AN INTERPRETATIVE PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF EVANGELICAL
PASTORS’ COMPETENCIES IN BIBLICAL MALE SEXUALITY
AND SPIRITUAL FORMATION

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education
by
Kirby John Silo

Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA
2022
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February 10, 2022

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this interpretative phenomenological analysis study was to understand how Evangelical pastors’ knowledge of biblical male sexuality, pedagogical knowledge, and relational knowledge affected their ministry praxis of teaching, educating, and discipling men in living sexually pure lives from a biblical perspective. Biblical sexuality is a significant component in the spiritual formation of Christian men. Current studies show that sexuality remains an awkward topic in Evangelical churches today. As a result, Christian men are not getting the help they need in this critical part of their spiritual development. Participants (N=7) were male Evangelical pastors serving as senior pastors in small churches with no professional counselors on staff. The competencies in teaching, educating, and discipling Christian men regarding male sexuality from a biblical perspective are generally defined as having the comprehensive knowledge of what the bible teaches about male sexuality as well as having the technical skills to educate men about biblical male sexuality through relational spiritual formation, and discipleship. The theories that guided this study are Shulman’s (1986) Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) and Solid Pastors Ministry’s (2018) Relational Competency (RK).

Keywords: Evangelical pastors, small church, biblical male sexuality, Relational Pedagogical Content Knowledge.
Dedication

To the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen. – Jude 1:25 (NASB)

This work is dedicated to my wife and ministry partner, Aileen, and my children, Asher and Hannah. Thank you for your support, patience, and encouragement. My schoolwork has kept me from you a lot, and I am grateful for your understanding. You are God’s gift to me. I love you so much!
Acknowledgments

To Dr. Butler and Dr. Beck, thank you. This work would not be possible if it were not for your insights, encouragement, guidance, and patience. God bless you both.

To the faculty of Liberty University, thank you. I have been a student at Liberty University since 2010, where I received my undergraduate and graduate degrees. Without exception, the professors in the Doctor of Education in Christian Leadership program were very helpful, gracious, and Christ-like.

To the nominators who provided me with participant leads, this work would not be possible without your assistance.

To the seven pastors who shared their thoughts, feelings, experiences, and struggles in their ministry of conforming men to the image of the Lord Jesus Christ, this work would not be possible without you. May the Lord grant me the grace, wisdom, and strength to follow your example in loving the broken and pointing them to Christ Jesus our Lord.

To my church family, with whom I have the privilege of serving as senior pastor, thank you for your understanding, support, and prayers.

To my parents and mother-in-law, who prayed for me and supported me, thank you for your love and prayers.

To my dog, Aldo, thank you for keeping me company when I have to stay up late, writing in the wee hours of the night.

Most importantly, thank You, Lord Jesus Christ, for helping and guiding me through this journey. I am in awe of Your grace, mercy, and love. Thank You for Your Holy Spirit, who helped me in crucial times. Glory be to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, God in three Persons, Blessed Trinity!
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List of Abbreviations

Biblical Male Sexuality (BMS)

Interview Questions (IQ)

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)

Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK)

Relational Knowledge (RK)

Relational Pedagogical Content Knowledge (RPCK)

Research Questions (RQ)
CHAPTER ONE: RESEARCH CONCERN

Introduction

After His resurrection from the dead and before His ascension, Christ Jesus commanded Peter to care for His sheep and feed His flock (John 21:15-18). The commandment given to Peter to shepherd His sheep three times is a metaphor for the heart of pastoral ministry as seen in the eyes of Christ (Michaels, 2010). Repeating the mandate he received from Christ Jesus, the Apostle Peter stressed how important it is for pastors to shepherd God’s flock properly. Ultimately, pastors are accountable to Christ Jesus, the Chief Shepherd (1 Pet. 5:2-4).

The primary objective of being a pastor or someone who shepherds Christ’s flock is to feed them with the truth of the teachings of God’s word (MacArthur, 2005). The three essential and divinely appointed resources that enable the Christian to grow spiritually in Christ are God’s word, God’s Spirit, and God’s people (Morrow, 2008, p. 45). Still, the pastor is responsible for the proper preaching and teaching of God’s word so that the church may mature spiritually.

Spiritual maturity translates into practical application, and the practical application of spiritual maturity is Christ-likeness or conformity to the image of Christ in character and deeds (Samra, 2006). God has provided His word and His Spirit to transform Christ’s church to be godly men and women in all the areas of their lives, and self-control is the foundation for godly behavior (Kisling, 2008). As a capable shepherd, the pastor must excel in feeding Christ’s sheep with the life-giving word of God so that they may grow spiritually and practically in all the areas of their lives, including sexual purity.

In particular, the focus of this research study was to understand how Evangelical pastors’ pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) regarding biblical male sexuality (BMS) and how their
relational knowledge (RK) affects their practical ministry of teaching, educating, and discipling men in their churches to be men of integrity and purity in their sexual lives.

This chapter provided a brief background to the problem and the statement of the problem. This chapter also covered this research’s purpose statement and questions. In addition, assumptions to the study were laid out, and the study’s delimitations were identified in this chapter. Finally, a definition of the terms used throughout this study and the study’s significance was provided towards the end of this chapter.

**Background to the Problem**

Christian spiritual maturity should translate into practical application in all the areas of the Christian life, including their actions, beliefs, and ideas about human sexuality and sexual relationships. Unfortunately, the link between biblical spirituality and human sexuality is easy to miss because of the misconception by Evangelical Christians that human sexuality and its expressions are somehow carnal (Anderson, 2018). As a result, most pastors tread the subject lightly due to the awkwardness and sensitive nature of the topic (Hart, 1994).

Today, the Evangelical church is still struggling to talk about sex. According to recent studies, there are no real and honest discussions of sex and human sexuality from a biblical perspective in Evangelical churches today (Isom, 2018). In addition, the availability of erotica through the internet adds to the stigma that sex for pleasure is unspiritual and unacceptable for a Christian (Spenceley, 2012).

The Evangelical church’s negative view towards sex and human sexuality is deeply rooted in early church history and protestant theology. For example, Origen, a student of the Platonic ideals of a simple life, eventually lived a life of extreme asceticism, going as far as castrating himself for the sake of the Kingdom of God (Gonzalez, 2010). Gregory of Nyssa also
held a platonic view of Christianity, dismissing the physical body for the sake of the celestial one (Boersma, 2018). Similarly, Augustine of Hippo, a theologian revered by Roman Catholics and Protestants, was a Manichean Gnostic before converting to Christianity (Wilson, 2019). The Manichean philosophy greatly influenced Augustine’s development of Christian theology that included a dualist view that the physical body is evil and the spirit is good (Wilson, 2019).

The low view of sex and the body continued in the Protestant Reformation’s theology, even into Puritanism in the 16th and 17th centuries. Although the Puritans rejected the Roman Catholic clergy’s practice of celibacy but affirmed instead that sex within marriage is holy, the Puritans believed that sex within marriage should not be passionate, hinting that pleasure in sex even within marriage is lustful and sinful (Doriani, 1991). Indeed, Puritanism became synonymous with being a prude; Puritans were known for their strict moral code and abstinence from any pleasure (Beeke & Smalley, 2020).

Pentecostalism of the early 20th century also had a dualist view of body and spirit, which continues to this day, often viewing sex within marriage as generally indecent, thereby imposing the need to place restrictions on it (Nadar & Jodamus, 2019). Today, Pentecostalism still carries the dualist view of body and spirit, sacrificing sex for pleasure even in marriage for pietism (Kgalemang, 2014).

The latest sex scandals involving prominent Evangelical personalities are waking up the Evangelical church’s attitudes on sexuality but in the wrong way because the reason that is often given for such moral failings is that men are hard-wired for sex, and there is nothing they can do about it (Gregoire, 2021). Still, Evangelical seminaries are aware of the lack of training by pastors in dealing with human sexuality issues (Meehan, 2021).
Because of the inherent awkwardness of sexuality, it largely remains taboo in Evangelical churches today (Isom, 2018). As a result, many Christian men struggle with sexual sins independently without real help from their churches (Barlett, 2014). Pastors should be at the forefront of this core issue. Pastors were called to be the principal disciplers of men, especially in biblical male sexuality (BMS) (Hart, 1994). BMS should be an essential component of Christian formation in Evangelical churches today through education and discipleship (Bartlett, 2014). Suppose pastors are not prepared to deal with male sexuality issues and do not know what the Bible says about them. How can they be the educators of men about sexuality issues from a biblical perspective?

Pastors are called to shepherd Christ’s flock by discipling them to be followers of the teachings of Jesus Christ (MacArthur, 2005). Discipleship is integral to spiritual formation, which is needed to help Christians remember that Christianity is not about the individual “self” but about following Christ Jesus wholly as Lord (Key, 2020). Discipleship, therefore, also encompasses the discipline for men to live sexually pure lives as an expression of submission to Christ Jesus (Anderson, 2018). Evangelical pastors, therefore, must be proactive in training men to live sexually pure lives from a biblical perspective as part of their spiritual formation.

**Statement of the Problem**

Evangelical pastors are called to educate and disciple their flocks in spiritual and sexuality issues (Suh, 2018). Sexuality and sexual identity, along with their role and responsibilities, are integral to what it means to be a human being created in the image of God (Hastings, 2017). Sexuality is part of the Christian life and experience. However, the topic of sex and sexuality is awkward in and of itself (Isom, 2018). The Christian man may find himself on his own trying to understand what the Bible teaches about male sexuality and its responsibilities.
Worst, the Christian man may turn to popular ideas about sex, which often run contrary to the biblical teachings of sex and male sexuality, leading him to sexual sins such as pornography (Jacobs, 2018).

Entertainment, social media, and information technology are just some factors contributing to the decline of morality today (Collinsworth, 2017). Recently, popular culture has coined the term “toxic masculinity,” which refers to the idea that men acting like men is bad for society in general (Salam, 2019). Even major U.S. corporations support the idea that being a man is destructive in itself while promoting effeminate beauty for men (Bacon, n.d.). The Evangelical church is no longer immune to these contemporary ideas, and popular culture greatly influences Christian men’s view of sex and sexuality in one way or another (Fredrickson, 2010).

Popular culture trivializes and normalizes sexual sins and the misuse and abuse of the God-given gift of sexuality. At the same time, popular culture mocks Evangelical Christianity for its hypocrisy since a few famous Evangelical leaders have been involved in sexual impropriety (Maxwell, 2017). These sexual failures by Evangelical leaders contributed to the cynicism of the secular world about the genuineness of the Evangelical Christian faith and those within the Evangelical church (Mirahmadi, 2021). Evangelical pastors’ attitudes on moral failure do not help either. A survey of Evangelical pastors indicated that only as much as 27% of them believe they should withdraw permanently from the ministry due to moral failings (Lifeway Research, 2020, p. 4).

It is not surprising that pastors feel ill-equipped to discuss human sexuality issues. According to a recent study by Barna Group (2020, para. 13), half of the clergy felt uncomfortable discussing social issues from the public, including homosexuality, same-sex marriage, abortion, and pro-life issues. Moreover, Evangelical pastors are unprepared to teach
contemporary sexuality issues because they never had practical training about them (Turner & Stayton, 2014). As a result, “churches are filled with people worried about their sexuality, wondering how to understand these things, struggling with same-sex attractions, tempted to stray from their marriages, enticed by Internet pornography and wondering how to bring their sexuality under submission to Christ” (Fredrickson, 2010, para.10). If this is the case, then the Evangelical church’s current condition is troubling and concerning.

It is not an option for the Evangelical pastor to teach and train the church about what the Bible says about sexual issues. However, Evangelical pastors neglect their calling in this issue (Suh 2018). Evangelical pastors are the spiritual leaders of men in their churches on matters concerning biblical sexuality. In that case, they need to effectively teach, educate, and disciple them in this area.

**Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) study was to understand how the competencies of Evangelical pastors in small churches regarding biblical male sexuality contributed to a practical ministry of discipling men to live a life of sexual integrity and purity. According to Simon (2012, 30-31), sexual integrity, from a covenantal lens, is the view that sexual intercourse is a sacred physical and mystical act that happens within the marriage covenant that is also symbolic of the mystical and life uniting symbolic union of Christ with the church, which is not to be taken lightly for doing so will be an affront to God.

At this stage in the research, competencies in educating and discipling Christian men in their understanding of what the Bible teaches about male sexuality is defined as having the comprehensive knowledge about biblical male sexuality and the skill sets to educate and help men deal with sexual sins and educate Christian men in their sexuality through spiritual
formation and regular discipleship (Hart, 1994; Jones, 2011). The theoretical framework that guided this study is Shulman’s (1986) Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK), which states that teachers should be experts of their subject matter and possess technical teaching skills needed to educate their students. In addition to Shulman’s PCK theory, this study incorporated Evangelical pastors’ relational competency (RK) as stated in Solid Pastors Ministry (2018). Relational competency, such as speaking candidly to men in the church about male sexuality, is equally important in training men to live sexually pure lives.

**Research Questions**

The following research questions (RQ) guided this interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA):

**RQ1.** How would Evangelical pastors describe their proficiency, if any, in addressing male sexuality issues from a biblical perspective?

This question sought to capture the knowledge and teaching competency of the Evangelical pastor regarding male sexuality from a biblical perspective. The source of knowledge regarding male sexuality may come from formal training such as seminary or informal training such as conferences or self-learning. The purpose of this question was not to assess the effectiveness of the Evangelical pastor’s seminary training regarding the issues of sex and male sexuality because some Evangelical pastors have little to no formal seminary training (Gilcher, 2020). The point of this question was to simply determine the level of knowledge the Evangelical pastor has regarding sex and male sexuality from a biblical perspective. It also sought to capture his pedagogical knowledge in teaching men in their flock about male sexuality issues from a biblical perspective. Pedagogical knowledge includes one-on-one counseling on avoiding and dealing with sexual sins, training married men to be spiritual leaders, and how to have healthy marital relations with their wives. Pastors are not just preachers. According to the
Scriptures, pastors must teach individuals what is right and wrong anytime the need arises (Patton, 2005).

**RQ2.** How would Evangelical pastors describe their comfort level, if any, in educating men in their ministry contexts about matters of male sexuality from a biblical perspective?

RQ2 sought to capture an Evangelical pastor’s comfort level in educating and discipling men in their spiritual care regarding the awkward subject of male sexuality from a biblical perspective. The pastor will likely avoid the uncomfortable topic of male sexuality if he is not comfortable speaking about it, even if he has a thorough knowledge of the subject matter and the skill sets to teach it to others. Relating to others meaningfully and personally is crucial for pastors (Floyd, 2017).

**RQ3.** How would Evangelical pastors describe, if any, their current ministry model in educating men regarding male sexuality from a biblical perspective?

RQ3 sought to capture an Evangelical pastor’s practical discipleship model of men in their ministry contexts regarding male sexuality from a biblical perspective through a consistent discipleship ministry model such as group classes and one-on-one counseling. Ministry models should include the frequency (e.g., weekly, monthly), the participants (e.g., singles, married), and the method (e.g., one-on-one counseling, group discussion).

**RQ4.** How would Evangelical pastors describe their ability to model sexual integrity and purity from a biblical perspective?

RQ4 sought to capture the Evangelical pastor’s ability to model what the Bible teaches about male sexuality as part of their relational competency. Pastors should serve as examples in how they lead their families, how they treat their wives, and how they conduct themselves inside and outside of the church setting that is becoming of the office of a pastor of Christ’s church that is free of even a hint of sexual immorality (Eph. 5:3).
This researcher believes that this research topic advanced the literature base. It sought to understand how the knowledge of BMS, pedagogical knowledge, and the relational knowledge of Evangelical pastors in small churches impact their ministry of educating and discipling men about sexuality matters from a biblical perspective.

**Assumptions and Delimitations**

This study aimed to understand how the competencies of Evangelical pastors in educating and discipling men regarding BMS contribute to the praxis of this specific ministry. Therefore, it was essential to identify this study's assumptions and delimitations to understand its context better.

**Research Assumptions**

The first assumption in this research study is that Evangelical pastors wanted to be proficient in what the Bible teaches about male sexuality. Evangelical pastors should desire to know what the Bible teaches, especially what it has to say regarding contemporary male sexuality issues.

Second, Evangelical denominations are not monolithic when it comes to their beliefs. While Evangelicals have a set of shared core beliefs such as the supremacy and authority of Scriptures, the belief in a Triune God, Christ’s death on the cross as payment for sins, salvation by grace through faith in Christ, and evangelism, Evangelicals come from varied traditions with varied systematic theologies (NAE, n.d.). Naturally, Evangelical pastors will also have varying interpretations of the Bible's teachings about male sexuality based on their theological convictions and traditions.

Third, discipleship and counseling should be part of any pastor’s core ministry (Toler, 2015). The pastor’s job is more than just delivering a sermon every Sunday. The pastor is the
caretaker of Christ’s sheep, and taking care of Christ’s sheep involves teaching, educating, and discipling the church in spiritual matters (Toler, 2008), including the area of male sexuality. Therefore, regardless of their marital status, Evangelical pastors should teach and counsel men in their ministry contexts about male sexuality from a biblical perspective.

The last assumption in this research study is that Shulman’s PCK theory (1986) is a valid assessment of any educator’s competencies. This study also assumed that relational knowledge (RK), in addition to PCK, is vital to a practical ministry of teaching, educating, and discipling men regarding BMS. Therefore, this research study was framed from these theoretical models.

**Delimitations of the Research Design**

Participants for this study were purposely selected using the following criteria:

1. Evangelical pastors. Pastors who belong to denominations that do not traditionally identify as Evangelical, such as Seventh Day Adventists, Church of Christ, or Oneness Pentecostal, were not selected as participants in this research.

2. Male Evangelical pastors. Female Evangelical pastors were not included in this research.

3. Senior pastors of churches with up to 125 in weekly attendance with no professional counselors on staff. Senior pastors of churches with more than 125 in weekly attendance were omitted. This study did not select assistant, worship, and administrative pastors, even if they are currently engaged in a men's discipleship ministry regarding BMS. Senior pastors of small churches with professional counselors on staff were not selected. The Evangelical pastor’s years of ministry experience were not factored in the selection of participants because Evangelical pastors should be able to teach and disciple their flocks about BMS regardless of their years of experience in the ministry. However, the participants’ years of ministry experience were noted and considered in the data analysis.

**Definition of Terms**

The following terms will be used throughout this study:

1. *Evangelical Christian* – a nomenclature for Christians belonging to the Evangelical movement characterized with the preaching of the Christian gospel (Gibson, 2018), especially in the emphasis of salvation by faith in the atoning death of Jesus Christ through personal conversion with an emphasis on the authority of Scriptures and
gospel proclamation as opposed to rituals (Evangelical, 2020). Evangelicals comprise of different denominations (e.g., Assembly of God, Foursquare, Southern Baptists, General Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Wesleyans, Pentecostals, Charismatics, Calvary Chapel, North American Baptist, Open Bible, Nazarene), including independent churches that are usually protestant and Trinitarian (NAE, n.d.).

2. Male sexuality – refers to the overall encompassing feelings and behaviors by human males regarding their sexual nature that includes sexual identity, sexual activity (e.g., sex, adultery, fornication, pornography), and sexual orientation as influenced by their culture, upbringing, religion, and environment (Bailey et al., 2016).

3. Biblical Male Sexuality – is what the Bible teaches about human male sexuality, including its specific identity, responsibilities in the order of creation, and its role and privileges in sexual relations, responsibilities, prohibitions, and restrictions (Hart, 1994). BMS, therefore, recognizes that the male and female sexes are distinct in their identities, role in the marriage covenant, position in the community with the view that sexual relationship is a gift from God to be enjoyed within the marriage covenant between a man and a woman, with the man as the head of the relationship (Hastings, 2017).

4. Small church – a church with an average weekly attendance of up to 125 people is considered a small church (Vaters, 2021).

5. Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) – subject matter knowledge of a teacher in the context of facilitating student learning (Shulman, 1986). PCK refers not just to the teacher’s overall knowledge of the subject matter but also the ability of the teacher to teach the subject matter to the student (Mecoli, 2013).

6. Relational Knowledge (RK) – the competency of pastors regarding the formation, growth, and maintenance of effective relationships with their church members to communicate information, build teams, and manage conflicts (Solid Pastors Ministry, 2018).

7. Relational Pedagogical Content Knowledge – the combined RK and PCK of pastors defined above.

Significance of the Study

The study of Evangelical pastors’ competencies in male sexuality and how they contribute to a well-rounded ministry of leading and discipling Christian men to be men of integrity and purity regarding their sexuality have theoretical, practical, and spiritual implications. Male sexuality is a significant part of a Christian man’s life. Yet, ironically, it is
one of the most neglected areas of spiritual development, often leaving Christian men to struggle with it on their own (Allender & Longman, 2014).

This study explained how Evangelical pastors’ RK and PCK regarding male sexuality from a biblical perspective contributed to how they minister and lead the men in their flock to be faithful flowers of Christ in this area. The emerging themes and meanings assigned by the participants on their experiences may be applied to other ministry contexts such as Evangelical pastors in mid-size, large, or mega-churches. In addition, specific denominations within Evangelicalism may also use this study.

It may also help identify a specific curriculum for seminaries to add to their pastoral ministry programs to help train future pastors and ministry workers to speak about sexuality issues with their congregation (Turner & Stayton, 2014). According to some researchers, there were hardly any courses in pastoral ministry programs that adequately prepare future pastors to be the educators of men regarding sexuality from a biblical perspective (Suh, 2018). As a result, this study may provide recommendations to seminaries to better equip pastors to be the leaders in their churches in educating and discipling men to be godly followers of Christ Jesus even in the area of their God-given gift of male sexuality.

Also, this study may help single, married, divorced, and widowed Christian men live holy lives through spiritual formation. Isom (2018) asserted that Evangelical churches are not getting the help they need regarding sexuality issues because pastors are not talking about this critical spiritual topic from scriptural lenses. As a result, Evangelical Christians’ current views on sexual purity have dramatically shifted from the past. For example, the General Social Survey of Evangelical Christians from 2014 through 2018 revealed that only 37% of Evangelical adults said that sex outside marriage was “always wrong,” while 41% said it was “not wrong at all”
(Ayers, 2019, par. 4). However, from 1974 to 1978, the exact percentages were 44% and 27%, respectively (Ayers, 2019, par. 4). In addition, porn viewing among Evangelicals, including Evangelical women, has risen as of late (Perry 2019).

**Summary of the Design**

This research study used the interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) framework. IPA studies are used to understand the participant’s lived experiences and the meaning they assign to these experiences (Alase, 2017), especially human predicament such as sexuality and competencies (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009).

The Evangelical pastors who were interviewed were selected based on the size of the church that the pastor is currently serving, regardless of their marital status. A small church pastor was the ideal research subject because pastors in small churches are typically more familiar with their congregation (Toler, 2008). In addition, small churches usually do not have professional counselors on staff. Therefore, the pastors of small churches usually serve as the primary educator and discipler of the church regarding spiritual formation (Toler, 2008), including issues relating to male sexuality.

Data collection methods for this study were primarily scheduled semi-structured, open-ended interviews. Participants were asked to provide a sermon, a sermon manuscript, or a teaching topic where they dealt explicitly with BMS issues in the past six months. After the interviews had been transcribed, the interview transcripts were coded and analyzed. Emerging themes were identified, and recommendations were made to add to the existing literature concerning Evangelical pastors’ competencies in BMS and the practical ministry of educating and discipling men regarding sexuality from a biblical perspective.
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

According to Kreeft (1990, p. 117), “We cannot know what sex in Heaven is unless we know what sex is; we cannot know what in Heaven's name sex is unless we know what on earth sex is.” This chapter examined theological literature, theoretical literature, and other related literature for this study. The literature covered in this chapter served as the foundation of this study. First, the theological literature section covered what the Bible says about sex and sexuality and the role of the pastor in educating the church about them from a biblical perspective. Second, the theoretical literature section covered Evangelical pastors' competencies in communicating and teaching what the Bible teaches about sex and sexuality to men in their ministry context. Third, the related literature section covered relevant topics that shape or affect an Evangelical pastor’s role as educator and discipler of men in their churches. Finally, this chapter provided a rationale for this study and the gap in the literature section.

Theological Framework for this Study

The Bible does not shy away from the topic of sex and sexuality. And when the Bible speaks about sex and sexuality, it does so in a straightforward way where God is the One teaching humanity about sex and sexuality, and He expects the readers to listen to what He has to say (Jones, 1992). From the beginning of human history, God designed sexuality to be part of the human component, specifically male and female sexuality, in terms of identity, duties, and responsibilities (Morris, 1976). Scriptures strongly teach about human sexuality and its intended purpose from the beginning (Gen. 1:28; 2:24). Just as God began with marriage in Genesis, God closed the canon of Scriptures with a beautiful picture of the marriage union between Christ Jesus and His Bride, the Church (Rev. 22:17). The nuptial imagery of Christ Jesus as the
Bridegroom and His Church as the Bride echoes God’s design in Eden, where He intended human sexuality as holy and pleasing (Zimmerman, 2003). Thus, the Scriptures have solid and definite teachings concerning human sexuality.

In addition, the Bible lays clear expectations that pastors should be the primary educator and discipler of the church regarding matters of sexuality (Freeman, 2016). When pastors do not step in their role as educators and disciplers of the church in issues of sexuality, then it is the church who suffers from the pastors’ failure to live up to the expectations of their calling (Suh, 2018).

**Human Sexuality in the Old Testament**

The first mention of human sexuality and its responsibilities in Scriptures (Gen. 2:24) is strongly didactic in nature (Waltke, 2001), as it is in the rest of the Old Testament. The theme of human sexuality in Scriptures, particularly male sexuality and expectations of sexual responsibilities within marriage, is consistent throughout the Old Testament Scriptures (Wilson, 2015). Sexual identity and human sexuality are inexorably related to God’s image, covenants, laws, community, and spirituality (Hastings, 2017).

Because the topic of sex and sexuality in the Old Testament is didactic (Waltke, 2001), sexuality should be an essential pedagogical component related to spiritual formation because sex and spirituality are interconnected (Carlisle, 2018). The Teacher in Ecclesiastes took the time to teach and talk about the vanity of sexual pleasure outside of God’s design as a warning to others (Bartholomew, 2009). The Evangelical pastor will do well to teach, educate, and disciple men with what the Scriptures teach about sex and sexuality.
**Human Sexuality and the Image of God**

Just as the Triune God exists in three Persons of non-irreducible and non-interchangeable identities, so are human beings uniquely created in non-irreducible and non-interchangeable identities of male and female sexes (Hastings, 2017). The non-interchangeability of the male and female sexes also has non-interchangeable responsibilities and duties in the marriage covenant before and after the fall (Gen. 2:24; 3:16).

Some biblical scholars define the image of God in humanity to mean that human beings have some attributes that are similar to God’s. For example, human beings are created in the image of God in that they are spiritual beings just as God is a spiritual being (Morris, 1973). On the other hand, some biblical scholars argue instead for the intentional definition of the image of God in humans, that is to say, that God’s image in humankind was His intention for them to be like Him, which has nothing to do with attributes (Kilner, 2015). The linguistic analysis of the term “image of God” supports the intentional definition exclusively (Heiser, 2015). To be human created in God’s image is more than an attribute or a function, but rather a status; that is, being human created in the image of God is to be conformed to His image and character (Kilner, 2015). What Kilner (2015) and Heiser (2015) were pointing out is that human beings, whether male or female, were created individually to be God’s image-bearers, that is, that they should be holy in every aspect of their lives (1 Pet. 1:16), including in their sexuality.

Therefore, the non-irreducibility and non-interchangeability of the male and female sexes play a role in how each is to be conformed to the image of the Triune God. Since the Triune God is eternally in fellowship with one another, and each person of the Trinity has different functions, human beings as males and females have a distinct role in the community, especially in the marriage covenant, which dictates the way they conform to God’s image (Hastings, 2017).
Male Sexuality and the Abrahamic Covenant

The sign of circumcision confirmed the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen. 17:1-14). The covenant itself had three parts: a command to be blameless (Gen. 17:1), a promise that he will obtain the Promised Land and be a father of many nations (Gen. 17:2-8), and a sign of the circumcision (Gen. 17:10-14). Since the Abrahamic Covenant’s promise involved fertility, the character of the covenant of circumcision has overt sexual connotations, especially at this stage of Abraham’s life where he and Sarah were now considered infertile due to their advanced age (Goldingay, 2000). Yet, by Yahweh’s miraculous grace, Abraham and Sarah conceived. Furthermore, all of the males in Abraham’s household were required to be circumcised (Gen. 17:10-14), an act that left them incapacitated for some time.

Circumcision, therefore, is a reminder of God’s miraculous promise to Abraham and his descendants. Every time a Jewish woman had sexual relations with her Jewish husband, she is reminded that their very existence resulted from God’s miraculous promise pointing back to the Abrahamic covenant (Heiser, 2017). The Abrahamic covenant involved a stipulation to walk blamelessly before Yahweh (Arnold, 2017). The covenant sign in the genitals of Abraham’s male offspring is perhaps a continuous reminder to them that God expects them to walk blamelessly before Him, including in the area of sexuality and their responsibility in the act of procreation.

Sexuality and the Mosaic Law

The book of Leviticus gave specific ordinances regarding purification rites for sexually related bodily discharges, monthly periods, and postpartum delivery (Lev. 15). It also gave specific laws concerning proper and improper sexual relations (Lev. 18). The laws regarding appropriate and inappropriate sexual relations were given to prevent the Israelites, God’s
covenant people, from copying the sexual practices of the Egyptians, whose bondage they left, and the sexual practices of the Canaanites, whose land they are about to conquer (Lev. 18:3). In addition, the laws concerning proper and improper sexual relations were given to prevent them and the land from being defiled so that they would not be vomited out of the land (Sklar, 2018). The Promised Land, of course, was tied to the Abrahamic Covenant, whose sign of circumcision served as a reminder for the Israelites during sexual intercourse that Yahweh is faithful and that God expects them to walk before Him blamelessly (Alexander, 1983).

The laws concerning what is proper and improper revolved around various sexuality issues such as incest (Lev. 18:6-17), ethical and moral considerations of adultery, child sacrifice, sexual relations during a woman’s period (Lev. 18:18-21), and homosexuality and bestiality (Lev. 18:22-23). These laws reminded the Israelites that sexual acts denote personal and community relationships. Human beings, especially those belonging to God’s covenant people, must function within their God-given roles in their relations with one another for them to be imagers of the Triune God who exists in a perfect relationship with each of the other Persons within the Godhead (Hastings, 2017). Therefore, God forbade homosexual relationships because it violated the non-interchangeability of male and female sexuality, which does not conform to the image of God (Sklar, 2018).

**Male Sexuality in the Narrative of Boaz and Ruth**

A typical summation of the Book of Ruth is that Boaz, in obedience to the Law of Moses, became a willing kinsman-redeemer for Ruth, the widow of his dead relative. But the narrative of the love story between Boaz and Ruth goes beyond that.

First, Boaz could have taken advantage of Ruth, but he did not (Hawk, 2015). Second, Boaz not only showed kindness to Ruth, a Moabite, but he was also willing to marry her,
knowing that by the law of Moses, the offspring produced in their union will not be his (Halton, 2012). Third, the sexual integrity of Boaz is tied to a greater theological truth – that male sexuality in obedience to God produces blessings with redeeming elements to it (Halton, 2012). Finally, in addition to the redeeming aspect of Boaz’s sacred male sexual responsibility, the kindness he showed Ruth by becoming her kinsman-redeemer resulted in him being the ancestor of King David (Evans, 2017). Thus, the Book of Ruth provides essential and practical lessons for men. Godly male sexuality, such as Boaz's, is redemptive and productive in communal relationships (Hawk, 2015). In this case, Boaz became the ancestor also of the royal Davidic Dynasty.

**Solomon’s Teachings Regarding Male Sexuality**

**Proverbs.** One of the main themes in Solomon’s Proverbs is godly male sexuality. In Proverbs 5, for example, Solomon instructed his son to avoid the adulterous woman at all cost and charged his son to keep his marriage vows with his wife pure. Proverbs 5 is an example of the pedagogical nature of the book of Proverbs related explicitly to male sexuality, such as the husband’s marital responsibilities (Okyere, 2013).

**Song of Songs.** Solomon’s Song of Songs is a graphic song about the sexual love and passion of a young heterosexual couple who are madly in love with each other (Copenhaver, 2011). The title itself suggests that it is the greatest of all songs and, as such, connotes a specific tone of pedagogy (Provan, 2001). Even though the early church fathers tried to read it allegorically (Coakley, 2002), Song of Songs depicted the joys of sex between a married man and woman (Gentry, 2018). Its matter-of-fact tone in describing the pleasures of having sex drove the point that sexual pleasure between heterosexual married lovers is natural and should be celebrated and taught (Coakley, 2002).
Most modern Bible translations try to hide the strong connotations of sex for pleasure in the Song of Songs because it suggests the Bible supports sex without the goal of procreation in mind (Case, 2017). However, the joys of sex in the song need not be viewed negatively. Instead, the celebration of sex in the song should be viewed as a faint reminder of the original purpose of mutuality as modeled by Adam and Eve, who enjoyed each other for the sake of enjoying each other without shame (Gentry, 2018).

**Ecclesiastes.** Solomon, writing as the teacher and spiritual educator of the Israelite congregation, shared his tragic experience of running after women, which he characterized as folly more bitter than death (Provan, 2001). Sexual pleasures outside of God’s intended plan bring regret and eventual destruction (Bartholomew, 2009). Song of Songs taught about the beauty of sexual relations within marriage. Proverbs taught about marital faithfulness. In contrast, the teacher in Ecclesiastes warned young men of the dangers of seeking sexual pleasures outside of God’s purpose and design (Provan, 2001).

*Allegory of God as Husband and Israel/Judah as Unfaithful Wives*

In the Old Testament, Yahweh used the husband/wife metaphor in describing His relationship with His covenant people. One such comparison is found in the Book of Ezekiel. In this book, Yahweh rebuked Oholah and Oholibah, His figurative wives, in explicitly sexual terms because of their lewdness and harlotry with their foreign lovers. Therefore, God pronounced violent punishment for these two sisters, who are metaphorically Samaria and Jerusalem, because of their sin of idolatry.

Some critics dismissed this chapter as pornographic and misogynistic (Bibb, 2014). In their critique of this chapter, such critics get it wrong by misjudging the biblical author’s intent. Using male and female sexual parts to depict the depravity of marital unfaithfulness does not
make the text pornographic. It would only be pornographic and misogynistic if the author intended to get his readers sexually aroused (Sloane, 2008).

Instead, the point of this chapter is to elicit disgust for the marital unfaithfulness of two women who were unfaithful to their husband, just as the sin of idolatry and spiritual harlotry by Israel and Judah against their God is disgusting (Block, 1997). Marital responsibilities are engraibed in biblical human sexuality as instituted by God in the beginning, and conformity to the image of God requires proper observation of the distinct roles and responsibilities of maintaining faithfulness in the marriage covenant (Hastings, 2017). In addition, the betrayal of one’s spouse because of sexual promiscuity and infidelity reflects how God felt when Israel ran after gods they did not know (Block, 1997). Pastors, therefore, should be faithfully reminding the men in their ministries that sexual sins are serious offenses in God’s eyes and are unbecoming of one who is betrothed to Christ (Guthrie, 2015).

**Human Sexuality in the New Testament**

The New Testament’s teaching on human sexuality is firmly anchored in the Old Testament. After all, the same God who inspired the Old Testament is the same God who inspired the New Testament. Furthermore, the New Testament affirmed and clarified the distinctiveness of the male and female sexes in human sexuality, their identities, and responsibilities (Lichtenwalter, 2018). Therefore, the Evangelical pastor would do well to educate and disciple men in their churches about the importance of keeping oneself pure sexually, as the New Testament teaches.

**Christ’s Teaching on Marriage, Divorce, and Male Sexuality**

In the Old Testament, adultery is the sexual relations between a married man and an unmarried woman or a married man with another man’s wife (Lev. 20:10-11; Deut. 22:22).
However, Jesus Christ redefined what constituted adultery in His Sermon on the Mount by stating that any man who looks lustfully at a woman who is not his wife had committed adultery in his heart (Matt. 5:28). Furthermore, Christ taught that any man who remarries after being divorced commits adultery unless the reason for the divorce was marital unfaithfulness (Matt. 19:9).

Christ Jesus affirmed that married people are one flesh or entity in God’s eyes since that was God’s original plan for marriage, so they must not be separated by any man (Matt. 19:4-6). The joining together in this passage refers to the sexual union between a man and a woman, which is the basis for their marriage (Loader, 2015). Thus, by citing the original intention of sexual union grounded in marriage from the book of Genesis, Christ affirmed the importance of sexual union in marriage, the seriousness of the marriage covenant, and the sin of adultery.

Pauline Teachings on Human Sexuality

**Mystical Union During Sexual Intercourse.** The teaching of Christ that sexual union unites a person to become one flesh with another was also affirmed by the Apostle Paul (Loader, 2015). In his first epistle to the Corinthians, Paul drew parallels with a person united with Christ in spirit through faith and a man united with his wife through sexual union (Byrne, 1983). Therefore, a Christian man who is joined to Christ in spirit and then commits fornication and adultery with a harlot is sinning against his own body (1 Cor. 6:16-18).

Some may reason that a Christian man can have sexual intercourse with his girlfriend or fiancé without being guilty of sin because his girlfriend or fiancé is not a harlot and that he genuinely loves her. But even this reasoning is incorrect. In the same letter, Paul gave an in-depth treatment of the subject of fornication (1 Cor. 7). According to Paul, sex is a gift from God to be enjoyed within marriage because sexual intercourse is more than just a physical action;
there is a mystical and spiritual union happening during sexual intercourse as taught by the divine authority of Christ Jesus (Gravrock, 1996).

Sexual union within marriage is sacred in the eyes of the Triune God. It is a gift to be enjoyed between a husband and wife that should be cherished and respected. Paul gave strong warnings about using one’s body to deprive their spouse of the joy of sexual union because the man has authority over the wife’s body just as the woman also has authority over the husband’s body (1 Cor. 7:2-6). The equality of authority between a husband and wife regarding sexual enjoyment requires selfless love and mutual submission, just as sexual enjoyment is equally a physical and spiritual act (Vang, 2014).

**Sexual Union and the Lord’s Supper.** One of Solomon’s Song of Songs’ themes is that food and sex are closely related (Meredith, 2008). However, food and sex go beyond the physical and allegorical; food and sex are spiritual issues in the New Testament.

In the 11th chapter of 1 Corinthians, the Apostle Paul gave specific exhortation regarding the sanctity of the Lord’s Supper and its proper observance, ensuring that those who partook of it were not sinning against the body of Christ (1 Cor. 11:27-29). Two things need to be given proper consideration in light of Paul’s exhortation about the Lord’s Supper.

The first consideration is found in chapter 10 before Paul’s exhortation concerning the Lord’s Supper (1 Cor. 11). In this chapter, Paul exhorted the Corinthian believers to be free from idolatry and refrain from eating food sacrificed to idols (1 Cor. 10:14). This command was given as it relates to their participation in the communion of the blood of Christ (1 Cor. 10:15-18). Paul clarified that his exhortation to avoid idols did not imply that idols have actual powers (1 Cor. 10:19). Instead, Paul pointed out that believers who knowingly eat and drink food sacrificed to idols participated in the fellowship of demons (Garland, 2003).
Idolatry is closely related to adultery, so when God illustrated the sin of idolatry, He used the metaphor of adultery (Ezekiel 23). Eating food sacrificed to idols was a spiritual act of adultery, just as participation in the Lord’s Supper was also a spiritual act of union with Christ’s body (Garland, 2003). Likewise, the mystical unity of the believer to the body of Christ during communion is a potent reminder of the spiritual and mystical union that happens during the act of sexual intercourse (Tsakanikas, 2004).

The second point for consideration is found at the beginning of 1 Corinthians 11. At the beginning of this chapter, Paul discussed the creation order of humans. Man (Adam) was created first, which necessitated head coverings for women in corporate worship as a reminder that the man is the head of the woman (1 Cor 11:1-14). While some might say that Paul’s exhortation about head coverings was a cultural issue, there is a strong possibility that the admonition for a woman to cover her head had spiritual and sexual connotations (Heiser, 2015).

The underlying theme of head coverings for women in the church was the honor code of the prevailing culture (Paddock, 2013). Paul’s exhortation on women’s head coverings was not just about the individual rights and freedom of the Christian women in Corinth. Instead, Paul’s concern was how the people outside of the Christian community would view Christian women in Corinth without head coverings (Paddock, 2013, p. 95). Suppose the Christian women in Corinth will not wear head coverings. In that case, they will send a message to the unbelievers that they do not care about honor and morals, which Paul will not have the Corinthian church do, as it would undoubtedly taint the name of Christ and the reputation of His followers (Paddock, 2013).

Thus, Paul’s exhortation to examine oneself before partaking in the Lord’s Supper was an invitation to assess their status as followers of Christ (Garland, 2003). Are the Corinthian believers participating in idolatry by their participation in eating food sacrificed to idols which is
a form of spiritual adultery, and are they ready to give up their rights to maintain honor and moral standards for the sake of the body of Christ? Are they practicing physical fornication? Perceived sexual sins, such as the appearance of not caring about honor and morals, and overt sins, such as idolatry (spiritual adultery) and fornication, fall out of order in God’s design and purpose regarding human sexuality and their relationship in the community of Christian believers. The practice of such sins hinders them from fully participating in the communion of the blood of Christ and the Lord’s Supper (1 Cor 11:27-29). Thus, Paul was using the ordinance of the Lord’s Supper in First Corinthians to teach firmly, among other things, what is proper and acceptable regarding human sexuality (Lamoreaux, 2016).

Illustration of Christ Jesus as Bridegroom and the Church as Bride. In the Old Testament, God used the allegory of marriage to describe His unique relationship with His covenant people. In the New Testament, the marriage covenant illustrated the relationship between Christ and His Church. Christ Jesus is the Bridegroom, and the Church is His bride (Eph. 5:25-27). During communion, the Church becomes one mystically and spiritually with Christ in the same vein that a husband and wife are one (Garland, 2003). In his epistle to the Ephesians, Paul exhorted Christian husbands and wives with the relationship of Christ Jesus and His Bride, the Church, in mind (Eph. 5:22-33). Paul warned them of sexual immorality prevalent in the unbelieving Gentile culture (Eph. 4:17-18). Paul’s antidote to sexual immorality among married couples was not abstinence from sex but the regular practice of having sex with their spouse (Thielman, 2010).

Paul's exhortation to the Christian wives was for them to submit to their husbands just as the Church was subject to the lordship of Christ. In commanding the wives to submit to their husbands, Paul, in effect, acknowledged the distinct roles that males and females bring in
marriage and human sexuality, and it also highlighted the authority placed on the husband (Patzia, 1990). Similarly, Paul’s exhortation for husbands to love their wives just as Christ loves the church also highlighted the distinct responsibility of leadership that husbands have in marriage and sexual relations, not solely for the husband’s benefit but also the mutual edification of both (Thielman, 2010). This picture of harmonious sexual union between a husband and wife is the model Christian couples should follow in their marriage and sexual relationship.

**Other New Testament Teachings on Sexuality**

**James the Apostle’s Teachings on Sexuality.** According to the Apostle James, covetousness is a product of sensual and lustful desires (McCartney, 2009). James used the term “adulterers” in calling out those who engage in such behavior to evoke shame as in the style of the Old Testament prophet, Hosea, to let these adulterers know that their actions prove that they are at enmity with God and that they need to repent (McKnight, 2011). Furthermore, James taught that their out-of-control covetousness and sensual desires were harmful to the body of Christ.

**The Apostles Peter and Jude’s Teachings on Sexuality.** In addition to Peter’s exhortation for wives to submit to their husbands and for husbands to live gently with their wives (1 Pet. 3:1-7), he, like Jude, touched on the subject of certain angels bound in a particular place of torment and punishment (2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 1:6). The fate of these wicked angels is tied to the narrative of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (2 Pet. 2:6; Jude 1:7). According to Heiser (2015), these angels bound in torment are the same angels who sinned against Yahweh by leaving their domain to engage in unnatural sexual relations with the daughters of men (Gen. 6). Thus, Peter and Jude explicitly taught that unnatural sexual relations (e.g., same-sex relations) are offenses to God’s holiness, which God will eventually punish.
The Apostle John’s Teachings on Male Sexuality. In writing the Book of Revelation, John used sexual imagery to convey his judgment against those who engage in spiritual and physical adultery and harlotry (Rev. 2:20; 17:3-6). Also, John mentioned that the 144,000 male witnesses during the Great Tribulation were not defiled by women but kept themselves chaste (Rev. 14:4). Is John then saying that men having sexual relations with women, even in a monogamous heterosexual marriage, is a cause of defilement for them?

The Book of Revelation is greatly symbolic, with John employing the “already-and-not-yet” time view in the tradition of the Old Testament prophets (Osborne, 2002). The women in this passage can be interpreted symbolically for the political, economic, and religious system of the Anti-Christ in the Great Tribulation, and the 144,000 witnesses are the ones who did not defile themselves with the worldly system of the Beast and the Mother of All Harlots (Huber, 2008). Therefore, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, John wrote in the Book of Revelation that adultery, whether physical or spiritual, is an offense to God, and those who keep themselves pure sexually and spiritually will enjoy their eternal reward.

Role and Responsibilities of Evangelical Pastors in Spiritual Formation

In light of how the New Testament writers and Apostles prioritized and emphasized the teaching of sexual purity, Evangelical pastors must prioritize the instruction and education of men in their ministry contexts as to what the Bible teaches regarding male sexuality. Discipleship is a crucial component of spiritual formation (Key, 2020) because an integral part of discipleship is teaching that not merely passes knowledge but also transforms worldviews (Wringe, 2009). Pastors, therefore, are the principal educators and disciplers of their flock regarding biblical sexuality that will transform the way they view sex through the lens of the Scriptures as part of spiritual formation (Freeman, 2016).
Scriptural Foundations of the Role of Pastors as Teachers, Educators, and Disciplers

The pastor’s responsibility to be a leader and promoter of Christian education is a calling anchored on the Scriptures. The pastor as a Christian educator is grounded on the metaphor of the “shepherd-teacher” in the biblical pattern set by Jesus Himself (Siew, 2013). As such, if pastors are to follow the biblical mandate of Christ to feed His sheep with His holy word, they would do so through the teaching of Christ’s word (MacArthur, 2005). Therefore, pastors should be spending more time in the teaching ministry than organizational duties (Siew, 2013).

The role of the pastor as a Christian educator is to transform the mind and heart of the believer (Westerhoff, 1985). Spiritual transformation of the believer happens when the pastor directs the believer’s mind to be conformed to the mind of Christ (Yount, 2019). The essence of Christian discipleship happens when the believer's mind is transformed through Christian education from the Scriptures (Young, 2013).

Summary of Theological Literature

The Bible has given the blueprint for healthy human sexuality, particularly the non-irreducible and non-interchangeable identities of male and female sexuality and their responsibilities in marriage and sexual relationships. The unity of the husband and wife is patterned after the relationship of the Persons in the Triune Godhead. God cares very much about proper human sexual relationships, which is why He imposed laws concerning them.

Sexual union is not just a mere physical act, but it is also mystical and spiritual. The picture of the perfect mystical and spiritual union of Christ Jesus as the Bridegroom and His Bride, the church, is the basis for biblical and God-pleasing marriage and healthy sexual relationships between Christian husbands and wives. The Old and New Testaments explicitly taught proper and improper sexual expressions and relations. The Bible often used sexual
imagery as an object lesson for God’s covenant people to understand and obey His commandments, especially in living out a biblical view of male sexuality.

Since the Bible prioritized teaching about sexual integrity in both the Old and New Testament, Evangelical Pastors must prioritize the education of men in their ministry contexts regarding what the Bible teaches about male sexuality as part of their spiritual formation. Therefore, as part of their ministry, pastors are called to be the primary teachers, educators, and disciplers of men in their ministry contexts to live sexually pure lives that are fulfilling, pleasing, and glorifying to God.

**Theoretical Framework for this Study**

Shulman introduced Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) in 1988, but the concept has been around since the 1950s (Shing, Saat, & Loke, 2015). According to Shulman (1988), effective teachers possess both the knowledge of their subject matter and the pedagogical skills needed to teach it effectively to others. For example, a chemist may know how chemicals work. However, the experienced and knowledgeable chemist will not be an effective Chemistry teacher if they have no technical teaching skills. Consequently, persons with technical knowledge of teaching cannot teach subject matters they do not know. For example, an experienced P.E. teacher cannot teach calculus if the experienced P.E. teacher does not know calculus even though the P.E. teacher is an experienced teacher. The relationship between pedagogical knowledge and content knowledge as two halves completing PCK is illustrated in figure 1 below.
Figure 1

*PCK consisting of PK and CK*

As shepherds of souls, pastors are teachers and educators of spiritual formation (Howe, 1983). As such, pastors should know what the Bible teaches about sexuality. However, Suh (2018) asserted that pastors often do not have sufficient knowledge to teach human sexuality. Isom (2018) also asserted that even if pastors know what the Bible teaches about human sexuality, pastors shy away from the topic because it is awkward.

Therefore, in addition to PCK, pastors should also have relational knowledge (RK) to teach the awkward subject of sexuality to their church. RK is essential for pastors because it is needed to form, grow, and maintain relationships (Solid Pastors Ministry, 2018). In addition to building relationships, a necessary component of RK is communicating information (Solid Pastors Ministry, 2018), which includes communicating awkward topics such as sexuality.

Therefore, this research study focused on Evangelical pastors’ pedagogical, content, and relational knowledge and how these competencies contributed to a practical ministry of teaching, educating, and discipling men regarding BMS. The relationship between PCK and RK
competencies that an Evangelical pastor needs to possess to educate and disciple men in sexuality issues from a biblical perspective is illustrated in Figure 2 below.

**Figure 2**

*RPCK consisting of RK, PK, and CK*

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**Seminary Training**

Suh (2018) surmised that the Evangelical pastor has a moral obligation to educate the church about human sexuality issues and to tend to those who were broken and hurt over them. However, according to Suh (2018), seminaries are not training pastors about these issues, so pastors cannot deal with such issues. Suh based her correlation between lack of seminary training on human sexuality and its absence in ministry praxis on Ott & Winters’ (2011) study, which asserted that most seminaries hardly have courses on human sexuality. But is the lack of seminary training really to blame for the lack of education and discipleship in Evangelical churches today?

According to Meek et al. (2004), seminary graduates from Evangelical seminaries found seminary faculty more helpful in human sexuality and ministry outside the classroom
environment than in the classroom. This study by Meek et al. (2004) was also cited by Ott & Winters (2011). However, this study acknowledged the lack of correlation between seminary training and ministry praxis on human sexuality matters. Still, it does provide strong evidence that strong relationships between teacher and learner contribute to open and honest dialogue about sexuality issues in ministry.

Most of the studies cited by Ott & Winters (2011) dealt with assessing a seminary student’s sexual values, preventing sexual abuse incidents in ministry, and social justice concerning LGBTQ issues. These topics do not necessarily equip an aspiring pastor to effectively disciple his church on biblical sexuality issues. The Association of Theological Schools (ATS) has refocused theological education to include training on human sexuality (Ott & Winters 2011). Conklin’s (1996) study attempted to understand sexuality education in seminaries from the seminary professors’ perspective, not the students’ perspectives, and it focused on seminaries in general and not specifically Evangelical seminaries. Still, no studies directly correlate the lack of seminary training on human sexuality issues as the cause of the lack of education and discipleship in Evangelical churches today.

**The Pastor as Teacher, Educator, and Discipler of Male Sexuality**

The pastor is responsible for feeding and nourishing Christ’s flock so that they may grow in the likeness of Jesus Christ. Therefore, spiritual formation is one of a pastor’s duties and callings, especially in matters concerning sexual purity. Spiritual formation, however, is not just a matter of preaching. Teaching transfers information or instruction, whereas preaching involves exhortation, admonition, and encouragement (Sproul, 2014). In other words, preaching is telling people what to do, while teaching is telling people how to do it.
Moses shepherded Israel to be a nation that conformed to the character of God (Laniak, 2006). Moses also reminded them that living sexually impure lives would violate their covenant with Yahweh (Sklar, 2018). Therefore, the Evangelical pastor must also shepherd and remind the men in his ministry context of the importance of living sexually pure lives as people of God.

In the same token, the Old Testament prophets were called by God to be the shepherds and pastors of Israel and Judah (Laniak, 2006). They served as God’s mouthpiece, reminding them to abstain from idolatry and sexual immorality, which are equally repulsive to God (Block, 1997). Therefore, the Evangelical pastor must shepherd their flocks to teach them to abstain from idolatry and sexual immorality.

Solomon also taught young men about the importance of living sexually pure lives (Okyere, 2013). Solomon also preached against the folly and vanity of sexual pleasures outside God’s intended purpose (Provan, 2001). Evangelical pastors, therefore, must also be the teachers and disciplers of men about sexual purity.

The call to pastors to shepherd the church to be the pure bride of Christ is also strongly present in New Testament teachings. Jesus taught about the sanctity of marriage and strongly warned about adultery and divorce (Loader, 2015). In his pastoral epistles, Paul reminded Timothy and Titus that those seeking the office of a pastor must live a life of strict morality with a good reputation inside and outside of the church community (Guthrie, 1990). In the same way, Evangelical pastors ought not only to teach and educate about sexual purity, but they must also be exemplary models of sexual integrity.

**The Evangelical Pastor as Teacher of Human Sexuality**

There should be an overlap between preaching and teaching (Sproul, 2014). However, teaching is primarily absent from preaching because preachers often do not invest time to study
the context and the meaning of the biblical passages (Duvall & Hays, 2008). For the Evangelical preacher to teach or instruct his congregation biblically, the preacher must preach an expository message, that is “communicating the biblical concept, derived from and transmitted through a historical, grammatical, and literary study of a passage in its context” (Robinson, 2014, p. 20). Preaching should be more than just telling the congregation what to do. Therefore, pastors must preach and teach from the Bible how to live their lives in light of the careful exposition and understanding of the biblical passage.

God’s word is one of the cornerstones of spiritual formation along with the Holy Spirit and God’s people (Morrow, 2008). While the study and understanding of Scriptures start with an individual, spiritual formation has always been a community affair through praxis among God’s covenant community (Johnston, 2008). Through the observance of God’s law, the Israelite community will know who Yahweh is to worship Him accordingly. Therefore, God’s law requires that the people of Israel instruct their children about God’s covenant requirements (Deut 6:4-7).

Spiritual formation through the teaching of God’s word starts as early as possible. The book of Proverbs is a testament to the importance of parents teaching their children about God’s ways (Prov 22:6). The idea, of course, is not early education for some (e.g., children of Levites or priests) but early education for all of the Hebrew children (Kim, 2011). The Prophet Samuel is an excellent example of early spiritual formation. It also demonstrated how this spiritual formation benefited the Israelite community (1 Sam 3:19-2).

These pedagogical concepts concerning sexuality in the Old Testament are also present in the New Testament. Naturally, the New Testament’s teaching on sexuality is grounded in the Old Testament. Christ Jesus, in particular, redefined some of the Old Testament laws concerning
sexual relations (Turner, 2008). Adultery is not simply sexual relations between a married man and someone other than his wife, but any man who even lusts after a woman who is not his wife has committed adultery with her in his heart (Matt. 5:28). The nuances of sexual immorality taught by Christ in the Sermon on the Mount are not mere ethical suggestions but the way of kingdom living (Turner, 2008). As such, the Evangelical pastor would do well to prioritize the ministry of teaching how to live sexually pure lives from the authority of Jesus Christ and His word.

It is not enough for the pastor to tell his flock what to do (preaching), but he has to show them how to do it from the authority of God’s word (teaching) (Sproul, 2014.). Therefore, teaching should be an essential element of pastoral ministry in discipleship. Christ taught His disciples about matters of faith, and He also taught them real-life issues using real-life illustrations for their spiritual development and conformity to His image (Hahn, 2019). Therefore, Evangelical pastors should teach their churches about matters of faith and real-life issues such as male sexuality.

**The Evangelical pastor as Educator of Human Sexuality**

According to Smith (2009), human beings are primarily liturgical beings because they are formed by what they do, not by what they know. The formative power of liturgy ultimately drives the human heart to love someone or something and pursue what they love. At the heart of Smith’s thesis is the idea that teaching by itself does not constitute learning; rather, education through the reorientation of the heart (or mind) to that which is true and good is where learning begins (Smith, 2009).

The difference between teaching and educating someone is philosophy (Diamond, 2008). Philosophy is an amalgamation of worldview, attitudes, and activity regarding a topic or a
subject (Knight, 2006, p. 8). Educational philosophy, therefore, is the framework by which an educator teaches a subject matter to his students by imparting a particular worldview and set of attitudes to his students that will get them to know how and why something is important or valuable. Therefore, educating the church concerning matters of sexuality goes beyond telling them to live sexually pure lives (preaching) or showing them how to live sexually pure lives based on what the Bible prescribes (teaching). Instead, Christian education, including sexuality matters, is primarily the reorientation of their hearts and minds to embrace the truth of the Scriptures for their beauty and value (Smith, 2009).

Conformity to Christ’s image is the object of spiritual formation. But spiritual formation happens in the believers’ hearts and minds because it is there that the problem of sin is addressed and the believer’s heart and mind renewed by the gospel of Christ through the Christian community (Lowe & Lowe, 2018). Therefore, the Evangelical pastor should be the local church’s primary educator, especially concerning male sexuality.

A pastor’s worldview is tied directly to what he teaches. Scott McConnel of Lifeway Research stated that as few as 15% of Evangelicals fully believe the Bible’s core teachings concerning the salvific work of Christ and the rapture of the church (Miller, 2020, 49:55). Lizzette Dilinger, qualitative director of Lifeway Research, attributed the decline of Evangelical Christian’s shifting beliefs to the Evangelical pastors because a growing majority of Evangelical pastors are not sure what to believe (Miller, 2020). The pretribulation rapture is a picture of Christ, the Bridegroom, coming for His pure bride, the church (Pentecost, 1981). The analogy of a Christian living a pure life, including sexuality, is hard to miss in a pretribulation eschatology.

Ultimately, educating the church about sexual issues is a matter of philosophy and worldview. A pastor with a solid Christian worldview and philosophy has the authority of God’s
word to rely on when educating the church in moral matters. After all, the ultimate reality of a Christian worldview is God, who alone has the right to give and define moral absolutes (Bush, 2003).

**The Evangelical pastor as Discipler of Biblical Human Sexuality**

God’s word is the foundation of Christian education, and it is one of the components of spiritual formation. God’s church is another component of spiritual formation (Morrow, 2008). In the Old Testament, God’s covenant people are the nation of Israel. In the New Testament, a new people consisting of Jews and Gentiles arose from the new covenant in Christ, called the church (Grudem, 2015). The church, consisting of believers, is where spiritual formation occurs (Lowe & Lowe, 2018). Spiritual formation through God’s people is called discipleship (Samra, 2006).

Discipleship is Christians walking together in Christ to form Christ in their thoughts and actions (McGill, 2020). Christian maturity does not happen in a vacuum because no Christian is an island (Lowe & Lowe, 2018). Naturally, discipleship from a church community perspective involves sharing the Christian experience with other Christians. Human beings, by nature, copy each other’s behavior, including thoughts, feelings, desires, and aversions (Maddix, 2015). Therefore, the Evangelical pastor needs to model a sexually pure life when discipling others about BMS. When a pastor clarifies the biblical teachings concerning male sexuality by example and prioritizes them in the spiritual formation of his flock through relational discipleship, the flock will mimic the shepherd’s model, including the shepherd’s convictions and priorities.

Discipleship is tied to community relationships (Samra, 2006). Believers in Christ are incorporated into the body of Christ upon regeneration so that they become a part of the body of Christ and are members of one another (Lowe & Lowe, 2018). The local church plays a crucial
and central role in the believer's spiritual formation because the local church is God’s appointed means by which the believer is being made complete until the day of Christ Jesus (Samra, 2006, p. 143). Therefore, the Evangelical pastor should be the primary builder of relationships in the church, including authentic discipling of members through the study of God’s word and wrestling with uncomfortable issues like sexuality.

**Ethical Considerations.** The Evangelical pastor will do well to remember that discipleship regarding human sexuality from a biblical perspective is not very intuitive, which makes it easier for them to ignore their responsibility (Freeman, 2016). Some topics concerning human sexuality can be very awkward. The dynamics of discipleship sessions regarding biblical human sexuality will differ in group and personal settings. Therefore, the Evangelical pastor must ensure that in addressing human sexuality concerns, the topic is appropriate for the audience’s maturity and age.

For example, it is appropriate to discuss why gender fluidity or same-sex marriage is not biblical and acceptable in the eyes of God in a group or an individual setting. Answering specific questions about permissible sexual expressions within marriage is appropriate at a men’s bible study group consisting of married men. Discussing topics of sex within marriage with single men may contribute to their struggles with lust. Matters concerning specific sexual sins and sexual temptations should be reserved in a personal counseling session.

Counseling is an integral part of pastoral ministry. In counseling sessions involving sexual addiction, the pastor must understand the ethics of confidentiality, but he must also know what the law says about mandated reporting concerning sexual abuse (Patton, 2005). Therefore, the Evangelical pastor must understand the issues in a personal counseling session regarding human sexuality and determine the appropriate course of action.
Cultural Considerations. As in all other areas of life, many social activities and norms are culturally diverse. The same is true in matters of human sexuality, such as men and women’s responsibility in a marriage relationship. And since the United States is a melting pot of different cultures, these cultural differences can be present in the church. Therefore, evangelical pastors must be careful not to praise one culture as better than another (Lingenfelter, 2008). Instead, the Evangelical pastor must pay attention to the different cultural nuances as appropriate.

Consequently, some cultures' views regarding human sexuality are directly against biblical teachings. For example, divorce and remarriage are prevalent in the American psyche, creeping into the Evangelical church (Goodrich, 2014). But just because divorce and remarriage are common in the U.S., it does not make it all right by God’s standards. Therefore, the Evangelical pastor must disciple his flock according to the Scriptures’ standards and values, not what the current culture dictates.

The ever-changing socio-economic trends in America bring many changes to the family dynamics. For example, “house husbands” are becoming more common than ever (Rhodan, 2013). How should the Evangelical pastor respond if a family in his congregation asks him if it is acceptable for the husband to stay home and take care of the kids if the wife has the potential to make more money? Is this arrangementbiblically permissible given the rising costs of child care? While the Bible does not speak anything against this kind of arrangement, the Evangelical pastor must be mindful of how this arrangement can change family dynamics that might run counter to God’s word. For example, will there be a tendency for the wife not to submit to the husband as God’s word prescribes if the wife is the one who is earning the family’s income? In these issues, the Evangelical pastor must consider other underlying problems, not just the
problems at hand when discipling married couples. Most importantly, he has to disciple them from the authority of God’s word.

It is inevitable that in discipling Christians, the biblical worldview and the postmodern culture will collide (Seifrid, 2017), and this is no surprise. Christians are God’s unique people, and they are a holy nation unto him (1 Pet. 2:9). Regardless of ethnicity and cultural background, Christians should have the fruit of the Spirit evident in them, especially in sexuality. Biblical values on human sexuality will be at odds with the world’s values. The Evangelical pastor must disciple his flock to adopt the biblical teachings on human sexuality.

**Personal Considerations.** In discipling his flock in matters concerning biblical sexuality, the Evangelical pastor must be careful to separate his personal opinions from the clear teachings of the Bible. If he has to give a subjective opinion, he should be forthright in acknowledging it as such. The Apostle Paul was an excellent example of this (1 Cor. 7:12, 40). The apostolic authority of the early apostles and their personal opinions about relationships influenced the church (Garland, 2003). The Evangelical pastor will do well to recognize that his private convictions can significantly influence those under his care. Conversely, there will be times when the pastor must correct his flock’s convictions if their convictions about sexuality issues are contrary to God’s word.

**Secular Views of Appropriate Sexual Expressions**

The idea of appropriate and acceptable sexual expressions is not exclusively a Christian construct. Even the secular culture has expectations of proper and healthy sexual expressions. For example, the advent of the #MeToo Movement acknowledged the need for social justice for women’s safety in the work and social environment from sexual predatory males. However, the movement failed to address the elephant in the room, that pornography is the main reason for the
objectification of women (Cooke, 2018). Likewise, the secular culture views adultery and infidelity in any relationship as something unacceptable, yet, at the same time, it tolerates sex outside of committed marriage relationships (Girls Ask Guy, n.d.). Likewise, the modern feminist movement championed women's empowerment, which also paved the way for transgenderism (Biggs, 2019). Yet, the same transgenderism is destroying women's rights by allowing transwomen (biological males who transitioned into females) to compete against women in sports competitions (Chesler, 2021).

While the secular view of sexuality has specific standards, they are often contradictory and lack absolute moral authority. Christian morality and ethics are based on moral absolutes set forth by a supreme and morally good God who alone has the right to define what is morally acceptable and what is not (Bush, 2003).

**Summary of Theoretical Literature**

According to some researchers, there is a lack of biblical education and discipleship concerning sexuality issues in Evangelical churches. Some of them blame the lack of seminary training of Evangelical pastors as the primary reason this is so. Still, there are no definitive studies regarding the lack of biblical education and discipleship concerning sexuality issues in Evangelical churches today. More qualitative studies are needed to pinpoint the cause of this phenomenon in today’s Evangelical churches.

A biblical view of sexuality is essential for Christian formation. Therefore, the Evangelical pastor should be the primary teacher, educator, and discipler of biblical sexuality in the church. In addition to being well-grounded on what the Bible teaches concerning human sexuality, the Evangelical pastor must also be aware of the current culture’s views and attitudes concerning them because their views impact the church. In addition, the Evangelical pastor
should use secular studies on sexuality issues that show the adverse effects of sexuality that run counter to God’s word.

**Related Literature**

The Bible has a lot to say about human sexuality. It is incumbent upon the Evangelical pastor to understand contemporary issues concerning human sexuality as part of their PCK competencies on this subject. Evangelical pastors must teach their churches effectively and develop their understanding of what God says about human sexuality as part of their spiritual formation (Suh, 2018). Teaching biblical human sexuality through discipleship and spiritual formation is part of their RK competencies. This section of the literature review briefly touched on specific topics relevant to Evangelical pastors’ RPCK competencies in discipling men to live sexually pure lives. Specifically, this section covered biblical perspectives on sexuality topics and trends in the current culture. In addition, this section discussed factors that may interfere or influence pastors from speaking about sexuality topics. This section also briefly touched on the ministry models for spiritual formation concerning male sexuality. Lastly, this section covered what appropriate behaviors look like for Evangelical pastors when modeling biblical male sexuality.

**Traditional and Contemporary Marriage and Sexuality Issues**

Traditional marriage and sexuality issues refer to marriage and sexuality issues before the Sexual Revolution in the 1970s (Fleischman, 2020). These would include topics such as divorce, contraception, and sexual addictions such as pornography. On the other hand, contemporary marriage and sexuality issues arose from the Sexual Revolution in the 1970s (Fleischman, 2020). These are primarily LGBTQ issues, including postmodern assertions of non-binary and gender-fluid sexuality (Sares, 2014). Therefore, a biblical understanding of these issues is essential for
an Evangelical pastor to teach, educate, and disciple men regarding male sexuality issues from a biblical perspective.

*Divorce*

According to a Barna Group (2008, par. 5) telephone interview, 26% of Evangelical Christians in the U.S. have been divorced. This figure means one in four Evangelicals has been divorced at least once. A similar study showed that Evangelicals have higher than average divorce rates despite their pro-family values (Goodrich, 2014). However, these studies do not cite why the divorce rate is high among Evangelicals. Furthermore, these studies did not show if the Evangelicals who have undergone divorce tried to save their marriage through formal counseling with their pastors or a secular marriage counselor.

These studies, however, are contested by other experts in the field. For example, Focus On The Family, an Evangelical Christian organization dedicated to the biblical teachings about family life and marriage issues, questioned the studies concerning the high rate of divorce among Evangelicals (Stanton, 2011). Married couples who belong to the traditional faith, Christian or otherwise, and practice their faith seriously have markedly lower divorce rates than the average population (Stanton, 2011). Merely belonging to a church does little for marriage, but what makes a big difference is one’s active practice of faith and participation in the faith community (Stanton, 2011).

Stanton’s assertions appeared to be backed by data. For example, according to an Associated Press (1995, par. 5) article, only four percent of male ministers in the conservative Southern Baptist denomination had been divorced. Similarly, active conservative Protestants who regularly attend church are 35% less likely to divorce, while nominal conservative Protestants are 20% more likely to divorce (Wilcox & Williamson, 2007, p. 56).
Regardless of the accuracy of the percentages in the data in the different studies about divorce among Evangelical Christians, it is inevitable that an Evangelical pastor, at one time or another, will come across a couple in his church who are having marital issues or contemplating divorce. Therefore, the Evangelical pastor must be educated and trained in family and marriage problems to help Christian couples experiencing these problems. Also, the Evangelical pastor must be skilled in giving advice and spiritual guidance to married couples having marital issues to help prevent their marriage from ending up in divorce. Finally, the Evangelical pastor must also be proficient in isolating the root cause of the marriage problem and not just its manifestations. He must provide biblical answers in dealing with the root cause of the marital conflict (Rassieur, 2005).

Instead of just handing out referrals for a marriage counselor, the Evangelical pastor must attempt to counsel the troubled marriage of his flock and work hard to get members of his church back on track through prayer, counseling, and speaking the truth of Scriptures in love (Pierre & Reju, 2015). Marriage and family counseling requires skill and discipline on the part of the Evangelical pastor. However, his primary motivation to excel in marriage counseling should be that it is the will of Christ Jesus, the Chief Shepherd, that he should be a conduit of healing and restoration to his church (Powlison, 2007). Therefore, Evangelical pastors are responsible for being prepared for this task not just to their flocks but ultimately to the Lord of the Church Himself.

**Birth Control**

The Evangelical pastor is more likely to be approached by a couple in his church for help regarding marital problems than for them to come to him for advice on birth control and family planning because Evangelical Christians are comfortable using contraception as a form of birth
control (Neuhaus, 1992). Therefore, the Evangelical pastor should familiarize himself with the ethics concerning various forms of contraception and birth control methods and their consequences and validity concerning the teachings of Scripture to teach it confidently.

**Abortion and Birth Control.** The birth control movement started in the early 20th century by Margaret Sanger using abortion as the method and eugenics as its guiding theory to weed out the unfit (Ummel, 2016). However, birth control (abortion) gave way to contraception, which the Roman Catholic Church explicitly denounced as incompatible with the teachings of Christ, while the Anglican Church and most of the Protestant denominations view contraception as an acceptable form of birth control, including the pill (Wubbenhorst & Wubbenhorst, 2017). This is significant since Evangelicals generally view abortion as morally unacceptable (Roberts, 2018), and some birth control pills prevent the implantation of fertilized eggs (Clowes, 2021).

Equally significant is the fact that younger Evangelicals today are more supportive of a woman’s right to choose to have her baby aborted (Burge, 2022).

**Ethics of Contraception as Birth Control.** According to Scriptures, the original purpose of sex is for procreation, and “the effective separation of sex from procreation may be one of the most important defining marks of our age – and one of the most ominous” (Mohler, 2012, par. 1). The widespread availability and use of contraception have changed the minds of many, including Evangelical Christians, that the primary purpose of sex is for recreation rather than procreation (Grisanti, 2012).

DeMarco (1983, par. 4) summed it best by stating that “more contraception tends to establish a “contraceptive state of mind” which leads to absolving responsibility for children conceived, which, in turn, leads to more abortion….” In addition, a recent study showed a
correlation between the use of contraception and divorce (Fehring, 2015), which perhaps explains why the divorce rates for Roman Catholics are lower than Evangelicals (Mena, 2013).

**Pornography**

Pornography is pervasive in today’s society and culture, and today’s internet technology provides instant access to pornographic materials that reshape the American psyche (Naselli, 2016). According to a recent study, most Evangelicals condemned the use of pornography as sinful. However, as of 2014, at least 40% of Evangelical men viewed pornographic material in the previous month when the survey was done (Perry, 2019, p. 699). Moreover, the use of pornography among Evangelicals is not endemic to men only, but Evangelical women have found fulfillment in viewing pornography (Thorne, 2017).

Christ Jesus taught that a man who looks lustfully at a woman has already committed adultery with her in his heart (Matt. 5:28). By linking lust directly with adultery and by stressing the lustful intentions over the act of adultery, Christ Jesus was not only raising the standard of sexual ethics, but He was also establishing an explicit prohibition against lustful thoughts (Turner, 2008). The sin of pornography does not just impair a Christian’s walk with God. The use of pornography by a Christian also negatively affected family relationships and relationships with the rest of the body of Christ for the simple reason that the sin of pornography naturally brought guilt, which diminished feelings of closeness with God and interest in spiritual matters (Perry, 2015). Therefore, there is no question that the consumption of any form of pornography is very destructive to the spiritual walk of any Christian (Hamman, 2018).

**Same-Sex Marriage and the Biblical Response**

On June 26, 2015, the United States Supreme Court changed the definition of marriage by affirming the constitutionality of same-sex marriage in a landmark case known as Obergefell
v. Hodges (Soergel, 2015). Since that decision, America has become more accepting of same-sex marriage (Masci, Brown, & Kiley, 2019). Support for same-sex marriage among Evangelicals, however, remained lower as a whole (Pew Research Center, 2019), with only 3% of Baptist pastors and 1% of Pentecostal pastors supporting same-sex marriage with a total of 8% of Evangelical pastors supporting same-sex marriage according to LifeWay Research (Earls, 2020, par. 13).

The Bible has consistently taught that marriage is the physical and spiritual union of one man and one woman (Gen. 2:24; Eph. 5:31). The updated New International Version of the Bible, a popular version among Evangelicals (Riley, 2008), is the most vocal in pointing out homosexual sins than other translations (Gryboski, 2012). Still, because of Obergefell v. Hodges, Evangelical Christians have become more accepting of this unscriptural practice (Green, 2014). Therefore, the Evangelical pastor must educate his church on why same-sex marriage is contrary to God’s word.

Evangelical pastors also need to educate their churches on how to reach out and relate to those bound by homosexuality. Christ gave His commission to His church to go forth into all the earth to make disciples of all nations (Matt. 28:19-20). Presenting Christ to the LGBTQ culture is a modern challenge for Evangelicals today (Schiemann, 2010). How are Evangelical pastors educating their flock to actively and purposefully bring Christ to the current LGBTQ culture?

**Gender Fluidity and Nonbinary Sexual Identity**

Gender-fluid or nonbinary gender means that a person’s gender identity or expression differs from their assigned gender at birth (Diamond, 2020). For example, a study by Katz-Wise & Hyde (2015, p. 1465) indicated that up to 48% of adult women and 34% of adult men reported some element of gender reorientation. According to behavioral theorists, sex refers to
the biological and physical aspects of being male or female, while gender is a social construct that refers to the behavioral, psychological, and social characteristics of men and women (Fontanella & Sarra, 2014).

The subject of gender fluidity has become a popular and political topic, especially in public schools and universities, which catapulted the issue to the forefront of the American psyche. Many organizations accommodate nonbinary people to choose how their gender should appear in customer databases. The accommodation by the government, hospitals, schools, and other businesses for nonbinary people to be referred to the gender they identify with has also streamed into personal and public discourse (Fenster, 2020).

The biblical teaching on human sexuality and gender is clearly stated in the first chapter of Genesis (Gen. 1:27). Christ Jesus affirmed this biblical tenet by quoting this passage to declare that God created them (humans) in the beginning, and He made them male and female (Matt. 19:4). Most Evangelicals follow the teachings of Christ and affirm the teaching that gender is biological and that transgenderism is a sin (Green, 2016).

But as non-binary gender identities are being normalized in today’s culture, these issues will undoubtedly affect Evangelical Christians at some point in their lives (Green, 2016). The Evangelical pastor must educate his flock with these issues from the solid scriptural witness that God created human beings as male and female. He must educate his congregation and respond in truth and love when approached by his members struggling with gender identity.

**Feminism and Toxic Masculinity**

When the term “toxic masculinity” was coined in the 1980s, it originally referred to the negative behaviors of manliness that exhibits extreme self-reliance, extreme aspiration for physical, sexual, and intellectual dominance, avoidance of emotional expression, devaluation of
women, and condemning of feminine traits in a man (Robinson, 2003.). Today, toxic masculinity is a derogatory term used by feminists to describe males who are rugged, competitive, ambitious, confident, risk-taking, and exhibiting leadership traits (Hobson, 2018). Some feminists would even use the term toxic masculinity for any actions or behaviors that are natural to the males, leading to the vilification and pathology of manhood in general (Hobson, 2018).

However, the Scriptures teach that God created humankind, male and female. Each sex has a different set of roles, duties, and obligations in the community that are distinct, non-irreducible, and non-interchangeable (Hastings, 2017). The Bible taught that men and women are created differently for different roles and functions. However, the Scriptures do not teach that being a male is better than being a female or vice-versa. Scriptures taught that in Christ Jesus, there is neither male nor female (Gal. 3:28). This does not mean that the roles, duties, and obligations of the male and female sexes that God designed in creation suddenly do not matter anymore. This passage neither implies that the male and female sexes are suddenly indiscernible nor interchangeable in Christ. Instead, this particular passage means that in Christ Jesus, a person’s sex does not give anyone special privilege when it comes to God’s gift of salvation; this verse has nothing to do with the idea of androgyny (Moo, 2018).

The Evangelical pastor must teach his church that contrary to the feminist agenda to delegitimize the male sex as something toxic, God created humankind as male and female. Furthermore, these sexual identities and responsibilities are non-irreducible and non-interchangeable (Hastings, 2017). Therefore, both the male and female sexes are equally good in God’s sight.
Secular Studies about Sexuality

The pastor should also use secular studies and findings of the adverse effects of sexuality not sanctioned by Scriptures to educate the church about sexuality issues. For instance, secular research studies consistently affirmed the negative impact of divorce on children’s emotional, behavioral, and educational well-being (Amato, 2010). In addition, secular research showed that premarital sex contributes to a higher divorce rate or dissatisfaction in marriage (Wolfanger, 2016).

Secular research revealed that pornography exploits a particular demographic population and, at the same time, causes harm to the consumer’s mental health that can lead to addictions and criminal activities (Bradley, 2018). According to secular studies, there is a significant risk of suicide for transgender people, with the risk going higher for those who underwent sex-reassignment surgeries (Williams, 2017). These secular studies help strengthen the Bible’s teachings that sexuality according to Scriptures produces benefits for those who practice what Scriptures teach. It also reinforces the idea that sexual prohibitions in the Scriptures are not just matters of personal faith. Even secular studies showed that deviation from the Bible's teaching about sexuality produces harmful effects.

Factors that Deter Pastors from Speaking about Sexuality Topics

Aside from the inherent awkwardness of the topic of sexuality, other factors may interfere or influence a pastor from speaking about sexuality topics. Ideally, Evangelical pastors are biblically grounded and informed about sexuality issues affecting men. It is also ideal that Evangelical pastors are proactively discipling their members to grow in their love for Christ by conforming them to His image (Smith, 2009).
Therefore, the Evangelical pastor is responsible for his church’s spiritual formation and transformation (changing mindsets) from a biblical perspective, even if the biblical view is contrary to the current culture (Yount, 2019). The same is true for matters concerning sexuality issues. As shepherds of Christ’s flock, Evangelical pastors must educate their members about what the Bible says about Christian living. They must also address perceived sins in the lives of Christ’s church, such as false doctrine and sin (MacArthur, 2005). Pastors are God’s mouthpiece to remind the church how to live. However, they are also God’s instruments to rebuke and correct God’s flock who are straying from God’s explicit commands and are adopting cultural practices contradictory to God’s word (Paddock, 2013).

For example, support for same-sex marriage among Evangelicals remains low (Pew Research Center, 2019). However, the 2015 U.S. Supreme Court’s decision to legalize same-sex marriage puts pressure on Evangelicals to accept the cultural shift concerning the redefinition of marriage to include same-sex couples, thus reducing orthodox Christian numbers in years to come (Lutzer, 2015). This was the case regarding Evangelicals’ changing attitudes on divorce, especially divorce and remarriage. Evangelicals condemned divorce and remarriage in the 1960s, yet divorce and remarriage are now widely accepted in the Evangelical church (Fea, 2015). As of 2018, 53% of white Evangelicals between 18 to 29 years old supported the legalization of same-sex marriage (Green, 2018, par. 2). Sadly, this cultural shift concerning the definition of marriage has already affected Evangelical mindsets and will likely continue to do so (Fea, 2015).

In addition, the attitudes of Evangelicals concerning the authority of the Bible are also changing, which is perhaps why Evangelicals are becoming more accepting of same-sex marriage. A study by George Barna concluded that only 10% of theologically conservative pastors have talked about political and societal issues that affect Christian and family values
from the pulpit, even though 90% of them believe the Bible has much to say about them (Hamilton, 2014, par. 1). Sam Rohrer, president of American Pastors Network, stated that Evangelical pastors avoid controversial political and societal topics such as same-sex marriage and transgender issues even though it goes against the word of God because they want to be comfortable (Hamilton, 2014). Barna’s study concluded that pastors purposely avoid controversial topics because controversial topics drive away people, and empty church chairs mean less income for the church (Hamilton, 2014).

Still, others asserted that Evangelical pastors are shying away from controversial topics such as same-sex marriage, same-sex attractions, and transgender issues even though the Bible has clear teachings about them because Evangelicals want to err on the side of love (Mitchell, 2020). However, Pastor Stephen Mitchell (2020) stated that Evangelical pastors must declare the whole counsel of God and defend the Bible’s teachings with compassion and conviction, showing compassion with grace and truth.

**Ministry Models for Spiritual Formation in Male Sexuality**

In 1990, coach Bill McCartney founded Promise Keepers, a ministry focused on helping men live lives of integrity which would also become one of the most significant Evangelical movements in the 1990s (Promise Keepers, n.d.). The Promise Keepers movement reached its apex in 1997 and has since disappeared from the national scene (Stone, 2021). Bartkowski (n.d.) blamed the decline and fall of Promise Keepers for its criticism of the religious establishment and its eschewing of religious organizations such as local churches. Perhaps the disappearance of Promise Keepers is a reminder that meaningful discipleship does not happen through national movements. Instead, Christian discipleship happens relationally within a local community of believers (Samra, 2006; Lowe & Lowe, 2018).
There are many ways for a local church to disciple men, such as group Bible studies, one-on-one discipleship or counseling, training courses, or day or weekend fellowships (Thornborough, 2012). More than the frequency, what is critical in a men’s discipleship ministry is the content of the topics being discussed and touched upon (Man in the Mirror, 2021). Men’s ministry should cover a balanced number of issues affecting men, including sexuality, relationships, leadership, and service, which all contribute to spiritual growth (Schroeder, 2011). Whatever the chosen methodology is, any ministry dedicated to men's discipleship should be meaningful, relevant, biblical, and personal (Smietana, 2018).

**Evangelical Pastors Modeling Biblical Male Sexuality**

The New Testament specifically gave instructions on the pastor’s qualifications (1 Tim. 3:1-7; Tit. 1:5-9). According to the Scriptures, a pastor must live an exemplary moral life and manage his household well. As straightforward as this may sound, the qualifications laid forth in Scripture are complex, which prompts further questions: Can a divorced man be a pastor, or does a man have to have a perfect marriage to qualify as a pastor (Guthrie, 1990)? Whatever the interpretation of these passages is, what is suggested at the very least is that a pastor should live a blameless life at present, such as living a life of integrity and managing their households well (Liefeld, 2011).

Still, what does blameless mean? Paul wrote in Ephesians 5:3 (NIV), “But among you, there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or any kind of impurity, or greed, because these are improper for God’s holy people.” The requirement for Christians, whether they are in church leadership or not, is that not even a hint of sexual immorality, sexual impurity, sensuality, or greed should be mentioned among Christ’s church because these are improper for God’s people (Snodgrass, 1996). The sins mentioned explicitly in the Ephesians passage are precisely
what the Modesto Manifesto attempted to address when it listed four things specifically as a safeguard for the integrity of the ministry: 1. To take only a fixed salary from their organization. 2. To never be alone with a woman other than their wife, mother, daughters. 3. To never criticize fellow members of the clergy. 4. To never exaggerate attendance figures at their meetings (Billy Graham Evangelistic Association of Canada, 2016).

In addition to sexual purit y, Evangelical pastors should manage their households well (1 Tim. 3:4). Pastors should be servant-leaders in the church, but most importantly, in their own homes (Chilton, 2019). Unfortunately, many pastors who are otherwise effective in their pastoral ministry fail to lead their homes. For example, John Wesley, a prominent 17th-century circuit preacher and founder of the Methodist movement beloved by many today, was so busy in his ministry that his wife left him (Busenitz, 2013). George Whitfield, another 17th-century circuit preacher and acquaintance of John Wesley, was unhappily married to an unhappy wife (Galli, n.d.). Another Evangelical pastor and theologian whose writings still greatly influence the lives of many Evangelicals today is A. W. Tozer (Purtle, 2008). Tozer was a man who spent at least five hours per day alone in prayer, yet he had difficulty relating to his wife and children that he died alone in a Canadian hospital in 1963 where he confessed that he lived a lonely life (Purtle, 2008).

While no pastor is perfect in his ministry or family life, Evangelical pastors must find a family-ministry life balance. Caring for and loving one’s family is part of the pastoral calling, and failing to do so is failing to fulfill a part of the Greatest Commandment (Chilton, 2019). Therefore, Evangelical pastors must never neglect their family relationships and responsibilities for their ministries.
Related Literature and Research Inquiry

The related literature reviewed thus far served to highlight topics that affect pastoral competencies (RPCK) as they relate to a practical ministry of discipling men towards sexual purity from a biblical perspective. The Evangelical pastor faces the challenge of understanding the ever-changing secular issues concerning male sexuality and teaching and relating them to his flock through discipleship. In addition, the studies reviewed in this chapter revealed that Evangelical pastors feel inadequate to address these issues. At present, there are no studies that show how these pastoral competencies contribute to a ministry of discipling men regarding sexual purity from a biblical perspective. This research study aimed to narrow the gap in the literature by discovering how subject matter knowledge and pedagogical knowledge combined with relationship knowledge and skills contribute to a ministry of discipling men to live sexually pure lives.

Summary of Related Literature

The Bible is clear about its teachings on issues surrounding human sexuality. The Evangelical pastor is responsible for teaching these truths to his flock for their spiritual development and edification from a biblical perspective, even in human sexuality issues. Therefore, it is beneficial for Evangelical pastors to know the different sexuality issues affecting men today. In addition, the Evangelical pastor must teach, educate, and disciple their congregation regarding BMS proactively through meaningful discipleships. They also need to develop their relational knowledge to teach and disciple their members about BMS in a personal and meaningful way. Furthermore, Evangelical pastors must model biblical masculinity and sexual purity.
Understanding these competencies is essential in discovering how pastors develop an active ministry of training and discipling men in their ministry contexts to live sexually pure lives. Yet, to date, this researcher found no studies that specifically establish these competencies with a practical ministry of discipling men in BMS from a biblical perspective among Evangelical pastors.

**Rationale for Study and Gap in the Literature**

Most pastors assume that their primary duty is to spread God’s word and shepherd followers seeking spiritual guidance (Dowd, 2021). Sexuality and spiritual issues, however, are closely related (Hastings, 2017). This study aimed to understand how Evangelical pastors’ competencies regarding BMS affect their practical ministry of educating and discipling men in this area. Pastors serving in small churches with no professional counselors on staff become the de facto counselors on spiritual matters, including BMS.

**Rationale for Study**

Since Evangelical pastors of small churches serve as the default teacher and discipler of all spiritual matters, including issues that affect male sexuality, this study is crucial in understanding how Evangelical pastors’ competencies contribute to a ministry of teaching, educating, and discipling men concerning male sexuality issues from a biblical perspective. Recent studies showed that most seminaries barely touch on sexuality issues in their pastoral ministry programs (Suh, 2018). Other studies have shown that seminary students who had personal discussions with their professors outside of the classroom regarding sexuality issues found them more helpful and valuable than traditional classes (Meek et al. 2004).

Therefore, there is a shift happening in some seminaries today. For instance, the Association of Theological Schools advocated for additional courses geared explicitly to
studying sexuality issues to be added to pastoral ministry programs in seminaries (Ott, 2012). Still, seminary educators such as Stephens & Jung (2015) argued for more comprehensive and holistic integration of sexuality courses in seminaries to equip would-be practitioners. In addition, Conklin (2001) proposed a study that sought to answer the question: “How does seminary training prepare clergy to address the sexuality-related needs of congregants?” However, this researcher found no studies explicitly linking an Evangelical pastor’s seminary training to their competencies in teaching the men in their churches regarding BMS issues.

There are also plenty of studies regarding the ability of Evangelical Christian parents to disciple their children regarding biblical teaching of abstinence before marriage (Dent & Maloney, 2017). But there have been no studies that explore pastoral competencies that contribute to an active men’s discipleship ministry by Evangelical pastors.

The importance of the Evangelical pastor’s role as teacher and discipler about sexuality issues cannot be understated, with recent studies showing that half of the clergy feel inadequate to discuss sexuality issues (Barna Group, 2020, par. 13). Though relatively unchanged, Evangelical pastors’ acceptance of same-sex marriage is still at a concerning rate of 8% (Earls, 2020, par. 13). Divorce rates among Evangelicals, as of 2008, remain high at 26% (Barna Group, 2008, par. 5). More Evangelicals also view sex outside of marriage as perfectly acceptable and not at all sinful (Ayers, 2019, par. 4).

Therefore, a study that seeks to understand the relationship between pastors’ competencies and their ability to disciple men in the area of BMS is desperately needed. This study, which focused on the pastoral competencies of RPCK concerning BMS, provided insights into what Evangelical pastors need to improve in their calling to teach, educate, and disciple men who will glorify God in living out their male sexuality in a godly way.
Gap in the Literature

The literature reviewed in this section addressed the priority Scriptures placed for Christian men to live out sexually pure lives. It also examined the literature concerning why the pastor should be the primary teacher, educator, and discipler of men regarding BMS. However, the literature reviewed did not address the competencies needed for pastors to be effective in their role as teachers, educators, and disciplers of men towards BMS. For example, Ott & Winters’ (2011) study about the lack of seminary training concerning sexuality issues only focused on LGBTQ issues but not on sexuality issues that Christian men would face. In addition, Laniak (2006) provided literature on the role of pastors as shepherds from a leadership point of view, such as the theological and scriptural foundations of pastoral ministry, the meaning of “shepherd leadership,” the ministry of the pastor as caretaker and teacher of the flock, but not in terms of discipling men about sexuality issues from a biblical perspective.

The literature reviewed also addressed the importance of having the necessary PCK and RK skills that Evangelical pastors would need to effectively teach, educate and disciple men in their ministry contexts. However, none of the literature reviewed revealed how the lack of content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, or relational knowledge affects pastors’ ministry in discipling men regarding male sexuality issues biblically. For example, Suh’s (2018) study argued for content knowledge concerning sexuality issues to be taught in seminary, but it did not address the needed relational knowledge. Samra (2006) and Lowe & Lowe (2018) stressed the importance of teaching and discipleship through community relationships. However, it did not address the role of the pastor as the principal discipler of men regarding biblical sexuality. Maddix (2015) discussed the necessity of the discipler as a role model for their followers. However, it did not specifically address the need for pastors to be models of sexual integrity as
they seek to disciple others to do the same. This study aimed to fill the literature gap by studying how the PRCK competencies affect the Evangelical pastors' practical ministry of discipling men in their churches to live sexually pure and satisfying lives.

**Profile of Current Study**

The literature reviewed in this chapter provided the foundation for this study’s research questions. Male Evangelical Christians suffer from the lack of honest conversations about sex and sexuality (Allender and Longman, 2014). They are often left to seek the answers to their questions and struggles by themselves (Barlett, 2014). The Evangelical pastor has a moral obligation to educate the church about human sexuality issues and tend to those broken and hurt over them (Suh, 2018). Even though the Bible has plenty to say about male sexuality issues, Evangelical pastors are not talking about them (Freeman, 2016). Many are quick to blame the seminaries for Evangelical pastors' lack of knowledge of sexuality issues from a biblical perspective. Currently, seminaries do not have enough curriculums to address sexuality topics to help prepare future pastors in this area (Suh, 2018). However, no studies link the lack of sexuality courses in seminaries today to Evangelical pastors' lack of engagement in their churches regarding sexuality issues from a biblical perspective (Ott & Winters, 2011).

While many books and articles concerning biblical human sexuality are available, sexuality topics remain primarily an awkward subject in Evangelical churches (Isom, 2018). As a result, there is currently a failure in the Evangelical church to teach what the Bible says about human sexuality (Bartlett, 2014). The one message most people are likely to hear in Evangelical churches today about human sexuality is that pre-marital sex is wrong, but there is no real help available to those struggling in this area apart from what they hear from the pulpit, and most Christians are left feeling alone and defeated (Isom, 2018).
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Researching Evangelical pastors’ competencies in educating and discipling men regarding biblical male sexuality is a matter of practical theology. Practical theology is the lived-out experience of Christian beliefs in everyday life, which should be a critical and theological reflection of the church’s practices in their interaction with those of the world to participate in God’s redemptive plan in the world (Swinton & Mowat, 2016). Practical theology, therefore, requires research. A qualitative study’s purpose concerning practical theology is not to add to Scripture but to get valuable insight in living out and applying the Christian faith in a broken world (Swinton & Mowat, 2016).

According to Ketelaars (2018), qualitative research is invaluable in pastoral ministry, especially spiritual formation, because it reveals the “why” behind the quantitative data. Research in ministry should occur within the social realities of communities, and qualitative research facilitates the discovery of what is truly going on in the social realities of communities (Sensing, 2011). Researching Evangelical pastors’ competencies and roles in educating and discipling men regarding BMS is also a matter of pedagogy. Qualitative research in theological education allows practitioners to know themselves and be stretched and shaped, leading them to a dynamic education practice in their ministry contexts (Csinos, 2018). Qualitative research fits this research study’s purpose because it seeks to understand the relationship of Evangelical pastors’ competencies in BMS and its praxis in ministry contexts.

This chapter described the research design specific to this study. It also provided information about this study’s participants, research setting, the role of the researcher, and ethical considerations. Finally, this chapter laid out the data collection methods, instruments, and data analyses used in this research.
Research Design Synopsis

This section provided a summary of this study’s research design. This included a review of the problem, purpose statement, research questions, and methodology.

The Problem

There is currently a failure in the Evangelical church to teach what the Bible says about human sexuality (Bartlett, 2014). Current studies showed that most seminaries hardly have courses on human sexuality (Ott & Winters, 2011). According to Suh (2018), the lack of education concerning human sexuality in churches resulted from the lack of training received by pastors concerning sexuality issues in seminaries. These studies blamed the lack of seminary training as the sole reason why pastors fail to teach, educate, and disciple their members regarding this topic.

Evangelical pastors are tasked with their calling as spiritual educators to bring wholeness and restoration even in the area of sexuality by building up positive sexual values by teaching them what it means to be made in God’s image as sexual beings (Suh, 2018). There are many books and articles concerning biblical human sexuality. Still, the pastor should be the primary teacher, educator, and discipler of biblical sexuality in the church. Specifically, there is a need for Evangelical pastors to teach, educate, and disciple men in their churches concerning BMS because male sexuality and spirituality are closely related (Nelson, 1999). Because of the absence of education and discipleship on male sexuality, most men in Evangelical churches do not have access to real help regarding real-life struggles from a biblical perspective (Allender and Longman, 2014).

It is not enough for the Evangelical pastor to preach and tell men in his church to live sexually pure lives, but he also has to teach how to live sexually pure lives from the authority of
God’s word. Therefore, teaching should be an essential element of pastoral ministry in matters concerning male sexuality. Christ taught His disciples about matters of faith, and He also taught them real-life issues using real-life illustrations for their spiritual development and conformity to His image (Hahn, 2019), which included topics concerning male sexuality.

Spiritual formation happens in the believers’ hearts and minds through the gospel of Christ and the Christian community (Lowe & Lowe, 2018). Ultimately, educating men about sexual issues is a matter of philosophy and worldview. An Evangelical pastor with a solid Christian worldview and philosophy has the authority of God’s word to rely on when educating men on sexuality issues. After all, the ultimate reality of a Christian worldview is God, who alone has the right to give and define moral absolutes (Bush, 2003).

The Evangelical pastor should be the primary educator of men regarding BMS. In addition, he should also be the primary discipler of men, especially in matters concerning male sexuality. Therefore, discipleship and counseling are integral components of pastoral ministry, especially on male sexuality issues (Toler, 2015). Also, evangelical pastors need relational knowledge to develop trust and confidence with their congregation (Solid Pastors Ministry, 2008). Therefore, relational skills are essential for discipleship and counseling ministries (Patton, 2005), especially sexuality issues.

As a discipler of Christians regarding BMS, Evangelical pastors must also be the model of sexual integrity. The Apostle Paul commanded that there must not be a hint of sexual immorality or impurity in Christ’s church (Eph. 5:3). Sexual immorality in this verse refers to a broad range of sexual sins such as promiscuity, illicit sexual relations, and lusts (Snodgrass, 1996). Relational discipleship requires moral exemplary on the part of the discipler (Maddix, 2015).
Finally, Evangelical pastors must understand the ethics of confidentiality in discipleship and counseling (Toler, 2015). However, he must also know what the law says about mandated reporting concerning sexual abuse (Patton, 2015). Therefore, the Evangelical pastor must understand the issues that could arise in a personal counseling session regarding male sexuality and determine the appropriate course of action.

**Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) research was to understand how the competencies of Evangelical pastors in small churches regarding biblical male sexuality contributed to a practical ministry of discipling men to live a life of sexual integrity and purity.

The theoretical framework for this research study is Shulman’s (1988) PCK competencies needed to be an effective teacher. In addition, RK competencies (Solid Pastors Ministry, 2018) were assessed together with PCK competencies to understand how these competencies contribute to an Evangelical pastor’s ministry in teaching, educating, and discipling men about BMS in their churches.

**Research Questions**

The following research questions (RQ) guided this study as it relates to the measurement of an Evangelical pastor’s competency in the area of BMS:

**RQ1.** How would Evangelical pastors describe their proficiency, if any, in addressing male sexuality issues from a biblical perspective?

**RQ2.** How would Evangelical pastors describe their comfort level in educating men in their ministry contexts about matters of male sexuality from a biblical perspective?

**RQ3.** How would Evangelical pastors describe, if any, their current ministry model in educating men regarding male sexuality from a biblical perspective?
**RQ4.** How would Evangelical pastors describe their ability to model sexual integrity and purity from a biblical perspective?

The relationship between the RQs and the pastoral competencies (RPCK) is illustrated in Table 1.

**Table 1**

*Relationship of RQs and Pastoral Competencies*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RQ1. How would Evangelical pastors describe their proficiency, if any, in addressing male sexuality issues from a biblical perspective?</th>
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<tr>
<th>RQ2. How would Evangelical pastors describe their comfort level in educating men in their ministry contexts about matters of male sexuality from a biblical perspective?</th>
<th>PK</th>
<th>CK</th>
<th>RK</th>
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<tr>
<th>RQ3. How would Evangelical pastors describe, if any, their current ministry model in educating men regarding male sexuality from a biblical perspective?</th>
<th>PK</th>
<th>CK</th>
<th>RK</th>
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<tr>
<th>RQ4. How would Evangelical pastors describe their ability to model a sexually pure life from a biblical perspective?</th>
<th>PK</th>
<th>CK</th>
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**Research Design and Methodology**

The focus of this research is to understand how Evangelical pastors’ competencies impact their biblically mandated role as educators of men in their ministry contexts to help them live out their God-given gift of sexuality in a biblical way. Since little information exists on how Evangelical pastors’ competencies affect their role as educators regarding BMS and what variables affect their competencies, a qualitative study was the best research methodology to use. In addition, qualitative research studies help reveal complex and multi-layered processes, relationships, and obstacles to operations (Leedy & Omrod, 2016).
Therefore, a qualitative study was the best approach in discovering how Evangelical pastors’ PCK and RK competencies impacted their role as educators and disciplers of men in their ministry contexts towards a biblical praxis of male sexuality in their everyday lives. This qualitative study sought to understand the complex and multi-layered processes involved in the education and the discipleship of men towards a biblical application of male sexuality. It revealed the obstacles, if any, that prevented them from actively doing so in their ministry contexts. Qualitative research studies can help develop new concepts and theories related to the specific phenomenon, but, in general, qualitative research does not establish cause-and-effect relationships (Leedy & Omrod, 2016).

The research design refers to the framework or the study’s scaffolding, including the problem statement, research questions, and how the answers to the research questions addressed the problem (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). The specific research design for this qualitative study is the interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA).

IPA is primarily a psychological approach in qualitative research to understand participants’ lived experiences (Alase, 2017). Edmund Husserl first conceptualized phenomenology in 1931 to understand the lived experiences of participants and the meaning of their experiences (Davidsen, 2013). However, IPA became a distinct qualitative tradition with the publication of Jonathan Smith’s paper in Psychology and Health (Alase, 2017).

What sets IPA from other phenomenological studies is its focus and approach. Smith et al. (2009) emphasized that the core of IPA’s focus is the psychological effects on the lived-out experiences of the human predicament. This design is in line with this study’s purpose: to understand how an Evangelical pastor’s competencies concerning male sexuality affect his praxis of teaching, educating, and discipling men in his ministry contexts towards BMS. IPA
studies allow the participants to tell their lived experiences (Alase, 2017), especially experiences concerning significant human predicament in health, sexuality, psychological distress, life transitions, and identity (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin 2009). This study sought to understand the Evangelical pastor’s lived-out experiences in the education and discipling of men regarding BMS and how their lived-out experiences impacted their ministries. Therefore, IPA is a good fit for this study’s purpose (Alase, 2017).

As the primary means of data gathering, this researcher recorded and transcribed the interviews for this study. The interview questions focused on the lived-out experiences of selected Evangelical pastors related to their teaching, educating, and discipling men in their churches regarding BMS. As part of the triangulation process, the different lived-out experiences of numerous participants in this research provided the basis for the themes that emerged during data analysis. Data triangulation is a research technique that utilizes various data sources, including multiple participants (Sensing, 2011). As a means of further triangulation, the content of the participant’s teaching or preaching materials concerning BMS in the past six months, if any, were analyzed for frequency/length, depth, and intensity, which was discussed further in the Data Analysis section.

Since the IPA methodology attempts to understand participants’ lived experiences and what these experiences mean to them, the answers to the interview questions were deeply personal. Therefore, protecting, securing, and managing data in IPA is crucial, including the deletion and destruction of the recorded videos to keep the identity confidential (Alase, 2017).

**Setting**

The study's setting was the Evangelical pastors serving as senior pastors in small churches with no professional counselors on staff. The participants may come from any
denomination that is a member of the National Association of Evangelicals or pastors of
churches who identify as Evangelical within the southwestern United States. Pastors in small
churches typically serve as counselors for their flock in all spiritual matters, including human
sexuality. Therefore, Evangelical pastors are the primary influencers of men in their churches to
live a sexually pure and healthy life as the Scriptures teach. In addition, pastors of smaller
churches are typically more connected with their congregation because smaller churches have
closer interpersonal relationships with one another (Ray, 2003). According to Killen (2005),
small church parishioners prefer their pastor to be involved in their lives as a way of showing
that he cares for them. According to a recent LifeWay survey, 88% of pastors with small
churches have regular counseling and discipleship meetings compared to 94% of pastors with an
average attendance of 250 or more (Earls, 2019, par. 5). Still, pastors of small churches can
positively impact the men in their churches regarding BMS during their counseling and
discipleship meetings.

Participants

This research aimed to understand how the education and training of Evangelical pastors
contributed to their competencies in teaching, educating, and discipling men regarding BMS.
Participants in this study were delimited to a preselected group of participants who met specific
criteria as a way of sharpening the research focus (Sensing, 2011). The participants in this study
were delimited to fit the following criteria:

1. Participants were male Evangelical pastors who may be single, married, divorced, or
   widowed.

2. Participants were serving as senior pastors of a small church (up to 125 weekly
   attendees) with no professional counselors on staff.
The Evangelical pastor’s years of ministry experience were not a factor in selecting participants because the study is interested in Evangelical pastors’ training and education related to competencies in BMS, not the length of their experience. Pastors should have the skills to address spiritual issues from a biblical perspective when they enter the pastoral ministry (Ott & Winters, 2011). Still, although tenure in the ministry was not a criterion in selecting participants for this study, this researcher captured the participants’ length of ministry experience when the participants offered the information.

Neither were the participants' training and education considered because pastors' training and education ranged from formal to informal (Hiebert, 2018). However, the participants’ demographics regarding seminary training or education were collected to identify patterns with participants who had seminary training and those who had not. The participants in this study need not have an active ministry of specifically teaching, educating, and discipling men regarding BMS in the past or present.

The participant’s denomination, educational training, age, and marital status were captured during the interview process. These demographics added a layer of information regarding the participants' lived experience in the ministry of discipling men toward BMS.

This study was interested in understanding how their PCK and RK competencies affected their ministry praxis of educating and discipling men regarding BMS. Recent studies have shown that seminary graduates lack the content knowledge of human sexuality issues due to the lack of courses concerning sexuality issues currently being provided in seminary (Suh, 2018). However, according to Meek et al. (2004), seminary graduates from Evangelical seminaries found seminary faculty more helpful in discussing human sexuality and ministry outside the classroom environment than in the classroom. Furthermore, the study of Meek et al. (2004) strongly
suggested that relational skills (RK) greatly influence discipleship regarding human sexuality. To date, this researcher has not seen any studies that specifically focused on the competencies of Evangelical pastors concerning BMS from the perspective of combined PCK and RK competencies.

There is no standard number of participants in an IPA study (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). The number of participants in an IPA study is limited only by the researcher’s discretion. However, the recommended number of participants in a qualitative study is five to ten (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). For this study, this researcher interviewed at least seven Evangelical pastors presently serving as senior pastors of small churches which do not have any professional counselor on staff. The participants in this study were sampled by contacting pastors from different Evangelical denominations in California and Nevada.

**Role of the Researcher**

The researcher’s initial role was to design the study and anticipate any problems that could hinder or negatively affect study outcomes (Sensing, 2011). Careful planning is essential to a successful research study, and researchers should begin by identifying the best research methodology that would fit their goals (Johnson & Christensen, 2014).

Therefore, the primary role of the researcher in an IPA study is that of a neutral, outside observer. Still, the idea of a non-participant observer in any qualitative research is not possible because the mere presence of an observer significantly affects participants’ responses (Sensing, 2011). However, there are ways to mitigate the influence of the presence of an observer in a research study.

For example, the term “interview” connotes a sense of formal inquiry (Sensing, 2011), limiting and inhibiting the participants’ responses to the questions. This researcher made the
interview feel more like a casual conversation to help make the participants more relaxed and at ease. Comfortable participants would feel no need to be defensive about their experiences and the meaning they assign to those experiences (Weiss, 1994).

Ultimately, an IPA researcher’s role is to investigate and interpret the participants’ lived experiences concerning the subject matter of the research study by analyzing the context of their experiences and making sense of them (Crawford, 2019). The IPA researcher must sort through the raw data and identify key concepts and explanations for the phenomena (Alase, 2017).

The IPA researcher should also be aware of any biases or struggles concerning the research topic. Therefore, a good suggestion for researchers of qualitative studies is to describe their own experiences with the phenomenon first to avoid interjecting their experiences into the participants’ lived experiences at the beginning of the note-taking process (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). To mitigate any bias, this researcher wrote his own experiences in teaching BMS and read them before each interview as a way of reminding himself that his experiences may not be the same as those of his research participants. By acknowledging his experiences and feelings toward the subject matter of this research, this researcher was confident that he did not interject his experiences in the experiences of the research participants so that the data analysis remains as neutral and as objective as possible.

This researcher has read several studies regarding sexuality issues in ministry during the course of this study, such as the lack of seminary training concerning sexuality issues (Ott & Winters, 2011) or the awkwardness that pastors find regarding the topic of human sexuality (Fredrickson, 2010). Therefore, this researcher was also aware that the studies he had read were not necessarily the case for the participants in this study. This researcher, therefore, was
confident that he was able to analyze the data in this study without being influenced by the literature he reviewed.

The note-taking process began as soon as the interview started. Using the Researcher’s Interview Worksheet (Appendix F), this researcher jotted down the dominant themes that began to emerge and observations regarding the participant’s feelings, facial expressions, and tone while being mindful of his personal feelings regarding the described experience.

**Ethical Considerations**

Research ethics pertains to the researcher’s honorable intent and goodwill towards the participant (Sensing, 2011). The protection of human participants in a qualitative research study has always been a sacred obligation of the researcher, but more so for an IPA researcher (Alase, 2017, p. 17). Therefore, researchers must do everything in their capacity to uphold this goodwill and protect the participants’ honor. Furthermore, assuring the participants in any research study that what they say and disclose will be kept in confidence is vital in earning their trust (Sensing, 2011). The usual practice for protecting confidentiality in a research study is to assign pseudonyms to the participants and alter details so that places and persons cannot be identified (Sensing, 2011, p. 88).

This researcher advised the participants of the interview’s confidentiality at the start of the interview. After the interview was transcribed, participants were assigned a number and pseudonym to maintain privacy and confidentiality. Any details disclosed by the participants that might potentially identify individuals were removed.

This researcher reminded the participants of their right to withdraw anytime during the data collection process (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). This researcher also notified the interview participants about the research study’s confidentiality and privacy before the interview.
Participants in this research study were not given any form of compensation for participating in the research study.

Informed consent gives everyone connected to the research study, especially the participants, the information they would need to decide to participate in the project out of their volition (Sensing, 2011). Participants in this study were given an informed consent form approved by Liberty University’s Institutional Review Board to outline any inherent risks associated with their participation in the study. In addition, video and audio recordings of the interview and the electronic and printed transcripts and worksheets were stored on a password-protected and encrypted USB drive. The USB drive and the printed interview worksheets were housed in a safe that was securely attached to a wall.

No participants below 18 years of age were interviewed in this study. Since the topic of this research study is sensitive, this researcher reminded the participants not to identify anyone in their responses to the interview questions. When a participant inadvertently provided a name during the interview, the name was struck out during transcription.

Following the generally accepted interview practices in a qualitative study, this researcher refrained from asking certain kinds of questions such as over-emphatic, manipulative, leading, or closed questions to avoid influencing the participants’ responses (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). Instead, this researcher let the participants speak and describe their thoughts, feelings, and experiences independently and asked follow-up questions as needed for clarity (Weiss, 1994).

Of the seven interviews, one was conducted in person, and six of the interviews were conducted online. All the interviews were audio and video recorded. This researcher utilized Zoom web conferencing service for online interviews as the video conferencing platform. Zoom...
web conferencing provided video encryption and secure data storage (Zoom web conferencing, n.d.). Therefore, Zoom web conferencing’s online meeting application was suitable for the interview.

For the interview done in person, a video camera was used to record the interview, but the camera was not directly focused on the participant’s face. Not focusing the camera directly in the participant’s line of sight may help the participant feel relaxed since the camera was not focused directly on them (Dehut, 2014). However, this researcher has found no studies that will confirm this. This researcher is aware that using a video camera in qualitative research can spoil the investigation altogether, as in ethnographic research (Gregory, 2020). However, cameras not directly focused on the participants have been extremely useful without being overly intrusive, as in primary care patient studies (Wilson, Schofield, & Martin, 2016). Based on these studies, this researcher believed that recording the interview with a video camera that is not directly focused on the participant provided minimum intrusion while providing the benefit of capturing the participants’ reactions and facial expressions that can be referenced back during data analysis.

This researcher focused on one research question at a time by asking all the interview questions and follow-up questions related to that research question before moving on to the next set of interview questions under a different research question (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). This step is critical for qualitative research such as an IPA study because poorly collected data can jeopardize the whole process (Sensing, 2011).

**Data Collection Methods and Instruments**

Data collection in IPA is usually in the form of scheduled open-ended interviews to allow participants to offer rich and thick first-person accounts of their experiences (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). However, other means of data collection that would allow the researcher to view
the participants’ experiences are also possible, such as their preaching messages (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

**Collection Methods**

IPA can use multiple forms of data in a single study, such as interviews, observations, written documents, objects or artifacts, electronic entities such as websites, social media, emails. Data collection in IPA is limited only by the researcher’s imagination (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). Data for this research study was collected mainly via semi-structured, in-person, or online interviews. The participants were given an option to meet online or in-person at the location of their choice.

In addition, this researcher also asked the participants to provide sermons, sermon manuscripts, or lessons about BMS issues they have preached or taught in the past six months to discover what topics they have covered and how they covered them. Looking into the participant’s preaching messages is a form of content analysis essential for triangulation in an IPA study (Renz, Carrington, & Badger, 2018).

**Instruments and Protocols**

A more detailed explanation of instruments and protocols that were employed during the data collection process is covered in this section.

*Open-ended Semi-structured interviews*

IPA studies must be designed using semi-structured, in-depth interviews with open-ended questions that encourage the participants to talk freely at length as part of a successful data collection strategy (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). The interview questions used to collect the data for this research study were based on the research questions and generally revolved around them. Employing fairly structured, open-ended interviews that allow for follow-up questions
prevents the researcher from going down the rabbit hole (Alase, 2017). The interviews did not go beyond an hour to avoid participant fatigue (Sensing, 2011).

The participants were given a copy of the interview questions and the definition of BMS (See Appendix A) as an aid or visual point of reference for visual processors (STEW, n.d.). The interview questions were sent a day before the interview to participants opting for online interviews. However, the participants were asked not to look at the interview questions until the start of the interview. Interview questions were given to the participant who was interviewed in person at the time of the interview.

Because this researcher resides in California, the participants were notified that they were being recorded at the time of the interview pursuant to California eavesdropping laws, CA Penal Code § 632, even though they had already signed the consent to be recorded. This researcher also advised the participants that they could stop the interview at any given time. Before asking the interview questions, this researcher asked the following preliminary questions:

1. What is your highest level of education?
2. What denomination do you belong to?
3. What is your marital status? Choices are single, married, divorced, widowed.
4. What age group do you belong to? Choices are 18 to 25, 26 to 35, 36 to 45, 46 to 55, 56 and older.

The IQs generally revolved around the following questions:

**IQ1.** Would you please describe your familiarity with male sexuality issues?

IQ1 sought to capture the participants' experience regarding their overall knowledge of male sexuality issues. These issues could range from personal problems such as sexual struggles or addictions to relational difficulties such as marital relationships and contemporary issues like...
same-sex marriage, gender fluidity, and toxic masculinity. IQ1 and its follow-up questions are a subset of RQ1, which sought to discover the Evangelical pastor’s CK.

**IQ2.** Would you please describe your skills and ability in educating men about male sexuality issues from a biblical perspective?

IQ2 sought to capture the participants’ experience regarding their pedagogical skills in teaching male sexuality issues from a biblical perspective. IQ2 and its follow-up questions are also a subset of RQ1, which sought to discover the Evangelical pastor’s PK.

**IQ3.** Please describe your comfort level in teaching, educating, and discipling men in your ministry context about male sexuality issues from a biblical perspective?

IQ3 sought to capture the participants’ experience regarding their comfort level in discussing male sexuality issues. IQ3 and its follow-up questions are a subset of RQ2, which aimed to discover the Evangelical pastor’s RK.

**IQ4.** Please describe the frequency of your ministry of teaching men about male sexuality issues as it relates to their spiritual formation, including avoiding and dealing with sexual sins and equipping married men to be leaders in healthy sexual relationships with their wives.

IQ4 sought to capture the participants’ experience in conducting discipleship or counseling ministries that focus on male sexuality issues in a group or individual setting. IQ4 and its follow-up questions are a subset of RQ3, which aimed to discover the Evangelical pastor’s RPCK.

**IQ5.** How would you describe your effectiveness in your role as a model among men in your ministry context in living out a sexually pure life from a biblical perspective?

IQ5 sought to capture the participants’ experience in modeling sexual integrity from a biblical perspective. IQ5 and its follow-up questions are a subset of RQ4, which also aimed to discover the Evangelical pastor’s RK.
These questions were asked in different ways for clarification, and follow-up and probing questions were asked to elicit more responses as needed (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The relationship of the interview questions to the research questions is summarized in Table 2 below.

**Table 2**

*Relationship of Interview Questions to Research Questions*

| IQ 1. Please describe your familiarity with male sexuality issues and what the Bible teaches about them? | RQ1 |
| IQ 2. Please describe your skills and ability in educating men about male sexuality issues from a biblical perspective? | RQ1 |
| IQ 3. Please describe your comfort level in teaching, educating, and discipling men in your ministry context about male sexuality issues from a biblical perspective. | RQ2 |
| IQ 4. Please describe the frequency of your ministry of teaching men about male sexuality issues related to their spiritual formation, such as dealing with or avoiding sexual sins. | RQ3 |
| IQ 5. Please describe your effectiveness in your role as a model among men in your ministry context in living out a sexually pure life from a biblical perspective? | RQ4 |

**Document Analysis**

In addition, sermons preached or lessons taught by the participants in the past six months containing BMS issues were reviewed to triangulate the participant’s answers during the interview. For example, if the participant said that he is very comfortable discussing BMS issues, but his preaching/teaching messages indicate otherwise, that was noted in the findings.

**Procedures**

This researcher began the research process by applying to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) to grant permission to conduct this research. Upon receiving the IRB approval letter (Appendix B), potential participants were identified and invited to participate in the study by
correspondence (Appendix D). In addition, a follow-up correspondence or phone call was made to potential participants to explain the purpose of this research study, answer questions, and schedule the interview if they were willing to participate.

Participants for this research study were identified through the snowball or chain referral sampling method. Snowball or chain referral sampling method is a non-probability sampling method that is also a form of convenience sampling because it targets members of the population known to the researcher (Naderifar et al., 2017). It is also called chain-referral sampling because the researcher asks the first few participants, who were selected by convenience, if they know other participants who meet the criteria for the study (Naderifar et al., 2017). This researcher identified nominators from his acquaintances, and the nominator letter (Appendix C) was sent to them. The nominators were asked to fill out a participant nomination form to identify potential participants. Once potential participants were nominated or recognized, a participant recruitment correspondence (Appendix D) was sent to the potential participant directly.

Selected participants were given informed consent, which advised them of the potential harm, physical or emotional, resulting from their participation in the study (Appendix E). The participants signed and returned the informed consent before data collection began. Selected participants who signed the informed consent were given a participant number and pseudonym to protect their confidentiality and privacy.

Interviews were conducted in the most comfortable and natural setting possible for the participants (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). It is also ideal that interviews are scheduled so that the participants are relaxed. Therefore, this researcher scheduled the interviews by reaching out to the participants and offered them the option to conduct the interviews face-to-face or online. This researcher also scheduled the interviews most convenient for the participants.
This researcher collected and compiled notes during the interview process, even though the interview was being recorded. Note-taking during an IPA interview is part of the data collection process that is crucial to identifying emerging themes and meanings that can lead to follow-up questions (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009).

During data collection in IPA, this researcher began jotting down memos of their initial interpretation of what he is seeing and hearing because they can help identify emerging themes early in the study (Alase, 2017). In addition, this researcher paid attention to repeated words or phrases, emotive words, non-verbal cues such as facial expressions and body language (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). The interview worksheet used during the interview is found in Appendix F.

**Data Analysis**

This section covered the analysis methods that were used in this study. It also covered how the findings stemming from the data analysis of this IPA study met the general trustworthiness standards. As a result, conclusions arising from the data analysis of this IPA study may be applied to current and future seminary and pastoral training.

**Analysis Methods**

There is no single prescribed method for working with data in an IPA study, but the essence of an IPA study, like other qualitative studies, lies in its analytic focus (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). In an IPA study, the focus of analysis is directed towards the participant’s attempt to make sense of their experiences (Davidsen, 2013).

Data analysis in an IPA study can be overwhelming to new and novice researchers (Alase, 2017). In IPA, the researcher makes sense of the participants making sense of their experiences (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). Data analysis in an IPA study typically begins
during the first interview. During the interview, this researcher engaged in a dialogue with the participant (Davisen, 2017) while forming initial interpretations of what the participant was saying (Alase, 2011).

The majority of data analysis in an IPA study occurs while the researcher reads the verbatim copy of the transcripts repeatedly. The recorded interviews were transcribed using Otter.ai’s premium proprietary transcription program. Reading the interview transcripts was the most time-consuming part of data analysis in an IPA study (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). After reading through the transcripts a few times while listening to the actual recording, this researcher did a more expository reading of the transcript by engaging in free textual analysis (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). At this juncture, this researcher looked for assigned meaning to words, relationships to phrases and objects, frequency of emotions, participants' values, word choices, and articulations of feelings by observing their facial expressions and voice tonality (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009).

After the exploratory reading and note-taking, this researcher began looking for emerging themes and keywords or phrases that the participants repeated as they ascribed meaning to their experiences (Alase, 2017). Per Davidsen’s (2013) suggestion, this researcher used the right margin of the interview transcript to identify themes while using the left margin to note the participant’s ascribed meanings and preliminary interpretations.

Themes were arranged according to the RQs of this study. As main themes emerged from the exploratory notes for each RQ, this researcher put them in the order they first appeared, like Smith, Flowers, & Larkin (2009) suggested. During this time in the data analysis process, the researcher looked for connections between the themes related to the RQs concerning PK, CK,
RK, and RPCK as a whole. This researcher used tables to discern relationships between thematic patterns, as Smith, Flowers, & Larkin (2009) suggested.

This researcher then moved to the next participant interview and began the data analysis process again. Once the data for all the participants had been analyzed, this researcher looked for patterns across the cases and discerned if other themes emerged from the comprehensive interviews of individuals (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). This researcher then summarized the study's findings in written and graphic format. Thus, textual and graphical summaries were used to summarize this IPA study.

As part of the data analysis process, participants' preaching and teaching messages were analyzed for content, depth, tone, and frequency in addressing BMS issues. The findings were compared with the participant's answers to the interview questions as part of the triangulation tactic to confirm whether their responses to the interview questions are consistent with how they teach BMS issues.

**Trustworthiness**

Unlike quantitative research, qualitative research does not employ instruments with standard metrics that measure validity and reliability (Nowell et al., 2017). IPA analysis is typically a double hermeneutic process, which means understanding a participant’s life experience is greatly influenced by the researcher’s own experiences, values, and presumptions (Rodham, Fox, & Doran, 2013). To ensure that qualitative studies such as IPA are trustworthy, qualitative researchers came up with various standards. Tracy (2010) recently came up with eight, while Lincoln and Guba (1985) came up with the following widely accepted criteria for trustworthiness.
**Credibility**

An IPA study is credible if the researcher recognized the experience as they were confronted by it (Nowell et al., 2017). In addition, triangulation techniques such as using multiple data sources, including numerous participants, help ensure the study’s credibility (Natow, 2019). For example, this researcher used other data sources such as preaching or teaching content from the participant’s social media page as secondary data sources.

The seven participants in this research study were asked the same interview questions. However, the follow-up questions were phrased differently at times from participant to participant to capture the accuracy of the participant’s experiences. The more the participants understood the interview questions related to the research questions, the more the participants expressed their lived experiences regarding the research topic (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

**Dependability**

Dependability means that the research purpose, participant selection, questions, processes, and procedures are logical and methodical (Nowell et al., 2017). To ensure the dependability of this research study, this researcher documented the qualification of the participants selected for this study. In addition, the informed consent process was documented to ensure that the participants in this study willingly participated and shared their experiences about the research topic. Likewise, the dependability of this research study was supported by the interview question’s relationship to the RQs.

**Confirmability**

Confirmability of a study means that the researcher’s interpretations can be traced to the data (Tobin & Begley, 2004). Confirmability is typically ensured by an audit (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). An audit trail is the availability of the raw data, transcripts, field notes, and
reflexive journal that shows the choices made by the researchers throughout the study (Nowell et al., 2017). Therefore, the transcripts of the interviews are available upon request. However, if transcripts are requested, the assigned alias name and participant number will be the only identifying information in the transcript and data analysis worksheet to ensure the confidentiality and privacy of the participants.

Transferability

Transferability refers to the generalizability of the inquiry (Nowell et al., 2017). Qualitative studies such as IPA are usually non-generalizable (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Still, the emerging themes and meanings assigned by the participants on their experiences may potentially be applied to other ministry contexts, such as Evangelical pastors in mid-size or large churches with no professional counselors on staff. This study is also transferrable to Evangelical Bible colleges or seminaries. The study can help identify specific curricula that seminaries can add to their pastoral ministry programs to help train future pastors and ministry workers in dealing with male sexuality issues.

This study is not transferable to other demographics such as women since female sexuality issues are different from male sexuality issues. This study is also not transferrable to large or mid-size churches with multiple pastors and counselors on staff. However, future researchers can pursue further studies that focus on areas where this study is not transferable. For example, a similar study can be done focusing on large churches. Also, the conclusions drawn from this study can be recommended to Evangelical seminaries.

Chapter Summary

This qualitative research study used the IPA design to discover how Evangelical pastors’ competencies affected their ministry praxis of teaching, educating, and discipling men in their
ministry contexts regarding BMS. This study focused on seven senior pastors of small Evangelical churches with no professional counselor on staff. The participants came from different Evangelical denominations. This researcher’s role in this study is to design and implement the IPA study to ensure that the research is logical and well structured. This researcher was a neutral observer who also analyzed and interpreted the participant’s experiences. Data for this research was collected primarily via semi-structured, scheduled interviews. This researcher also employed document analysis as part of the data collection and triangulation tactic. This researcher ensured that data collection and analysis met a qualitative study's generally accepted trustworthiness standards.
CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

Overview

The purpose of this study was to understand how Evangelical pastors' content knowledge (CK), pedagogical knowledge (PK), and relational knowledge (RK) concerning biblical male sexuality (BMS) affected their ministry praxis of discipling men in their churches to live sexually pure lives. Seven Evangelical pastors of small churches with no professional counselor on staff were invited to participate in this study to determine how their pastoral competencies contributed to their ministry of discipling men in their churches towards BMS. The participants were also asked to provide preaching or teaching messages regarding biblical male sexuality that they gave, if any, in the past six months. This chapter covered specific data compilation protocols and measures employed in this study and a brief demographic background and sample data of the participants. In addition, the data and analysis findings section outlined the themes and subthemes that emerged from the analysis of the data collected, which was juxtaposed to the research questions that guided this study. Finally, this chapter concluded with an evaluation of the research design.

Compilation Protocol and Measures

The general premise of recent studies was that Evangelical pastors are failing to educate and disciple men in their churches to live sexually pure lives from a biblical perspective (Suh, 2018). According to these recent studies, Evangelical pastors are ill-prepared to discuss sexuality issues from a biblical perspective because of the failure of seminaries in training them in this topic (Ott & Winters, 2011). As a result, Evangelical pastors were silent on the subject of BMS, while male Evangelical Christians are often confused and left on their own in figuring out what the Bible teaches about BMS and how to live and apply it in their lives (Freeman, 2016).
Using Shulman’s (1986) Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) theory and Solid Pastors Ministry’s (2018) Relational Knowledge pastoral competency as a framework to understand how competencies regarding BMS affected pastors’ ministry of educating and discipling men to live sexually pure lives as Scriptures teach, seven pastors from four Evangelical denominations were interviewed for this study. Each of the Evangelical pastors was interviewed individually, and the interview questions used were based on this study’s research questions (RQs). The interviews were initially planned for an hour. The average length of the interviews, however, was 32 minutes. The most extended interview lasted about an hour, and the shortest interview was 20 minutes. In addition, each participant was asked to provide preaching or teaching messages they gave regarding BMS, if available, as a means of triangulating their responses to the interview questions. Only two participants provided this researcher with their teaching/preaching message regarding BMS from the past six months.

The interviews were transcribed using Otter.ai premium proprietary transcription software with a transcription accuracy rate of 97%. The initial reading of the transcripts was done while simultaneously listening to the audio recording of the interviews. Corrections were then made to the transcripts as needed. Three of the seven participants were born and raised in the Philippines, just as this researcher was. In the case of the three participants born and raised in the Philippines, their interview transcripts were grammatically corrected for clarity and translated as needed.

After reading the transcripts several times, the participants' answers were manually coded using Saldaña’s (2021) exploratory coding methods. Once the coding was completed, the themes and subthemes were identified and grouped categorically (Saldaña, 2021). The identified
dominant themes and subthemes were then juxtaposed to this study’s research questions to give meaning to the participants’ responses to them.

**Demographic and Sample Data**

Seven senior Evangelical pastors of small churches from four Evangelical denominations were invited to participate in this study. Three participants are pastors serving in the Southern Baptist Convention, the largest Baptist convention in the United States (Fahmy, 2019).

Two participants are pastors under the Foursquare Church, an Evangelical Pentecostal denomination with 90,000 churches and 8.8 million members worldwide, founded by Aimee Semple McPherson in 1923, with its headquarters in Los Angeles, California (Foursquare Church, 2021). In addition, this denomination is affiliated with four accredited Christian colleges in the U.S, such as Life Pacific University (Foursquare Church, 2021).

The other two participants are pastors under the Assembly of God and Christian and Missionary Alliance denominations. Assembly of God is an Evangelical Pentecostal denomination founded in 1914 with 13,000 churches and 3,000,000 members in the U.S. and 69 million members worldwide, making it the largest Pentecostal denomination in the World (Assemblies of God, n.d.). Christian and Missionary Alliance is also an Evangelical Pentecostal denomination founded in the 1880s with over 22,000 churches and 6 million members worldwide (Alliance World Fellowship, n.d.)

The participants were asked to sign an informed consent document before or at the time of the interview. Each of the participants was asked five interview questions. Follow-up questions were asked as needed to clarify or elicit responses from the participants. Each participant was given an identifying number and pseudonym to ensure confidentiality. The participants were listed below in the order of their interviews with their aliases.
Participant 1: Pastor Adam

Pastor Adam is a Southern Baptist pastor in southern California. He is married, and he is between 26-35 years old. He is currently in a Masters of Divinity program in an Evangelical seminary. His response to the interview questions indicated a well-rounded knowledge of male sexuality issues today, specifically mentioning toxic masculinity and the #MeToo Movement and issues concerning sexual addiction such as pornography. In addition, he has read Every Man’s Battle by Steve Arterburn. Finally, he described his men’s ministry as follows:

“I don't have a specific ministry that targets that (BMS). I would just say that our men's ministry, when we have Bible studies on a weekly basis when we have prayer together, this topic (BMS) regularly comes up. And I think just naturally reading through the Word of God, they're just going to naturally come up with sexual purity, sexual temptations, and other sexual questions that come up. And it's not uncommon that at least once a week, these things are talked about, and prayed over, and wrestled through. Whether that be in a group setting environment, or a one-on-one individual basis, or in a marriage counseling.”

Participant 2: Pastor Benjamin

Pastor Benjamin is a Southern Baptist pastor in southern California. He is married and is between 26-35 years old. He pastors a church where most of his members are in their early twenties. He is currently in a Masters of Divinity program in an Evangelical seminary. Pastor Benjamin’s responses would indicate some familiarity with male sexuality issues, such as the influence of feminism in the culture today. However, he admitted that he has not read comprehensively about the subject. Still, he is familiar with LGBTQ+ issues, and he has read a book written by Joe Dallas, a practicing gay who became a Christian, whom he has invited to speak at his church. He has also read the book, A People to be Loved by Preston Sprinkle, which
addresses how Evangelicals should deal with the LGBTQ community in a Christ-like way.

Pastor Benjamin does not currently have a regular men’s ministry at his church, but he describes his ministry among men in his church as follows:

“I'll just call and schedule a time with the men alone… I will initiate conversation about how they're leading their homes and their own devotional life with Christ and in what ways can I pray for them or equip them to properly focus on leading their homes.”

**Participant 3: Pastor Caleb**

Pastor Caleb is a pastor with the Christian and Missionary Alliance. He belongs to the age group of 56 years and older, and he is married. He was born and raised in the Philippines, where he also attended Bible college. He ministers to a primarily Filipino church in northern California. Aside from homosexuality and pornography addiction issues, he is not familiar with the more contemporary sexuality issues such as toxic masculinity, nor has he read any books regarding them. However, he is familiar with the Barna Group studies on divorce and separation among Evangelicals, which he finds alarming. He described the men’s ministry in his church as follows:

“At this time, no (men’s ministry). But we incorporate that (BMS) in our message.”

**Participant 4: Pastor Daniel**

Pastor Daniel is a pastor with the Foursquare Church in northern California. Pastor Daniel is married, and he belongs to the 46-55 age group. He did not attend seminary, but he attended Bible college. Because of his 30 plus years in pastoral ministry, he stated that he is very familiar with male sexuality issues affecting men today. He is also one of the two participants who gave this researcher a sample of his preaching or teaching regarding biblical sexuality. Pastor Daniel described his ministry model in discipling men as follows:
“We have quite a few different small groups that men can connect with that are specific to men's issues. So that's the primary vehicle for communicating biblical sexuality to men.”

**Participant 5: Pastor Eli**

Pastor Eli is a Southern Baptist pastor in northern Nevada. He was born and raised in the Philippines. He is married and belongs to the 36-45 age group. He has an Associate of Arts degree in a secular field, but he did not attend Bible college or seminary. He has been in the pastoral ministry for six years. He described his ministry model in discipling men as follows:

“Our church is a small church. Smaller than 125. Men will probably make about, I want to say, 60-55. And then we have the men's ministry. So when it comes to programs about sexuality, we don't really have a particular, “Hey, this is how to exercise your holiness” program.”

**Participant 6: Pastor Finneas**

Pastor Finneas is a pastor with the Foursquare Church in northern California. He is married and belongs to the 36-45 age group. He has earned a Masters of Divinity from an Evangelical seminary. After finishing high school, he entered the ministry, where he ministered to the youth and young adults. As a result, Pastor Finneas stated that he had to study and read many books concerning biblical sexuality issues. During his interview, he readily recited some of the books he had read and used to educate men in his ministry. He has read books such as *Pure Desire* by Ted Roberts, *Anatomy of Seduction* by Jack Hayford, former president of the Foursquare Church denomination, *Every Man’s Battle* by Steve Arterburn, to name a few. He also stated that he listens to podcasts that deal with male sexuality issues, such as *Porn Free Radio*. He is one of the two participants who shared a recent preaching message concerning
biblical sexuality. He has been a senior pastor for six years. He described his current ministry model among men as follows:

“If we have eight men's gatherings a year, I would say at least half of those relate to male sexuality. Four times a year, there's a specific teaching to men on male sexuality.”

**Participant 7: Pastor Gabriel**

Pastor Gabriel is a pastor with the Assemblies of God in northern Nevada. He is married and belongs to the 46-55 age group. He was born and raised in the Philippines but had been pastoring a multi-cultural church for 21 years. He holds a Master's degree in Christian leadership. Pastor Gabriel described his present ministry model in discipling men as follows:

“We have men's breakfast every month. So, some of these things (sexuality issues) are being discussed. And part of the conversation is definitely spiritual formation, being faithful and walking with the Lord and being pure before His eyes.”

The participants’ demographic data, including their age group, marital status, denomination, and educational background, is summarized in Table 3 below.

**Table 3**

*Participant Demographics Summary*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pastor Adam</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Southern Baptist</td>
<td>Masters of Divinity*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastor Benjamin</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Southern Baptist</td>
<td>Masters of Divinity*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastor Caleb</td>
<td>56 and older</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Christian &amp; Missionary Alliance</td>
<td>Bible College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastor Daniel</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Foursquare Church</td>
<td>Bible College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastor Eli</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Southern Baptist</td>
<td>Associates of Arts (Secular)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastor Finneas</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Foursquare Church</td>
<td>Masters of Divinity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastor Gabriel</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Assemblies of God</td>
<td>Masters of Arts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Denotes participant is in the process of completing his education at the time of the interview
Data Analysis and Findings

The data for this research study came primarily from the scheduled, open-ended interviews. If any, recorded preaching or teaching messages regarding biblical male sexuality given by the participants in the past six months were analyzed as a triangulation technique to confirm what the participants said during the interviews. Of the seven participants, only two had their own preaching or teaching message regarding biblical sexuality in general but not exclusively about BMS that they shared with this researcher. The other participants either used teaching videos regarding BMS from other ministries or did not have any message about BMS that they recorded. As this researcher listened to the preaching and teaching messages of the two participants regarding biblical sexuality in general, nothing was found that would indicate any inconsistencies with the answers they gave during their interviews.

Two coding procedures were utilized in this study. The first coding cycle was done using the emergent themes that came up in the initial interview of the participants. The second coding procedure was accomplished by mapping the codes to the study’s research questions. As a result, four dominant themes were identified: 1. Personal conviction, 2. Tension with culture, 3. Pastoral mandate, and 4. Personal journey. A table of the main themes and subthemes and their relationship to the RQs are shown in Table 4 below.

### Table 4

*Themes and Subthemes in Relation to the Research Questions*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RQ1</th>
<th>1. Personal Conviction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.1 Ultimate authority of the Bible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.2 God's design in creation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ2</td>
<td>2. Tension with Culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.1 Accepting the broken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.2 Need for a different approach with non-believers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.3 Deception of sin and bondage to sin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Running two coding cycles in two different ways allowed logically linking seemingly unrelated facts to fit categories with another (Saldaña, 2021). Coding the data this way was necessary because as words and phrases were coded from the first coding cycle, new codes were discovered, which necessitated merging them with existing categories. In contrast, other previously found subthemes were infrequent, reclassified, and refitted in the overall coding scheme (Saldaña, 2021). Sometimes a sentence may produce two or more differing subthemes. In those cases, the data was coded for multiple subthemes. Phrases repeated by the participants were coded and counted as often as they were repeated.

All of the participants gave meaningful and descriptive answers to the interview questions. Based on the themes evident in the participants’ responses, this researcher mapped the participants' responses by themes and subthemes to the study’s RQs from meanings derived from the participant's responses to the interview questions. A summary of the frequency of the subthemes within the dominant themes is illustrated in Table 5 below.
Table 5

*Frequency of Themes and Subthemes*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Theme 1</th>
<th>Theme 2</th>
<th>Theme 3</th>
<th>Theme 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subtheme</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total by Subtheme</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total by Theme</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Research Question 1**

*How would Evangelical pastors describe their proficiency, if any, in addressing male sexuality issues from a biblical perspective?*

All of the participants interviewed expressed a profound belief regarding the Bible at the outset. Therefore, personal conviction is the dominant theme that characterizes their proficiency in addressing male sexuality issues from a biblical perspective. Their responses to all interview questions are marked by a constant reference or allusion to what they believe the Bible teaches about male sexuality and God’s design in creating humans, male and female.

The constant reference to their conviction of God’s word and design in creation jumped out as the basis for their knowledge of sexuality issues. In other words, what they know about sexuality issues is firmly anchored to what they believe the Bible says about them. However, their conviction of what the Bible teaches about male sexuality issues was the source of their authority when teaching men in their churches how to live sexually pure lives.

The personal conviction theme revealed two subthemes: 1. The Bible as the ultimate authority in matters of sexuality. 2. God’s design in creation. The personal conviction theme is the only dominant theme where all participants touched on all the subthemes.
The Bible as the Ultimate Authority

The deep-seated conviction within the participants that the Bible is the ultimate authority when it comes to human sexuality, including male sexuality, was the strongest of the subthemes under the personal conviction theme that mapped to RQ1. The participants’ proficiency in addressing male sexuality issues from a biblical perspective came from their deep conviction that the Scriptures are the final authority. The codes for this subtheme made up nearly 10% of all the codes in the interview transcripts. The following excerpts supported this observation:

**Pastor Adam.** “Culture does not dictate what masculinity or femininity is. God gets to dictate what masculinity is.”

Pastor Adam did not shy away from discussing his conviction that Scriptures are the final authority regarding BMS. Although he did not view himself as an expert, Pastor Adam demonstrated a strong familiarity with the current culture’s view on sexuality, including the abuses of ungodly male sexuality that led to the #MeToo movement. Nevertheless, he does not believe that a broken culture gets to define what human sexuality is since God already expressed it in His word.

**Pastor Benjamin.** “I fully affirm the complementarian view that God calls both men and women. They are equal in God's sight, equal in dignity and worth, both image-bearers of God, both full inheritors of the grace of God through their faith in Jesus Christ.”

Pastor Benjamin’s soft-spoken voice matched his humble demeanor. His statement above was drawn not merely from a theological conviction but from the Scriptures, especially the Genesis creation narrative and an apparent reference to the Evangelical gospel, which is salvation by grace through faith in Chris Jesus. Thus, his statement on BMS was reflective of the totality of the Scriptures’ teachings.
Pastor Caleb. “Biblically, Genesis, of course. Well, for me, in my personal conviction, I believe that. I will keep on telling them that God only created men and women.”

The oldest of all the participants with more than 35 years of pastoral ministry experience, Pastor Caleb’s answer was short but straight to the point. He used the terms “biblically” and “personal conviction” in the Genesis creation account to say God created only two sexes.

Pastor Daniel. “I think the aptitude to educate men on biblical masculinity or biblical sexuality, that aptitude first comes from the Word, from the Bible, my knowledge of the Scripture and what that teaches, because that's the ultimate authority on what sexuality is: God's word.”

With over 30 years in the pastoral ministry, Pastor Daniel’s statement regarding his conviction that his knowledge about male sexuality is anchored solely in what the Scriptures teach about them is truly remarkable. Pastor Daniel was confident that the only way he could have counseled men effectively as a pastor regarding sexual struggles and issues was through his knowledge of the Bible and what it says regarding matters of sexuality. Pastor Daniel also demonstrated his conviction that the Bible answers human sexuality issues in his teaching messages regarding sexuality issues.

Pastor Eli. “A young man will come to me and say, “Hey, Pastor, I'm thinking about this,” and I tell him how the Bible has it written down.”

Pastor Eli’s responses to the interview question were very thoughtful. His above statement demonstrated his conviction that the Bible has the answer to life’s questions, including those of male sexuality issues. In another part of the interview, he confessed that as he is listening to questions from his church members about sexuality issues, his mind is already thinking about what scriptural verses to give them regarding their life situation.
Pastor Finneas. “I'm pretty versed in biblical male sexuality, what's permissible, what's not permissible. How men can find themselves in sexual bondage and prisoners to their own lusts and desires, and how to combat that through a biblical framework and a spiritual framework. So yeah, I'd say I'm fairly well versed in that. “Hey, I'm having an affair.” Well, here's what the Bible says about that. Here's what you need to do. Here are some steps to take.”

Among the participants, Pastor Finneas was the only one who gave a litany of biblically-based books he had read concerning biblical sexuality. In listening to Pastor Finneas’ teachings on human sexuality, one can see that he is passionate to see Christians be freer from the bondage of sexual sins. As indicated in his above statement, Pastor Finneas is convinced that only the Bible has clear and definitive answers to becoming free from sexual bondage. Therefore, his approach was not merely intellectual but practical, pointing to the steps laid out in the Scriptures that a Christian needs to take to overcome sexual sins.

Pastor Gabriel. “And the second thing, I think, is really understanding the commands of God and that sex is a gift within the marriage context.”

Pastor Gabriel, of course, was speaking of the Bible when he referred to the “commands of God” in the above quote. Pastor Gabriel believes that the Bible is an authoritative book with specific teachings concerning sexuality that Christians should know and obey.

God’s Design in Creation

Another deep conviction that all the participants held is that God’s design of the human sexes is good and wise. Specifically, the participants believed that there are noticeable differences in God’s purpose of the male and female sexes, including the differences in their roles and responsibilities in terms of marriage and community relationships. The following excerpts supported this observation:
**Pastor Adam.** “When I sit down to counsel someone, I find it very easy for me to define the biblical perspective of God-designed masculinity as we are created in the image of God, and what that means in our characteristics, and our virtue, and in our value.”

Pastor Adam’s one-on-one teaching through counseling regarding BMS was greatly influenced by his conviction that, first and foremost, God created both men and women in His image. Pastor Adam believes that God uniquely created humans, male and female. Yet, he believes that the male and female sexes have unique attributes, roles, and functions specifically designed and appointed by God.

**Pastor Benjamin.** “However, there are different roles. I am familiar with that. I teach that to my congregation. I try to teach that God has called men to be the servant leaders of their homes.”

In highlighting the different roles of the male and female sexes in a husband-and-wife relationship, Pastor Adam challenged the men in his church to step up into their God-given role as leaders of their families. He is convinced that leadership is God’s primary calling for the husbands.

**Pastor Caleb.** “Genesis, of course. Genesis 1:26, it says when God created man in His own image, you could see that God created man and woman. That's very, very, plainly stated in that verse. That's very clear that God created only men and women. I believe God created humanity in that order.”

The above quote from Pastor Caleb was his initial answer to the question which asked him to describe his knowledge of male sexuality issues. He is persuaded from the Scriptures that God created and designed only two sexes, male and female, or man and woman. For him, this is the foundational truth when discussing sexuality issues.
Pastor Daniel. “We touched on some issues there (sermons) about God’s plan for biblical sexuality.”

In listening to his sermon messages entitled “Relationship Goals,” this researcher confirmed that Pastor Daniel’s above statement was true. In one of his messages in this series, Pastor Daniel spoke about the Bible’s specific instructions on the different roles of a man and a woman in a husband-and-wife relationship. He emphasized that the instructions are not suggestions, which means that God expects his followers to follow what He designed in creation.

Pastor Eli. “I always start with we are God's creation, and we are created in God's image. I focus on we are the temple of the Holy Spirit, we are created in God's image, and so is their partner. I say, “you know your girlfriend is God's creation; your boyfriend is God’s creation. You are God's creation, created in His image; you are the temple of the Holy Spirit.””

In addition to Pastor Eli referencing God’s design in creation when talking about biblical sexuality, Pastor Eli also emphasized the biblical teaching that Christians are also the temple of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, when Christians engage in premarital sex, according to Pastor Eli, they are also desecrating their bodies, which are the temples of the Holy Spirit.

Pastor Gabriel. “I would teach my men about understanding this responsibility of understanding and knowing your value and the value of others. Because the problem right now is that if, like me, as a man, if I look at a woman lustfully, I just devalued someone that God created in his image and likeness.”

Pastor Gabriel spoke about values regarding human sexuality. Value, for Pastor Gabriel, is the worth that a person places on another person, specifically in the context of sexuality. Looking at or treating someone as a mere sex object devalues that person whom God fearfully and wonderfully made in His image. Therefore, Pastor Gabriel taught the men in his church that
they have a responsibility first to know the value God has placed on themselves and others to see why the sins of lust are harmful to both themselves and others. Pastor Gabriel is convinced that God’s design in creating humankind is based on the value God has bestowed upon them as His unique creatures, and Christians will do well to remember and emulate that.

**RQ1 Summary**

RQ1 sought to understand the proficiency of Evangelical pastors in small churches in addressing male sexuality issues from a biblical perspective. Based on the participants’ responses, the dominant theme for RQ1 was personal conviction. Although this dominant theme had the fewest instances in participant responses making up 21% of all dominant themes, this was the only dominant theme where all participants’ responses touched on all of the subthemes.

All participants’ responses to the interview questions indicated that their foundational knowledge regarding BMS was strongly tied to their conviction that the Bible is the final authority in sexuality issues. In addition, they are also convinced that God’s design in creating man and woman is perfect. The frequency of the subthemes within the dominant theme for RQ1 for each participant is summarized in Table 6 below.

**Table 6**

*Frequency of the Subthemes by Participants Within the Dominant Theme for RQ1*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RQ1</th>
<th>How would Evangelical pastors describe their proficiency, if any, in addressing male sexuality issues from a biblical perspective?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Subtheme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastor Adam</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastor Benjamin</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastor Caleb</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastor Daniel</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastor Eli</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastor Finneas</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Research Question 2

*How would Evangelical pastors describe their comfort level, if any, in educating men in their ministry contexts about matters of male sexuality from a biblical perspective?*

Two participants stated that they were uncomfortable the first time they spoke about BMS issues. However, all the participants said without hesitation that they are very comfortable discussing BMS topics with the men in their ministry contexts, either in a group or personal setting, even though the current culture’s view regarding male sexuality is antithetical to their biblical worldview.

Their comfortableness in addressing BMS in light of the current culture’s antithetical stance to their biblical worldview was expressed negatively and positively. The negative expression of their comfortableness in teaching men in their churches regarding BMS had nothing to do with the awkwardness of the topic. Neither were they shying away from the truth of God’s word. Instead, they wanted to make sure that they could tear down the current cultural view of male sexuality in a loving way and present the truth of God’s word in a way that the men in their churches could understand. They were also aware that not everybody would receive the biblical teachings regarding male sexuality. Hence, no matter how hard they tried, they knew that the world’s view of male sexuality would always be at odds and in conflict with biblical male sexuality, particularly those new in the Christian faith and those outside of the Christian faith. Nevertheless, this did not detract them from speaking about BMS issues regularly.
The positive expression of their comfortableness stemmed from their deep conviction that the sexually broken needs love and acceptance. They were also comfortable discussing BMS because they believe that the secular view of male sexuality is influenced by sin and deception, which must be exposed so that those in bondage may be set free. Finally, they also spoke candidly regarding BMS issues because of the urgency to discuss the topic today. They believe that God has called the church of Jesus Christ to live a life of holiness and purity.

The dominant theme that emerged from the participant's responses is the tension with culture, and the subthemes identified were 1. Accepting the broken, 2. The need for a different approach with non-believers, 3. Deception of sin and bondage to sin, and 4. Need for the church to be different.

Accepting the broken

Six out of seven participants stated that they are comfortable speaking about male sexuality issues because their members are broken over them. Therefore, the participants felt the need to reach out to those in their churches who are struggling over BMS. The following excerpts supported this observation:

Pastor Adam. “When I talk to men about same-sex attraction, I haven't really thought about why it's not awkward for me other than I start from a place of grace and mercy, just like I received grace and mercy from God. Understanding that this same sex-attraction sin is not a damnable sin, an unforgivable sin. It's another sin that needs to be prayed over, and worked through, and counseled through, just like someone who has pornography issues, or adultery issues, or any other sexual sin.”

At the heart of Pastor Adam’s comfortableness in speaking about male sexuality issues is the gospel message of God loving the world and saving the lost through Jesus Christ. Therefore,
sexuality topics such as same-sex attraction are not awkward because he realized that all sins are forgivable. However, Pastor Adam felt the need to address these issues from a biblical perspective.

**Pastor Benjamin.** “I think there are other areas where I can speak a little bit more candidly and freely around these issues. I have to really think beforehand of being biblical, yes, but also trying to understand where my people may be on the issue, and then also being very compassionate.”

Pastor Benjamin had no reservations in being honest when discussing male sexuality issues. However, he was also aware that in addition to understanding how people are at different levels regarding these issues, the important thing is that he deals with them in a very compassionate way. Therefore, pastor Benjamin did not avoid the issue at all. However, he does speak on these issues with the realization that compassion is an essential component in discussing his members’ struggles with male sexuality issues.

**Pastor Caleb.** “The truth is the truth. You need to tell them the truth in love without compromising.”

Pastor Caleb is convinced that Christian love is essential for Christian truth. Therefore, for Pastor Caleb, truth and love need not be at odds, and there is no need to compromise one over the other either. Consequently, it is not awkward for Pastor Caleb to tell his church about what God’s word says about human sexuality issues with love.

**Pastor Daniel.** “Their (men in his church) struggles are not a definition of who they are as a person. The struggle is separate from the individual. If somebody comes to me with something that could be considered offensive to someone of faith, you're hearing something about someone struggling with pornography or extramarital affairs, or whatever, that's not the
individual. I mean, we make our own decisions, obviously, but I don't classify people. For my acceptance of them is not based upon their struggles. It's comfortable for me to talk to people about their struggles because their struggle is not them.”

In his “Relationship Goals” message series, Pastor Daniel spoke about the love of Christ as the only sure basis for all human relationships. As a pastor, he understood his role to love the people that Christ gave him. Therefore, Pastor Daniel felt comfortable counseling the men in his church about their struggles because God loves the individual. He tries to love them as Christ loves the church, and his acceptance of them motivated him to view his members separately from their struggles.

**Pastor Eli.** “They have approached me with that problem. And then I told them what the Bible said. I confronted them about it, of course, in a loving way.”

For Pastor Eli, confronting sexual sin with love is not uncomfortable. He can engage with his members regarding male sexuality issues because he loves the people in his church, and he passionately wants them to grow in their spiritual walk with Christ.

**Pastor Gabriel.** “Well, if you look at Jesus, the way he did it, it’s just so amazing. He was so humble, and so loving.”

Pastor Gabriel's voice was filled with awe as he recounted how the Lord spoke with the Samaritan woman and the woman caught in the act of adultery in the Gospel of John. He realized that attacking culture may not be the best way to win the culture over to biblical teachings. However, he was quick to point out that Jesus’ way of dealing with sinners was always loving yet never compromising.

*Need for a Different Approach with Non-believers*
Six out of seven participants also touched on the need to have a different approach with new Christians or unbelievers when discussing male sexuality issues. For example, whereas the participants would go straight to what the Scriptures say about sexuality issues, they also realize that non-believers are more likely to reject the truth. Similarly, despite their professed faith in Christ and His word, new believers may still be influenced by what culture says about sexuality that is often contrary to the Scriptures. The following excerpts supported this observation:

**Pastor Adam.** “Whereas someone who's an unbeliever, who doesn't believe in the Scriptures, I have to tear down their worldview first, according to Scriptures, and then point to them how God has designed male sexuality. And so sometimes it can be a painstaking work to talk to someone who is convinced in their own mind that their sexuality is natural.”

In the above quotation, pastor Adam related how talking about male sexuality issues with an unbeliever is not necessarily awkward. However, he is cognizant that he cannot just approach the topic purely from the Scriptures because the unbeliever may not hold to biblical truths. Therefore, Pastor Adam felt the need to deconstruct the non-biblical view of sexuality as harmful or deceptive before presenting the scriptural alternative.

**Pastor Benjamin.** “There is this tension and discomfort, not because I'm afraid of biblical truth, but it's more about the wisest way to present and teach that biblical truth to my members in light of their potential experiences and their potential understanding of these issues through cultural brainwashing.”

Pastor Benjamin’s discomfort when discussing male sexuality issues with his church members is not the kind where he shies away from discussing them. Instead, the discomfort he felt discussing male sexuality issues with his members comes from his desire to communicate Scriptures clearly. Pastor Benjamin knew how much influence the present culture had on his
members. Therefore, he constantly evaluates how he will present these biblical truths to his members to understand what God has to say about these issues.

**Pastor Caleb.** “You know, in our church, we have people coming in who are gays and lesbians. And I'm extra careful of how I’m going to handle them without compromising the truth.”

Pastor Caleb is not uncomfortable telling God’s truth regarding human sexuality. However, like the other participants, he is also aware that a different approach is needed to communicate God’s truth that does not compromise the truth itself.

**Pastor Daniel.** “Equally comfortable, but I would have different questions for the two different individuals (believer and non-believer) and different counsels.”

Without hesitation, Pastor Daniel stated that he is equally comfortable discussing male sexuality issues with a non-believer as he would with a Christian. Still, like the other participants, his response revealed that a different approach might be needed when discussing male sexuality issues with non-believers.

**Pastor Eli.** “I try my best to make them understand with their language or in a parable or an illustration.”

Although Pastor Eli was not referring to unbelievers per se, he realized that discussing male sexuality issues with his members requires more than just citing Bible verses. Of course, the Scriptures were his starting point, but he also had to expound on the verses to communicate better what the Scriptures teach.

**Pastor Gabriel.** “I feel comfortable. But here's what we know. I think the biggest mistake of a lot of people today, even the pastors or leaders, or Christians, for that matter, I think the biggest problem right now is the way we communicate, the way we engage with them. Here's
what we know. The LGBTQ group, we know this, that they want to attack. And the tendency is for you to attempt to attack back. But is that the best way?”

Pastor Gabriel became animated as he said these words. He was convinced that the way most Christians and Christian leaders engaged with the culture regarding LGBTQ issues has become a cycle of attacks and counter-attacks, which led him to ponder that there must be a better way. But, for him, the better way was demonstrated by none other than Jesus Christ Himself. For Pastor Gabriel, Jesus engaged the culture lovingly without compromising.

**Deception of Sin and Bondage to Sin**

All participants expressed in their responses that they are comfortable speaking about BMS issues because sin brings deception, guilt, shame, and bondage. Therefore, the participants were comfortable talking with the men in their churches about BMS because addressing male sexuality issues from the Scriptures brings forgiveness, clarity, and freedom. The following excerpts supported this observation:

**Pastor Adam.** “How do I say this? The younger generation seems to be a little bit more confused about who they're designed to be. I think there does seems to be a cultural reality that defines masculinity as a toxic reality if it's abused, especially in the system of power. But in a biblical sense, masculinity in and of itself as God designed it is not toxic. It's not toxic as God has defined it in His word.”

Pastor Adam is concerned by the apparent confusion he observed among the younger generation regarding their sexuality. According to Pastor Adam, this confusion translated to a warped expression of sexuality that needs to be corrected. Therefore, Pastor Adam is comfortable engaging the men in his church to step up into the leadership role God had designed
for them. He calls them out from the pulpit and through personal conversations, and he encourages them to teach their families what the biblical view of sexuality is.

**Pastor Benjamin.** “And on these kinds of issues that were the culture goes directly against the grain of biblical teaching, I want to be sensitive to the fact that a lot of the people that attend my church have been incorrectly culturally conditioned to think about things in a certain way.”

The cultural brainwashing that Pastor Benjamin referred to that affected the members of his church was one of the reasons he regularly speaks to the men in his church on a one-on-one basis. In addition, he periodically engages them and educates them through the study of God’s word weekly to counter the current culture’s deception.

**Pastor Caleb.** “In my personal conviction, I believe that when they ask, “How do you know he’s a man?” Science will prove that you have that “thing” (penis) you see in a man. Now, when a person starts saying, “Oh, I have the heart of a (woman),” that’s just their opinion. Maybe that is how they feel. I can respect that. But as a man of God, I will keep on telling them that God only created men and women.”

Pastor Caleb blamed homosexuality or gender identity issues on the deception of sin. But aside from citing Scriptures, Pastor Caleb nonchalantly mentioned the science of anatomy to show that being male or female is not subjective but objective. Pastor Caleb was comfortable pointing out that males have certain body parts that are undeniable.

**Pastor Daniel.** “We talk about these things in various ways frequently that your struggle doesn't define you. That's one of the biggest things, I think, that the devil is able to use is shame.”

Condemnation from sexual sins was a big concern for Pastor Daniel. He is aware that Christian men often feel ashamed because of sexual addictions in their lives. Therefore, Pastor
Daniel takes the time to talk to the men in his church regarding these issues personally to let them know that their failings are not what defines them. Instead, Pastor Daniel explains to them that Christ’s righteousness defines them.

**Pastor Eli.** “The biggest lie is they make it sound as if it's the Bible's error, or it's the reader’s misconception or misunderstanding of the Scriptures because they'll cite another Scripture because they want to keep their Christianity. They want to say, “I'm a Christian. You're just misunderstanding the Bible, pastor,” that type of conversation. I say, “You know it's one thing that you are deliberately sinning. It's another thing that you're saying that God's word is wrong.”

There was a sense of frustration in Pastor Eli’s voice as he was recounting the back story to the above quotation. He could not believe the great lengths Christians went to justify their sins. They said that his interpretation of the Bible was faulty to justify their sexual lifestyle contrary to the Scriptures. Therefore, Pastor Eli regularly speaks about scriptural truths regarding sexuality issues with the men in his church.

**Pastor Finneas.** “The more that I studied, the more that I understood. The more that you talk with people who are struggling, the less and less awkward it becomes because you know that you just have to talk plainly. We have to be able to communicate with real words in a plain manner, using plain English and talking about the subjects that don't nobody likes to talk about in order to see people get free.”

Seeing people set free by the power of God’s word is what drives Pastor Finneas to talk about sexuality issues, especially with the men in his church. He is convinced that sexual temptations and bondage are real, but he also knows the Bible has the answer. Therefore, Pastor
Finneas purposely taught his church what the Bible says about them as plainly as possible to expose sin’s deception.

**Pastor Gabriel.** “They need to understand if you look at something so amazing, so beautiful, so incredible with the lens of your sin, then you’ll mess it up.”

For Pastor Gabriel, sin warps a person’s values, and warped values destroy the most beautiful human relationship, which is that of the husband and wife. Therefore, Pastor Gabriel does not hesitate to teach the men in his church about the importance of marriage relationships to avoid them being destroyed by sin’s deception.

**Need for the Church to be different**

Three of the seven participants expressed in their responses that there is a need for the church of Jesus Christ to be different from the prevailing culture, especially regarding male sexuality. They speak comfortably about BMS issues for this reason. The following excerpts supported this observation.

**Pastor Caleb.** “Barna (Group), if you search, you can see that it pops out in their statistics what’s going on, why divorce rates, or separation among believers. These are God-fearing people! I can't even believe that this is happening! So the question is, why is it happening to us? The thing is, we're good here (points to the head), but we’re not doers.”

The disbelief in Pastor Caleb’s voice was hard to miss. He blamed the high separation rate among Evangelicals on pastors' failure to discuss this topic. These statistics prompted him to talk about these issues because he believes the church needs to be different from the world.

**Pastor Eli.** “When I speak up in the pulpit, I'm speaking to the flock God has given me. I'm not speaking to the world. I'm speaking to the flock that He has given me. If it has to be personal, so be it.”
Pastor Eli related that speaking about sexuality topics from the pulpit was awkward initially. However, the awkwardness came off when Pastor Eli realized that the Holy Spirit was convicting him to take care of God’s flock. He knew then that he had to speak freely about sexuality topics from a biblical perspective because the church needs to know what God requires from them: to be holy and blameless and different from the world.

**Pastor Finneas.** “I would say I'm very confident in communicating about the subject and relating the subject from a biblical perspective to my congregation because it's absolutely necessary. It’s the questions that most people are asking that the church has to have answers for.”

The need to provide biblical answers to his church regarding sexuality issues prompted Pastor Finneas to talk about sexuality issues candidly. Pastor Finneas is aware that the Christian worldview is different from the secular worldview, and he also believes that Christians should be different from non-Christians.

**RQ2 Summary**

RQ2 sought to understand the comfort level of Evangelical pastors of small churches in educating men in their ministry contexts about male sexuality from a biblical perspective. The participants’ responses indicated that they are very comfortable discussing male sexuality issues from a biblical perspective with the men in their churches. The participants knew that their members were broken people, even in their sexuality, and they knew they needed to be accepted with love. They were also aware that even though it is vital to be biblical regarding male sexuality issues, they acknowledged that a different approach is needed when speaking to non-believers or new believers about these issues.

The participants were comfortable engaging with their members about BMS because they are acutely aware of the deception and bondage that sexual sins bring. The subtheme of sin and
its deception regarding male sexuality made up 48% of the subthemes related to the dominant theme of RQ2. This subtheme addressed the importance of discussing male sexuality issues and why the participants are comfortable discussing them with their members.

Finally, they were comfortable engaging with their members about male sexuality issues from a biblical perspective because they believed that God called His church to be different from culture. The frequency of the subthemes within the dominant theme for RQ2 for each participant is summarized in Table 7 below.

Table 7

*Frequency of the Subthemes by Participants within the Dominant Theme for RQ2*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RQ2</th>
<th>How would Evangelical pastors describe their comfort level in educating men in their ministry contexts about matters of male sexuality from a biblical perspective?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Theme Subtheme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.1. Accepting the broken approach with unbelievers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pastor Adam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pastor Benjamin</td>
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<td>Pastor Caleb</td>
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<td>Pastor Finneas</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Pastor Gabriel</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total by Subtheme</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total by Theme</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Research Question 3**

*How would Evangelical pastors describe, if any, their current ministry model in educating men regarding male sexuality from a biblical perspective?*
As revealed in the Participant Demographics section, not all the pastors in this research study had a structured ministry in discipling men regarding BMS issues such as a men’s group. Still, all of them were driven to educate and disciple men in their church towards BMS through personal counseling and follow-up. The pastors' responses brought substantial narratives concerning their various discipling ministries to men, not just in the way they do it but also in the matter-of-fact descriptions of the issues they encountered.

More importantly, they are convinced that they have to disciple and train men in their churches as part of their regular ministerial duties because of their perceived pastoral mandate. What drives their ministry to disciple men is summarized in the pastoral mandate theme. The pastoral mandate theme revealed the following subthemes based on the participants’ responses:
1. Urgency.
2. Pulpit ministry.
3. Education and discipleship.
4. Approachability and trust.
5. Moving on despite perceived failures.

Of the four dominant themes in this study, the pastoral mandate theme had the most instances, totaling 92 references across its subthemes from all the participants.

**Urgency**

Four out of seven participants expressed urgency as their impetus in discipling men regarding BMS. This urgency refers to the priority and importance of teaching the men in their churches what the Bible says about godly and fulfilling male sexuality, which is in direct contrast to the culture’s deceiving and destructive take on male sexuality. The following excerpt supported this observation:

**Pastor Adam.** “There's a reason why, when Paul went to go report the good news about the Gentiles coming to salvation, and the Pharisees said, “They need to observe the law of Moses.” And Paul defended the gospel. And at the end, they were like, “Alright, just make sure
they don't eat things strangled or with blood. And to stay sexually pure.” There's a reason that was number three. Just stay away from sexual immorality because that's Christianity 101. Purity in sexuality. And that's including men.”

For Pastor Adam, educating the men in his church regarding BMS was as essential as teaching them the elementary teachings of the Christian faith, such as systematic theology. Furthermore, for Pastor Adam, the findings of the First Jerusalem Council in the book of Acts were proof that sexual purity is of paramount importance for Christian formation and Christian living, even for first-century Christians. Thus, for Pastor Adam, to teach men about the essential doctrines of the Christian faith but not teach them about biblical sexuality is unacceptable.

Pastor Caleb. “I could see the importance, and the urgency because obviously, if you don't put emphasis on this matter, let's say the sanctity of marriage, if the couple is not strong, the family, of course, is not strong. That's why we have a lot of foster kids because of the separation/divorce, and the society is struggling because of the lack of emphasis in the church or in the pulpit.”

According to Pastor Caleb, a functional society is at stake if Christian men will not step up to be the salt and light of the earth, especially when it comes to relationships. In addition, pastor Caleb is concerned that society will collapse if there is a high separation and divorce rate among Christian couples. Therefore, Pastor Caleb spends the time and effort to teach the men in his church about male sexuality in the context of marriage, especially in loving and serving their wives and families.

Pastor Eli. “But that was the wisdom that God has given me, saying, “Hey, these guys, your kids, these people are learning about sex out there, and it’s not biblical.” So I need to tell
them what the Bible actually talks about and discusses, and how the Bible sees sex or what sex is really designed for by the designer Himself.”

Pastor Eli was aware and concerned that if the church does not educate the men about male sexuality from a biblical perspective, the culture will. And if the culture succeeds in influencing the men in the church, then it will be harder to undo the damage if they buy into what culture teaches about human sexuality. So, for Pastor Eli, not educating the men in his church about BMS is not an option but a must.

**Pastor Finneas.** “But now, because it’s so prevalent, I don't have the option of it being awkward. I don't mind talking about it anymore.”

Pastor Finneas referred to the prevalent struggles with sexual temptations and bondage that the men in his church deal with regularly. He knew he had no other option but to deal with it with them by talking about it, praying for them, providing them with resources, and following up with them.

**Pulpit Ministry**

Six of the seven participants stated that they speak naturally and regularly about BMS issues from the pulpit. Though most participants don’t preach sermons strictly regarding male sexuality issues, they touch on the topic as the need arises or the text of Scripture requires. The following excerpts supported this observation.

**Pastor Adam.** “We just finished a marriage series last night, and we’ll probably do more (series on male sexuality) within the next six months. It's different to do a whole sermon about male sexuality and have bits and parts of it weave through my actual sermons.

Although Pastor Adam has not delivered a sermon exclusively addressing BMS, he firmly believes in preaching about them regularly in the future. Even if he has not dedicated an
entire sermon about male sexuality, he believes that incorporating male sexuality topics in his sermon encourages the men in his ministry to ask him about male sexuality issues.

**Pastor Benjamin.** “As it's been said, the pulpit drives the church. Whenever I have had the ability, depending on the text of Scripture I'm preaching on, I try to discuss these issues. I call the men to be a bold, courageous, humble leader from the pulpit. And I actually think it's also good for me to share that in the presence of women and wives and also younger single, unmarried men or women in my church.”

Like the rest of the participants, Pastor Benjamin is driven to preach about male sexuality topics from the pulpit. He found that discussing male sexuality topics such as male leadership helps women understand the different roles God gave to men and women.

**Pastor Caleb.** “We preach it in the pulpit. I tell them, “It's your choice.” I told them, “If you continue doing that (pornography), nobody's monitoring you 24-7, but it's your choice. However, when you do that, it's like poison that's entering your mind, in your heart. It’s only just a matter of time before they're going to separate you from the Lord and your wife.”

For Pastor Caleb, following God’s commandments about sexual purity was not just a spiritual matter. Instead, it was also a practical matter for Pastor Caleb. If Christians obey God in the area of sexual purity, then they will be blessed with contentment in their relationships. They will also be free from the bondage that sexual sins bring. He regularly makes the men in his church understand this practical approach to obeying God’s word from the pulpit.

**Pastor Daniel.** “We just finished a sermon series called Relationship Goals. And part of that was God's specific instructions for every relationship in our life. And that includes sexual relationships.”
This researcher listened to Pastor Daniel's sermons regarding the Bible’s specific instructions about human relationships, including sexual relationships. His sermons had a casual tone yet clear and direct enough to be understood by the listeners.

**Pastor Eli.** “When I preach on Sundays, I go verse by verse. And if it's sexual purity, I'm talking about sexual purity. And if they're living together, and I have to illustrate that living together is a sin, I'm saying it. They know that I know.”

Pastor Eli stated that he knows what is going on in the lives of his flock, and if he has to touch on the issues that he knows are happening, he mentions them in his sermons, especially about male sexuality issues. So for him, it is something that just comes naturally, and he does not even put much thought behind it because He trusts that it is the Holy Spirit that is prompting him to mention specific examples in his sermons.

**Pastor Finneas.** “I did do a sermon about six weeks ago on human sexuality.”

Pastor Finneas furnished this researcher with this particular sermon regarding godly human sexuality. In his message, Pastor Finneas talked about the natural inclination of the male mind to think about sex all the time. The answer to that natural inclination, according to Pastor Finneas, is to yield to the power of Christ through the Holy Spirit and His word. Pastor Finneas also plans on preaching on topics about sexuality more so in the coming year because he believes that it is vital to address these issues from the pulpit.

**Pastor Gabriel.** “About a month ago, I dealt with this new study, that not only men now struggle with porn. Even women struggle with porn. And so that's something that I mentioned during my preaching.”

This researcher found Pastor Gabriel’s demeanor during the interview as very relaxed and very open at the same time. So, when Pastor Gabriel shared that he spoke about the issue of
pornography addiction even by women in his recent sermon, this researcher found him credible and sincere. Pastor Gabriel also stated that he is not planning on speaking about male sexuality issues from the pulpit this year but will look into it next year. For now, Pastor Gabriel is content with bringing these issues up as the occasion warrants the need.

*Education and Discipleship*

The subtheme of education and discipleship included various aspects such as proactive and reactive pastoral counseling regarding BMS issues, training leaders and members to deal with male sexuality issues biblically, and enforcing discipline on leaders who fall into sexual sins. This single subtheme had the most reference from the participants' responses accounting for 18% of all the subthemes in this study. The following excerpts supported these observations:

**Pastor Adam.** “I counsel a lot of men and marriages, but more specifically men, through some of their sexual struggles and ranging anywhere from addiction to pornography to even homosexuality. And, of course, the intention is always to point them back to biblically instituted male sexuality.”

Pastor Adam not only preached about BMS issues from the pulpit, but he proactively taught on these issues with the men in his churches in the men’s group Bible study as well as individual counseling. Pastor Adam stated that it is not uncommon for a man from his church to come to him for counseling regarding male sexuality issues at least once a week.

**Pastor Benjamin.** “In my shepherding of my church, when I’m meeting one-on-one with families or sometimes with couples. I'll just call and schedule a time with the men alone. I'm never with a woman alone. But a lot of those talks I will initiate conversation about how they’re leading their homes and their own devotional life with Christ, and in what ways can I pray for
them or equip them to properly focus on leading their homes. And then I'll talk with them about pornography and masturbation in those settings, like “Is that a struggle in your life?”

Like Pastor Adam, Pastor Benjamin also proactively taught the men in his church about male sexuality issues through one-on-one counseling. He initiates these conversations, and he directly asks the men in his churches about their struggles with sexual sins. Sometimes, Pastor Benjamin believes that the sexual addiction problem may be deep-seated, so he would refer them to Christian pastors who are also therapists in sexuality issues.

However, when it comes to leaders in his church that have fallen into sexual sins, Pastor Benjamin believes in disciplining them and restoring them. For Pastor Adam, discipline is a teaching tool. Discipline may involve removal from their leadership position until they are restored. As an example, Pastor Benjamin shared the story of a church leader removed from his leadership role because he engaged in premarital sex. The restoration process involved regular one-on-one counseling sessions and meeting with other leaders in the church to let the person know that they love him and want to see him have victory over these issues. And when the person was fully restored, they celebrated and prayed over him some more.

**Pastor Caleb.** “There's a certain period of time many veterans came here, and they start telling me, “Pastor, you know, I just paid $5, $10 for this beautiful prostitute. They are just entering the room for a few minutes. I enjoy that sex!” I told them, “But don't you know how many clients they had already that morning? How do you know they do not have HIV? You don’t know if within a year or three years or five years from now you're dead fast because of that. So, you could enjoy temporarily, but the consequences, are you ready to face that?”

Pastor Caleb’s way of educating the men in his church is practical. He highlighted the health benefits of living a sexually pure life and the risk of contracting sexually transmitted
diseases when choosing to live a sexually promiscuous lifestyle. He also explained falling from grace from a practical perspective. For Pastor Caleb, falling from the grace of God and living outside of God’s will is not worth the momentary pleasures of sin.

**Pastor Daniel.** “We have quite a few different small groups that men can connect with that are specific to men's issues. So that's the primary vehicle for communicating biblical sexuality to men.”

Pastor Daniel’s way of educating the men in his church regarding BMS is through systematic, semester-based classes called “Life Groups.” While these classes were not strictly about male sexuality issues, they taught several male sexuality topics. In addition, the men in their churches had the option to register for these classes that are three months long, for up to three courses per year.

**Pastor Eli.** “I disciple young men that I feel like God is leading me to disciple, whether it's for leadership or counseling. Maybe they're straying away. One of those men, one of those young guys, I didn't realize; I didn't know until later on that he was actually struggling with his sexuality.”

Pastor Eli’s approach to educating men in his church is through personal discipleship. First, he found it helpful to talk to them personally. Secondly, by initiating the conversation, his members open up to him with their struggles. He then educates them on what God says about their situation from the Bible.

**Pastor Finneas.** “I take guys through *The Immoral Woman* by Jerry Dirmann) who are trying to get free from sexual issues. Just a series of resources that I've collected over the years that I referenced to men struggling in that area.”
For Pastor Finneas, counseling the men in his church regarding BMS involved not just studying the Bible. He also takes them through books and articles written by Evangelical pastors on the subject of male sexuality as a way of educating them. Thus, Pastor Finneas has a biblically-based approach in dealing with sexual sins and temptations. However, he also incorporated Christian-based counseling literature to educate the men in his church on the path to freedom from the bondage of sexual immorality.

Pastor Gabriel. “We have men's breakfast every month. Some of these things are definitely being taught. And part of the conversation and definitely spiritual formation, being faithful and walking with the Lord and just being pure before His eyes. We do have that.”

For Pastor Gabriel, educating the men in his church takes place in a casual setting of a monthly men’s breakfast to study God’s word. This informal setting allowed them to discuss male sexuality issues in a relaxed atmosphere. Then, after thoughtfully discussing these issues, they also pray about them.

Approachability and Trust

Four of the seven participants brought up the need for pastors to be approachable if they are to make an impact on discipling men regarding BMS issues. The participants felt that they could not help the men in their churches with their struggles if they were not approachable. The following excerpts supported this observation:

Pastor Benjamin. “And I think trust is just organic. We have people in our church over like a minimum of five nights a week in our home. And we pick different leaders at different seasons. And I think we've proven to them in the six years that we've led them that they can trust us. I think there's a pretty healthy culture of vulnerability and confession of sin (in our church).”
Even though Pastor Benjamin believes that trust is organic, he still had to set the stage for the men in his church to trust and approach him. Therefore, Pastor Benjamin opens his home multiple times a week to talk and pray about men’s various issues. For Pastor Benjamin, the intentional cultivation of an environment of trust within his pastoral ministry was crucial to his success in ministering to the spiritual needs of his members.

Pastor Daniel. “I feel that people, in my experience, feel pretty free in sharing with me their struggles. And so, I think the effectiveness that you can have in helping someone struggle with issues of sexuality, or any struggle for that matter, is that you are approachable.”

Pastor Daniel admitted that his pulpit ministry is but a small window where the people in his church view him for who he is. For Pastor Daniel, this is a sad truth but a reality nevertheless. Therefore, he ensures that his demeanor shows love and concern when he preaches. In addition, he ensures that he goes around and meets with everyone before they leave the church and make himself available to them. Therefore, approachability is a critical component of Pastor Daniel’s pastoral ministry, especially as he ministers to men in his church.

Pastor Eli. “It’s quite frequently that people come to me. They talk to me about everything under the sun. It’s not everybody, but certain individuals feel very comfortable with me telling me about anything.”

Pastor Eli stated that he never felt bothered when people came to him. On the contrary, he welcomes it as part of his pastoral ministry. Often, he already knows where the conversation is headed, but he politely listens just the same. Listening is part of his strategy in ensuring that the men in his church know they can come to him for anything, including sexuality issues.
Pastor Finneas. “And that seems to really open the door of communication for guys to realize that it's a human struggle. It's not a struggle that doesn't affect pastors, or there's nobody that's holier than thou.”

In his recorded message regarding sexuality issues, Pastor Finneas shared some of his struggles when he was younger. He believes that if the men in his church know that he faces the same challenges regarding BMS, they will be encouraged to approach him to talk about their struggles in sexuality without the fear of being judged.

Moving on Despite Perceived Failures

Three of the seven participants expressed heartfelt narratives of their perceived failures in counseling men in their churches. Yet, they continue with their pastoral mandate to preach and teach BMS even if they are not always successful in their endeavors. The following excerpts supported this observation:

Pastor Eli. “I would rather prefer they tell me, “Oh, I understood what you said, and I'm actually gonna step out of this meeting and do what the Bible says.” I'd rather have them tell me that. So far, I’m zero and 99. I think zero wins, 99 losses with my counseling because, more often than not, that's what happens. And so that's what I mean about zero-99.”

The statistical figure that Pastor Eli gave is figurative. Pastor Eli felt that very few of his church members listened to his counsel. And those that do not listen eventually leave his church because they were offended by his counsel.

As an example, Pastor Eli recounted this story, “I had this one guy; he got married to his girlfriend, but they were living together (at that time). He came to me, and he said, “You know, I feel lost. I feel empty. I want God back. I need God back.” And I went straight for it. I said, “Listen,” I told him, “You have to stop whatever you’re doing with your girl. You guys can't live
together, much more you can't have sex.” That was the last time I saw him. He was agreeing; he was crying. He was in tears. Then he said, “Do I have to do that?” This was after I talked about holiness and the temple of the Holy Spirit. I said, “You have to love God above anything else, and anyone else. Right now, what you're telling me, what you're showing God and telling God through your lifestyle, is that you love your girl more, and you love yourself more, like committing this act, intentionally sinning. Because you already know what God wants from you, and you're still doing it.” So that was the last time I saw him. He still messages me here and there.”

There was a bit of sadness in Pastor Eli’s voice as he recounted this story. But the sadness he felt was not because he offended his church members, eventually causing them to leave his church. Instead, Pastor Eli said the sadness he felt had to do with the church members choosing to live outside God’s will, given that they have heard of the gospel. Still, Pastor Eli said he is committed to telling them what God expects of His church, no matter where the chips fall.

Pastor Finneas. “I've seen some breakthroughs with people in that area and some freedom. But, oftentimes, it's one of those things where you can lead people to water, but you can't make them drink. I'd love to see more fruit in my ministry as a result of what I teach. I want to see more fruit in my ministry in that area. It tends to feel like the overwhelming majority of men, even though I give them the resources, we talk, we pray; it just seems like an ongoing struggle. I'm not seeing that breakthrough moment that I want to see at a more rapid pace. That people would really experience long-lasting freedom.”

Pastor Finneas felt that he could do better in counseling people regarding BMS issues. However, he knew the struggle was real regarding these issues, and he just wished that there was more he could do in his mission of seeing people freed from the bondage of sexual sin. Still, his
perceived inadequacies do not deter him from reaching out to the men in his church to help them with their struggles in male sexuality issues.

**Pastor Gabriel.** “There are some of those times where I think, “I should have done this, or I should have done that.” But I believe that as pastors, we try our best to shepherd our people. But as long as we're biblical, as long as we feel like we've done our part, and if they choose to go to a different route, that's not on me.”

Pastor Gabriel knew there was only so much he could do. Eventually, the church member is responsible for following through with the biblical counsel he gave them. Pastor Gabriel finds comfort that even the prophets of the Old Testament were not always successful in calling people to repentance.

**RQ3 Summary**

RQ3 sought to understand the current ministry model of Evangelical pastors of small churches in educating and discipling men regarding male sexuality from a biblical perspective. The participant’s responses indicated the varying models each has in educating and discipling the men in their ministry contexts regarding BMS, such as informal breakfast prayer meetings to structured semester-based courses. Nevertheless, the dominant theme for RQ3 was the theme of pastoral mandate or the belief that they were personally called, as part of their pastoral ministry, to educate men in their churches to live sexually pure lives. The instances of the subthemes in this dominant theme accounted for a third of all the subthemes. The subthemes related to RQ3 included urgency, pulpit ministry, education and discipleship, trust and approachability, and moving on despite perceived failures.
The participants in this study all engaged in preaching and teaching about male sexuality topics from the pulpit. In addition, six of the seven participants stated that they would continue to preach and teach about male sexuality topics from the pulpit in the future.

Four of the participants expressed the urgent need to discuss BMS with their members because of the continued influence of culture on their members. Discussing BMS issues with their members ensures that they get the correct view of male sexuality from a biblical perspective.

The subtheme of education and discipleship comprised 53% of all the subthemes in the pastoral mandate theme associated with RQ3. In addition, all participants expressed some form of continued ministry in educating their members about BMS, either in a one-on-one or group setting.

Four participants expressed the need to be approachable and trustworthy in their pastoral ministry of teaching, educating, and discipling men in their churches. Three participants expressed confidence in moving forward with their pastoral mandate despite perceived failures in conforming some of the men in their churches towards a biblical application of male sexuality. The frequency of the subthemes within the dominant theme for RQ3 for each participant is summarized in Table 8 below.

Table 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RQ2 Theme</th>
<th>How would Evangelical pastors describe, if any, their current ministry model in educating men regarding male sexuality from a biblical perspective?</th>
<th>Pastoral Mandate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subtheme</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Pastor Adam</td>
<td>3.1 Urgency</td>
<td>3.2 Pulpit ministry</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pastor Benjamin  0  2  10  3  0
Pastor Caleb     3  4  9  0  0
Pastor Daniel   0  2  8  3  0
Pastor Eli      4  3  3  3  4
Pastor Finneas  4  1  6  1  1
Pastor Gabriel  0  1  6  0  1

Total by Subtheme  12  15  50  10  6
Total by Theme        93

Research Question 4

How would Evangelical pastors describe their ability to model sexual integrity and purity 
from a biblical perspective?

The final interview question for this study asked the participants the poignant question to 
describe their effectiveness in their role as a model among men in their ministry context in living 
out a sexually pure life from a biblical perspective. All participants answered this question rather 
honestly. Some responded to this question confidently, as evidenced by their quickness in 
responding to the questions. Others were somewhat hesitant and required a bit of reflection, as 
evidenced by the time it took them to answer the question. Still, others were surprised, as 
indicated by their initial response, such as, “That is a good question.” Still, a few became slightly 
animated in answering the question, as if caught off guard and not knowing where to begin. 
Overall, the participants expressed that they strive to model BMS in their lives, which they also 
mentioned repeatedly in the other parts of the interview. This category also brought out 
meaningful responses from the participants in modeling sexual integrity and purity from a 
biblical perspective.

The participants’ responses to the interview questions revealed that they are aware of 
their responsibility to model sexual integrity from a biblical perspective. Furthermore, the 
participants indicated that they are continuously and consciously working on being a good model
of what the Bible teaches about biblical masculinity. Therefore, the dominant theme for this research question was personal journey, and the subthemes were 1. Self-awareness, 2. Personal discipleship, 3. Transparency and Accountability, and 4. Influence of their wives.

**Self-Awareness**

Self-awareness refers to the participant’s consciousness of their struggles, weaknesses, and limitations regarding male sexuality. Self-awareness also included their perception of their effectiveness and consistency as a Christian pastor in living an exemplary life and dealing with those struggling with sexual sins and temptations. Six participants clearly expressed this idea. The following excerpts supported this observation:

**Pastor Adam.** “And so, number one, I think just humility, humbleness. Understanding that you're never too big to ever fall into a sexual temptation. I mean, look at David, right?”

For Pastor Adam, the longer he stays in the ministry and the bigger his influence is, the more he is convinced that it should drive him to humility and realize that he is more prone to fall into sexual temptation. Therefore, Pastor Adam strives to live a life of sexual purity because the temptation is always just lurking in the corner.

**Pastor Benjamin.** “And I think one of my core idols in my walk with Christ is being a people pleaser. And I think there are times where that takes over in a situation where I have some concerns, and I don't act right away. And so that area, I know I could grow even more in being an effective role model and leader of my church in these (BMS) issues.”

Pastor Benjamin’s awareness of his tendency to be a people pleaser may affect his ability to effectively disciple men in BMS. Pastor Benjamin, therefore, acknowledged that he would never come to a point where he has learned all he can learn in terms of being a role model and discipler of men. Instead, he knows that there is always room for improvement.
**Pastor Caleb.** “I need to be an example as a minister.”

Pastor Caleb’s responses were often short and to the point. Yet, his awareness to live an exemplary sexually pure life is a must and a requirement as a minister of the gospel. To live contrary to what he preaches would be hypocritical in his eyes.

**Pastor Eli.** “One of my biggest mentors in the faith, father in the faith, is Ravi Zacharias. The news still feels recent to me. I wasn’t even done mourning for him, and then there’s that news that he fell. It’s heartbreaking for me. Why is it heartbreaking for me? Because I fully well know that I could easily be him. It could easily have been me, and it could still be me, to fall into that sin, just because of how sex is just all over the place. Our culture, our society, is so sexual.”

There was disbelief in Pastor Eli’s face as he recounted the events surrounding the man who had a considerable influence on his growth in the Christian faith. Yet, his concern was that if it happened to someone he had looked up to and admired, he realized it could also happen to him. Pastor Eli said this reality keeps him on his guard.

**Pastor Finneas.** “The age-old reality is that sin is attractive, that there is not an attractiveness to sin that we never get really over. The lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, the pride of life, these can affect anyone.”

For Pastor Finneas, what he said is just the reality regardless of whether one is a Christian or not. But for Pastor Finneas, this is more true for Christians. And Pastor Finneas is not willing to be caught off-guard in this area because he knows that he is still in the flesh and must constantly fight the flesh.

**Pastor Gabriel.** “Everybody struggles, whether you’re a Christian or not. Everyone struggles with some things. And let’s just be real. I’m struggling as you are struggling with some things.”
Pastor Gabriel was not necessarily referring to struggles regarding sexual issues. Instead, he mentioned pride and anger as something as familiar as sexual temptations. And for Pastor Gabriel, any Christian who denies that they have any struggle for the sake of looking good is pharisaical and hypocritical.

*Personal discipleship*

The subtheme of personal discipleship was found in the responses of six participants. This subtheme alluded to the participants’ acknowledgment of their responsibility for their spiritual formation or spiritual walk, which impacts how they continuously model sexually pure lives from a biblical perspective. The following excerpts supported this observation:

**Pastor Adam.** “I’m staying away from pornography. I’m staying away from even movies that have sexually explicit content every single time.”

For Pastor Adam, walking the straight and narrow path requires sacrifice, including limiting his choice of entertainment. In addition, he never watches a movie by himself. Instead, he and his wife watch movies together. Still, both are committed to checking the ratings of the movie’s content they are about to watch. If there is even a hint of sexual content, they do not watch the film.

**Pastor Benjamin.** “I need to cultivate a healthy walk with Christ in a healthy marriage and a healthy culture of confession to my church.”

Open, public confession is a regular part of Pastor Benjamin’s church. He encouraged his church to share a testimony of how they overcame temptation, but he screens them ahead of time so that it is not too graphic or personal. He believes that part of true discipleship is humility and honesty about their spiritual walk and struggles.
**Pastor Caleb.** “I thought to myself. I promised the Lord. I promised myself, “If I ever touch another woman,” I kept saying, “I’d rather die first.” It's like a betrayal not only to the covenant between my wife and me but a betrayal to my Lord.”

Pastor Caleb knows that sexual temptations are around him. He realized that these temptations are just a mere click away with today's technology. But temptations are real, and Pastor Caleb said he could not fight these temptations with his strength. Instead, he has to cry out to the Lord for help constantly.

**Pastor Eli.** “Knowing the fact that I can easily fall, I pray, I pray, I pray. And that's not to say it goes away after prayer. That's not to say that (prayer) just makes me immune to sexual temptations that come my way. It does not. These are the boundaries or things that I put upon myself and the things I need to do.”

Still, Pastor Eli is convinced that having boundaries and setting precautions to avoid sexual temptations is not enough. He does not want to focus on the different ways of preventing sexual temptations either because the techniques themselves can remove the focus from God. For Pastor Eli, setting boundaries and precautions are good things to do, but more importantly, keeping himself focused on God and walking closely with Him is what gives him the victory.

**Pastor Finneas.** “I would say a practice of humility, maintaining a practice of humility. Things like picking up trash around my church. I feel like it keeps you grounded. So, it's really just an active pursuit of being like Jesus, and being humble, and rejecting the cultural notion of celebrity and of fame.”

Pastor Finneas is persuaded that there is a correlation between humility and sexual purity. Therefore, he purposely does menial work to keep himself grounded. Consequently, Pastor
Finneas feels the need to practice servant leadership as part of his greater calling of being a follower of Christ Jesus.

**Pastor Gabriel.** “When I am tempted, I would say, “God, I don't want to dishonor you. I don't want to dishonor my wife. I don't want to sin against you, and I don't want to sin against my wife.”

Pastor Gabriel was honest enough to admit that he, like everyone else, struggles with something. Therefore, the most crucial thing for Pastor Gabriel is to fight temptations and quickly call to God when faced with temptations.

**Transparency and Accountability**

All seven participants immediately pointed to their need to be transparent and accountable to model a sexually pure life for the men in their ministry contexts in their private lives and in how they do their ministry. Transparency is also something that they continuously strive to achieve in their journey towards sexual purity. The following excerpts supported these observations.

**Pastor Adam.** “Never think that you're too great for accountability. You need someone higher than you to keep you accountable. If anything, I make myself accountable to the men in my church. In terms of my sexual purity and other temptations. And my wife has absolute access to everything that I have and own. She can grab my phone. She can go on my computer whenever she wants; she can check up on my (web browsing) history.”

Like a few other participants, Pastor Adam makes himself accountable to the men in his church. However, he also finds it necessary that his wife has access to his electronics, including web browsing history, so that nothing he does online is hidden from his wife.
**Pastor Benjamin.** “I follow Billy Graham's Modesto Manifesto. I'm not sure if you're familiar with that, of not being alone with a woman, not being alone in a car with a woman.”

In speaking about the Modesto Manifesto, Pastor Benjamin also believed that being fully transparent with his finances is tied to living a sexually pure life. He believes that the more secretive he is with his time and schedule, the more evasive he will be with how money is spent in the church, which, in turn, can breed for other opportunities in keeping other things secret in his life and ministry. For Pastor Benjamin, the lack of transparency in any aspect of his life can ultimately lead to sexual impurity.

**Pastor Daniel.** “Everything from simple things like all of our social media in our house all of our online stuff is all open to everyone that's in the home. Our devices are available for each other to see histories and things of that nature. I think the openness just with your media if you're married with your spouse. And then I have regular conversations with other men about these things, “How are you doing?”

Being open about his social media activities with his wife is how Pastor Daniel holds himself accountable. But he also talks to the men in his church and makes them accountable just as he is responsible to them. For Pastor Daniel, being accountable is one of the ways he models sexual purity.

**Pastor Eli.** “I don't know how effective I am. I don't know because, you know, to my embarrassment, my past has been so tainted. And my testimony to the men and the young men at church is that they knew I was a womanizer in the past.”

Pastor Eli is not sure if his former lifestyle as a womanizer before becoming a Christian is helpful for the men in his church. Still, he sincerely hopes God can use his ugly past to remind
people how God can change anyone. For that, he is willing to take a risk in being transparent in sharing his history with his members.

**Pastor Finneas.** “I share pretty openly, pretty candidly, pretty vulnerably about my own struggles. And so, I think with openness and honesty, being vulnerable, I would say, that is why I have any effectiveness is because I'm not afraid to share my own struggle, and speak candidly about it.”

Through Pastor Finneas’ recorded messages, this researcher confirmed that he is willing to be vulnerable with his members and share a few of his past struggles. He does so because the point is not to glorify his struggles but to glorify the Savior who rescued him from his struggles.

**Influence of their wives**

All seven participants’ responses strongly indicated the subtheme of the participants’ wives’ influence on their ability to model a sexually pure life. The subtheme of the influence of their wives included having them as ministry partners, loving them, serving them, and growing in their relationship with them, which contributed to their growth in the area of modeling a sexually pure life. The following excerpts supported these observations:

**Pastor Adam.** “I married a good woman. So yeah, she's only challenged me to step up into a greater role of masculinity and manhood and fatherhood and husbandry. If a woman comes to me for counseling, absolutely. But my wife needs to be there. And so, make that appointment with my wife. Text my wife, email my wife, make sure all communication goes through my wife, and then we'll set up an appointment. She's gonna be there with me, and then we'll both counsel you through it. And that's how we always do it.”

Pastor Adam relied on his wife when counseling members of the opposite sex. He did not want to be with them alone, so his wife acted as his secretary and co-counselor when counseling
women. For Pastor Adam, his wife is also a ministry partner who significantly influenced how he conducted ministry, especially in counseling members of the opposite sex. His wife also influenced him greatly in stepping up to his role as a leader and model.

**Pastor Benjamin.** “My wife and I, I think our philosophy of ministry is, we really want to be present with our people and spend lots of time with them.”

Despite Pastor Benjamin’s strong complementarian view regarding female leadership, he considered his wife a true partner in his pastoral ministry and regarded her as a ministry leader. Of all the participants, Pastor Benjamin consistently mentioned the influence of his wife in how he conducted himself not only in this particular question but also in the other questions.

**Pastor Caleb.** “I don’t want to be a hypocrite preaching before you if you don’t see it in my life. If you don’t see my wife is actually happy.”

Pastor Caleb considers his pastoral ministry important but not as important as his relationship with his wife. Pastor Caleb stated that it is unfortunate that pastors forget that they are supposed to be married to their wives and not their ministry. Pastor Caleb added, “God is always first. But with regards to the ministry and your spouse, your spouse comes first.”

Therefore, Pastor Caleb models a life of servant-leader in his marriage for his members to follow. For example, he helped his wife take care of the kids when they were growing up. To this day, Pastor Caleb drives his wife to work, and he enjoys that time alone with her.

**Pastor Eli.** “I’ve had women come to me for counseling, but I always have my wife with me when that happens.”

Like the other participants, Pastor Eli is not comfortable counseling women by himself. Therefore, he always has his wife with him whenever he counsels the opposite sex. For Pastor Eli, it will be impossible for him to minister effectively without his wife.
Pastor Gabriel. “But if you start seeing God's creation, in regards to sex, as something beautiful and amazing, using His lens, then you'll do it within the marriage context. You'll be honoring. You’ll be obedient. My wife, when her and I would be intimate, she is just praising God, just because of the beauty of intimacy. And she appreciates it. And during our intimacy, she would really just thank God.”

Pastor Gabriel’s honest response about his intimacy with his wife reflected God’s design in sexual relations between a man and his wife as it was in Genesis. Thus, for Pastor Gabriel, finding sexual satisfaction with his wife and satisfying his wife sexually in love and purity is the best way to model a life of sexual integrity.

**RQ4 Summary**

The purpose of RQ4 is to understand how Evangelical pastors of small churches model sexual integrity and purity in their lives from a biblical perspective. The dominant theme that arose from the participants’ responses is that modeling a sexually pure life is a personal journey, which is a continuous process. The subthemes for RQ4 included self-awareness, personal discipleship, transparency and accountability, and the influence of their wives.

Six participants indicated an awareness that they are not immune from sexual temptations or sins. However, six participants expressed their commitment to live sexually pure lives in their Christian walk. Their awareness of the dangers of sexual temptations and their commitment to live sexually pure lives contribute to their ability to model BMS effectively among the men in their churches.

All the participants expressed the importance of being transparent and accountable as part of their personal growth in BMS as they model it to their members. In addition, all the participants expressed the influence of their wives in modeling BMS in one form or another. The
frequency of the subthemes within the dominant theme for RQ4 for each participant is summarized in Table 9 below.

Table 9

*Frequency of the Subthemes by Participants within the Dominant Theme for RQ4*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RQ4</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>4.1 Self-awareness</th>
<th>4.2 Personal discipleship</th>
<th>4.3 Transparency and accountability</th>
<th>4.4 Influence of their wives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Subtheme</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastor Adam</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastor Benjamin</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastor Caleb</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastor Daniel</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastor Eli</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastor Finneas</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastor Gabriel</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total by Subtheme</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total by Theme</td>
<td>59</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Evaluation of the Research Design**

The purpose of this research study was to understand how the competencies of Evangelical pastors in small churches regarding male sexuality contributed to their ministry of discipling men in their ministry contexts to live out their sexuality biblically as part of their spiritual formation. The pastoral competencies of RPCK regarding BMS were identified as the primary competencies that enable Evangelical pastors to disciple men to live sexually pure lives. However, since there is little information about what variables affected pastors’ competencies in discipling men to live sexually pure lives, a qualitative study is the best methodology. Qualitative research studies facilitate the discovery of complex and multi-layered processes and relationships as well as obstacles to operations (Leedy & Omrod, 2016).
As a qualitative method, IPA studies focus on the participants' lived experiences (Alase, 2017). Moreover, IPA studies make sense of participants' lived experiences concerning significant human predicament in health, sexuality, psychological distress, life transitions, and identity (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). Therefore, an IPA study was the best methodology for this study since it aimed to understand the competencies of Evangelical pastors of small churches in discipling men in their ministry contexts concerning BMS.

The RQs were carefully formulated in conjunction with this research study’s purpose and the theoretical framework guiding this study. The theoretical framework of this study presupposed that both content knowledge or knowledge of the subject matter and pedagogical knowledge or teaching skills is needed for someone to be an effective educator. In addition, relational skills in pastoral ministry or the ability to disciple and communicate with men in their churches regarding the awkward topic of sexuality were equally needed. Finally, RK also included the ability of the Evangelical pastor to model a sexually pure life for his members.

The RQs for this study were purposely formulated to understand how these pastoral competencies contributed to a ministry of discipling men in the area of biblical sexuality. The first RQ focused on discovering an Evangelical pastor’s proficiency in addressing male sexuality issues from a biblical perspective. This RQ is related to the PCK competencies. The second RQ focused on discovering the Evangelical pastor’s comfort level in educating men in their churches regarding BMS. The second RQ is, therefore, related to the RK competency.

The third RQ focused on discovering the participants’ current ministry model in discipling men to live sexually pure lives from a biblical perspective. Thus, the third RQ is related to the RPCK competencies. Finally, the fourth RQ focused on discovering the ability of
Evangelical pastors to model a sexually pure life from a biblical perspective. The fourth RQ, therefore, is related to the RK competency.

**Strength of the Design**

The strength of the design of the RQs that guided this study is demonstrated by their apparent connection with this study’s purpose statement and the theoretical framework that guided this study. From this study’s RQs, IQs were formulated and used as the primary means of collecting data, which consisted mainly of scheduled semi-structured, open-ended interviews. No leading questions were asked during the interviews. Instead, this researcher allowed the participants to answer from their own experiences and unique ministry settings. During the interviews, no questions unrelated to the RQs were asked as these questions would be unnecessary and distracting. For example, this researcher did not ask one pastor who mentioned a specific sin in his church how prevalent that sin was in his church because that particular question had nothing to do with the RQs and IQs. Instead, this researcher followed the preset IQs and corresponding follow-up questions since they were anchored on the RQs.

The rich and thick narratives of the participants brought out four dominant themes and 15 subthemes. The themes and subthemes that emerged from the participants’ responses were further evidence that the overall design of this IPA study was sound. Thus, the design of this research study fit well with its purpose statement, and the data collected was sufficient since it brought out the themes and subthemes that help make sense of the relationship between an Evangelical pastor’s competencies and practical ministry.

**Weakness of the Design**

IPA interviews are usually conducted in person. However, six out of seven participant interviews were conducted via Zoom web conferencing out of convenience, and only one
interview was conducted in person. The data collected via online interviews were just as substantial as those collected via in-person interviews. In addition, there was no significant difference in the quality of the data collected from the in-person interview versus those collected from online interviews.

Still, this researcher felt more connected with the participant interviewed in person than those interviewed online because of the shared presence and real-time observations of the participant's facial expressions and body language. In addition, two of the interviews conducted online had some technical disruptions, which prevented some of the data from being captured in its rawest form. Examples of technological disruptions were the loss of audio and connectivity issues during the online interviews. This interviewer attempted to recover the data by asking the participant to repeat what he had just stated. Therefore, this researcher found that it was better to conduct the interviews in person whenever possible because there were no technical disruptions during in-person interviews.

Another weakness of the design is the limitation of the IQs themselves. The IQs were carefully formulated so that it does not detract from the RQs. In addition, the IQs were designed so that the questions were directed to the participants’ experiences only. For example, the interview follow-up question, “Is the topic of males sexuality issues awkward for you? Why or why not?” sought to understand the participant’s feelings about discussing male sexuality issues. However, it did not discover why male sexuality issues may be awkward for their church members.

Another area the IQs could have been improved is the additional follow-up questions under IQ4. IQ4 sought to capture the participants’ experience and frequency in conducting discipleship or counseling ministries regarding male sexuality issues in a group or individual
setting. However, additional follow-up questions such as, “What about your present ministry model of discipling men towards BMS is working, and why do you believe it is working?” or “What things would you change in the way you conduct your discipleship ministry among men towards BMS would you change, and why?” would have added another layer of information for this IQ.

Another way that the study’s design could have been improved is to screen the participants to see if they had given a preaching or teaching message regarding human sexuality in the past six months, with this researcher listening to them first before conducting the interview. Then, instead of using the messages as a triangulation technique for the interview responses, portions of the preaching or teaching messages would be addressed in the actual interview to discover why the participant said what he said in his message. Conversely, the participant may also be asked why he only chose to address a specific issue in his preaching or teaching but not other related topics.
CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS

Overview

This research study aimed to understand the relationship of the pastoral competencies of Evangelical pastors of small churches in biblical male sexuality (BMS) and their ministry praxis of discipling men in their churches to live sexually pure lives as part of their spiritual formation. The research purpose and research questions that guided this study was briefly reviewed in this study. This chapter also provided the conclusions, implications, and applications drawn from this study, followed by a discussion of the research limitations of this study and recommendations for future studies.

Research Purpose

The purpose of this interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) study was to understand how the competencies of Evangelical pastors in small churches regarding biblical male sexuality contributed to a practical ministry of discipling men to live a life of sexual integrity and purity.

Competencies in educating and discipling Christian men in their understanding of what the Bible teaches about male sexuality is defined as having the comprehensive knowledge about biblical male sexuality (BMS) and the skill sets to educate and help men deal with sexual sins and educate Christian men about godly sexuality through spiritual formation and regular discipleship (Hart, 1994; Jones, 2011). The theoretical framework that guided this study is Shulman’s (1986) Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK), which states that teachers should be experts of their subject matter and possess technical teaching skills needed to educate their students. In addition to Shulman’s PCK theory, this study incorporated Evangelical pastors’

**Research Questions**

The following research questions (RQ) guided this interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA):

- **RQ1.** How would Evangelical pastors describe their proficiency, if any, in addressing male sexuality issues from a biblical perspective?

- **RQ2.** How would Evangelical pastors describe their comfort level, if any, in educating men in their ministry contexts about matters of male sexuality from a biblical perspective?

- **RQ3.** How would Evangelical pastors describe, if any, their current ministry model in educating men regarding male sexuality from a biblical perspective?

- **RQ4.** How would Evangelical pastors describe their ability to model sexual integrity and purity from a biblical perspective?

**Research Conclusions, Implications, and Applications**

The participants gave substantial and detailed descriptions of their thoughts and feelings about BMS and their experiences in ministering to men towards BMS. The participants’ responses to the interview questions were sufficient to answer the RQs that guided this study.

**Research Question 1 Conclusions**

The participants’ responses to the interview questions revealed that their proficiency in addressing male sexuality is inexorably tied to their conviction that the Bible is the ultimate authority in male sexuality issues. They also believed God’s design in creation serves as the blueprint for all marital and sexual relationships, which Christians must follow. All the participants’ responses touched on these two subthemes at least once. The following interview excerpts support these conclusions:
“I find it very easy for me to define the biblical perspective of God-designed masculinity as we are created in the image of God, and what that means in our characteristics, and our virtue, and our value.” – Pastor Adam

“God and His creation and his creative order has made male and female as separate, distinct sexes that have separate roles within the home, within their marriage, and within the church.” – Pastor Benjamin

“We believe that there is a law of first mention, and we go back to Genesis. God formed man, and that man became a living soul. With that scriptural background, I use that to guide our men.” – Pastor Caleb

“I always start with that we are God's creation, and we are created in God's image.” – Pastor Eli

“If you start seeing God's creation, in regards to sex, as something beautiful and amazing, using His lens, then you'll do it within the marriage context. You'll be honoring. You'll be obedient.” – Pastor Gabriel

The participants' knowledge about BMS comes directly from their understanding of what the Bible teaches regarding sexuality, including male sexuality. However, their conviction that what the Bible teaches about sexual matters is authoritative and that God’s design of the male and female sexes, their functions, and roles is where they draw their authority from when discipling men in their ministry contexts about male sexuality issues.

It is also worth noting that of the seven participants, only two have seminary graduate degrees, while two are currently pursuing their graduate degrees in seminary. In addition, two of the participants went to Bible college, and one did not have formal pastoral training. Yet, all the
participants consistently affirmed and demonstrated a biblical knowledge of sexuality issues from their conviction that the Bible is God's infallible and authoritative word.

Yet, some of the literature reviewed in this study consistently appealed to the lack of seminary training as the main reason Evangelical Pastors are neglecting their calling in discipling men to live sexually pure lives. For example, Suh (2018) suspected that pastors are inadequate to teach men in their churches about biblical sexuality because seminaries do not offer any courses on sexuality issues. Ott & Winters (2011) also blamed the lack of seminary courses as the principal reason why pastors are not engaging their flocks about sexuality issues from a biblical perspective, even though they admitted the lack of correlation between this particular ministry and seminary training.

In contrast, as some of the literature reviewed in this study suggested, a philosophical worldview is the foundation of education (Diamond, 2008). As Knight (2006) conjectured, educational philosophy is the framework by which educators impart to their students something from their worldview that is valuable and most important. The participants in this study indicated that they teach, educate, and disciple men about male sexuality issues from the Scriptures because they believe that the Bible is God’s authoritative word, even in male sexuality issues. The participants’ responses supported Diamond's (2008) and Knight’s (2006) assertions.

**Research Question 2 Conclusions**

All participants clearly expressed their comfortableness in discussing male sexuality topics from a biblical perspective with the men in their ministry contexts. Two of the participants acknowledged some awkwardness or discomfort the first time they spoke about sexuality issues with their members. However, the awkwardness or discomfort went away after their initial discussion of BMS.
All the participants expressed comfortableness in discussing BMS even though they were keenly aware that the current culture’s views on male sexuality are contrary to their biblical beliefs. Therefore, the participants' comfortableness in discussing BMS despite the culture’s opposing views was negatively and positively expressed.

The negative expression of their comfortableness has nothing to do with the awkwardness of the topic of male sexuality, nor does it have to do with the fear of the culture’s response. The participants clearly and repeatedly stated that they are comfortable discussing BMS with believers and non-believers alike. However, the participants expressed that no matter how comfortable they were addressing male sexuality issues from a biblical perspective, they are aware of the secular worldview’s influence on believers and non-believers. Six participants expressed the need for a different approach with non-believers when discussing BMS. However, they acknowledged that discussing BMS is an uphill battle because of the deception and bondage that sexual sins bring to men. Three participants expressed that the culture’s view on sexuality is often combative, oppressive, and against the biblical perspective. Nevertheless, they felt comfortable discussing BMS issues.

Several factors drive the positive expression of their comfortableness in discussing BMS. First, the participants believed that unscriptural expressions of male sexuality are sins that deceive men, which eventually enslaves them. Therefore, six participants expressed the need to love and accept those deceived and bound by sexual sins, which is why they are comfortable speaking about BMS. Second, all participants are convinced that sin and deception need to be exposed, which is why they talk comfortably and plainly about sexuality issues. Third, three participants expressed concern that the
church needs to be different from the culture, which drives the participants to regularly address BMS with their members. The following interview excerpts supported these conclusions:

“To be honest, the first time I had to speak about sex in the pulpit, it was very uncomfortable because my wife was there. My children were there. My in-laws were there. My sister was there. My mom was there. It was very uncomfortable. But now I’m comfortable.” – Pastor Eli

“There is a natural awkwardness that I've had to fight through with it to bring it up. But now, because it's so prevalent, I don't have the option of it being awkward. I don't mind talking about it anymore.” – Pastor Finneas

“If a non-believer came up to me and started talking to me about male sexuality. I think I would have a more difficult time because I'm trying to appeal to them through biblical truth and biblical realities that they do not hold to.” – Pastor Adam

“There is this tension and discomfort, not because I'm afraid of biblical truth, but it's more of the wisest way to present and teach that biblical truth to my members in light of their potential experiences and their potential understanding of these issues through cultural brainwashing.” – Pastor Benjamin

“But that was the wisdom that God has given me saying, “Hey, these guys, your kids, these people are learning about sex out there, and it’s not biblical. You need to tell them what the Bible actually talks about and discusses, and how the Bible sees sex or what sex is really designed for by the designer Himself.” – Pastor Eli
“The struggle is separate from the individual. You're hearing something about someone struggle with pornography or extramarital affairs or whatever. That's not the individual. I mean, we make our own decisions, obviously, but I don't classify people. My acceptance of them is based upon their struggles, so it's comfortable for me to talk to people about the struggles because their struggle is not them.” Pastor Daniel

“We have to be able to communicate with real words in a plain manner, using plain English and talking about the subjects that don't nobody likes to talk about in order to see people get free.” – Pastor Finneas

The comfortableness of the participants in discussing biblical male sexuality with their flock supported some of the literature reviewed in this study. The comfortableness of a pastor to communicate biblical truths, including awkward topics such as male sexuality, fell under the RK competency as suggested by Solid Pastors Ministry (2018). RK competency is especially needed for counseling, so this vital ministry can easily be overlooked and neglected unless the Evangelical pastor is comfortable discussing sensitive issues such as male sexuality (Freeman, 2016).

The lived experiences of the pastors in this research study supported the concepts in the above literature. The comfortableness of the pastors to discuss male sexuality issues from a biblical perspective is reflected in their ability to address these critical issues with the men in their churches in several ways, such as one-on-one counseling, discipleship, and group studies. Their comfortableness is also demonstrated by the topics they bring up, such as sexual addictions like pornography, promiscuity, fornication, gender identity, same-sex attractions, marital infidelity, and godly male leadership in marriage and family.
Still, a number of the literature reviewed in this study concluded that human sexuality topics, including BMS, are awkward, especially in a church setting (Isom, 2018). Fredrickson (2010) suggested that church pews are filled with people confused about sexuality issues because pastors do not even know how to approach an awkward topic with their members, so pastors avoid it altogether. Barna Group (2020, p. 13) also came out with the study that said more than 50% of the Christian clergy feel uncomfortable talking about sexuality topics from the pulpit because people might take offense.

However, no studies indicated expressly that Evangelical pastors are avoiding the topic of sexuality because of its awkward nature or that Evangelical pastors felt uncomfortable preaching about sexuality topics for fear that their members will be offended. Furthermore, studies such as that of the Barna Group (2020) did not distinguish participants by denomination or affiliation. Instead, their study lumped all Christian clergy into a broad category, regardless of their commitment to the authority and infallibility of the Scriptures.

**Research Question 3 Conclusions**

The ministry models of discipling men in their churches towards BMS differed for each participant. For example, the participants’ ministry models ranged from one-on-one discipleship and counseling to group Bible studies to semester-based classes. Still, all the participants have active ministries in discipling men in their churches regarding BMS. Furthermore, the participants’ responses strongly indicated that their ministry model among men is driven by a firm conviction of their pastoral mandate to disciple them in BMS.
Four of the participants expressed the urgency of the need to disciple men in their churches about BMS because of the negative impact of the culture’s opposing views on their church members. At the same time, all participants expressed that it is incumbent upon them to speak about BMS regularly from the pulpit. All participants expressed the necessity of educating men about BMS through counseling, training, discipline, or any combination thereof. Four participants expressed the need to be approachable to educate them about BMS effectively. Three participants expressed heartfelt responses to their perceived failures in convincing some to follow the Bible's teachings about male sexuality issues in their ministry contexts. Yet, despite their perceived failures, they continue to engage in the ministry of discipling men towards BMS. The following interview excerpts supported these conclusions:

“I'm very familiar with men's struggles. I'm actually counseling a few of our men right now through their marriages. And I have one young single man who's struggling with pornography and same-sex attraction.” – Pastor Adam

“I also train the men that are leaders in my church to initiate conversations like that with the other men that are under their leadership. I've dealt with pornography (issues). I've dealt with singleness (issues), I've dealt (with) marriage-related issues. So I think those are the ones I have dealt with. I've dealt with homosexuality (issues). So those would be examples of equipping my people and how I talk about it with my church.” – Pastor Benjamin

“We have quite a few different small groups that men can connect with that are specific to men's issues. So that's the primary vehicle for communicating biblical sexuality to men.” – Pastor Daniel
“I have been preaching against the gay lifestyle. I’ve lost, I’d say, probably about four members because they have approached me with that problem. And then I told them what the Bible said.” – Pastor Eli

“We have regular men's meetings where that tends to be the subject almost every time we gather. We're talking about how to stay pure, and how to create avenues of freedom for our lives and accountability, and how to love our wives and serve them and maintain sexual purity. I would say I'm very confident in communicating about the subject.” – Pastor Finneas

As indicated by their responses, all participants in this study have an active ministry of teaching, educating, and discipling men to live sexually pure lives from a biblical perspective. Although their ministry methods vary from one-on-one reactive and proactive counseling, informal group studies, and semester-based classes, all participants have an active and ongoing ministry of discipling men to live sexually pure lives.

The active ministry models of the participants in this study regarding the discipling of men is a critical component of their pastoral ministry. Now, more than ever, ministries which seek to address family relationships are relevant today because it sets the frame of integrating truths of faith into everyday family life (Kjesbo & Cha, 2020). An active ministry of discipling men to live sexually pure lives from a biblical perspective is the foundation of biblically grounded family relationships (Preato, 2005).

Yet, some of the literature reviewed in this study concluded that pastors neglect their duties of discipling men to live sexually pure lives as the Bible teaches. Isom (2018) concluded that no discipleship is happening about sexuality issues in Evangelical churches today. For lack of practical training in this area, Turner & Stayton (2014) suggested that Evangelical pastors are ill-prepared to teach contemporary sexuality issues in their churches. However, no definitive
studies showed this is the case for Evangelical pastors. Furthermore, this study’s participants’ active ministry in educating and discipling men in their churches appears to contradict some of the literature reviewed.

**Research Question 4 Conclusions**

The interview question and follow-up questions on RQ4 were the most poignant of the interview questions because they asked the participants plainly and directly to describe the effectiveness of how they model living sexually pure lives for the members of their churches. All of the participants expressed their answers sincerely. Six of the participants revealed a level of self-awareness that they are not immune to sexual sins and temptations and that they, too, can fall into sexual immorality. The same six participants also expressed their responsibility in ensuring that, as pastors, their spiritual walk with Christ Jesus is in line with His word. All the participants mentioned the importance of transparency in the way they live their lives. It was also crucial for them to be held accountable by their church members. Finally, all participants expressed the strong influence of their relationship with their wives that drives them to model sexually pure lives for their members. The following excerpts supported these conclusions:

“So, how do I protect myself? Knowing the fact that I can easily fall, I pray, I pray, I pray.” – Pastor Eli

“As a leader, I’m responsible to make sure that I watch my life, of how I care for my wife, and how I care for my children. And basically set an example of how I honor and value women, both men and women. One of the things they know is that I don't meet with women or any women by myself. That is a big “no-no.” The main thing is how I treat my wife. I would be vulnerable many times about the struggle of lust, and if there is that temptation, I would immediately say, “Don't look there,” or “God, I don't want to dishonor You, I don't want to
disobey you. I don't want to sin against You, and I don't want to sin against my wife.” So I'm pretty open about the struggles and what I do.” – Pastor Gabriel

“I think openness and honesty with the leaders in my life; openness and honesty with my wife. I would say a practice of humility. Maintaining a practice of humility like picking up trash around my church. I feel like it keeps you grounded. It keeps you humble. It keeps you in the role of servant, which is what every pastor is a servant.” – Pastor Finneas

“I married a good woman. So yeah, she's only challenged me to step up into a greater role of masculinity and manhood and fatherhood and husbandry.” – Pastor Adam

Maddix (2015) stated that Christian discipleship is the sharing of the Christian life with other Christians, which requires moral exemplary on the part of the discipler. The personal journey of the participants’ growth in sexual purity involves sharing their struggles with their members and living an honorable life for them to follow. The participants’ responses to RQ4 support some of the literature reviewed in this study.

**Empirical Literature**

Empirical literature consisting of theological and related literature on BMS was reviewed in this study. The theological literature reviewed included the Old and New Testament teachings on male sexuality, including its prohibitions and responsibilities in the marriage covenant and community. The related literature reviewed different topics that affect pastors’ ability to disciple men in their churches concerning BMS, such as subject matter knowledge, ability to speak on issues, ministry models, and sexual integrity as part of a pastor’s qualifications. Data analysis from the participants’ responses was compared to the empirical literature reviewed in this study. The data from the participants' responses and the empirical literature revealed points of agreement, divergence, and novel contribution.
**Points of Agreement**

All of the participants in this study agreed with the existing theological literature that the Bible has definitive standards and expectations regarding sexual purity, especially for men belonging to the covenant community of Christ’s church. The data analysis also revealed that all participants knew that the culture’s antithetical stance to biblical teachings on male sexuality affected male Evangelical Christians because of its pervasive influence in entertainment, politics, and social media (Naselli, 2016). The related literature stated that sex and sexuality are an awkward topic in Evangelical churches today (Isom, 2018). Two participants expressed the feeling of awkwardness when they discussed sexuality issues from the pulpit for the first time.

**Points of Divergence**

Barna Group (2020, para. 13) stated that half of the clergy feel uncomfortable discussing social issues from the public, including homosexuality, same-sex marriage, abortion, and pro-life issues. In addition, the related literature frequently stated that pastors are unprepared to teach contemporary sexuality issues (Isom, 2018). Finally, Barna concluded that pastors are not preaching the whole counsel of God when it comes to biblical marriage and sexual morality because of fear that church members will leave, which will affect the church’s income (Hamilton, 2014).

However, the participants in this study all expressed that they are very comfortable speaking about male sexuality issues from a biblical perspective even though they are keenly aware that the culture’s view on male sexuality issues is opposite to what the Bible teaches. One participant acknowledged that speaking against sexual sins cost him a few members who left because they did not like what he had to say, but that did not deter him from talking about biblical truths concerning sexuality issues. In addition, the participants in this study indicated an
active ministry of educating and discipling men in their churches regarding BMS by addressing BMS issues from the pulpit, small group, or individual settings. Six participants stated that they plan on speaking about BMS from the pulpit in the next six months.

Additionally, Allender and Longman (2014) stated that Evangelical men often feel left alone to find the answers regarding sexuality issues that affect them. However, the participants in this study said that they are regularly approached by men in their churches to ask them about male sexuality issues or talk about their struggles.

Finally, this study challenged the prevailing literature that no discipleship regarding BMS is happening in churches today (Suh, 2018). While the participants’ discipleship ministry models among men in the churches vary in frequency and methodology, the participants all indicated that they have a regular ongoing ministry of educating and discipling men to live sexually pure lives.

**Novel Contribution**

Not only are the participants in this study actively discipling men in their ministry contexts to live sexually pure lives, but their responses also indicated that they strive to find different ways to approach the subject with new believers and non-believers. They believed that a balance of being biblical and being compassionate is the key to fruitful discussion regarding BMS with them.

**Theoretical Literature**

The theoretical framework for this study is Shulman’s (1986) Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) theory and Solid Pastors Ministry’s (2018) Relational Knowledge (RK). This framework sought to understand how these pastoral competencies contributed to Evangelical pastors of small churches in discipling men in their ministry contexts towards BMS.
The literature reviewed included the role of pastors as teachers and educators of spiritual formation as part of their ministry in shepherding souls (Howe, 1983; Toler, 2015), including male sexuality matters. In addition, studies showing the lack of seminary training regarding human sexuality were considered (Ott & Winters, 2011). Finally, literature that blamed seminaries’ failure to prepare pastors to educate and disciple men regarding sexuality issues (Ott Suh, 2018) was considered for this study. The data from the participants' responses and the theoretical literature revealed points of agreement, divergence, and novel contributions.

**Points of Agreement**

The participants' responses indicated that RCPK pastoral competencies strongly impact their ministry of discipling men towards BMS. The participants in this study demonstrated that their content knowledge of BMS allowed them to engage the men in their churches regarding sexuality issues from a biblical perspective through consistent education and discipleship. In addition, the theoretical literature suggested that pastors should be the primary teachers, educators, and disciplers of men regarding BMS. The participants in this study firmly believed that teaching, educating, and discipling men to live sexually pure lives are integral to their pastoral ministry and calling, thus affirming the existing theoretical literature.

**Point of Divergence**

Nevertheless, there is a point of divergence with the existing theoretical literature. First, there was no indication that seminary training contributed to the participants’ RCPK competencies in discipling men towards BMS. Only two of the participants have Masters degrees from seminaries. Two are presently pursuing their graduate studies in seminary. Two attended Bible College, and one never went to Bible College but has an Associates of Arts degree in a secular field. Yet, all participants have an active ministry in discipling the men in their ministry.
contexts towards BMS. The one participant who has a Masters of Divinity degree expressed that he learned about BMS not from seminary but from reading books about sexuality issues from an Evangelical perspective on his own.

**Novel Contributions**

A significant finding that emerged from this study that was not covered by the existing theoretical literature is how a pastors’ conviction regarding what the Bible says about male sexuality drives their ministry of discipling men in their churches to live sexually pure lives. All of the participants in this study immediately expressed that their knowledge of male sexuality comes from understanding what the Bible teaches about them. However, their firm conviction that the Bible is the ultimate source of authority in matters of sexuality, including male sexuality, drove them to teach, preach, educate, and disciple men to live sexually pure lives with authority.

Another finding that emerged from this study that was absent from the existing theoretical literature is how an Evangelical pastor’s wife greatly influenced his role as a model of living a sexually pure life. Having their wives as ministry and accountability partners contributed significantly to their transparency. They also viewed loving and serving their wives as an essential element in being a role model for men in their churches.

**Research Implications**

The implications of the results of this study affect existing empirical literature and the existing theoretical literature regarding pastoral competencies that contribute to the ministry of discipling men to live sexually pure lives as part of their spiritual formation. In addition, the results of this study also have practical implications. Finally, these implications are crucial to understanding the phenomenon regarding the lack of discipleship of men regarding sexuality issues happening in Evangelical churches today.
**Empirical Implications**

Qualitative studies do not establish correlations (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). However, the data from this study revealed that the participants in this study, all of whom are Evangelical pastors of small churches, are actively involved in the ministry of discipling men in their churches towards BMS. Thus, this study does not necessarily falsify existing empirical studies. However, this study, at the very least, challenged the prevailing notion that no discipleship regarding BMS is happening in Evangelical churches today (Isom, 2018; Ott & Winters, 2011; Suh, 2018). In addition, there may be a correlation between a pastor's high view of Scriptures and his active ministry of educating and discipling the men in his church towards BMS.

**Theoretical Implications**

The general theoretical assertion regarding the lack of discipleship happening in Evangelical churches today is because of the lack of seminary training pastors had in seminary (Suh, 2018). However, only two of the participants in this study have completed a Master's level education in a seminary setting. Two participants are presently completing their graduate studies in seminary, while two have attended Bible college, and one has no formal pastoral training. Yet all of them are actively involved in the ministry of discipling men in their churches towards BMS. Their impetus for engaging in an active ministry of discipling men in BMS is not their seminary training but the belief that their pastoral calling requires them to do so.

The participants’ attitudes regarding their pastoral ministry as the primary educator of their members, particularly of the men in their ministry contexts regarding BMS, is consistent with the existing theoretical literature that pastors are the primary educator of their churches (Hahn, 2019). Likewise, the participants’ perceived calling as the primary disciplers of men in
their churches is consistent with existing theoretical literature that pastors are the primary discipler of their churches (Maddix, 2015), including men in the area of biblical sexuality.

Finally, the theoretical literature reviewed in this study asserted that education is primarily driven by philosophy (Diamond, 2008; Knight, 2006; Smith, 2009). Therefore, the participants’ philosophical conviction that the Bible is the final authority regarding sexuality issues and is what drove the participants to disciple the men in their churches about BMS is in line with the literature review.

**Research Application**

This study should positively impact all Evangelical pastors and encourage them to actively pursue a ministry of educating and discipling men to live sexually pure lives from a biblical perspective. A breakdown of the research applications per RQ is broken down as follows:

**RQ1 Application**

This study suggested that pastoral competencies in educating men regarding BMS are not acquired from seminary but rather from a personal conviction that the Scriptures have the answers concerning male sexuality issues. Just as seminary training is not necessary to be an effective pastor (Hiebert, 2018), seminary courses regarding male sexuality issues are not essential to teach BMS issues. Three participants never attended seminary, with one not having any formal pastoral training. Yet, this study revealed that all the participants know what the Bible teaches about sexuality, especially sexuality issues concerning men. Their conviction that the Bible is the word of God and is the final authority in matters regarding sexuality, including God’s original plan and design in Genesis, was the foundation for what they teach their members regarding sexuality issues.
The Association of Theological Schools (ATS) encourages seminaries to add courses in sexuality in their pastoral ministry programs (Ott, 2012). However, Evangelical seminaries would do well to design and offer Bible apologetic courses instead as part of their pastoral ministry programs. These courses should specifically highlight the reliability of Scriptures in terms of prophecies fulfilled, reliability of manuscripts, unity of Scriptures, and even harmony of science and the creation account. The more seminary students are convinced of the accuracy and reliability of Scriptures, the more they will view it as authoritative (Elmore, 2019). Evangelical denominational leaders will also do well to affirm the Bible's unchanging authority as God's infallible word in today's postmodern culture, especially regarding sexuality topics.

**RQ2 Application**

Some of the literature reviewed in this study suggested a certain awkwardness about sexuality topics. However, this study indicated that the sexuality topics from a biblical perspective are not too awkward that Evangelical pastors are avoiding the topic altogether. On the contrary, the participants in this study all stated that they are very comfortable discussing sexuality issues with their churches, especially with the men, for the various reasons already discussed.

Evangelical denominational leaders will do well to encourage the pastors in their churches to discuss male sexuality topics with their members, especially with men. The Evangelical leaders can discuss biblical male sexuality as part of their general meeting agenda in their local district meetings and have pastors share their experiences in educating the men in their churches regarding BMS and their experiences and positive outcomes.
**RQ3 Application**

This study suggested that a practical ministry of discipling men to live sexually pure lives comes in all forms, such as semester-based courses, weekly men’s meetings, informal men’s gatherings, and one-on-one discipleship or counseling. This study also suggested that what drives the participants to teach, educate, and disciple men to live sexually pure lives as part of their ministry is their belief that they have the mandate of their pastoral office and calling to do so.

Evangelical denominational leaders, therefore, need to encourage the pastors in their denomination to set up some sort of ministry in their local churches that speak to men about sexuality issues from a biblical perspective. In addition, Evangelical denominational leaders will do well to track the successes of ministries dedicated to the discussion of sexuality issues with men from a biblical perspective and offer training and seminars to equip the pastors in their denomination in this area.

**RQ4 Application**

The participants in this study all stated that they are continuously growing in their journey in how they model sexual purity in their lives and their ministries. A significant part of modeling sexual purity in their lives is their wives. Therefore, evangelical denominational leaders will do well to invest in conferences for pastors in their denominations to help Evangelical pastors improve their relationship with their wives and family and help them find a balance between ministry and family life. In addition, denominational leaders will do well to discuss issues affecting pastors today, such as when certain Evangelical personalities have fallen into sexual sins. Discussing such matters can help the pastors in their denomination process the reality and dangers of falling into sexual immorality.
**Research Limitations**

This study was conducted by interviewing seven Evangelical pastors of small churches who shared relevant narratives of their thoughts, feelings, and experiences in their ministry of educating and discipling men towards BMS. This study utilized triangulation techniques to verify the accuracy of the participants' responses, such as listening to messages they gave regarding BMS. The preaching and teaching messages regarding BMS that two participants gave to this researcher corroborated some of their responses.

Still, this researcher has no way of confirming the accuracy of all the participants’ detailed statements strictly from the interviews alone. The participants shared subjective experiences, feelings, and thoughts from their unique ministry contexts and personal perspectives. The only way to confirm what the participants shared during the interview process other than a sample of their preaching or teaching messages is to personally observe them doing what they say they do in their natural setting. However, that kind of observation falls under the case study method of qualitative research (Heale & Twycross, 2018) and is beyond the scope of an IPA study.

In addition, in describing their pastoral competencies, the participants may have unknowingly overestimated their ministerial competencies to avoid appearing incompetent, or they may have underestimated their competencies to avoid sounding arrogant. The participants’ overestimating or underestimating their competencies could be mitigated by continuously reminding them that they can be honest with their answers during the interview process, as their responses will be kept confidential. The accuracy of their stated competencies could be evaluated by interviewing members of their churches and confirming their pastor’s competencies in
teaching, educating, and discipling men towards BMS. However, doing so will compromise the confidentiality of the participants.

An inherent limitation of qualitative studies such as an IPA is its transferability or generalizability (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This study is not transferable to other ministry settings. It is also not transferrable to different demographics. However, since the themes and meanings discovered in this study may potentially be applied to other ministry contexts and demographics, this study can help identify other research areas.

**Further Research**

Research studies naturally bring up potential studies for other areas of investigation. This research study is no different. This study expanded the literature by providing valuable insights from the lived experiences of Evangelical pastors of small churches in discipling men in their ministry contexts to live sexually pure lives from the teachings of the Bible.

Sexuality, however, is also an integral component of womanhood. Therefore, a study that seeks to understand how pastoral competencies contribute to a practical ministry of discipling women in biblical sexuality can prove beneficial for the body of Christ concerning women’s ministries. Female Christians are not immune from the culture’s influence regarding sexuality (Thorne, 2017). In addition, female attitudes towards sexuality issues, such as singleness, divorce, remarriage, and widowhood, are vastly different from men’s (DeFranza, 2015). Therefore, a study focusing on how to help Christian women cope with sexuality issues peculiar to them is needed and beneficial for the body of Christ.

Additionally, this study focused on Evangelical pastors' competencies in discipling men towards BMS from the pastors’ perspective. Current studies suggested that church members are being left in the dark on their own regarding sexuality issues (Barna Group, 2020). Therefore, a
survey of pastoral competencies in discipling men towards BMS from the members' perspective may also prove beneficial in understanding how the members perceive the effectiveness of their pastor’s ministry in this area. In addition, a study of pastoral competencies and the results of their active ministry of discipling men towards BMS within a particular Evangelical denomination may be beneficial by identifying what works and what does not in their unique denominational distinctive and settings.

Additionally, a correlational study may be done to examine whether or not a pastor’s high or low view of Scriptures affects how they disciple their churches to follow Scriptures’ teachings in living sexually pure lives. Finally, another correlational study may focus on how a pastor’s tenure in the ministry affects his ability to educate and disciple his church to live sexually pure lives.

Finally, a study that focuses on the effectiveness of various men’s discipleship ministry models is also beneficial. This particular study may help identify which ministry model works best in terms of growth and consistency in discipleship.

**Summary**

This study sought to understand how the competencies of Evangelical pastors in small churches regarding biblical male sexuality contributed to a practical ministry of discipling men to live a life of sexual integrity and purity. Existing literature stated that no discipleship is happening in Evangelical churches today regarding biblical male sexuality (BMS) among male Christians because pastors are not equipped to handle this task. Empirical literature stated that pastors are not prepared to disciple men in churches today regarding BMS because they were not trained in seminaries. The existing theological literature said that men's discipleship in BMS is
essential, and pastors should be the primary teacher, educators, and discipler of men regarding BMS.

The theoretical framework for this study is Shulman’s (1986) Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) as well as Solid Pastors Ministry (2018) relational competency (RK). The existing theoretical literature stated that PCK contributed to a pastor’s effectiveness in teaching biblical truths. In addition, the current literature says that RK competency is also needed for the pastor to communicate the awkward topic of BMS to his flock. Therefore, the pastoral competencies of RPCK contributed to the education and discipleship of men towards BMS.

From these theoretical frameworks, research questions were formulated. First, data were collected through in-depth, semi-structured, open-ended interviews of seven Evangelical pastors of small churches with no more than 125 in weekly attendance. The interviews were transcribed, analyzed, and coded for themes and subthemes to help explain Evangelical lived experiences in educating and discipling men towards BMS.

Data analysis of the participants’ responses revealed that all participants know what the Bible teaches regarding male sexuality. They also expressed great comfortableness in speaking about male sexuality issues with the men in their church from a biblical perspective. In addition, participants in this study have an active ministry of educating and discipling men in their churches towards BMS. Finally, they also saw themselves as a role model for sexual integrity for the men in their churches.

Therefore, this study expanded the existing literature on the topic of discipling men to live sexually pure lives by providing fresh perspectives from the experiences of seven Evangelical pastors of small churches. In addition, this study challenged the idea that the failure to educate men to live sexually pure lives stems from the pastor’s lack of seminary training in
this area. Finally, this study also challenged the prevailing idea that pastors are shying away from discussing male sexuality issues because of the awkward nature of the topic.
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APPENDICES

Appendix A – BMS Definition and Interview Questions for Participants

Biblical male sexuality (BMS) is what the Bible teaches about human male sexuality, including its specific identity and the order of creation and its role and privileges in sexual relations, responsibilities, prohibitions, and restrictions (Hart, 1994). BMS recognizes that the male and female sexes are distinct in their identities, roles in the marriage covenant and community with the view that sexual relationship is a gift from God to be enjoyed within the marriage covenant between a man and a woman with the man as the head of the relationship (Hastings, 2017).

1. Would you please describe your familiarity with male sexuality issues?

2. Would you please describe your skills and ability in educating men about male sexuality issues from a biblical perspective?

3. Please describe your comfort level in teaching, educating, and discipling men in your ministry context about male sexuality issues from a biblical perspective?

4. Please describe the frequency of your ministry of teaching men about male sexuality issues as it relates to their spiritual formation, including avoiding and dealing with sexual sins and equipping married men to be leaders in healthy sexual relationships with their wives.

5. How would you describe your effectiveness in your role as a model among men in your ministry context in living out a sexually pure life from a biblical perspective?
Appendix B – IRB Approval Letter

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

August 8, 2021

Kirby Silo
Joseph Butler


Dear Kirby Silo, Joseph Butler,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under the following exemption category, which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46.104(d):

Category 2.(iii). Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met. The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination required by §46.111(a)(7).

Your stamped consent form(s) and final versions of your study documents can be found under the Attachments tab within the Submission Details section of your study on Cayuse IRB. Your stamped consent form(s) should be copied and used to gain the consent of your research participants. If you plan to provide your consent information electronically, the contents of the attached consent document(s) should be made available without alteration.

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and any modifications to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty University IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by completing a modification submission through your Cayuse IRB account.

If you have any questions about this exemption or need assistance in determining whether possible modifications to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at irb@liberty.edu.

Sincerely,

G. Michele Baker, MA, CIP
Administrative Chair of Institutional Research
Research Ethics Office
Appendix C – Letter to Potential Nominators

Dear [Participant Nominator]

As a graduate student in the School of Divinity at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a doctoral degree. The purpose of my research is to understand how pastoral competencies concerning biblical male sexuality contribute to a ministry of discipling men to live sexually pure lives as part of their spiritual formation, and I am writing to request your help in finding eligible participants to invite to join my study.

Participants must be 18 years of age or older and male Evangelical pastors who serve as the senior pastor of small churches consisting of up to 50 average weekly attendees where there are no professional counselors on staff. Participants, if willing, will be asked to participate in a recorded interview, either in person or online. If participants have taught or preached about male sexuality topics in the past six months, they will be asked to provide a preaching/teaching manuscript, outline, or a recording of the preaching/teaching if available. It should take approximately one and a half to two hours to complete the procedure listed. Names and other identifying information will be requested as part of this study, but the information will remain confidential.

If you know of any individuals who meet the above criteria who would be a good fit for this research study, would you consider returning this form with the name and contact information of the potential participant listed below? I appreciate your willingness to help me with my research to contribute to an important area of inquiry. If you have any questions, please call me at (XXX) XXX-XXXX or email me at xxxxxx@liberty.edu. You may also email my supervisor, Dr. Joseph E. Butler, at xxxxxxxx@liberty.edu. Thank you.

Potential Participant #1
Name: ________________________________________________________________
Email: ________________________________________________________________
Phone Number: _________________________________________________________

Potential Participant #2
Name: ________________________________________________________________
Email: ________________________________________________________________
Phone Number: _________________________________________________________

Potential Participant #3
Name: ________________________________________________________________
Email: ________________________________________________________________
Phone Number: _________________________________________________________

Sincerely,

K. J. Silo
Doctoral Candidate
Appendix D – Participant Recruitment Correspondence

Dear [Recipient]:

As a graduate student in the School of Divinity at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a doctoral degree. The purpose of my research is to understand how pastoral competencies concerning biblical male sexuality contribute to a ministry of discipling men to live sexually pure lives as part of their spiritual formation, and I am writing to invite eligible participants to join my study.

Participants must be 18 years of age or older and male Evangelical pastors serving as senior pastors of small churches consisting of up to 125 average weekly attendees where there are no professional counselors on staff. Participants, if willing, will be asked to participate in a recorded interview, either in person or online. If participants have taught or preached about male sexuality topics in the past six months, they will be asked to provide a preaching/teaching manuscript, outline, or recording of the preaching/teaching if available. It should take approximately one and a half to two hours to complete the procedure listed. Names and other identifying information will be requested as part of this study, but the information will remain confidential.

To participate, please reply to this email to set up an interview. A consent document is attached to this email. The consent document contains additional information about my research. If you choose to participate, you will need to sign the consent document and return it to me at the time of the interview.

Sincerely,

K. J. Silo
Doctoral Candidate
Appendix E – Informed Consent

Consent

Title of the Project: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of Evangelical Pastors’ Competencies in Biblical Male Sexuality and Spiritual Formation
Principal Investigator: Kirby Silo, Doctoral Candidate, Liberty University

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study
You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must be at least 18 years of age or older, a biological male, and currently serving as the senior pastor of a small Evangelical church where there are no professional counselors on staff. Small church is defined as having up to 50 weekly attendees. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research.

What is the study about and why is it being done?
The purpose of the study is to understand how pastoral competencies concerning biblical male sexuality contribute to a ministry of discipling men to live sexually pure lives as part of their spiritual formation. The study will help give direction to seminaries, Bible colleges, and denominational leaders as they provide further training to pastors and seminary students in this area.

What will happen if you take part in this study?
If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following things:
1. Participate in either a recorded in-person or online interview about your experience in teaching biblical male sexuality issues.
2. Provide outlines, access to recorded preaching/teaching messages, and preaching/teaching manuscripts that touch on biblical male sexuality issue(s) if you have preached on the topic within the last 6 months. It should take approximately one and a half to two hours to complete the procedures listed.

How could you or others benefit from this study?
Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.

Benefits to society include better training for pastors and students in seminary to teach male sexuality issues from a biblical perspective.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?
The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

How will personal information be protected?
The records of this study will be kept private. Published reports will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

- Participant responses will be kept confidential through the use of pseudonyms. Interviews will be conducted at the location of your choice, a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation. The interview venue may also be online if you prefer.
- Data collected from the interview will be stored on a password-locked computer and may be used in future presentations. Hard copy data will be stored in a locked cabinet. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.
- The interviews will be recorded and transcribed. Recordings will be stored on a password-locked computer for three years and then erased. Paper transcripts will be shredded. Only the researcher will have access to these recordings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How will you be compensated for being part of the study?</th>
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<td>Participants will not be compensated for participating in this study.</td>
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<th>Is study participation voluntary?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.</td>
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<th>What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?</th>
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<td>If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.</td>
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<th>Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?</th>
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<tr>
<td>The researcher conducting this study is Kirby J. Silo. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you are encouraged to contact him at (xxx) xxx-xxxx. You may also contact the researcher’s faculty sponsor, Dr. Joseph E. Butler, at <a href="mailto:xxxxxxxxx@liberty.edu">xxxxxxxxx@liberty.edu</a>.</td>
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<th>Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?</th>
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<tr>
<td>If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, you are encouraged to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at <a href="mailto:irb@liberty.edu">irb@liberty.edu</a>.</td>
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Disclaimer: The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is tasked with ensuring that human subjects research will be conducted in an ethical manner as defined and required by federal regulations. The topics covered and viewpoints expressed or alluded to by student and faculty researchers are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official policies or positions of Liberty University.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Your Consent</th>
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<tr>
<td>By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the</td>
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study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

*I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.*

☐ The researcher has my permission to audio-record and video-record me as part of my participation in this study.

____________________________________
Printed Subject Name

____________________________________
Signature & Date
## Appendix F – Researcher’s Interview Worksheet

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Emerging Themes</th>
<th>Interview Question/Follow-Up Questions</th>
<th>Meanings/Expressions/Emotions</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Would you please describe your familiarity with male sexuality issues?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1.a. What books have you read about male sexuality?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1.b. How familiar are you with contemporary terms concerning male sexuality issues such as toxic masculinity and gender fluidity?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1.c. How has your life experience, such as marital status, added to your understanding of what the Bible teaches about biblical male sexuality?</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emerging Themes</td>
<td>Interview Question/Follow-Up Questions</td>
<td>Meanings/Expressions/Emotions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. Would you please describe your skills in educating men about male sexuality issues from a biblical perspective?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>What books have you read about male sexuality issues that address them from a biblical perspective?</td>
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<td>2.a. Please describe your ability to answer questions about male sexuality issues from a biblical perspective on the spot?</td>
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<td>2.b. Please describe your confidence level that if someone asks you about male sexuality issues, you would be able to give a clear answer that is also scripturally grounded.</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Please describe your comfort level in teaching, educating, and discipling men in your ministry context about male sexuality issues from a biblical perspective.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.a.</td>
<td>How would you describe your comfort level in giving counsel or answering questions about male sexuality issues (sexual sins and struggles) from a biblical perspective on the spot?</td>
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<td>3.b.</td>
<td>Is the topic of male sexuality issues awkward for you? Why or why not?</td>
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<td>4. Please describe the frequency with which your ministry teaches men about male sexuality issues as it relates to their spiritual formation, including avoiding and dealing with sexual sins and equipping married men to be leaders in healthy sexual relationships with their wives.</td>
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<td>4.a. How often have you talked about male sexuality issues from the pulpit or one-on-one discipling or counseling classes in the past six months?</td>
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<td>4.b. How often do you plan on speaking about male sexuality issues from a biblical perspective in the next six months?</td>
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<td>4.c. How would you describe the level of importance you place in teaching and educating men about male sexuality issues from a biblical perspective?</td>
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<td>5. Please describe your effectiveness in your role as a model among men in your ministry context in living out a sexually pure life from a biblical perspective?</td>
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<td>5.a. How would you describe your ability to practice what you preach when it comes to living a sexually pure life as the Bible teaches?</td>
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<td>5.b. Why do you believe many Evangelical personalities fall into sexual sins, and what is your strategy to avoid falling into sexual sins?</td>
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