

Creation Therapy and Human Behaviour: Evaluating the Arno Profile System in Christian Counselling

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Abstract

Understanding human behaviour requires a framework that accounts for both psychological structure and spiritual identity. Creation Therapy, grounded in the belief that temperament is a God-given and stable component of personality, offers such a framework for Christian counselling. Central to this model is the Arno Profile System (APS), which assesses expressed and wanted needs in three core relational domains: Inclusion, Control, and Affection. This study evaluates the relevance and effectiveness of the APS in Christian counselling practice within the Ghanaian context. Using a mixed-methods design, the research combined APS temperament profiling with case-based counselling interventions among individuals experiencing marital conflict, grief, family dysfunction, and identity struggles. Quantitative analysis assessed the reliability and construct validity of the APS subscales, while qualitative case narratives provided insight into clients' relational patterns and counselling outcomes. Findings indicated that the APS demonstrated strong reliability and was effective in identifying temperament-based needs that influence emotional and relational functioning. Moreover, APS-informed counselling interventions resulted in improved psychological well-being, stronger therapeutic rapport, and greater self-awareness among counselees. The study concludes that integrating APS within Ghanaian Christian counselling is both theologically coherent and clinically useful, offering a culturally responsive approach to emotional healing and spiritual growth.

Keywords: Creation Therapy, Arno Profile System, temperament, Christian counselling, Ghana, emotional healing, pastoral care.

1. INTRODUCTION

Human behaviour reflects a complex interaction of biological predisposition, emotional processing, relational experience, and cultural formation. Across psychological and theological traditions, scholars have long recognized that individuals exhibit relatively stable patterns in how they perceive themselves, relate to others, and respond to life circumstances. These enduring patterns are commonly understood in terms of temperament, which refers to the foundational emotional and relational dispositions that shape behavioural tendencies from early life onward (Thomas & Chess, 1977; Buss & Plomin, 1984; Kagan, 1994). While personality can be shaped significantly by environment, learning, and personal experience, temperament is considered more biologically rooted and consistently expressed across situations and time. The distinction between temperament and personality is essential within counselling, because interventions that focus only on cognitive or behavioural change may fail to address the deeper, structural emotional needs that drive relational patterns.

Within Christian theological anthropology, temperament is not understood solely as a biological phenomenon but as an aspect of the imago Dei, expressing God's intentional design for human relational identity. Theological psychologists such as Crabb (1977), McMinn (1996), Collins (1997), and Benner (1998) argue that emotional and relational functioning must be approached holistically, integrating spiritual identity, relational need, and psychological structure. From this perspective, emotional distress can arise not only from environmental stressors or developmental trauma but also from the tension between one's God-given temperament and the expectations imposed by family, culture, or religious community.

Christian counselling therefore has an opportunity to support healing by helping individuals understand and honour their temperament rather than suppress or distort it.

Creation Therapy builds upon this theological foundation by proposing that temperament reflects a divine relational blueprint. The Arno Profile System (APS), developed within this framework, provides a structured method for assessing temperament through three relational dimensions derived from Schutz's (1958, 1992) FIRO theory: Inclusion (social belonging and recognition), Control (decision-making and responsibility), and Affection (emotional closeness and intimacy). Each dimension is measured in terms of expressed behaviour (what one gives) and wanted behaviour (what one desires in return). This dual structure is clinically significant because emotional suffering frequently arises when there is a gap between outward behaviour and inward need (Horowitz, 1991). The APS therefore offers a valuable lens for understanding emotional and relational conflict in counselling contexts.

The relevance of temperament-based counselling is particularly pronounced in Ghana, where identity is deeply shaped by communal values, extended family relationships, and social responsibility (Mbiti, 1969; Geekie, 1997; Wiredu, 1996). Emotional experience is often expressed through the lens of relational duty, social harmony, and spiritual meaning. Individuals may suppress emotional needs to maintain family expectations or communal belonging, resulting in internal dissonance that manifests as stress, relational conflict, or spiritual discouragement. Pastoral counselling in Ghana frequently focuses on prayer, moral guidance, or exhortation, but may lack structured frameworks for understanding the emotional mechanisms underlying suffering (Oke, 1999). As a result, individuals experiencing emotional conflict may interpret it as spiritual weakness, rather than as a temperament-based relational need seeking expression.

Despite the conceptual compatibility between APS and Ghanaian relational identity, the APS has not been empirically examined or validated in Ghanaian counselling settings. Christian counsellors in Ghana increasingly make use of temperament language in ministry and counselling practice, yet without localized evaluation, there is uncertainty regarding the tool's cultural appropriateness, interpretive accuracy, and therapeutic effectiveness. This gap presents a significant limitation in the development of contextually grounded Christian counselling practice.

This study therefore investigates the applicability, reliability, and counselling usefulness of the Arno Profile System in Ghanaian Christian counselling contexts. It examines how temperament profiles correspond to emotional experience, relational patterns, and counselling outcomes, and how understanding temperament may support emotional healing, relational growth, and spiritual integration. The aim is to contribute to the development of a counselling approach that is psychologically coherent, theologically meaningful, and culturally responsive within the Ghanaian context.

1.1 Background

The understanding of human behaviour has been a central concern within both psychology and Christian counselling. While contemporary psychological theories provide valuable insights into cognition, emotion, and interpersonal functioning, many of these frameworks do not sufficiently address the deeper questions of identity, purpose, and relational design that are essential to Christian understandings of the human person. Within Christian counselling, the question of why individuals respond differently to similar circumstances or relational environments is often approached through the lens of spiritual maturity, personality traits, or learned behaviour. However, this perspective sometimes overlooks the innate and enduring

structure of temperament, which shapes how individuals perceive relationships, seek belonging, express emotion, and respond to conflict.

Creation Therapy offers a framework for understanding human behaviour that integrates psychological insight with theological anthropology. Creation Therapy proposes that temperament reflects God's original design for the individual, forming a core part of the *imago Dei* and serving as the foundation upon which personality and character develop. In this view, temperament is not simply a set of behavioural tendencies, but a relational blueprint that carries profound implications for emotional well-being, spiritual growth, and interpersonal relating. When individuals live in alignment with their God-given temperament, they experience greater inner peace, relational harmony, and emotional resilience. Conversely, when temperament needs are suppressed, misunderstood, or violated whether by family expectations, societal norms, or religious pressure emotional conflict and relational distress often result.

The Arno Profile System (APS) was developed to operationalize the principles of Creation Therapy by providing a structured assessment of temperament through three relational domains: Inclusion, Control, and Affection. The APS does not merely categorize behaviour; it distinguishes between expressed needs (what a person demonstrates outwardly) and wanted needs (what a person desires inwardly), thereby illuminating the tension that often underlies emotional pain. This distinction is central to understanding self-protective behaviour, relational miscommunication, and internal emotional conflict. For example, an individual who appears emotionally independent may, in fact, have significant unexpressed emotional needs that manifest indirectly through frustration, detachment, or discouragement. The APS makes these invisible dynamics visible, offering a language for experiences that counselees often feel but cannot articulate.

This is particularly relevant in Ghanaian cultural contexts, where identity is deeply relational and strongly influenced by family structure, community belonging, and shared social expectations. Emotional restraint, respect for authority, and communal responsibility shape relational behaviour, sometimes making it difficult for individuals to express personal emotional needs openly. Pastoral and faith-based counselling are central sources of emotional support in Ghana, but they often emphasize spiritual advice, prayer, or moral correction rather than emotional interpretation and relational understanding. While spiritually meaningful, these approaches may inadvertently reinforce emotional suppression, especially when struggles are attributed to lack of faith rather than unmet temperament needs.

The need, therefore, is for a counselling framework that honours both spiritual identity and emotional design one that affirms a counselee's relationship with God while also recognizing the relational needs embedded in temperament. The APS presents such a framework, but its relevance and effectiveness in Ghana have not yet been systematically examined. This study arises from the need to evaluate whether the APS can meaningfully support counselling in Ghanaian Christian contexts by enabling emotional insight, relational restoration, and spiritually grounded healing.

1.2 Problem Statement

Although Christian counselling is widely practiced in Ghana, much of it remains informal and primarily pastoral in nature, relying on prayer, exhortation, and biblical encouragement as primary means of emotional and relational support. While these practices are spiritually meaningful, they often do not provide the interpretive tools necessary to understand the underlying emotional dynamics and relational needs that contribute to personal distress. Consequently, individuals struggling with emotional pain, marital conflict, identity confusion,

or interpersonal tension may receive spiritual guidance without gaining insight into the temperament-based patterns that shape their behaviour and emotional responses. This can lead to repeated cycles of frustration, relational misunderstanding, and spiritual discouragement, as counselees may assume that their emotional challenges indicate personal weakness, lack of faith, or spiritual failure.

The challenge is compounded by the fact that most counselling models adopted in Ghana are rooted in Western psychological frameworks that do not fully account for the communal and relational orientation of Ghanaian identity. In many Ghanaian cultural settings, individuals are expected to prioritize social harmony, respect authority, and manage emotional expression according to communal norms. These expectations can cause individuals to suppress or mask their internal emotional needs, making it difficult for counsellors to accurately identify the sources of distress through observation alone. A counselling approach that does not address temperament may therefore misinterpret behaviour, apply interventions that conflict with the client's emotional design, or reinforce patterns of emotional suppression.

Creation Therapy and the Arno Profile System (APS) offer a means of addressing this gap by providing a structured and theologically coherent method for identifying temperament-based relational needs. However, despite the conceptual compatibility between APS and Ghanaian relational values, the APS has not been empirically validated within Ghanaian Christian counselling practice. Without such validation, counsellors risk applying a model without established cultural relevance, potentially misinterpreting counselees' emotional experiences or drawing conclusions that do not align with Ghanaian relational contexts. The absence of localized research on the APS limits the development of counselling approaches that are both spiritually meaningful and emotionally attuned.

Therefore, the problem this study addresses is the lack of empirical evaluation of the Arno Profile System in Ghanaian Christian counselling contexts, resulting in a gap in the availability of counselling frameworks that are simultaneously culturally relevant, theologically grounded, and psychologically effective. This study seeks to determine whether the APS can serve as a valid and useful tool for supporting emotional insight, relational healing, and spiritual growth among Christian counselees in Ghana.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the reliability, construct validity, and practical counselling usefulness of the Arno Profile System (APS) within Ghanaian Christian counselling settings. The study seeks to determine whether the APS accurately identifies the relational and emotional needs of Ghanaian counselees and whether the incorporation of temperament awareness into counselling conversations contributes to measurable improvements in emotional well-being, relational functioning, and self-understanding. By examining both quantitative temperament data and qualitative counselling experiences, the study aims to demonstrate how APS-informed counselling can support a more nuanced, empathetic, and theologically grounded approach to emotional and relational healing. Ultimately, the study intends to provide evidence for a counselling model that is psychologically coherent, spiritually meaningful, and culturally appropriate for Christian counselling practice in Ghana.

1.4 Research Questions

This study was guided by a set of inquiries designed to evaluate both the psychometric soundness and counselling usefulness of the Arno Profile System within Ghanaian Christian

contexts. The first concern focused on determining whether the APS temperament subscales Inclusion, Control, and Affection demonstrate internal reliability when administered to Ghanaian counselees. The study also sought to establish the construct validity of the APS by examining the degree to which the distinctions it makes between expressed and wanted relational needs to correspond to the emotional and interpersonal patterns observed during counselling sessions. In addition, the research explored how the integration of temperament awareness into the counselling process influences counselees' levels of emotional clarity, relational adjustment, and psychological well-being. A final consideration involved examining how Ghanaian cultural and communal identity structures shape both the experience and interpretation of temperament, thereby influencing how APS results are understood and applied in counselling practice.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is significant because it addresses an important gap in the development of Christian counselling approaches within the Ghanaian context. While Christian counselling is widely practiced in Ghana, much of it remains rooted in pastoral guidance, spiritual exhortation, and communal support approaches that are spiritually meaningful but often lack structured frameworks for understanding the emotional and relational mechanisms underlying personal distress. By empirically evaluating the Arno Profile System, this study provides a means of equipping counsellors with a theologically grounded and psychologically informed tool that can enhance the precision and depth of counselling interventions. Understanding temperament allows counsellors to move beyond surface-level behaviours and address the internal emotional needs that shape relational patterns and self-perception.

The study further contributes to contextualized psychological scholarship. Many of the counselling models used in Ghana are imported from Western contexts and assume an individualistic understanding of identity and emotional expression. In contrast, Ghanaian identity is shaped by communal belonging, extended family ties, and shared responsibility, which significantly influences how emotions are experienced and communicated. By examining the APS within this cultural framework, the study contributes to the ongoing development of culturally relevant counselling approaches that honour Ghanaian relational dynamics rather than override them with external models.

In addition, this study enriches theological reflection within pastoral care by reaffirming that emotional life and relational needs are not signs of weakness or spiritual inadequacy, but expressions of the divine relational design embedded in temperament. This perspective supports pastoral counsellors in guiding individuals toward emotional healing without inducing guilt, shame, or spiritual self-blame. The findings also have practical implications for counsellor training programs, church-based counselling ministries, and theological institutions seeking to integrate biblical anthropology with psychological practice.

Overall, the study contributes to counselling practice, cultural psychology, and Christian theological anthropology by demonstrating how temperament-based understanding can facilitate emotional insight, relational restoration, and spiritual growth within Ghanaian Christian counselling.

1.6 Scope and Delimitations

This study is limited to the examination of the Arno Profile System within Christian counselling settings in Ghana, specifically among counselees who sought support for emotional, relational, and identity-related concerns. The APS was used as the primary assessment tool, and its

interpretation was integrated into counselling conversations grounded in Christian values and theological reflection. The study does not attempt to evaluate the APS across all cultural contexts in Africa, nor does it compare the APS with every other temperament or personality assessment model. Instead, the focus is intentionally restricted to understanding how the APS functions within Ghana's communal and faith-oriented relational environment, and whether it provides counsellors with a reliable and meaningful framework for addressing emotional distress.

The research draws on both quantitative temperament profiles and qualitative counselling case narratives; however, the purpose is not statistical generalization to the wider population, but the development of contextual insight and practice-based understanding. Because participants were selected from individuals already seeking Christian counselling, the findings may not necessarily apply to counselees in secular therapeutic contexts or to those who do not share a Christian worldview. Additionally, the study evaluates counselling outcomes within the timeframe of the counselling engagement and does not extend to long-term follow-up beyond the counselling relationship. These delimitations ensure clarity of focus while supporting the depth and contextual relevance of the study's interpretations.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Biblical and Theological Anthropology of Human Nature

A foundational premise of Christian counselling is that human beings are created in the imago Dei bearing the capacity for relationship, meaning, and purposeful existence. Christian theological anthropology affirms that humans are not merely biological or psychological organisms, but relational and spiritual beings designed to live in communion with God and

others (Benner, 1998; Collins, 1997). This perspective grounds emotional life in a theological framework, where relational longing and emotional expression are understood not as incidental or purely psychological phenomena but as reflections of divine intention. Thus, human behaviour cannot be adequately interpreted without reference to the relational and spiritual dimensions of personhood.

The fall, in Christian understanding, did not eliminate the divine design embedded in human nature, but it did introduce fragmentation into relational experience. Emotional confusion, interpersonal conflict, and psychological distress can therefore be seen as expressions of the tension between God's intended relational harmony and the fractured reality of human experience (Crabb, 1977). Healing, from this perspective, involves a restoration of relational atonement with God, with the self, and with others. Counselling is thus not only an interpersonal process but also a deeply spiritual one, as it seeks to help individuals realign their emotional and relational lives with the divine design imprinted within them.

In this light, temperament becomes an essential dimension of personhood. Temperament reflects the structural foundation of emotional need and relational orientation features of identity that shape how individuals seek connection, manage boundaries, and express affection. Theological perspectives such as those presented by Benner (1998) and McMinn (1996) suggest that understanding temperament allows counsellors to affirm the uniqueness of everyone's relational design. Rather than viewing emotional differences as deficiencies, temperament-based counselling acknowledges that each person carries distinct relational strengths and vulnerabilities that require understanding, acceptance, and guidance. Emotional healing occurs not through the suppression of temperament, but through learning to live in alignment with it while cultivating spiritual maturity.

This theological understanding supports the central claim of Creation Therapy: that temperament is part of God's intentional design, and therefore a crucial component of emotional and relational well-being. Counselling grounded in this theological anthropology views emotional distress not simply as a symptom to be corrected, but as a signal indicating the presence of unmet relational needs embedded within temperament. This offers a compassionate and spiritually integrated approach to understanding emotional struggles in Christian counselling.

2.2 Classical Temperament Theory and Psychological Foundations

In psychological scholarship, temperament is understood as the biologically rooted foundation of emotional reactivity and behavioural tendency. It represents the innate pattern through which individuals respond to stimulation, manage arousal, and engage relationally with the social world. Early developmental research demonstrated that temperament is observable in infancy and remains relatively stable over time, shaping how individuals approach relationships, cope with stress, and interpret experience (Thomas & Chess, 1977). Their longitudinal studies identified consistent behavioural styles across children, suggesting that temperament is not simply acquired but forms a core structure of personality development.

Buss and Plomin (1984) advanced this understanding by proposing a genetic basis for temperament, asserting that emotional intensity, sociability, and activity level are heritable traits that structure personality formation. Their work drew attention to the biological consistency of temperament across lifespan changes and social environments. Kagan (1994) further demonstrated that inhibited and uninhibited behavioural styles observed in infancy predict emotional tendencies in adulthood, reinforcing the view that temperament reflects

enduring patterns of emotional processing rather than temporary responses to environmental conditions.

Additional contributions emerged from Eysenck's (1967; 1998) model of personality, which proposed that individual differences in emotional expression and behavioural activation were linked to neurological functioning. Although framed as personality theory, Eysenck's model emphasized the structural and physiological components of emotional responsiveness, aligning closely with temperament research. Cloninger (1993) later expanded this understanding by integrating neurobiological, psychological, and behavioural dimensions into a unified model, illustrating how temperament provides the motivational groundwork upon which character, values, and learned behaviours develop.

Across these perspectives, a consistent theme emerges temperament forms the foundational core upon which personality, identity, and relational patterns are built. Personality may change through learning, experience, and cultural shaping, but temperament reflects enduring emotional architecture that remains stable over time. This distinction is crucial for counselling because interventions aimed solely at modifying behaviour may overlook the deeper temperament-based needs that drive relational and emotional functioning. When these needs are ignored or misunderstood, individuals may experience persistent emotional frustration, identity confusion, or relational strain.

From a counselling standpoint, understanding temperament provides insight into how individuals seek connection, establish boundaries, express emotion, and interpret relational cues. It offers a means of recognizing the emotional logic behind behaviour making visible the internal motivations that shape how individuals navigate their social world. When temperament is acknowledged and integrated into counselling, emotional distress can be approached with compassion and clarity, rather than judgment or misinterpretation. This forms the psychological

foundation upon which Creation Therapy and the Arno Profile System build their interpretive approach to emotional healing and relational growth.

2.3 Foundations of Creation Therapy

Creation Therapy emerges from the understanding that temperament is not merely a psychological construct, but a God-designed relational blueprint embedded within the human person from creation. Temperament reflects the core emotional and relational needs that shape how individuals give and receive love, form attachments, and respond to life's relational challenges. Unlike personality which develops through experience, culture, and learning temperament is viewed in Creation Therapy as the innate emotional architecture that God placed within each person as part of the imago Dei. Thus, temperament is not arbitrary; it is purposeful, meaningful, and spiritually significant.

Creation Therapy asserts that emotional distress often arises when an individual attempts to live in ways that contradict or suppress his or her God-given temperament. Such suppression may occur due to family expectations, cultural norms, church teachings, or relational experiences that encourage individuals to ignore or deny their emotional needs. For example, a person with a temperament that requires emotional closeness may be raised in an environment where emotional expression is discouraged or interpreted as weakness. Over time, this internal conflict can produce frustration, loneliness, resentment, or identity confusion. Emotional pain is not always the result of sin, trauma, or moral failure; frequently, it is the predictable outcome of temperament needs being unrecognized or unmet.

This core insight distinguishes Creation Therapy from many forms of traditional counselling. Rather than treating emotional struggles as disorders or behavioural deficits, Creation Therapy interprets them as signals of disharmony between one's external behaviour and internal

temperament structure. Counselling therefore does not aim to change or correct temperament, but to help individuals understand, accept, and live in alignment with it. In this view, emotional healing involves recognition and integration, not suppression or forced behavioural adjustment. The counsellor's role becomes one of guiding the client toward self-understanding, relational communication, and spiritual integration in ways that honour their God-designed emotional identity.

Central to Creation Therapy is the belief that every temperament carries unique strengths and vulnerabilities. There is no “better” or “weaker” temperament; each brings relational capacities that contribute to the flourishing of individuals and communities. When temperament is understood, affirmed, and supported, individuals are better able to express love, maintain healthy boundaries, regulate emotional life, and foster meaningful relationships. However, when temperament is misunderstood or dismissed, individuals often resort to coping mechanisms that mask emotional need or produce relational conflict.

Thus, the goal of Creation Therapy is to facilitate emotional harmony, relational authenticity, and spiritual wholeness by helping counselees understand the temperament God placed within them. This theological foundation provides the interpretive framework within which the Arno Profile System (APS) functions not as a personality classification tool, but as a relational needs assessment designed to reveal the emotional logic of human behaviour.

2.4 The Arno Profile System (APS)

The Arno Profile System (APS) was developed as the clinical application of Creation Therapy, offering a structured means of identifying an individual's temperament by measuring relational needs across three primary domains: Inclusion, Control, and Affection. These categories were adapted from Schutz's (1958; 1992) Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation (FIRO)

model, which proposed that all human relational behaviour can be understood in terms of needs for social belonging, influence and responsibility, and emotional closeness. The APS expanded upon FIRO theory by distinguishing between two modes of relational functioning in each domain: expressed behaviour (what a person gives to others) and wanted behaviour (what a person desires to receive). This dual measurement is crucial because emotional distress frequently arises from the discrepancy between outward relational behaviour and inward emotional need a dimension that many counselling frameworks overlook.

Inclusion describes the degree to which a person seeks social interaction, recognition, and group participation. An individual may appear highly socially active (high expressed Inclusion) while longing for privacy and emotional separation (low wanted Inclusion) or conversely may desire companionship deeply (high wanted Inclusion) but rarely initiate contact due to fear of rejection or social uncertainty (low expressed Inclusion). The APS brings clarity to such patterns, allowing counsellors to see not only *what* a person does socially but *why* they do it.

Control refers to the need for structure, leadership, and responsibility within relationships and environments. Some individuals communicate authority and decisiveness but internally prefer to avoid responsibility or oversight; others appear passive or deferential externally but inwardly desire guidance, predictability, and security. When expressed and wanted Control do not align, individuals may experience chronic stress, guilt over decision-making, or frustration when expectations are unclear.

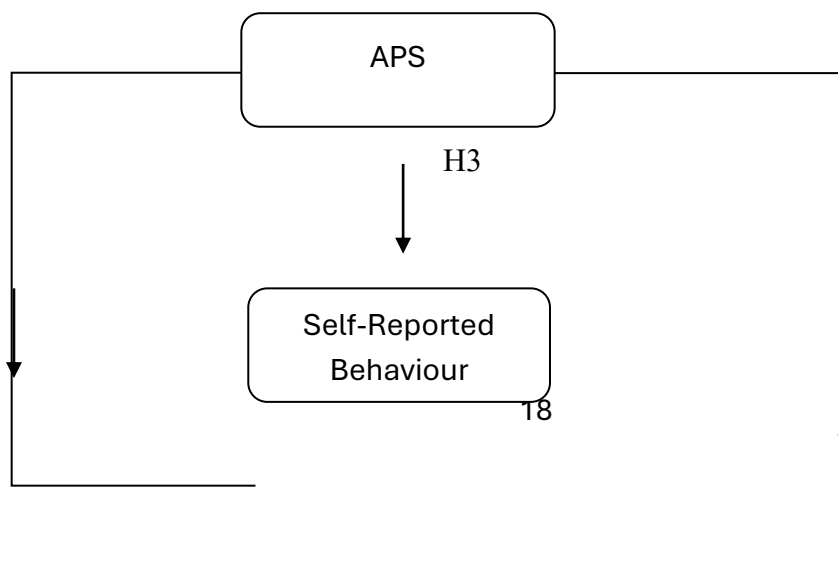
Affection addresses emotional intimacy, tenderness, vulnerability, and the capacity for close personal connection. In many cultural settings including Ghana expression of affection is shaped heavily by norms surrounding emotional restraint, gender roles, and relational propriety. Therefore, a person may deeply desire emotional closeness (high wanted Affection)

but display minimal emotional expression (low expressed Affection) due to social conditioning or fear of emotional exposure.

By identifying the distance between expressed and wanted needs within each domain, the APS provides insight into internal emotional tension. This internal discrepancy is often where counselling breakthroughs occur. For example, a person who gives affection but does not know how to receive it may experience depletion and emotional fatigue. Another who projects independence while silently longing for reassurance may struggle with loneliness or relational insecurity. The APS makes these relational dynamics visible and nameable, allowing the counsellor to work with the emotional reality of the client rather than the external behaviour alone.

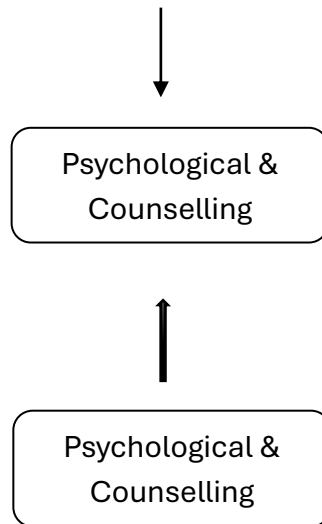
Importantly, the APS is not merely descriptive; it is interpretive. It serves as a clinical guide for counselling intervention, helping the counsellor tailor communication strategies, boundary setting, emotional regulation techniques, and relational restructuring to the client's temperament needs. In Christian contexts, this interpretive clarity is particularly significant because emotional pain is frequently moralized or spiritualized. The APS reframes emotional struggle not as spiritual failure but as unmet relational design restoring dignity, compassion, and theological coherence to the counselling process.

2.4.1 Conceptual Framework



H4

H1



H2

Sources (Author's Construct, 2002)

2.4.2 Statement of Hypothesis

H0₁: The APS subscales are not reliable in the Ghanaian cultural context.

H1₁: The APS subscales are reliable in the Ghanaian cultural context.

H0₂: The APS does not have construct validity in the Ghanaian cultural context.

H1₂: The APS has construct validity in the Ghanaian cultural context.

H0₃: APS temperament profiles are not related to self-reported behavioral and emotional challenges.

H1₃: APS temperament profiles are related to self-reported behavioral and emotional challenges.

H0₄: APS-based counselling interventions do not improve psychological well-being.

H1₄: APS-based counselling interventions improve psychological well-being.

H0s: Cultural and faith beliefs do not influence challenges and insights from the APS.

H1s: Cultural and faith beliefs influence challenges and insights from the APS.

2.5 Relational Needs and Emotional Regulation

Relational needs form the emotional core of human functioning. Everyone seeks belonging, structure, and intimacy to varying degrees that correspond to temperament. When these needs are acknowledged and met in healthy ways, individuals experience emotional balance, relational satisfaction, and a sense of internal coherence. However, when relational needs are ignored, suppressed, misunderstood, or chronically unmet, emotional distress often results. This distress may manifest as anxiety, withdrawal, irritability, resentment, insecurity, or relational conflict. Importantly, Creation Therapy asserts that such distress is not evidence of spiritual immaturity or personal inadequacy, but a natural consequence of temperament needs being out of alignment with lived relational experience.

Within the APS model, emotional regulation is understood as the process of navigating the tension between expressed and wanted relational needs. When expressed behaviour accurately reflects internal desire, emotional experience tends to be stable and integrated. However, when there is a significant discrepancy between what one desires emotionally and what one expresses externally, internal conflict emerges. For instance, a person who desires deep emotional connection but has learned to suppress or conceal vulnerability may experience loneliness even in close relationships. Similarly, an individual who desires guidance and clarity but feels compelled to project independence may struggle with confusion or self-doubt. In such cases, the emotional struggle is not random it reflects a temperament structure seeking expression and relational recognition.

Over time, individuals develop coping mechanisms to manage this internal tension. Some cope by overcompensating projecting emotional strength while suffering inwardly. Others withdraw emotionally to protect themselves from disappointment or misunderstanding. Still others attempt to reshape their temperament to fit relational or cultural expectations, often resulting in exhaustion or identity fragmentation. These coping patterns are understandable within the context of survival and relational adaptation. However, they do not resolve the underlying need; they simply manage the discomfort temporarily.

In counselling, emotional breakthrough often occurs when a counselee comes to recognize the emotional logic behind their patterns not as failure, but as a meaningful and consistent response to temperament need. This recognition provides language for feelings that may have been long experienced but never understood. It also allows counselees to reframe their emotional lives in ways that are compassionate rather than self-blaming. Counselling then shifts from attempting to correct behaviour to supporting integration and helping individuals express needs safely, communicate boundaries clearly, and build relationships that honour their emotional design.

This perspective aligns closely with Christian theological anthropology, which views healing as the restoration of congruence between the inner and outer self, rather than the suppression of internal life. Emotional clarity becomes a pathway toward relational honesty, and relational honesty supports spiritual authenticity. Thus, relational needs are not obstacles to spiritual life they are integral to it.

2.6 Ghanaian Communal Identity and Emotional Expression

Ghanaian cultural identity is deeply rooted in communal belonging, shared responsibility, and interconnectedness of the self and the group. As Mbiti (1969) famously expressed, “I am because we are, and since we are, therefore I am.” The individual is understood primarily as

part of a wider social network family, clan, community, and church. This communal orientation forms the foundation of emotional and relational life in Ghana. Relationships are sustained not only through affection and companionship but also through mutual obligation, respect for authority, and social cohesion (Gyekye, 1997; Wiredu, 1996). Emotional expression, therefore, is shaped significantly by the expectations and norms governing communal interaction.

In this context, the expression of emotional needs is often mediated by considerations of social harmony and respect. Many individuals are socialized to minimize the open display of distress, vulnerability, or desire for closeness, particularly in public or hierarchical relationships. This can lead to emotional restraint, especially among men, older siblings, leaders, and individuals in positions of responsibility. Affection may be demonstrated indirectly through provision, presence, and shared experience rather than verbal affirmation or explicit emotional expression. Similarly, expressions of autonomy or decision-making may be influenced by cultural expectations surrounding elders, gender roles, or religious authority. These cultural dynamics shape how temperament is lived, perceived, and interpreted.

The tension between internal temperament needs and external cultural expectations is especially significant in counselling. For example, a person with high wanted Affection may experience emotional emptiness in relationships where affection is understood functionally rather than relationally. Another with low expressed Control but high wanted Control may struggle under communal expectations to lead, organize, or take initiative in family or church contexts. Likewise, a highly inclusive temperament may experience emotional distress when circumstances require prolonged solitude or separation from community, while a temperament that requires solitude may experience exhaustion or anxiety in highly interactive environments.

These tensions can be misunderstood as personal deficiencies rather than as expressions of temperament interacting with cultural relational norms. In many cases, individuals attribute

emotional discomfort to lack of faith, moral inadequacy, or failure to meet communal expectations. This interpretation can result in self-blame, spiritual guilt, or relational withdrawal. Pastoral counselling may inadvertently reinforce these patterns when emotional needs are interpreted exclusively in moral or spiritual terms rather than as reflections of *God*-given relational design.

Thus, the Ghanaian communal context does not negate or override temperament; rather, it shapes the way temperament is expressed, constrained, or redirected. Understanding this interaction is essential for counselling that seeks to affirm both cultural identity and emotional integrity. A counselling approach that fails to account for communal dynamics risks imposing Western individualism, while one that ignores temperament risks reinforcing emotional suppression. The Arno Profile System offers a potential bridge: it recognizes the relational logic of temperament while allowing expression and interpretation to be contextually grounded in Ghanaian cultural and communal identity.

2.7 Pastoral Counselling Practices in Ghana

Pastoral counselling in Ghana occupies a central role in emotional and spiritual support systems. Churches often serve not only as places of worship but as primary sites of guidance, conflict resolution, and psychological assistance. Individuals facing marital tensions, grief, stress, interpersonal conflict, and identity struggle frequently turn to pastors, prophets, and spiritual leaders for help. This reflects both cultural trust in spiritual authority and the communal expectation that emotional and personal difficulties should be addressed within a relational and faith-oriented context (Oke, 1999).

However, the dominant counselling approach in many Ghanaian churches emphasizes prayer, scriptural instruction, prophetic direction, and moral encouragement. These strategies offer

spiritual affirmation and emotional comfort, but they often do not provide the interpretive framework needed to understand the underlying emotional and relational dynamics shaping personal distress. When emotional conflict is addressed primarily through spiritual language, counselees may internalize the belief that their struggles are rooted in lack of faith, spiritual attack, or insufficient prayer, rather than in temperament needs that have been suppressed, misunderstood, or unmet.

This dynamic can result in misinterpretation of emotional pain. For example, a counselee who experiences chronic loneliness may be advised to pray more fervently or to increase involvement in church fellowship, without recognizing that loneliness may be the result of high wanted Affection not being acknowledged or expressed. Similarly, a counselee who struggles with decision-making or leadership expectations may be encouraged to “be strong” spiritually, even when their temperament requires guided structure rather than independent initiative. In such cases, pastoral guidance though sincere may inadvertently reinforce emotional disharmony.

Additionally, because many pastors have not been formally trained in psychological assessment or clinical counselling, emotional expressions may be interpreted in spiritualized terms, such as “stubbornness,” “pride,” “weakness,” or “fear.” This can lead counselees to suppress emotional needs, attempt to force behaviour change through willpower alone, or adopt coping mechanisms that conceal rather than heal internal tension. Over time, this contributes to emotional exhaustion, relationship breakdown, or spiritual discouragement.

The need, therefore, is not to replace pastoral counselling with psychological models, but to enrich pastoral counselling with frameworks that help interpret emotional life in ways that are both spiritually grounded and psychologically coherent. The Arno Profile System provides such a framework by offering a biblically integrated, clinically structured, and relationally

sensitive means of understanding temperament. Its emphasis on the difference between expressed and wanted relational needs allows pastoral counsellors to recognize emotional dynamics that may otherwise go unnoticed or misunderstood.

By incorporating temperament awareness into pastoral counselling practices, counsellors can help individuals understand their emotional experiences as part of God's relational design rather than as a sign of spiritual failure. This study addresses the need to evaluate whether the APS can serve as a reliable and contextually meaningful tool to support such integration in Ghanaian Christian counselling.

2.8 Identified Gap in Scholarship

Although temperament theory has been widely discussed in psychological literature and Creation Therapy has been utilized in various Christian counselling contexts, there remains a notable lack of research examining the applicability of the Arno Profile System (APS) within African, and specifically Ghanaian, cultural settings. Most existing studies that explore temperament within Christian counselling frameworks have been developed in Western contexts where identity, emotional expression, and interpersonal relationships are shaped by individualistic value systems (Benner, 1998; McMinn, 1996; Collins, 1997). These contexts differ significantly from the communal relational structure's characteristic of Ghana, in which emotional experience and behavioural expression are deeply influenced by extended family ties, social hierarchy, and community participation (Gyekye, 1997; Mbiti, 1969).

As a result, counselling approaches and assessment tools developed in Western contexts may not translate seamlessly into Ghanaian pastoral or counselling environments without cultural interpretation and adaptation. The APS, though theologically grounded and relationally focused, has not undergone significant empirical evaluation in Ghana, leaving questions

regarding its cultural sensitivity, interpretive accuracy, and therapeutic relevance within Ghanaian emotional and relational frameworks. Without such validation, counsellors who employ the APS risk importing interpretive categories that may not fully account for the ways Ghanaian individuals express, negotiate, and regulate emotional needs in communal settings.

Furthermore, pastoral counselling practices in Ghana have historically emphasized spiritual exhortation and doctrinal instruction, with limited incorporation of structured psychological assessment models. While these pastoral approaches provide spiritual comfort and community support, they may unintentionally overlook the relational and emotional mechanisms underlying distress. The absence of temperament-based interpretive tools within Ghanaian Christian counselling means that counselees may continue to misinterpret emotional pain as spiritual weakness or moral failure, reinforcing internal conflict and discouragement.

Therefore, this study addresses a critical gap in scholarship by examining how the APS functions within Ghanaian Christian counselling contexts, evaluating its reliability as an assessment tool, and interpreting its usefulness for guiding counselling intervention and emotional healing. By doing so, the study contributes to the development of a counselling framework that is culturally rooted, psychologically informed, and theologically coherent, thereby enriching pastoral counselling practices in Ghana.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a mixed-methods research design that integrated quantitative temperament assessment with qualitative counselling case analysis. The mixed-methods approach was selected because it allowed for the systematic measurement of temperament patterns while also capturing the lived emotional and relational experiences of counselees

within the counselling setting. Quantitative data provided a basis for evaluating the reliability and interpretive coherence of the Arno Profile System (APS) in the Ghanaian context, while qualitative data offered rich insight into how temperament awareness shaped emotional understanding and counselling progress. The integration of these two forms of data rests on the understanding that emotional and relational phenomena cannot be grasped through numerical analysis alone, nor through narrative accounts in isolation, but through the convergence of systematic measurement and contextual interpretation (Creswell, 1994; Patton, 1990).

The research design was practice-based, meaning that the study was embedded within real counselling interactions rather than constructed as an experimental or laboratory investigation. This approach aligns with the goals of pastoral counselling research, which seeks to understand psychological and spiritual experience as it naturally unfolds in therapeutic and ministry settings. The study therefore prioritized depth of insight and contextual relevance over statistical generalization, focusing on how the APS shaped counsellor understanding, client self-awareness, and relational dynamics during counselling sessions.

3.2 Participants and Sampling

Participants were selected through purposive sampling, a method appropriate for research conducted in clinical and pastoral counselling environments where the goal is to understand phenomena within their natural setting. The participants were individuals who voluntarily sought Christian counselling for concerns such as marital conflict, emotional distress, relational tension, grief, identity confusion, and internal restlessness. All participants identified as Christian and were actively involved in church life, which ensured that the theological dimension of temperament interpretation was meaningful and contextually appropriate.

A larger group of counselees completed the APS temperament assessment, providing the quantitative data used to evaluate internal consistency and interpretive reliability. From this broader group, three counselees representing distinct temperament patterns were selected for deeper qualitative analysis. These case narratives were chosen because they illustrated unique and contrasting expressed-wanted need dynamics in the domains of Inclusion, Control, and Affection. All identifying information was removed, and pseudonyms or generalized descriptions were used to ensure confidentiality and protect personal privacy.

3.3 Instruments

The primary instrument used in this study was the Arno Profile System (APS), a temperament assessment tool derived from Creation Therapy and based on Schutz's interpersonal need theory. The APS measures relational behaviour along two dimensions expressed and wanted within three interpersonal domains:

- **Inclusion:** need for social interaction and recognition
- **Control:** need for responsibility, leadership, structure, and influence
- **Affection:** need for emotional closeness, vulnerability, and intimacy

Because emotional conflict often emerges when external relational behaviour does not match internal relational desire, the APS is uniquely suited to identify internal emotional tension and the relational needs underlying interpersonal patterns. The APS results were used to inform counselling conversations, emotional interpretation, communication strategies, and relational restructuring exercises within the counselling process.

3.4 Data Collection Procedures

Data collection occurred in two phases. First, participants completed the APS temperament assessment during the initial counselling session. The results were reviewed jointly with the counselee, allowing for reflection on emotional tendencies, relational needs, and behavioural patterns. This interpretive dialogue formed the foundation for ongoing counselling work.

Second, counselling sessions were conducted over several weeks. Session notes, counsellor observations, reflective journaling, and client self-expressions were used to track changes in emotional understanding, relational behaviour, and self-awareness. Three of these counselling journeys were selected for narrative presentation as case studies, not to generalize outcomes but to illustrate the therapeutic significance of temperament awareness within real counselling encounters.

3.5 Data Analysis

Quantitative APS data were analysed through descriptive reliability interpretation, focusing on the consistency of expressed and wanted scale patterns within the participant group. Construct validity was examined by comparing APS results to emotional themes and relational patterns observed during counselling conversations. Qualitative narrative data were analysed through thematic analysis, identifying recurring emotional experiences, relational conflicts, coping strategies, and breakthroughs in self-understanding. The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings allowed for a holistic understanding of temperament, emotional regulation, and counselling outcomes.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

Participation in the study was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all counselees. Pseudonyms and generalized identifiers were used to maintain confidentiality. No identifying personal details, locations, or contextual clues that could reveal participant identity are included in the findings. The counselling process adhered to Christian and professional counselling ethics, emphasizing respect, dignity, emotional safety, and non-coercive therapeutic practice. Theological reflection was presented in supportive and affirming language, avoiding moralizing or pathologizing emotional experience.

4.0 FINDINGS

4.1 Reliability and Internal Consistency of APS

Analysis of the Arno Profile System (APS) data gathered from Ghanaian counselees indicated strong internal coherence across the three relational domains of Inclusion, Control, and Affection. The patterns of expressed and wanted behaviour demonstrated consistency across sessions, suggesting that the APS functions reliably as an interpretive tool within Ghanaian Christian counselling settings. Participants' assessment results corresponded meaningfully with their observed relational tendencies and self-reported emotional struggles, thereby supporting the construct validity of the APS in this cultural context.

Counsellors reported that temperament profiles provided a structured understanding of emotional behaviour that aligned with real counselling interactions. When counselees were guided through their profiles, they frequently recognized the described patterns as accurate reflections of their internal experiences. This alignment between data and lived reality reinforced confidence in the APS as both a diagnostic and interpretive resource. More importantly, it created a sense of self-recognition among counselees who had previously misinterpreted their emotions as spiritual weakness or personal failure.

4.2 Observed Temperament Patterns in Ghanaian Counselees

Three consistent patterns emerged across counselees. First, there was a tendency toward high wanted Affection combined with low expressed Affection, revealing deep emotional longing constrained by social expectations of restraint. Second, several counselees demonstrated low expressed Control but high wanted Control, suggesting a desire for structured guidance rather than autonomous decision-making. Third, a smaller number showed high expressed Inclusion with low wanted Inclusion, characteristic of outwardly social individuals who secretly desired solitude and space.

These configurations reflect the influence of Ghana's communal social norms, where participation, responsibility, and emotional restraint are highly valued. Many individuals outwardly conformed to communal expectations while inwardly desiring something different, creating internal emotional tension. The APS illuminated these hidden discrepancies, allowing counsellors to frame emotional distress as temperament-driven rather than as evidence of moral or spiritual deficiency.

4.3 Case Narrative One: The Quiet Longing for Connection (Affection Dynamics)

The first case involved a woman in her early thirties who sought counselling for chronic feelings of emotional loneliness despite being active in her church and family life. She described herself as "always giving but rarely receiving." Her APS profile revealed low expressed Affection (3) but high wanted Affection (8) a configuration common among individuals who deeply desire closeness but find it difficult to communicate emotional need.

In counselling, she initially interpreted her loneliness as a sign of weak faith, believing she “should be content with God alone.” Through exploration of her APS results, she came to see that her emotional longing was not spiritual failure but part of her God-given temperament. The counsellor helped her develop safe strategies for expressing affection, such as verbal appreciation and small physical gestures, within her marriage and friendships.

Over several sessions, she began to report emotional relief and improved connection with her husband, who admitted he had misinterpreted her emotional silence as self-sufficiency. The realization that her temperament was designed for connection not isolation produced what she described as “freedom without guilt.” This case illustrated how APS-guided counselling transformed emotional shame into self-understanding, restoring both relational and spiritual peace.

4.4 Case Narrative Two: The Weight of Responsibility (Control Dynamics)

The second case concerned a young man in his late twenties who came for counselling due to anxiety, indecision, and self-doubt. He was active in youth leadership at his church but described feeling “tired of always leading.” His APS profile showed low expressed Control (2) but high wanted Control (9), revealing a strong internal desire for structure and security rather than leadership.

In the Ghanaian setting, where assertiveness and decisiveness are often associated with maturity, his tendency to seek guidance was viewed by others as weakness. He internalized these expectations and tried to appear confident and decisive, though it caused intense inner conflict. Counselling helped him reinterpret his anxiety not as inadequacy but as temperament-driven need for clarity and predictability.

The counsellor guided him in developing relational boundaries and in communicating his need for shared responsibility rather than sole leadership. As sessions progressed, he reported a decline in anxiety and a greater sense of peace. He remarked, “I now understand that I’m not weak; I just work best where there is order.” This case demonstrates how recognizing the Control dimension of temperament can reduce shame and facilitate adaptive behaviour consistent with emotional design.

4.5 Case Narrative Three: The Exhausted Leader (Inclusion Dynamics)

The third case involved a male church leader in his forties who presented with burnout, irritability, and emotional exhaustion. Despite being admired for his energy and social involvement, he confessed to feeling “emotionally empty” and withdrawn at home. His APS results revealed high expressed Inclusion (9) but low wanted Inclusion (3) a pattern indicating a person who engages socially out of duty or habit while inwardly longing for solitude and reflection.

In the communal environment of Ghanaian ministry, where relational availability is equated with spiritual commitment, he had pushed himself to attend every event, meeting, and family obligation. Through APS-based counselling, he discovered that his emotional exhaustion stemmed not from a lack of faith but from a mismatch between external demand and internal temperament need.

The counsellor helped him restructure his schedule to include periods of solitude, prayer, and quiet reflection. Initially, he feared such boundaries might appear selfish, but over time, he noticed renewed energy and emotional presence when engaging with others. He later described this change as “serving from overflow instead of depletion.” This case illustrates the restorative

power of honouring temperament boundaries and shows that self-awareness rooted in temperament understanding enhances both ministry and mental health.

4.6 Summary of Findings

Across all three cases, APS-guided counselling provided a pathway for reframing emotional pain as meaningful rather than sinful. The system's clarity allowed counselees to recognize their emotional patterns as part of divine design rather than as weakness or rebellion. Each case demonstrated that when temperament needs are acknowledged and supported, emotional harmony and relational authenticity increase.

The findings also confirmed that the APS resonates with Ghanaian cultural values emphasizing relationship, responsibility, and community. By interpreting emotional distress through the lens of temperament and theology, counsellors were able to integrate psychological insight with spiritual guidance, achieving both emotional relief and theological affirmation.

5.0 DISCUSSION

5.1 Interpretation within Theological Anthropology

The findings of this study affirm that temperament-based counselling reflects a deeply theological understanding of human nature. Within Christian anthropology, every person is created in the *imago Dei* not as a static image but as a relational being designed for communion with God and others (Benner, 1998). Emotional and relational patterns are therefore not random; they mirror the divine relational design embedded within human creation. When counselling acknowledges this divine structure through temperament, it aligns therapeutic insight with theological truth.

The experiences of counselees in this study revealed that emotional distress often arises when individuals live out of harmony with their temperament, either through suppression of need, cultural expectation, or misunderstood spirituality. In all three cases, counselling facilitated restoration not by changing temperament but by helping counselees realign behaviour and emotional expression with their divinely intended relational patterns. Thus, the APS becomes more than a diagnostic tool; it becomes a theological instrument of self-revelation, assisting both counsellor and counselee in discerning how divine design operates through emotion and relationship.

This interpretive framework shifts Christian counselling away from moralizing or pathologizing emotion. Emotional conflict is not viewed as sin or weakness, but as a meaningful expression of the tension between divine design and human experience. Healing, then, is a process of grace where understanding and acceptance replace guilt and fear, and where the counselee learns to live truthfully within God's original blueprint for emotional and relational life.

5.2 Cultural Context and Temperament Expression

The study further demonstrates that Ghanaian communal culture profoundly influences how temperament is expressed and perceived. Ghanaian identity emphasizes social harmony, respect, and interdependence (Gyekye, 1997; Mbiti, 1969). These values nurture community cohesion but can inadvertently encourage emotional restraint and conformity. Within such a framework, temperament patterns that deviate from communal norms such as low expressed Control or high wanted Affection may be misinterpreted as weakness or immaturity.

The APS provides a corrective interpretive lens by reframing these patterns not as deficiencies but as expressions of emotional diversity within God's design. By recognizing that individuals

vary in their relational orientations, counsellors can affirm both individuality and communal belonging without conflict. In this way, APS-based counselling fosters a contextually balanced understanding of emotion one that honours communal interdependence while still validating personal emotional needs.

Moreover, this balance is crucial for Christian counselling in Ghana, where many counselees experience inner conflict between communal expectation and private emotional reality. The APS bridges these worlds by enabling counsellors to interpret behavior within cultural norms while addressing the hidden emotional dimensions beneath outward conformity. The counsellor thus functions not as a moral instructor but as a mediator of understanding between the self and the surrounding community.

5.3 Implications for Christian Counselling Practice

The integration of the APS into Ghanaian Christian counselling practice offers several practical benefits. First, it enhances counsellor accuracy in understanding client behaviour. Rather than relying solely on observation or spiritual intuition, counsellors can draw on structured temperament data to identify the relational tensions underlying emotional distress. Second, APS-guided counselling supports empathic understanding. Counselees who recognize their emotional logic feel validated and empowered, reducing shame and resistance. Third, the system facilitates spiritually integrated intervention, allowing counsellors to connect emotional insight with biblical teaching on self-awareness, stewardship of relationships, and authentic living.

Pastoral counsellors trained in APS interpretation can use it to bridge the gap between theology and psychology, helping clients understand that spiritual maturity involves not denial of emotion but wise management of temperament. In church settings, this approach can transform

how emotional health is discussed replacing fear and stigma with acceptance and growth. Counsellors can also use temperament insights to support marital counselling, leadership development, and family communication.

Furthermore, the APS encourages preventive counselling. By helping individuals understand their temperament early, churches and counselling ministries can equip members to navigate stress, relational expectations, and leadership responsibilities with greater emotional intelligence. Such preventive approaches can reduce burnout, relational breakdowns, and spiritual disillusionment among both lay members and clergy.

5.4 Comparison to Other Counselling Approaches

Traditional Western counselling models, while empirically robust, often emphasize cognitive restructuring, behavioural modification, or emotional catharsis. These approaches tend to prioritize autonomy and self-expression, values that may not fully align with Ghana's communal worldview. Conversely, traditional pastoral counselling in Ghana emphasizes faith, morality, and obedience, often without exploring the emotional structures underlying behaviour.

The APS and Creation Therapy framework offer a middle ground. They affirm the authority of Scripture and the spiritual dimensions of human life while incorporating psychological structure and clinical method. This integrative balance allows counsellors to engage both heart and mind, faith and reason, emotion and theology. Unlike purely psychological tools, the APS provides a biblically informed rationale for emotion, enabling counselling to function as both spiritual guidance and emotional healing.

This synthesis makes APS-based counselling particularly well-suited to the Ghanaian Christian context, where individuals desire spiritual authenticity but also seek psychological

understanding. By offering a tool that respects faith commitments while addressing emotional complexity, the APS strengthens the credibility and depth of Christian counselling practice.

6.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The present study set out to examine the reliability, validity, and contextual relevance of the Arno Profile System (APS) within Ghanaian Christian counselling. The results affirmed that the APS provides a dependable framework for understanding temperament as a God-designed structure of relational need and emotional functioning. When applied within pastoral counselling, it offered both counsellor and counselee a language for articulating emotional experience in a manner that was psychologically coherent and theologically meaningful. Rather than pathologizing emotion or moralizing struggle, APS-based counselling reframed distress as a signal of misalignment between inner temperament design and outward relational expression.

The three case narratives demonstrated that temperament awareness can transform the counselling process by replacing guilt and confusion with self-understanding and compassionate insight. Counselees who once viewed their emotional pain as weakness came to recognize it as a normal expression of unmet relational needs. This shift supported genuine emotional healing, improved relational communication, and renewed spiritual confidence. The APS therefore functioned not merely as an assessment instrument but as a therapeutic bridge between theology and psychology, restoring congruence between spiritual belief and emotional reality.

Culturally, the study highlighted how Ghana's communal orientation shapes emotional expression. Within such a collectivist environment, relational obligation often supersedes personal need. This creates tension for individuals whose temperaments require solitude,

reassurance, or autonomy that may appear inconsistent with cultural expectations. The APS proved adaptable to this environment because its relational categories Inclusion, Control, and Affection mirror the same dimensions emphasized within Ghanaian communal life. By interpreting these dynamics through a theological lens, counsellors could affirm both cultural belonging and personal authenticity, preventing the emotional suppression that often results from rigid conformity to social norms.

The implications for Christian counselling practice are substantial. First, counsellor training programs and theological institutions in Ghana should integrate temperament-based frameworks such as the APS into their curricula. Doing so will strengthen the professional competence of pastoral counsellors, providing them with interpretive tools that complement biblical wisdom. Second, churches can employ APS principles in premarital, marital, and leadership counselling to promote self-awareness, relational balance, and preventive care against burnout. Third, the Ministry of Education and faith-based universities might consider supporting research and certification initiatives that contextualize temperament counselling for broader African application.

Theologically, the study reinforces that emotional life is integral to spirituality. To live authentically before God involves acknowledging the emotional design He has placed within each person. Recognizing temperament does not diminish spiritual dependence; it clarifies how grace operates through individuality. Counsellors who adopt this integrated view can guide clients toward wholeness that embraces body, mind, and spirit, mirroring the biblical call to love God with all dimensions of one's being.

Finally, future research should explore the long-term outcomes of APS-guided counselling across diverse Ghanaian populations and denominations. Comparative studies between rural and urban contexts, or between Ghanaian and Western Christian counselling settings, would

deepen understanding of cross-cultural validity. Moreover, empirical studies assessing measurable changes in emotional well-being and relational satisfaction following APS-based interventions could provide stronger evidence for its efficacy.

In summary, the Arno Profile System offers a theologically grounded, psychologically informed, and culturally sensitive model for Christian counselling in Ghana. By affirming temperament as divine design, it helps restore emotional dignity and spiritual coherence in those seeking healing, thereby enriching both the theory and practice of pastoral care across Africa's growing faith communities.

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