

**IMAGO RELATIONSHIP AND EMOTIONALLY - FOCUSED THERAPIES ON
DATING CHALLENGE AMONG WORKING CLASS MEDICAL PERSONNELS
IN IMO STATE**

REV. SR. OGAZIE, CELESTINA. ADAKU Ph.D

srtinaogazie18@gmail.com.

Department of Psychology and Counselling,
Michael Okpara University of Agriculture Umudike, Abia State.

Abstract

The study investigated imago and emotionally focused therapies on dating challenge among working class medical personnel in Imo State. It adopted a quasi-experimental research design. Three research questions and one hypothesis guided the study. The population of the study comprised working class 24 medical personnel (males and Females who are in dating relationship, and since the population was manageable the researcher used all as the study population. They were drawn purposefully from Federal Medical Centre Owerri (FMC) based on their responses to the researchers' developed instrument titled: 'Dating Challenge Questionnaire' (DCQ). Two experts in the Department of Guidance and Counselling and one from Measurement and Evaluation validated the 20-items instrument used for the study. The stability of the instrument was determined using Person Product Moment Correlation and reliability index of 0.83 obtained. The internal consistency of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha method and reliability of 0.84 established. The researcher employed the services of two research assistants who assisted her in the administration and collection of the instrument. Collected data were analyzed using Mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions while Analysis of covariance was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The result of the study showed that imago therapy effectively reduced dating relationship challenges among working class medical personnel. It further revealed emotionally focused therapy as an effective tool in reducing dating relationship challenges and finally, that the two treatment packages proved effective, however, emotionally focused therapies proved more effective than Imago therapy. Based on the findings, the research recommends the use of both treatment packages in the reduction of dating relationship challenges and other similar challenges.

Keywords: Dating relationship, Challenges, Working Class Medical Personnel, Imago Relationship Therapy and Emotionally Focused Therapies

Introduction

Dating refers to an intimate relationship between two mature persons who love themselves intimately that if well-handled may lead to marriage. According to Chukwuenke (2013), dating is a conscious social relationship between two mature individuals (male and female) which may be for the purpose of assessing each other's compatibility for marriage. In our African traditional believe, it is the man who initiates dating, and after dating for a while the two mature individuals may find themselves fit for a closer or deeper relationship (Courtship/marriage). For two mature persons to go into dating relationship, should be exclusively intentional to see if they can be compatible as marriage partners. In the same line, Colleen Healy (2023) sees dating relationship as a relationship where a partner may wish to spend time with another in order to get to know him or her better, spend time in the hope of finding committed relationship. In the same vein, Ketleen (2023) equally defined dating relationship to be a period when an individual is learning about another individual, he include: both physical and emotional intimacy which may lead to settling down after the dating. Villanueva (2015) observed that the new generation people has modified dating relationship to mean companionship which lack definitions. The ultimate goal of dating relationship is to have a lasting relationship that may lead to lasting marriage.

Ketleen (2023) identified five stages in dating relationship as: (i) attraction (ii) settling in (iii) reality (iv) emotional intimacy and (v) commitment. (i) Attraction: This stage is a stimulating period that has to do with all it takes to be attracted to the opposite sex with the full intention of coming closer to him or her in a relationship that may further finding a long-lasting match. (ii) Settling in: Having been attracted to each other, the partners tries to bring in those ingredients of dating that will make them come closer to each other. (iii) Reality: The period of attraction and settling in is evaluated in this stage to affirm if really the two partners are genuine in their dating relationship and if they can move ahead for more closer and committed relationship. As I said earlier, if this stage is well handled, there is every possibility that the relationship will grow into a lasting and happy marriage life. On the other hand, if mishandled, the two parties may separate with guilt, aggression, depressions and so on (iv) Emotionally intimacy: At this stage, some individual may be suppressing their behaviour, secrets feelings and emotions for the other partner pending when they feel safe to relate them in dating relationship. If actually the partners are really in love, a strong bound are formed here, and if not, they begin to bear misfiling and may start looking for another person to date. (v)

Commitment. At this stage of dating relationship, the partners may have had better understanding of themselves and may have been more committed to each other. This may possibly lead to marriage, otherwise there will be no commitment and the goal of the dating relationship will collapse.

No matter the circumstance, two different individuals in dating relationship who possesses different personalities and temperaments are bound to have challenges as a result of differences in their personalities, according to obsolete citation identified seven common relationship challenges namely: infidelity, intimacy, conflict, poor communication, sexual problems, substance abuse and divorce or breaking up. In the same vein, Counselling Directory (2023) pointed out ten common challenges in modern relationship to include: lack of time, lack of healthy communication, fake relationship, taking your partner for granted, financial insecurities, trust issue, dividing duties, career goals, lack of appreciation unjust sex lives, jealousy, over possessive partner, view about parenthood, unrealistic expectations and extra-marital affairs. In fact, majority of the conflicts that transpire in dating relationships come as a result of great expectations that one's partner will fulfil his or her needs in a certain way. Whereby the expectations were not met, the partner involved begin to question whether he or she made a right choice which may lead to poor relationship and finally brake up. This type of challenges is regularly seen among the working-class people which medical personnel are among them.

Medical personnel are trained professionals such as medical doctors, nurses, laboratory technicians, pharmacists among others who received authorized education, acquired specialized knowledge, skills and attitudes and is registered and licensed with the medical and Council to provide, promote, prevent, support and restore, medical care and services with the within the scope of his or her license. Among working class groups, medical personnel are one of the most respected and presumed group to have what it takes in terms of finance, opportunity to secure job within or abroad since they are specialty in specific areas. A lot of people including those in abroad desire to marry medical personnel because this opportunity that they have. As co- workers, coupled with their specialties in the field of medicine and having been with their colleagues form quite some reasonable periods, some of them go into dating relationships which brings them closer to their colleagues who they have feeling for marriage. Meanwhile, quite good number of them who go into dating relationships finds it difficult to continue because of various challenges. After a long period of time, some may separate and start all over again in search of a life partner.

Williams (2017) pointed out about 31 modern relationship problems as follows: (a) lack of appreciations (b) fear of loss (c) false expectations (d) emotional immaturity (e) self-centred (f) no gratitude (g) lack of respect (h) lack of personal responsibility and (i) little consideration for others, but only for self (j) inability to command self (k) judgment without considering others (l) lack of interpersonal skills (m) little honesty with self (n) excusing self alone (o) hating those who tell us the truth (p) making things personal among others. Concurrently, Benyamin (2023) posited the challenges of dating and marriage in the new generation as: Psychological, sociological and anthropological difficulties. In this study, the researcher identified ten challenges that may inhibit working class medical personnel from having a smooth dating relationship periods or completing and understanding dating relationship periods to lead to marriage life (i) communication challenges (ii) unresolved conflicts. (iii) lack of intimacy (iv) infidelity/trust (v) pride (vi) culture (vii) religion (viii) personality/temperament (ix) genotype (x) family background (xi) sickness among others. Long-term effect of dating and separating may result in anxiety, depressing, stress, fear of marriage, aggression, self-harm and sometime in vulnerable position

In order to embrace a long-lasting satisfied dating relationship, the researcher introduced two counselling therapies to know their effectiveness in reducing dating challenges among medical personnel in Imo state namely: Imago Relationship and Emotionally focused Therapies.

Imago Relationship Therapy (ERT) is a variety of unique techniques to assist partners attain a long-lasting relationship and a fulfilled journey together (Paige and LWSW (2023). Imago Relationship Therapy (IRT) was developed by Harville Hendrix and Helen LaKelly Hunt in (1980) The therapy talked about the relational Counselling which transforms conflict between two individuals into an opportunity for healing and growth. Here, the therapist does most of the guidance, asking questions which arouses the partners to communicate freely and now make more discovery about themselves. In an open dialogue, the partners may sort themselves out and as a result become more intimate. The major techniques involved in Imago therapy are dialogue, mirroring, validate and empathy. Imago dialogue: The counsellor assists the partners to enter into an empathetic dialogue where each partner has the opportunity to disclose his or her childhood experiences that causes the individual to behave strange and to relate what actually he or she may need to be healed of. In this conversation, rules are observed on certain things such as; when to speak, whose turn to speak not to deviate from the topic of discussion and so on. It is the work of the counsellor to support the process. Imago dialogue allow partners to understand and increase empathy, remove negative hurt language, create a safe emotional

environment for both partners to openly share and to allow both partners equality that none may feel superior to the other. However, the Imago dialogue is categorized under three subheadings namely: mirroring, validate and empathy.

Since imago relationship therapy is more of the counsellor's guidance, the counsellor represents all he or she heard the partners say without being judgmental or criticizing any of the partners, observing their facial expressions, vocal tones, gestures and even posture. The purpose of this is to assist them gain explanation, thoughtfulness and understanding about the other partner. (ii) validate: Here, one of the partners is allowed to talk while another listens and concurs to what the other is sharing. a partner is free to questions for more clarifications where he or she was confused. (iii) Empathy: This is where each partner share what he or she thinks the other is feeling with all sense of thoughtful and consideration. By sharing all these together, they are coming in a mutual understanding of each other, increasing communication and, make stronger their relationship which is the target of the treatment. According to Ruthie and Joel (2023), imago relationship therapy is more beneficial for people who are just dating as a first step to examine their common grounds and validate their experiences so far in their relationship. Again, Schmidt and Nathan (2016) in their study on Imago relationship therapy showed that it helped couples experience increase empathy and relationship satisfaction. Furthermore, Gehert, Schmidt, Giegerich and Luquet (2017) study revealed that 12 weeks of Imago relationship therapy was linked to improvements in relationship satisfaction. In the same vein, Schmidt and Gehert, (2017) study on imago relationship found out that Imago therapy helped improved empathy levels of partners. Finally, Martin and Bielawski. (2011) study showed that people who participated in Imago relationship therapy saw improvement in self-awareness and gained a better understanding of their own and their partner's child hood experiences.

Another variable under study is Emotionally Focused Therapy (EFT)by Sue Johnson This therapy is based on attachment theory. The therapy is focused on being attached to others as a source of comfort, safety and growth. The principles of EFT focus on: emotion, growth, exploration, emotional balance, present experience and the experimental map. The therapy is mostly used on people who is struggling with depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder and so on. Mardpour (2020), Marinen & Johnson (in press) identified three steps in Emotionally focused therapy as: De-Escalation, restructuring and consolidation. De-Escalation technique focuses on identifying negative interaction patterns and its contributions to conflict in a relationship. Here, the counsellor applies the three strengths of EFT namely (i) one of the partners expressing the underlying feelings and other changes and perceptions on the other. (ii)

the partners learn to understand the underlying emotional need (iii) they take responsibilities for emotional their needs

1. (i) De-Escalate Here, the counsellor attentively guides the two parties on attentive listening, and communication skill, not to raise voice at each other, asking positive and relevant questions, avoiding interruption or going off track, non-judgmental, willingness to understand and respect for each other and so on. The counsellor guided the partners to recognize the escalating stages to a aggression namely: early warning signs, hostile, threat and assaults. In the process of de-escalate, one of the partners may say 'I can see that your heart is still heavy', Can I say something? It is a mildways of considering your partner. Other ways include, to give a breathing space to the other, to respect body language, tunes etc. According to Esther (2023) these early signs give opportunity to act immediately to de-escalate in a treatment session. (ii) Restructuring. This is the act reforming one's emotions so that the other partner may feel and express new and appropriate interactions that lead to more closeness. The therapist encourages the partners to investigate the causes of the problems more deeply by expressing their emotions, needs and desires especially the shameful or fearful ones especially those ones that they had refused to admit. The partners were also encouraged to practice acceptance, love, free communication, compassion and forgiveness to the other partner. (iii) Consolidation and integration. The counsellor assists the partners to apply the attachment bond which helped improve their relationship. Maryam, et al (2015) study revealed that EFT has a significant positive relationship effect. Also, Makinen & Johnson pointed out that EFT can be very effective in addressing depression, withdrawal, hurts and negative feedback from partners. According to Gottman (2023) EFT is better for those looking to heal emotional disconnection and attachment while Imago relationship therapy is better for those who want the root cause of relationship patterns therefore the choice of the therapy should be according to the need of the client. Furthermore, study of Nazanin, Shokouh, and Vallyolah (2018) on comparing the effectiveness of emotionally Focused Couple Therapy and Imago Relationship Therapy revealed that both had treatment packages are effective in dimensions of marital satisfaction but EFT proves significantly more effective than IRT.

Statement of the Problem.

Dating is a relationship where two mature individuals come closer for the purpose of assessing each other's compatibility. Sometimes, when the two parties involved are having personal,

psychological, and social challenges, such beautiful and goal-oriented healthy dating relationship may not be achieved. The effects may range from anxiety, stress, hurts, hopelessness, despair, withdrawn transferred aggression, mental imbalance, sickness, disliking others, not marrying at all, growing old single, being at a loss, spontaneous regrets among others. Efforts have been made by other researchers to address the issues and challenges of dating relationships in order to arrest separations, divorce, single parenting, court-cases, violence that arise in some marriages, but to the researchers' best knowledge, the two techniques have not been applied in this area using medical personnel and this is the gap this study sought to fill.

The purpose of this study is to:

- 1 find out the effect of Imago relationship therapy on dating challenge among working class medical personnel at post-test and control
- 2 find out the effect of emotional focused therapy on dating challenge among working class medical personnel at post-test and control
- 3 find out the comparative effect of the two therapies on dating challenge among working class medical personnel at post-test and control

Research Questions: The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the effect of Imago relationship therapy on dating relationship challenges among working class medical personnel at post-test and control?
2. What is the effect of emotional focused therapy on dating relationship challenges among working class medical personnel at post-test and control?
3. What is the relative effectiveness of the two counselling therapies on dating relationship challenge among medical personnel at post-test and control?

Hypothesis: Hypothesis was formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

4. There is no significant mean score difference on the rate of reduction of dating challenges among medical personnel exposed to Imago and emotionally-focused therapies and the control group at post-test period.

Methodology

The research adopted a pre-test-post-test quasi-experimental design involving two experimental groups and one control group where an intact group was used. The study was

carried out in Federal Medical centre Owerri, Imo state. The population of the study consists of 24 medical personnel who are on dating relationship, made up of males and females. since the population size was small and manageable, the researcher decided to work with it. The researchers' choice of under studying the working-class medical personnel was that there are good number of them who are unmarried while some are growing older despite that they have good jobs. quite good numbers are into dating but cannot make right decisions after dating periods. Furthermore, her choice of choosing FMC Owerri was where a good number of unmarried medical personnel both males and females can be found at a glance. The instrument for data collection was 'Dating Challenge Questionnaire' (DCQ). It was a 20-items researcher's constructed questionnaire that covered questions on dating challenges. The instrument served as the instrument for the pre -test and post-test. The questionnaire was structured into 4 point-scales of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) with weights of 4,3,2 and 1 respectively. however, 2.50 was used as the criteria for acceptance or rejection for decision making. The instrument was validated by two professionals in the Department of Guidance and Counselling and one from Measurement and Evaluation. The stability of the instrument was determined using Person Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and reliability index of 0.83 obtained. However, the internal consistency of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha method and reliability coefficient obtained was 0.84.

The subjects were grouped into two experimental (Imago therapy), (Emotionally focused Therapy) and the control group. The data were collected in three stages namely: the pre-treatment, treatment and the post-treatment. The pre-treatment yielded the baseline data used for the study. The treatment stage dealt with the actual manipulation of the experimental conditions and the post-treatment was used to checkmate the effectiveness of the treatment packages. While the groups received treatment on dating relationship challenge, those in the control group did not receive treatment rather, they were kept busy with medical ethics on confidentiality in the said hospital. Imago therapy group were taught with Imago skills namely: dialogue, mirroring, validate and empathize. Confidentiality was established, counsellor and the client's activities were carried out, and Assignment given to the clients. The researcher reinforced the clients on the ones they did well. On the other hand, emotionally focused therapy was also introduced, confidentiality was established, activities of both the counsellor and the clients were carried out. Home works and assignments were given to the clients. Furthermore, the two treatment packages were used in combination to find out its effectiveness on the medical

personnel dating relationship challenging behaviours. The sessions were equally treated accordingly. The study was carried out in four weeks with eight sessions. each session lasted for fifty (50) minutes. In the end, there was understanding, forgiveness, promise of more commitments, rebuild of trust and hope, the client's experienced closer and strengthened dating relationship which was the target of the treatment. The post-test was carried out after two weeks interval. For the post-test, the instrument was reshuffled and the paper size and colour changed so that the clients may not notice that it was the same questionnaire. The researcher also collected the responses on the spot. The goal of the post-test was to investigate the effectiveness of the treatment packages used. Efforts were made to control the extraneous variables. The data was administered by the researcher and two briefed trained research assistants. Collected data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions while Analysis of covariance ANCOVA was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the effect of Imago relationship therapy on dating relationship challenges among working class medical personnel at post-test and control?

Table 1: Analysis of mean and standard deviation of the effect of Imago therapy on dating relationship challenges among working class medical personnel at post-test and control.

Group	N	Pre-test		Post-test		Reduction
		\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD	
IRT	8	3.92	0.98	2.04	1.13	1.88
Control	8	3.96	1.0	3.94	0.92	0.08

Table 1 showed the dating relationship challenge of working-class nurses who were exposed to imago relationship therapy. The study revealed that they had pre-test mean of 59.96 with standard deviation of 15.27 and a post-test score of 37.37 with a standard deviation of 10.60, making a reduction of 22.59. On the other hand, the study revealed that those on the control group had pre-test mean of 59.87 with standard deviation of 12.82 and a post-test score of 52.78 with a standard deviation of 14.92, making a reduction of 0.09 respectively. However, the post-test mean score was greater than the pre-test mean score. This was an indication that Imago

relationship therapy reduced dating relationship challenge among working class medical personnel. Therefore, Imago relationship therapy was effective in reducing dating relationship challenges among working class medical personnel.

Research Question 2: What is the effect of emotional focused therapy on dating relationship challenge among working class medical personnel at post-test and control?

Table 2: Analysis of mean and standard deviation of responses of the effect of emotionally focused therapy on dating relationship challenge among working class medical personnel at post-test and control.

Group	N	Pre-test		Post-test		Reduction
		\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD	
EFT	8	3.94	0.98	2.07	1.11	1.87
Control	8	3.97	1.01	3.95	0.94	0.07

Table 2 showed the dating relationship challenge of working-class nurses who were exposed to emotionally focused therapy. The study revealed that they had pre-test mean of 49.45 with standard deviation of 3.45 and a post-test score of 27.04 with a standard deviation of 2.36, making a reduction of 22.41. On the other hand, the study revealed that those on the control group had pre-test mean of 49.91 with standard deviation of 3.59 and a post-test score of 49.87 with a standard deviation of 3.10 making a reduction of 0.04 respectively. However, the post-test mean score was greater than the pre-test mean score. This was an indication that emotionally focused therapy reduced dating relationship challenges among working class medical personnel. Therefore, emotionally focused therapy was effective in reducing dating relationship challenges among working class medical personnel.

Research Question 3: What is the relative effectiveness of the two counselling therapies on dating relationship challenges among medical personnel at post-test and control?

Table 3: Analysis of Mean and standard deviation of responses of the effectiveness of the two counselling therapies on dating relationship challenges among medical personnel at post-test and control.

Group	N	Pre-test		Post-test		Reduction
		\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD	
IRT	8	3.92	0.98	2.04	1.11	1.88
EFT	8	3.96	0.98	2.07	1.11	1.87
Control	8	3.97	1.01	3.95	0.94	0.07

Result on table 3 revealed that medical personnel exposed to the two-treatment package and the control, those exposed to Imago relationship therapy had pre-test mean score of 55.14 with standard deviation of 11.03 and a post-test score of 26.01 with a standard deviation of 6.24, making a reduction of 29.13. On the other hand, those exposed to emotionally focused therapy had pre-test mean score of 56.47 with a standard deviation of 9.99 and a post-test score of 19.67 with a standard deviation of 5.55, making a mean score reduction of 36.80. finally, the control group had mean score of 55.68 with standard deviation of 72.9 and a post test-test mean score of 514 with standard deviation of 11.03, making a mean reduction of 0.54 respectively. However, the post-test mean score of EFT (36.80) was greater than the post-test mean score of IRT (29.13) and that of control (0.54). This was an indication that both therapies reduced dating challenge among working class medical personnel, However, emotionally focused therapy was more effective than Imago relationship therapy in reducing dating relationship challenges among working class medical personnel.

Hypothesis: Hypothesis was formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no relative effectiveness on the mean score responses of working class medical personnel exposed to the two counselling therapies and their reduction on dating relationship challenge at post-test and control

Table 4: Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) for the significance mean score of working class medical personnel exposed to combined treatment packages (IRT and EFT) on dating relationship challenge at post-test and control

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	35.457	3	11.819	187.59	.000
Intercept	2.551	1	2.551	27.812	.000
Pre-test	3.945	1	3.935	24.076	.000
Exp. Groups	2.055	2	1.0275	29.208	.000
Error	2.323	21	0.063		
Total	2138.294	24			
Correct total	37.78	23			0.03

a R square = 0.112 (adjusted R square = 0.112)

Since the p-value for the corrected Model, pre-test, and Experimental groups are all less than 0.05, the null hypothesis (H_{01}) is rejected. The researcher suggests that there is a statistically significant difference in the mean scores of dating relationship challenges at post-test among the different groups, showing the relative effectiveness of the counselling therapies. this indicates that both therapies effectively reduced dating relationship challenges among working class medical personnel. However, Emotionally Focused therapy was significantly more effective than Imago Relationship Therapy in mitigating the challenges.

Discussion

The result of the study on table 1 showed that imago relationship therapy (IRT) was effective in reducing dating relationship challenged of working class medical personnel. The result of the present study agreed with Schmidt and Nathan (2016) study who carried out a closed study on Imago relationship therapy and observed that it helped couples experience increase empathy and relationship satisfaction. Furthermore, Gehert, Schmidt, Giegerich and Luquet (2017) study revealed that 12 weeks of Imago relationship therapy was linked to improvements in relationship satisfaction. Concurrently, Martin and Bielawski, (2011) study showed that people

who participated in Imago relationship therapy saw improvement in self awareness and gained a better understanding of their own and their partner's childhood experiences. the present study was also in line with Ruthie and Joel (2023) study who revealed that imago relationship therapy is more beneficial for people who are just dating as a first step to examine their common grounds and validate their experiences so far in their relationship.

The result of the study on table 2 showed that emotionally focused therapy was effective in the reduction of dating relationship challenges among working class medical personnel. The findings of the present study is agreement with the study of Maryam, Ali, Khodabakshs, Nasirudin and Elnaz, H.K (2015) study which revealed that EFT has a significant positive effect relationships. Also, Makinen & Johnson pointed out that EFT can be very effective in addressing depression, withdrawal, hurts and negative feedback from partners According to

The result of the study on table 3 revealed that the two therapies were effective in the reduction of dating relationship challenges among working class medical personnel. Though, emotionally focused therapy was more effective than Imago relationship therapy in reducing dating relationship challenges among working class medical personnel. According to Gottman (2023) EFT is better for those looking to heal emotional disconnection and attachment while Imago relationship therapy is better for those who want the root cause of relationship patterns. Therefore, the choice of the therapy should be according to the need of the client. Furthermore, the study of Nazanin, Shokouh, and Vallyolah (2018) on comparing the effectiveness of emotionally Focused couple Therapy and Imago Relationship Therapy revealed that both had been more effective in dimensions of marital satisfaction and relationships.

The result on table 4 showed a significant relative effect on the two treatment packages in reducing dating reducing dating relationship challenges among working class medical personnel. It clearly showed EFT as significantly more effective than IRT in reducing dating relationship challenges among working class medical personnel. The result of the present study is in line with Nazanin, Shokouh, and Vallyolah (2018) study which compared the effectiveness of emotionally Focused Couple Therapy and Imago Relationship Therapy and revealed that both had were effective in dimensions of marital satisfaction but EFT was more effective than IRT. The result of the present study was also not in agreement with Gottman (2023) study who revealed that EFT is better for those looking to heal emotional disconnection and attachment while Imago relationship therapy is better for those who want the root cause of relationship patterns therefore the choice of the therapy should be according to the need of the client.

However, Makinen & Johnson pointed out that EFT can be very effective in addressing depression, withdrawal, hurts and negative feedback from partners which is accurately what the present study sought to address.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that dating relationship clients taught using imago relationship and emotionally focused therapies had greater satisfaction and stronger dating relationship than the control, therefore the two techniques proved effective in the reduction of dating relationship challenges among working class medical personnel. Furthermore, it was concluded that emotionally focused therapy is more effective than Imago relationship therapy in reducing dating relationship challenges among working class medical personnel. Based on the findings of the study, the researcher made the following recommendations

1. The researcher recommended the use of Imago relationship therapy by counsellor in the treatment of dating relationships
2. Family counsellors should also be conversant with emotionally focused therapy to assist partners on dating relationship and other related relationship challenges.

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