotionally separate from their families (and religious denominations) of childhood. Interdenominational marriages should be accepted as the cost of living in an open society and not a crisis of major proportions. Religion cannot contradict itself by endorsing prejudice or deactivating brotherhood - a practice that is regarded as virtuous in its own Holy Writ. Nothing stands higher than the sanctity of the scriptures as they all read from the same book-The Bible. Denominations should come up with fundamental ways of marriage that spur and conscientise early adults to make informed choices. Denominations should only feel that a duty devolves upon them to guide the affections of the early adults, that they may be placed upon those who will be suitable companions. They should also feel it a duty, by their own teaching and example to so mould the character of the young adults from their earliest times, that they will be pure and noble and will be attracted to the good and true and to make their own choices. The meaning of interpersonal attraction must be negotiated in a way that substantially promotes the doctrine of a denomination and individual will of marriage. Early adults must be wise enough to fill the gap between principles of interpersonal attraction and their church doctrine. They must seek advice from the aged and shun the bestowal of their affections, lack of wisdom dictate a hasty choice that leads to the marriage relation becoming a galling yoke.

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