

CHAPTER FIVE

LITERATURE CONTROL

5.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to link previous research to the research findings that have been collected, analysed and coded into themes.

De Vos (1998:48) states that conducting a literature control involves planning narratives and comparing the findings with existing theories and previous research reported. The purpose of this exploration is to compare research findings with literature regarding the content of a marriage enrichment programme. The literature control focused on the topic of marriage enrichment and especially, the content that would be included in a marriage enrichment programme.

The researcher found that available literature on marriage enrichment was limited and therefore could not use too many literature sources to conduct the literature control. The major sources of literature that were mentioned in chapter 2 were also used in this chapter.

5.2. THEME 1: THE NEED FOR MARRIAGE ENRICHMENT INTERVENTION

The research found that participants identified a need for marriage enrichment for the following reasons:

- There is insufficient focus and access for couples to marriage preparation programmes as these seem to be only accessible and available within certain religious groups.

- The reasons why couples marry differ and are based on several factors such as economic reasons, pressure to marry by peers, families, age, etc. The couples therefore need support to try and maintain or sustain the marriage. Marriage enrichment groups can provide this support.
- There is currently a high level of marital breakdown and divorce in our society. “Marriages are being destroyed” and marriage enrichment is therefore needed to avoid marital breakdown.
- Marriage enrichment provides the opportunity for enhancing and making a good marriage better, and for making the marriage more enjoyable.
- Marriage enrichment programmes can provide an opportunity or forum/platform where spouses can safely share and openly discuss negative feelings and negative aspects about the marriage. Participants stated that they would not ordinarily discuss these negative aspects during their daily life for fear of conflict or anger by the other spouse.

The above statements made by the research participants in the focus groups were supported by the literature reviewed by the researcher.

According to Mc Manus (1995) quoted in Hunt, Hof and DeMaria (1998:7) the crises experienced in marriages and families challenge us to find more effective and efficient ways to reach couples earlier, before they become locked into dysfunctional patterns that not only destroy their relationships but seriously affect their children and others around them. The ME movement has emerged in response to the serious problems facing marriages and families today.

Hunt, Hof and DeMaria (1998:40) inform us that ME has a major emphasis upon the positive aspects of the marital relationship. The positive emphasis provides a base for moving to more sensitive and difficult issues such as those involving conflict or anger. The teaching of specific skills that makes the expression of and constructive resolution

of negative feelings possible is also part of many programmes. Although positive affirmation skills are essential it is also necessary for a programme to enable couples to cope effectively with potential areas of conflict such as unfulfilled wants and needs.

Couples who only receive training in the expression of positive feelings and thoughts cannot be expected to express themselves effectively when negative feelings and thoughts in conflictual situations arise (Gottman, 1994) in Hunt, Hof and DeMaria (1998:41). Marriage enrichment programmes therefore are designed to give couples practice in both areas, which also includes how to deal with the expression of negative feelings.

According to Hanna (1995:346), marriage counselors believe that the answer to “Why do we want to marry?” is one of the best predictors of marital success. Hanna (1995:346) discusses the following poor reasons for marriage:

- i. Pressure: pressure can come from a lover, family, friends, or society itself. Even age exerts pressure, according to Hanna (1995:346).
- ii. Other reasons come from the child ego state: “Oh, marriage seems like such fun.” “It’ll be like playing house.” “We can sleep together legally.” “The wedding and honeymoon will be such fun.” “I’m so in love.” Even love is not a sufficient reason to marry. Although love is certainly of great importance, intimate relationships and successful marriages require even more.

These poor reasons mentioned above make it necessary for couples to have a resource such as ME, beside that of divorce, who want to improve the quality and fate of their marriages to make it better and more fulfilling. Even couples that marry for the “right” reasons will need support to ensure marital satisfaction.

The literature reviewed thus support the statements made by the respondents with regard to this theme. The respondents agreed that there is a need for marriage enrichment and that it is an important resource for couples.

5.3. THEME 2: MENTORING AND SUPPORT THROUGH MARRIAGE ENRICHMENT GROUPS

The research found that participants noted the enrichment needs of the group of people in society who are brought up in single parent households. These people grow up with negative feelings and emotions towards the concept of marriage, and are also often not exposed to the positive modeling of marital roles. It was felt that these individuals, once married, would be able to be inspired and mentored in their own marriages through the marriage enrichment group and that such a group will provide an important resource for young married people who grew up in single-parent households. The authors that were reviewed did not include research on this topic and therefore, the researcher believes that new information was gained through this research study.

The focus group participants also saw the need for conducting marriage enrichment in a group setting. They felt that the group process facilitates discussion of problems presented in marriages. It also provides the opportunity for sharing and providing support among the couples and that this encourages growth within marriages. The group experience is seen by participants as an ideal way to allow couples to learn from the experiences of others. This view was supported by the literature reviewed by the researcher.

According to Hunt, Hof & DeMaria (1998:23) all forms of ME have had couples meeting together in group settings, although the amount of contact between couples

varies among programmes. Positive support arises out of the informal friendships that develop among couples that participate in the same event. The common theme is to encourage honesty about the full range of marital issues and concerns. With an attitude of strong respect for the privacy of each couple, discussions among couples allow them to compare notes about marriage and to encourage and support each other in their marriage relationships.

According to Hunt, Hof & DeMaria (1998:37) in ME, participants in a group setting have the opportunity to consult with and help other couples (altruism) and to experience a sense of universality. Hunt, Hof & DeMaria (1998:37) also point out the following as primary categories of curative factors in group therapy:

- i. Imparting information;
- ii. Instillation of hope;
- iii. Universality (sense of “I am not alone with this problem”);
- iv. Altruism (helping other group members through support, reassurance, etc.);
- v. Corrective recapitulation of the primary family group;
- vi. Development of socializing techniques (social learning);
- vii. Imitative behaviour (modeling);
- viii. Interpersonal learning;
- ix. Group cohesiveness (sense of solidarity, wellness, experiencing the group as a source of strength and encouragement);
- x. Catharsis (ventilation of positive and negative feelings).

These curative factors are interdependently operative in every type of therapy group, including couple groups, but they have varying degrees of importance depending on the nature, goals and composition of the specific group.

Mace (1975) in Hunt, Hof & DeMaria (1998:38) reminds us that a ME event is not just a group of unrelated individuals, but a group of subgroups (couples), each of which is a preexisting and ongoing social unit, making for a more complex group experience. Another major element in ME programmes is a set of shared beliefs about the importance of persons, their marriages, and the value of encouragement from others.

Brown and Brown (2002:96) state that all couples need support and that meeting this need is critical to the well-being of the marriage. Marriage enrichment groups can be an important source to provide support to couple relationships.

The literature discussed above support the discussion by the participants who saw the group approach as a positive approach for marriage enrichment.

5.4. THEME 3: PREVENTIVE NATURE OF MARRIAGE ENRICHMENT

The research participants view marriage enrichment as a prevention programme that seeks to equip and empower couples with skills and techniques that help towards preventing the breakdown of their marriage. The programme as seen by the participants, focuses on strengthening the marriage relationship and to providing various skills and techniques that is then utilised by the couple to enhance and enrich the marital relationship. These views that are shared by the research participants was supported by the literature available on this subject.

Davidson and Moore (1996) state that marriage enrichment has emerged as a preventative approach to assist couples trying to make their marriages better. Denton (1986:3) states that marriage enrichment calls for prevention, for helping couples and families to discover their strengths and enhance these before reaching the clinical stage. Rather than waiting for something to “go wrong”, enrichment is proactive. It

takes the initiative to deal with the ordinary difficulties of life while they are just that – small, “stone-in-the-shoe” problems of life confronted by all couples and families. However, if unattended, if mismanaged, these everyday problems can blossom into crises of major proportions so that therapy is needed.

According to Hunt, Hof & DeMaria (1998:19) the aim of ME programmes is to prevent the emergence, development or recurrence of interpersonal dysfunction. It is believed that by dealing with people in marriages that are basically functional, and by developing the potential and strengths that are there, growth and satisfaction can occur. As a positive, growth-oriented base develops, deterioration in the relationship can be halted or prevented. The parties learn how to recognize problems early, and how to cope with change and conflict.

5.5. THEME 4: EDUCATIONAL NATURE OF MARRIAGE ENRICHMENT

The focus group participants interviewed in this research all agreed that education and skills development is crucial to a marriage enrichment programme. They highlighted the importance of teaching, sharing and building skills that will equip couples with skills and information to help them resolve and handle problems when they do occur in the marriage.

The various skills mentioned by the participants were communication, managing of finances, problem solving, conflict management and parenting skills. These skills are considered by the participants to be essential in sustaining the marriage. Participants also mentioned the value of the group process in the sharing of ideas and experiences, which enhances the learning experience of the couples attending.

The views shared by the participants were supported by the literature reviewed by the researcher. Brown and Brown (2002:189) state that the primary goals of marriage

enrichment are to promote self-awareness, empathy, self-disclosure, increased intimacy, and the development of communication and problem-solving skills. Diskin (1986:114) states that enrichment programmes usually adhere to an educational model, teaching the skills of communication, conflict negotiation and decision-making. They act as a support service for married couples, enabling partners to cope better with increasing demands placed upon them from within and without the relationship. According to Dinkmeyer and Carlson (1986:19) the movement to enrich marriages and provide education rather than therapy for couples emerged to help couples build happier and more satisfying relationships.

Hunt, Hof & DeMaria (1998:18) state that the proponents of ME emphasize its dynamic, experiential, and educational nature. According to Guerney (1977) quoted in Hunt, Hof & DeMaria (1998:18) an educational model is one in which attitudes and specific skills are taught in a structured and systematic fashion. Behavioural objectives are stated and appropriate evaluative measures are included in the programme. A rationale is provided for what is to be learned, along with practice and supervision. There is a focus on developing skills and teaching participants to generalize beyond the learning situation to their everyday life experiences.

The focal points of the educational model are on the setting of goals and reaching them, increasing understanding, and creating a climate of growth and development. There is an emphasis on individual and relationship strengths rather than on what is wrong with the relationship or how the relationship got to where it is. The educational model can provide a successful structure for increasing interpersonal functioning (Hunt, Hof & DeMaria 1998:19).

5.6. THEME 5: MARITAL SATISFACTION

The participants interviewed in the focus groups all agreed that the focus of marriage enrichment is on making a good marriage better and on bringing in new experiences

and more fun and enjoyment into the marriage. This is seen as important towards making the marriage more fulfilling and satisfying. Marital satisfaction is considered by the participants to be an important topic of focus in a marriage enrichment programme and the participants agree that couples need to define for themselves what would make their marriage more satisfying or what they define as satisfying for their own marriages.

The participants related marital satisfaction to the enhancing of positive aspects in the marriage and adding more to them in order to create a more satisfying marriage. Participants also suggested that couples re-assess and expand the marital boundaries when necessary in order for them to obtain marital satisfaction. The following literature that was reviewed regarding this theme supports the views of the research participants.

Callan and Noller (1987:118) state that marital satisfaction, which is often labeled as marital happiness or adjustment, is the subjective evaluation of the quality of the couple's relationship, generally across a number of factors. Marital satisfaction is the most important determinant of whether a marriage will remain intact (Callan & Noller, 1987:118).

Marital satisfaction is a subjective evaluation that a relationship is good, happy, satisfying or successful. Each person brings into a marriage a set of expectations, certain personality dynamics, a distinct family background and a particular level of physical and emotional health. It is the way these sets of factors combine and inter-relate that determines the marital satisfaction of the couple (Callan & Noller, 1987:119).

According to Brown & Brown (2002:160) trust and intimacy are critical factors in a successful marriage. Trust develops slowly as couples spend enjoyable times together,

strive to understand each other, back up their actions with words, and fulfill their obligations to each other. Without trust, the authors believe that closeness and intimacy are not possible in the relationship.

Brown & Brown (2002:171) further state that intimacy can only occur when each partner has a clear sense of himself/herself as separate from the other. An intimate relationship develops from a choice to be together, rather than a need to fulfill one's self through another. In an intimate relationship, partners bring out the best in each other, care for each other, and enjoy the relationship. They also take responsibility for the relationship, protect it, and share their joys as well as their hurts.

5.7. THEME 6: SELF DISCLOSURE

The participants interviewed in this research agreed that a marriage enrichment programme should allow for couples to redefine their expectations and feelings regarding what each spouse would want out of the marriage relationship. The participants also discussed that the positive and negative aspects of the marriage should be discussed during the programme, by the spouses. They also felt that the marriage enrichment programme can be an important and neutral platform or forum where negative feelings can be shared in a safe, professional environment, that otherwise is often repressed by the spouses. They acknowledged that in order for self-disclosure to occur there needs to be trust in the relationship, and in one's partner. Self-disclosure will not be possible if spouses do not feel safe and secure in the relationship. These views maintained by the participants were supported by the literature reviewed with regard to this theme.

According to Hunt, Hof & DeMaria (1998:46) self-disclosure – the revealing of one's thoughts and feelings to another person, is of central significance to the philosophy and process of marriage enrichment. Self-disclosure is most effective, according to

Hunt, Hof & DeMaria (1998:19) when it is appropriate, honest, direct, explicit, and congruent. In addition, when there is a balance between the expression of thoughts and feelings, the disclosure takes on an even greater meaning.

According to Lief (1977) quoted in Hunt, Hof & DeMaria (1998: 46) self-disclosure is appropriate and most helpful when the following criteria are met:

- i. When it is a function of the ongoing relationship,
- ii. When it occurs reciprocally,
- iii. When it is timely,
- iv. When it is pertinent,
- v. When it moves by relatively small increments,
- vi. When it can be confirmed by the other person,
- vii. When account is taken of the effect that disclosure has on the other person,
- viii. When it creates a reasonable risk,
- ix. When it accelerates during a crisis,
- x. When the content is mutually shared.

According to Hunt, Hof & DeMaria (1998:47) self-disclosure exerts its influence on relationships in several ways. First, one gains a greater awareness of true self through successful disclosure. Second, self-disclosure helps an individual discern similarities and differences between his or her perceptions and feelings and those of others. It also makes it possible for people to learn directly from each other what their specific needs, expectations, and intentions are. Thus, self-disclosure encourages people to redirect their perceptions of others from roles such as husband, wife, mother, or father to unique sensitive individuals. In other words, the higher the self-esteem, the higher the level of self-disclosure. Finally, according to Hunt, Hof & DeMaria (1998:47) disclosure begets more disclosure, but a climate of trust and acceptance is needed to initiate and maintain the reciprocating cycle.

Hunt, Hof & DeMaria (1998:47) warn that, although the benefits of self-disclosure cannot be disputed, the philosophy of ME does not endorse unlimited disclosure. It is limited to the extent that it is positive and voluntary and not the result of confrontation. Evidence suggests that the valence of a disclosure (its positiveness or negativeness) may be more important than the level of intimacy achieved (Gilbert, 1976) quoted in Hunt, Hof & DeMaria (1998:47). That means that high levels of disclosure actually may be destructive if the thoughts and feelings disclosed are highly negative (Gottman, 1994) quoted in Hunt, Hof & DeMaria (1998:47).

Hanna (1995:222) mentions that just as all kinds of content can be organized into levels, self-disclosure also has its degrees. According to Hunt, Hof & DeMaria (1998: 47) what is needed in ME programming is a response to the varying disclosure needs of all couples. There is also a need for clear, public expression of disclosure norms and possibilities that are likely to occur within the framework of a particular programme model. Such a statement of norms would make it easier, and less a matter of chance, for a particular couple to select or be referred to a programme that could suitably address their perceived needs and risk-level.

In summary, ME emphasises certain key aspects of self-disclosure and sees them as integral parts of a mutually satisfying and growing relationship. They are that the disclosure be voluntary, positive, not the result of confrontation, and accented on the building of self-esteem.

5.8. THEME 7: SEXUAL ENRICHMENT

This research found that participants agreed together that an important aspect of a marriage enrichment programme should be to focus on sexual intimacy and sexual enrichment of the marriage. They all agreed that sexual fulfillment is needed to ensure marital satisfaction and therefore felt that sex and sexual issues must be included as a

topic in the marriage enrichment programme. Participants also mentioned the possibility of the use of a professional sex therapist to discuss and explore the topic of sex and sexual fulfillment with the couples and that couples should be exposed to different techniques that enhances bonding and intimacy on a physical and emotional level that results in sexual enrichment and marital satisfaction. Participants acknowledged that they perceived a link between low levels of sexual satisfaction in the marriage with the incidence of spouses' involvement in extra-marital relationships. The views that were shared by the participants were supported by the literature reviewed by the researcher.

According to Hanna (1995:333) sexuality is a part of being human, and lovemaking has special meaning within an intimate love relationship. Finding ways to enhance one's own sexuality and to maintain a fulfilling relationship is vital. Hanna (1995: 334) states that therapists are quick to point out that sexual dissatisfaction within marriage is common, and usually, the underlying cause is not a sexual one. Hanna (1995:334) quotes mark Schwartz, a sex therapist who contends that when clients come to him seeking help for sexual problems, he spends 80 percent of the time in marital therapy and only 20 percent on sexual behaviour. He pinpoints incomplete self-disclosure as a factor. Sex deteriorates when a person is seemingly incapable of establishing a close, mutually disclosing, nonsexual relationship with another person.

Brown & Brown (2002: 22) state that a good sexual relationship is an expression of affection and a strong marriage. According to Wallerstein (1995:186) sexual expression affects all aspects of the couple's relationship. She states that a harmonious sex life adds powerful new strands to the relationship and affects all domains of the marriage. As a couple finds sexual pleasure together, their perceptions of and fantasies about each other expand. Their shared erotic experiences, the memories they have created, and their new physical ties profoundly change their self-images. A good

sexual relationship strengthens self-confidence, affirming a man's pride in his manhood and a woman's pride in her womanhood.

Wallerstein (1995:186) states that the ability to give and receive sexual pleasure is a mature dimension of adulthood. Achieving it together is not only a source of individual pride but also an affirmation of the couple's unity and commitment. She further notes that a healthy sexual relationship requires communication about the couple's physical relationship. Sexual intercourse requires vulnerability where partners let the other know what they desire. Each partner must trust the other and overcome the fear of rejection. When couples are able to overcome such fears, they are able to find satisfaction and fulfillment in their marriage.

Brown & Brown (2002:23) state that the couple cannot complete the task of exploring sexual love and intimacy in their marriage if there are unexpressed issues that affect the relationship. Expression of desires require each partner to risk being rejected, while avoidance of key issues such as money or intimacy creates distance and dissatisfaction. When partners can communicate openly about their expectations and desires, they are able to feel accepted and may improve their physical relationship.

According to Brown & Brown (2002:23) exploring sexual love and intimacy requires that the couple communicate verbally and nonverbally about their desires and expectations and look for ways to please each other. The couple works as a team where each partner gives and receives pleasure in the relationship.

5.9. THEME 8: INDIVIDUAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT IN RELATION TO THE GROWTH OF THE MARITAL RELATIONSHIP

The research results found that participants showed concern for the subject of individual or personal goals that often become sacrificed whilst pursuing growth in the

marital relationship. Participants felt that marriage enrichment programmes should address the need for spouses to maintain their individuality and not lose focus of their own personal or professional goals whilst pursuing couple relational goals. They felt that spouses should maintain a degree of separateness, whilst sharing a connectedness on another level in the marital relationship.

The research participants also acknowledge the life-cycle changes of individuals in relation to the life cycle changes of the marriage relationship. The impact of these changes on the individual impacts on the marriage and vice versa. These views shared by the research participants, is supported by the existing literature.

Hunt, Hof & DeMaria (1998:20) quote Herbert Otto (1976:14) who defines ME in terms of the “development of marriage and individual potential while maintaining a consistent and primal focus on the relationship of the couple.” His definition indicates the balance that most ME programmes try to provide between relational and marital growth on the one hand, and individual growth on the other.

Hunt, Hof & DeMaria (1998:20) further quote Mace and Mace (1976) who state that ME programmes need to focus on the simultaneous growth and development of the individual and of the marital relationship, with each aspect supporting the other. Such a focus contributes to the development of a growing, flexible, mutually satisfying relationship. Miller et al (1991) quoted by Hunt, Hof & DeMaria (1998:20), note that one goal of the Couples Communication Programme is increased self- awareness, partner-awareness, and couple-awareness, and increased self- and other-esteem. Otto (1969) in Hunt, Hof & DeMaria (1998:20), speaks of actualizing the potential of the couple in relationship to each other and the personal potential of each individual in the relationship. It has been stressed that self-actualization is needed along with relationship actualization.

Hunt, Hof & DeMaria (1998:21) state that most ME programmes emphasize improvement of the marital relationship, devoting the majority of time to couple communication, deepening the mutual acceptance and emotional life of the couple, fostering marriage strengths, and developing marriage potential. At the same time, acceptance, esteem, actualization, and expression of the self are crucial aspects of growth and development in the marriage and other relationships and need to be addressed as well. Luthman and Kirschenbaum (1974) in Hunt, Hof & DeMaria (1998:21) state that the “ideal base for a marital relationship is that each partner have a strong sense of himself as a separate, whole person, whose survival is attached to himself and to his growth.” They also stress the ability to be parents, children, and friends to each other as necessary to actualize the potential of the individual and the couple.

According to Brown & Brown (2002:16) building togetherness and creating autonomy is crucial to developing a psychological identity for the marriage. Construction of an identity is often absent or is very weak in distressed marriages. In happily married couples, togetherness is not created at the expense of autonomy or each spouse’s efforts to meet their individual needs.

Brown & Brown (2002:16) further state that a marital identity helps couples cope with life’s inevitable frustrations and problems. The new identity is built on mutual respect and the primacy of the relationship with each other. Relationships with friends and coworkers need to be changed or terminated if they compete with the spousal relationship.

Hunt, Hof & DeMaria (1998:21) state that ME programmes must respond to both individual and couple needs for growth and development. This can occur whether the programme focuses equally on individual and couple growth, or just on enhancing the relationship. A problem emerges only when one or the other is virtually excluded or

ignored. They also state that many ME practitioners emphasize the inevitability of conflict and the legitimacy of appropriately managed conflict within the marital relationship. They also stress that emerging conflict within a dynamic system is not always easily managed solely through dialogue, and they frequently provide skill training in conflict management. Constructive conflict management and problem solving is much needed as the application and practice of what is stated verbally.

5.10. THEME 9: CONSIDERATION OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY

This research found that different cultural groups often have different criteria for defining the different roles of spouses in a marriage. Participants also noted that couples from different cultures have different definitions of marital satisfaction. Participants felt the acknowledgement of different norms, values and cultural practices, and the impact that these may have on a marriage enrichment group will need to be considered when a programme is being developed. They also mentioned that consideration should be given to cultural differences within the group.

According to Brown & Brown (2002:176) culture and ethnic differences lead to differences in expectations and attitudes about marriage. They further state that partners who present themselves with unchangeable problems, such as problems based on differences in ethnicity and culture, must learn to accept each other's view of the problem. That is, each must become more compassionate and "soften" his or her position on the other's behaviour before any change can take place. If partners are unable to understand how ethnic or cultural traditions affect the other's behaviour, then each will not see the other's concern as valid or see how each other's behaviours cause pain for their partner.

According to Brown & Brown (2002:177) in order to create acceptance, the leader must reframe the marital problem as one of common differences between the marriage

partners and their emotional reaction to these differences. Acceptance can occur when each partner learns to tolerate or live with the other partner's negative behaviour. The leader can help the couple become more tolerant of each other's problems by fostering self-acceptance, self-control, and self-awareness.

This research also found that participants felt that specific cultural groups who meet together in a marriage enrichment exercise and who understand each other's culture will enjoy the experience of marriage enrichment, thus implying that specific programmes be designed to meet the needs of a specific cultural group, for example a group of Hindu or Muslim or Christian couples. The research participants felt that the group will be able to benefit more from this experience as the couples that participate all share the same beliefs, values and norms regarding the roles and responsibilities of the married couple.

Hunt, Hof & DeMaria (1998:179) discuss some programmes with ethnic couples. They discuss specific programmes designed for African-American couples and for Chinese Americans therefore lending support to the idea that separate and specific programmes be designed to fulfill the enrichment needs of these specific cultures.

The researcher found that insufficient literature exists on this topic. There appears to be more research conducted in family and marriage therapy than on marriage enrichment. The research found that participants also discussed the cultural competence of the group leader or therapist to deal with culturally diverse groups. Respect for different cultures is seen as an important aspect. Participants felt that when conducting marriage enrichment groups, leaders must be able to give consideration for the different cultures participating.

5.11. SUMMARY

This chapter linked previous research on marriage enrichment to the research findings of this study through a literature review.

Previous research supported the findings of this study and new information was also gained in theme 2 that was not found in the literature sources reviewed by the researcher. The aims and objectives of this research study, as set out in chapter 1, were reached and were also supported by and coincided with previous research findings. The purpose of this study was accomplished as it links to previous research and offered a new insight. This gives a broader framework for professionals who wish to develop a marriage enrichment programme for use by professionals in the practice of marriage enrichment.