

Exploring Lived Experiences of Born-Again Anglican Christians and Longevity in Marriage in Ankole Diocese: Does Regular Church Attendance Matter?

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the Lived experiences of Born-Again Anglican Christians and Longevity in marriage in Ankole Diocese, with a special focus on the role of regular church attendance. A Phenomenological qualitative study research design was used to obtain the information from born-again Anglican Christians. In-depth Interviews were conducted among 12 born-again Anglican Christians (married for 50 years and above and had been in salvation for 20 years at the time of data collection), 2 parish priests and 1 archdeacon. Using content

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F. Mwesigwa, *Exploring Lived Experiences of Born-Again Anglican Christians and Longevity in Marriage in Ankole Diocese; Does Regular Church Attendance Matter?*

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.59472/jodet.v1i3.46>

analysis, data was analysed and coded. Findings were presented under themes and sub themes. Majority of the study participants showed that spirituality significantly contributes to sustainable harmonious Anglican marriage. The participants revealed that Church attendance contributes to marital happiness in a way that born-again Christian couples get marital support. Findings showed that regular church attendance enhances religious commitments, helps couples to quickly grow in Faith, facilitates regular moral guidance and are more likely to resolve issues just in case they separate. The study concludes that regular church attendance is very vital in the lives of “Born again Anglican Christians” through learning how to love each other, how to forgive and how to be humble. Therefore, for Anglican Christian marriages to be harmonious and last longer, the married couples need to attend Church services together since it strengthens their relationship with God who is the Author of Christian Marriage.

Keywords: *Lived experiences, church attendance, Born again, Anglican Christians and Longevity in marriage.*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

World over, religion, faith and spirituality are used as cultural repertoire in enduring marriages Sharifinia, M., & Sori, M. (2021). In most African communities, observing traditional marital rites leads to longevity in marriage (Nyamache & Asatsa, 2022). Important to mention though, is that religion and religious involvement extend beyond cultural perspectives and individual satisfaction to include influencing marital and family relationships (Crespin-Boucaud, 2020). Prayer, church attendance, and participation in other religious activities are coping mechanisms that most “born-again” Christians in Africa use to enhance their spirituality and these are key resources that the “born-again” tap from during difficult times (Ephirim-Donkor, 2021). In Uganda, the observation of Christian discipline and fellowship among “born-again” helps to minimise marital conflicts (Akurut, 2022). In

Ankole diocese, the preliminary studies recently conducted show that the “born-again” Anglican Christians commonly known as Abalokole (“the saved”) in Church of Uganda (COU) live harmoniously and for longer periods. To be more specific, the preliminary findings registered through documentary records made by church leaders at the request of the Bishop of Ankole Diocese, show that two hundred Anglican Christian couples (200) had registered fifty years and above in holy matrimony in 2022. More than three-quarters of those couples were Abalokole belonging to the East African Revival Movement, loosely referred to as the Tukutendereza group (Tukutendereza meaning “we praise you Jesus”). This is key to sustainable development.

In Africa and Uganda in particular, there is scanty literature concerning the role of spirituality and longevity in marriage. So far, Moon (2022) studied “The Balokole Revival and African Christian Spirituality”, Lister et al., 2019 examined “The influence of prayer and family worship on relationship functioning among married adults” while Mackey & O'Brien (2005) studied “The significance of religion in lasting marriages”. However, little is known about how regular church attendance contribute towards longevity in marriage. This paper therefore provides useful insights on how regular church attendance among Anglican “born- again” Christians contribute towards longevity in marriage in Ankole Diocese, Ankole Sub-region. This aimed at enhancing marital bliss among Christians for sustainable development.

2.0 Empirical Literature

Chen, Kim & VanderWeele (2020) Studied “Religious-service attendance and subsequent health and well-being throughout adulthood: evidence from three prospective cohorts” The study reveals that Religious-service attendance has been linked with a lower risk of all-cause mortality, suicide and depression. Using longitudinal data from three large prospective cohorts in the USA, the study examined the association between religious service attendance and a wide range of subsequent physical health, health behaviour, psychological distress and psychological well-being outcomes in separate cohorts of young, middle-aged and older adults.

All analyses adjusted for socio-demographic characteristics, prior health status and prior values of the outcome variables whenever data were available. Bonferroni correction was used to correct for multiple testing. Their results showed that estimates combining data across cohorts suggest that, compared with those who never attended religious services, individuals who attended services at least once per week had a lower risk of all-cause mortality by 26% [95% confidence interval (CI): 0.65 to 0.84], heavy drinking by 34% (95% CI: 0.59 to 0.73) and current smoking by 29% (95% CI: 0.63 to 0.80). Lack of service attendance was also associated with several psychological distress outcomes (i.e. depression, anxiety, hopelessness, loneliness) while service attendance was positively associated with psychosocial well-being outcomes (i.e. positive affect, life satisfaction, social integration, purpose in life), but was generally not associated with subsequent diseases, such as hypertension, stroke, and heart disease. They conclude that individuals who already hold religious beliefs, religious service attendance may be a meaningful form of social integration that potentially relates to greater longevity, healthier behaviours, better mental health and greater psychosocial well-being.

Brown et al., (2023) carried out a study about “Do You Need Religion to Enjoy the Benefits of Church Services? Social Bonding, Morality and Quality of Life Among Religious and Secular Congregations”. They show that participation in religion has frequently been associated with high levels of happiness. Few studies, however, have directly compared the effect of participating in a religious versus a secular congregation. The creation of the Sunday Assembly, in effect a secular ‘church’, has created the opportunity to make direct comparisons between religious and non-religious congregations. They hypothesize that a coherent moral narrative and specific moral values contribute to increased marital bliss for religious couples as opposed to adherence to secular traditions.

Through a survey of three traditions (conservative religious, mainstream religious, and secular) they compared quality of life (QoL), levels of social and marital bonding, and moral thinking. They found that connectedness to one’s congregation was positively associated with overall QoL, as was the degree to which participants believed their

values matched those of others in their group. They show that Religious theological traditions, compared with secular, predicted social and environmental health, but not other QoL domains. Their findings suggest that believing and sharing moral values with one's congregation may contribute to QoL

Lehrer & Chiswick (1993) studied "Religion as a determinant of marital stability". Using data from the 1987-1988 National Survey of Families and Households, their study examined the role of the religious composition of unions as a determinant of marital stability. With the exceptions of Mormons and individuals with no religious identification, stability is found to be remarkably similar across the various types of homogamous unions. Consistent with the notion that religion is a complementary marital trait, they show that interfaith unions have generally higher rates of dissolution than intra-faith unions. The destabilizing effect of out-marriage varies inversely with the similarity in beliefs and practices of the two religions as well as with the mutual tolerance embodied in their respective doctrines. Their results also suggest that religious compatibility between spouses at the time of marriage has a large influence on marital stability, rivalling in magnitude that of age at marriage and, at least for Protestants and Catholics, dominating any adverse effects of differences in religious background

3.0 APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Study Area

Ankole Diocese is found in the Ankole sub-region found in South Western Uganda. Ankole was among the first regions to experience the Christian revival movement with different spiritual ideologies. Mbarara which later became Ankole Diocese is well known for the East African Revival Movement that ushered in a new spiritual experience to awaken the church in 1963. The East African Revival Movement, is an evangelical spiritual awakening movement that has become synonymous with the Anglican Church of Uganda, simply described as Okulokoka, Luganda for getting saved, was birthed in Gahini Rwanda around 1931 and spread to Kigezi in 1935 and Ankole in 1936. One of the few surviving first barokore of 1936 is the 95-year-old Mr. Zabron

Kabaza who edits the Kishumuurozo, Runyankore for ‘The Key’, a Runyankore daily guide to the study of the Bible.

The Revival movement was mainly ignited following spiritual reflection, fervour and calling to repentance of sins and the call to preach the word of God to win souls for Christ. Among those who embraced the East African Revival Movement that stressed public confession of sins, walking in light and sexual purity, was Eric Sabiiti, later Archbishop of Uganda. It is noted that Archbishop Sabiti and his wife Geraldine offered their house in Kinoni in Mbarara to be used by all those who were chased from their homes because of becoming born-again. It is not surprising that Kinoni archdeaconry had the highest number of born-again lasting marriages. This study considered Kinoni Archdeaconry because of having the highest number of “born-again” Anglican Christians who had been married for fifty years and above at the time of data collection.

3.2 Design and Sampling

This is a Phenomenological qualitative study. A phenomenological approach is a research design used in understanding and generating knowledge about first-person events, or the lived experiences of the population under study (Stolz, 2020). The approach was appropriate in studying long-lived marriage experiences among the “born-again” Anglican Christians. There were 33 “born-again” Anglican Christians that had been married for fifty years and above in Kinoni archdeaconry at the point of data collection.

The sample size was arrived at by listing separately the targeted population. After listing those that were married for fifty years and above, the research team went on to identify those that were born-again for twenty years and above from the same list. The final list generated was randomised using Excel to arrive at the sample size. A sample size of 12 “born again” Anglican couples was used. While sampling is key to determining the sample size, the actual sample size for the study was determined at the point of saturation.

3.3 Tools and Methods

Semi-structured interview guide was designed. The interviews involved 12 “born-again” Anglican Christians who had been married for fifty years and above but also should have been saved for twenty years and above at the time of the interviews. The interview guide comprised of questions about how church attendance contributes to harmony in long-lasting marriage. The key informants involved 1 Parish priest and 1 Archdeacon from Kinoni archdeaconry.

3.4 Data Analysis

After conducting the interviews, the collected audio recordings were first transcribed into Runyankole- Rukiga (this is because the two languages go hand in hand) the local language, and translated into English by two research assistants. The research team reviewed each other’s work to ensure good quality of the transcriptions and translations of the data. The transcripts were entered into NVivo 12.0 and coded. Data analysis was an iterative process using content analysis. The research team compared their codes, identified inconsistencies, and discussed until a consensus was reached. When coding was complete, the team identified the themes. The results were presented objective by objective.

3.5 Operational Definitions

Born-again

The born-again are distinguished by a public confession of Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour and normally read the Bible every day with a Bible study guide known as Kishumuuruzo. They often attend regular fellowships and/or evangelistic crusades and conventions. For this study, the “born-again” Anglicans are the East African Revival Movement Christians whose popular theme is the greeting Tukutendereza (a Luganda word meaning “we praise you, Jesus”). They respect the core values of East African Revival fellowship including the repentance of sins. For this study, the “born-again” were operationalized as; (a) evidenced by the believer regularly attending church services and living a changed life. This is because believers/”

born-again” are considered to be motivated by the triune God to glorify and enjoy Him forever.

Longevity in marriage

Research varies on the criterion for what determines longevity in marriage. Karimi, Bakhtiyari, and Arani (2019) considered a long-term marriage as one that has lasted at least 20 years. Other studies interviewed marriages of 45 years Pnina (2009) and Piechota, Ali, Tomlinson, and Monin (2022), 40 years Dickson et al. (2002), and 30 years or more Robinson and Blanton (1993) and Weidmann, Ledermann, and Grob (2017). The Long marriages so far were enjoyed by Karam Chand and Kartari Chand in Bradford in the United Kingdom who were married for 90 years; K. Philipose Thomas, Sosamma Thomas in Kerala in India who were married for 88 years, Herbert Fisher and Zelmyra Fisher in USA who were married for 86 years (Lauer & Lauer, 1986). In Uganda, one Ruyaga and his wife Joy who live in Bwizibwera in Mbarara district have been married for 76 years <https://www.monitor.co.ug/uganda/lifestyle/heart-to-heart/ruyaga-s-76-year-relationship-is-testimony-marriage-is-doable-4495626>

However, there is scanty African literature on longevity in marriage. The descriptive phrase longevity in marriage is operationalized in this study to mean couples who have been married for 50 years and above. Currently it is the only African study to concentrate on longevity in marriage and one which has considered many years as far as longevity in marriage is concerned; given what other studies have done.

4. STUDY FINDINGS

In this section, we present the analysis that was carried out to achieve the study objectives. We explored the lived experiences of the “born-again” Anglican Christians (usually termed as the East African Revival Brethren) that had been saved for twenty years and who were at the same time married for fifty years and above at the time of data collection. The findings are presented in Table 1.1 below.

Table 1.1: Showing summary of finding on the role of church attendance towards Longevity in marriage

Research Question	Theme	Sub Theme
How does regular church attendance by “Born again” Anglican Christians contribute towards Longevity in marriage in Ankole Diocese?	Church attendance and marital happiness	• More likely to reunite in case they separate • Regular moral guidance • Quick growth in faith which is key in marriage

Source: Field Data, 2023.

Church Attendance and Marital Happiness

Church attendance among the “born-again” Anglican Christians increases marital happiness. The participants showed that in some cases the selected themes for the gospel during some Sunday and midweek services usually call for repentance and forgiveness so as to live in peace and love with your neighbour. A family being a key unit where the first neighbour is and in case of the married, a partner, such gospel messages are key to ensuring love between the “born-again” couples in particular and their family members in general. The sermons contribute to creating, improving and retaining social relationships between the “born-again” Anglican couples, translating into marital happiness. Below are the sub-themes under which related verbatim quotes from different “born-again” Anglican Christian participants are presented.

The “Born-Again” Anglican Christians Are More Likely to Reunite in Case They Separate

During data collection the “born-again” Anglican Christian participants showed that their regular church attendance contributes significantly to

their harmonious long-lasting marriage. They expressed that sometimes the gospel challenges them and in case one has gone astray, he or she is able to re-kindle the old flame. The views are presented below;

“.....my dear, it's tricky but I have seen the hand of God in my marriage. One time I had separated a bed with my wife just over minor marital issues and I started sleeping in our visitor's bed room for two weeks. During that time, we had a mission week and during the service the preacher preached about husbands who beat their wives and he called the congregation to repentance. Although I did not walk to the altar, I got touched. When I reached home, I asked my wife to forgive me and I came back to our marital bed..... if I was not born again my marriage would be no more.....” **EARB-A**

Another one said:

“..... let me tell you this secret, one time my wife decided to go back to her parents because we disagreed on matters of children up bringing. During that time, I used to attend Sunday services alone and my fellow Christians kept asking me why the seat for my wife was empty. I kept lying but it bothered me so much. I decided to go to her parents and I pleaded and requested her to come back.... since then, we are happily married.....” **EARB-Q**

The above views got from the “born-again” Anglican Christians in Kinoni Archdeaconry, show that attending church, listening to the gospel preached during the services and interacting with the fellow Christians during and after the services are significant in contributing to peaceful and long-lasting marriage. It is of wisdom to note therefore, that some of the “born-again” Anglican Christians respond to the gospel message and in case of where the gospel is related to marriage, their actions in response, lead to marital happiness and longevity in marriage. The views presented above were confirmed by the parish priest who had this to say:

“.....for the time i have been a priest in this area, I am sure that the “born-again” Anglican Christians also have marital challenges like

other marriages but rarely will you get a scenario where a man or a woman has neglected his wife or children.....somehow there is a way they work out issues because they want to protect their testimonies and to live by examples.....” PP-A

Another priest said:

“.....you need to know that attending church services is like attending school. Although there are no physical exams but when we go back to our homes the practice tells a lot about whether we understood what we were taught at church or not. When a teacher is teaching, it is more likely that those who like the subject and the teacher as well will pass highly. In most cases the “born-again” Christians will understand the gospel during church services and put it into action...and by the way in most cases the “born-again” Christians are seen as role models when it comes to marriage. So, most of them try to protect their testimonies and image as well...” PP-B

The views generated from the parish priests and “born-again” Anglican Christians show that church attendance and shared belief are protective faith factors that contribute to longevity in marriage. The public declaration to have accepted Jesus Christ as the Lord and Saviour keeps the Christians focused towards their marital vows and obligations; a unifying factor for sustaining marriage.

Regular Moral Guidance

While conducting interviews during the actual data collection the issues of receiving moral guidance regularly also appeared and most “born-again” Anglican participants showed that it is through attending Church, that they are able to deal with matters of faith and morality, the authoritative voice of Christ is exercised by church leaders who are guided by the Holy Spirit, that abides with the Church to lead the Christians into moral practices.

One of the born-again interviewees said:

“..... most “born-again” Anglican Christians do not get involved in immoral acts that usually result say from drinking alcohol

because most times during church services such behaviours are preached against.....so it is very likely that a sober couple will be happy.....” **EARB-D**

Another born-again said,

“.... if I was not morally upright, it was going to be difficult to live peacefully with my partner because we were both born and raised differently. When I got born-again, I learnt to be patient, forgive and tolerate my partner. I learnt those by attending church

Services and listening to the gospel. As I speak now, we live happily compared to how we were before I got born again.....yes challenges come but” **EARB-A**

“.....i recall that our parents used to refer to an immoral person as that one who does not attend church on Sundays. This meant that good morals were known to be learnt from church.....even now the gospel usually focuses on ensuring that Christians both young and old are morally upright. It is clear that morality of the couples is more likely to cause happiness among the couples although difficult to perfect.....” **EARB-G**

Another born-again told us his story:

“..... but why don't I tell you, my experience? One time I was invited to preach because my church leaders thought I was born again and I was given specific verses to preach about. When I read through the verses I realised that possible examples point out my weakest areas...I tried to give excuses not to preach but I did not succeed.....i decided to listen to God's voice and when time came for some Christians to give their life to Christ, I also stood up with them.....the Christians could not believe..... my wife was the first to stand up and she came towards me while crying and I realised how I was torturing her yet.....ohhhhh.....my case is rare....” **EARB-E**

The parish priest echoed the experience of the born-again Anglican Christians arguing that:

“.....in most cases if not always the teachings are always about Christian values and understanding each other as children, wives, husbands and members of the same society. Observing values in our marriage is one of the reasons why some born again Christians live happily and longer in their marriage.....” PP-4

Analysis drawn from the above findings shows that the conscience of the believers is shaped by the worship and ministry of the word. Strengthened by moral education through the explication and application of Scriptures, believers can act as the proponents of Christian norms in society. In this way, the local Anglican Church is the torch-bearer of moral decision-making appropriate to instilling Christian morals among the Anglican Christians marriages. Continuous reinforcement of biblical teachings against divorce and immorality therefore, appears to be among the main themes of the gospel usually preached about during Sunday/midweek Church services.

Quick Growth in Faith and Increased Support Because of having similar Religious Commitment

Born-again Christians who actively share the same religious beliefs and practices show that they are equipped with more spiritual resources than non-born-again couples. They also tend to have marriages that last longer and are happier. The views are presented below:

“.....you see we are always taught to speak in faith about our marriages.....confession is possession that is one of the slogans I have learnt from my priest.....in case I am faced with marital challenges, I usually say the devil is a liar...hahaha they all laugh....i have to be happy in my marriage and I have seen my claims work out... not only do I speak but I also act.....I try to be a good wife to my husbandbecause faith without action is dead.....” EARB-K

The same born-again went on to say:

“....and you cannot put God on pressure, one has to be patient. For me I got convinced that marriage needs patience or else it fails.....my friend, a husband and wife cannot move at the same pace in most cases.....i waited for fifteen years for my husband to get saved but I did not give up praying for him regardless of how he behaved.....I do not regret to have become patient because we are now happily married.....” **EARB-K**

Another born-again said,

“.....i learnt that being married to someone of my religion has significantly contributed to our happy and long marriage.....most of the values we emphasise within our home as a couple are usually what is emphasized at our church....this makes our marriage convenient, happy and harmonious.....” **EARB-L**

Another born-again said:

“.....religious compatibility has helped my marriage so much....being of the same religious background usually stabilises our marriage..... our marital companionship is enhanced because we share spirituality traits of the same religious background...we know our children have to be baptized and confirmed in our faith.....” **EARB-G**

Another born-again stressed the challenge of differences in religious commitment:

“.....by the way my son married a catholic woman, one time they went to church and the wife refused to enter the church and she stayed seated in their vehicle....it was so irritating on the side of my son.....when he was sharing the experience with me he seemed frustrated with his marriage...in trying to show his frustration he further exposed that when he is away the wife dorns his children in rosaries or takes them to her church against the husbands wish....you

can see how marriage can sometimes become a challenge if you belong to different denominations.....” **EARB-E**

The above views were reflected by the archdeacon in his submission;

“.....similarity in the religious beliefs and practices of husband and wife implies that the spouses can participate jointly in religious observances both at home and in their church. Religion also influences many activities beyond the purely religious sphere, including the education and upbringing of children.... these are very instrumental in contributing to harmonious and long-lasting marriages.....” **ARCD-A**

From the above findings it is vital to deduce that, the belief that persons sharing similar characteristics (e.g., social status, values, norms, beliefs) will adjust more easily to one another. The religious values, norms, and beliefs are centrally important to many people the married “born-again” Anglican Christians inclusive, it follows that, for the born-again, religion and faith homogamy play a noteworthy part in the success of their marriage.

5.0 Discussion of Findings

Discussion of findings was done with respect to the study findings and in line with empirical literature. Findings revealed that church attendance and shared similar beliefs are protective faith factors that contribute to longevity in marriage. The public declaration to have accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour keeps the “born-again” Christian focused towards their marital vows and obligations; a unifying factor for sustaining marriage. The study by Rukirande et al., (2005) found out that marriages among the revival Anglican Christians were renewed or even transformed; women were respected for the first time. Women called their husbands “Mwami (Sir)” and husbands called their wives “Mukyara (Madam)”. Consistent with the findings and the study by Rukirande, is the research that was conducted in North America by Haji (2023) about how religion is a complementary marital trait and that interfaith unions have generally higher rates of dissolution than intra-faith unions except if they have had a number of children.

A similar study should have entitled Should I Stay or Should I Go? Relationship Satisfaction, Love, Love Styles and Religion Compatibility Predicting the Fate of Relationships “was done in Brazil. The study included 129 participants and by use of relationship scale assessment, the findings verify an influence of love and compatibility of religion on relationship destiny (Cassepp-Borges, 2021). The results also suggest that religious compatibility between spouses at the time of marriage has a large influence on marital stability. While interfaith marriages have gained importance in different secular states and societies, this study underlines that harmony and longevity in marriage is significantly related to intra-faith. Anglican Christianity teaches that marriage is a permanent and sacred lifelong union, which is complete with or without children. A peaceful, harmonious and long-lasting marriage is key to attaining a peaceful nation at large. A peaceful nation culminates into sustainable development.

The findings from in-depth interviews revealed that the morality of the believers is shaped by the worship and ministry of the word. Strengthened by Christian moral values through the exposition and application of Scriptures, believers act as the proponents of Christian norms in society. In turn, the local Anglican Church is the torch-bearer of moral decision-making appropriate to instilling similar morals among the Anglican Christians marriages. The findings generated from the interviews are similar to the study of Ssenyonyi in Muranga and Mbasia who found that repentance in marriage was applied in relationships.

Any wrong done was put right even when the other partner was unaware. This is similar to what Brown et al. (2023) found out when they conducted a study in United Kingdom about “Do You Need Religion to Enjoy the Benefits of Church Services? Social Bonding, Morality and Quality of Life among Religious and Secular Congregations”. They found that religious congregations appear to promote a unique moral perspective not found in secular congregations and to promote wellbeing in some areas of life including marriage.

Relatedly, is the study that was done in United Kingdom about “Exploring the Relationship between Church worship, Social bonding and moral values”. The findings demonstrate that, for churchgoers,

there is a relationship between the use of music or synchronous movement in a church service and feelings of social bonding (Brown, van Mulukom, Jong, Watts, & Farias, 2022). As proved by the findings and the related literature, this study further underscores that polite and fair behaviour of empathy and sympathy among most “born-again” Anglican Christians makes their marital relationship jovial; a key component for ensuring long-lasting and harmonious marriage for sustainable development.

From a deeper discussion, it was revealed by the “born-again” Anglican Christians that observance of divine marital roles related to being submissive on the side of women is an equalizing voluntary principle focused to raising everyone else to one’s own personal level of importance and worthiness. They show that continuous learning of such marital roles usually takes place during attending church services. Contrary to the findings, Qamar and Faizan (2021) studied “Reasons, impact, and post-divorce adjustment: Lived experience of divorced women in Pakistan” and their findings showed that some perceptions about divine marital accountability lead to torturous environment thereby causing separation and ultimately divorce. In concurrence with the findings, this study emphasizes that submission in marriage is a sign of strength, not of weakness.

It requires a great degree of personal strength of character. Submission in marriage is a spirit of respect a wife has toward her husband. It is an attitude intended to help her and her husband to live a contently, peaceful and long-lasting marriage life together. Lamentedly is a situation where some people use it to subject women to domestic violence. This is against human rights and a challenge to achieving sustainable development goal 5 which talks about gender equality.

5.1 CONCLUSION

The study concludes that regular church attendance is very vital in the lives of “Born again Anglican Christians” through learning how to love each other, how to forgive, and how to be humble. They are always reminded that their goal is to understand each other, not be the one who is ‘right’, slow down their speech and tempers, so that they can really listen to each other. This has significantly contributed to their

harmonious and long-lasting marriages. Therefore, for Anglican Christian marriages to be harmonious and last longer, the married couples need to attend Church services together since it strengthens their relationship with God who is the Author of Christian Marriage.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

In addition to regular church attendance, Ankole Diocese could benefit from organizing workshops and educational programs specifically tailored to married couples within the Born-Again Anglican community. These programs could focus on topics such as effective communication, conflict resolution, and the spiritual dimensions of marriage. Religious leaders and marriage educators should consider integrating spiritual practices and teachings into their sermons. This could include discussing the role of faith, prayer, and community involvement in strengthening marital bonds.

Collaboration with other Christian denominations and faith-based organizations could enrich the support systems available to married couples. Sharing best practices, resources, and experiences could lead to innovative approaches for promoting marital longevity across different religious communities

5.3 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This paper was a synergistic product of many minds. We are grateful to numerous individuals for their inspiration and wisdom in bringing this work to its successful completion. We appreciate the participants from Kinoni Archdeaconry; mainly couples that had been married for 50 years and above, and also spent twenty and above years in salvation. We also acknowledge Ankole Diocese especially lay readers and priests that helped in conducting baseline study. More appreciation goes to Bishop Stuart University for the research grant extended to Principal investigator. Great thanks also go to Dr. Alice Jossy Kyobutungyi Tumwesigye who helped in the editing of this paper.

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