

**UGANDA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY-MBALE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
THE IMPACT OF CHILDLESSNESS ON MARRIED COUPLES IN
AKOROMIT SUB COUNTY, KAPELEBYONG DISTRICT**

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCE IN PARTIAL
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ABSTRACT

The general objective of the study is the impacts of childlessness on married couples in Akoromit Sub County. Having seen that this type of study was not conducted in this area, there was a need to do it as the only way to bridge the gaps amongst couples, like communication gap, integrity /respect and love in families. The amount of pain, emotional trauma and psychological torture that the childless women go through is unquantifiable and immeasurable. Because of the stigmatization of women and the pressure on them they are often driven to consult in darkness spiritualists and native doctors. Some women suffer abuses also at the hands of these spiritualists and native doctors. Some are raped and forced to succumb to various demands of these spiritualists.

This study was guided by the following three standard objectives and these are; to explore the causes of childlessness on married couple couples in Akoromit Sub County, to assess the impact of childlessness on married couples who are childless in Akoromit Sub County and to determine the solutions for the families which are childless in Akoromit Sub County? A case study was used for the research design. It was a qualitative approach used for data collection. A sample size of 10 respondents was selected for the discussion. Indeed the impact of childlessness on married couples has affected the lives of people whereby it's seen that some chose voluntarily not to have children and some involuntarily.

DECLARATION

I **AJUMO PROSSY** hereby declare that this report is my original work and it is not plagiarized and has never been submitted to any other institution for any academic award.

Signature:.....

Date:.....

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REG: S21/MUC/BSW/002

APPROVAL

This is to certify that this research report has been done under my close supervision and is now ready for submission to the Department of social science of examination with my approval.

ACADEMIC SUPERVISOR

Signature:.....

Supervisor's Name: PIMER JESSICA UKOKU

Date:.....

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my beloved sons, may they emulate hard work from me as their mother for the success in future. God bless you all.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

My sincere thanks and gratitude go to the Almighty God as my comforter and helper, the over seer and the one who gave me wisdom and intelligence to reach this far and be able to complete this report.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

FP	:	Family Planning
DHS	:	Demographic Survey
RH	:	Reproductive Health
WHO	:	World Health Organization
GBV	:	Gender Based Violence
HIV	:	Human Immune Virus
AIDS	:	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
HH	:	Households

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CHAPTER ONE:

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This study seeks to explore the impact of childlessness in Akoromit sub-county, Kapelebyong district. In this study childlessness will include couples who do not have biological children, single women who have failed to have their own biological children. The study will not include male participants because African culture believes all men are able to have children look for a study to support this saying). Women and men who made informed decisions not to have children through various means of prevention will not be part of the study. Having children in marriage is seen as the cream of every African marriage (Molofu,1989).

Childlessness in Men

Fatherhood is not as central to the male identity in Karamoja society; males are not exempt from the influence of social culturalization. The essence of masculinity, as taught by society, is a man's ability to demonstrate strength, virility, and potency. However, the infertile man fails to demonstrate these characteristics. As a result, male clients typically report feeling the loss of their identity as a man, a husband, and as a potential father, both by society and by themselves. In essence, they are faced with a potential loss of their manhood (Doreen, at el Wendy, 2004.). Thus, childlessness also attacks the core of the male identity, but in a slightly different way than it does for females. According to(Ofwono, 2002) childlessness of the male as a result of childlessness is often not acknowledged and is less visible. Further, there are other socially sanctioned ways in which men can mask their childlessness. Childless men may therefore be less traumatized. However, in cases where the childlessness of a man is known in the society, such man may also suffer different kinds of trauma and stigma. According to (Upton, 2001) in Karamojasociety, childless men have lesser status in the community compared to their peers with children and their views may not be considered or they may not be allowed to contribute to societal discussions. The Effect of Childlessness on the Couple Relationship, Childlessness often comes as an unexpected shock to most couples. For many, having children is not a question of if, but when. Differences in the way couples commonly view childlessness can lead to tension and anger in marital

relationships. According to (Wilson & Bernard 2004, 399) infertile couple goes through feelings of disbelief, denial, anxiety and loss of control, isolation and guilt. One woman in their study stated, I was angry at him, because I didn't think it really affected him like it did me. I just felt that his life was good and my life wasn't. A man in the same study commented, would get upset with me, saying you don't really seem to care; you don't seem to take interest in this. (Fred William 1985) reported that almost 50% of women considered childlessness the most distressing experience of their lives, compared to only 15% of men. Also (Abel 1988) found that wives considered childlessness an enormous role failure, while husbands perceived childlessness as a disconcerting event, but not a tragedy.

Childlessness in women

For women in the study, it was found that sexual satisfaction was the only variable that was predictive of marital satisfaction, suggesting that the quality of a women's sexual relationship is linked to the overall adjustment of her marriage. The authors concluded that although childlessness was a stressful experience for both men and women and had effects on their sexual functioning, it did not positively or negatively affect their levels of marital satisfaction. The experience of childlessness by childless women in Karamojongis marked by various kinds of social, economic and emotional consequences. Those experiences are in many ways similar to those of childless women in other cultures. What Karamojong childless women share with other childless women is the feeling of low self-esteem due to their childlessness? They are often described as being **hollow** "empty", barren or wasted and arid (Gerald 2002) observed that the vast majority of these childless women made no distinction between failed bodies and failed selves. They seem to experience childlessness as a generalized role failure, not just as a failure of the body". Similarly, the feelings of guilt accompanying distress have also been found in studies of childless women in Karamojongcommunity Divorce, abandonment and remarriage by husbands are more frequent outcomes of childless women.(Mariano, 2004) explanation of the status of married women in the family identifies the root cause of the problem. In her ethnographic study on marriage, she points to the „stranger“ role of a newly-wed woman in her in-laws house. This woman must prove her usefulness as a woman, in order to contribute to the prosperity of her in-laws“ family. The main way to show this is to give birth to a baby. If she fails in this task, she remains a permanent stranger in the family, and continues to hold a low status. Through bearing a child a newly-wed woman

gains acceptance and this is an experience that a childless woman never feels. Even according to (Ogutu,1996) observed that in societies where motherhood is the synonym of womanhood, childlessness destroys the identity of a woman as a woman. Women are ostracized from the community and are blamed for their reproductive failing. They are seen as less worthy than other women, due to their barrenness as well as poorness, and are held responsible for fixing their improper feminine organ“ themselves. In Karamoja community, it is also the case that mother hood International is the synonym of womanhood.

1.2 Background to the study

The history of childlessness started long time ago in the bible where these women were undergoing pain and sorrow because of having no child as seen below.

1.2.1 The Biblical context

Abraham and Sarah

Biblically it's said that Sara was childless, this made her to lose hope that she could not have any child again in her marriage, she opted for her maid Hagar. (genesis11:30).

Being a woman who was submissive to her husband Abraham and always called her “my lord” meaning she loved him a lot she told him to produce with her, and of which Abraham and Hagar begot Ishmael after the permission from his wife at the age of 86years.Genesis 16:1-end.Here now God blessed Abram and Sara and made them to change their names to Abraham and Sarah. They were blessed with a boy called Isaac meaning laughter. (Genesis 17:1-end)

Hannah and Peninnah

In the bible there was a man from Ramathaim called Elkana who had two wives called Hannah and Peninnah. From these two women Peninnah had children and this caused her to mock Hannah. This provoked her to pray while crying to God Almighty. According to 1Samuel 1: One day Eli the high priest got her praying bitterly and he asked her are you drunk? She replied No, and then he asked her that what could be the problem as to why you are praying like these? Then answered that am not leaving here until God answers me. Eli the high priest blessed her and told her that her faith has saved her now go in peace knowing God in heaven has already answered request. Having

dedicated herself in prayers Hannah finally begot Samuel meaning I asked from God(1 Samuel 1:1-end)

Elizabeth-A mother to John the Baptist

Mary mother to Jesus was a sister to Elizabeth who is the mother to John the Baptist, she stayed too long without having any child and the angel of the Lord appeared to her saying woman blessed are you because you will have a baby boy who will preach about the coming of the messiah for the world, there Elizabeth did not believe within herself she answered to the angel in a laughter that how possible is it. But short period of time she produced John who baptized Jesus Christ. Today many Christians believe that the bible teaches that children are a gift from God and it is His plan for everyone to have them. Childlessness is therefore often seen as God's punishment for certain sins that the barren must have committed. (Mathew 3:1-end, mark 2:3)

1.2.2 Childlessness at a global level

According to Phillip,(2001)European countries- German-speaking countries seem to be at the forefront of this development as more than 20 % of the women living in Germany, Switzerland, and Austria who are reaching the end of their reproductive period will remain childless. (garnons 2017) But other European countries, such as the UK and Finland, also report high levels of childlessness. Eastern and Southern Europe did not have high levels of childlessness a decade ago, but are now seeing steady increases.

This book provides an overview of the recent trend toward a "Life without children" across Europe. It seeks answers to questions like: What are the determinants of childlessness in the 20th century? Is there an unbroken trend in childlessness, or is there evidence of trend reversals.(Okure 1978) Besides that, according to (Bildad,(1897). How does the likelihood of remaining childless differ across social strata? To what extent do economic uncertainties affect childlessness? How do fertility desires evolve over the life course? To what extent does the situation of a woman's partner affect her fertility decisions? How far can we push the biological limits of fertility? What role can assisted reproduction play in reducing childlessness? How many men fail to have children of their own? What impact can family policies have on fertility decisions? Can governments reverse the trend towards childlessness and, if so, should they?(Burton wills, 2018) Wide spread permanent childlessness is a relatively recent phenomenon. In these countries the shares of women

who remain childless have been increasing rapidly. In Italy, for example, childlessness skyrocketed to 20 % among the cohorts born around 1965 (Tanturri at elMencarini 2008). Meanwhile, in Belgium, France, and the Scandinavian countries, childlessness has remained comparatively low. An exceptional case is Finland: in the Nordic context, Finland has always had relatively high levels of childlessness. Recent data for Finland show that childlessness in that country is still rising; thus, it appears that the gap between Finland and the rest of the Nordic states is expanding (Rotkirch at elMiettinen,2012)

In his broad overview of fertility trends in 28 European countries, Sobotka concludes that because of the recent increase in childlessness in southern Europe and in the former state socialist central and eastern European countries, childlessness is converging at high levels in Europe. From a global perspective, significant developments can be observed in Asian countries, and particularly in Japan, too, where childlessness has been increasing among recent birth cohorts (Frejka et al. 2010; Raymo et al. 2015). However, we also see some signs of a reversal of this trend, as childlessness appears to be gradually declining among the younger cohorts in a number of countries, including the UK (Berrington, 2019). The US also had high levels of childlessness for decades, but recent evidence indicates that the trend is reversing in this country as well

1.2.3 The Place of Children in African context

African society is structured largely around the lives of its children. Across the continent, children represent continuity with rituals and contemporary institutions designed to ensure children's survival and prosperity. At the same time, children are viewed in many African cultures as crucial to family survival itself, in that they help maintain household economies through their cheap labor in the home, in family agricultural or food-processing activities, or in trade or artisanship (Children and Childhood). According to (Mbiti, 2011) he conveyed the importance of childbearing in African marriages, stating: "Marriage and childbearing are the medicines against death. While death continues to demolish life, marriage and childbearing keep ahead of it all the time" parts of Africa) people marry because they want to have children. This is the principal aim.

Having many children is necessary for the prolongation of the tribe or community. Also (Turaki 2000) he says that the African man has to have children to continue the survival of his family. It is firmly believed that Children are gifts from God, the gods and ancestors. (Gaskiyane,1997) elucidates: "In traditional cultures the greatest desire and requirement is to have children, East

African Journal of Traditions, Culture and Religion, especially male children, to be heirs of property" In this context of Africa, (Waruta at elKinoti) further contend that "Not only is the birth of a child important amongst the African people, but the gender of the child is also important. Male children are valued, especially in many patrilineal African societies". Shorter, "polygamy serves the prosperity and growth of the extended family and provides status and support for women in societies where they have no vocation other than marriage and the bearing of children to their husband's lineage." Besides that,(Egede, 1999) corroborates these ideas in affirming that children are seen as reincarnations of the ancestors, they add procreation value to life and serves as the link between the unborn and the Dead. As a complement,(Mbiti1991) notes the following about children: the product of marriage is children; children seal the bond of marriage, children are signs of longevity for parents and perpetuate the family line, children bring glory and wealth. In Urhobo culture or tradition of the Niger Delta region of Nigeria, the names given to children reveal the value and place of children in the society. Names such as: Omonigho (child is bigger than wealth), Omowho (the child is a person), Emokiniovo (children are brothers), Emorurukpe (children of light), Emamo-emo (good children), Emorirhe (children have come), etc.

All these names indicate the value that is placed on children and their place in society. Children, especially male children were also valued for their economic purposes. In traditional African societies, rural communities and in the hinterland in Africa, agriculture whether farming or fishing was the major source of income and sustenance of the family. Children were needed to enhance labour and productivity. (Baloyi, 2013) he asserted that: "In most African cultures men (males) are generally to be the breadwinners. Stock and crop farming were the common means of survival, and both require strength and labour". Without children, there will be no future for the family, ethnic group, community, etc. Children help in household chores, and in the neighborhood and in the farmland and fishing activities. As the children become adolescents and young adults they apprenticed and learn various skills in the community. It is children who become young persons and adults and takes over responsibilities from their aged parents. Life was supremely valued in Africa and it is expected that children will grow old, become aged, live long lives and die at old age. Dying as a child was seen as a curse. Children are not giving proper burial. They are hurriedly buried without any proper ceremony or rites. It is a bad omen shunned by every family and African people. The birth of children brings great joy to the African community, but any mishap in pregnancy or death of the child is intolerable and unacceptable. Prayers and various rituals are

performed to ensure that the pregnant woman delivers safely. Even,. It is to the abuse, plight and predicament that they face that this piece now turns. Childless women are made to face a lot of abuses.

When a woman is unable to have children, some African men turn to polygamy. The man is often pressured by his family members and even friends to take another wife. Polygamy has many negative effects on the childless woman. Many women in Africa also suffer from the negative effects of polygamy. (Baloyi2013) he cites Yamani to presents thefollowing definition of polygamy: “From its Greek origin, the word polygamy is understood in the broader sense to include any simultaneous multiple marriage unions for one person, such as female polyandry and male polygamy”. The just mentioned author citing Yamani states that: “however, the word polygamy is used ...to describe the state of a man having more than one woman, including the religious, legal and customary aspects of these unions”. Polygamy is a form of marriage in which a man is married to more than one wife. One of the reasons for polygamy is childlessness. Because of the great value placed on children as necessary for the sustenance of the family and community, when in marriage there are no children some African men quickly take more women in order to give birth to children. In African East African Journal of Traditions, Culture and Religion, traditional culture recognizes that infertility is a very good reason for a man to marry another wife. Polygamy suffers from a lot of pressure. There is competition in the family over economic resources that are often scarce. The childless woman is often verbally abused and called evil names by the man or the new woman (co-wife) of the in-laws. At times the bedroom is taken over by the new wife and the first or earlier wife is sent to the boy’s quarter or other rooms outside the main house. The childless woman is humiliated and disgraced. Still on the negative effects of polygamy, (Baloyi, 2013)he quoted that the ideas from Struensee that: “Among the things that a critical evaluation of polygamy helps us to see is that not only does it encourage the treatment of women as inferior beings, but it also foments rivalry between wives and forces many women to share already scarce resources with co-wives and their children.

1.2.4 Childlessness in Uganda

It’s noted that today in this society when two marry and fail to get the children a woman to a larger extent is highly blamed as the major cause but not a man. This has been strengthened by (Lamunu 2001), Long time ago in African traditional society a woman who does not bear children is

considered as a reproach, no man wanted that type in the society. This study adopted a qualitative phenomenological design to analyze the cultural values of children among infertile couples. The study was carried out in Lira. Also according to (Okwera 2000), the region is said to be the fifth-highest user of contraceptives among couples in Uganda, with a total fertility rate of 4.4, the seventh-lowest in the country. The district is home to many cultures, many clans of which are Langi people. Although the majority of the people are adherers of the Christian and Islamic faiths, they firmly live by the tenets of the African culture chief of which are supernaturalism and patriarchy.

The value of children based on this perception can, therefore, be inferred from their capacity to ensure compliance with this religious order around which human existence revolves. This perception was well articulated by (Okwera at el Felicia 1998), a 43-year-old university graduate and an entrepreneur who has been married for 15 years. She affirmed that childbearing is a commandment while Okwera averred that a biological child fulfills that commandment. "A child is a commandment from God that everybody must have... God did not say that some, He said, be fruitful and multiply" "Having a child is a fulfillment of God's divine injunction to increase and multiply. God's plan for us all is to be fruitful and multiply" **Family sustainability.** The childlessness gives life satisfaction to some people while diminishing others, for whom parenthood was a personal goal. (Andrew, 2000) According to the world perspective study 1978, childlessness has been viewed as a public problem causing divorce, quarrels, fights and agony on married couples (blame on) affecting 56% of the families in the society. Clinicians and epidemiologists use the concept childlessness to mean difficulties to conceive by a woman or to impregnate a woman by a man thus no conception at least one year of attempting to conceive (Ogweng, 2007) In support to the above, (Aweko 1987) Also childlessness is a factor in low birth rates and population decline in an area and to the entire world, with which is associated in diminishing labour force entries and rising proportions in older ages.

Infertile couples may experience loneliness and isolation as they grieve through their sorrow, unfortunately couples whose communication patterns are poor often more likely to have greater feeling of discontent, which can be exasperated by physical, emotional and financial strain caused by childlessness. In that her human rights will be violated even when the etiology of the problem is not directly attributed to her. In view of these, women's health advocate and the Government at

various levels should Endeavour to provide adequate preventive and counseling service to improve the reproductive health and rights of women in Nigeria. (Okwonkwo 1989)It's almost always presumed that readiness for marriage is readiness for procreation, to get married is to contribute freely through procreation to the survival of the lineage and society at marriage both traditional and Christian, one of the most appreciated and common gesture of good will be shown to the newly married couples is praying for the fruit of the womb(may God give you children/twins/triplets) in your stay. You shall give birth to male and female, in the ninth month we shall gather to celebrate the new born as addition to the family,society and to the entire world. However, in these wishes the societal perception of marriage and the use of sexuality in marriage as primarily geared toward the begetting of progeny are encapsulated.

Note this: no one wants to be childless but it can be **VOLUNTERY** or **INVOLUNTARY** this study targets the couples of 35 years and above, majorly the rural setting.

1.3 Statement of the problem

As it is generally explained, childlessness at the global, African and Ugandan level is evidently seen and noted, so it is very necessary to carry out the study since its remote. Having registered quiet a big number of constant fights in homes due to childlessness on married couples it has led to gender harassments. According to the office of community development officer Akoromit Sub County, most women are beaten due to childlessness making one to be depressed, strained, and anxious and also develop health problems. However, women of this type wish to be surrogate mothers in their entire life. Childlessness is either voluntary or involuntary, urging governments to relieve suffering and ensure they adopt children(Surrogate mothers)

1.4 Research objectives

1. To explore the causes of childlessness on married couples in Akoromit Sub County.
2. To assess the impact of childlessness on marriage of couples who are childless in Akoromit Sub County.
3. To determine the solutions for the families which are childless in Akoromit Sub County?

1.5 Research questions

1. What are the causes of childlessness on the married couples in Akoromit Sub County?
2. What are effects of childlessness on married couples in Akoromit Sub County?

3. What are the possible solutions for childlessness on married couples in Akoromit Sub County?

1.6 Justification

This study truly shows that no research of this very type has been conducted in Akoromit Sub County, Kapelebyong district and it's necessary because of the following:

To examine the background of childlessness on married couples in Akoromit sub county.

It will guide other researchers to carry on another research.

It will guide the clan leaders

1.7 Significance of the study

The study was limited to Akoromit Sub County in only 5parishes and 30villages

It brings the stake holders on board to research on the current similar topics to improve on the wellbeing of the people in the society.

It helps the student to attain knowledge and understanding for acquiring the qualification of bachelor degree of social work and social administration

Social work and social administration since the skills have been improved.

1.8 The scope of the study

This will now help to find solutions for the causes of childlessness on married couples in AkoromitSub County, Kapelebyong district. The study was limited to Akoromit Sub County in only 5parishes and 30villages

The parishes include, Olekat, Kobuin, Aminito, Akoromit and Akore

It has been discovered that most families in this parishes are divorcing due to childlessness caused by their history, curses and others.

1.9 Conceptual frame work

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Independent variable

Childlessness

- ❖ Menstruation cycle.
- ❖ Infertile husbands.
- ❖ Still birth.
- ❖ Curses.
- ❖ Witchcraft.
- ❖ Accidents.
- ❖ STDs/STIs
- ❖ Miss courage.
- ❖ Historical background.

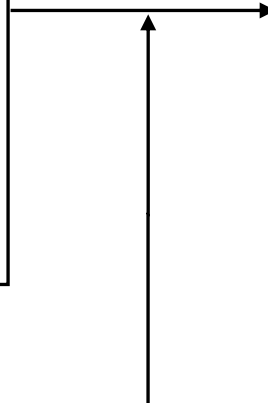
Dependent variable

Married Couples

- ❖ Gender base violence
- ❖ Alcohol/drug abuse
- ❖ Unfaithfulness
- ❖ Depression
- ❖ Anxiety
- ❖ Divorce
- ❖ Polygamy

Moderating factors

- ❖ Church
- ❖ In plant/artificial insemination
- ❖ Surrogate mothers
- ❖ Adoption



1.10 Key variables

Independent variable	Dependent variable
Childlessness	Married couples

1.11 key terms definitions of the topic

Childlessness

This is defined as the inability to conceive and bear children for the married couples.

According to (Taylor, 2012) he defined childlessness as lack of children for the couple in their marriage.

Also (Rev .Olise,2003) defined as it as a curse or punishment from God. And he elaborated it clearly that the punishment or curse can be due to abortion, witchcraft or misfortune, inheritance etc.

Besides that Dr. Eric 2011 also defined childlessness as an act of having no children, whereby it can be voluntary or involuntary.

Marriage

According to (Samin 2010) HE defined as a union between a man and a woman. It can be traditional, Christian or court

Biblically, also it's a covenant between the two people upon their agreement. Marriage is between a man and a woman as God ordained to be.

Couples

(Hagar 2011) These are fully and legally married people, thus between a woman and a man. A ward of certificate is given to them for recognition by theclan, court or church.

1.12. Conclusion of the chapter

The experience of childlessness by childless women in Akoromit society is marked by various kinds of social, emotional and economic consequences. Those experiences are similar to those in other cultures; these women always feel low self-esteem.

Divorce abandonment and remarriage by husband are more frequent outcome.

CHAPTER TWO

THE LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The general research objective of the study is to explore on the impact of childlessness on married couples in Akoromit Sub County. The literature will be reviewed within the context of this study objective and to establish the linkage between the independent and dependent variables. And this chapter will be organized in the following ways within the context of the conceptual frame work, and it points the knowledge gap that this study seeks to contribute.

2.2 To explore causes of childlessness on married couples

Childlessness is the term for people - men and women - having no children. Childlessness may have personal, social and/or political significance. According to (Davis at el nelson 2010) childlessness is caused by many factors in either male or female reproductive systems, however it is sometimes not possible to explain the causes of childlessness. Birth defects of reproductive system. In female its caused by tubal disorder such as blocked fallopian tube which are in turn caused by un treated sexually transmitted infections or complications of un safe abortion, postpartum sepsis or abdominal/pelvic surgery. In men, childlessness in men is caused by obstruction of the reproductive tract causing dysfunctional ties in the ejection of semen. The blockage can occur in the tubes that carry semen such as ejaculatory ducts and seminal vesicles. Blockages are due to injuries or infections of the genital tract. (Dr. Eric at el Robins, 2010)Excessive consumption of alcohol, some men and women kill their leisure time by drinking alcohol , not knowing that to some extent it leads to childlessness in marriage. In this region its seen that most people concentrate in getting money for buying alcohol other than eating balance diet to improve on their nutrition, instead spend much time in drinking which leads to the weakening of the lungs and destruction of the liver .Also family loss of money.(Maxwell ,1999)According to WHO childlessness is due to hormonal imbalances, disorders of the endocrine system causing imbalances of reproductive hormones. The endocrine system includes hypothalamus and pituitary glands examples of common disorders include the pituitary cancer and hypopituitarism. (Hurry, 2000)In African traditional society, witchcraft caused childlessness where by most people tend to tie peoples marriages because of jealousy making one to suffer in

the life. For this case it's the gods to decide about your birth.(okwonkwo,1998)Also in men and women, scarring from sexually transmitted infections, abdominal surgery or endometriosis.(whyclef,2013)Curses, these are wrong /bad statements declared towards one's life, this ends up affecting many generations of people if the same family lineage. Some couples have lacked children due to bad words declared to them by their relatives/parents and has ended up affecting their marriage (bonny at el Joshua 1998.)Smoking,today research has shown that, women and men who smoke are not able to concentrate on sexual intercourse since they feel a lot of back ache, loss of sexual desire, also smoke disorganizes the respiratory system make it unable to function normally leading to lung cancer.(bill, 2016)Accidents, according to(Ali,2022) he said that most people after getting accidents fail to produce especially if they get internal injury or damage of their reproductive organs like destruction of uterus in women leads to childlessness.Abortions, most women during their teenage age got excited and they conceived due to exposure, because the pregnancy is not planned for they end up aborting it. This bring tension whether the process was not safe during evacuation of the fetus.(Gym , 1999)Gender based violence, violence can be sexual harassments through rape, battering of women (primitive way of beating women) this constant fights led to torture and pain infliction on one) thus end up in destruction of one's body. Love in a family fixes all thing right.(Apex 2020) A settled mind is a settled family.

2.3 To Assess the Impacts of Childlessness on married couples

Psychological effect, People trying to cope with involuntary childlessness may experience symptoms of distress that are similar to those experienced by bereaved people, such as health problems, anxiety and depression (Stearns, 2009)Political Specific instances of childlessness, especially in cases of royal succession, but more generally for people in positions of power or influence, have had enormous impacts on politics, culture and society. In many cases, a lack of a male child was also considered a type of childlessness, since male children were needed as heirs to property and titles. Socially, childlessness has also resulted in **financial stress** and sometimes ruin in societies which depend on their offspring to contribute economically and to support other members of the family or tribe (Matthews, 1986). In the 20th and 21st centuries, when control over conception became reliable in some countries, childlessness is having an enormous impact on national planning and financial planning (Gilbert, 2007). **Associated Stigmas** In a society that encourages and promotes parenthood, with its current social norms and culture, childlessness can be stigmatizing. The traditional idea that couples should reproduce and want to reproduce is still

widespread in Nigeria. Childlessness is considered deviant behavior in marriage and this may lead to adverse effects on the relationship of the couple, as well as their individual identities when pertaining to the lack of children being involuntary. This transition is from the anticipated parenthood to an unwanted status of non-parenthood. Such a transition may require the individual to readjust their perspective of self and/or relationship role with their significant other (Miall, 1986). Education Childless persons tend to have higher level educations than those that do have children. Due to their higher education these childless couples also tend to have professional and managerial positions. Finances, As a result of their higher level educations, higher paying jobs, and dual income, childless couples tend to have greater financial stability as compared to those with children. On average, a childless couple spends 60 percent more on entertainment, 79 percent more on food and 101 percent more on dining out. Childless couples are also more likely to have pets and those that do tend to spend a good deal more money on them (Gilbert, 2007).

Social and Cultural Impacts of Childlessness on Married Couples According to(Ugwanyi 1999), the number of children a man has determines the socio-economic importance of the man. Childlessness **demoralizes** some of the affected couple's zeal to accumulate wealth, because they view that wealth accumulated would go to the community when they die, because of this, most of the couples squander their money while they are still alive. Measures the political strength by the number of children a man has, childless couples are not recognized in the society they find themselves in a political desert. (Ugwanyi,1999), explained that children help to render valuable services and this create source of income on their father's farm land, cattle, rearing and in agricultural pursuit, besides this, the females are source of income to their parents when they get married. Cultural beliefs come in various forms and the cumulative effect of these beliefs is a set of taboos and norms whose counteracting effect results in childlessness (Larsen, 1996). Analysis and findings has shown the perception of childlessness in sub-Saharan Africa and the adverse effect of this on women who takes **the blame for** couples childlessness. The findings agree with that of (Larsen, 1996; Dyer et al. 2002). The consequences of childlessness are more profound in women as compared to men (Inhorn 1994). It is generally believed that men cannot be infertile so far as he can sustain an erection. Fertility and potency are often thought to be synonymous.

According to Orubuloye et al Augustus(1996), if a man cannot father a child, a male member of the family can always assist him in doing so. This is done in the western countries and it is called sur

to one spouse, which is evidenced by the common practice of **divorce** because of childlessness. The findings are in keeping with other qualitative and quantitative studies which indicate an overwhelmingly negative implication of the inability to procreate (Sabatelli, 1988; Kemmann et al. 1998). Divorce, abandonment and remarriage by husbands are more frequent outcomes of childless women. (Mariano, 2004) explanation of the status of married women in the family identifies the root cause of the problem. In her ethnographic study on marriage, she points to the „stranger“ role of a newly-wed woman in her in-laws house. This woman must prove her usefulness as a woman, in order to contribute to the prosperity of her in-laws“ family. The main way to show this is to give birth to a baby. If she fails in this task, she remains a permanent stranger in the family, and continues to hold a low status. Through bearing a child a newly-wed woman gains acceptance and this is an experience that a childless woman never feels Childlessness in all its forms is seen as social deviance and it is socially unacceptable in marriage Several studies in sub-Saharan Africa have shown that being childless is traumatic to couples without children. It is seen as a major life crisis at the individual, family, and community level with seemingly insurmountable consequence It challenges their social and moral identities [In worse cases, infertile persons, especially women, are seen as harbingers of evil to people and communities Perceptions of the values of children are intricately linked with culture. In the European context, childlessness leads to poor communication between a man and a woman at home, poor communication to even the neighbors, friends and relatives since you feel it’s a reproach. (Edgar 2013).

These couples are already experiencing “bereavement for a person who has never existed” Regrettably again, women feel the pain acutely while their husbands share to a certain degree and the relations who never experienced the trauma of childlessness do not understand its weight. Instead of moving closer, the childless couples are often isolated in the Asian society where parenthood is encouraged and promoted (mark ,2017) Furthermore, the stigma of childlessness in Italy was clearly expressed by a childless woman in Rome by the name .Royna To her, “people will never give you respect,... You have no value. People insult you-‘You barren woman! You are useless!’ It’s horrible. And if you are not strong, you will not survive” (Golda,1998) the effect is mockery.

2.4 To determine the solutions for the couples which are childless?

According to (Dr.Jane,2018) the government has established clinics for in planting the children in Kampala-Bukoto. Where the couple is free to go for advice on how to get the child. This clinic they test the semen of men in order to find whether their sperms have tails, thus qualifying for in plant.here life continues after seeing that your wife is pregnant after in plant(artificial insemination) and even helps to determine the sex of the baby.Surrogate mothers, the government has established homes for nurturing the children such as ssanyu babies home in Kampala, Amecet babies home Soroti. where mothers without children are very free to register with the government as the only way to express their interest towards adoption of children. Child adoption must be a mutual understanding between a man and a woman for peace to rain in their marriage (Bridget, 2012).Practice self-compassion, a couple you must love you and act positively towards others and avoid comparing yourself with them. This brings peace and love within you. So you must acknowledge your feelings well.As acouple you must learn copying mechanism/ skills on how to manage stress. Be positive and accept the facts that you don't and will never and bear children in any time.To a larger extent, you must find your own therapist to administer medication; guidance and counseling to you as a couple which has failed to produce children. This specialist will help in all ways of your health. Gynecologist for women helps to address issues of the reproductive organs in women. the government must employ many of them in health centers. Accept the facts of life that with or without a child marriage must continue since it can be the plan from God for you not to have any.(Pr.Johnson 2013) here the church does not accept divorce because of that.Guidance and counseling ,Christian couples in Africa who are facing the challenge of involuntary childlessness. In other words the Lecturer in Pastoral Care and counseling, Psychology of Religion, Christian Ethics and Chaplain at The Nigerian Baptist does this great work as achurch.Prayers and fasting, according (Regin,2003) She encouraged all the Christians in Hungry to pray and fast as the only way to break the curses. This also encourages open doors for the hope of a child.In Nigeria, Ikoba clan the people pray to their gods of fertility and offer sacrifice in demand of the child, so this encourages all people to being offering their sacrifice to get the blessing of the child. (Ogubanali,2000)Burning of incest, this calls for faster blessing in a home of a childless couple as you believe Din Kumar the god of the moon and Kumari the god of the sun. (Umar,2022)

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.

3.1 Introduction

The main objective of the study was to explore the impacts of childlessness on married couples. To achieve the study objective, the researcher used qualitative methods of data collection, since interest was in the stories as told by people whose lives have been affected by childlessness. The chapter develops the research methodology creating the framework to build upon the research objectives and questions. The chapter was organized by the following sections: the research design, the area of study, the sources of information during the study, the study population and sampling techniques, variable definitions and measurements, the procedure for data collection, quality/error control, data processing and analysis, ethical consideration and methodological constraints and conclusion.

3.2 Research design

This design was chosen because it was appropriate in producing data required for qualitative analysis, allowing simultaneous description of views, opinions, perceptions and beliefs at a single point in time. It also allowed collection of views at a single point in time as it involved observation of all the population or a representative subset, at a defined time (Gay, 1996).

It also allowed quantitative analysis as cross-sectional studies collect data using questionnaires (Chris, 2004). Two approaches of data collection and analysis was adopted. The qualitative approach focused on obtaining data in form of statements from those involved in the situation under review. The respondents gave suggestions, opinions or strategies for achieving the results. The analysis of qualitative data provided the basis for in –depth understanding of the situation under study. The quantitative approach focused on descriptive and inferential statistics obtained from the responses of the sample. This approach produced results in form of tables which provided the basis for discussion and conclusions about the findings.

3.3 Area of study

The study was conducted in Akoromit Sub County located on the western part of Kapelebyong district;it's along the road as your heading to the district headquarters. Also 1KM away from the

main road, bordering ApeduruSub County in Amuria district.This was area because this kind of research has never been conducted from this place on the impacts of childlessness on married couples.

I also chose because most families which were childless, desperate and even faced the problem of gender based violence at home.

Table 1 :The table below shows the villages and parishes of Akoromit sub county.

S/N	Parish	Village
01	Kobuin	Moruapesur,Oderai,Aloetand Akisim, TikTik
02	Aminito	Arugwang, ArubelaA,OdusaiA,Odusai B
03	Akore	NapakA,Napak B, Market Cell,Ometwa
04	Olekat	Akworo A,AkworoB,Tobora A, Tobora B,Ometwa A, Matailong

Source: from Sub County (2023)

Table 2: The population of Akoromit Sub County

Parish	Male	Female	Total	Households	Childless House Holds
Kobuin	492	530	1022	204	12
Aminito	250	636	886	310	34
Akore	590	450	1040	112	10
Olekat	222	740	962	157	18
Akoromit	554	356	910	783	31
Total	2108	2712	4820	1566	107

Source: sub county/CDO office (2023).

3.4 Sources of information

3.4.1 Primary data

The origin of the data used was primarily from the field where I engaged the respondents in group focus discussions. I used interviews and observation method.

3.4.2 Secondary data

This data was got from the local government act, local council at the village level. It helped me to get enough information.

3.5 Population/Sampling

This research study only targeted only the married couples with the cases of childlessness in their families in marriage. Age brackets of 35-50 years thus this aimed at finding solutions for the problems.

3.5.1 Sample Size and Selection

The sample comprised a total of 90 community members; resident in the Sub County drawn from five parishes was studied. All these were childless married people; this size of the community members was determined by judgmental sample. This population was considered enough to give representative views. The total sample for both community members and key informants was 90.

3.6 Sampling Techniques

The researcher used different sampling techniques to select the respondents. These included simple random and purposive sampling.

3.6.1 Simple Random Sampling

According to (Levy at el Lemeshow 2013), simple random sampling is a subset of a statistical population in which each member of the subset has an equal probability of being chosen. A simple random sample is meant to be an unbiased representation of a group (Hayes, 2019). This study used simple random sampling technique from the existing probabilistic sampling techniques.

3.6.2 Purposive Sampling

According to Suri (2011), purposeful sampling is a technique widely used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich cases for the most effective use of limited resources. This involved identifying and selecting individuals or groups of individuals that were especially knowledgeable about or experienced with a phenomenon of interest (Cresswell at el Clark, 2011).

In this study, purposive sampling was used to select sub-county stakeholders both political and administrative and the opinion leaders to participate in the study.

This was due to their knowledge and legislative role at their levels respectively and have both local and technical information on the study. This technique was used following the postulate that if sampling has to be done from smaller groups of key informants, there was a need to collect informative data, and thus the researcher needed to select the sample purposively (Tongco, 2007).

In addition, snow ball sampling was used in the selection of respondents at community level (Ngoma 2010).

3.7 Variables and indicators

The procedure for the data collection was from the opinion leaders, religious leaders, local council through focus group discussion while in the field.

3.8 Measurement levels

3.8.1 Validity

Validity refers to truthfulness of findings, accuracy and quality of instruments used to obtain data about the phenomenon under study. Content validity which literally means the amount of substance in the study was measured under this study. Content related validity (CVI) was considered. The researcher ensured the instrument shaded equate traits through consultations with the researcher's supervisor, colleagues and a research expert. The research expert helped in strengthening the validity of the research instruments. The test of content validity was established through inter judge with two research consultants. Each rated the items on a two-point rating scale of Relevant (R) and Irrelevant (IR). The computation of CVI (Content Validity Index) was done by summing up the judges' rating on either side of the scale and dividing by two to get the average.

3.8.2 Reliability

The strategies used to obtain reliability were; peer debriefing, prolonged engagement and audit trails. The researcher tried to be responsive and adaptable to the respondents, holistic and ensure professional immediacy. Data was systematically checked, focus maintained, and there was identification and correction of errors. This helped to ensure establishment of accuracy of data collected.

Reliability was also obtained by carrying out a test of Reliability Analysis Scale (Alpha-coefficient) using SPSS. The instruments were found to be accurate in this study and there were

few adjustments to improve them. SPSS applied was because of its easy and automatic applicability and fitted a two or more-point rating scale. The instruments of their search were 14 questionnaires of the pilot study based on the Like type five-point scale.

3.9 Procedure for data collection

After the approval of the proposal by the University supervisor, a general letter of introduction was got from the Head of Department of social sciences to introduce the researcher to the Sub County Chief permitting her to carry out the study. Then the researcher went for introduction to the respondents and piloted the area under study and gave the respondents a letter of informed consent explaining to them the purpose of the study.

The researcher made appointments with the various respondents involved in the study concerning the time, date and place. Later the researcher distributed questionnaires to the respondents which contained both open and closed ended questions. Also interviews were conducted. In addition, during the study, confidentiality was highly promised and the information obtained was kept for academic purposes only. The procedure helped to improve the usefulness, timeliness, accuracy, comparability and collection of high quality for better analysis and reporting. The data collection instruments included the questionnaire, interview guide, documentary checklist.

3.9.1 Questionnaire

Questionnaires were used to collect data from various focus groups in the sub county. The questionnaire was used in this case because it has proved to be an invaluable method of collecting a wide range of information from a large number of individuals (Sekaran, 2003). The questionnaires were popular because the respondents filled them in at their own convenience and were appropriate for large samples. The questionnaires were designed with both open and closed ended questions as described by (Ammon 2005).

3.9.2 Interview guide

The researcher prepared and used an interview guide to conduct face to face interviews with key informants. These included sub-county stakeholders both political and administrative and the opinion leaders among others.

Interviews were chosen because they are thought to provide in-depth information about a particular research issue or question (Neale, 2006). In addition, interviews were chosen because they make it is easy to fully understand someone's impressions or experiences, or learn more about their answers as compared to questionnaires. According to (Rowley2012), interviews were advantageous in that they provide in-depth data which is not possible to get using questionnaires.

3.9.3 Documentary Review

This consisted of a list of documents (Sekaran, 2003) particularly concerning the impact of childlessness, which were directly relevant. Most of these documents were obtained from public libraries, Kapelebyong District.

In this case; textbooks, journals, magazines, theses, conference papers, newspaper articles, government reports, internet, and dissertations related to the topic under investigation as recommended by Amino (2005) were reviewed.

3.10 Quality errors control

This ensured the good quality of the data through reliability test, thus using the software and password. The data collection instrument used was the interview guide in a group discussion of 10 couples.

3.10.1 Validity

Considers how correctly the research tools measure what the researcher wanted to measure. Thus, validity was about the research tool being credible or trustworthy or being accurate or correct (Evans wills, 2014).After formulating the questionnaire, the supervisors and other experts reviewed the items and checked the language clarity, content comprehensiveness, and relevancy and how long the questionnaire is. To establish the validity of the instruments, the researcher used expert judgement as recommended by Gray (1987) as the best method for ensuring validity. Thus the researcher ensured that the instrument was clear, relevant, specific and logically arranged.

3.10.2 Reliability

A tool's reliability showed the extent to which it was free of errors and that made sure that there were continuous valuation across time and also across the various items in the instrument. This therefore means that a tool's reliability showed how stably and consistently the tool evaluates the

idea thereby helping to measure the worthiness of a measure (sawmill,2000). The researcher employed the test-retest reliability.

3.11 Strategy for data processing and analysis

Data analysis involved organization, categorization as per the themes or patterns in the data, and finally linking (Howe & Lewis, 1994). And Qualitative Data analysis was carried out.

3.11.1 Qualitative Data Analysis

In this study, qualitative data was analyzed used narrative analysis. This technique emphasizes studying the messages contained in the communications of the individual participants (Cortazzi, 2014) and categorizing them as per the themes.

The researcher read the written descriptions, summarizes them, relates participants' stories to discover differences and repeated similarities, and discovers how data relates to the participants, to the people and to their environment. Since the cardinal principle of qualitative analysis is that of relationships, then it was the best technique to assist this study in finding out the impact of childlessness in married couples.

Qualitative data processing

This was the process of bringing understanding and meaning to data collected for validity and reliability. Data collected from the field was first of all sorted, edited, coded and entered into in the computer using SPSS., This package was useful to the researcher to present data using tables, graphics and frequency tables and further helped the researcher generate descriptive statistics such as means and standard deviations . Qualitative data was analyzed and presented in form of texts and interviews, impressions, words, photos; symbols were examined and presented used descriptive or narrative method where the researcher presented detailed literature description of the respondents' views for the reader to make their opinions (Bell, 1993).

Closed-ended questions were recorded and then the answers to each question were checked for every questionnaire for used for calculating the percentage of participants who gave each response. For saving time and cost, they will be analyzed by generating quotations, single words and making brief phases. For individual interviews, these were used to produce data in the form of notes, a summary of individual interviews. The researcher wrote each question at the top of a separate

blank page or the coded sheet to make it easy for respondents to answer using their own words to save time and money.

3.12 Ethical consideration

The ethics/ protocols to be followed were the approval from the Sub County in order to create awareness to the community and also to get a letter of introduction from the sub county. The respondents also must consent; this helped to find out whether the respondent agrees/ disagree.

Confidentiality: Confidentiality was looked at by Oxford(2018) to mean information that was private not to be noticed. Whatever has been said in confidence must remain confidential. The researcher would assure the respondent that information was not to be passed on to another party (third party) without consent of the respondent. Their identity and response will be made confidential throughout. To ensure that, there was no plagiarism in the study, all work used in this book was cited for and referenced in order to ensure that originality was ensured while using other people's work proper citation. Further, voluntary participation will be observed where by respondents were not forced to participate in the study without their will.

3.13 Anticipated methodological constrains

Below were the challenges faced during this study?

Using interview, it was time consuming during interactions with the respondents since its one on one interaction as the only way to get proper and firsthand information from the respondent.

Also it was very costly to design the questionnaire thus takes time.

The questionnaire was only meant for the educated people thus it limits illiterate people from studying it.

It involved resources like money which was not easy to access as a student, thus affecting facilitation of many things during the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents data analysis of the study findings, presentations and interpretations as obtained from the field on the impacts of childlessness on married couples in Akoromit Sub County. The study was guided by three research objectives as follows:

To explore the causes of childlessness on married couples in Akoromit Sub County.

To assess the impact of childlessness on married couples who are childless in Akoromit Sub County.

To determine the solutions for the families which are childless in Akoromit Sub County?

4.2 The demographic features of childless married couples

The study targets only 8 married couples with the age of 35 to 50years, in the parishes of Kobuin, Olekat, Aminito, Akoromit and Akore respectively of Akoromit sub county.

Table 3: The table below describes the demographic data of the respondents.

S/N	Name	Parish	Village	Age	Education	Marital Status	Married Since	Religion
1	Akiteng Mary	Akore	Ometwa	34	P.4	Married	2001	Anglican
2	Agayo Eva	Kobuin	Iyalakwee	30	P.7	Married	2010	Anglican
3	Ocen Robert	Aminito	Arugwang	45	P5	Married	1999	PAG
4	OtimYoweri	Akoromit	Africa	48	P2	Married	1989	catholic
5	Ocalamo Tom	Olekat	Alleles	38	P.4	Married	2012	catholic
6	Atimjoyce	Olekat	Matailong	35	P6	Married	2011	catholic

7	Akong Judith	Kobuin	Tiktik	41	P7	Married	2000	Anglica n
8	ItekatBena	Akore	Apungure	44	P7	Married	2012	orthodox

Source: Primary field data

Age of participants

This age bracket was chosen because they still very productive with hopes that they can have a child in their age.

Origin of the participants

This showed where the participants come from in Kapelebyong district and what distance do they travel in case of service delivery.

Education level of participants

The education level of Participants matters a lot in order to know whether they are literate or illiterate. None of these people reached to secondary or any higher level of education.

Marital status and period in marriage

It was a good thing to know if these childless couples were married, concubine, separated or divorced.

Religion of participants

This was necessary because it helps to find whether the religious leaders are aware of these cases and how they have tried to solve it. Religion identity helps in spiritual wellbeing.

4.3 To assess the causes of childlessness on married couples in Akoromit sub county.

4.3 Theme one: witch craft

Theme above is in line with the first objective: to explore the causes of childlessness on married couples in Akoromit sub county. The study found that this very factor has caused childlessness on married couples in Akoromit Sub County as discussed below with different individuals through interviews and focus group discussions.

According to Akong Judith,

witchcraft as the major cause of childlessness, whereby during traditional marriage ceremony people with jealousy hearts get opportunity of handing you a gift which was put in the shrine and there you receive and used without your knowledge thus that is the genesis of suffering.

In line with the above, Akiteng Mary illustrated that;

Sometimes they are women who are in polygamous marriage; the co wife will pick your panties and take them to the shrine to tie your birth.

In comparison to the above, Otilem Kelementino concluded that:

during his youthful age he witnessed old women come out as early as 6:00am to remove the footdust of their children, even shave their foreface then keep the hair, this alone will explain to you what witch craft does in marriage today for this generation.

Subtheme: Curses

Sometimes we suffer in our marriage without knowing the genuine reason for the problem but the few people explained this way.

Atim Janet well explained that,

Curses, basing on the experience from the religious leader I found that children are murdered immediately after birth as a result of failing to keep the satanic covenants you went to the shrine to get the child whereby they demand that child to be named after them.

Not only that but also some families have satanic alters which demand sacrifice often as the way of fulfilling their covenant.

Agayo eva said:

She got married to a family which had generational curses of childlessness because they were not open enough to disclose this secret to her, she has lost her 3 children because of this generational curses in this family.

Theme two: Traditional belief

This being another cause of childlessness amongst married couples

Otim Yoweri narrated that:

It's a must to obey the rules of their taboos as the clan (ikarewok) where by women were not to bathe with rain water collected from any grass thatched house and of which they did it sometimes back this alone caused childlessness.

Okoropot Dan said that:

The traditional beliefs done sometimes back are being seen now, affecting the people in way that when you are just in the first trimester of your pregnancy never to kill a chameleon and snake that the baby inside will puff like these animals, in other words people of long time ago believed in snakes and their spirits would come and visit them like snakes.

Okiring Emmanuel, added that

Traditionally their spirits in the shrine would communicate so pregnant women were not allowed to seat next to the shrine but must eat the left over's of what is brought from the shrine,

Generally this is seen as aslavery.

Focus group discussion with the opinion leaders, cultural leaders and religious leaders as explained below.

Theme three: the will of God

Reverend Okello Paul clearly taught that,

Its only God with power and authority to give us the fruits of our womb, while counseling couples in group discussion he properly encouraged us to pray just like ANNE in the bible til God gave her Samuel.

In addition to that statement, Stella Ocomthe mothers union said this.

God can test our faith whether we are faithful and patient enough so let us be kin and also emphasized on prayers and love in families.

Fr. Enos Okiring said that:

Childlessness in families is for the time being but God will give children at his own appointed time to mankind.

During my discussions with the religious leaders

Focus group discussion

They said that childlessness is from God as seen in the story of Hannah who had no child but at her later age she prayed and received.

Sometimes it's the will of God for one not to have a child

Theme four: family planning

Asekenye Martha said that:

Most teenagers have resorted in to premature sex and they have known about it so much and she said that marriages today are failing due to children since the young girls involving into family planning in fear of conceiving ,not knowing that it's a method used by marriage couples to control birth rates in their families. Family planning with all its associated problems like dryness, over bleeding, general body weakness makes one not to have any child since it has been used for a longer period of time.

Okalebo Nathan added that:

Since most youth are exposed to family planning method like condoms so they find it very easy to fornicate anyhow, thus breaking the Ten Commandments in the bible thus is not acceptable by God.

To strengthen the above, the opinion leaders discussed that,

Focus group, the opinion leaders

They have observed that most young girls joined family planning while they were at their tender age of 15, 17 18 years and that drug has denatured all the ovules in awoman so this alone is a problemDiseases like diabetes, during my interaction with a diabetic marriage man he told me

that since he was discovered that he had diabetes the medication / drugs have become too much in the body and have made him not to be active/ sensitive giving him no desire for sex at all for 7 years in his marriage.

HIV/AIDS as a sexually transmitted disease and sexually transmitted infections like UTI. When the diseases are severe can lead to chronic situation thus making the reproductive system weak and weaker causing it un able to secret hormones responsible for production in the body. thus there comes a problem of c childlessness.

Theme five: Biological factors/inheritance.

Itengot Paul clearly stated that,

According to him, he divorced with his wife because of biological factor is biological changes in all don't connect well. He said that its one of the ways he lost marriage since his penis erects for a shorter period and it cools thus causing it unable to produce sperms very fast.

In the same explanation with above, Osele Dan said:

impotence, religious and opinion leader observed that some people are born like that following their ancestral background. This is hereditary from one generation to generation. Childlessness is hereditary from the fore fathers.

AcenElian also emphasized that.

Women should not be blamed for childlessness however;there are men who have short tail spermswith the strength to function but no ability to produce achild.

Similarly to the above,AtimEresi spoke that,

Thereare women with very high temperatures in their virgina, they denature the sperms of a man thus failure to reach to the vulva to form a fetus.

Theme six: Accidents

OkelloMoris also narrated that,

Accidents, this man told me that while in army he was accidentally short and one testicles was affected thus making him not to produce any child although he can play sex. The accident affected his human ability to thus spoiling the man hood.

Similarly, Opejo Yuvenito said that,

He lost his man hood while in the army-force where by one of his testicle was short, now he was left with only one since 2000 till date he has no child.

Opileo spoke that,

During the time of male circumcision in the mosque, hospital and culturally in Mbale region 10% of men lose their manhood through that. The process of cut the urethra might be cut accidentally and can rot if not well managed.

Theme seven: Abortions,

Ocom Joel said that:

Some girls did abortion while they were still adolescent which was improper. Now when time for marriage come you get a stable man but in you, you know that you cannot bear any child. Abortions are not good because it destroys your internal reproductive system as a woman. Abortion is attempted murder case.

Okim Godfrey emphasized that,

Sometimes specific animals if a woman eats them will miscarry, the squirrel- this animal must not be touched by any pregnant woman, in an attempt she will miscarry.

Okello Paul illustrated very well that,

Un necessary taking of drugs like opium, cigarettes, alcohol makes one an addict. The opinion leaders have said that 10% childless married couples are due to substance use where by this weakens the immune and reproductive system of a person such a situation it's a person who has chosen to be childless.

Asio Angella said similarly to the above that,

In Akoromit Sub County there is a traditional herb called “olwici” once you take it you will conceive but a baby can’t reach beyond two month in the womb and it comes out as a miscarriage. Some girls took it as a way of preventing themselves From early pregnancies

4.4 To assess the impact of childlessness on married of couples in Akoromit Sub County

In order for me to get better information I engaged the following respondents.

Theme one: severe lower abdominal pain and swing mood.

According to AbesoSila

She said that due to absence of a child in her marriage, she feels like not to talk to anybody since they call here a bee hive, that alone changes her moods.

Okalebo timothy argued that

Several women undergo a lot of pain during their menstrual cycle such as cramps, sharp pelvic pain which cannot be treated, however in 2000 co wives had a short quarrel and the one managed to access the panties of her friends while in her periods since it was a deal ,performed rituals and lower abdomen pain was acute till now no child in that compound.

Focus Group discussion.

While in the field, in a group discussion of women only they told me that witch craft has made them to get painful periods during their menstrual cycle since they were assigned to the moon thus causing severe abdominal pain and acute headache.

Causing one to be moody, painful periods will never allow you to concentrate on something productive at home.

Poor health due to depression since the only thoughts you have is how to get a child.

Theme two: divorce

Atim Eresi complemented that:

Divorce, the story of a married man who was produced as a premature baby due to biological body changes caused childlessness in his life. No woman will ever accept to stay with a man with such complications.

Atim clare urged that,

Also diseases like diabetes have made people childless since they are chronic in nature thus causing divorce. It's common in men who have diabetes a woman can decide to have multiple partners as a way to quench her thirst. Diabetes kills manhood in men.

Beseri otekat said that,

Poor health due to depression since the only thoughts you have is how to get a child this affects both men and women where by one can lose weight, becomes pale, loss of appetite,

Theme three: Isolation,

Atiang Betty narrated that:

Since you are the only person without a child in clan you interacting with others very difficult since the conversation will change into children at any time. Making a person afraid all the time. Isolation makes you to be confined in one place. She personally spoke that she experienced that pain since she is also married and no child till now.

In addition to the above, Okaileng Misaki spoke that,

Mockery, failure to have a child brings mockery from friends, family members and relatives. They begin laughing at you while giving you unnecessary names, funny statements like "you eat food and vomit it" meaning playing sex and not conceiving.

Amaitumihelger well explained that,

Isolation is due to trauma, frustration and exhaustion in an individual, this causes one to be alone, thus developing habits like talking alone, laughing alone and always rude.

Theme four: Lack of support,

In this point particularly I wanted to engage of the focus group for detailed explanations. Below are different views from the respondent in the focus group discussion

Focus Group discussion

There are some people who have accepted to live a life of no child because they know that its God who caused it to happen that way, so they age they become helpless and no one is around to help then like to fetch water, cooking among others.

In this study a learnt that having children is a blessing and it's a defense but without them you are insecure where at any time your property will be grabbed like land since there is no one to inherit it.

Abuse from the mother in law most especially, mothers after realizing that there is no child in that marriage they utter out statements which are provocative in nature like good for nothing. This alone brings anxiety to a childless person.

Stress is the next issue especially during difficult moment like fear of separation / divorce in a family. This leads to trauma in the life of a person.

Seeking support from spiritual sources like from witch doctor, especially women they do that as the way of trying to maintain their marriage not knowing that they are bringing curses and making covenants will affect their future generation.

Childlessness has led to low productivity at home since you can't work hard for nothing. This makes income generation too hard to get.

Gender based violence, childlessness has brought about fights at home especially men beat their women since they traditionally know that its women to conceive not knowing that it's either side to work hard, a woman is beaten badly thus bring torture to her.

Stigma, women mostly are victims of this where by even if they go to the well for water they are spoken behind them that a barren and burden. Publically it's not good this affects them a lot.

Unfaithfulness, during the face to face discussion i learnt that women were suffering a lot and they have kept it in person , since their men have started cheating on them in search of a child thus having extra marital partner this brings fear and worries if a man contracts STDs/STIs. Besides that polygamy has been the order of the day for the men who are not sure whether its them who are impotent or women. Here another woman is brought on board to replace you which is a painful moment to note in life.

4.5 To determine the solutions for the families which are childless in Akoromit Sub County?

Theme one: persistence in prayers and fasting

Atim Mary well explained that:

Persistence in prayer until God answers you just like Hannah in the bible, sometimes it's not our making to be childless but best reasons known to God only.

OkorePaty added to the above that,

To remove curses and witch craft you need to conduct family deliverance such that the entire clan is delivered out of that bondage of childlessness. Thus this calls for religious leaders to pray and fast to remove that reproach away from that clan, family or individual.

In summery Kedi Simon narrated that,

Many people who persisted in prayers and fasting have testified of having children since they obeyed all what they were told to .paying accost of sacrifice like one to commit in dry prayer and fasting frequently and give thanks to God.

Theme two: counseling and guidance

Opolot Mathew complemented that,

Counseling and guidance to the family, they should know that God has plans for everyone on earth. They should accept the fact that with or without a child marriage must continue since God is the author of marriage.

Ikiria Wilson encouraged that,

Treatment, the couple must go for further medication since some causes of childlessness is due to severe diseases like UTI.

A woman must visit the gynecologist to a certain the type of abnormality in the reproductive system.

Agutimiria concluded by saying that,

To avoid trauma and more stress stay away from peer influence because they can easy provoke you to do something painful in life.

Have frequent body checkup and testing to ensure proper healthy life for both.

Concussion, the data was analyzed using various tools and instruments while in the field and many participants responded positively with the topic- the impact of childlessness on married couples in Akoromit sub county.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter helps to connect field work with literature review and also written according to the three objectives.

5.2 To explore the causes of childlessness on married couples in Akoromit sub county

5.2.1 The will of God

Basing on the facts in the bible, childlessness started a long time ago and its only God who has power and authority over everyone on earth.

There for I strongly agree that childlessness id cause by God himself.

5.2.2 Accidents

This cannot be a genuine reason for one to be childless, because accidents differ so I disagree.

5.2.3 Tradional herb called olwic

I strongly agree that facts that olwic causes childlessness since it's evidenced by some couples interacted with.

5.3 To assess the impact of childlessness on married couple in Akoromit sub county.

5.3.1 Divorce

Always when couples marry and stay longer without a child “blame on” will automatically occur, its majorly common in men, then they begin cheating.

By this strong explanation, I do agree that divorce is the end process.

5.3.2 Gender base violence

As couples stay for a longer period of time without a child they begin to put blames on one another, men will be aggressive and turn into violence thus fighting, abuse among others.

At the end a woman to a larger extent is highly beaten.

5.3.3 Isolation

I observed from the field that due to too much stress one can chose to be egocentric sine you have low self-esteem about your life thus the best is to be isolated.

5.4 To determine the solutions for the childless couples in Akoromit sub county

5.4.1 Adoption of children

Childless families today have gone a step to adopt the children, such that as they grow older these children help them to meet their basic needs, and they will age gracefully,

I do disagree with this solution because such adopted children will benefit from you and later turn to grab your property like land.

5.4.2 Inplant

Some desperate families have gone as far as trying inplant method/artificial insemination in demand of achild.

So I truly conquer with this statement.

5.4.3 Hold prayers

As a family there is a need to break generational curses, then prayers must be conducted as the only way to break the curse.

Conclusively,the findings were discussed by each respondent according to the way they know or perceive it.

Interesting to note was that the affected couples (childless) were positive about the study and this kept them very curious and optimistic.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the findings, conclusions, recommendations and areas for further research in line with objectives.

5.2 Summary of the Findings

The objective of the study was to analyze the impact of childlessness on married couples in Akoromit Sub County and it has been noted that to a larger extent is involuntary basis where by have tried all options to ensure that you get a child but all in vain you fail and divorce is the next step while others just endure in polygamy in faith that at one point she may also conceive. This has to a larger extent affected the women since the community observes them as the major cause of childlessness.

46% cases of gender based violence against women registered in the office of the CDO in Akoromit Sub County.

5.3 Conclusion

During the study I observed and noted that women carry a lot of blame of not conceiving not knowing that even men can be impotent. So generally they are seen as a problem thinking that they intended. Most marriages are not stable because of childlessness.

5.4 Recommendations

After the research study I recommend that counseling and guidance workshops must be held in order to help childless couple have appositve living since their mindset has changed through teachings.

The government must strengthen the laws against gender based violence in families. This will prevent torture and abuse of mainly women by men.

I strongly recommend that with or without a child, marriage **MUST** continue.

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APPENDICES

Appendix1: Semi Structured Interview Guide for the Community

Dear respondent,

This interview guide explores **the impact of childlessness on married couples in Akoromit Sub County.**

It also assesses the causes of childlessness on married couples in Akoromit Sub County.

My name is **AJUMO PROSSY, REG NO S21/MUC/BSW/OO2**, Am a student of Uganda Christian University pursuing a bachelor’s degree in social works and social administration and I would like to collect information on the topic **“THE IMPACTS OF CHILDLessNESS ON MARRIED COUPLES IN AKOROMIT SUB COUNTY”**.

All responses to the questions will be kept confidential and your participation is highly appreciated.

SECTION (A) personal data

Do you feel good if I engaged you to participate in this discussion please?

My name is (Optional)

1. Sex..... (Observe)

2. Illiteracy level.....

3. Religion.....

4. When were you born?

SECTION (B) TO BE ANSWERED BY CHILDLess MARRIED COUPLE.

5. How long have you been married please?

.....

6. What is that interesting thing that you want to share with me about your marriage please?

.....

7. Always in marriages with or without problems it must continue since it's a way of life until death. Is there any pressing issue that you want to share with me please and it's kept confidential?.....

SECTION (C) TO BE ANSWERED BY THE OPINION/RELIGIOUS LEADER

5. How do you understand the word childlessness in your own opinion as a religious leader/opinion leader?

.....
.....

6. In families today, what have you observed about childlessness do you think they chose it or it's a natural thing.

.....

7. According to your own opinion in the society you live, what are the causes of childlessness you have observed in your community?

.....
.....

8. Now that you have seen and understood the causes of childlessness in your community, how has that impacted the married couples in families please?

.....
.....

9. As the community member, opinion leader, religious leaders or clan leader. What do you think are the possible solutions you can or government should put in place to solve the problem of childlessness in the community?

.....

10. Is there anything you want to say about childlessness?

.....

EYALAMA NOI NOI

Appendix ii: Research permit



KAPELEBYONG DISTRICT

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

AKOROMIT SUB COUNTY.

DATE: 28TH /02/2024

Dear, *Respondants*.....

RE: AJUMO PROSSY (REG NO S21/MUC/BSW/002).

This is to introduce the above mentioned person as a student of Uganda Christian University-Mbale University College.

She has been permitted to carry out research on the topic: **The impacts of childlessness on the married couples in Akoromit Sub County, Kapelebyong district.**

Kindly avail her with enough information to help her study successful.

Your positive contribution will be highly appreciated.

Thank you

[Signature]
Otwao Solomon



Senior Assistant Secretary.-Akoromit s/c

0775952825

Appendix iii: The Map of Kapelebyong District Local Government Indicating all the Sub Counties and Town Councils

