

**PEOPLES PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE
CASE STUDY OF CHRISTIAN CHURCHES IN
RUHINDA SUBCOUNTY –RUKUNGIRI
DISTRICT**

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**RESEARCH REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY
OF SOCIAL SCIENCES IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT FOR
THE AWARD OF BACHELOR DEGREE IN
GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING OF
KAMAPAL INTERNATIONAL
UNIVERSITY**

JUNE 2010

DECLARATION

I Namanya Rogers BGC/17442/71/DU, declare this work is a result of my own effort and has been submitted for any award in any other university or institution of learning.


Signed: *Amun.*

Date *29th* JUNE 2010 .

APPROVAL

This research report is submitted work which has been done and written under my supervision as a university supervisor, and submitted with my approval.

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Signed: 

Date 29/09/2010

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated with love to my family whose abundant love, support, and extreme tolerance and understanding have sustained me through the course of the study.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am very grateful to my supervisor, Mr. Edabu who had to sacrifice his precious personal time to allocate quality time for our meetings and besides his expert support; I feel indebted to him for his sacrifice.

I extend similar appreciation to all lecturers in the education programme for the sacrifice, effort, commitment and support they have shown to us for our search in knowledge.

My thanks go to my peers in my class especially all members of our discussion group whom we have put so much effort to see ourselves through in our studies

Thank all and God bless you.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the background, problem under investigation, purpose and objectives of the study, research questions, scope and significance of the study.

1.2 Background

Marriage, according to Gonza (2004), is an institution by society as a union between man and woman who have committed themselves to staying together with the hope of begetting children to make a family. It is also the basis of a family and it ensures the survival of the human race.

Christian marriage is more than just the union of two Christians of the opposite sex. Christian marriage is characterized and guided by Christian principles that are taught in the Bible. A Christian marriage is not defined by the teachings of a church but it adheres to the standards of marriage revealed in the Holy Bible regardless of the church's teachings and practices.

Marriage is a holy, divine and God-ordained institution whose origin dates back to the time of creation.

The King James Version (KJV) of the Bible, Genesis 1:27-28 explains the origin of marriage clearly. Thus, *{27}so God created man in his own image, in the image of God, male and female were created {28} And God blessed them, and God said unto them, be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth".* God instituted marriage after His careful observation that *"it is not good that the man should be alone"* (Genesis 2:18, KJV).

In His answer to the Pharisees' question about divorce, Jesus also reiterated a need for marriage by quoting the Old Testament (O.T.) Scripture. Thus, *"Haven't you read the scripture that says that in the beginning the creator made people male and female? And God said, for this reason, a man will leave his father and mother and unite with his wife .*

Bryson (2001) points out that a single man or woman, even if in a relationship with God, is not a complete human being. Completeness exists only when a man and woman are joined together as one and in this essential relationship, they are complete in relationship with the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit. Only when marriage exists between one man and one woman who through their sexual union become one flesh, does God proclaim that "*it is good*" unlike when He said "*it is not good for man to be alone*" (Genesis, 2:18). God created marriage which is the sexual union both physical and spiritual of a man and woman.

Bryson father reveals that loneliness is destructive to human beings; the relationship of marriage among others is therefore a solution to loneliness.

However some people both Christians and non-Christians have misunderstood the meaning of Christian marriage and developed negative, contrasting and varying perceptions towards its teaching.

Some have misinterpreted 1Peter 3:1 to mean that in marriage husbands are superior to wives on the basis that Paul emphasized that wives should submit to their husbands.

Others have embraced same-sex unions in Christian churches as a form Christian marriage.

Where as others, especially men, feel that by engaging in Christian forms of marriage, they will be tied down by those legally-binding documents and vows, the fear of not getting girls any more because Christianity forces them to be faithful and monogamous (Donna, July 5, 2009).

Traditionalists also believe that Christian marriage is a form of Western religious domination that should be allowed no place in African culture.

It is against these contrasting perceptions that the researcher has been prompted to conduct a study on people's perceptions towards Christian marriage.

1.2 Problem statement

While Christian marriage is honored among different Christian sects and throughout the Bible as a God-ordained institution, it has been misunderstood and perceived differently by both Christians and non-believers; (Wikipedia, 2009).

In economic terms, some people say that it is expensive; others view it as a Western form of religious neo-colonialism and a chain that forbids men from marrying many wives as they wish. Other Christians, for example, the United Church of Canada have gone ahead to embrace and bless same-sex unions as a form of Christian marriage which is contrary to Christian teachings. Such contrasting perceptions towards Christian marriage need a thorough and comprehensive investigation.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The study is purposed to investigate people's perceptions towards Christian marriage.

1.4 Objectives of the study

- I. To find out people's perceptions towards Christian marriage.
- II. To identify the role of Christian teaching in the survival of marriage.
- III. To find out factors that influences the survival of marriage.

1.5 Research questions

- I. What perceptions do people have on Christian marriage?
- II. What is the role of Christian teaching in the survival of marriage?
- III. What factors influence the survival of marriage?

1.6 Scope of the study

The study was conducted on people's perceptions towards Christian marriage. It was conducted among different selected Christian churches in Ruhinda sub-county, Rukungiri District. The study took a period of 7 months (September, 2009 - March, 2010)

1.7 Significance of the study

The study will help the researcher to acquire a Bachelor of Guidance and Counseling from Kampala International University since it is one of the requirements for the award.

The study will influence Christian couples to build their marriages based on Christian and Biblical principles. This will enable them to stay together, “for better or worse” since marriage is a God-ordained institution.

The study may influence and unite Christian leaders to oppose and denounce marriage practices that are against Biblical teaching-such as gay marriages divorce, polygamy and adultery among others. This will teach married couples a lesson of staying together in peace righteousness and harmony thus fulfilling God’s purpose of marriage. Christians are not to celebrate, promote or embrace sinful practices but to overcome them.

The study may influence engaged couples to embrace Christian marriages since marriage is a divine institution established by God.

This will instill Christian values in their marriages and make them stand the test of time in the face of impossible odds. The study will act as a reference manual for other research students. This will help them complete their studies and advance in their careers.

1.8 Anticipated study limitations

Limited co-operation. Some respondents especially may become suspicious about the objectives of the study and therefore become hesitant to give out the necessary information. This limited the researcher in making a conclusion on people’s perceptions towards church marriage. However the researcher was given an assurance to conceal the identity of respondents and to use the findings solely for academic purposes. After this assurance, respondents are expected to accord him the necessary co-operation.

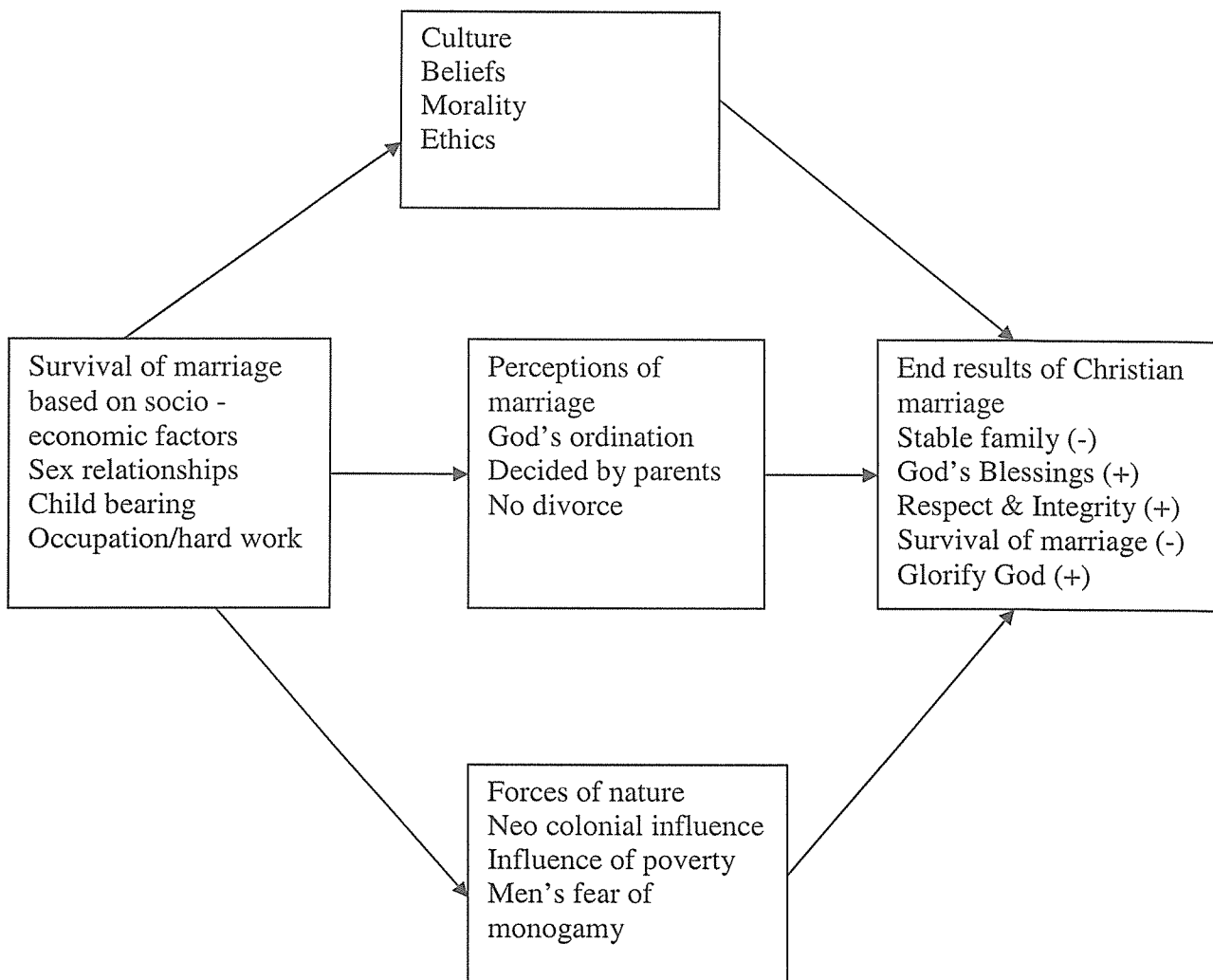
Language barrier. Some respondents may not understand the language (English) in which questionnaires and interviews were designed and conducted. This was limited by the flow of communication and open access to information.

However, research assistant were requested to interpret and translate questionnaires and interviews into respondents’ local languages.

Limited resources - such as scholastic materials and services, transport fare and accommodation. Funds may not be enough to cater for all these requirements since the Institute does not fund research students. The study delayed the researcher in submitting

the findings of the study for examination. Nevertheless, the researcher looked for financial, material and moral support from friends, relatives, guardians and well-wishers to ensure that the study is completed in its stated timeframes.

1.9 Conceptual frame work



From the above illustration, the arrows show the conceptual background and the theoretical relationship between variables under the study

The diagram further portrays the thematic linkage of marriage and people's perception based on social-economic factors (Sexual relationships and child bearing) as well as forces of nature (poverty)

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This is a selection of all the available documents by different authors (both published and unpublished) which contain information, ideas, data and evidence written from a particular stand point to express certain views on people's perceptions towards Christian marriage and the effective evaluation of these documents in relation to the topic.

Enon (1998) is of the view that reviewing literature helps the researcher to determine what has been done before so as to avoid duplication because it would be meaningless to merely repeat the same work.

The basic sources of literature include the Bible text books, magazines, journals, pamphlets, newspapers, the internet and research reports among others.

2.1 Christian marriage

Christian marriage, according to Rubio and Hanlon (2003) is the lifelong relationship between one man as a husband and one woman as a wife. Christians typically regard marriage as instituted and ordained by God.

In the New Testament, marriage is thought of as normal and proper it is to be "*held in honor among all*" and "*for better or worse*" both in joy and pain. It is for this reason that Jesus, in His answer to the Pharisees' question concerning divorce remarked thus, "*..... for this reason a man will leave his father and mother and unite with his wife and the two will become one.... man must not separate, then what God has joined together*". (Mark 10:7-9 GNB).

Marriage was instituted and ordained by God at the time of creation. This was after His observation that none of the creatures He had created was a suitable companion to help man (Adam) (Genesis 2:20-24 GNB). Christian marriage is built on the basis of Christianity and Biblical teachings.

2.2 Divorce

Adams and Joy (1986) define divorce as the official dissolution of marriage. This is a situation where a husband and wife decide to officially separate from each other after observing that marriage cannot work. However this is not God's original plan, for He purposed marriage to be eternal, permanent and lifelong. That is why Jesus taught that *"what God has joined together let no man put asunder"* (Mark 10:9) and that *"any man who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery, and the man who marries a divorced woman commits adultery"* (Luke 16:18). Therefore Christian marriages should be permanent and divorce should be avoided at all costs.

However, Jesus allowed one circumstance under which a Christian can divorce his wife (adultery). He therefore, taught the Pharisees that *"whoever divorces his wife, except for unchastity and marries another wife commits adultery"* (Matthew 5:32 and 19:9). Therefore unfaithfulness is the only reason under which a Christian husband can divorce his wife without offending Christianity.

However, the researcher believes that this should be optional rather than a rule since Christianity and the Bible provide room for repentance and forgiveness (Matthew 18:21-35 and Hosea 3:1).

2.3 People's perceptions towards Christian marriage

There are different and contrasting perceptions held by both Christians and non-Christians concerning Christian marriages.

Hillary (1999) reveals that many people view Christian marriage as the most expensive form of marriage. This is because for a couple to be embraced and blessed by the church, the husband has to first pay bride price to the father of the bride which sometimes is too expensive, in addition to church requirements. This makes poor couples to shun church marriages and opt for cohabiting.

Hillary's study father reveals that Christian marriage involve making vows in front of the church congregation which most people fear to make since they are not sure of fulfilling them. These vows include sharing all property, loving and staying with each other for better or worse till death do them part, faithfulness among others.

2.4 men's fear of monogamy

Similarly, Donna (July 5, 2009) points out that men fear Christian marriages because they feel they will be tied down by those legally binding documents and vows, the fear of not getting girlfriends any more because after marriage they are forced to be faithful and monogamous. This is because men have been known to be unfaithful and polygamous by nature. Such perceptions drive intending couples from Christian marriage and they end up cohabiting.

John (2005) reveals that in African culture, the main reason of marrying in churches is that the couple is allowed to receive holy communication. As a matter of fact, nothing in Africa has more resisted Western Christianization than marriage.

It is a communal event that deeply involves two clans and is effected in stages of which some permit cohabitation. In contrast, he says that Christian marriage is a contract between two individuals and has a fixed starting point. In the early years, John points out that most young Christians were also ready to marry in church.

However, the ever increasing bride wealth made people be satisfied with the stage of customary marriage which permitted cohabitation but not yet the Christian rite which presupposed full payment of dowry.

2.5 Neo-colonial influence.

John, (2005) further points out that after independence, the majority couples were satisfied with customary marriage only and pastors became alarmed and instituted an expert study called the Church's Research on Marriage in Africa (1967) whose findings pointed out that in few places do more than a half the Anglicans or Catholics marry in church and 1/3 of such marriages are likely to fail or turn into polygamy. The findings further revealed that in parts of East Africa, the number of church marriage has halved in 10 years and the declining trend was expected to double.

The researcher believes that economic aspects of Christian marriage are making couples to embrace customary marriage, eloping and cohabitation. Similarly Bingham and Joel

(1989) reveal that the Christian church is in the process of excommunicating itself from its strict rules concerning Christian marriage. All the intervention of various bishops and conferences have agreed on the basic necessity to close the present gap between customary marriage and church marriage by celebrating them together, the church accompanying with her instructions and blessing all the stages a couple undergoes until the marriage is definitely formed, this way raising customary marriage to the level of Holy matrimony.

2.6 Influence of poverty.

Some Christians have misinterpreted the teachings of Isaiah and adopted polygamy as a form of Christian marriage. They base themselves on the assertion that *“when that time comes, seven women will grab hold of one man and say, “we can feed and clothe ourselves but please let us say you are our husband, so that we won’t have to endure the shame of being unmarried”* (Isaiah 4:1 GNB)

However, polygamy is prohibited by true Christianity and Biblical teaching. That is why God created *“one woman for one man”* and not *“women for one man”* (Genesis 1:27-28 and 2:22-24). Solomon was punished by the Lord partly for being polygamous (1Kings 11) as his father David (2Samuel 11:26-27) when he killed Uriah and married Bathsheba.

Gredhill and Ruth (1 July, 2005) reveal that contrasting perceptions of different Christian sects towards Christian marriage has reached a controversial level where some churches have embraced and blessed same-sex unions and marriages as part of Christianity. This is an issue about which some Christian churches are at present in disagreement with other Christian churches. The ordination of a gay Gene Robinson as a bishop within the Anglican Church in 2005 drew different lines of division within the church. This has been caused by divergence in perceptions towards Christian marriage.

However homosexuality and gay relationship is not in line with God’s purpose of marriage throughout the Bible. In Genesis 19:1-29 God destroyed the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah because of gay relationships and in Genesis 1:27-28 God created male and female.

2.7 stable families and peaceful marriage.

Studies by Beetham (1967) reveal that at no point has the Christian message and ethic broken more radically into the life of Africa than in the demand on the family structure that it should accept monogamy as the marriage pattern for those of its members who become Christians. This has resulted into contrasting perceptions and open conflict with the family and community and given rise to secret conflicts in the mind and life of many Christians. He reveals that the ruling of the first missionaries was almost universally that polygamous men should at their conversion to the Christian faith put away all but one wife; otherwise they could not receive the sacrament of Baptism and Holy communion. There were those who did not think it right to break the existing marriage relationship and therefore thought to retain such a man with the fellowship of Sunday and Bible study but withheld the sacraments, though doing so with a feeling that the churches' practice was at odds with the spirit of the Lord.

The researcher believes that this does not carry the conviction of all who become Christians as there have been all too many cases of prominent church leaders who have taken a second wife secretly a fact known to community and kept from the minister or seen by him with a blind eye.

Gifford (1999) points out that many people in African culture shun Christian marriage because they regard it as a form of Western continued neocolonialism that is disguised in form of religion. Propagators of this belief argue that before the introduction of Christianity, marriages in Africa were stable and there were no common cases of divorce and separation as it is the order of the day. They are of the view that if traditional African cultural values are adhered to, marriages would stand the test of time. It is on this basis that Christian marriages are held and viewed with negative and contrasting perceptions.

2.8 Christian teaching and the survival of marriage

Different studies have been conducted in addition to the Bible to find out the role of Christian teaching in the survival of marriage. The Denvers Statement (December, 1989)

points out that Christianity encourages submission of wives towards their husbands and love of husbands towards their wives.

The statement was prepared basing on Colossians 3:18-19 where Paul was encouraging marital harmony. Thus saying, "*Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands, for that is what you should do as Christians. Husbands love your wives and do not be harsh with them*". Ephesian 5:21-33, Titus 2:3-5 and 1Peter 3:1-7 also encourage women submission and men's love in relationships. These Christian teachings instill harmony and peace among couples. However in today's context this is untrue as a result of women empowerment and democratic governance, women instead claims that men be submissive to them especially the educated women.

Steil and Janice (1997) point out that Christian teaching promotes and encourages monogamy which cements marital bonds. Their teaching is based on Genesis 1:26-28 where God created one woman for one man, blessed them and encouraged them to produce many children and Mathew 19:5 where Jesus quoted the O.T. scripture saying that, "*for this reason a man will leave his father and mother and unite with his wife and the two will become one*". Jesus went on to say, "*any man who divorces his wife for any cause other than her unfaithfulness, commits adultery if he marries some other woman*" (Matthew 19:9). Such Christian guiding principles help and encourage Christian couples to stay in peace and harmony.

Christianity encourages the production of children in marriage and this creates a strong connecting link between the husband and the wife. In the Book of Genesis 1:27-28, God created human beings, male and female, blessed them and encouraged them to produce many children such that their descendants will live all over the earth and bring it under their control. This command has been taken on by Christianity to encourage all married couples to have children so as to fulfill God's will and purpose for marriage. It is only through children that a couple's love is strengthened.

Christianity encourages marital fidelity and faithfulness. The Book of Proverbs 5, 6:20-35 and 7 warns against adultery and discourages man to have sexual relations with another man's wife. Verse 15-20:5 emphasize love and marital faithfulness by encouraging couples, thus, *"be faithful to your own wife and give your love to her alone children that you have by other woman will do you no good. Your children should grow to help you not strangers. So be happy with your wife and find your joy with the girl you married. Pretty and graceful as a deer. Let her charms keep you happy; let her surround you with her love. Son why should you give your love to another woman? Why should you prefer the charms of another man's wife?"* Such stern warnings from the Lord are central themes of Christian teaching on marital fidelity which create harmony between couples and ensure the survival of marriage.

Studies by Duty and Guy (2002) point out that essentially all Protestant denominations hold marriage to be ordained by God for the union between a man and a woman. They see the primary purpose of this union as being to glorify and worship God by demonstrating his love to the world. Other purposes of marriage include intimate companionship, rearing children and mutual support for both husband and wife to fulfill their life callings. The researcher is of the view that since Christianity views marriage as purposed to glorify God, it ensure harmony and peace in marriage since families that worship and pray together also stay together.

2.11 sex relationships.

Related studies by Throckmorton and Anne (2008) point out that Christian Egalitarians believe that full partnership in marriage relationship is based on mutual sexual relationship and equality in marriage has based in Biblical view. In a most important sense, there is no priority of one over the other. A person's husband and wife are of equal value; *in truth, they are one*. Their position is that equality between a wife and husband produces the most intimate, wholesome, and mutually fulfilling marriages. Their belief is that the Apostle Paul's statement recorded in Galatians 3:28 applies to all Christian relationships, including Christian marriages. He says that, *"there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for you are all*

one in Christ Jesus". It is this full partnership that creates a sense of recognition and respect for each other in marriage which ensures its survival and longevity.

Stag, et al. (1978) points out the Roman Catholic teaching that God himself is the author of the sacred institution of marriage which is his way of showing love for those He created. Marriage is a divine institution that can never be broken even if the husband or wife legally divorces in the civil courts.

As long as they are both alive, the church considers them bound together by God. Marriage is intended to be a faithful, exclusive, life long union of a man and a woman; committing themselves completely to each other.

A Catholic husband and wife strive to sanctify each other, bring children into the world and educate them in the catholic way of life. Man and woman, although created differently from each other, complement each other. This complementarily draws them together in a mutually loving union.

2.9 Factors that ensure the survival of marriage.

Most religious scholars have conducted studies to find out factors that ensure the survival and eternity of marriages. Most notably is sexual relationship.

Neff and David (2004) point out that sexual relations in marriage create strong intimacy between married couples. This creates beauty among couples which goes beyond physical appearance and creates long term attraction toward each other.

Even the Apostle Paul in his letter to the 1 Corinthians 7:3-5 encourages the act of sexual intercourse in marriage, saying that *"a man should fulfill his duty as a husband and a woman should fulfill her duty as a wife and each should satisfy the other's needs. A wife is not the master of her own body but her husband is, in the same way a husband is not the master of his own body but his wife is. Do not deny yourselves to each other, unless you first agree to do so for a while in order to spend your time in prayer; but then resume normal marital relations. In this way you will be kept from giving in to Satan's temptation because of your lack of self control"*.

2.10 Occupation and hard work.

Hard work among married couples also helps to ensure the survival of marriage by enabling couples to meet their day today needs.

It is on this basis that even Proverbs 31:10-31 praises a hard working wife, showing that *“her husband puts his confidence in her and will never be poor. As long as she lives, she does him good and never harm”*.

It is therefore highly doubtful whether any sensible husband who fears the Lord can abuse the marital rights of a woman such as described above.

However, husbands are also required to work hard and complement on their wives earnings. This creates a sense of responsibility and togetherness which ensures the survival of marriage.

Studies by Piper, et al. (1991) point out that love and affection ensures the survival and eternity of marriage. It is through marital love that a husband and wife accept, to stay with each other for better or worse regardless of one's strength and weaknesses, age, physical appearance race and color among others.

The books of Ecclesiastes 9:9, 1 Peter 3:1-7, and Colossians 3:18-19 clearly explain that husbands and wives should live happily together in a spirit of love, harmony, respect and compassion.

2.11 child bearing

Production of children also ensures the survival of marriage. This is because children cement marital bond between couples and act as a connecting link between the husband and the wife. At the time of creation (Genesis, 1:27-28) God instructed man and woman to have children and fill the earth. So, failure to produce children creates long term misery among couples which sometimes lead to marriage break up.

The story of Elkanah and his two wives; Hannah and Penninah (1 Samuel 1) explains clearly the importance of children in marriage and the pain experienced by a childless couple, which pain may end up breaking their marriage apart.

Monogamy and fidelity among married couples also ensure the survival of marriages. It is natural and normal that all human beings dislike sharing their sexual partners with

some other people. Even the Bible discourages polygamy and infidelity among couples. In Mathew 19:9 even Jesus allowed divorce under the circumstance of infidelity.

God created one woman for one man (Genesis 1:27, 2:21-24) meaning that he intended marriage to be monogamous. God was not happy with King David (2 Samuel 12:7-15) and his son Solomon (1 Kings, 11:1-13) because of their polygamous nature.

The researcher is therefore of the view that if married couples uphold monogamy and fidelity as sacred Christian values, their marriages would stand the test of time since such an act is a fulfillment of God's will and purpose for marriage.

Studies by Cunningham (1999)¹ reveal that commitment ensures the survival of marriage. He says that commitment keeps the love alive or the fire burning between married couples. However, he notes that commitment does not mean one will always feel great love and concern for his/her spouse all the time. There may be times where one feels really bad about his/her spouse and marriage or where he/she is tempted to go elsewhere for fulfillment because of the frustration he/she experiences in marriage.

Continued commitment will get over these times and work to make things better, thus, enabling an environment where love and happiness will germinate.

He further says that commitment will keep one pursuing his/her spouse and working to establish and maintain a fulfilling marriage relationship just as Hosea did to his wife Gomer, (2005)

Regardless of bad or good times commitment will keep one stable, hopeful and working to stabilize his/her marriage which ensures its survival and longevity.

Cunningham (2000)² also reveals that marriage is not only strengthened by commitment to each other but also prayer and commitment to God. Since God is the author of marriage, the husband and wife in a Christian marriage must be dedicated to living a life pleasing to God and according to God's will-Living a life in Christ through prayer.

Each person should strive to live their life according to the principles that are taught in the Bible for the New church as well as gleaning from the activities and instruction given

in the O.T. Each person is striving to fulfill God's purpose of marriage. This will enable the husband and wife to rely on a force outside of them to sustain them in their marriage.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research design

The researcher used a cross-sectional survey design during the study. This involved collecting information from a cross-section of respondents from different localities at the same time. This design was preferred because the East African Population Institute (2008) is of the view that cross-sectional designs are fast and can study a large member of population at little cost and short time.

3.2 Area of the study

The study was conducted in Ruhinda Sub-county, Rukungiri District. Four Christian churches were selected as representatives of all other Christian churches. These included Kashenyi Church of Uganda (C.O.U), Rwamagaya Catholic Church, Rwabukoba C.O.U. and Nyakanyinya Catholic Church.

3.3 Population of the study

The study was conducted on church leaders and members of the congregation. that is intending couples a waiting to weed, singles(unmarried people) and those already engaged in holy Christian marriage.

3.4 Sample size

From each selected church, the researcher selected 6 church leaders and 12 members of the congregation. These add up to 72 respondents in total.

3.5 Sampling technique

Simple Random and stratified sampling techniques was used to select participants in the study. Random sampling was employed to select church leaders because, according to Enon (1998) it is the single best way to avoid bias and prejudice during the study. It was also the best way to obtain a representative sample from a big population (Gay, 1996). The lottery and number method were employed. The names of all church leaders were written on pieces of paper and put in a box. The first six names to be picked were considered for participation in the study.

Stratified sampling was used on the church congregation, where by they divided into 2 groups (the married and the unmarried). After grouping them, the lottery and number method were repeated, where by the first 6 names to be picked from each group (the married and singles) were considered for participation in the study. This process was repeated through out the four selected churches.

3.6 Sources of data

The researcher used both primary and secondary sources for collecting data.

Primary sources contained first hand information obtained from questionnaires and interviews. Where as secondary sources was accessed by contacting the available documents-such as newspapers, magazines, service bulletins, brochures, visitors books, marriage registers, bibles and prayer books among others to gather the necessary information.

3.7 Data collection methods

These were the techniques the researcher used while collecting and compiling information during the study. They included questionnaires, interviews and documentary analysis.

The questionnaire

Questionnaires were used because they collect information from many respondents in a projected time frame. All respondents were given the same sets of questions except in technical circumstances. 72 questionnaires were used to collect data from respondents. 24 were administered to church leaders and 48 to members of the congregation in the selected churches.

These questionnaires composed of both close-ended and open-ended parts.

Close ended questions were preferred because they are easy to answer and score while open-ended questions were intended to give respondents a chance to support their opinions in a free atmosphere in addition to predetermined choices.

Generally, questionnaires were preferred because according to Gay (1996), questionnaires require less time, are less expensive and permit selection of data from a much larger sample.

Interviews

Both formal and informal interviews with church leaders and some members of the congregation in the selected churches were conducted.

Guiding questions were used for the interviews but during the course, other questions were asked depending on the responses by the respondents. Results from interviews helped in complementing information that was obtained from the questionnaire.

During interviews, clarification took place enabling the interviewee to reveal his /her view point. Interviews also gave more information which might not be given in questionnaires; (Gay, 1996).

Documentary analysis

Church documents - such as magazines, visitors' books, service bulletins, brochures prayer books, bibles and marriage registers among others were analyzed to establish people's perceptions towards church marriage.

The records showed the number of Christian marriages in relation to the married couples in the selected churches.

Documentary analysis were used because, Gay (1996) is of the view that it enhances the researcher's overall understanding of the situations under study, by providing information which cannot be obtained using other instruments.

3.8 Research procedure

A letter of introduction was obtained from the Dean, Faculty of Education. This enabled the researcher to approach the respective respondents with whom he made appointment for interviews, questionnaires and church records. The researcher was accorded maximum co-operation since the letter of introduction proved to the relevant respondents that the study is purely for academic purposes.

The researcher administered questionnaires, starting with church leaders followed by the married couples and then end with the unmarried. Church leaders were given more time because their questionnaire required more explanation and they had to perform their official duties as well. They were given two weeks to fill questionnaires and return them

to the researcher. However since members of the congregation are always on the move, they were given three hours to fill and return questionnaires on request.

Mean while, the researcher had time to interview church leaders and the selected members of the congregation. An interview guide helped to guide the researcher during this process. After interviews, the researcher requested church leaders to allow him access church records that were relevant to the study. The process was repeated in all churches with in scope of the study

Care was exercised in ensuring that the rights of these respondents are protected. The researcher respected human dignity and conceal the identity of respondents in the study. Only informed consent required and the opinions of respondents were solely used for academic purposes on agreement with the respondents.

3.9 Data analysis and presentation

Three methods of data analysis were used. These included descriptive statistical analysis, qualitative data analysis and quantitative data analysis.

3.9.1 Descriptive statistical analysis

Descriptive statistical analysis technique using frequency counts and percentages was used to analyze data from questionnaire. The researcher used the method because he was analyzing data from close - ended questionnaire from a big number of respondents. The technique was preferred because according to Gay (1996), it permits the researcher to meaningfully describe many scores with a small number of indices.

3.9.2 Qualitative data analysis

Data from structured interviews was analyzed using content analysis technique. Responses categorized and tabulated basing on themes studied. This method was preferred because the researcher analyzed views, perceptions and opinions of respondents; and according to Gay (1996), qualitative data analysis is a simplified technique of making sense out of enormous amount of narrative data.

3.9.3 Quantitative data analysis

Quantitative techniques were used to analyze and present quantitative data. Data was analyzed in form of tables, charts and graphs that was backed by frequency and percentage presentation.

This method was preferred because Enon (1998) is of the view that quantitative methods use standardized measures that fit diverse opinions and experiences into predetermined response categories. The advantage of quantitative method was that it measures the reactions of very many people to a limited set of questions thus facilitating comparison and statistical manipulation of data. It therefore gives a broad general set of results.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents and discuss the findings and analysis of data obtained from the study. There were four research questions formulated in this study and results were extracted from observation, questionnaires and interviews.

4.2.0 RESPONDENTS BIO-DATA ANALYSIS

4.2.1 Age of Respondents

The table 4.1.2 shows the percentage (%) sex distribution in years

Sex	Frequency	Cumulative age (%)
Male	27	56.3
Female	21	43.8
TOTAL	48	100

Source: Primary data 2010

In this study the efforts have been made in searching and studying relevant facts about the actions undertaken to protect the environment.

The table 4.1.3 shows the percentage (%) education distribution

Education level	Frequency	Cumulative age (%)
Degree	10	20.8
Diploma	21	43.8
Secondary	17	35.4
TOTAL	48	100

Source: Primary data 2010

Content analysis has been made and thus data has been classified, organized and compared to meet the systematic objective and qualitative descriptions.

4.2. Research question one.

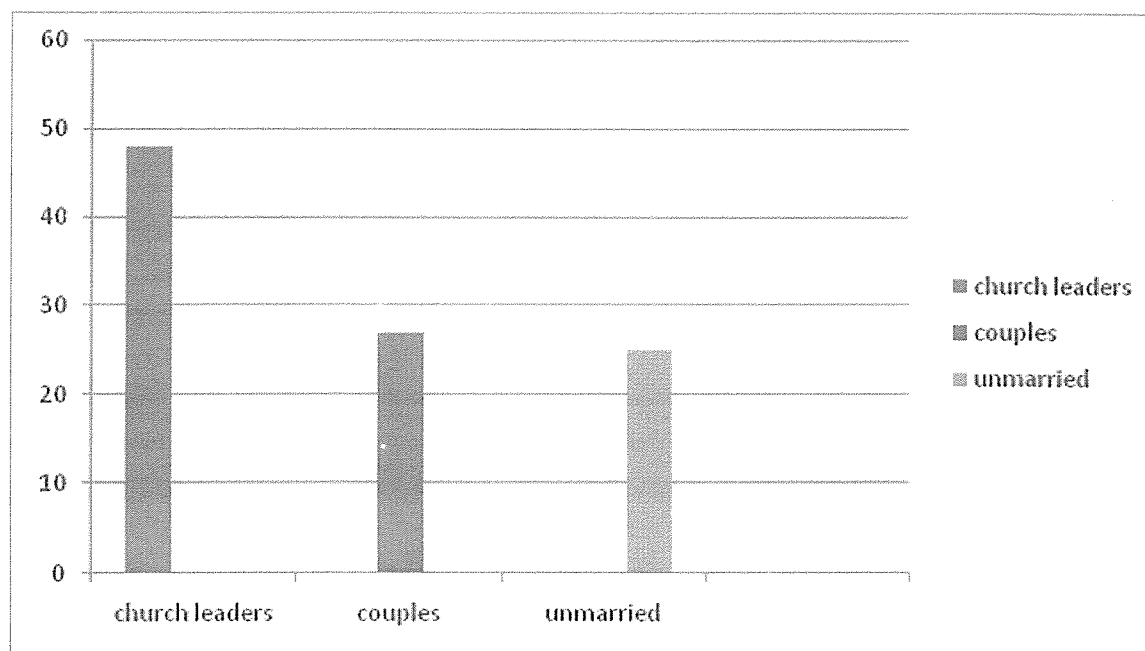
Table 4.1 showing category of target population is involved in the study

Category of respondent	Age bracket	frequency	Percentage
Church leaders	20-40	10	48
Couples	20-40	30	27
Unmarried	20-40	8	25
Total		48	100

Source: primary data 2010.

From table 4.1 the researcher observed that church leaders including, priests, pastors and other clergy men scored 48 percent in submitting their opinions on divorce and marriage separations, couples engaged in marriage deferred from clergy men and submitted in the second position with 27 percent and the rest of the unmarried commonly called the singles and searching like students and those courtship and dating come thirds rating at 25 percent respectively giving different views on devorvce, marrage longevity and weddings. This is clearly presented in a statistical form in the next page.

A Bar graph showing statistical submission of respondents' opinions on marriage in Ruhinda Sub County Rukungiri District.



4.3. Research question 2

Table 4.3 showing category of perceptions people have on Christian marriage

Category of respondent	frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	10	48
agree	30	27
Strongly disagree	8	25
Total	48	100

Source: primary data 2010.

Christian marriage remains a lifelong relationship between one man as a husband and one woman as a wife. Christians typically regard marriage as instituted and ordained by God. *In the New Testament, marriage is thought of as normal and proper it is to be "held in honor among all" and "for better or worse" both in joy and pain. It is for this reason*

that Jesus, in His answer to the Pharisees' question concerning divorce remarked thus, "..... for this reason a man will leave his father and mother and unite with his wife and the two will become one.... man must not separate, then what God has joined together". (Mark 10:7-9 GNB)

According to the response obtained from questionnaire the clergy men affirmed that is Marriage was instituted and ordained by God at the time of creation. This was after His observation that none of the creatures He had created was a suitable companion to help man (Adam) (Genesis 2:20-24 GNB). Christian marriage is built on the basis of Christianity and Biblical teachings.

4.4. Research question 3.

Table 4.4 showing category of role of Christian teaching in the survival of marriage

Category of respondent	frequency	Percentage
Church leaders	10	48
Couples	30	27
Unmarried	8	25
Total	48	100

Source: primary data 2010.

In the words of Adams and Joy (1986) define divorce as the official dissolution of marriage. This is a situation where a husband and wife decide to officially separate from each other after observing that marriage cannot work.

However, as many happily married couples noted that this is not God's original plan, for He purposed marriage to be eternal, permanent and lifelong. That is why Jesus taught that "what God has joined together let no man put asunder" (Mark 10:9) and that "any man who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery, and the man who marries a divorced woman commits adultery" (Luke 16:18). Therefore Christian marriages should be permanent and divorce should be avoided at all costs.

Further more the people interviewed seemed to suggest that if Jesus allowed one circumstance under which a Christian can divorce his wife (adultery). He therefore, taught the Pharisees that “whoever divorces his wife, except for unchastely and marries another wife commits adultery” (Matthew 5:32 and 19:9). Therefore unfaithfulness is the only reason under which a Christian husband can divorce his wife without offending Christianity.

From the analysis of the respondents findings , the researcher believes that this should be optional rather than a rule since Christianity and the Bible provide room for repentance and forgiveness as clearly stated in the gospel of (Matthew 18:21-35 and Hosea 3:1).

Though not married the single and searching youth seemed to appreciate and concurs with the significance of Christian marriage(wedding).this is evidenced by the perception held that holy marriage promotes faithfulness and trustworthy in marriages thus extending and granting marriage longevity.

4.5. Research question 4.

Table 4.5 showing category of *Christian teaching and the survival of marriage*

Category of respondent	frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	10	20.8
Agree	20	41.7
Strongly disagree	8	16.7
Disagree	10	20.8
Total	48	100

Source: primary data 2010.

Although different studies have been conducted in addition to the Bible to find out the role of Christian teaching in the survival of marriage. The opinions suggested by the

interviewed respondents indicate that Christianity encourages submission of wives towards their husbands and love of husbands towards their wives.

Further interpretation of the clergy men shows that marriage was prepared basing on Colossians 3:18-19 where Paul was encouraging marital harmony. Thus saying, “Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands, for that is what you should do as Christians. Husbands love your wives and do not be harsh with them”. Ephesians 5:21-33, Titus 2:3-5 and 1Peter 3:1-7 also encourage women submission and men’s love in relationships. These Christian teachings instill harmony and peace among couples.

Table 4.6 showing category of target population is involved in the study

Category of respondent	frequency	Percentage
Unhappily married	10	48
Happily married	30	27
Unmarried	8	25
Total	48	100

Source: primary data 2010.

The happily marriage couples pointed out that Christian teaching promotes and encourages monogamy which cements marital bonds. Their teaching is based on Genesis 1:26-28 where God created one woman for one man, blessed them and encouraged them to produce many children and Mathew 19:5 where Jesus quoted the O.T. scripture saying that, “for this reason a man will leave his father and mother and unite with his wife and the two will become one”. Jesus went on to say, “any man who divorces his wife for any cause other than her unfaithfulness, commits adultery if he marries some other woman” as referenced in the gospel according to (Matthew 19:9).

The researcher’s analysis of the interviews reveals that .Such Christian guiding principles help and encourage Christian couples to stay in peace and harmony. Christianity encourages the production of children in marriage and this creates a strong connecting link between the husband and the wife. In the Book of Genesis 1:27-28, God created

human beings, male and female, blessed them and encouraged them to produce many children such that their descendants will live all over the earth and bring it under their control.

Table 4.7 showing category of target population is involved in the study

Category of respondent	frequency	Percentage
Church leaders	10	48
Couples	30	27
Unmarried	8	25
Total	48	100

Source: primary data 2010.

At least 24 percent of the haply marriage couples agreed that Christianity encourages marital fidelity and faithfulness. The Book of Proverbs 5, 6:20-35 and 7 warns against adultery and discourages man to have sexual relations with another man's wife. Verse 15-20:5 emphasize love and marital faithfulness by encouraging couples, thus, "be faithful to your own wife and give your love to her alone children that you have by other woman will do you no good. Your children should grow to help you not strangers.

The fraternity of the unmarried class (those in courtship observed that to be happy with your wife and find your joy with the girl you married. Pretty and graceful as a deer. Let her charms keep you happy; let her surround you with her love. Son why should you give your love to another woman? Why should you prefer the charms of another man's wife?" Such stern warnings from the Lord are central themes of Christian teaching on marital fidelity which create harmony between couples and ensure the survival of marriage.

Studies by Duty and Guy (2002) point out that essentially all Protestant denominations hold marriage to be ordained by God for the union between a man and a woman. They see the primary purpose of this union as being to glorify and worship God by demonstrating his love to the world. Other purposes of marriage include intimate

companionship, rearing children and mutual support for both husband and wife to fulfill their life callings, visions and predetermined future prospects.

Therefore in conclusive remark it should be noted with emphasis that there are different and contrasting perceptions held by both Christians and non-Christians concerning Christian marriages. In his own words Hillary (1999) reveals that many people view Christian marriage as the most expensive form of marriage. This is because for a couple to be embraced and blessed by the church, the husband has to first pay bride price to the father of the bride which sometimes is too expensive, in addition to church requirements. This makes poor couples to shun church marriages and opt for cohabiting.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

5.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the whole research project sighting several recommendations, conclusions and suggestions for future research areas.

5.2. Summary.

In this study the researcher attempted to observe diverse perception and different understanding perspective of people towards marriage regardless whether holy or not, in any of the contemporary denominations and religious sects.

The research paper highlights the different opinions of people on the basic marriage virtues and cherished values expected by any happily married couple irrespective of the setting either in rural or urban communities but emphasis is placed in western Uganda, Rukungiri district in Ruhinda Sub County.

Further more, it is undoubtedly profitable that once the religious institution in conjunction with other local denominations in rural areas team up to ensure successful marriage then,, Uganda shall continue to enjoy the legacy and privilege of being the pearl of Africa symbolizing the moderate basic social cultural strengthen,

This project exhaustively explores ground based perception and views of different categories of people on the spiritual interpretation of marriage. The results from the feasibility study reveal most people interpret church marriage depending on the age.

5.3. Conclusion

It is not too late to achieve goals of a beautiful environment that can support future ages and decades of generations but the journey begins by embracing sustainable development approaches with out compromising environmental education programs the can champion sustainable use of mineral resources and enhance environmental stewardship,

responsibility as key virtues that contribute to sheer expediency to environmental protection and preservation of nature.

As Uganda responds to global challenges such as climate change, environmental pollution and increased demand of resources on the world market, more multidisciplinary farming approaches such livestock ranching, zero grazing, organic farming have to be considered as a substantial package suitable in enhancing environmental protection.

5.4. Future areas of research.

Despite of the interesting findings and implications of this research project a lot desire to be done to complement universal efforts relevant developing successful marriage relationship for the betterment of future generation

I therefore observe that educating local communities on the equitable use of natural resources be considered in future as study area.

The role of marriage relationship in enhancing social cultural ties should be undertaken as a potential topic for future research.

5.5. Recommendations

Our country needs to programs that enhance global cooperation and generation of global awareness on the diverse understanding of marriage the increasing rate of family abuses like divorce, separations and child neglect depicts urgency for Its all east African community states to embrace social cultural education as the basic strategy to be included in all school stages that is primary, secondary, university and tertiary institutions.

World citizens in both domestic, regional and transboundry or foreign countries have to realize the prime, marriage and basic family virtues such as stewardship, love, cooperation, togetherness and charity support.

The media fraternity such as press ,radios and television have to demonstrate sect oral support in enhancing massive awareness on social cultural issues like divorce, courtship

and marriage issues such deforestation and modern farming methods, thanks to Nile broadcasting service television (NBS) which is psychosocial support and campaign on Titles show. And vision vice radio that sensitize couples on marriage matters in between the sheets program.

Training of youth in courtship ,dating and those intending to have holy marriage should be undertaken as basic ethics which is the best alternative to adopt in fostering healthy family and marriage relationships.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Questionnaire

Dear respondent it is my pleasure to consult your opinion on the study entitled. Peoples perceptions towards Christian marriage. I request you to complement my efforts in this academic research by submitting your response and opinion in this brief interview.

The information obtained shall be for academic purpose only and confidentiality shall be ensured.

Respondent's background.

Please tick in the box for the right option.

1. Gender ☐ (3). Education level ☐
(a).female ☐ (a) secondary level. ☐
(b). male. ☐ (b).diploma. ☐
2. Age: ☐
(a). 20-40+ ☐ (c). Degree. ☐
(b). 50-80+ ☐

a).questionnaire for the unmarried people.

3. How relevant is church marriage to people i ☐ p (those intending to marry).

Strongly agreed ☐ strongly disagreed ☐

Agreed ☐ Disagreed ☐

4. What do you expect to achieve after wedding in church.

Strongly agreed ☐ strongly disagreed ☐

Agreed ☐ Disagreed ☐

5. Dose church weeding mean successful marriage.

Yes ☐

Reason

No ☐

Why if no.....

b).interview for the married couples.

1. Why did you choose to wed in church?

.....

.....

.....

2. How do you feel to be in holy marriage?

3. In your opinion why is divorce and marriage separation not good among couples?

.....

.....

4 What perceptions do people have on Christian marriage?

Strongly agreed strongly disagreed

Agreed Disagreed

5. What is the role of Christianity in the survival of marriage?

.....

.....

.....

.....

6. What factors influence the survival and success of marriage?

.....

.....

7. Do you allow divorce in your denomination?

Yes

Reason.....

No

Reason.....

c) Questionnaire for any church administrators (clergy men).

i). Name (optional).....

ii) Sex a) Male b) Female

iii). Age.....

iv) Name of church and denomination.....

v) Education background a) Primary b) Secondary c) Tertiary

d) None of these e) others (specify).....

vi) How long have you been married?

a) 0-3 years b) 3-6 years c) 6 years and above

1. Under what circumstances would you allow divorce?

.....
.....

2. How advantageous is church marriage to

a) The church.

.....
.....

b) to the family.

.....
.....

3, in your own option how different is church marriage from other religions

.....
.....
.....

4. How do you think local people understand holy marriage?

.....
.....
.....

Thank you for educating the nation.