



THE INFLUENCE OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH ON AGIKUYU CUSTOMARY MARRIAGE: A CASE OF KITITO PARISH CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF MURANGA, KENYA

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Abstract: In recent years, there has been a decrease in the number of weddings that have taken place inside the church. This suggests that the church's teaching on marriage is not being followed, despite the fact that the church's membership has grown in recent years. It would seem that even church members who are already married have difficulty basing their marriages on particular doctrines held by the church. However, there are still many marriages in this day and age that have significant difficulties, and this is true even among the devout. In order to investigate the effect that the Roman Catholic Church has had on Agikuyu customary marriage, a research was carried out with the Catholic Diocese of Murang'a's Kitito Parish serving as the study's primary location. Evaluation of how modernity and Christianity have impacted the stability of Agikuyu marriages, evaluation of how marriage age influences the stability of Agikuyu marriages, and assessment of how family social and economic circumstances influence Agikuyu traditional marriage were the goals of the study. The target population consisted of 5,375 members of the congregation. A method known as intentional sampling was used to get a sample of the respondents. Using the Slovene Formula, you can arrive at an estimate of the sample size which is 375 participants who participated in the research. Primary data were collected via the use of focus group discussions (also known as FGDs), questionnaires, and interviews with key informants. Secondary data were gathered through records kept by parishes and dioceses, as well as libraries and periodicals that were already accessible. The material was supplemented with secondary data obtained from the libraries. After being cleaned up and coded, the information that was gathered was analyzed statistically using both descriptive and inferential methods by means of the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS), which also contains applications for doing correlation analysis and logistic regression.

(Keywords: Marriage, Christianity, modernity influence, Agikuyu customary Marriage)

INTRODUCTION

There are fewer and fewer happy marriages, which may be explained by the Macro model of marital instability (Esping-Andersen & Billari, 2015, derived from Coleman 1986) and the trade theory in marital instability (Lewis and Spanner, 1979, 1982). According to the model and theory, a marriage can only be considered to be of high quality if both partners are content with the marriage's subjective cost-benefit ratio (Esping-Andersen & Billari, 2015). This shows that what couples commonly associate with satisfaction is a blend of emotional, social, and financial advantages from the partner (Wagner, 2020). If these advantages are not provided to the spouse, it causes physical, verbal, and psychological problems such as emotional alienation, outbursts, insults, domestic violence, separation, and even divorce. For instance, when COVID-19 started to spread over the globe in December 2019, containment measures including lockdowns were put in place. The pair had few resources and planned to work in foreign environments. This stress tested their emotional intelligence and ability to cope with the pandemic's issues in addition to the added parental responsibilities brought on by school closings. The majority of individuals in Europe no longer see marriage as thrilling because of their views and experiences. If they do, they describe reduced love and affection, shifting of blame, emotional exhaustion, assaults, separation, and divorce (Eurostat, 2017). In 2017, there were 1,900,000 marriages throughout all of Europe, with the

exception of France, and 800,000 successful divorces, according to data on marriage and divorce released by the European Union (EU) (Eurostat, 2017).

NEED OF THE STUDY.

Our goal in this study is to examine the degree to which the marriage practices of Kikuyu Catholic Christians in Kitito Parish have been influenced by the interaction between Roman Catholic marriage principles and Kikuyu customary ones. This study is intended to provide more information about the effects of implementing a foreign marriage system on a traditional marriage.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Population and Sample

The study's target population consisted of 5,375 parishioners under the administration of Kitito Parish. The table below displays the target population and the specific categories from which samples were obtained. Murang'a County was chosen on purpose for a number of factors. First off, Murang'a is revered as the ancestral home of the Agikuyu. Agikuyu people hold the view that they were born in Murang'a and reared by Ngai (God). Although the Kikuyu inhabited the region and arrived in the fifteenth century, the Agikuyu still see it as their homeland (Muriuki, 1974). They moved from arid to semi-arid regions into high potential agricultural areas on the eastern slopes of the Aberdare mountains, where they eventually came together as a group with similar agro-ecological survival tactics. Second, Kenyatta explains that the region around the town of Gakuyu, which is today located in the county of Murang'a, is historically thought to be the center of Agikuyu land. The name Gikuyu, which is derived from the Mukuyu (Fig) tree, is also known as Gakuyu (Kenyatta, 1938).

Third, the Agikuyu people are said to have originated in Murang'a, where Mukuwe wa Gathang'a is located. It is a widely held belief among the Agikuyu people in this region that God came to the first man Gikuyu and gave him ownership of the whole region south and west of Mount Kenya to the forest's edge. Gikuyu and his wife Mumbi settled in Mukurwe wa Gathanga, where they reared their kenda muihuru (nine full) daughters, who later gave rise to the nine clans of the Agikuyu. Consequently, compared to Kikuyu residing in other counties, those from Murang'a are seen to be a purer breed and uncontaminated by other local cultures. Murang'a is bordered to the north by Nyeri county, to the west by Nyandarua county, and to the south by Kiambu county. Machakos county is to the south-east, Embu is to the east, and Kirinyaga is to the north-east (Kenyatta, 1961). Fourth, compared to other Kikuyu populations in other counties, Murang'a residents still hold traditional and cultural practices in high regard and have resisted changes brought about by Western cultures. near Kenya's ecclesiastical province of Nyeri, near Murang'a, the Kitito Parish is a part of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Murang'a. His Holiness Pope John Paul II established the Catholic Diocese of Murang'a on March 17, 1983, during the fifth year of his pontificate. It was created from what is now the Nyeri Archdiocese, the Catholic Diocese of Nyeri. In 1902, Tuthu Parish, which is now a part of Murang'a Diocese, welcomed the Consolata Missionaries. Since the Catholic Diocese of Murang'a was founded, the following bishops have served as local ordinaries: Rt. Rev. Bishop James Maria Wainaina from 27 June 2009 to the present; Rt. Rev. Bishop Peter J. Kairo from 17 March 1983 to 21 April 1997; Rt. Rev. Bishop Peter Kihara Kariuki, IMC, from 3 June 1999 to 25 November 2006; Archbishop John Njue as Apostolic Administrator from 25 November 2006 to June 2009.

Target Population

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1-10 Years (Young couples)	896	16.7
11-20 Years (middle aged couples)	1301	24.2
21-30 Years (elderly Couples)	1534	28.5
31 Years and above (Priests, Catechists, Family Counsellors in the diocese)	1644	30.6
Total	5375	100

Researcher (2023)

This Catholic Parish was created in 1926 by the Consolata Missionaries and has been administered by the same congregation till 1994/5 then handed over to the Diocesan Priests of the Diocese of Murang'a. In the year 2001 Kitito Parish was handed over again to the Consolata Missionary Priest Rev. Fr. Cavinatto who administered the Parish till 2018. Then the Bishop took it over and handed it again to the current Diocesan Priest by name Rev. Fr. John Muguro Ngugi. It is a vast parish laying southern part of the diocese of Murang'a and neighboring Arch-diocese of Nairobi from the South, Ithang'a Parish to the Eastern and Don Bosco Makuyu Parish to the North. Don Bosco Makuyu and Ithang'a Parishes were carved from Kitito Parish.

Kitito Parish is divided into two main Pastoral administrative zones. That is Coffee Zone and the Pineapple Zone. The Coffee zones covers nine local Churches, Kitito Parish Centre, Kasioni, Kirimiri, Maji Kiboko, St. Bakhita Gachanjiru, Mithiini, Mutithi, Mwaniambogo and Kinyangi Local Churches. All these local Churches are around and neighboring the Kakuzi plantations and Kakuzi hills. Most of the Christians in this zone are workers in Kakuzi company but two of the local Churches are in permanent agricultural settlement, the rest are within Kakuzi plantations or at the neighborhood. Pineapple Zone comprises of seven local Churches, these Churches are as follows, Greystone, Mwana Wikio, Delmonte- Kenya Cannery (KC.), Kenyatta Farm, Mangoto, Nanga and Nginyi. Most of the Christians in this zone are workers in Delmonte Farms and Demonte factory that produce canned fruits that they are growing.

The parish has a fair share of challenges, from pastoral point of view, the Parish does not grow in number of mature adults whom we could say are in full participation of Sacramental life of the Church. The Sacramental life of Kitito Parish has been observed that, baptisms are given annually but Church marriages have not been celebrated as expected from the number of baptisms given. Second long distance between its local Churches, poor road networks, and poor roads. The Parish is also in semi-arid zone of Murang'a county. The place lacks permanent settlements and the few that are there lack crucial documents of ownership such as title deeds. Due to the vastness of the Parish, there is already a proposal to have the Parish divided into two. With these challenges at hand, we have investigated if they influence the Agikuyu Church marriage in Kitito Parish.

Sample Size

Category	Frequency	Sample Ratio	Sample Size	Percentage (%)
1-10 Years	896	0.07	62	16.7
11-20 Years	1301	0.07	91	24.2
21-30 Years	1534	0.07	107	28.5
31 Years and above	1644	0.07	115	30.6
Total	5375		375	100

Researcher (2023)

3.2 Data and Sources of Data

The primary data for the research came from the field of study, and it was gathered via the use of a questionnaire and an interview guide that were given to important respondents. The primary method for the collecting of data is the use of structured questionnaires, which enable respondents to respond in a consistent manner to questions.

1. Questionnaires

Standardized questionnaires were employed to gather the data. The kind of information that needed to be gathered served as the deciding factor in which questionnaires were chosen. The questionnaires were separated into parts; section A includes items on the respondents' background information, while section B has questions on the influence of the Catholic Church and Kikuyu traditional marriage. The questionnaire had both open-ended questions and questions with specific, predetermined answers. In open-ended questions, the information is more specific, but in closed-ended questions, the focus is on the facts about the variables. The questions were completed using a 5-point Likert scale, with the responses ranging from agreeing "strongly" to disagreeing "strongly" to being neutral.

2. Interview Guides

Interview guides were utilized for the purpose of this research because they tend to produce the highest cooperation and the lowest refusal rates, offer high response quality, and take advantage of the presence of the interviewer. Furthermore, interview guides are multi-method data collection tools because they combine questioning, cross-examination, and probing techniques (Owens,2002). Interview guidelines were used throughout this research project in order to elicit information from the carefully selected informants.

3.3 Theoretical framework

Many ideas have been proposed to investigate family instability and its consequences on family livelihoods. A few of these are economic theory, social exchange theory, behavioral theory, and crisis theory. This section also covers the vulnerability-stress-adaptation paradigm (Karney and Bradbury, 1995), which combines recent theories and research. With regard to the Kitito parish, Catholic Diocese of Murang'a-Kenya, this study designed to address the influence of Roman Catholic Church marriage on the Agikuyu customary marriage. Agikuyu customary marriage was the dependent variable. The independent variables were marriage age, cultural setup, contemporary culture, and family social-economic background.

Economic Theory

Since Becker's (1973, 1974) groundbreaking theory of marriage, marriage markets have undergone a significant transformation. The biggest changes in divorce rates, the reduction in marriage rates, and the overall weakening of the conventional family structure have been among these phenomena, and they have occurred in both Western Europe and the United States.

The first economic theory of marriage, developed by Gary Becker, covers a number of models. In order to improve decision-making at the micro-level, the rational choice theory and models that have been employed in more conventional applications of economics are proposed. Among other gains or benefits, Becker's rational decision-maker was driven by the advantages of specialization among spouses (Becker, 1983).

Having a combined production where specialization promotes efficiency and enables individuals to have higher standards of living, as opposed to being single, is the function of marriage, in Becker et al.'s (1998) opinion. They contend that a marriage functions best when one spouse has had a market job (a formal career) and the other has worked at home. When spouses intrude on one another's professional spheres (jobs), marriage advantages are lowered and specialization is decreased. A rise in women working increases the risk that women in unhappy marriages may leave their spouses, according to Becker et al. (1998). According to Becker

et al (1983), investing in human capital that is explicitly targeted toward marriage results in marital stability. The presence of children in a marriage raises the projected marital benefit and lowers the chance of separation or divorce because children are considered as a critical long-term investment. These writers contend that the primary purpose of marriage and family life is to have children and raise them as a family. However, raising children requires parents to make time and financial commitments. The economic environment has an influence on both the likelihood of cohort marital instability and the timing of births in marriage.

The chance of marital instability is increased by factors reducing marital gains. They consist of a significant difference between the partners' characteristic qualities, such as education level, age, socioeconomic background, race, or religion. Becker et al. (1991) found that the best sorting pairs people based on factors like age, education, and other characteristics important to household output. The advantages of remarriage, the women's income, the number of children from the first marriage, and the duration of the first marriage were all regarded to have a substantial impact on the rate and probability of remarriage. The idea is that second marriages are more likely to experience marital instability than third marriages, and so on. According to Becker (1973), a number of factors are regarded to be the primary causes of marital instability in the majority of families. Among the factors are gender roles, children (marriage-specific human capital), money, education, religion, marital duration, age, ethnicity, unwed pregnancies, and migration. But many contemporary experts now doubt his Economic Theory. The bulk of research show that attitudes and expectations for marriage, having kids, and gender roles have sometimes altered. Sayer et al. (2011) found that marital instability is not a consequence of women becoming monetarily independent, but rather because it offers spouses the opportunity to exit unpleasant marriages. Recent research do, however, point to a rising tendency of divorce and separation in rural regions. In general, the theory is unable to foresee the utility of specific events and circumstances for certain couples. It assumes that people's defining traits and productive potential are stable, hence it does not take local economic swings into consideration. Furthermore, it disregards the role that outside elements like social expectations and cultural standards have in the ideal sorting process. The economic theory failed to account for the fact that couples have varying expectations and perceptions of marriage benefits because some could positively have an impact on a husband or wife's desire for separation or divorce when predicting a certain phenomenon or event will increase chances of marital instability. This research used economic theory to determine the effects of Kikuyu traditional marriage and Roman Catholic Church marriage on Kitito Parish.

Marriage had favorable economic impacts for individuals, hence the idea was embraced. It also benefits society. In general, married couples produce more financial assets than single individuals do, and cohabiting couples do not produce as much wealth as married couples do. Those who had been married continuously had significantly more assets than those who had not. According to research on how marital history affected retirement income, wealth was reduced by 75% for those who never got married and by 73% for those who are divorced but don't get remarried (Connor Court, 2012).

Marriage has an effect on kids. When children are present, married households earn more money, while non-married households earn less money. According to the economist Robert Lerman's research, "the trend away from marriage among parents between 1971 and 1989 accounted for nearly half the rise in income inequality and more than all the rise in child poverty rates" (American review 79:62–66).

Understanding the nature of marriage and the family is essential to the implementation of economic policies that are beneficial for families. Some basic principles may be given as policy directives if one conceptualizes the family as a social topic and views the economic character of marriage as a partnership, as Morse and Cardinal Trujillo (2006) do. These include: the government's respect for each person's fundamental human rights, which include the freedom to choose whether to get married or stay single; the government's respect for the special and indispensable role that marriage and the family play in society, which cannot be compared to other forms of cohabitation; the government's recognition of the social character that the reality of the family entails; the subordinate role of the government and any other institution with which it is associated.

Bowen's Family Systems Theory

The creator and supporter of this strategy is Murray Bowen (1966). The focus of Bowen's (1966) family systems theory is on the family patterns that develop in families to lessen emotional, bodily, and psychological anxiety. Married individuals are part of a family and have a range of innate feelings. According to the trait, ability, and mixed theories of emotional intelligence, some of the behavioral traits that define social interactions are present at birth or may be learned. Given that Bowen's perspective is applicable to all weddings, including those that take place in the Catholic churches of Kitito Parish, the researcher chose this hypothesis. According to Bowen's theory, every family functions as a system of interconnected pieces and experiences life as an emotional unit because they engage in so many emotional exchanges with one another. The whole system is impacted when one of its components fails. Therefore, the components are more significant than the sum of their parts.

The feeling of relational distance (either too much closeness or too much space in a relationship) particularly causes emotions and anxiety to surface in the family context. The intensity of a family's emotions depends on both internal and external stimuli. These stresses are emotional characteristics that appear in certain themes and are passed down through married people's generations.

The greatest benefit of this theory is its ability to help married individuals understand their previous lives and develop a learning pattern that may alter their marriage. The researcher later adopted the idea as a result of its focus on the role that emotional wellbeing plays throughout the spectrum of families. According to this view, a family is an emotional entity that is defined by constant emotional interactions with both other family members and the outside world. The hypothesis also highlights how deeply established these emotions are in couples' thoughts, feelings, and actions. Efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience are examples of good or constructively formed emotions that are likely to contribute to a marriage's success, according to Carmona-Halty, Salanova, and Llorens, Schaufeli (2018).

The ideas, emotions, and actions of the husband and wife have a significant influence on one another. The marriage becomes unbalanced as a result of their actions, which may be offensive and transgressive, as they compete for each other's attention, approval, and support. They also react to one other's requests, expectations, and disappointments (Carmona-Halty et al., 2018). Forgiveness encourages the emotional dependence required for collaboration and cohesion among family members, in this instance married couples, who must work together to meet one another's needs. High levels of stress improve the processes that promote collaboration and teamwork, yet this might lead to problems. The concept of emotional intelligence consequently includes the capability of a married individual to perceive, comprehend, and manage both their own and their spouse's emotions. This theory of human nature holds that a family's success is based on how emotionally intelligent each member is. The idea of forgiveness, another research aspect, is essential in easing tensions that typically develop in emotional interactions and triangulations. The mechanisms that encourage familial intimacy and the opposing forces that result in individuality, autonomy, and a distinct self are seen from a

systemized viewpoint in this theory. Perhaps because of this, it is a commonly utilized hypothesis in family therapy and other research involving families.

This concept highlights the need of effective emotional power management within the family along with marital harmony and emotional intelligence. One of the most effective ways to reduce stress is via forgiveness. Forgiveness has the power to subdue these energies and tensions before they normally get beyond the dyadic level. As a result, family systems theory provides a platform and context for arguing for the benefits of emotional intelligence and forgiveness to improve marital quality. However, those who see a family as a matrix of learning opportunities, including as parenting styles, socialization, and cultural expectations, as opposed to a system, contend that this theory is flawed in several important ways. The sticking point is from the fact that married people, by nature, are unlikely to adhere to the predispositions of the theory, making it inapplicable. However, it is widely accepted that humans function within actualities and potentialities.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Response rate

There were 80 questionnaires in all sent to the group of participants who had been married for between one and ten years. 68 of these surveys, or 85% of the total, were filled out and returned. 135 questionnaires were given to individuals in the second group who had been married between 11 and 20 years. 85 questionnaires, or 62.9% of them, were completed and returned to the researcher. Third group of the participants were couples married between 21-30 years, to this group 80 questionnaire were administered and out of these number 75 questionnaires were completed and returned this indicated that 93.7% response rate. The last category was those married for more than 31 years, among this category we included catechists, family life coordinators and two priests working in the Parish. In this category 75 questionnaire were handed over to the Participants of which 65 participants responded positively. This illustrated that 86.6% of the participants response. 293 respondents responded to the questionnaires and participated in FGD representing 78 percent response rate while 82 of the respondents never responded to the questionnaires nor joined in FGD represented by 22%. A response rate of 60% or greater is regarded as remarkable, according to Mugenda & Mugenda (1999), whereas a response rate of 50% or less is deemed adequate for analysis and reporting. This statement claims that an incredible number of individuals answered. The approach of "drop-off and pick-up" with an additional visit boosted the response rate.

Sample distribution

Category	Total Administered questionnaires and FGD			Returned questionnaires and conducted FGD/interview			Response % Rate	Non-Response	% Non- Response
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	%		%
1-10 Years of marriage	30	50	80	24	44	68	85	16	20
11-20 Years of marriage	32	43	75	26	43	65	86.6	6	8
21-30 Years of Marriage	30	45	75	30	35	65	86.6	10	13.3
31 and above Years of Marriage	65	80	145	39	60	95	65.5	50	34.4
Grand Total	157	218	375	112	181	293	78.1	82	21.8

Gender

The researcher aimed at examining the response based on gender. Table 4.2 presents the findings of the study.

Gender of the Respondents

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Male	112	38.2
Female	181	61.7
Total	293	100.0

Source: Researcher (2023)

According to the data, male respondents were 112, accounting for 38.2 percent of the total, while female respondents were 181 accounting for 61.7 percent of the total respondents who participated in the investigation. The study indicated that both genders participated in the study and had different opinions on the influence of Roman Catholic Church Marriage on the Agikuyu Customary Marriage which assisted the researcher in making an adequate conclusion.

Type of Marriage

The study aimed to find out from the respondents how they contracted their marriages. The results are shown in table 4.6 below.

table 4.8 Type of Marriage

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Roman Catholic	131	44.7
Kikuyu Customary	111	37.8
Civil Marriage	51	17.5
Total	293	100.0

Source: Researcher (2023)

The study showed that 44.7 percent had conducted Roman Catholic marriage, 37.8 percent represented kikuyu customary marriage and 17.5 percent represented civil marriage. The study indicated that all the marriage categories effectively participated in the study which assisted the researcher in acquiring adequate information regarding the study. From the sample the researcher was able to figure out the form of marriages conducted in Kitito. This was an added advantage to get more information on our study.

Marriage Age and Roman Catholic Church Marriage on the Agikuyu Customary Marriage

The study aimed to analyze how marriage age influenced Roman Catholic Church marriage on the Agikuyu customary marriage. The results are presented in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9 Marriage Age and Roman Catholic Church Marriage on the Agikuyu Customary Marriage

Statement	Mean	Std Deviation
Age difference is associated with divorce, especially in cases where the husband is more than three years older than the wife	3.23	1.21
A stable marriage and family life create other aspects of marriage such as love, good character,	3.12	1.43
Kikuyu community views marriage as a rite of passage that marks a person's transition from one phase of life to another	3.05	1.39
Africans believe that marriage is a sacred institution that holds the gift of procreation	3.14	1.28
Members of the community, especially children, are taught about the importance of marriage which act as the hut's center pillar	3.59	1.98
Average Mean	3.22	1.46

Source: Researcher (2023)

The results in table 4.8 showed that teaching about marriage's value to community members, particularly kids, was reflected by a mean of 3.59, which serves as the hut's central support. The majority of those surveyed strongly agreed with the assertion and said that community education and culture were important, particularly when couples were getting ready to wed. Divorce is more likely to occur when there is an age gap, particularly when the husband is more than three years older than the woman, as shown by a mean of 3.23. According to the respondents, age was important, and couples should choose their own age.

A stable marriage and family life create other aspects of marriage such as love and good character and the Kikuyu community views marriage as a rite of passage that marks a person's transition from one phase of life to the next was represented by a mean of 3.05. Africans believe that marriage is a sacred institution that holds the gift of procreation, which was represented by a mean of 3.14. The vast majority of respondents said that maintaining a stable and happy marriage required age maturity. Before the couples were married, seminars and counseling were thought to be essential.

These findings were in agreement with the suggestion that was given by Parish Pastoral team members among them the Catechists, Family life coordinators, and the priests. The Parish pastoral team members debated on the above themes. One of the informants stated that,

“a stable marriage requires mutual love, respect, understanding, and parental consent as demonstrated in the payment of the bridewealth by the bridegroom's family to the bride's family”.

Christianity and Modernity influence on the Agikuyu Customary Marriage

The study intended to analyze the influence of Christianity (Roman Catholic Church Marriage) and Modernity on the Agikuyu Customary Marriage. The results are shown in table 4.10.

Table 4.11 Christianity and modernity influence on the Agikuyu Customary Marriage

Statement	Mean	Std Deviation
Education of children was passed on from the parents and the community to the children	3.34	1.44
Couples who marry while young rush into marriage and in the process, they make poor mate selection.	3.30	1.50

<i>The leadership of the Church does not encourage the Agikuyu customary marriage</i>	3.37	1.32
<i>Kikuyu customs childbearing was inseparable from marriage</i>	3.27	1.39
<i>Educated members of the Kitito parish follow strictly the Roman Catholic Church Marriage</i>	3.23	1.51
Average Mean	3.30	1.43

Source: Researcher (2023)

According to the study's findings (table 4.10), the Church's leadership does not support Agikuyu customary marriage, which was represented by a mean of 3.37; education of children was passed down from parents and the community to the children; young couples who rush into marriage and make poor mate choices were represented by a mean of 3.30; and educated Kitito Parish members strictly adhere to the RCC. The average for marriage was 3.23, while the average for the Kikuyu tradition that childbearing was inextricably linked to marriage was 3.27.

The finding was in concurrence with an interview with the Priest working in the mission who summarized on above themes topics as follows:

The Catholic Church has always been on the front line to hold dearly to the local customs and values that do not conflict with the Church's teaching, however, there are some values that despite the fact that they don't interfere with the Church teaching still delay our young people in getting their marriage blessed. In recent years we have started organizing the circumcisions of our boys and during that period of the initiation, we are inviting the elders to counsel our young initiates on Agikuyu customs and traditions. We in a special way advise the young men on how to form a stable marriage and teach them the importance of keeping Agikuyu customs alive through practicing good morals. Among the lessons taught to the initiates is the importance of marriage and responsible parenthood. We, however, don't force the payments of the dowery but encourage the young men planning for Church marriage to seek parental blessings by involving them in courtship, visiting the parents of the bride, and sharing their intention of marrying their daughter.

In another interview, one elder also said that, "As the Church elders, we have tried to help in solving some of the marital issues with our young couples but is not easy in contemporary society, Couples working at times have no time for counseling. Most of their problems are based on income and contribution to housekeeping and other domestic needs like school fees for their children, food, and clothing. We advise them on cost sharing in their family running"

The respondents indicated that Church leadership failed to engage married couples because the couples most of the time were busy in their daily business/workplace and thus resulted in divorce.

Family Social Economic Background on Roman Catholic Church Marriage on the Agikuyu Customary Marriage

The study intended to analyze the influence of family social economic background on Roman Catholic Church Marriage on the Agikuyu Customary Marriage. The results are shown in Table 4.11.

Table 4.12 Family Social Economic Background on Roman Catholic Church Marriage on the Agikuyu Customary Marriage

Statement	Mean	Std Deviation
<i>Children with more economically stable family backgrounds have had better childhood experiences</i>	3.41	1.42
<i>Children contribute to the socioeconomic prospects of their parents through constraints on resources and time</i>	3.35	1.43
<i>Belief in marriage as sacred has been linked to a decrease in the detrimental effects</i>	3.47	1.57
<i>People who believe that marriage is sacred may also be more likely to remain committed to marriage</i>	3.57	1.51
<i>Parents with higher levels of education are more likely to impart social and cultural capital to their children</i>	3.37	1.78
Average Mean	3.42	1.54

Source: Researcher (2023)

The study's results suggested that persons who see marriage as holy may be more inclined to stick with their marriages. A mean of 3.57 people said that they held this view of marriage as sacrosanct. The negative impacts reflected by a mean of 3.47 have been connected to a reduction in belief in marriage as holy. Children from families that are more secure economically seem to have had

better childhood experiences, as shown by a mean of 3.41. A mean of 3.37 indicates that parents with greater levels of education are more likely to pass on social and cultural capital to their offspring. Children contribute to the socioeconomic prospects of their parents through constraints on resources and time represented by a mean of 3.35.

The findings on the above themes were elaborated by FGD participants and were in agreement with the results. One of the women in FGD the team retaliated that "some married couples failed to observe faithfulness in their marriage which promoted divorce."

From the discussion above we learn that a well-to-do family with a stable economy may withstand some of the marital challenges that cause separation and divorce. This means that each spouse should make some contribution from their earnings to the family's needs.

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