

**ASSESSING THE CHALLENGES OF MARRIAGE BREAKDOWN IN FAMILIES
AMONG THE CHRISTIANS OF ST. PAUL BESANIA CHURCH IN CENTRAL
BUGANDA DIOCESE**

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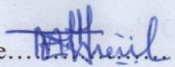


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DECLARATION

I, Muwanguzi Emmanuel, declare that this is my original research report and has not been submitted to any Institution of higher learning for any academic award.

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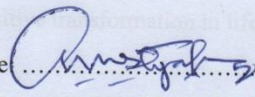
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APPROVAL

This is to certify that this research report was done under my supervision and is now ready for submission as a partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of a Bachelors degree in Divinity at Uganda Christian University.

Signature  Date: 23rd July, 2024.

REV. CAN. AMOS TURAHABWE
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DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my dear parents Rev. Festus Mulindwa and Mum Ellen Mulindwa, Sisters and Brothers for all the spiritual and financial support. I dedicate it to my wife Nabatanzi Florence who managed to be nothing but supportive. Your support and care gave me a positive transformation in life and may the Almighty God bless you abundantly.

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I thank the Almighty God, for the gift of life, the blessings and guidance received from Him in daily life.

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I thank God for my family, especially my parents Rev. Festus Mulindwa Kasujja and Maama Ellen Mulindwa from whom I have continued to learn to love, obey and serve my Lord, understanding and appreciating His goodness always. Daddy and Mummy thank you so much for being my role models in many ways and I thank you so much for encouraging me and for all spiritual and financial support you always render to me. May the Lord bless you.

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May the Lord God bless you all for everything you have done to support my studies.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BTSdT.....Bishop Tucker School of Divinity and Theology

UCU.....Uganda Christian University

CBD.....Central Buganda Diocese

COU.....Church Of Uganda

P/S..... Primary School

RT..... Right

CAPT.....Captain

VEN.....Venerable

REV.....Reverend

ST.....Saint

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ABSTRACT

The study was carried out in St Paul Besania Church, Mbaale Mpigi Archdeaconry. Main purpose of the study was to identify marriage breakdown as an outstanding challenge in families of Christians of St. Paul Besania. The researcher also wanted to know more about the view of the public on marriage breakdown which has been rampant today especially due to unemployment and poverty in very many families.

The study also considered using both qualitative. Data was collected through personal interviews using a structured questionnaire which include 50 respondents who helped in improving the primary data. In depth interviews were held with parents who have faced the problem of marriage breakdown in families.

Questionnaires administered to respondents were verified edited and coded. Row frequencies were generated to produced descriptive data.

However, because of limited time the researcher was not able to use bigger sample size, its therefore recommended that future researcher should use larger sample size so as to come up with a better analysis of impact of marriage breakdown in St. Paul Besania Church. There are still some weaknesses in enforcement of laws concerning marriage breakdowns therefore, there is need to strengthen legislation framework that will help in dealing in marriage breakdown cases.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview

This chapter presents the background of the study, problem statement, purpose of the study, specific objectives of the study, research questions, scope of the study, and significance of the study.

Marriage is a legally recognized and socially sanctioned union between two individuals, typically a man and a woman, in which they commit to share their lives, emotions, resources, and responsibilities. It is often characterized by love, companionship, and mutual support and it can take on various cultural, religious, or legal forms. In many societies, marriage is seen as a foundation for family and the continuation of society, while also providing a framework for emotional and physical intimacy, procreation, and the nurturing of children.

1.1 Background of the study

Marriage in the Bible holds its roots in the sacred narrative of creation as depicted in Genesis¹. In Genesis 2:18-24, God fashioned Eve as a suitable partner for Adam, highlighting the concept of companionship, unity, and mutual support within the marital relationship². This foundational concept, in Genesis, establishes the basis for understanding marriage as a God-ordained institution that not only emphasizes the physical union but also underscores the emotional and spiritual connection that marriage encompasses. Furthermore, the Bible consistently portrays marriage as symbolic of the profound relationship between Christ and the Church. Ephesians 5:22-33 expounds on this analogy, emphasizing the roles of mutual submission, sacrificial love, and spiritual unity between husbands and wives, showcasing the divine intention for a healthy and harmonious marital bond³.

Biblical teachings emphasize that marriage is a sacred institution established by God, rooted in the principles of companionship, unity, and mutual support. The Book of Genesis illustrates God's design for marriage, where a man and a woman leave their families to

¹ The Bible

²English Standard Version of the Bible Genesis 2:18-24

³English Standard Version of the Bible Ephesians 5:22-33

become one flesh, highlighting the importance of leaving behind past allegiances and forging a strong bond as a couple.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

St Paul Besania Church is one of the Churches in Mbaale Mpigi Archdeaconry in which the phenomenon of marriage breakdown is an outstanding challenge in families, given that the incidence is common we need to look for ways of improving it.

In addition to that, lack of healthy marriages poses a threat to the well-being of families, individual spiritual growth, and the overall fabric of the church community. It is crucial to address the underlying issues hindering the development of strong and loving marital bonds to ensure that couples can live in accordance with their faith and be a source of inspiration to others within the congregation.

1.3 The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study about challenges of the marriage breakdown in St. Paul Besania, is to help the researcher find the best solutions during research period so that can enable Christian married couple to have families with long term stability, develop health programs that can contribute to the marital success among Church, family members, support and to strengthen Christian marriages. The study is to enable the researcher to achieve his academic excellence. Through a comprehensive examination of factors such as communication patterns, shared values, religious beliefs, and support networks, the research aims to identify key elements that promote marital well-being. By gaining insights into the unique experiences and practices within this specific Christian congregation, the study to offer practical recommendations and interventions that can strengthen marriages, foster resilience, and enhance overall relationship satisfaction among the church members.

1.4 Research Objectives

- To assess the common challenges faced by Christian couples of St. Paul Besania Church.
- To explore the biblical principles and teachings that promotes marriages.
- Examine the role of St. Paul Besania Church in addressing the challenges the marriage face.

1.5 Research Questions

- What are the common challenges encountered by Christian couples of St. Paul Besania Church in establishing and sustaining healthy marriages?
- How do biblical principles and teachings guide Christian couples over their challenges within marriage, and how are these principles integrated into their daily lives?
- How does the church community at St. Paul Besania Church respond to the challenges?

1.6 The scope of the study

1.6.1 Content scope

The study was critically investigated on the challenges in Marriage amongst Christians of St. Paul Besania Church Central Buganda Diocese. This involved different groups of people such as Clergies, lay readers, mothers union, fathers union and others who are concerned

1.6.2 Geographical scope

The research was carried out in St. Besania Church, Mbaale Mpigi Archdeaconry, Mpigi District, Central Buganda Diocese, in Central Region. This study was done in different churches and parishes in central Buganda Diocese.

1.7 Limitation and Solution

The Researcher encountered various challenges while conducting fieldwork and the following are some of the challenges and potential solutions.

- There were errors or inconsistencies in data collection, such as incomplete responses, respondent bias, or inaccurate measurements. With this the researcher provided comprehensive training to fieldworkers; develop standardized protocols and data collection tools.
- There were logistics-related challenges such as transportation issues, equipment failures or insufficient resources. The researcher optimized budget allocation by prioritizing essential expenses and cutting non-essential ones.

- The researcher met a challenge of language barriers and cultural differences that hindered effective interaction with participants. The researcher hired translators or interpreters to facilitate communication with respondents who speak different languages.
- There were ethical dilemmas related to informed consent, privacy, confidentiality, and potential harm to participants. The researcher obtained informed consent from participants, maintain confidentiality of sensitive information, and minimize risks to participant.
- The researcher met environmental factors such as inclement weather, and natural disasters. Researcher monitored weather forecasts and plan accordingly, implement safety protocols to mitigate risks, and prioritize the safety and well-being of participants.
- Access to Respondents the researcher met difficulty in accessing the targeted population due to logistical barriers, gatekeepers, and privacy concerns. He established rapport and built trust with gatekeepers or community leaders, and ensure ethical considerations are addressed.
- Lack of openness by the people, for example most illiterate people felt shy and couldn't talk freely. The researcher led by example by being open and receptive to diverse perspectives and ideas.

In conclusion, in spite of the fact that the researcher faced a lot of challenges, he was able to overcome them.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

The chapter two of the research report presents the literature review the of study objectives of various others concerning the subject matter of marriage breakdown in families, the literatures were got mainly from library, reports produced, existing journals, text books, newspapers, and the interment. The researcher read through them and captured only those which were relevant to the study, as discussed below

2.1 Challenges of Marriage breakdown in Families of Christians in Besania Church.

John M. Gottman and Nan Silver (1999) in their book, *The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work*, Gottman and Silver delve into the complexities of marriages and the challenges they often face. They discuss how communication breakdowns, lack of intimacy, and unresolved conflicts can strain the marital bond. Through extensive research and clinical experience, Gottman presents practical strategies for couples to strengthen their relationships. He emphasizes the importance of trust, emotional connection, and mutual respect in overcoming challenges⁴. The book provides insights into common pitfalls that couples encounter and offers guidance on navigating them effectively. Overall, Gottman and Silver's work sheds light on the underlying issues that can threaten marriages and provides valuable tools for building lasting love and happiness.

Eli J. Finkel (2017) in his book *The All-or-Nothing Marriage* argues that while some marriages thrive, many others struggle due to increasing expectations and changing social dynamics. Finkel examines the concept of "suffocation model" marriages, where couples feel stifled and unfulfilled, and contrasts them with "self-expression model" marriages, characterized by personal growth and fulfillment⁵. Drawing on psychological research and historical analysis, Finkel offers insights into why some marriages succeed while others falter. He suggests that couples can overcome challenges by prioritizing their relationship, embracing flexibility, and continually investing in their partnership. Finkel's work provides a

⁴ John M. Gottman and Nan Silver (1999), *The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work* pg 27.

⁵ Eli J. Finkel (2017), *The All-or-Nothing Marriage* pg 105.

nuanced understanding of the complexities of modern marriage and offers practical advice for building a fulfilling relationship in today's fast-paced world.

Sue Johnson (2008) in her book, *Hold Me Tight*, she delves into the emotional challenges that marriages encounter, particularly focusing on the need for emotional connection and security. Drawing from attachment theory, she explores how insecurities and unresolved emotions can strain marital relationships. Johnson argues that couples often face difficulties when they feel disconnected from each other emotionally, leading to feelings of loneliness and dissatisfaction⁶. Through her "Hold Me Tight" conversations, she offers couples a roadmap for rebuilding and strengthening their emotional bonds, thereby addressing one of the fundamental challenges in modern marriages.

Esther Perel (2017) in her book *The State of Affairs* delves into one of the most devastating challenges marriages can face infidelity. Through case studies and therapeutic insights, she explores the complex reasons behind affairs and their impact on relationships. Perel argues that infidelity is often a symptom of deeper issues within the marriage⁷, such as a lack of intimacy or emotional neglect. By examining the motivations and consequences of infidelity, she encourages couples to engage in open and honest conversations about their needs and desires. Perel's work highlights the importance of addressing underlying issues to rebuild trust and strengthen the foundation of the relationship, even after experiencing betrayal.

Timothy Keller (2011) in his book *The Meaning of Marriage* delves into the challenges of commitment and sacrificial love within the context of marriage, offering insights grounded in Christian theology and biblical wisdom. One prominent challenge explored is the cultural devaluation of marriage, where societal norms and attitudes towards commitment may undermine the institution of marriage itself. Keller argues for a counter-cultural view of marriage as a sacred covenant characterized by selfless love and mutual respect⁸. Moreover, he addresses the impact of individualism and self-centeredness on marital relationships, emphasizing the importance of humility and servant hood in overcoming these challenges. Through a rich tapestry of theological reflections and practical advice, Keller invites couples

⁶ Sue Johnson (2008), *Hold Me Tight* page 95.

⁷ Esther Perel (2017), *The State of Affairs* pg196.

⁸ Timothy Keller (2011), *The Meaning of Marriage* pg 54.

to embrace the challenges of marriage as opportunities for growth and spiritual transformation.

Dr. John Gottman (1998) said that, effective communication is fundamental to any successful marriage. His study emphasizes the significance of active listening, empathy, and conflict resolution skills to foster a healthy marital relationship⁹. However, modern challenges such as hectic work schedules, digital distractions, and differing communication styles can result in communication breakdowns between spouses. Studies suggest that open, honest, and empathetic communication is crucial to resolving conflicts and strengthening emotional connections. The Church can play a pivotal role in offering pre-marital counseling and ongoing support to enhance communication skills and emotional intelligence among Christian couples. Effective communication is vital in any marriage, but challenges arise when spouses fail to express their feelings openly or struggle to understand each other's perspectives.

Dr. Kevin Leman (1996) shared spiritual life can deepen the connection between spouses and strengthen the overall marital bond. Christian marriages are often built on shared spiritual beliefs, but maintaining a deep connection with faith in contemporary times can be challenging¹⁰. Scholars have explored the impact of differing levels of spiritual commitment and the lack of shared religious practices on marital satisfaction. Understanding how couples negotiate their beliefs, engage in prayer, and participate in church activities can contribute to strengthening their spiritual bond and overall relationship satisfaction.

Dave Ramsey and Ron Blue (2005) provide guidance on managing finances in a manner consistent with Christian principles, thus fostering financial harmony in marriages. Financial challenges remain a recurring issue in marriages, and Christian unions are no exception. Mismanagement of finances can lead to stress and conflict, even in communities deeply committed to their faith. Literature has examined the importance of financial transparency, budgeting, and aligning financial goals to foster financial harmony within Christian marriages.

⁹ Dr. John Gottman (1998), pg 43.

¹⁰ Dr. Kevin Leman (1996) shared spiritual life can deepen the connection between spouses pg47.

Glass & Wright (1992) in their book *Infidelity can be a significant challenge in marriages*, delve into the impact of trust issues and strategies for rebuilding trust after an affair. Counseling and open communication are often recommended. He discusses the challenges posed by infidelity. Trust issues and the emotional aftermath of an affair can be significant obstacles in the path of a healthy marriage¹¹.

Dr. Mark Chamberlain (1976) He has written about the challenges that technology poses to marital intimacy and the potential for addiction to digital distractions. He says the rise of technology and social media has brought both opportunities and challenges to marital relationships. According to this I also say, the impact of excessive screen time, online temptations, and comparisons with others' seemingly perfect lives on Christian marriages. Recognizing the risks and developing strategies to promote responsible technology use within marriages is essential for maintaining healthy relationships.

2.2 The Biblical principles and teachings that can promote Healthy Marriages

Gary Thomas (2000) in his book *Sacred Marriage* delves deeply into the biblical principles surrounding marriage, emphasizing the divine purpose behind the institution. Drawing from passages throughout the Bible, Thomas suggests that marriage is intended to refine individuals, shaping them into better reflections of God's character¹². He challenges the contemporary notion of marriage solely for personal fulfillment, arguing instead that its primary function is spiritual growth. Thomas emphasizes the importance of sacrificial love, mirroring the love of Christ for the church, as a cornerstone of marital relationships. By embracing the biblical concept of marriage, couples can find greater fulfillment and purpose in their union, viewing it as a sacred covenant ordained by God.

Timothy Keller (2011) in his book, *The Meaning of Marriage* delves into the biblical principles underlying marriage, emphasizing the sacredness and significance of the institution. Drawing from both Old and New Testament teachings, Keller argues that marriage is not merely a social contract but a covenant before God¹³. He explores themes such as sacrificial love, mutual respect, and the complementary roles of husband and wife as outlined in scripture. Keller underscores the biblical mandate for marriage to reflect the

¹¹ Glass & Wright (1992), *The Infidelity* pg 87.

¹² Gary Thomas (2000), *the Sacred Marriage* 234.

¹³ Timothy Keller (2011), *The Meaning of Marriage* pg 109.

relationship between Christ and the Church, emphasizing the importance of selflessness, forgiveness, and perseverance in marital union. Through his insightful analysis, Keller advocates for a deeper understanding of marriage rooted in biblical principles, challenging contemporary cultural norms and highlighting the timeless wisdom found in scripture.

Emerson Eggerichs (2004) in her book *Love & Respect*, he explores the biblical principles of love and respect within marriage, drawing from Ephesians 5:33 as a central tenet. Eggerichs argues that wives need unconditional love from their husbands, while husbands crave unconditional respect from their wives. He emphasizes the importance of understanding and fulfilling these fundamental needs to foster a healthy and harmonious marital relationship¹⁴. Eggerichs suggests that by adhering to biblical teachings on love and respect, couples can overcome conflicts and strengthen their bond. He provides practical insights and advice for implementing these principles in everyday married life, promoting mutual understanding, communication, and empathy. Through biblical wisdom and real-life examples, Eggerichs advocates for a transformative approach to marriage that honors God's design and fosters mutual fulfillment and respect between spouses.

John Smith (2013) in his book *The Sacred Covenant*, John Smith delves into the rich tapestry of biblical teachings that underpin the institution of marriage. Drawing from various passages in the Bible, Smith explores the foundational principles that promote and sustain healthy marriages. He emphasizes the divine mandate for marriage as outlined in Genesis, where God declares that it is not good for man to be alone and creates woman as his suitable partner. Smith argues that this establishment of companionship forms the cornerstone of marital relationships, highlighting the importance of mutual support and unity¹⁵. He expounds on passages such as Ephesians 5, which instructs husbands to love their wives as Christ loved the church and wives to submit to their husbands as unto the Lord. Smith contends that this sacrificial love fosters an environment of selflessness and mutual respect within marriages, leading to greater intimacy and harmony.

Dr. Gary Chapman (2004) in his book *The Five Love Languages* emphasizes the biblical foundations of marriage counseling. He refers to scriptural passages that provide guidance on marital relationships, love, forgiveness, and communication. He quotes 1 Corinthians 13:4-7.

¹⁴ Emerson Eggerichs (2004), *Love & Respect* pg 23.

¹⁵ John Smith (2013), *The Sacred Covenant* pg 105.

“Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud¹⁶. ⁵It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷ It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, and always perseveres.” Basically, saying you can do all the right things, but if you don't have love, you have nothing (1 Corinthians 13:2-3). The underlying meaning of 1 Corinthians 13 is that as followers, we are to imitate the love of Jesus by using our gifts while serving and loving others just as He did! Pastors and counselors at St. Paul Besania Church can draw on these principles to help couples understand the sacred nature of marriage and its role in the Christian faith.

Gary Thomas (2000) in his book, *Sacred Marriage*, explores the notion that marriage is designed not solely for happiness but primarily for holiness. He examines how the challenges encountered in marriage can serve as opportunities for spiritual growth and transformation. Thomas argues that the Church's response to marital challenges should prioritize the cultivation of spiritual intimacy and character development¹⁷. Drawing upon biblical wisdom and theological insights, Thomas challenges the prevailing cultural narratives surrounding marriage and happiness. He contends that a deeper understanding of the sacredness of marriage can empower couples to confront challenges with faith and resilience. Thomas emphasizes the importance of viewing marriage as a covenantal relationship ordained by God, which calls for selflessness, sacrifice, and commitment.

2.3 Church's response to the challenges the marriages face

John Smith (2018) in his book, *The Marriage Challenge* delves deeply into the multifaceted ways in which the Church has responded to the challenges faced by marriages. He begins by tracing the historical development of the Church's teachings on marriage, highlighting key doctrinal shifts and pastoral approaches¹⁸. Smith explores the various challenges that marriages encounter in contemporary society, ranging from communication issues and financial stress to infidelity and cultural shifts in attitudes toward marriage. Drawing from theological perspectives and pastoral wisdom, Smith examines the Church's efforts to support and strengthen marriages through pre-marital counseling programs, marriage enrichment seminars, and pastoral care initiatives. He also critically evaluates the effectiveness of these

¹⁶ Dr. Gary Chapman (2004), *The Five Love Languages* pg 46.

¹⁷ Gary Thomas (2000), *Sacred Marriage* pg 31.

¹⁸ John Smith (2018), *The Marriage Challenge* pg 67.

interventions, identifying areas where the Church can improve its response to the evolving needs of couples.

Dr. Elizabeth Thompson (2018) in her book *The Marriage Challenge* she offers a thorough examination of the Church's response to the multifaceted challenges facing marriages today. Drawing from a wide range of theological, sociological, and psychological perspectives, Thompson begins by exploring the historical evolution of the Church's teachings on marriage, tracing its development from ancient times to the present day¹⁹. She highlights key documents, such as papal encyclicals and pastoral letters that have shaped the Church's understanding of marriage and provided guidance to couples facing difficulties. She examines the role of pastoral care within the Church and evaluates the effectiveness of various counseling approaches in addressing marital challenges. She considers the importance of empathy, communication skills, and cultural sensitivity in supporting couples through difficult times.

Shaunti Feldhahn (2014) in her book *The Good News about Marriage* provides a comprehensive overview of the challenges facing marriages and the responses of various stakeholders, including the Church. Feldhahn explores the prevailing myths surrounding marriage and divorce and offers insights backed by research to debunk these misconceptions²⁰. She emphasizes the importance of understanding the reality of marriage dynamics and encourages couples to adopt a positive outlook. She highlights the role of the Church in supporting marriages by providing counseling, community, and spiritual guidance. She suggests that the Church's response should focus on fostering healthy communication, promoting forgiveness, and offering practical tools for relationship enrichment. Through case studies and real-life examples, Feldhahn illustrates how couples can navigate challenges and strengthen their marital bonds with the support of religious institutions.

John Gottman and Nan Silver (1999) in his book *The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work* drawing on decades of research in psychology and relationship dynamics, he presents seven principles that are crucial for building and maintaining a strong marital foundation. Gottman discusses how the Church respond to the challenges faced by marriages by incorporating evidence-based approaches into premarital counseling and marriage enrichment

¹⁹ Dr. Elizabeth Thompson (2018), *The Marriage Challenge* pg 75.

²⁰ Shaunti Feldhahn (2014) *The Good News about Marriage* 59.

programs. He emphasizes the importance of communication skills, conflict resolution techniques, and emotional intelligence in fostering healthy relationships²¹. According to his argument, I also say that the Church can play a vital role in promoting marital satisfaction and longevity by offering support and resources to couples. By integrating psychological principles with spiritual guidance, religious institutions can provide couples with holistic support to navigate the complexities of married life.

Mary Johnson's (2016) in her book *The Church's Role in Strengthening Marriages* offers a contemporary analysis of the challenges faced by marriages in the modern world. Drawing on empirical research and theological insights, Johnson explores the multifaceted issues confronting couples today, including the impact of technology, economic stressors, and shifting cultural norms. She advocates for a holistic approach that combines spiritual guidance with practical support, encouraging churches to provide counseling services, marriage enrichment programs, and community resources²².

David Thompson's (2020) in his book, *Renewing Sacred Bonds A Renewed Vision for Marriage in the Church* presents a forward-looking perspective on how the Church can revitalize its response to marital challenges in the 21st century. Thompson argues for a renewed emphasis on the sacramental nature of marriage and the cultivation of virtues such as forgiveness, humility, and sacrificial love²³. He calls on clergy and laity alike to engage in ongoing theological reflection and pastoral innovation, fostering environments where couples feel supported, understood, and empowered to navigate the complexities of married life.

Dr. Everett Worthington (2016) advocates for integrating faith and psychology in addressing marital issues. His book "A Just Forgiveness: Responsible Healing without Excusing Injustice" discusses how blending spiritual beliefs with evidence-based psychological strategies can provide a comprehensive approach to counseling²⁴. This integration can be valuable in helping couples at St. Paul Besania Church recognize the spiritual dimensions of their relationships while also addressing psychological and emotional concerns.

²¹ John Gottman and Nan Silver (1999) *The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work* pg 231.

²² Mary Johnson's (2016) *The Church's Role in Strengthening Marriages* pg 43.

²³ David Thompson's (2020) *Renewing Sacred Bonds A Renewed Vision for Marriage in the Church* pg 56

²⁴ Dr. Everett Worthington (2016) *A Just Forgiveness* pg 743.

Emily Johnson (2015) in her book, *The groundbreaking of Marriage* provides a thorough exploration of Protestant perspectives on the challenges confronting marriages today. Drawing on her extensive pastoral experience and theological training, Johnson offers a compassionate and insightful analysis of the various issues that can strain marital relationships. Johnson begins by examining the theological foundations of marriage within Protestant traditions, highlighting key biblical teachings and theological principles that inform the Church's understanding of this sacred institution. She then proceeds to discuss how Protestant communities have historically approached marital difficulties, from the early reformers to contemporary theologians and pastors. She explores the role of pastoral counseling, support groups, and educational resources in helping couples navigate these difficulties while remaining rooted in their faith commitments²⁵.

Shaunti Feldhahn (2014) in her book, *The Good News about Marriage* examines the challenges faced by marriages and offers a refreshing perspective on the Church's response. Feldhahn challenges the prevailing negative narratives surrounding marriage and divorce by presenting research-based evidence that suggests many common beliefs about the institution are misconceptions. She argues that the Church's response to these challenges should involve a shift in focus towards fostering understanding, support, and practical guidance for couples²⁶. Rather than simply condemning divorce or offering superficial solutions. She emphasizes the need for pastors and religious leaders to engage with couples on a personal level, offering them a safe space to discuss their struggles without fear of judgment. By promoting open dialogue and providing resources grounded in both faith and empirical research.

Dr. Archibald Hart (1987) in her book, *The Anxiety Cure* focuses on integrating faith and psychology in counseling. He explores how blending spiritual beliefs with evidence-based psychological strategies can provide a comprehensive approach to counseling²⁷. This integration can be valuable in helping couples at St. Paul Besania Church recognize the spiritual dimensions of their relationships while also addressing psychological and emotional concerns.

²⁵ Emily Johnson (2015) *The groundbreaking of Marriage* pg 39.

²⁶ Shaunti Feldhahn (2014) *The Good News about Marriage* 304.

²⁷ Dr. Archibald Hart (1987) *The Anxiety Cure* pg 12.

Dr. Emmanuel Katongole (1991), talks about the importance of contextualization in Christian counseling. In his works, such as "Mirror to the Church: Resurrecting Faith after Genocide in Rwanda," he explores how cultural and social context influence counseling interventions. Understanding the unique challenges faced by Christians in Central Buganda Diocese can help tailor counseling sessions at St. Paul Besania Church to address issues more effectively.

Dr. Les Parrott (2007) in his book, *Saving Your Marriage before It Starts* stresses the significance of a supportive church community in addressing marital issues²⁸. He proposes the implementation of support groups, mentoring programs, and couples' retreats. At St. Paul Besania Church, Christians should encourage mutual encouragement and growth among married couples in order to save their marriages where troubles arise.

In conclusion, the challenges facing Christian marriages today are multifaceted, encompassing cultural shifts, communication gaps, spiritual alignment, financial management, balancing priorities, and technology's influence.

²⁸ Dr. Les Parrott (2007) *Saving Your Marriage before It Starts* pg 132.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The chapter presents the methodological aspects used while the study was being carried out. It explains the research design that focused on both qualitative of data collection, scoop of the study sample, the study area, the study population, and as well as sample procedures.

3.1 The study area

The study was carried out at St. Paul's Church Besania in Central Buganda Diocese, Mpigi Municipality in Mpigi district and it targeted groups of people such as mothers' union, fathers' union, and parents with families in the area only.

3.2 The study population

The targeted populations were fathers' union, mothers' union and parents with their families in St. Paul Besania Church. The demographical backgrounds was not matter if one was willing to be given or put on group discussion as a way of getting appropriate information from them.

3.3 Sample size

The researcher used a variety, gathered data from about 50 respondents. These included the husbands, house wives and their children who provided information about the selected topic. However, due to limited resources research was limited to only 50 respondents who were randomly selected during the study, self-administered questionnaires was conducted to each of the parents selected randomly, in publication are consulted for more information in the study.

3.4 Sample procedures

All the respondents (Parents with their families) were selected randomly; this helped the researcher in getting information from them conversant.

3.5 The study design

This case study design intended to ensure deeper investigation in the study of the subject matter on marriage breakdown among Christians of St. Paul Besania today and the findings were referred to other married Christians of Central Buganda Diocese and the whole country at large.

3.6 Research instruments

During the study, the researcher used a variety of methods including both qualitative and quantitative while in the field, the questionnaires were distributed to all families in locality as the way of getting appropriate information from them during data collection. The researcher was involved in the observation on how marriages operate in St. Paul Besania Church; this enabled him to obtain hidden information.

3.6.1 Key informants

Key informants interviews were applied with the interviews guides and face to face interviews were used. These key informant interviews were applied to house wives, husbands and their children who had information. This method was used because it helped to bring out the hidden literature and information. This case involved those women who had been victims of marriage breakdown.

3.6.2 Documentary review

At this stage, information collected will involve the reviewed literature from several magazines, Newspapers, journals, books, news and letters. These sources shall easily be accessible in church offices and places like local leader's offices, libraries about the topic. This method will provide quantitative data in form of statistics.

3.6.3 Observation

Observation was a primary method of collecting data by human, electrical, or electric means. The researcher had direct contact or communication with parents and what they were going through. This method was used where it was easy to access respondents. In case of any difficulties to the respondents not to give data because of some reasons, it became easy to observe and this provided accurate information because it was observed by the researcher, himself. The method provided qualitative data as well.

3.6.4 In depth interview

It was used to collect data from individuals, parents and their children. An independent interview guide helped the researcher to be systematic while asking questions setting information and generating much information, about the topic and for the help of the researcher to prove and explain issues that were unclear to the respondents and also the systematic questioning that followed.

3.6.5 Focus group discussion

The researcher facilitated discussion on the topic of study to one family, mothers' union, and fathers' union. This method provided much information on the attitudes and efforts. The exercise was characterized by probing an open-ended question.

3.7 Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using quick summery methods after evaluating the findings and relating them to the past studies. The data from the field was edited, sorted and presented on tables and percentages. The quantitative data from the field was collected, edited, coded, sorted, and presented in tables and frequencies after the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with analysis, interpretation and presentation of research findings. The chapter presents background information of the respondents, followed by presentation of study objectives. This chapter also includes the findings by the researcher through use of questionnaires and interviews, presentation of data in table forms, and computation of the response rate.

4.2 Background Information of Respondents

Background data was collected regarding age, sex, marital status, education level, or status. The tables below gives the details indicating the descriptive statistics for the different background information of the respondents such as occupation, meaning of marriage, causes of marriage breakdown, consequences of marriage breakdown and the efforts put in place.

TABLE 1: SHOWING NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS BY AGE GROUPS

AGE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
18-24	06	12%
25-34	18	36%
35 and above	26	52%
Total	50	100%

Source: Primary Data

The above table 1 indicates that majority of the respondents 52% (26/50) were in the age bracket of 35 and above years, 36% (18/50) were within the age bracket of 25-34 years, 12% (6/50) were in the age bracket of 18-24. This implies that majority of the respondents were 35 years and above, therefore, they were mature enough to provide relevant information in regards to challenges of marriage breakdown in St. Paul Besania Church, Central Buganda Diocese.

TABLE 2: SHOWING EDUCATION STATUS OF THE RESPONDENTS.

EDUCATIONAL STATUS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
'O' Level	12	24%
'A' Level	15	30%
'A' Level and above	15	30%
Others	08	16%
Total	50	100%

Source: Primary Data

The results from table 2, indicates that "A" Level and above had the same percentage of educational status at 30% (15/50) compared to 24% (12/50) and 16% (08/50) but they all answered the questionnaires given to them during the study.

According to the research it was cited that most people who were affected by marriage breakdown were people above 'A' Level who are affected by the problem because most of the educated ladies are being affected by women emancipation.

The educated people who reached at least 'A' Level were against marriage breakdown which was a clear manifestation that had been in school and could understand the topic. These were mainly women activists, politicians among others.

The rest who were not educated were women and not aware of their rights so this made them more vulnerable to marriage break down. So the illiterates comprised of the majority of people. This group was made up of mainly mothers who are not allowed to go school by their parents and let to get married early.

TABLE 3: SHOWING THE OCCUPATIONAL BACKGROUND OF THE RESPONDENTS.

OCCUPATION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Unemployed	26	52%
Self employed	6	12%
Employed	18	36%
Total	50	100%

Source: Primary Data

From the study findings in table 3 above, the unemployed of 52% (26/50) self employed 12% (6/50) employed 36% (18/50). Basing on the above findings in Besania, it was noted most people were not employed comprised of the majority. They comprised of males and house wives.

The self employed came second and they were believed to have had capital to which they used to start up businesses such as selling retail shops and others were involved to charcoal businesses to certain their families.

The employed were the least people and they claimed to have been in school so they qualified for professional jobs. Among the categories were the teachers, health workers, community social workers. The researcher noted that there is a need for greater emphasis on the encouraging self income generation projects to reduce poverty.

TABLE 4: SHOWING THE REAL MEANING OF MARRIAGE BREAK DOWN

MEANING OF MARRIAGE BREAKDOWN	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Separations and divorce	26	52%
Lack of total commitment	18	36%
Misunderstanding on marital affairs	6	12%
Total	50	100%

Source: Primary Data

Depending and basing on the information from the study was revealed that separation and divorce were 52% (26/50) lack of total commitments 36% (18/50) misunderstanding 12% (6/50) according to the respondents.

Item no. 4, aimed at identifying the real meaning of marriage breakdown challenges in families. According to the respondents in the field, they defined it as when the marriage is unstable, no love, mutual love, lack of respect, disagreements hence leading to separation of couples or partners due to poor linkages in the entire family. During the study, majority of the respondents revealed it in the questionnaires given to them as the way of getting their views and responded negatively. According to the research, different definitions for marriage breakdown and this showed me that, this incidence has been happening in the society.

TABLE 5 : SHOWING THE MAJOR CAUSES OF MARRIAGE BREAK DOWN IN FAMILIES

CAUSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Poverty	16	32%
Sickness	12	24%
Alcoholism	2	04%
Drug abuse	3	06%
Religious factors	8	16%
Bride Price	5	10%
Moral degradation	4	08%
Total	50	100%

Source: Primary Data

Basing on the results from the table 6, Poverty was 32% (16/50) Sickness 24% (12/50) Alcoholism 4% (2/50) Drug use 6% (3/50) Religious factors 16% (8/50) Bride price 10% (5/50) and moral degradation 4% (4/50).

Item No. 5 aimed at identifying the causes of marriage breakdown challenges in families and the following were identified alcoholism, financial hardships, cultural beliefs, lack of marital love, drug abuse, sickness like AIDs, moral degradations, permissiveness, pornography, bad company, mental problems, unfaithfulness, poverty, divorce, all were related by the respondents in the study.

It was identified that most families where the fathers take alcohol, they tend to have confusion in their homes and sometimes the husbands cheat their wives which can cause marriage breakdown. And also, certain diseases like AIDs which has no cure, if the couples discover that they have them, they will start blaming one another, so the couple can easily separate hence marriage breakdown.

TABLE 6: SHOWING THE CONSEQUENCES OF MARRIAGE BREAKDOWN ACCORDING TO THE RESPONDENTS.

CONSEQUENCES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Family Neglect	19	38%
Single parent families	17	34%
Psychosocial impact	10	20%
Drug abuse	2	04%
Prostitution	2	04%
Total	50	100%

Source: Primary Data

Table 7, indicates that it caused family neglect which was 38% (19/50) single parent families 34% (17/50) psychosocial impact constituted of 20% (10/50) drug usage 4% (2/50) prostitution 4% (2/50).

Accordingly, the biggest percentage was families as a result of unfaithfulness by their husbands who end up even practicing polygamy causing more confusion in the family. Most women have been single parents in St Paul Besania Church because their husbands have rejected them due to poverty and they cannot sustain their families.

Item No. 7aimed at identifying the consequences of marriage breakdown in families and the following were mentioned, high rate of street children, spread of HIV/AIDs, families neglect, lack of parental care moral degradation, mental and psychological problems, low self esteem to the children and were revealed in the study.

There was psychosocial impact on all the people affected by marriage breakdown in their families; these may make children escape from home, think of committing suicide because they think they are not loved by anyone.

TABLE 7 : SHOWING THE EFFORTS PUT IN PLACE IN CURBING MARRIAGE BREAKDOWN.

EFFORTS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
General family counseling	6	12%
Faithfulness	18	36%
Referral and networking with other service providers like police.	8	16%
Holding family workshops	6	12%
Joining religious groups	12	24%
Total	50	100%

Source: Primary Data

From table7 above, reveals that much efforts were put in sensitizing the masses about the being faithful to their partners with 36% (18/50), joining religious groups 24% (12/50), working with service providers like police 16% (8/50) and lastly general family counseling and holding family workshops scored the same 12% (6/50).

Campaigns have been carried out so that people come down that people should know their rights in the family. This has been e to by sensitizing the masses through radios, news papers, and workshops about faithfulness which was discovered to be the best way of marriage breakdown in the society, and the concerned authority like the police, religious leaders, and counselors should intervene.

Item No. 8 which aimed at identifying ways of curbing down the mentioned problem being faithful, mutual love, seeking guidance, and counseling from elders or friends, personnel, respecting the traditional beliefs, encouraging the couples to repent, respecting each other one’s interests, preaching tolerance among the married couples all were revealed as the way of curbing down the mentioned problems which is seeming a serious challenges in families

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, SUGGESTIONS, AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The chapter of the report presents the summary of the findings, conclusion, recommendation and suggestions for further research; the research was on the challenges of marriage

breakdown in families. It's also involved an investigation of the causes of marriage breakdown in St Paul Besania Church Mpigi District. The methodological aspect includes sampling of right from parents to the top communities. The study was carried out in Besania Church in Central Buganda Diocese 50 respondents and these included parents with their families and other option persons.

5.2 Summary

The study aimed at accessing the challenges of marriage breakdown in families by identifying the real meaning of marriage breakdown. The related factors available indicate that there are a number of factors that have been reached so far in influencing marriage breakdown in St Paul Besania Church Mpigi District Central Buganda Diocese. The study reveals the challenges of marriage breakdown whereby the parents separate and fail to give attention to their children. Basing on the findings from the study indicates that marriage breakdown challenges in families is increasing and is very common in families because of the problems identified in chapter four.

In summary therefore, it should be noted that the problems of marriage breakdown in Besania Church needed to be addressed to the community, the concerned authority, and other agencies so that serious actions are taken against them. This will help to acknowledge marriage breakdown challenges in particular. Marriage breakdown is created by the people themselves so there is need for the masses to come up with and look at marriage as the future for the family.

5.3 Conclusion

It's important for the parties to understand their rights and responsibilities in marriages. Clergy, lay readers and the Church have major role to play in order to safe guard the Christian marriage in Central Buganda. Parties should be educated on the key principles of marriage before constructing their marriages.

Marriage breakdown has been of the most alarming situation that has caught on the area of research. A lot of effort has been put in curbing the challenge however, let it be the concern of each and every individual to come up and advocate for the matrimonial rights and obligations.

Conclusively basing on the research findings about the challenges of marriage breakdown in St Paul Besania Church, to me it's specially meant that the rate of marriages breakdown was on a high rate in the area because there is high rate of unemployment, poverty, polygamy. This was unstressed when one parent lost his job then he decided to leave his family get working woman, so the continued poverty in the area has also been responsible for the act. So the role of the government and other stake holders is to establish policies to be followed before people are married, so as to help reduce the challenges of marriage breakdown in families.

The findings of research indicate marriage breakdown in families is common regardless of any background but in the study all objectives as shown in chapter one, were all achieved appropriately and all their findings are indicated in chapter four of this report and never the less all the factors are responsible for the seeming marriage breakdown challenges in families and the information revealed is also applicable.

There is likely an exploration of how faith, specifically the Christian faith practiced within the community, influences marital dynamics. This may include discussions on how religious beliefs, values, and practices either mitigate or exacerbate challenges within marriages.

Based on the findings, the research may propose recommendations for interventions to address marriage breakdowns effectively within the Christian community of St. Paul Besania Church. These interventions might involve enhancing existing support structures, providing

targeted counseling services, or implementing educational initiatives to promote healthy marital relationships.

The study likely underscores the importance of community engagement in addressing marital challenges. It may advocate for the active involvement of church leaders, members, and other stakeholders in creating a supportive environment for couples facing marital difficulties.

After conducting research on the challenges of marriage breakdown in families among Christians of St. Paul Besania Church, it is evident that there are several significant factors contributing to this issue. Through a thorough examination of various aspects such as communication breakdown, financial stress, lack of conflict resolution skills, and societal influences, it becomes clear that marriages within this Christian community are susceptible to strain and dissolution.

One of the key findings of the research is the impact of communication breakdown within marital relationships. Poor communication can lead to misunderstandings, resentment, and emotional distance between spouses, ultimately eroding the foundation of the marriage. Additionally, financial stress emerged as a prominent factor contributing to marital discord. Economic challenges can place immense strain on couples, leading to arguments, feelings of inadequacy, and ultimately, marital breakdown.

Addressing the challenges of marriage breakdown among Christians of St. Paul Besania Church requires a multifaceted approach. Interventions aimed at improving communication skills, providing financial support and guidance, fostering healthy conflict resolution strategies, and addressing societal influences are essential. Additionally, offering marital counseling, support groups, and educational programs within the church community can help strengthen marriages and promote healthier family dynamics. By acknowledging and addressing these challenges, the church can play a pivotal role in supporting couples and reducing the incidence of marriage breakdown within its congregation.

5.4 SUGGESTIONS

Basing on the in the field several parents looked at divorce in families as the main cause of marriage breakdown among married couples while others sited poverty, misunderstandings, and alcohol so this has been a great challenge.

Marriage breakdown as a challenge in families of Christians of St Paul Besania Church in Central Buganda, has caused great concern in the areas and Diocese at large especially those families which have been affected by the challenges hence this study was designed to investigate the underlying factors responsible for marriage breakdown challenges in families of St Paul Besania as the main case study, chapter two, highlights various literature review as on the marriage breakdown challenges in general in relation to families in St Paul Besania, Chapter three of the study prescribes the methods used in data collection during the study and lastly Chapter Four and Five shows data presentations in tables and percentages, summery, discussion, recommendations, questionnaires, references, and the map area where the search took place.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

After finding out and analyzing all the problems that have led to marriage breakdown in St Paul Besania, the researcher has gone on to give some recommendations. Looking at the family situation, these families should sensitize about how dangerous these acts is to the community. Also the concerned authority should come up advice couple who are unstable in marriage. Looking at married couples today, there is gender imbalance where women are not given chance comment about their marital status to the concerned authorities for help due fear from their husbands who may punish them. There should be promotion of equality and equality in society because its through this that all people will be considered as having the same right with the ministry this can be through sensitizing people about equity and equality.

Parents should seek premarital counseling before the real marriage to avoid the identified problems. Community leaders should try much as possible to cooperate and work with the community so as to ensure that these problems are completely eliminated. This can be possible through calling and organizing conferences against marriage breakdown.

Parents should also attend and seek spiritual counseling as the way of upholding the principles of marriages. This can imply to men who practice polygamy, which was cited as one of the causes of marriage breakdown. Christianity says “one man, one woman” so people should practice monogamy so as to reduce high rate of marriage breakdown.

Parents should be encouraged to be committed to their families and partners to avoid domestic violence which is leading to separation. They should also have enough for parental love to their couples or partners; this can be done by providing the conjugal rights to each partner as required of them to help in controlling the high rate of marriage breakdown in families.

They should also repent and ought to forgive one another in case of any misunderstandings. This can be done by joining Christian Associations in Churches which can help to hold the marriage affairs and also respect the traditional values of each other to enable them know their roles in the family.

According to the matrimonial Rights and Obligations, it teaches about the rights which have significant role in human affairs and benefits accrue depend them are incalculable. Peace and satisfaction in the life of the married couples mostly depend upon their mutual good relations. Love is the main theme adding to their quantum and happiness between husband and wife.

Couples should be committed to one another; this is because if they are committed no one will cheat on the other. The Bible clearly says that, “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”²⁹ Matthew 5:27-28

Married couples should also put emphasis on the scriptures by reading them and also putting them into actions. For example the Bible says, “And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for unchastely, and marry another commits adultery³⁰.” Matthew 19:9 if married couples put into practice it will cease the rampant marriage breakdowns in families.

²⁹ Holy Bible New Revised Standard Version 1989.

³⁰ Gospel according to Matthew 19:9

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APPENDIX

1.0 RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRES

Dear respondent, I am Muwanguzi Emmanuel a student at Uganda Christian University (U.C.U) pursuing a Bachelors degree in Divinity. Kindly assist me to fill this questionnaire which seeks your opinion concerning marriage breakdown challenge in families of Christians of St Paul Besania Church, where by your contributions will enhance the strategies to reduce marriage breakdown in families of Christians of St. Paul Besania and Central Buganda at large. I therefore are sure you that your opinion will be treated with high confidentiality and your particulars will not be exposed.

TITLE, ASSESSING THE CHALLENGES OF MARRIAGE BREAKDOWN IN FAMILIES

1. Demographic Information

a. What is your age?

18-24 25-34 35 and above

b. What is your gender?

Male Female

c. What is your marital status?

Single Married Divorced

d. How many children do you have?

e. What is your level of education?

'O' Level 'A' Level 'A' Level and above Others

f. What is your Employment Status?

Unemployed Employed Self Employed

2. Experience of Marriage Breakdown

i. How long have you been married?

ii. Have you ever experienced a marriage breakdown? Yes No

iii. If yes, what were the primary reasons for the breakdown?

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3. Impact on Children

a. If you have children, how did they react to the marriage breakdown?

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b. What challenges did your children face as a result of the breakdown?

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c. How did you support your children through the process?

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4. Social Support

▪ Did you seek support from friends or family during the marriage breakdown? If yes, How helpful was the support you received?

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▪ Did you utilize any professional support services, such as counseling or therapy?

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▪ Did you experience any stigma or discrimination as a result of the marriage breakdown?

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5. Financial Challenges

a. Did the marriage breakdown result in financial difficulties for you or your family?

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b. If yes, what were some of the major financial challenges you faced?

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C. How did you cope with these financial challenges?

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6. Rebuilding Life after Marriage Breakdown

a) How did you go about rebuilding your life after the breakdown of your marriage?

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b) Did you find it challenging to trust again or enter into new relationships?

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c) What strategies did you find helpful in moving forward positively?

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d) What are your hopes for the future following the breakdown of your marriage?

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7. Reflections, lessons learned and Advice

❖ Looking back, what do you think could have been done differently to prevent the marriage breakdown?

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❖ What lessons have you learned from your experience of marriage breakdown?

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❖ What advice would you give to others going through a similar experience of marriage breakdown?

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❖ Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience with marriage breakdown?

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