What is marriage?

Marriage is the legal union between man and woman as husband and wife to establish a permanent community of mutual love, companionship, comfort, production and upbringing of children.

PURPOSE/ SIGNIFICANCY OF MARRIAGE

It's a solution against misuse of sex of the unmarried e.g. fornication. this is because one wont yarn for sex in one is married to someone because when the urge comes, one solves it through sex.

Marriage is for production of children and therefore a continuation of human raise failure to get married is tantamount to committing a crime against traditional belief and practice.

Marriage is for sexual intercourse and enjoyment i.e satisfies the sexual desire which strengthens the marriage bond e.g. Paul says in the book if corinthians1 that married people should not deny one another sexual intercourse but should do it regularly.

Marriage provides companionship , mutual support and understanding. This is because the woman was created as a companion to man e.g. in the book of Genesis, God said it is not good for man to live alone and He made for him a suitable companion and made Eve for Adam.

Marriage is a fulfillment of God's commandment. God intended for man and woman to live together in union as a husband and wife e.g. in the book of Genesis, God said a man shall leave his father and mother get united to his wife and the two shall become one.

Marriage is linked with a religious belief about the continuation of life after death. Through marriage, the dead are reborn through physical features and personality traits of their grand children.

Marriage gives a person completeness. If one is no married, he is considered incomplete and a child e.g. Mbiti in his book African philosophy and religion, he says, if one has grey hair, then has a bold head and becomes toothless but when he has not married, is considered to be a child.

Marriage brings the two families together that of the boy and girl.it creates and strengthen the relationship between the two families.


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Marriage is a necessary step in becoming an adult unless one is married he or she is still a child and only becomes an adult after marriage e.g. Okot p'bitek in his book song of Lawino says those who are unmarried are young children.

Marriage is the expansion of love and friendship because its through marriage that the couple can express their emotions and feelings.

Marriage is for the purpose of expanding a clan and enriching it through children. Boys are for defence against external attacks and also production of children.

Marriage saves the survival of the community. Through marriage the torch for human existence is lit and kept burning and is a uniting link between generations.

UNDERSTANDING OF MARRIAGE IN AFRICAN TRADITION SOCIETY

Marriage was a way of accepting responsibility i.e the responsibilities of looking after home ----------producing and bringing up of children.

Marriage was a necessary step to become an adult. It was after marriage that the couple would be accorded respect as an adult and given a place of responsibility in society.

In marriage, sex was proper and was allowed as a way of expressing love and attaining sexual satisfaction.

Marriage was for producing children. People married in order to expand the clan and he gets heirs e.g. john Mbiti in his book African philosophy says people who died and left children behind could continue living in the "laso"( the present) while those who died and left with no children would go into the "zamani"( in the total past)

Virginity was valued at the time of marriage. It gave oneself respect and pride e.g. in Buganda if a girl was found a virgin at the time of marriage, the aunt would be treated with respect by giving her a goat for job well done.

Marriage was polygamous in that couples especially men married more than one wife especially those with high libido and it was a sign of respect.

In African traditional society, people married within their tribal settings i.e people married their tribemates but from different clans. It was a way of reducing in misunderstandings in a home arising from differences in customs.



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Marriages were religious in nature. The ancestral spirits and dead were all called upon and bless the marriages in terms of child production since children were very important.

Parents played a significant role in choosing marriage partners using very rich experience and the children didn't object.

Marriages were communal in that the entire society would get involved in giving advise and material support to the couple which helped in stability of marriage

The man was head of the marriage and the family and all decisions were made by him and the wife followed what he wanted her to do.

Sex education was emphasized before marriage. Boys and girls were taught by their aunties and uncles how to be good wives and husbands .e.g in Buganda girl preparing for marriage would be taught how to please their husbands in bed by using the bush"okukyalira ensiko" in order to pull their labial minola

Marriage was compulsory- the unmarried were isolated and undermined in the community. This is because they were required as kids or mature beings.

Bride wealth was paid. It was meant to seal the marriage and the form of appreciation e.g. in teso ,a man would pay up to 25 heads of cattle because it would be hard to refund so the woman had to remain married.

THE MODERN UNDERSTANDING OF MARRIAGE

Today mixed marriages are allowed. One can marry a person from different tribe and country provided thereis love e.g. princess of toro Komuntale Ruth got married to a black American called Christopher thomas

Today with or without virginity marriage still stands and takes place, which is important is love for each other.

Today people are free to choose either to marry or stay single/celibacy is allowed in order to serve God e.g. in the catholic church, there are many nuns and priests who have decided to remain single even the pope in the Vatican is not married.



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Today most marriages are monogamous because of the influence of Christianity, modernity and education..

Today there are many cases of divorce and separation . this is because of many reasons e.g. domestic violence, lack of enough courtship where people fail to study each other.

Today most young people are taken up by external factors like mostly physical beauty status rather than character traits e.g. faithfulness, honesty etc.

Today there is free choice of marriage partners. They are free to ask for parental blessings.

Today sex education is carried oout but by the youth themselves, aunties and uncles have limited time to track the girls and boys due to their busy work schedules.

Today couples prefer few children and others prefer to stay childless provided they love each other.

Some people even go against the natural law by practicing homosexuality or gay-relationship instead of marrying people of opposite sex.

Today most marriages take the decision of church and civil marriages, even after customary marriage, the two decide to go ahead to marry in churches.

Today widows are free to remarry or stay single after the death of their husbands unlike in traditional African society where they were inherited( women).

Today marriage is a covenant between two people i.e the husband and the wife who agree to stay together permanently till death sets them apart.

FACTORS FOR CHANGING PATTERN OF MARRIAGE

The influence of women liberation movement. This has empowered women to become independent to the extent that some feel they don't need men. This has resulted into single parent-hood.

has religious conviction. Some people have no fear of God at all and as such such would rather have children outside marriage without recognizing the institution of marriage.

The breakdown of traditional culture and this has made people look down upon virginity upon marriage because they prefer western life to african life style.



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The nature of employment. Some couples are very distant from each other due to work which has led to separation and breakups due to suspected adultery e.g. in 2007, UPDF soldiers decided to marry conglese women yet they had left their women back in Uganda.

The problem of death or disease outbreak like AIDS has scared off young men and women from marriage and even destroyed the cultural practice of wife inheritance.

Permissiveness of society where some people they are free to behave in any way they want by practicing homosexuality ,remaining single etc.

Political instability. This has interrupted family life by separating cuples leaving some as widows and widowers due to death e.g. in northern Uganda bcause of the LRA political insurgency or ----------families were interrupted and women became widows because of the death of their husbands.

Rapid urbanization has been responsible for marriage breakups because they come to towns to look for jobs and leave their wives back at home and they end up getting other women.

Poverty and economic hardships. This has made people opt for fewer children for fear food, school fees and medications.

The influence of Christianity by which it emphasizes monogamy at the expense of polygamy because God created one Adam for one wife Eve.

The education system has made some people to resort to single parenthood because of going for further studies and feeling superior in case one is very educated.

The influence of western culture where people prefer to remain single.

TYPES OF MARRIAGES

There are generally those recognized and acceptable forms of marriage.

Religious or church marriage

Traditional or customary marriage

Civil or state marriage.

RELIGIOUS MARRIAGE



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This is a type of marriage that takes place in church and is conducted by an authorized religious leader e.g. a reverend, priest, a pastor, the couple exchange vows(promises) and they are issued with a marriage certificate.

CHARACTERISTICS OF CHURCH MARRIAGE

It takes place in a church.

It is presided over by a religious leader e,g Bishop, reverend, priest or pastor.

There is exchange of vows that each partner is made to pronounce to remain faithful under any circumstances.

It is based on permanently in other words divorce is not allowed in the marriage arrangement , is only death that sets them apart.

Monogamy is the ideal type of marriage recognized in this type i.e one man for one wife.

The marriage is highly publicized. Many Christians witness the marriage.

A marriage certificate is issued in church marriage which acts as as evidence that the two are married.

God ᾽ s blessings are received through the priest.

There is exchange of wedding rings by the partners and these act as physical commitment that the two are married.

Man and woman are equal since all were created in God ᾽ s image

The church marriage requires that the wife would have fulfilled traditional requirements like payment of bride wealth and the consent of parents.

There is free choice of a marriage partner, each person choses a person of his or he hearts desire and dreams.

Faithfulness between the couples is highly emphasized.

ADVANTAGES OF CHURCH MARRIAGE

There are higher chances of sexual satisfaction. Since the couple give the bodies to each other and one has the liberty over the other's body. E.g. St. Paul in his letter to the corinthians says couple shouldn't deny themselves the right to have sex but satisfy another to avoid falling into temptation.



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There is love and understanding in marriage because there is free choice of marriage partner and there is less interference from parents and relatives.

Church marriage lasts longer than other forms of marriage. This is because problems in marriage are solved by the couple and other religious leaders.

The children born in this marriage are brought up in a Christian environment and thus they have fear of God.

The couple is honoured and respect because the public knows that they are married people and they can easily access jobs and promotions at work places.

There are many gifts given to the couple by friends and relatives. This helps to boost the newly married couple to have a good beginning in their new home.

They receive God's blessings. Church marriage is blessed by God though life representatives on earth i.e priests through their prayers

It reduces on the problem associated with polygamous marriages like witchcraft since its normal to be a monogamous family.

There is a high degree of faithfulness in church marriage about because of genuine love among some partners.

The Christian married in church enjoy the other benefit of the church like other sacraments, being a God parent and taking up some positions in church e.g. the fathers union.

Children born in this type of marriage receive parental care ,love and education. The parents ensure that children grow up being loved and cared for.

DISADVANTAGES OF CHURCH MARRIAGE

Its expensive and sometimes leaves the newly wedded couple in heavy debts ie involves paying bride wealth, hiring cars etc.

It is risky incase one is got in the act of adultery in these days of AIDS yet they vowed to stay together in times in times of joy and sorrow until death do them apart.

It leads to poverty. In order to make it very attractive before friends and relatives, one borrows a lot of money and some sell off their property.

Its rigid especially in case the other partner is not Christian, he/she has got to be converted in order to be married in church.



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Some parents refuse their children from marrying in church until the bride wealth has been fully paid. This makes this kind of marriage to delay.

Its against culture and norms of some societies. It rejects polygamy yet polygamy solves a number of problems e.g. barrenness.

It is time consuming since it involves many conditions and ceremonies for the occasion to be coourful.

It undermines other forms of marriage. Church leaders consider other forms of marriage as evil . they consider these married customarily as fornication.

Sometimes love is lacking. Some people enter church marriage for the case of honouring parents and pleasing friends. This leads to divorce.

It makes the couple to make unnecessary commitment before the partners are aware of future stability e.g. for good for bad in sickness and good health.

There is exploitation of the wife by the man since she is wedded inchurch.

The man takes her as his property and over works her.

WHY DO PEOPLE POSTPONE

Religious differences. Some people postpone church marriages because of religious differences between the partners e.g. catholic priests will not wed muslim boy with catholic girl. The boy has to first convert to Christianity.

Failure to make the right choice. Marriage is a permanent relationship. If one has failed to make a proper choice, he postpones it.

Evidence of trial marriage. Trial marriage is not punishable, lesds to production of children and gives all pleasure of marriage including sex so no need of church marriage.

Its monogamous and binding. Some people do not want to be committed to a person until they are sure of the true character of the man or woman.

impotence or barrenness. some people fear to commit themselves to an impotent man and barren woman since children are important since theu help in expansion of the clan.

Bad examples given by married people. Some people who are married in church quarrel, they fight and disrespect each other. This draws many people away from church marriage.



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Customary marriage is essential. Some people regard customary marriage as true and essential marriage and they look at church marriage as an extra

It is expensive. Church marriage is expensive. It requires millions of shillings in order to make it appear colourful before friends and relatives.

Bad behaviours of wedded women. Some wedded women tend to be big headed and because church marriage is binding men postpone it to save themselves from headache.

Failure to pay bride wealth. If the boy has not fully settled the bride wealth, the marriage is postponed since parents want it before church marriage.

WHAT SHOULD THE CHURCH DO TO ENCOURAGE CHURCH MARRIAGE

The church should encourage the couple to make an affordable function. It should not be very insight or expensive to the means of the couple.

The church should carry out and support mass wedding. This will enable the poor Christians in church to sanctify their marriages e.g. pastor Robert Kayanja Of Miracle Centre Cathedral/Church Rubaga always conducts mass weddeings where many people receive holy matrimony especially the poor and those under trial marriages.

The church should set up projects so that people are employed to raise money to fund the wedding function and also pay the bride wealth e.g. Watoto church pastored by Gary Skinner constructed schools for poor and orphan children in wakiso district and employs many teachers in them and other workers.

The church should teach Christians that it is their right to get God's blessing therefore they should go for church marriage which is blessed by God through reverends and priests.

The church should motivate Christians to undertake church marriage by offering free sacraments and the church should also assist the couple materially.

The church should continuously guide married people to behave well by conducting marriage seminars in order to serve as a good example to the unmarried.

The church leaders should preach to Christians that sex outside marriage is condemned in the bible and it's a sin before God. They should get married in order to avoid punishments from God. ( 1 corinthians 8: 18-20).



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The church should appeal to parents to demand for less bride wealth for their daughters. This will enable the poor men to marry them instead of fearing to go for them.

The church should encourage intending couples to carry out enough courtship in order to make the right choices and go in for church marriage.

The church should sensitize the Christians about the importance of church marriage such as faithfulness, marriage stability, respect and blessings from God and parents.

The church should make christians to accept teaching of the church about marriage such as monogamy so that they accept to marry one man one woman.

CUSTOMARY MARRIAGE/ TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE

This is a form of marriage with a covenant involving two communities of the boy and the girl. It involves payment of bride wealth and other rituals like circumcision.

Characteristics Of Customary Marriage.

Marriage was arranged by senior members of the family basing on the good qualitiese.g hardwork. This was because they had enough experience which maintained family stability.

Bride wealth was given to the girl's family by the boy's family as compensation for the loss of a family member who has been boosting in domestic work.

The main purpose of marriage was child production and childless marriage was considered to have been a cursed by the spirits.

Widow inheritance was encouraged in some societies. This was done to overcome sexual starvation especially on the side of the widows. The widow was inherited by the brothers of the deceased.

Marriage was a communal affair and all members of the society participated in paying the bride wealth, choosing a partner and giving advice.

Polygamy was accepted. Men married many women especially those with high libido and to gain respect from society.

Marriage was to be between different clans but same tribe. Mixed marriage was discouraged. This is as to reduce on conflicts in a home or marriage.

Divorce was rare and was acceptable under certain conditions e.g. bad character like night dancing of a woman.



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Wife sharing was allowed. Men would share their wives e.g. if a man was going for a long journey , he would live his wife to his brothers in order to avoid her from sexually starving.

Virginity was highly valued before marriage and girls who were found virgins on marriage were rewarded and respected. The aunties received gifts from the groom's family.

In some families initiation rites were necessary before marriage. The intending partners had to be initiated from child hood to adulthood e.g. the sabiny of eastern Uganda, female genital mutilation had to be carried out to prevent adultery of women.

Sex education was conducted to prepare the young ones for marriage. This enabled them to respect their husbands and to remain disciplined.

ADVANTAGES OF CUSTOMARY MARRIAGE

It involves paying of bride wealth which stabilizes marriage and it gives security and makes a woman valuable since she is appreciated in the family.

Its polygamous in nature. This gives room for a man to marry more than one wife which helps to solve the problem of barrenness.

Parents blessings. Customary marriages are blessed by parents. Parents bless their children to have a stable and lasting marriage since they are the god of the earth.

Customary marriage allows parents to get involved in the choice of marriage partner for their sons and daughters since they are God's representatives on earth. This is for marriage stability.

It is flexible. Either monogamous or polygamous. You can divorce under serious circumstances which threaten each other;s lives e.g. fear of contracting AIDS.

It promotes discipline with community equally among girls because they are expected to marry when they are virgins. It promotes respect to them.

Sex education, guidance and counselling are given out to the couple before marriage and after marriage. This helps to establish a stable marriage with disciplined members.

It is convenient, there are no strings attached. One doesn't need to belong to a certain religion or be converted in order to practice it.

Sexuality is legalized. Sex outside marriage is a sin and is punishable but sex in marriage is legalized and partners are free to enjoy it.



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It is less expensive. Apart from bride wealth which may also b paid in instalments, no other costs may be made.

It makes marriage a community affair since everyone is involved in say choosing a marriage partner, raising bride wealth, giving advise and give away ceremony.

DISADVANTAGES OF CUSTOMARY MARRIAGE

It leads to early marriages since parents arrange for the marriage in case they do not have money they marry off the girl in order to get money.

It leads to forced marriages as some parents may force the girls to go with a man who can afford to pay the bride wealth and the choice and approved by them. This leads to marriage instability.

It is open to polygamy. This increases economic hardships, quarrels and conflicts in a home and other associated problems.

It is based on bride wealth. Bride wealth is very expensive and poor partners may lose their choices because they can't afford to pay.

Parent interference, the parents interfere in the activities of their children's homes because they paid bride wealth. This limits to their freedom as couples in their home.

There is limited love in a home. This is because choice of a marriage partner is done by the parents and children do not get partners of their dreams.

It may lead to men undermining their wives. If bride wealth is high and an inconvenience to the man, he may undermine the wife because he thinks her parents want to grow rich from him.

It gives room for divorce. It lacks binding vows. It is open to divorce yet Christianity advocates for permanency in marriage.

Customary marriage advocates for marriage within the same tribe. It is against mixed marriages, this denies children choice to marry a person from another tribe that he or she has much interest in.

It increases conflicts between the girl's parents and boy's parents. This is especially true if the girls parents demand for high bride wealth. They do it as a way of exploiting them.

It lacks God's blessings. Customary marriage misses God's blessings because religious leaders do not officiate the function yet they represent God on earth.



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CIVIL MARRIAGE

This is the type of marriage officiated by any authorized government officials like RDCs, CAO, Judge and couple makes their declarationin an office----------and the marriage is then registered and usually a certificate is issued.

ADVANTAGES OF A CIVIL MARRIAGE.

It is time saving. There is no wedding meetings. One can do other things instead of concentrating on welding meetings.

It is cheap in nature. Since there are few expenses and few witnesses e.g. in Uganda, couples in Uganda that want to undergo civil marriages pay Two hundred thousand shillings(shs 200,000) as registration fees.

It is flexible. It is less discriminative in nature because it doesn't put into consideration things like religion and culture.

It reduces on unnecessary parental intervention. This is because parents are less involved in this kind of marriage.

It leads to family stability. The wife feels accepted, recognized and respected in the home. It gives the children full rights to inherit their parental property. This is because they are legitment children since the parents marriage is official.

It is an official and recognized form of marriage. It therefore protects people's marriages incase of any problems since it is recognized by the government through its officers.

DISADVANTANGES OF CIVIL MARRIAAGE

Civil marriage misses out God's blessings because religious leaders are absent in this kind of marriage to represent God.

It is mainly for people who enter it out of problems e.g. when a man impregnates a school girl and marriages takes circumstantially to avoid imprisonment.

There is less time for courtship. The people are not given enough time to study one another. This destabilizes the marriage.



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It misses out parental blessings. Most times parents aren't involved in this kind of marriage so the couple misses parental blessings yet they represent God on earth.

It distorts African culture. This is because it allows mixed marriages of marrying from different cultures yet African culture advocates for mostly from the same tribe.

It is more private than public. Marriage is a public affair but with civil marriage, it involves few witnesses and its conducted in an office.

It sets a bad example. This is because other Christians may get to go for civil marriage and not church marriage hence miss God's blessings.

REASONS WHY MARRIAGE IN TRADITIONAL AFRICAN SOCIETY WAS MORE STABLE THAN TODAY

Polygamy was accepted. This helped to solve the problem of barenness so as to help women to remain married unlike today where thereis monogamy and in case of barrenness the woman is sent away.

Sex education was conducted. This made the children to be taught how to respect themselves, parents and how to become good wives and husbands unlike today where children spend most of their time in school and miss basic sex education values.

In African traditional society, marriage was a community affair. The entire community was directly involved in choosing of a marriage partner and give advise, this ensured their stability unlike today where the young people elope and soon after they divorce.

In African traditional society , parents and relatives played a role in choosing marriage partners. This made the children to respect their parents choices unlike today where there is individual choice and sometimes the wrong choice is made.

Intermarriages that responsible for family instability today were non existent. Priority was given to marriage partners of the same tribe and cultural background which strengthens the marriage bond, while today these are mixed marriage with different customs which has led to misunderstandings among couples.



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In African traditional society, production of children made marriages stable because they acted as a binding factor to the parents whereas today, there are many childless marriages which lack a binding factor.

Women respected their husbands. They considered to be inferior and accepted their low status and lived in their homes unlike today where there is women emancipation where women disrespect their husbands because they have money.

Divorce was considered as shame in society. Married people endevoured to maintain their marriages in order to avoid shame unlike today where divorce is normal and divorced people are given places of responsibility like being Members of Parliament.

Payment of bride wealth was done before marriage. This cemented the relationship unlike today where people marry minus paying bride wealth hence having shaky marriages.

Women in African traditional society owned no property and survived at the mercy of their husbands so if they divorced, they suffered unlike today where women are rich and they survive on their own.

In African traditional society, post marital counselling was conducted. This helped in solving marriage issues whereas today ,because of generation gaps, couples go about their marriage themselves resulting into disagreements and breakups.

PROBLEMS FACED BY MARRIED PEOPLE TODAY

Barrenness and impotence

Domestic violence

Poverty

Disease e.g. cancer, AIDS

Parental or relative interference.

Witchcraft

Discrimination over religious differences

Giving birth to children of the same sex especially girls.

Disrespect in marriage.

Unforgiveness



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irresponsibility of marriage partners i.e domestic work.

Unfaithfulness like committing adultery.

Drug abuse.

Workaholic partners i.e too much work oriented.

Lack of enough time for one another.

Long distance marriages.

Lack of sexual satisfaction.

SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS OF MARRIAGE INSTABILITY

Marriage partners should be faithful to each other. One of the ten commandments says " do not commit adultery". It is a sin and punishable by God.

Married people should pray to God. They should pray to God to help them overcome challenges they have in their homes e.g. Hannah was barren and went to the temple at Shiloh and poured out her heart to God and was blessed with her son called Samuel.

Married people should be ready to produce children and husband should appreciate the sex given by God since children are a blessing from God.

They should maintain a monogamous type of marriage. Polygamy has got many problems like quarrels and fights. Monogamy leads to peace e.g

In the book of Genesis, God created one man Adam for one woman Eve and put them in the garden of Eden to pro-create and co-create.

They should stick to the marriage vows and know how that marriage is permanent. Marriage is a lifetime relationship which is full of respect, forgiveness, love etc. r.g in the book of matthew God says I hate divorce declares the sovereign lord and whoever divorces and again marries another one commits adultery.

The married people should forgive one another. They should forgive one another whenever they go wrong in order to reconcile and enjoy their marriage e.g. Prophet hosea forgave his prostituting wife gomer and reconciled with her and brought her back home ( hosea 1and two


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They should have sex regularly. They should play sex regularly and effectively in order to avoid sexual temptations e.g. St. Paul in his first book to the corinthians says married people should not deny one another sex, they should do it regularly, abstain only in time of prayer and fasting and resume later normal marital relations.

They need to work hard in order to provide for their families and overcome the problem of poverty which leads to marital unfaithfulness in search for money.

They need to be patient with one another especially when it comes to children, children are a gift from God and should wait until God blesses them e.g. Abraham and Sarah had a childless marriage and were patient with each other until God blessed them with a child called Isaac at 90 years and 100years.

They should pay bride wealth as required by traditions and the church in order to make their marriage stable e.g. Abraham paid 10 camels in order for his son Isaac to marry Rebecca. This made their marriage stable.( Genesis 24).

Women should be submissive to their husbands. Submission of women will make the men to love them and live in peace and harmony e.g. in the book of first peter 5, it tells us Sarah was submissive to her husband Abraham and called him master.

Husbands should love their wives. They should show care,love and provide necessities to them. This will reduce on their misunderstandings in their home.

QUALITIES TO BE CONSIDERED BY A PROSPECTIVE HUSBAND OR WIFE (TODAY)

Love. The intending couple should have interest in one another. They should naturally be attractive to each other. One should follow the desire of her heart.

Beauty. The intending partners should consider beauty. They should choose a person who will entice him and feel comfortable with to show you to others.

morals or Character . the boy and girl should try study the character of a prospective partner. They should study the character of kindness, politeness, considerate, reliable.

Health. It is important to marry someone from family where there are no hereditary diseases e.g. sickle cells and asthma because they are expensive to treat and cause a lot of misery to the family.

Age. It is advisable that the age gap between the two should not be too wide but atleast there should be a difference in age between the boy and girl since girls mature faster than boys.



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Common interests. Couples should have many common interests in order to help them develop fellowship in marriage and also agree.

Education and intelligence. These should not be very exact the same but if they are very different the two will have difficulty in understanding each other due to differences in reasoning abilities e.g. a PHD holder and a P7 leaver.

Practical abilities. A man should be able to earn a living and sustain their family. They should be good workers e.g. the wife should be a good worker and house keeper, fond of children and be able to look after children.

Belief or Religion. Intending couples should consider religion i.e people of the same religion should get married to each other to avoid misunderstandings that arise from difference in religious beliefs.

Family background. It is important to know the family background of the person you want to marry, you should know whether they are wizards, practice witchcraft, criminals like thieves or robbers since charity begins at home.

Cultural status or background. The couple should be reasonably close cultural backgroung. The family will understand each other more closely compared to when the cultures differ in terms of language, cultural beliefs, religious customs, dressing code etc.

QUALITIES OF CHOOSING A MARRIAGE PARTNER IN AFRICAN TRADITIONAL SOCIETY

What were the qualities to be considered in African traditional society when choosing a marriage partner?

Ability to give birth was considered. The girl had to be in position to produce for the man and the man's manhood had to be okay since children were the major reason why people get married.

Virginity was a valuable quality expected among the girls and was tested on the day of marriage and if one was found a virgin, rewards were given e.g. in ankole, the father in law had to sleep with his son's wife to see where animals had gone, if found a virgin, the auntie would receive a whole cow.

One was expected to be sexually normal to be able to consummate in marriage. A man was to be free from impotence and the woman free from frigidity.



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One was expected to have gone through initiation rights. These were rituals of passage from childhood to adulthood e.g. in Mbale a boy was supposed to undergo circumcision before marriage as a sign of maturity.

One Had to be in good health conditions that is being free from hereditary diseases like asthma in order to control the spread to the children.

Hardwork. In African traditional society , a girl was required to be hardworking especially cleaning her home, cooking food and keeping home. Hardwork was a sign of blessing and laziness a sign of a curse from the gods.

A boy was considered to be brave enough in case of any trouble or danger in a home, he was expected to give effective protection to the girl and the property.

A girl was to be morally behaved( displined). If a girl was morally upright even in future children would learn from her and behave well in society.

Family background. Parents had to research and let their children marry from families which were free from witchcraft, wizards, night dancing. The family had to be morally upright.

Ability to pay bride wealth. A boy was expected to pay bride wealth before having girl in his home, failure to do so showed that he was unable to look after the wife.

Tribes were considered. In most cases members of the same tribe were allowed to to marry so as to reduce on the problems of taking long to adjust due to differences in language, customs, taboos.

The character of both parents was considered. Both of them were required to behave well and free from fighting, quarreling, abusing each other and were expected to be happy with visitors in order to ensure peace in a home.

MODERN METHODS OF CHOOSING A MARRIAGE PARTNER

Advertisement through mass media. Many people advertise themselves in the media and have ended up getting partners e.g. bukedde TV every Saturday at 9:30pm there is a programme entitled " Abanonya" hosted by Phillip Kaggwa. Many girls and boys advertise themselves on marriage and they pair up.

In churches. Pastors choose from the congregation a marriage partner for a boy. This is especially for shy boys who fear to express themselves before the women and arrange for their marriage.



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Some meet at work places. A man and woman meet at their places of work, study one another, get interested in each other and arrange for their marriage after meeting their parents.

Universities and schools. Many people meet at universities, get to know each other more, study for the qualities they have been looking for and later get married.

Journeys. Some people meet on a bus and on aeroplane as they move to or from places, they pick a conversation and later exchange telephone numbers which later leads to marriage.

Individual choice depending on one's interests and wishes which are related to physical attraction.

Parents choice. This is common in the boy's side when consultation with the parents of a girl decide to choose partners for their boys.

Scientific methods where people search for their partners using scientific methods. Many people get marriage partners on the internet and get married to them. E.g. the former president of Uganda, the late godfrey binaisa got a Japanese woman and got married to her from Uganda and their reception was in Munyonyo and chief guest was president Museveni.

Friends and peer influence. One may have a friend who has a brother ,they arrange and discuss about marriage partner, so she arranges for their meeting to discuss issues and later get married.

Through cultural practices. many girls get marriage partners after circumcision where the boys are initiated into adulthood e.g. in Mbale among the bagisu, after circumcision a boy is now a man and is ready for marriage especially if he was brave during the ceremony.

Through conferences and workshops. Many people meet in conferences and workshops and get attracted to each other which later leads to marriage e.g. pastor katongole of victory church ndeeba always organized workshps for singles where many young people meet and get marriage partners.

Through relatives and family members.

Celebrations and parties.

TRADITIONAL WAYS OF CHOOSING A MARRIAGE PARTNER

Beer parties. Parents could share words concerning the marriage of their children during the beer party. They would make a choice among themselves without the knowledge of their children and marriage takes place later.



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During initiation ceremony. This was the time to show that the boys and the girls are ready for marriage and available partners would be chosen e.g. among the Sabiny of eastern Uganda , girls would be taken for marriage after undergoing female circumcision because they had graduated from childhood to adulthood.

Womb booking. During pregnancy when both mothers were expectant they would book future partners for their children especially if they produce different sexes before they were born.

During hunting. Boys discussed about ideas concerning marriage whereby their friends would help them appreciate the choice they have made and later present them to their parents.

Direct parental choice. The parents would chose a family from which they wanted their sons to marry from and they would get for him a wife.

Wrestling. Marriage partners were got through the show of strength and mighty where the boys were expected to wrestle the girl down and if he overpowered the girl, then he would take her for a wife e.g. Karamojongs , the boys were expected to wrestle the girls down before taking them home to show that they were strong to protect the home against external attacks.

Through magic and charms. The boy would bewitch the girl and would apply some magic on the girl in order to seduce her into marrying him.

Through threats and intimidations. The interested families would keep sending threats and intimidations to the girl's family until the family would yield to the pressure and give in their daughter to avoid future calamities e.g. the ankole of western Uganda, if one wanted a girl and the parents were hesitant, they would send threats of lightening and death of cattle yet animals were very treasured.

Through excitement and emotions. Some parents out of too much joy and excitement at functions would just offer their daughters into marriage to a boy who excelled in a particular skill like dancing, playing an instrument etc.

Forceful capture of a girl. Here a group of boys would capture a girl and take her into hiding later they would alert her parents of her whereabouts and pay brideprice.

Using gifts. The boy's family would keep sending gifts to the family of the girl until they would accept their daughter to get married to such a family e.g. in Nigeria the family of the boy consistently send kola nuts and wine to the girl's family until such a time when the gifts were accepted then the kola nuts would be broken and marriage preparations would be started.



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Through intermediaries who looked for a girl on behalf of the boy and then brought the girl to the boy's family for approval and later arranged for payments of bride price.

ADVANTAGES OF PARENTAL CHOICE OF A MARRIAGE PARTNER.

There is parental support. The couple is supported by the parents incase of any problem e.g. economic problems so suffering is done away with.

It is permanent and safeguards against divorce. This is because parents take time to identify a suitable partner for their children. So they make the right choice.

There is unity and harmony in a home. This is because the married children remain closer to their parents and the generation gap is closed which limits misunderstandings between the two.

Respect is accorded to the parents by the couple. The wife respects the parents of the boy because the chose for her a husband.

There is parental blessings. Some marriages are blessed by parents and are successful. Parents always wish their children good luck since they did it in good faith.

There is unity between both families. Unity is created between the two families because they deal with each other negotiating for bride wealth and they work for the success of the children's family.

It preserves culture. Parental choice helps to keep their culture as parents keep their norms as they look for their marriage partners e.g. they get partners of the same tribes but different clans and who have fulfilled cultural obligations.

Parents contribute bride wealth since they are involved in marriage affairs of their children hence boosting of the partners t have a successful marriage.

Chronical diseases were eliminated. These were done away with because parents were knowledgeable about family background of the parents of partner better than the young people.

Eradicates incest. Parental choice helps in avoiding incestuous marriage which is a sin before God because parents know all details of every relative.

Eradicates sexual immorality. Parental choice safeguards young people against sex immoralities which is common among young people during courtship since the two people rarely meet before the actual marriage.



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Sex education was conducted. A couple was subjected to sex education before marriage . they carried out guidance and counselling sessions and cautioned them about the troubles in marriage and gave them solutions which led to marriage stability.

DISADVANTAGES OF PARENTAL CHOICE OF MARRIAGE PARTNER

Forced marriage. A partner is brought for a son or daughter to marry without his or her concern so she/he marries against her/his will which reduces on the joy of marriage.

It leads to parental interference. Parents over interfere in their children's marriage because they made a choice for them even where it is not necessary. This limits their freedom.

There is lack of love in marriage. This is because the marriage was initiated by parents and not the children. This causes misery in marriage.

Divorce increases. Parental choice denies children a chance of having partners of their choice and interests which increases misunderstandings in a home hence divorce.

Here, it creates a sense of irresponsibility among partners. This is because it undermines the confidence of the partners. Parents continue regarding their married children as young people who cant make decisions.

There is incompatibility amongst couples simply because they never took enough time to study one another. This may encourage unfaithfulness as one looks for a partner where they have almost the same interests.

There is a problem of loyalty. Most times the wives are more loyal to the in-laws other than the partners they are married to because it's the parents who get a husband for her. This leads to family conflicts.

Parental choice may result into unnecessary demands from the parents in-law of the wife e.g. the father in-law may demand sex from the son's wife because he contributed bride wealth and also play a role in choosing her.

It leads to polygamy. Parental choice encourages polygamy since the parents of the boy determine how many wives they should choose for him because polygamy is a form of pride and respect.

Parents tend to be greedy for bride wealth and they end up being exploitative by demanding too much bride wealth for their girls. This makes the man to disrespect the wife and also over work her.



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ADVANTAGES OR MERITS OF INDIVIDUAL CHOICE

It results into joy and faithfulness in marriage since one takes time and choses a person of their choice.

There is greater compatibility amongst partners. Partners have behaviors more or less similar because they took time to study one another that enables them to live together in peace.

It has a limited chance of divorce. This is because the partners will have taken sometime together before they finally decide to get married.

It helps partners to fully exercise love, affection and intimacy among themselves simply because they loved one another from the start, this helps them to enjoy sex in marriage.

Partners make independent decisions. They are able to manage their affairs without reference to parents. They share ideas and plan for the family which leads to family development.

Faithfulness is more ensured for the partners. When partners make their choice without anybody's influence and they test each other in all aspects of life e.g. honesty.

It helps partners to solve individual differences without involving parents therefore it reduces on parental interference in marriage.

It avoids frustration in marriage, one doesn't need to get disappointed because he made his/her choice unlike parental choice where they may choose for you a wrong choice based on their wishes and not the children's wishes.

One is free to marry or not depending on one's wishes unlike in African traditional society where parents would impose a marriage partner on an individual whether willing to marry or not, this creates peace in an individual.

Outdated cultural beliefs are eliminated which may destroy the marriage like the practice of the father in law sleeping with the daughter in law to see where his cows have gone e.g. among the bahima.

DISADVANTAGES OR MERITS OF INDIVIDUAL CHOICE OF A MARRIAGE PARTNER



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One is likely to marry someone with a chronical disease simply because most times through medical checkup is not done and partners are ignorant of one's status.

Parents blessings are missed because at times parents do not approve of their children's choice yet parents are God's representatives on earth.

Fornication. Most times the intending partners do practice sex before marriage for fear to be rejected which is sinful before God.

The two young tend to consider the outside beauty than the character and personal background of the partner, this causes frustrations in marriage.

With individual choice, incestuous marriages are likely to be made. This is because the intending partners may not be well vast with their relatives which is against our cultural settings.

Many mistakes are likely to be made e.g. poor choice which leads to regret since parents are not involved and yet they give wise counsel.

Individuals encourage trial marriage. The intending partners first stay together for some time studying one another to see whether they can live together. This results into disappointments when they fail to marry one another.

Good cultural values are missed out e.g. bride wealth which is a sign of appreciation to the parents of the girl for work well done but with individual choice sometimes it is not paid.

High chances of divorce are likely to occur. This is because the partners can separate easily since they made their own choice and parents are less involved yet divorce is a sin before God.

There is likely to be inadequate preparation for marriage( courtship). This is because marriages are arranged in a hurry, so partners do not study each other's behavior well which leads to divorce as a result of constant misunderstandings.

PROBLEMS YOUNG PEOPLE FACE IN TRYING TO LOOK FOR A MARRIAGE PARTNER TODAY

There is a lot of indiscipline among young people today which makes it hard to choose a partner. Indiscipline is expressed through a lot of permissiveness, drinking alcohol, smoking etc.

Young people face a problem of rumors which are generated by peers and those who do not wish them well leaving them in conflicts hence failure to materialize into real relationship.

A problem of HIV/AIDS which makes the partners to suspect each other to the extent of refusing marriage due to the fear of AIDS which is a killer disease.



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Many people despise marriage, they take it to be a bad burden and they do this through brain washing environment so they prefer to stay single.

There is a lot of pretense whereby some people pretend to be seriously in love when actually aren't thus leading to frustration after one has given out her heart.

There is a lot of sexual immorality , they test each other sexually before marriage and after the test they lose interest leading to disappointment because after tasting, they found what they didn't find what they expected.

Lack of seriousness. Intending partners do not take each other seriously, boys think that girls are after material wealth and girls think that boys are after sex hence failure to compromise.

Peer group influence. Young people get views and ideas from peer which are misleading, this leads to sex misuse rather than conducting proper courtship.

Parents play little or no role in the choice of marriage partners thus young people are left to do everything on their own without the parental guidance hence end up making the wrong choices.

Economic hardships. Poverty has made it impossible for people to get their marriage partners since girls prefer rich men or leave out serious poor men.

Short period of courtship. There is no proper period of courtship thus some people enter marriage abruptly leading to marriage breakups due to conflicts in incompatibility.

Its rare to get a girl who is a virgin. This is because of the pressures today caused by permissiveness, economic hardships and untold lies about sex. This frustrates people who want to get married to virgin girls.

## COURTSHIP AND ENGAGEMENT

### COURTSHIP

This refers to the period of winning each other's love but before marriage. It is a period to study and understand one another in the likes and dislikes, weaknesses , strength and interests(hobbies)

### ENGAGEMENT

It is the next period after courtship and this stage friendship is made publicly known to various people and marriage plans are drawn e.g. introduction and wedding.



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IMPORTANCES OF COURTSHIP

It provides ample time for the two partners to exchange ideas and share problems so that the two enter marriage when they know the problems and difficulties in it.

It make marriage stable. After courtship it is rare for a marriage relationship to break due to strong relationship that might have been built during this time.

It helps to study each other's habits. Courtship helps the partners to study each other's habits, this concerns roughness, being noisy, seriousness, easily annoyed and this helps to stabilize marriage.

It helps the two people to know each other's relatives and friends who are of help incase of any problem because they introduce them to you during courtship.

Health conditions. Courtship helps the two people to find out if the partner has any chronical diseases like asthma and disabled then it would be up to them to decide whether they can afford that condition.

It helps them to know each other's religion. During courtship it is important for the two partners to talk about their religions differences and helps them to reconcile and decide which religion to follow.

Courtship is important because it gives the two people to recognize their cultural differences that they have e.g. language, the food eaten, way of dressing , customs , this helps to adjust accordingly.

Courtship helps one to make the right choice simply because you study the person very well and make the final decision.

Courtship helps one to examine the academic level of the intending partner and it shows one's understanding ability, this helps them to have a brighter future.

Courtship helps the intending partners to know the dislikes and likes of one another, this makes them to adjust accordingly and live a peaceful life.

It helps the intending partners to know one another physically and emotionally ----------finds for the other and how one expresses those feelings for one another which helps to create harmony in their home.

DANGERS OF MODERN COURTSHIP



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Sexual immorality. Some young people want to taste their fiancées sexually before getting married leading to misuse of sex and committing a sin of fornication.

There is limited time in courtship today for the partners to study one another. This leads to making bad choices in terms of discipline which later results into divorce.

People just consider physical beauty more than inner beauty(character). They do not utilize courtship effectively to lay a foundation for marriage. This leads to conflicts in a home hence domestic violence.

There is a danger of HIV/AIDS. Some young people take up courtship before studying their HIVstatus and eventually engage into fornication paving way for infection and finally death.

There is a wide spread of indiscipline and immorality among young people during courtship evidenced by sexual immorality, watching pornography, smoking and drinking alcohol etc. these are sins before God.

There are many cases of incestuous marriages because sometimes these people do not study one another well hence violating cultural norms and biblical teachings because they don't study each other well and do not know all their relatives hence violating cultural norms and biblical teaching.

There is a danger of unwanted pregnancies which has resulted into serious health complication such as over bleeding due to an attempt to carry out abortion.

There is a danger of peer group influence where wrong information is given to partners, thus end up breaking up in their relationship.

There is a lot of pretense in love relationship. Most young people are hypocrites and just want to extract money from their fiancés. This results into disappointments of one of the partners.

Sometimes it is done without the consent of the parents which has resulted into conflicts between parents and children especially if they haven't agreed on the children's choice.

TRIAL MARRIAGE

Trial marriage is where the boy and girl intending to marry, stay together with the purpose of studying each other for a certain period of time before the real marriage is approved.

REASONS WHY PEOPLE PREFER TRIAL MARRIAGE TO OTHER FORMS OF MARRIAGE.



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Cultural demands. Some people's cultures demand that they should try out marriage before it is confirmed e.g. among the acholis in northern Uganda, it is a necessary step for marriage to test the ability for young people to live together.

There is lack of funds and other material things to effect the payment of bride wealth. So they work together to raise bride wealth since its necessary step to other forms of marriage.

To test fertility. Some want to test the fertility of their favorite partners before commitment since children are seen as important to a family.

Bad examples from other couples. Some people go in for trial marriage because of the bad examples of some Christian couples like fighting. So couples want to ascertain the good character of their spouses.

It gives chance to the children(boy and girl) to take marriage decisions themselves since they are given chance to study and comment partners.

It gives chance to the parents to approve of the couple on both sides hence receiving parental blessings.

It helps to prove whether the girl is hardworking and able to support the family.

It gives chance to the boy's family to study the character of the girl whether its good or bad, this helps to stabilize marriage.

It stabilizes marriage. i.e it reduces cases of divorce once marriage has been effected since the two people love one another and have agreed.

Some people want to taste their partners sexually but this is a sin, they want to see whether they are sexually active.

Some fear authorized marriages especially church marriage which rejects divorced partners to remarry or stay single unless the other partner is dead.

It enables the making of good choices since parents are involved in the choice of a marriage partner hence reducing incest.

CHRISTIAN OBJECTION TO THIS FORM OF MARRIAGE

Christianity is totally against trial marriage because of the following reasons.

It encourages separation incase the partners are fed up of each other. They just walk out since there is no binding factor yet marriage is to be permanent.



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It is characterized by quarrels and misunderstandings especially when it fails yet Christianity calls for peace, love and harmony in a family.

It leads to separation of the partners which leads to emotional and psychological torture which results into sin like murder yet it is a sin before God. God says " You shall not kill".

It leads to loss of virginity which is a disadvantage especially if the girl has been a Christian because virginity is valued by God.

One may be forced to withhold child production while still trying on other's character yet Christian marriage is meant to be for the production of children.

Children in such a marriage lack parental care and love incase marriage fails yet in Christianity children are a blessing from God.

It leads to hatred between families when the affair ends in total failure. This destroys Christian harmony yet Christians are meant to love one another.

The woman would be exploited by the man sexually and afterword dropped yet the woman was created to be a helper, companion and complement to a man (Adam) rather than for exploitation

It gives room for sex misuse i.e fornication since the couple engages into sex before marriage yet with Christianity , sex is meant to be played in marriage only.

The woman may get frustrated and end up in prostitution ruining the body yet to Christianity, our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit and shouldn't be misused and defiled.

It is built on suspense since the girl is not sure of passing the test in order for marriage to take place yet Christianity calls for mutual trust and understanding among the couples.

CAUSES OF UNMARRIED STATE OF LIFE/ CELIBACY

Unmarried state of life is a situation where a man or woman of marriageable age decides to stay alone.

Religious vocation. Some people are unmarried because their vocations do not allow them to marry e.g. the catholic priests are meant to serve God and remain single e.g. Cardinal Kizito Lwanga of Kampala Archidiocese in Rubaga division i.e single and serves God.



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Failure to get a suitable marriage partner . some people decide to stay unmarried until they get the right partners suitable for them that they can stay with till death.

Poverty. Some men stay unmarried because of failure to raise money to pay bride wealth, construct a house and meet other basic needs of life.

Bad example (experience). Some people have a very bad experience with a partner which lead to divorce so they decide to remain single.

Bad family background. Some people come from families with bad character traits which hinder them from getting marriage partners e.g. night dancers, cannibalism etc.

Fear of AIDS. Some people fear AIDS yet it is not easy to use a condom throughout the marriage relationship so they remain single.

Shyness. Some people are too shy to get a partner and don't know what to do even though they would llike to marry so they remain single.

Children born outside marriage. Most people with children see no reason why they should marry since they already have children who are the major essence of marriage.

Bad examples from married people. Some people stay single because of the bad examples that they get from the already married e.g. quarrelling, this discourages them from getting married.

Peer group influence. Some people are friendly to people who despise the marriage institution by spelling out the disadvantages so they remain unmarried.

Cultural factors. Some people fail to marry because of culture like princesses of spirits e.g. Nakku, a ceremonial wife to the Kabaka is not meant to get married again, since Kabaka doesn't share a wife with other men. Abasiige in Buganda, each clan had to send young girls to the palace, they grew up from there and tsught morals to other children.

Effects of women liberation movement which has empowered women to think that they are independent of the men and- prefer to stay single, because they are employed and have money.



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DANGERS OF UNMARRIED STATE OF LIFE/ CELIBACY

Celibacy life encourages sexual immorality due to sexual starvation. This leads to acquisition of sexually transmitted diseases such as AIDS leading to death.

Unmarried life encourages wastage of resources through buying prostitutes for sexual satisfaction and drinking recklessly , this leads to poverty.

They lack support at old age or even during sickness, they disturb relatives and friends since they lack husbands and wives to look after them effectively.

It reduces a person's life span. This is due to worries and anxiety, sometimes overdrinking, sleeping hungry as they will be no one to care for a celibate.

Denied position of responsibility in some societies. Celibates are considered to be having a biological problem such as impotence and being frigid and are denied responsibility in society and also irresponsible.

It is an act of selfishness. Each person was created for one another for the purpose of marriage and building up a happy family.

It causes poverty. This is because people don't work hard as they lack children to look after. They prefer leisure.

It causes psychological sickness especially when one buys prostitutes for sexual satisfaction and drinking recklessly in order to get comfort.

It violates God's command about marriage and family and that is go and produce and multiply and fill the world, since they lack children.

It reduces on their political career most times celibates are considered to be young and unserious and therefore aren't voted for in political positions.

UNMARRIED LIFE IN AFRICAN TRADITONAL SOCIETY

In most African traditional societies, un married state of life was not allowed and measures were taken to avert the situation of unmarried life style.

POSITION OF BACHELORS AND SPINSTERS IN AFRICAN TRADITONAL SOCIETY.

Qn. Discuss the position of bachelors and spinsters in African traditional society.



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They were humiliated-during the burial of the dead, the body wasn't given respect at all e.g. among the batooro, they would pass the dead body through the back door and burry the dead with a banana stem so that the spirit of the dead wouldn't come back to disrupt the married ones.

Bachelors were denied leadership roles. They would not participate in society management because they were considered young and of a low status e.g. in the book of song of lawino, by Okot P'bitek says " You may be a giant of a man, grow grey hair and become toothless with age but if you are not married you are regarded as a child.

They were regarded as being selfish and greedy. They want to eat everything alone yet in African traditional society there was communal sharing.

They were considered to be wrong elements in society. They are among the first suspects of any immoral act in society e.g. theft and sex misuse.

They were considered to be cursed by spirits due to the wrong they might have committed against them, since the spirits were expected to fight the living either to bless them or punish them.

They were considered to be a great burden to their relatives. They would be a great danger to their relatives during sickness at old age where they would be unable to support themselves.

The unmarried were considered to be having a miserable life as they lacked children who were a source of happiness in marriage and life as they entertained the parents by dancing.

In some societies where life after death was expected through the birth of children, the unmarried would remain dead , they couldn't resurrect, their death meant total death.

Remaining unmarried especially the girls denied the parents bride wealth and as such girls would be forced into marriage in order for the parents to get bride wealth.

The unmarried were generally under looked in a home They are considered as the ladies hence--------incase of community functions, they would isolate them from the main public and make them to eat and drink with children.

They were considered to have never tested sex and also married as an important element in life because traditionally, sex before marriage was punishable and forbidden.

BRIDE WEALTH



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Bride wealth refers to the items , material and payments given by the family of the boy to the family of the girl just before marriage as a form of appreciation to the girl's parents.

IMPORTANCE OF BRIDE WEALTH IN AFRICAN TRADITIONAL SOCIETY

It was a form of appreciation and gratitude given to the girl's parents by the family of the boy for the proper upbringing of the girl.

It was a form of compensation for the loss of their daughter or her absence in the family after marriage since she had been doing house work and helping her mother.

It was an indicator of economic ability of the man. It was a sign that the girl will be looked after well by the husband since he is able to pay bride wealth.

It acted as a marriage certificate. It showed that marriage had taken place and it was hard to divorce a woman after paying bride wealth for her because it was hard to refund it.

It cemented marriage relationships since the woman feared to divorce because the family would not be able to pay back the bride wealth which had already been used by the brothers to get their wives.

It was a sign of man's expression of love for the wife. The gifts symbolized his feelings of love to the wife and they showed that he was interested in the marriage.

It brought about respect to both the bride and the groom. The groom was respected for having paid bride wealth accorded to him.

It created a strong bond between the boy's family and the girl's family since the childen had become wife and husband meaning a new relationship had been created.

It promoted morale and discipline in society. The upright girls got married after the spouses had paid bride wealth and the undisciplined girls took long to get married.

It helped to uplift the economic status of the bride's family. The more girls one had the more wealthy he became due to the bride wealth paid.

It acted as a license for the couple to begin the process of producing children because they had been legally married and sex was legalized.

It helped the brothers of the girl to get married because they used the bride wealth of the girl to pay for their marriage partners.



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ABUSES/ DISADVANTAGES / ARGUMENTS AGAINST BRIDE WEALTH.

It creates enmity in some families due to over charge of bride wealth. The boy's family looks at the girls family as exploitative hence causing misunderstandings.

It may lead to economic crisis of the couple. This makes marriage appear more of a burden than a blessing due to exhausting all resources.

It may lead to forced marriage. The girl may be pressurized by needy family members to marry some one she doesn't love but who can afford to pay a lot of bride wealth.

It encourages polygamy. This is because the rich men can afford to pay bride wealth to the girl's family than the young poor boys.

It leads to fornication. This is as they look for bride wealth. This is unacceptable by traditional and Christian teaching about sex, it is sinful .sex is meant to be played in marriage.

It has increased cases of elopement. This is with the view that bride wealth will be reduced after a girl has given birth leading to trial marriages and its consequences.

It may compel the man to get money in dubious or wrong ways such as corruption in order to pay bride wealth. This may lead to imprisonment of the man.

It has resulted into unhappy marriages. This is because of payment of bride wealth. The man expects the woman to obey him without questioning. This makes the man to overwork her woman.

It has resulted into many unmarried mothers and fathers. This is due to failure to pay bride wealth which has further led to sexual immorality i.e fornication.

It reduces a woman to a property of a man. This is because in some societies, payment of bride wealth involves bargaining. This leads to misunderstandings amongst parents.

It has made some parents to become greedy and selfish by demanding too much. This destroys the image of god from which we were created.

It has led to mistreatment of the woman by the man. This is because he paid bride wealth so she is over worked by the man.

BRIDE WEALTH AND CHRISTIANITY



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To a greater extent, Christians are supposed to pay bride wealth. Bride wealth is an expression of love by the husband to the wife e.g. genesis , Jacob loved Racheal so much that he accepted to work for 14years of at Laban's place before marrying her . Genesis 29.

It helps to stabilize marriage. Stability is what is required of a Christian marriage. Marriage is meant to be permanent as called by God.

It is a form of appreciation to the girl's parents by the boy's parents. This is in fulfilment of the commandment of God which says respect and honour your father and mother . Exodus 20.

It is supported in the bible. Abraham had to send gifts to the parents of Rebecca in form of possessions. Genesis 24:53.

A Christian should recognize culture by paying bride wealth. In the bible, Jesus said that he had not come to abolish the customs of the Jews but to fulfill them e.g. Jesus attended a wedding at Cana.

Payment of bride wealth shows that the two families are ready to share. The girl's family shares the bride wealth. Sharing is a Christian virtue and is accepted by God.

It brings about unity between the boy's family and the girl's family because they are happy in receiving a wife and bride wealth. Christianity advocates for a spirit of brotherhood, unity and peace amongst people.

It brings about discipline and morality more especially among the girls, the more disciplined the more bridal wealth. Christians advocate for raising up of children in a God fearing and disciplined way.

It acts as a license for producing of children legally because one-has got a wife.The bible says, go and produce and multiply and fill the world.

It acts as a marriage certificate. It helps the couple to live together permanently. Christianity advocates permanence in marriage. God hates divorce in malachi.2.

Bride wealth is a sign of commitment and seriousness by the man.It makes the man one with his wife. Christians advocate for faithfulness among the married people. God hates adultery.

However to a lesser extent, bride wealth shouldn't be paid because of the following reasons;

Incase its expensive to the extent that it makes the couple fail to stay together yet marriage is a gift from God.



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If bride wealth turns the woman into a property of the man and he mistreats her because according to Christianity, man and woman are created are created in the image of God and should live in peace.

If it makes the husband to mistreat their wives by over working yet the bible says husbands love your wives and treat them with respect.

In circumstances where the boy is forced to meet the demands of paying bride wealth using wrong means like stealing yet for one of the commandments says that you shall not steal.

The boy and girl may end up fornicating in the process of looking for bride wealth. This is delsyed yet fornication is a sin before God and is punishable by eternal fire. Galations 3:19-22.

Incase it leads to forced marriages where a girl is forced to go with a man who can afford to pay bride wealth but when there is no love hence divorce yet Christianity advocates for permanent marriage.

It deprives one of his/her right choice of a marriage partner if bride wealth isn't paid.

This results into unhappy marriages yet Christians are meant to live in confort and harmony in their marriage.

It may result into many unmarried mothers and fathers because they cant afford to pay bride wealth for their partners yet marriage is a gift from God to all mankind.

It encourages polygamy by the rich men who can afford to pay much bride wealth yet marriage is meant to be monogamous. God created Adam for Eve. i.e one man, one woman.

It created enmity in some families because of over demanding for too much bride wealth from the boys family yet in Christianity, families are meant to live together in unity and love.

## DIVORCE

Divorce is the legal dissolution of a marriage between husband and wife. It's the complete total separation between husband and wife

### CAUSES OF DIVORCE TODAY

Health complications. If one of the partners has a chronic disease which is expensive to treat, the other may opt out of a marriage.



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Impotence and barrenness. Children are a vital component in marriage. If a couple lacks children, one may opt out of the marriage in order to get children.

Long period of separation. When couples separate for long due to studies, imprisonment, work etc. it leads to sexual starvation and or may end into adultery e.g. the late former president of south Africa nelson Mandela divorced with his wife Winnie Mandela because she committed adultery with their family lawyer while he was in prison for 27years fighting against apartheid policy in south Africa.

Domestic violence. Presence of beatings and fightings in a home between a couple leads to divorce since one doesn't count to lose their life e.g. former vice president of Uganda Wandira Kazibwe divorced with her husband late engineer Charles Kazibwe because he slapped her twice hence disrespecting her.

Lack of ample time for each other. Couples lack quality time for each other due to their busy work schedule, this leads to boredom hence adultery which leads to divorce.

Laziness. If one of the partners is lazy , spends most time sleeping and doing nothing constructive for the family then divorce happen because the man is irritated.

Sexual unsatisfaction. If one of the partners is weak sexually due to some abnormalities and is incapable of reaching orgasm then divorce takes place because sex is important in marriage.

Poverty. This is especially if a man has no job and cannot afford to provide for his wife and children's needs, the wife may opt for another man who Can provide for her.

Sexual unfaithfulness in marriage. If one of the partners go outside for sex in this era of AIDS, one opts for a divorce due to fear of contracting it.

Parental interference. Some parents interfere in their children's marriage. They dictate on what should be done in their son's marriage which irritates the woman and she leaves her home.

Religious differences.

Addictions. If a man is addicted to may be taking alcohol, it worries the wife and she may opt for divorce.

Age factor. As years go on , women become less attractive in their physical beauty, develop wrinkles in their faces. This forces some men to look for young attractive women.

EFFECTS OF DIVORCE



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Divorce is a sin before God. Marriage is meant to be permanent, whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery.

It leads to prostitution. This is as the divorced partner tries to make ends meet which leads to contracting AIDS.

Children suffer. Children of divorced wives suffer in the hands of their step mothers, some are burnt e.g. aisha nabukera of masaka was burnt by her step mother using a lit candle with which left her deformed.

It leads to revenge. Many divorced partners become frustrated and end up attacking partners of their ex- husbands and pour acid on them. This leads to their death and deformation.

It leads to sex abuse. Divorced partners suffer from sexual starvation so they resort to sex outside marriage which is a sin before God.

It opposes the purpose of marriage which should be a permanent union for mutual love and companionship and the bible says what the Lord has joined together nobody should separate it.

It leads to loss of respect in society. Divorced partners are considered a failure in life and incapable of sustaining a home.

It creates psychological torture on the divorced partner especially if one loved the other. This may result into commiting suicide.

It leads to indiscipline among children. Children from divorced homes are indisciplined because their parents are ------and have no one to look after them and may turn out to be criminals of social outfits.

It gives a bad example to young people. Young people facing problems in marriage see no solution to their marriage problems but divorce, since their elders also divorced.

SOLUTIONS TO DIVORCE

Partners should satisfy one another sexually. This will help to avoid tempting situations in marriage that lead to adultery e.g. in the book of 1 corinthians, Paul says that married people should play sex regularly and effectively and shouldn't deny one another sex to avoid sexual temptations.

A couple should emphasize prayer. Married people should regularly seek for God's guidance to overcome problems in marriage e.g. in the book of 1 Samuel, Hannah went to pray at priest Eli's place and prayed for a and God blessed him with a son called Samuel.



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The married should respect marriage vows made in church i.e loving one another for riches for poorer till death separates them. This will make the marriage people to endure problems in the marriage.

Married partners should be faithful to one another in order to avoid conflicts that lead to divorce arising from adultery.

Husbands should love their wives as their own bodies and should treat them as a weaker sex. This will help them to stay together in love and harmony. 1 peter 3: 7 , Ephesians 5:25.

Wives should be submissive to their husbands and show respect to them. This helps to promote unity in a family e.g. Sarah was submissive to her husband Abraham and called him master.

Married partners should work hard in order to fight poverty and overcome the economic causes of divorce.

Married partners should forgive one another in marriage. Forgiveness in marriage helps the married to live in peace and togetherness e.g. in the book of Hosea , prophet Hosea forgave his adulterous and prostituting wife Gomer and brought her back from her lovers.

The married couple should receive Christ as their personal savior who will remove barriers and differences in their lives-------that hinder successful marriage.

The married people should go for guidance and counseling from church leaders. This will help them to discuss problems and solutions that they face in their marriage.

Married women should have love for their children and produce since production of the children brings conflicts in marriage like if the man wants many children. E.g. in the book of genesis, God created Adam and Eve, put them in the garden of Eden and commanded them to go and produce, and multiply, and fill the world.

Married people should reconcile with their conflicting partners who may be parents who interfere in their marriages. This will create peace in the homes.

WHY WAS DIVORCE RARE IN AFRICAN TRADITIONAL SOCIETY

Payment of bride wealth. Payment of bride wealth stabilizes marriages. This is because incase of divorce, it would be refunded back to man and at times, it was already used by the brother to get their wives.

Marriage was for production of children and they were supposed to be born and brought in a marriage home to avoid suffering.



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Marriage was a communal affair. It wasn't a private affair so as a man wouldn't divorce the woman without the consent of society and they had to look for the cause.

Polygamy safe guarded against divorce if a man was polygamous, he would find love and comfort in one of them and wouldn't divorce the other.

Parents took part in the choice of a marriage partner so they always chose for their children the best partner fit for them.

Married couples got enough sex education and marriage counselling before getting married. This made the couple aware of the problems found in marriage and has to go about them.

Marriage was meant to bridge the gap between society and stop conflicts. So divorce was discouraged hence it would being back hostility and was among societies.

Mothers loved their children and they had a belief that they leave their homes their children would suffer and in order to avoid suffering of the children, mothers stayed in their homes.

Divorce was looked at as a shameful act. There was no place for the divorced and divorced people were considered as a curse so they stack in their marriages.

Sexual immorality was limited in African traditional society. Wives were faithful to their husbands, girls married when virgins and prepared themselves for their husbands.

Marriage was taken as a life long institution for everyone. In case of being childless, this was solved by taking on another wife not divorce.

It was difficult to get a wife. It involved payment of bride price( wealth) which was expensive.

BIBLICAL VIEW ON DIVORCE

God initiated marriage and blessed it and the two were to stay together permanently. He created Adam and eve to live together therefore no need for divorce.

God emphasizes that partners should live together permanently. In the book of malachi he says " I hate divorce says the sovereign Lord"

Paul advises married couples to satisfy one another sexually that one may not fall into temptatons of adultery that leads to divorce. 1 corinthians 7:3-5.

Marriage is a life long covenant separated by God only. Jesus stressed that what God has put together, no one should separate. Mark 10.



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Divorce is accepted on grounds of sexual unfaithfulness only however, marriage is meant to be maintained permanently.

It is considered a sin and laws were given to the Israelites about divorce e.g. if a man sent away his wife with false accusations that she wasn't a virgin, he was condemned. Deuteronomy 22:3-21.

St Paul addresses the new converted married Christians against divorce, because it hinders the growth of the church.

In the old testament, God uses hosea to show that divorce is bad. Hosea was married to gomer who was a prostitute but he didn't divorce her but instesd loved her and brought her from her lovers. Hosea 1 and 2.

The new testament teaches tolerance, forgivenss and reconciliation in case of conflict in marriage. Forgive others and you will be forgiven by God. Matthew 6:12

Peter advises husbands to treat their wives as a weak sex. Domestic violence that paves way for marriage institution break up should be out of a Christian marriage.

Jesus says that whoever divorces his wife and marries another one sins against his wife and the woman who divorces her husband and remarries commits adultery to him. Mark 10:9-11.

St. Paul says if a woman leaves her husband and lives with another man while her husband is still alive she will be called an adulterous but the man dies, she is free to marry another one.

St. Paul says a wife must not leave her husband but if she does, she must remain single or else be reconciled to her husband. The husband shouldn't divorce his wife.( 1 corinthians 7:10)

CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH DIVORCE WOULD TAKE PLACE IN AFRICAN TRADITIONAL SOCIETY

Incase of adultery especially of women because of on the side of the man, it was seen to be normal.

In case of mental illness or any other incurable disease. Since it was considered to be a sign of bad omen.

Incase of cultural diversity i.e mixed marriages were highly discouraged e.g. marriage between a mutooro and a mukonjo in western Uganda was disapproved since the bakonjo were considered to be people of low status compared to batooro.



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Failure to complete payment of bride wealth especially incase of societies where they would allow to pay in instalments since bride wealth was highly valued in African Traditional Society.

If a girl was found not to be a virgin upon marriage. Virginity was highly valued and respected in African traditional society. It showed that the girl was morally upright.

Incase of barrenness of woman. If a woman was unable to produce children and was also indisciplined, then she would be sent away. Children helped to expand the clan.

Failure to undergo initiation rites for a man especially the tribes where such rites are respected. This is because he would be considered to be a child.

Incase of laziness of the woman. A woman was to provide for her children and look after them. Failure to do so would lead to divorce.

It was always allowed incase of dangerous behavior practiced by one of the partners e.g. cannibalism since people were meant to live together in peace.

Parental interference. Incase parents thought that their son had made a wrong choice, they would encourage him to divorce his wife and marry another one.



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