

**THE CHANGING PATTERN OF ACOLI TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE IN LAMWO
DISTRICT: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE FROM 1910 - 2020**

BY

ORAC JIMMY

20/U/2665/MAH/PS.

**A RESEARCH REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND
HUMANITIES IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN HISTORY OF GULU
UNIVERSITY**

JANUARY, 2024

DECLARATION

I, **ORAC Jimmy**, declare that this research report is my original work and has not been presented for an academic award to any institution of learning.

Signed  Date 15/01/2024

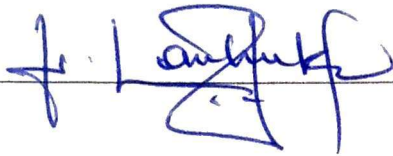
ORAC Jimmy

REG NO: 20/U/2665/MAH/PS.



APPROVAL

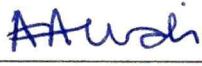
This is to certify that, this research report entitled “The changing pattern of Acoli traditional marriage in Lamwo district: a historical perspective.” is submitted with our approval as an authorized University Supervisor.

Signed 

Date 15/1/2024

Associate Professor Wilfred Lajul

Supervisor

Signed  Date 15TH JANUARY 2024

Dr. Alidri Agatha

Supervisor

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Many thanks to my supervisors, Prof. Wilfred Lajul and Dr. Alidri Agatha; thank you so much for all support and guidance offered in carrying out this research.

I would also like to extend my heartily appreciation to the department of history of Gulu University for their contribution and support in different sources of materials and the lecturers who imported professionalism into my work.

My heartfelt thanks go to my lovely wife Aryemo Racheal Melody, and all the family members for being supportive, encouraging, understanding and loving throughout the entire period of this research.

Above all, to the Almighty God who is great and makes everything beautiful in His own timing.

DEDICATION

To my late mother, Anek Rose who instilled in me the love for education and helped me develop my esteem as having the ability to achieve anything others are able to; you set the bar high for me, mother. You should have been here with me to witness the first of your inspiration. Continue to rest in eternal peace!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	i
APPROVAL	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iii
DEDICATION	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	v
LIST OF ABBREVIATION AND ACRONYMS.....	x
ABSTRACT.....	xii
CHAPTER ONE	1
GENERAL INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Background to the Problem.....	2
1.2 Historical Background.....	5
1.3 Conceptual framework	6
1.4 Theoretical Background	6
1.5 Problem Statement	7
1.6 General Objective.....	7
1.6.1 Specific Objectives	7
1.6.2 Research Question	8
1.7 The Scope of the Study	8
1.7.1 Content Scope.....	8
1.7.2 Time Scope	8
1.7.3 Geographical Scope.....	9
1.8 Justification of the Study	9
1.9 Significance of the Study	9

1.11 Definition of Key terms.....	10
CHAPTER TWO	11
LITERATURE REVIEW	11
2.0 Introduction	11
2.1 Acoli Traditional Marriage.....	11
2.1.1 Forms of Marriage in Acoli	11
2.1.2 Nature of Acoli Traditional Marriage.....	12
2.2 Modern Forms and Nature of Marriage	14
2.3 Reasons for the Changing Pattern of Marriage	17
2.3.1 Employment.....	17
2.3.2 Financial Status.....	18
2.3.3 Policy Contexts.....	19
2.3.4 Education	20
2.4 Conclusion.....	21
CHAPTER THREE	22
METHODOLOGY	22
3.0 Introduction	22
3.1 Research Approach.	22
3.2 Research Design.....	22
3.3 Study Area.....	23
3.4 Study Population	23
3.5 Sample Size	23
3.6 Sampling Technique and Procedure.....	24
3.6.1 Simple Random Sampling.....	24
3.6.2 Purposive Sampling.....	24

3.7. Methods of Data Collection	25
3.7.1 One-on-one interview/ key informant methods:.....	25
3.7.2 Focus Group Discussion	26
3.7.3 Document Review	27
3.7.4 Sample Data Collection Tools/ Instruments.....	27
3.7 Research Procedure	27
3.8 Data Analysis and Presentation.....	27
3.9 Validity and Reliability	28
3. 10 Limitation and Delimitation	28
3.11 Ethical Consideration	28
CHAPTER FOUR.....	31
ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS AND PRESENTATION.....	31
4.0 Introduction	31
4.1 Respond Rates	31
4.2 Background Information of the Respondents.....	32
CHAPTER FIVE: NATURE OF ACOLI TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE	34
5.0 Introduction	34
5.1 Nature of Acoli traditional marriage	34
CHAPTER SIX: NEW NATURE OF MARRIAGES IN ACOLI MODERN SOCIETY	39
6.0 Introduction	39
6.1 New nature of marriages in Acoli modern society.....	39
CHAPTER SEVEN: REASON FOR THE CHANGING PATTERN OF ACOLI TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE	42
7.1 Reason for the changing pattern of Acoli traditional marriage	42
CHAPTER EIGHT	46

DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	46
8.0 Introduction	46
8.1 Discussion of Findings	46
8.1.1 Nature of Acoli Traditional Marriage as Practice in Lamwo	46
8.1.2 New Forms/Nature of Marriage in Acoli Society as Practice in Lamwo	47
8.1.3 Reason for the Changing Pattern of Acoli Traditional Marriage	49
8.2 Conclusions	51
8.2.1 Nature of Acoli Traditional Marriage.....	51
8.2.2 New Forms of Marriage	51
8.2.3 Changing Pattern	51
8.3 Area of Further Study.....	52
REFERENCE.....	53
APPENDICES	60
Appendix A: Plagiarism.....	60
APPENDICES	61
Appendix B: Introduction Letter from Gulu University	61
APPENDICES	62
Appendix C: Map Showing Sub -Counties in Lamwo District.	62
Appendix D: A list of Acoli Traditional Marriage requirements in the past	63
Appendix E: A list of the present day (new) requirements as used in Acoli Traditional Marriage.	64
Appendix F: Coding of Respondents.....	65
Appendix G: When marrying an Acoli woman, in-laws crawl their way into her home	69
Appendix H: Bylaw on Acoli Bride Price eases traditional marriage	70
Appendix I: Questionnaire.....	71

Appendix J: Interview Guide	76
-----------------------------------	----

LIST OF ABBREVIATION AND ACRONYMS

ATM	Acoli Traditional Marriage
COVID 19	Corona Virus 2019
CSO	Civil Society Organization
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
HIV	Human Immune Virus
JRP	Justice For Reconciliation Project
LC1	Local Council One
MESTS	Ministry of Education Science, Technology and Sport
MoEVT	Ministry of Education and Vocational Training
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
UDHS	Uganda Demographic and Health Survey
UK	United Kingdom
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Emergency Fund
WB	World Bank

WFP

World Food Programme

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to investigate the changing pattern of Acoli traditional marriage in Lamwo district. The research was guided by the following objectives: to find out nature of Acoli traditional marriage, to explore the new forms and nature of marriage in Acoli society, and to find out the reasons for the changing pattern of Acoli traditional marriage. A case study approach was employed. A sample of 75 respondents were selected through purposive and simple random sampling techniques from a total population of 85 individuals. Data was collected through key informant interviews and focus group discussions. The data was analyzed in line with the research objectives and subsequently converted into text format. The findings revealed that the nature of Acoli traditional marriage have remained with minor changes. The study also found that there are new forms of marriage within the Acoli societies in Lamwo. The research also indicated factors such as employment, financial status, and educational level causing changes to tradition marriage. The study concludes that Acoli traditional marriage in Lamwo have undergone limited alterations, it further concludes that there are new forms of marriages practiced by the Acoli people. Furthermore, the research concludes that employment, financial stability, and educational background are key factors contributing to these changes in marriage.

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

The chapter provided an overview of background to the study, problem statement, and the purpose of the study, the objectives of the study, the scope of the study, research questions and significance of the study, Limitation and delimitation of the study.

Marriage is commonly described as a social and legal contract between men and women, although in some cultures, same-sex marriages have been permitted, as noted by Coontz in 2005. Max Weber's definition of marriage, as articulated by Collins in 1986, characterizes it as a "stable sexual relationship" sanctioned and legitimized by a larger community, serving to regulate rules related to property rights and children (Collins, 1986).

Empirical evidence regarding the origins of marriage is relatively scarce, as it developed at different times across cultures and has been defined in various ways. It is widely agreed that, as an institution, marriage is not as ancient as families themselves. In the past, debates among social scientists delved into whether original societies practiced monogamous or polygamous marriages, had restrictions on sexual behavior or allowed sexual freedom, or were governed by women (matriarchal) or men (patriarchal). However, these discussions were often shaped more by ideology than by concrete empirical evidence (Lamanna, 2002).

This study is based on the main ideas that is; changing pattern of traditional marriage. The concept has sub variable that is form of marriage in Acoli, modern form of marriage in Acoli and reason for changing trend of marriage. Form of marriage will be measured in term of monogamy (the combination of one wife to one husband) is the prevalent form almost everywhere, polygamy (having several wives at one time), and Civil marriage and interfaith.

1.1 Background to the Problem

In India, while traditional Hindu society predominantly practiced monogamy in marriages, polyandry, polygamy, bigamy, and exchange marriages were also prevalent. However, over time, polygamy, polyandry, and exchange marriages have considerably declined, and monogamy is now the prevailing practice among most people in Indian society. Traditional Hindu marriages were guided by the concept of "dharma," which pertained to the performance of religious duties. These marriages were primarily intended for the fulfillment of sacred obligations and functions, including the establishment of kinship and guardianship of the family. With the influence of various factors such as mass media, consumerism, and globalization, the sacred aspects of these relationships have diminished. The objectives and meanings have shifted from values like respect, faithfulness, and

In Africa, polygamy has historically been the prevailing marriage system in Africa. Marriage has witnessed shifts in its marriage structure in Africa which is attributed to modernization and civilization. For instance, among Zulu, according to Emdoneni (2023) traditional marriage have experience changes, but also has distinctive stages, with the first being the payment of *lobola*. Once lobola has been paid *izibizo* will follow, where gifts are given to the bride's family, followed by *umbondo* where the bride reciprocates by buying groceries for the groom's family, and finally the actual wedding or *umabo*. The traditional Zulu wedding always takes place at the family home of the groom. The bride will leave her home early in the morning, covered in a blanket given to her by her mother. The bride's father leads her to her new family home, and she is advised not to look back, so as not to invite bad luck. The bride's family also comes early in the morning, with the wedding ceremony starting at around midday.

In East Africa for example among Kikuyu, Twambui (2022) noted that the first step of the introduction starts with the man's side. The man takes the lady to see his parents and siblings. During the visit, the bride is asked a few questions, which she must answer truthfully. The process

is critical to establish whether the bride will quit her marriage at first sight of trouble. The groom's family then discusses their thoughts and discoveries for a few days. Upon acceptance, the groom proceeds to the next stage, *Kuhanda Ithigi*. At this stage, accompanied by his parents, friends and aged women and men, he visits the girl's homes to 'book her', meaning no man can ask her hand in marriage. The team then discusses the dowry payment with the girl's family. A representative from each side records everything the girls' family demands for dowry. Dowry can be in the form of goats, crates of sodas, wheat flour, beer, tanks and *sufurias*. However, nowadays the dowry (*Ruracio*) items are something converted into money (Twambui, 2022).

In Uganda, Thiara and Hague (2011) noted that Bride price, commonly practiced in African countries, serves as a foundation for legitimizing customary marriages. This practice traditionally involved the exchange of livestock, cash, goats, sheep, or other items, depending on the specific cultural norms of the society. However, in recent times, due to the influence of modernization and westernization, there has been an introduction of new and 'modern' gifts such as land titles, electronics, furniture, home theater systems, cars, and various other items alongside the traditional offerings. Nevertheless, the incorporation of these new and modern elements, as well as changes in the way bride price is paid, has, in some instances, transformed the practice into a display of affluence, resulting in the payment of exorbitant sums (Moore, 2013). Such amounts can often be beyond the means of prospective grooms with limited incomes. Despite ongoing debates among feminists and politicians on this topic, the perspective of the most critical stakeholders has been notably absent namely, the men and women at the grassroots level who are most directly affected by bride price, experiencing both its positive and negative consequences.

Mugambe (2021), in Buganda marriage is considered vital and the process must be carefully followed to the dot before the union is deemed successful. The process has witnessed changes, but the basics remain. Ateenyi (2021) the process begins with the husband-to-be visiting his fiancée's

home, in a bid to acquaint himself with her home, known as *Kukyaala*. That gives the boy insight into the lifestyle of his soon-to-be wife.” She added that the initial contact is a way for the parents to establish a connection, which then allows them to carry out investigations into the man’s clan, religion, parenting, and background. “*Kukyaala* is also used by the parents to dictate the bride price before the parents agree to give away their daughter, which must be delivered at the *Kwajula*.” Bride price in Buganda, known as *Omutwaalo* is dictated by the girl’s parents, as the condition which must be fulfilled before they officially sanction the marriage. *Kwajula* follows closely thereafter and is the point where the union between the man and the woman is fully legalized and blessed by the parents. The woman’s fiancée is graduated to her husband at the *Kwajula*. It is where the girl introduces her fiancée to all her family members who recognize the man as her husband, and all the responsibility for her is transferred to him” (Ateenyi, 2021).

Historically, within the Acoli culture, marriage transactions were traditionally facilitated through the collaboration of social connections and the contribution of various items such as a goat from a friend, a sheep from a brother, and even livestock from one's father (O'Byrne, 2021). These transactions involved the exchange of livestock, animal pelts, food, millet beer, feathers, and even gold. However, in the contemporary context, these transactions are predominantly conducted using monetary payments (Grabska, 2012). As a consequence of the substantial increase in costs over the past two decades, this shift to monetary payments has posed challenges for many individuals. The list of required items for marriage has expanded significantly, leading to a rise in the overall expenses associated with marriage. In addition, the value of cows has been reduced thus, making a groom’s family to bring several cows. Such inflationary calculations make marriage more difficult than ever (O’Byrne, 2021). Owing to this, the researcher therefore intends to conduct this study on the changing pattern of Acoli traditional marriage in Lamwo district.

1.2 Historical Background

Acoli Marriage

Historically, in Acoli culture, when an Acoli man is interested in a woman and intends to marry her, the initial step in demonstrating his responsibility is to make a casual visit to her mother's home, often accompanied by a friend or friends. Subsequently, after the visitors depart, the woman informs her mother about their identity. An inquiry is then made to ensure that the potential partner is not related by blood or clan. Following this, the man informs his own family about his intentions, and once an agreement is reached within his family, he informs the woman. In turn, she notifies her parents that special visitors will be arriving on a specified day to initiate the marriage ceremony.

On the agreed-upon day, the young man, along with his father, brothers, and other family members, visit the young woman's home and are warmly received into her mother's house. The girl's father inquiries about the visitors' identity, and the boy's father responds appropriately. The girl is also asked to confirm her knowledge of the visitors. This particular interaction typically takes place in the evening, as it is believed that during the daytime, the presence of many people may be detrimental, as there could be individuals with ill intentions, such as those practicing witchcraft, who might disrupt the proceedings. The discussion then shifts to the items to be presented as a bride price, and a specific date is established for the delivery of these items.

On the agreed date, before the groom and his company arrive, spies, usually aunts from both sides, are strategically placed in various parts of the home to monitor who arrives before evening. The aunt who first spots the arrival of the groom and his entourage raises a joyous ululation and is rewarded with a gift known as "*dyel pa wayo*." The dowry, referred to as "*nyom*," may consist of

cattle, goats, sheep, household items, or money. It's worth noting that the girl's dowry is often saved and not immediately spent; it may be reserved to offset her brothers' dowries when it's their turn to marry and contribute. Importantly, the dowry items do not necessarily have to be delivered all at once, as installments may be accepted. Following this ceremony, the girl officially becomes a member of the boy's clan. While it may take some time to complete the dowry payments, the girl's status undergoes an immediate transformation from "*nyako*" (girl) to "*dako ot*" (wife).

1.3 Conceptual Framework

The study comprises two key concepts; changing pattern as the independent variable whereas Acoli traditional marriage in the dependent variable. The conceptual framework below illustrates the relationship between changing pattern and Acoli traditional marriage in Lamwo district. The independent variable comprises new forms of marriage, and factors that are influencing changes in the nature of Acoli traditional marriage. Acoli traditional marriage which in the dependent variable will be seen in terms of involvement of parents, payment of Bride price, bring physical items.

1.4 Theoretical Background

This study was underpinned by Structural-Factor theory also known as functionalism theory. It was introduced in 1898 through the work of Herbert Spencer. The theory states that, the different parts of the society majorly institutions, produces social change. These institutions include, government, education, family, healthcare, religion and economy. The parts of the society cause change because the society is like a human body with various organs that work together to keep the body functioning.

The major proponents of this theory are scholars such as Talcott Parsons and Robert K. Merton in 1940's to 1960's. They support the supposition with the argument that, each function of the society directly and positively influences the other, such that, these social functions are complimentary and none is exclusive.

In this research, the changing pattern of Acoli traditional marriage in Lamwo District, is believed to have occurred due to various factors that stem from the different societal institutions. This study sought to explore the different social functions that compliments Acoli traditional marriage and produce changes in the changing pattern of the institution.

1.5 Problem Statement

It is known that marriage, which was sealed by the payment of bride's price as a token of appreciation to the parents of the bride is changing. Some of the changes are in terms of introduction of new forms of marriages like, church marriage and civil marriage. What is not clear is why these changes are taking place. Authors like Silver (2022) economic reasons; Makiko & Cohen (2007), have attempted to answer this question by reporting that there is change in how people think toward marriage, but their answer is not satisfactory in the context of Acoli long cherished tradition of marriage. The paper then attempts to find out the reasons for the changing pattern of Acoli traditional marriage.

1.6 General Objective

To investigate the changing pattern of Acoli traditional marriage in Lamwo District.

1.6.1 Specific Objectives

The study shall be guided by the following specific objectives:

- i) To examine the nature of Acoli traditional marriage as practiced in Lamwo.

- ii) To find out the new forms and nature of marriage in Acoli society as practiced in Lamwo today.
- iii) To investigate the reasons for the changing pattern of Acoli traditional marriage in Lamwo district.

1.6.2 Research Question

- i) What is the nature of Acoli traditional marriage as practiced in Lamwo district?
- ii) What are the new forms and nature of marriage in Acoli society today as practiced in Lamwo district?
- iii) What are the reasons for the changing pattern of Acoli traditional marriage in Lamwo district?

1.7 The Scope of the Study

The scope of the study is divided into three distinctive sub themes including: content, geographical and time scope as presented below.

1.7.1 Content Scope

The content of the study is historical study that focused on the changing pattern of Acoli traditional marriage as the main variable using nature of Acoli traditional marriage, the new nature of marriage in Acoli society and the reason for the changing pattern of Acoli traditional marriage in Lamwo district.

1.7.2 Time Scope

This study covers the period from 1910-2020. 1910 marked the beginning of Christianity in Acoli sub region which was the beginning of adulteration of the changing pattern of marriage. 2020 showed unprecedented increment in the number of young girls getting married. Joy for children

Uganda reported that more than 140 million young girls were married off as the results of Covid 19 pandemic.

1.7.3 Geographical Scope

The study was conducted in the district of Lamwo, Acoli Sub-region, in Northern Uganda. This was because the district was the most affected by the changing pattern of Acoli traditional marriage from 1910 to 2020.

1.8 Justification of the Study

Several studies have been done on marriage, however, there are limited studies done on the changing pattern of Acoli traditional marriage right from the past to present. Marriage is still measured important and necessary, and only few individuals remain unmarried by choice. Goals of marriage are, however, undergoing changes especially for the urban and educated sections of the population in Acoli. The older notions regarding large size family, (large number of children especially sons being the source of status for parents) are being replaced by preference for small size family. Marriage is now for self-fulfillment rather than primarily for procreation or societal welfare. This study therefore intended to bridge the gap by investigating the changing pattern of Acoli traditional marriage and supplement to the existing body of knowledge.

1.9 Significance of the Study

The study will add information on the existing body of knowledge in the subject the changing pattern of Acoli traditional marriage. Focus was on getting the detailed information on nature of Acoli traditional marriage, the new nature of marriage in Acoli society, and the reason for the changing thinking pattern of Acoli traditional marriage. Hence acting as reference or source of literature for review by other researchers.

The government and policy makers can make use of this research finding to improve on the enactment of marriage and divorce bill in Uganda still in offing of becoming an act of parliament.

The researcher may also be a beneficiary of this study by getting a degree of Master of Arts in History of Gulu University since it is a requirement for the partial fulfillment for this award.

1.11 Definition of Key terms

Traditional Marriage: the primary established form of marriage recognized in a given country or within a specific religious or social group at a given time is often referred to as "traditional marriage." In traditional marriages, there is typically a set of customary practices and rituals that the families of the future bride and groom engage in, which may include ritual visits and the exchange of gifts. These customs and practices are specific to the culture or community in which the marriage is taking place and are an integral part of the institution of marriage within that particular context.

Marriage is a transaction and resulting contract in which a woman and a man are recognized by society as having a continuing claim to the right of sexual access to one another, and in which the woman involved is eligible to bear children (Haviland 1996).

Historical Perspective: is the study of a subject in light of its earliest phases and subsequent evolution; Is the way things were viewed and understood at a time and place in the past (Simplicable, 2022)

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents reviews of available relevant literatures about the history of marriage at both the global and national levels. The chapter also explained the main Acoli traditional marriage, the nature of marriage in Acoli modern society and the reasons for the changing pattern of Acoli traditional marriage in Lamwo district.

Marriage represents a foundational institution present in every society, forging connections not only between spouses but also between their respective families. It significantly influences sexual practices, the bearing and nurturing of children, economic prospects, and serves as a source of security and social support for women (Defoe, 1997). In the context of Uganda, as indicated by the 2006 Uganda Demographic and Health Survey (UDHS), a substantial 94 percent of women aged 25-29 have experienced marriage at least once in their lives.

2.1 Acoli Traditional Marriage

In Acoli culture, marriage is a formal agreement between two entities, which can either be a contract between two individuals, symbolized by the husband and wife, or a contract between two families, represented by the same individuals (Lajul, 2014). Acoli society primarily practices two main types of marriages, which are monogamous and polygamous unions.

2.1.1 Forms of Marriage in Acoli

Monogamy Marriage

Monogamous marriage is defined as a marital arrangement where a person is exclusively committed to one partner at a time, or it can be characterized as the practice of having only one

mate (DeLecce, 2016). It is the sole legally recognized form of marriage and is the most prevalent type of marital union in the Western world (DeLecce, 2016). However, among the Acoli people, monogamy is not the traditional norm, though it is becoming increasingly popular. Terms such as "faithful" or "loyal" can also be used to describe a partner in a monogamous relationship who has not engaged in infidelity with another person (Stocrk, 2022). It's worth noting that in the Acoli culture, monogamy is a relatively recent concept when compared to polygamy.

Polygamy

According to Gadban and Goldner (2020), polygamy is characterized as a form of marriage in which one spouse, whether male or female, has multiple other spouses. The most prevalent manifestation of polygamy is when a man has multiple wives, as described by Al-Krenawi (2012). In the past, particularly before the influence of modernization, this was the predominant and widely recognized form of marriage within the Acoli culture. Although polygamy has encountered various societal shifts and challenges in recent times, it's important to note that many individuals, centuries ago, voluntarily chose polygamous relationships over monogamous ones (Zeitzen, 2018).

2.1.2 Nature of Acoli Traditional Marriage

In Acoli tradition, when the boy's family agrees to a marriage, it serves as the green light for the union. The boy informs the girl, and she, in turn, informs her parents about the forthcoming marriage ceremony with special guests. The girl's mother then shares this news with the entire family. To prepare for the arrival of the guests, the structures in the girl's homestead receive a fresh coating of mud mixed with cow dung, and seats, typically made from animal hides, are arranged. On the agreed-upon day, the boy, accompanied by his father, brothers, and other invited family members, visits the girl's home and is warmly received into her mother's house. During the introductions, the visitors are required to kneel and not stand, while the girl's father poses

questions. He inquires about the identity of the visitors, and the boy's father responds accordingly. The girl is also asked to confirm her recognition of them, as documented by Silver (2022).

The discussion proceeds to the items and animals that will be given as a bride price, a practical gesture to express gratitude to the girl's mother. This discussion also involves setting a specific date for the delivery of these items. It's important to note that this doesn't necessarily mean all the items must be delivered at once, as installments may be accepted, as noted by JRP (2006). Following this ceremony, the girl officially becomes a part of the boy's clan. While it may take some time to complete the dowry payments, the girl's status transitions from "*nyako*" (girl) to "*dako ot*" (wife) immediately. Often, the dowry provided for the girl is not expended but kept aside to be used to offset her brothers' dowries when they get married and have to make payments. In the event of a divorce, dowry refunds are made, though the exact value to be refunded depends on the terms agreed upon when the dowry was initially paid.

While marriages were occasionally arranged in the past without the consent of the boy and the girl, such situations have become increasingly rare in modern times, with most people now embracing the contemporary concept of freedom of choice. In earlier times, if a father favored a friend's daughter as a match for his son, it was possible for these fathers to make an arrangement and compel their children into a marriage with each other. Often, it was the father's wealth that facilitated the payment of the bride price, leaving little room for the son to influence the decision.

The Acoli culture places immense significance on the marriage ritual, to the extent that the failure to marry is seen as a curse or an anomaly, prompting the intervention of elders to oversee the situation. Childlessness is regarded as one of the gravest misfortunes that can befall a couple, with women typically bearing the blame. In such cases, the marriage might be dissolved, or the husband might be permitted to take another wife. For the Acoli, the primary aim of any marriage is to have

children. Historically, it is noted that an Acoli couple would not establish their own household until the birth of their first child. Until then, the newly married couple resided in the groom's mother's house. In instances where a girl became pregnant before the formal marriage, the marriage ceremony, known as "nyom," would not take place until she had given birth to confirm that the child belonged to the groom, as outlined by Mikolo (2018).

Acoli traditional institutions have by-laws that encompass the customary norms and traditions associated with marriage. These regulations cover various aspects, including elopement, bride price, the marriage ceremony itself, child custody, divorce, and widowhood. Furthermore, within Acoli society, customary clan laws dictate appropriate behaviors and relationships between husbands and wives, and these customs persist in modern settlements. For example, if a dispute between a married couple leads to actions such as consuming ash, evicting one partner from the home, or engaging in the symbolic acts of throwing money, food, or pots at each other, it is viewed as a grave transgression referred to as "*kiir*," considered an offense against the ancestors and a curse upon the family. In such instances, elders take an active role in mediating and reconciling the couple, followed by ceremonial rituals aimed at appeasing the ancestors and dispelling any potential misfortune that may arise, as detailed by the Gulu NGO Forum in 2006 (Gulu NGO Forum, 2006).

2.2 Modern Forms and Nature of Marriage

Modern marriage came mostly from the west and is define as a contract between two individual and witnessed by the society. There are several modern forms of marriage as discussed below.

Civil Marriage

Civil marriage is a form of matrimony that receives recognition and validation from the state. Glad (2014) expressed the view that any couple can engage in a civil marriage provided they meet the specified requirements set forth by the government. According to Gibson (2021), a civil marriage will automatically default to the community of property regime, unless the parties enter into an antenuptial contract that explicitly states whether the marriage will be in or out of the community of property, with or without the accrual system. Gibson further noted that dissolving a civil marriage is generally more complex compared to other forms of marriage. He emphasized that certain prerequisites, such as proof of nationality, an LC1 letter, passport-size photographs for identification, and marriage affidavits that adhere to Section 10 of the Marriage Act of Uganda, must be met. Glad (2014) disclosed that for most individuals, marriage is regarded as a public expression of love and mutual support between adult couples. The government shares this perspective and employs the institution of marriage as a gateway to a multitude of legal protections, responsibilities, and benefits established by the state.

Interfaith Marriage

According to Sewenet, Tessagaye, and Tadele (2017), faith or religion plays a significant role in shaping our identities and lives. In the past, individuals sharing the same religious beliefs often preferred to marry within their faith. However, over time, people from different religious backgrounds have also begun to form unions, which are commonly referred to as interfaith or interreligious marriages. Such marriages represent a type of intermarriage and involve interactions between distinct religious groups, sub-societies, or societies, as noted by Gray (1987). This practice has existed since the inception of various religions, reflecting the level of integration and social proximity between individuals from different religious communities.

Schoen and Thomas (1990) revealed that a higher prevalence of interreligious marriages indicates reduced social distance between religious groups, and conversely, a lower frequency of such marriages suggests a greater social divide. Sewenet, Tessagaye, and Tadele (2017) added that numerous studies have demonstrated that interreligious marriage contributes to an increased awareness of cultural relativism and religious tolerance.

Church Marriage

Church marriage is a monogamous form of union, adhering to the principle of one man and one wife, and it is solemnized within a place of worship or another authorized venue in the presence of an authorized officiating officer of the church, as described by Ninsiima (n.d). Each church typically maintains a set of prerequisites that the bride and groom must fulfill before being permitted to marry. In some of the early churches, marriage required that the couple be baptized and have no previous spouse. However, contemporary churches have introduced additional criteria, including mandatory counseling sessions, medical testing, and a wedding fee (which varies depending on the specific church branch), in order to facilitate the wedding ceremony.

Mixed Marriage

A mixed marriage, also known as an inter-racial marriage, is another type of marital union that has gained increasing popularity in recent times. Historically, people tended to marry within their own racial or ethnic groups, but today, individuals from different racial backgrounds are coming together in the bonds of matrimony. It's worth noting that in the past, such marriages were prohibited in various parts of the world, including the United States, Nazi Germany, and apartheid-era South Africa, under the term "miscegenation." In the United States, as of 1960, interracial marriage was legally prohibited in 31 states. However, a significant legal milestone occurred in 1967 when the Supreme Court of the United States, through the landmark decision, ruled that race-

based restrictions on marriages, such as anti-miscegenation laws, violated the Equal Protection Clause. This decision led to the legalization of interracial marriages throughout the United States (Oyez, 2019).

2.3 Reasons for the Changing Pattern of Marriage

The contemporary understanding of marriage has evolved considerably over the past century, as noted by Ortiz-Ospina and Roser (2020). Key transformative factors include the emergence of feminism and the sexual revolution in the 1960s, which led to a reevaluation of gender roles within marriage. The increased participation of women in the workforce, a trend highlighted by Silver (2022), brought about substantial shifts in the economic dynamics of marriage. The definition of marriage underwent a thorough examination when divorce gained social acceptance and the rights of the LGBTQ+ community were recognized, as mentioned by Gelling (2020). As women asserted their decision-making authority within their marriages and men began to shoulder more child-rearing responsibilities, modern marriages adopted a more egalitarian and balanced character, reflecting the insights of Silver (2022).

2.3.1 Employment

Traditionally, women were financially reliant on their husbands, who served as the sole breadwinners in the family. Financial assets were primarily owned by the men, who would allocate housekeeping funds at their discretion. However, as noted by Miani and Hoorens (2014), the traditional breadwinner/housewife model of marriage has seen a decline. Over the past five decades, women's involvement in the paid workforce has steadily increased. Women no longer marry primarily for economic reasons; they are better educated, pursue well-paying careers, and achieve financial independence. Nonetheless, Veerle (2011) emphasized that this transformation does not necessarily equate to an equal division of household responsibilities, childcare duties, or workplace equality. Barker (2018) further pointed out that despite women's increased participation

in the workforce, they are still more likely to work fewer hours than men and earn less on an hourly basis.

Studies have revealed that male employment and favorable economic circumstances consistently enhance men's likelihood of getting married (Smock & Manning, 1997). Social shifts in women's economic situations, notably their increased participation in the labor force and enhanced earnings capacity, have been associated with reduced marriage rates. Robert (1998) also highlighted that there is evidence indicating that women improved economic resources have provided them with alternative life choices, including the decision not to marry. Similarly, when examining the economic situations of both partners, it appears that only men's economic circumstances influence the likelihood of a couple transitioning into marriage, with no observable impact from women's economic circumstances. There is contradictory evidence suggesting that a lack of economic resources for both men and women reduces the likelihood of entering into marriage (Smock, 2005). On the other hand, some research found similar associations between economic well-being and the decision to enter into marriage for both men and women.

2.3.2 Financial Status

Numerous studies have identified the existence of a subjective financial threshold for entering into marriage. Financial and residential independence are often viewed as prerequisites for marriage, and this association is linked to a specific lifestyle. Poor individuals, both men and women, have been found to be only half as likely to be married when compared to those with incomes three times the poverty level, as highlighted by Gibson-Davis and colleagues (2005). For some, cohabitation may serve as an alternative or a stepping stone to marriage, particularly for those who feel they cannot "afford" marriage, as noted by Edin, Kathryn, and Reed (2005). Unfortunately,

the limited availability of comprehensive data on cohabitation in many countries hinders in-depth comparative analyses of cohabitation formation, as mentioned by Geist (2016).

While the relationship between economic status and marriage formation has been extensively explored at the individual level, it is equally important to examine it at the societal level. Societal norms regarding financial prerequisites for entering into marriage imply that even if a couple does not personally subscribe to these economic "standards" associated with marriage, they are likely to encounter such expectations from their social networks, as noted by Seltzer (2000). These societal expectations can influence individuals' behavior. Moreover, the impact of economic instability and economic opportunities on marriage decisions and timing extends beyond the individual level. Unemployment doesn't solely affect the behavior of those who experience it directly. High unemployment rates, particularly among men, can discourage even those who are currently employed from pursuing marriage, as suggested by Geist (2016).

2.3.3 Policy Contexts

Fuwa, Makiko, and Cohen (2007) highlight that the policy context represents a distinctive aspect within the changing marriage trends. Current policies aim to enhance women's status in society, with a focus on achieving gender equality and encouraging greater participation in the labor force. As Silver (2022) explains, traditional marriages were characterized by a clear division of roles based on gender. Husbands worked outside the home and were primarily responsible for the family's financial well-being, while wives took on the sole responsibility for domestic tasks, including shopping, cooking, cleaning, and child-rearing. In modern marriages, where women work and contribute to the family's income, responsibilities are shared more equitably between husbands and wives. In some cases, wives may even earn a higher income than their spouses. Additionally, most contemporary husbands actively participate in child-rearing, including tasks

such as changing diapers and, in some cases, taking paternity leave to stay at home full-time with their children.

Stevenson and Wolfers (2007) underscore that changes in the legal framework have fundamentally transformed the foundation of the marriage contract. These changes have removed the ability to make long-term agreements within marriage, as one spouse cannot promise not to seek a divorce in the future. Moreover, these alterations have shifted the right to initiate divorce, and consequently, bargaining power, from the party most invested in preserving the marriage to the individual who desires to terminate it. While the previous laws permitted divorce only in the presence of sufficient evidence of fault, many divorces involved couples who mutually consented to divorce. These couples engaged in private negotiations to establish uncontested (and often contrived) claims of fault to present to the courts. Essentially, the fault-based system allowed for mutual consent divorce but not unilateral divorce.

2.3.4 Education

A lower level of educational attainment is associated with a higher likelihood of marriage dissolution. According to data from the 2006 Uganda Demographic and Health Survey (UDHS), a greater proportion of ever-married women between the ages of 25-49 who married before their 14th birthday had no formal education (37%) when compared to those who married at a later age (26%). Conversely, a higher percentage of women who married after the age of 18 had achieved secondary education or higher, in contrast to those who married at younger ages. Over the period between the 2001 and 2006 surveys, there is a slight increase in the percentage of individuals who first married at age 18 or older and had completed secondary school or attained higher education.

Similarly, men with more years of schooling may choose older spouses not merely because of their educational attainment, but because they have delayed their involvement in relationship-related

matters in order to focus on their education, as indicated by Dessy, Diarra, and Pongou (2018). In the modern labor market, extended periods of education are often required, leading to delayed marriages due to the heightened challenges in finding a suitable match and men's changing economic circumstances, as suggested by Sweeney (2002).

2.4 Conclusion

A critical analysis of the above literatures shows the forms of marriage in Acoli, modern form of marriage reason for changing pattern of marriage. However, from the above literature the patterns of marriage were not talked about in the context of Acoli. This is the gap that the researcher has identified and intends to use this research to bridge it.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the methods used in the study. It included the following: research approach and design, study population, sample size collection, data collection methods, research procedure, Validity and reliability, ethical consideration, Covid 19 and Ebola SOP, data analysis, and data presentation.

3.1 Research Approach.

I used a qualitative approach to collect, analyze, and interpret the data collected from the field. The qualitative approach is also known as history by quotation) where the search for a story construed from a range of printed or written evidence and the resultant history is arranged chronologically and presented as a factual tale, and the sources range from manuscripts such as letters, diaries, and memoirs) to imprints such as textbooks, journals, and other books of the period under consideration (Monaghan and Hartman, 2000).

3.2 Research Design.

In this study, a historical research design was employed. According to Malunda and Atwe Bembere (2021), this approach aligns with the constructionism paradigm and was chosen for its effectiveness in investigating the masses' beliefs, opinions, and attitudes. Data was collected and done contextually based on observation and respondent interaction. Under qualitative, I employed historical design and investigated past events (historical events about the Acoli traditional marriage that have shaped the present (Amin, 2005).

3.3 Study Area.

The study was conducted in the Acoli sub-region covering Lamwo District.

These geographical locations were the most affected areas in the study of Acoli traditional marriage (Laruni, 2015).

3.4 Study Population

Korb (2012) provides a definition of the study population, which refers to a collection of individuals, objects, or items from which samples are selected for the purpose of measurement. Once the unit of analysis is identified, the next step for the researcher is to determine the target population, which is the specific group of people about whom the researcher aims to draw conclusions once the research study is completed. The process of identifying the target population involves establishing the criteria that dictate which individuals are to be encompassed in the study and which individuals should not be considered for inclusion. The population of the study comprised Married couples (35), Elders (10), Local Chiefs (5), CSO (5), Church leaders (5) and Youths (25). The study population was 85 respondents.

3.5 Sample Size

Salkind (2010), sample is a portion of a larger group of potential participants. The results got from the sample can be used to make statements that apply to the broader population. The study was based on a sample size of 75 people drawn from a population of 85 people.

Categories of respondents	Population	Sample size	Sampling technique
Married couple	35	30	Simple random sampling

Elders	10	10	Purposive sampling
Local chiefs	5	5	Purposive sampling
CSO	5	5	Purposive sampling
Church leaders	5	5	Purposive sampling
Youth	25	20	Simple random sampling

Table 3.2. Showing population categories, population, sample size and sampling techniques

Source: primary data

3.6 Sampling Technique and Procedure

3.6.1 Simple Random Sampling

Sekaran and Bougie (2016) sampling is where every element in the population has a known and equal chance of being selected as a subject. Simple random sampling method was selected because it is also preferred for data collection since biasness is minimized when selecting respondents. Simple random sampling provides for greater precision and accuracy. For this study, married couples, NGO workers and youth were sample using simple random sampling.

3.6.2 Purposive Sampling

Kothari (2010) discusses a form of sampling that focuses on selecting individuals whom the researcher deems significant to the research topic and are readily accessible. As stated by Etikan and Bala (2017), purposive sampling relies on the researcher's judgment to determine who can provide the most valuable information to fulfil the study's objectives. Furthermore, purposive sampling is employed when some members of the population possess specific qualifications and positions that make them suitable for participation in the study. This sampling method proves particularly valuable when there is a need to promptly assemble a targeted sample, as noted by

Crossman (2020). The study used the snowball and networking approach to identify clan leaders, elders, cultural chiefs, church leaders, and key informants. This helped the researcher to identify respondents who have knowledge and information about the study, they might have witnessed or been part of the changing thinking patterns of Acoli traditional marriage.

3.7. Methods of Data Collection

To collect adequate and quality data, I used one interview/ key informants' method, Focus Group Discussion, and document review, which were purely narrative and descriptive.

3.7.1 One-on-one interview/ key informant methods:

These involved face-to-face interactions between me as the researcher and the respondent, including key informants, personal narratives, and oral history (Best and Kahn, 1986). This was a flexible method of acquiring data, as Cohen et al. (2018) described since it allowed the use of many verbal and nonverbal sensory channels. Under this method, I explored issues in depth to discover the opinions, behaviours, and attitudes of the people about Acoli traditional marriage.

According to Mumar (1989), a key informant refers to a qualitative, in-depth interview with a respondent who knows what is happening in the study area. I identified key insiders and asked local chiefs, and other people within the study area who had ideal sources of information about the Acoli traditional marriage in the Acoli sub-region from 1910 to 2020. I formulated study questions and prepared interview guides for Acoli traditional marriage in the Acoli Sub-region from 1910 to 2020. I took adequate notes while interacting with the informants and checked for reliability and validity.

While conducting a personal narrative, I did my best to find out the historical context, historically specific times, and places of the study area from the narrators. I interviewed married couple actors and witnesses who repeatedly told me their stories, which were useful in clarifying issues about Acoli traditional marriage in Acoli sub-region from 1910 to 2020.

On the other side, I used oral tradition. According to Jan Vansina (1961), all messages of oral tradition have a social surface; they are significant to members of the communities in which they are told. Otherwise, they would not be communicated at all. The messages were created by the society, which was subjected to recreation by historical changes influenced by the social present. The message expresses culture and language; cultures shape all messages, which must be considered when interpreting messages. The impacts of a given message reflect the kind of community and the symbolic aspect of the message concerning the image and their interpretation. While interviewing these prospective narrators, I explained the nature of this project to them. I used the best quality sound digitalized equipment, tape recorder, and external microphone and recorded the interview for about one to two hours. While conducting oral tradition and Oral history, I asked brief questions, including perspectives on human rights one at a time, listened carefully, labelled the respondents, and created a backup copy on a hard disc. Furthermore, finally, I concluded by thanking her or him for having enjoyed hearing interesting oral history about Acoli traditional marriage in the Acoli sub-region from 1910 to 2020. During these interviews, I coded all my respondents from the Sub-Counties I carried out my interview them.

3.7.2 Focus Group Discussion

I used this method to interview a group associated with a research problem for about two hours (Potton, 2002). Like other qualitative data collection techniques, the questions focused on 50 finding out the ideas, opinions, attitudes, and beliefs of the Acoli people of Northern Uganda about the Acoli traditional marriage from 1910 to 2020 (Kumar, 2005). In each chiefdom, I held discussions with a group of women and men. I intended to use Focus Group Discussion to get in-depth information from people with common or varying ideas about the Acoli traditional marriage in the Acoli sub-region from 1910 to 2020 (Chawla and Sondhi, 2028). I recorded and took notes

as we proceeded with the discussion. I used the funnel approach, beginning with a broad question and zeroing in on the topic.

3.7.3 Document Review

I used this method to collect data from existing online resources (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016), such as reports, newsletters, magazines, and articles. I reviewed the following documents: colonial reports, Acoli District Administration Achieves. This was important because it helped triangulate, validate, and corroborate data. It was also less costly on my side as the researcher and suitable for background information, although these pieces of information were inadequate and incomplete (Best and Kahn, 1986).

3.7.4 Sample Data Collection Tools/ Instruments

During data collection, I used the following tools: document review (colonial reports, Uganda Argus, ADA Achieves, One-on-one interviews, key informants, and Focus Group Discussion.

3.7 Research Procedure

I obtained a letter of introduction from Gulu University, Dean Faculty of Education and Humanities to introduce me to the respondents. I used an interview guide to collect qualitative data from the respondents and data were then to be sorted for analysis.

3.8 Data Analysis and Presentation

Data analysis comprises tabulating, editing, and coding all the research instruments administered to various respondents. This is to help identify inconsistencies or errors that might have come during data collection and immediate editing to ensure a uniform, accurate and comprehensive report. In this study, analysis of qualitative data obtained through interviews consisted of steps such as arranging data systematically and converting them to text format. Then after data were

organized by arranging and aligning them according to the research objective and research questions.

3.9 Validity and Reliability

In order to ensure truthfulness, consistent accuracy, and the virtue of fairness and honesty, I used triangulation to control biases (Mathison, 1988).

3. 10 Limitation and Delimitation

I faced the following challenges while conducting the research from the field: respondent biases toward the military, denial of sharing confidential and classified information, loss of memory due to the advanced ages of the respondents, and limited access to people's homes due to the COVID-19 pandemic. To overcome the limitation, I used the snow bowling technique to identify people with viable information about the Acoli traditional marriage in the Acoli sub-region.

3.11 Ethical Consideration

According to UNCST (2014), to protect the rights and welfare of human research participants, research should be conducted following four basic research ethics principles: respect, beneficence, Non-maleficence, and Justice.

Respect for persons incorporates at least two fundamental ethical considerations, namely, respect for autonomy, which requires that those who are capable of deliberation about their personal choices should be treated with respect for their capacity for self-determination, and protection of persons with impaired or diminished autonomy, which requires that those who are dependent or vulnerable be afforded security against harm or abuse. Beneficence refers to the ethical obligation to maximize benefits and minimize harm. That is to say, expected benefits should reasonably justify risks of harm by research. Research design should be scientifically acceptable, and researchers should be competent to conduct research and safeguard research participants' rights

and welfare. Non-maleficence (i.e., do not harm) prescribes that researchers should not deliberately inflict harm or evil on research participants. Justice refers to the ethical obligation to treat each person following what is morally proper, to give each person what is due to him or her. The principle refers primarily to distributive justice, which requires fair and equitable distribution of both burdens and benefits of participation in research.

In addition to UNCST 2014, Zhao and Alexander (2002) identified five ethical concerns I considered when conducting qualitative research. These guidelines dealt with Informed consent, where I obtained the consent and cooperation of the respondents, especially those exposed to some risk, and I gave them a consent form to sign. As a researcher, I kept quite a secret and used code to represent the individual respondents. In addition to that, the respondent's participation in the study was made voluntary.

Since this research was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic and Ebola Virus outbreak in Uganda, I ensured Covid 19 and Ebola Virus Awareness in the following ways;

Before Data collection

Before data collection, I attended training on health guidance that equipped me with knowledge of signs and symptoms of Covid 19 and the Ebola Virus and preventive measures such as hand hygiene before placing and removing the mask, as well as storage of the mask, social distancing and avoiding handshakes and ensuring personal screening.

During data collection. While collecting data from the field, I ensured the following Standard Operating Procedures for Covid 19 and the Ebola Virus. I wore Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), and we washed our hands with soap and water or used hand sanitizer before the interview. Handshakes and hugging were prohibited. The physical distancing of at least 2 meters in all research-related activities was observed.

Focus Group Discussions: the research participants and I washed their hands with soap and water or used hand sanitizer before the interview. Screening for temperature was carried out before conducting meetings.

Consent Process: I and the respondents observed social distancing when taking consent (while 2 meters apart) upon arrival to the participant, I washed my hands with soap and water

Equipment Sanitization: shared devices used to record or capture data were sanitized regularly

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS AND PRESENTATION

4.0 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the changing pattern of Acoli traditional marriage in Lamwo district.

This chapter discusses the study findings and their interpretations. It covers the characteristics of the respondents which include their gender, age-groups, highest levels of education attained and marital status. The chapter also presents the qualitative results got from the various interview conducted during the study.

4.1 Respond Rates

The rate of response of the respondents for this study was as presented in Table 4.1 below.

Tool	Population	Actual response	Respond rate (%)
Interview guide	35	32	91.4%
Focus group interview guide	40	38	95%
Total	75	70	93.3%

Source: Primary data (2022)

Findings in Table 4.1 shows that there was a total response rate of 93.3% from the respondents. The rate of respond was found to be appropriate and it allowed for data analysis. According to Amin (2005) a response rate of 70% or higher is often considered to be acceptable for most circumstances. Therefore, in this a response rate of 93.3% was acceptable and this was realized as a result of good relationship between the researcher and the respondents.

4.2 Background Information of the Respondents

The background information of the respondents was studied. This was found important for the purpose of verifying the representativeness of the samples and to allow for the generalization of the results. The results were as shown in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2: Background Information of the Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	22	46.8%
	Female	25	53.2%
Age	18-25	3	6.4%
	26-35	17	36.2%
	36-45	18	38.3%
	46 & Above	9	19.1%
Level of education	Primary	5	10.6%
	Secondary	17	36.2%
	Tertiary institution/university	20	42.6%
	None	5	10.6%
Marital status	Single	18	38.3%
	Married	22	46.8%
	Divorced	5	10.6%
	Separated	2	4.3%

Source: Primary data (2022)

Results in Table 4.2 above show that more female (53.2%) participated in the study as compared to their male counterparts (46.8%). This shows that women were more responsive compare to men.

This further indicated that the researcher was gender sensitive since issues regarding marriage involves both genders.

The findings from table 4.2 indicated that majority of the respondents were in the age bracket of 26-45 constituting 38.3%, followed by those in the bracket of 16-25 years (36.2%), then those in the bracket of 46 year and above (19.1%) and those in the bracket of 10-15years were 3 constituting (6.4%). Therefore, all the age categories were catered for and the respondents were mature enough to make independent opinion about the study.

In regard to level of education, majority of the respondents (42.6%) were found to have reached tertiary institution/university level of education, while 36.2% have attained secondary level of education, 10.6% attained primary level of education and also 10.6% did not attain any form of education. This shows that the respondents involved were knowledgeable in the context of the study. The findings also revealed that all the respondents were educated enough to give a well-balanced view of the topic under investigation.

Regarding marital status, the results indicated that majority of the respondents (46.8%) were married, 10.6 % divorced, 4.3 % separated while 38.3% of the respondents were single. This implies that most of the respondents (61.7%) have knowledge regarding marriage since most of them have been married or have been into marriage.

CHAPTER FIVE

NATURE OF ACOLI TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE

5.0 Introduction

Findings and discussions on the nature of Acoli traditional marriage

5.1 Nature of Acoli traditional marriage

Objective one investigated the nature of Acoli traditional marriage as practiced in Lamwo District. The qualitative findings from both focus group and key informant interviews are as presented below.

On the statement that during Acoli traditional marriage parents are still involved during the process of traditional marriage in Acoli. *Key informant* 001 from Cubu, Palabek Gem Sub-County and *key informant* 020 Pangira, Lokung Sub-County stated that parents are still fully involved in the process of traditional marriage. They are the ones who decide most of the things regarding the amount of bride price “*lim akumu*” and the physical item while also considering the tradition of the clan. Parents together with the uncles from both the boy’s and girl’s sides are the ones who discuss during the marriage. The only thing that parents are not fully involved in is the process of convincing the girls. This is because nowadays people meet in places such as workplace, schools among others which is far from the parents which made them not to fully get involved in the process of convincing.

During the interview all the respondents who participated in the study agreed that bride price is still paid in the process of traditional marriage among the Acoli people in Lamwo district. They pointed that bride price is still one of the key elements of traditional marriage among the Acoli people in Lamwo district. The bride price can be paid partly if the groom cannot pay fully at ones. *Key informant* 003 from Cubu, Palabek Gem Sub-County added that when the boy raises the

remaining balance, he informs their family and the father of the boy informs the bride family and a day is scheduled for the payment of the balance “*tyeko lim*” and other physical items that might have been partly paid. *Key informant* 007 from Labworo Oyeng Palabek Gem Sub-County however, opined that nowadays there is increase in both bride price paid and the quantity of the physical items brought compared to the early days.

Out of the focus group interview, the respondents unanimously agreed that physical items in addition to bride price are still given to the bride family during the process marriage. *Key informant* 002 from Cubu, Palabek Gem Sub-County however, noted that, some families nowadays are now asking for some items which in the early days were not included such as big saucepan “*nywal ber*”, chair “*rwot onino*” and sportsman (cigarette) yet tobacco is the one to be brought. The quantity of the items has also increased nowadays compare to those days. This implies that during Acoli traditional marriage, animals together with other items are still brought during traditional marriage in Acoli as it was in the early days.

Regarding the question of whether both boys and girls have the freedom to choose their marriage partners, the majority of interviewees concurred with the statement. A youth participant in a focus group explained that there are numerous opportunities to meet potential partners, such as at schools, during market days, and in workplaces. Additionally, relatives, especially married aunts, occasionally play a role in connecting individuals when they believe a person would make a suitable spouse. This indicates that among the youth in Lamwo, there is a considerable degree of freedom when it comes to selecting marriage partners.

However, *Key Informants* 007 from Labworo Oyeng, Palabek Gem Sub-County and *key informant* 022 from Lawiyedung, Madi-Opei Sub-County argued that parents still exert influence over the choice of a marriage partner. *Key Informant* 007 from Labworo Oyeng, Palabek Gem Sub-County

claimed that certain parents even dictate which clans their sons or daughters should marry into. This occurs when there have been previous disputes between clans or cases involving witchcraft. Such situations are more likely to arise when a young man wishes to marry someone from a nearby village where people are acquainted with each other.

Regarding the question of whether marriages in Acoli proceed even if a girl becomes pregnant, the majority of respondents in the focus group interviews disagreed. They emphasized that no discussions or arrangements are made concerning a pregnant girl until she has given birth. *Key Informant 002* from Cubu, Palabek Gem Sub-County explained that even after the birth, there is a waiting period, typically around six months to a year, before marriage discussions or "*lubo kor nyako*" may proceed. *Key Informant 010* from Madikiloc, Padibe West Sub-County added that all marriage-related matters are put on hold upon learning that a girl is pregnant, and they are only resumed after the girl has delivered her child. However, *Key Informant 006* from Labworo Oyeng, Palabek Gem Sub-County mentioned that there have been a few instances where marriages continued even after the girl was found to be pregnant. He attributed this to the influence of religion, which is prioritized over Acoli tradition in some cases. When church leaders grant approval, families may proceed with the marriage.

Concerning the questions on the availability of by-law in Acoli which govern bride price, marriage, child custody, divorce and widowhood. *Key informant 013* from Ogako, Padibe East Sub-County and *023* from Lawiyedung, Madi-Opei Sub-County noted that in the early days there was average of the amount paid for the bride price (but not specific) and the quantity of the items brought in the process of marriage, though no by-law on it. Children were looked after communally by the clan though the paternal uncles are responsible for other things in case the child is orphan. *Key informant 027* from Wigweng, Madi-Opei Sub-County stated that in the early days, divorce was very rear since men had freedom of marrying many wives. In addition, the tradition of Acoli allows

many women so long as the man is able to look after, and the women look at it as normal and they would live harmoniously with their co-wives, though nowadays it's hard. *Key informant* 014 from Ogako, Padibe East Sub-County pointed that cases of witchcraft, barrenness and adultery were majorly the causes of divorce.

On the question that was monogamy marriage practiced among the Acoli, respondents during the focus group discussion and key informant interview agreed that monogamy was practiced among the communities in Lamwo. *Key informant* 031 from Kwera, Agoro Sub-County stated that monogamy was known among Acoli though was not widely practice since most of the old people within the community had more than one wife. He added that he knows very few elders that had only a wife but most of them have many wives (not even two but three or even more). *Key informant* 019 from Pangira, Lokung Sub-County added that most of the known people who practice monogamy were mainly those who embrace Christianity. *Key informant* 009 from Madikiloc, Padibe West Sub-County added that he only knows some few elders who marry only one wife and most of them were catechist.

Regarding the question that polygamy marriage is still the main form of marriage, most of the respondents agreed. They stated that polygamy is still practice even if Christian religion and the government discourage it since it results into many children. *Key informant* 032 from Kwera, Agoro Sub-County stated that polygamy marriage is still commonly practice. She added that nowadays work take men to various places, and in such places men in most cases will have a wife there. She added that such practice has been in the early days and it is still happening. *Key informant* 016 from Ogako, Padibe East Sub-County added that the tradition of Acoli and even the elders encourage it, to him polygamy is the main form of marriage in Acoli. During the focus group discussion, one of the respondents stated that men are still inheriting the widows of their brother which mean adding another wife thus becoming polygamous.

On the statement that men in Acoli are still allowed to inherit widow of their brothers, respondent during agreed with the question. They said that however, it's becoming rare in this era of HIV/AIDS. Men now fear marrying their brother's wife especially when they know their status. Even families discourage their sons from marry such widows and women as well reject the marriage when they know the status of the person they are supposed to remarry. *Key informant* 027 from Kwera, Agoro Sub-County stated that he witnesses several cases of men marrying widow of their brothers though mainly happen among mature people who are mostly above 40 years of age. He noted at that age it is hard for a woman to go anywhere to remarry, and there might be many children which makes it hard for them to leave the home so they opt to stay with the brothers to the late husband.

CHAPTER SIX

NEW NATURE OF MARRIAGES IN ACOLI MODERN SOCIETY

6.0 Introduction

Findings and discussions on the new nature of marriages in Acoli modern society.

6.1 New nature of marriages in Acoli modern society

Objective two investigated the new nature of marriage practice in Acoli modern society in Lamwo district. The qualitative findings from both focus group and key informant interviews are as presented below.

On the question regarding knowledge or witnessed civil marriage, during the focus group interview, most of the participants have not heard of it. None of them were in position to describe what happen during civil marriage. However, *key informant* 002 from Cubu, Palabek Gem Sub-County stated that he heard of civil marriage severally and witness on some few occasions. He noted that this form of marriage is common among people who come from other countries especially white from Europe who come to marry our daughters (girls). Have also seen some Acoli men who stay in Europe also come do civil marriage, but have never seen anybody from within going for such form of marriage. He added civil marriage at district level is conducted by Chief Administrative Officer. *Key informant* 027 from Ogako, Padibe East Sub-County stated that those people who claimed to be more exposed are the one going for such marriage. He added that such people who go for civil marriage just need marriage certificate to allow them fly out of the country in case marriage certificate is a requirement to allow them stay in a country but in actual sense such people are not serious in their marriage. This confirmed that civil marriage is very uncommon in Lamwo district.

Concerning the question that people from different religion marry among themselves (interfaith) in Acoli, majority of the respondents who took part in the study agreed with the question. *Key informant* 032 from Pangira, Lokung Sub-County stated that religion was brought lately by missionary, so it doesn't matter so long the boy and the girl are willing. She further said "I have never heard of any case of a boy or girl being stopped from marrying because of religion". During the focus group, one of the respondents stated that it is Moslems who are strict and normally try to influence the person who want to marry a Moslem to first convert to Islam. But, with Christianity, people are marrying among them without any barrier. *Key informant* 018 from Apweta, Palabek Ogili Sub-County noted that most people in Lamwo don't take religion seriously, so religion is not a key factor during marriage among people. *Key informant* 011 from Paracele, Palabek Nyimur Sub-County added that she even knows of a girl from a very staunch catholic family and the mother is even a catechist but marry a man who is from a staunch Anglican family and both the parents accepted the marriage to continue. The findings show that religion is not a serious factor considered when it comes to marriage in Acoli since majority of the respondents confirmed that there is inter-faith marriage in Lamwo.

Regarding the question of whether church marriage is a common form of marriage in Lamwo, the majority of respondents in both the focus group and key informant interviews stated that it is not very common in the district, although it is practiced to some extent. *Key Informant* 019 from Madikiloc, Padibe West Sub-County explained that while church marriage is recognized among the people of Lamwo, it is not widely practiced due to the conditions it imposes, such as the requirement to remain with only one wife. This condition contradicts Acoli tradition, which allows for the marriage of more than one wife. *Key Informant* 046 from Wigweng, Madi-Opei Sub-County added that church marriage is considered expensive because it often involves organizing large parties, making it primarily accessible to wealthier individuals in the community. *Key*

Informant 062 from Pobar, Agoro Sub-County emphasized that traditional practices still hold significant influence over marriage decisions, and people often prioritize completing the traditional marriage and do not proceed to church marriage. Only a few individuals who are closely affiliated with the church continue to pursue church marriages. Some respondents in the focus group interviews admitted that they had not witnessed a church marriage and were unfamiliar with the proceedings. One religious leader confirmed that church marriage is indeed not common in Lamwo, even though they encourage people to consider it. He noted that in their church, it may take an entire year without witnessing a single church marriage, emphasizing that church marriage is not very common in the district.

Regarding the question of whether inter-racial or mixed marriages occur in Lamwo, the results indicated an increase in such marriages compared to previous years, although they are not very common. Most participants were aware of instances where an Acoli individual married someone from another tribe or was married by someone from a different tribe, even though these cases were not widespread. One respondent mentioned the growing number of people marrying individuals from other tribes, attributing this trend to increased mobility to towns and regions where people from various backgrounds coexist, as opposed to earlier times when travel and settlement in other areas were less common. *Key Informant 030* from Pangira, Lokung Sub-County explained that the recent availability of phones and the internet has facilitated connections between young people, regardless of their locations. There are now more opportunities for people from various tribes and regions to meet compared to the past. However, *Key Informant 047* from Bang, Madi-Opei Sub-County noted that intermarriage is more prevalent in some villages than in others. *Key Informant 019* from Madikiloc, Padibe West Sub-County mentioned that most of the intermarriages he was aware of had faced challenges and often failed due to cultural differences and, in some cases, language barriers...

CHAPTER SEVEN

REASON FOR THE CHANGING PATTERN OF ACOLI TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE

7.0 Introduction

Findings and discussions on the reason for the changing pattern of Acoli traditional marriage

7.1 Reason for the changing pattern of Acoli traditional marriage

Objective three investigated the reason for the changing thinking pattern of Acoli traditional marriage in Lamwo district. The qualitative findings from both focus group and key informant interviews are as presented below.

Views from the respondents from both focus group discussion and key informant interview confirmed that the employment of both men and women bringing change to marriage. *Key informant* 017 from Apweta, Palabek Ogili Sub-County stated that employment is one of the key factors that influence changes in pattern of marriage. Through employment, the partners will have money which makes it easier for them to bring in other additional things such as organizing party since there is money to facilitate such event. Nowadays you will see both the boy and the girl bringing their workmate to form groom/bride mates during traditional marriage. Some boys even take their friends whom they work together in the hut “ot” where the negotiation is taking place yet they are not related. *Key informant* 004 from Cubu, Palabek Gem Sub-County added that he has witness where even white people enter in the hut where discussion is taking place simply because he/she is the work mate of the person marrying. *Key informant* 026 from Ogako, Padibe East Sub-County and *key informant* 067 from Rudi, Agoro Sub-County people who work try to please their friends and workmate and organized big parties during traditional which in the early days were not there.

On the question that if women are employed, their perception on marriage changed, *Key informant* 061 from Pobar, Agoro Sub-County claimed that when a woman is employed, she will have money and having money by women is causing a lot of divorce. They think work is everything since it brings them money and don't take marriage seriously. Women who are employed tend to devote most of their time for job related work while see marriage and having children as waste of time. Women who are working if their husband want to marry normally try to bring in some modern thing, I have seen in one of the traditional marriages where even the bottle of water contain the photo of the couple, just to show off to their colleagues. Even the family of the girl who work try to come up with a very high amount of bride price together with other physical items on the ground that their daughter is a working class and cannot cheaply like someone who is not working. This means that employment of women is a factor that is resulting to changes in their perception regarding marriage.

Regarding the statement that both partners having money leads to additional elements during marriage, such as organizing parties, the participants in the focus group discussion concurred. Wealthy individuals today often go to the extent of hiring artists to compose marriage songs ("*lakubukubu*") and even produce videos of their traditional marriage ceremonies. They also exchange expensive rings during the traditional marriage, which was not a practice in earlier times. *Key Informant* 019 from Madikiloc, Padibe West Sub-County provided insight, stating, "I have observed several times that financially stable couples do not engage in bride price negotiations, even though our tradition allows it. Their marriages are typically concluded at once, as they cover all expenses without a remaining balance. Consequently, events like '*tyeko lim*' are no longer part of the process." This suggests that money plays a significant role in shaping changes in people's attitudes toward marriage.

Regarding whether financial stability influences people to opt for specific types of marriages, such as civil marriage, some participants in the focus group discussion agreed, while others disagreed. One respondent noted that those with financial means tend to choose church or civil marriages, and they had not heard of any financially disadvantaged individuals opting for such marriages. However, *Key Informant* 002 from Cubu, Palabek Gem Sub-County mentioned that financial status does not necessarily dictate the choice of marriage type, as even people from outside the country prefer civil marriage due to its cost-effectiveness and ease of obtaining a certificate compared to church marriages. Additionally, the civil marriage certificate is widely recognized internationally compared to other forms of marriage. This suggests that financial stability does play a role in influencing people's decisions about marriage but is not the sole determinant.

On the question of whether government policies regarding marriage change the way marriages are conducted, the respondents in the focus group discussion unanimously stated that they were unaware of any government policies that had altered marriage practices. *Key Informant* 034 from Olebi, Lokung Sub-County explained that marriage practices are primarily influenced by religion, tradition, finances, and education, but government policies do not significantly impact them. Furthermore, religion, tradition, and finances are the primary factors influencing marriage decisions, not government policies. This indicates that government policies on marriage have little influence on people's attitudes toward marriage.

Regarding whether the education level of both partners influences them to adopt modern marriage practices, the participants in the focus group interview agreed that educated individuals are more inclined to embrace modern ways of doing things and may disregard traditional practices, perceiving them as backward. These educated individuals often opt for modern forms of marriage. *Key Informant* 020 from Madikiloc, Padibe West Sub-County however, stated that modern forms of marriage are typically considered after completing the Acoli traditional marriage, so most

people first finalize their traditional marriage and then proceed to modern forms such as church weddings and civil marriages. *Key Informant* 031 from Pangira, Lokung Sub-County mentioned that some educated individuals influence their parents to accept modern elements that were not part of traditional marriage practices. *Key Informant* 024 from Ogako, Padibe East Sub-County observed that highly educated women sometimes undervalue marriage, believing that it may lead to their husbands exerting control over them. This explored the idea that the level of education is a significant factor contributing to changes in the thought patterns of people in Lamwo and among the Acoli regarding marriages.

CHAPTER EIGHT

DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of findings, discussions and conclusions derived after conducting the study which was intended to investigate the changing thinking pattern of Acoli traditional marriage in Lamwo district. It also discusses and come up with conclusion that can help enlighten people of Acoli on issues regarding traditional marriage, what influence marriage and other new forms of marriages.

8.1 Discussion of Findings

The discussions of the findings of this research were presented according to research objectives as below.

8.1.1 Nature of Acoli Traditional Marriage as Practice in Lamwo

This research showed that nature of Acoli traditional marriage is still intact though with minor changes during the process of marriage. According to JRP (2006), the typical Acoli traditional marriage process involves several key steps. These steps include discussions within the family about the impending marriage, the establishment of a specific date for the marriage, and the delivery of various items such as cattle, goats, sheep, household goods, and a bride price in monetary form on the agreed-upon date. This changes the girl's status from *nyako* (girl) to *dako ot* (wife) immediately.

The findings also indicated that polygamy remains the predominant form of marriage among the Acoli, although there has been a decline in the number of wives. In the past, it was common for men to have more than three wives, but in recent times, most men typically have two wives, primarily due to the high cost of supporting a large family with multiple wives and children. The

study further emphasized that polygamy is prevalent because it aligns with Acoli traditions that permit it. However, this discovery contrasts with Zeitzen's (2018) findings, which suggest that many people nowadays are opting for monogamous relationships. Zeitzen's research was conducted in contemporary European societies, which prioritize limiting population growth, and where most Western societies prohibit polygamy. In contrast, among the Acoli people, the tradition encourages polygamy.

The study also reported that monogamy as form of marriage has become common among Acoli in the recent time. As religion (Christianity) is penetrating Acoli communities, it discourages polygamy since they refer to it as un-godly. Many Acoli who embrace Christianity have started believing that polygamy is sinful. This study is in line with study of DeLecce (2016) who also reported in his study that monogamy is common and consider as the only legal form of marriage. However, DeLecce was looking at the perspective of Western world whereas in Acoli there is no legal attachment to monogamy.

8.1.2 New Forms/Nature of Marriage in Acoli Society as Practice in Lamwo

The study findings revealed that there are new forms of marriage practice among the society of Lamwo. The most common ones are interfaith marriage, mixed marriage and church marriage. With the coming of very many religions of late, people now marry from different religion. This aligns with the research by Sewenet, Tessagaye, and Tadele (2017), which noted that in the past, individuals from the same religious backgrounds typically preferred to marry within their faith. However, as time has progressed, people from different religious backgrounds have increasingly chosen to enter into marital unions. Gray (1987) emphasized that this practice has ancient roots dating back to the emergence of different religions. Schoen and Thomas (1990) found that a higher occurrence of interreligious marriages indicates a lower level of social distance between religious

groups, and vice versa. Sewenet, Tessagaye & Tadele (2017) also pointed out that numerous studies have highlighted how interreligious marriages contribute to the promotion of cultural relativism and religious tolerance.

Due to increased mobility and migration, mixed marriages have become more common in Lamwo. This observation aligns with Romano's (2008) findings, which confirmed the presence of interracial marriages. Romano further suggested that interracial marriages provide couples with opportunities to gain a multifaceted perspective on the world and to internalize the concept of cultural relativism through their day-to-day experiences. The study also concurs with Oyez (2019), who noted that mixed marriages have gained popularity in recent times. In the past, individuals tended to marry within their own racial or ethnic groups, but now, people from various backgrounds come together in marriage, often as a result of meeting in different settings, such as for work, study, or business.

The research also indicated that civil marriages are predominantly found in urban areas, making them an uncommon form of marriage among the Acoli people. According to Glad (2014), civil marriage involves meeting government requirements, including proof of nationality, an LC1 letter, and passport-sized photographs for identification. These requirements differ from the customary Acoli marriage practices, which contributes to the rarity of civil marriage. The study's findings revealed that civil marriages are more common when one partner is from outside the Acoli community. Many women who wish to enjoy the privileges granted to their spouses opt for civil marriage. This finding is consistent with Nussbaum's (2010) research, which highlights the benefits of civil marriage, such as access to various tangible and intangible advantages. Tangible benefits typically pertain to matters like taxation, pensions, inheritances, property ownership, and the ability to make surrogate decisions. However, Knouse (2012) argues that civil marriage may limit individual liberties and equality.

The study further uncovered that while church marriage is recognized among the population, it is not widely practiced. The research reported that church marriage is associated with specific conditions, such as the requirement for a man to be married to only one wife, which contrasts with Acoli tradition allowing multiple wives. This finding corresponds with the observations made by Ninsiima (n.d), who pointed out that church marriage is a one-man, one-wife arrangement. Additionally, the study findings indicated that church marriage can be financially burdensome. This aligns with Ninsiima's work, which highlighted a list of requirements, including fees, that the bride and groom must satisfy before entering into a church marriage, making it accessible to only a select few. Ngundu (2011) further emphasized that despite the introduction of European marriage traditions, such as civil and church marriages, Africans continue to regard traditional marriage as a complete, valid, and legitimate form of marriage.

8.1.3 Reason for the Changing Pattern of Acoli Traditional Marriage

The findings of the study confirm that there are changes in the thinking pattern when it comes to Acoli traditional marriage. The study further confirmed that the main factors bringing the changes is financial status of the partners. The study's findings align with the perspective presented by Gibson-Davis et al. (2005), which suggests that financial and residential independence are considered prerequisites for marriage and are associated with specific lifestyle choices and the selection of marriage types. They noted that individuals with limited financial means, both men and women, were less likely to enter into marriage or, if they did, tended to adhere to traditional marriage norms. Edin, Kathryn, and Reed (2005) reinforced this notion by indicating that due to financial constraints, cohabitation has become an alternative or intermediary step to marriage for those who believe they cannot afford the costs associated with marriage.

The study revealed that the level of education plays a role in shaping marriage patterns. Educated individuals are more inclined to embrace modern forms of marriage. Since a significant proportion of educated people are gainfully employed and financially stable, they often opt for alternative marriage types like church marriage. This finding is consistent with Robert (1998), who suggested that increased economic resources provide people with the flexibility to consider various life course options, including their choice of marriage type. Smock (2005) further supported this notion by pointing out that evidence indicates that a lack of economic resources for both men and women can deter them from entering into marriage and lead them to select marriage types that align with their financial circumstances.

The study found that government policies have minimal influence on marriage practices. This perspective may not fully align with the arguments of Stevenson and Wolfers (2007), who contended that legal frameworks governing marriage can fundamentally impact the basis of the marriage contract. In Uganda, marriage matters are traditionally managed at the clan or family level, with the government having limited involvement. Additionally, existing policies are often not rigorously enforced. Consequently, government policies do not exert significant influence on marriage practices. The study's results revealed that various government policies on marriage often conflict with the customs and traditions of different tribes, leading each tribe to adhere to their own traditional practices. Ngundu (2011) emphasized that the criteria for the validity of marriage were originally determined by customary practices rather than statutory law, resulting in limited policy influence on marriage practices in Africa. Nevertheless, Ngundu acknowledged that change has occurred, partly as a consequence of theological debates on marriage initiated by colonial authorities imposed on Africans.

8.2 Conclusions

Out of the findings and discussion of this study, the following were concluded:

8.2.1 Nature of Acoli Traditional Marriage

The essence of Acoli traditional marriage in Lamwo has remained largely unchanged over time, with most of its fundamental elements still intact, albeit with minor adjustments. This suggests that the Acoli community continues to attach great importance to their traditional marriage customs. The findings also shed light on the limited prevalence of alternative forms of marriage within the Acoli culture. Acoli people hold their traditional marriage practices in high regard, and these customs take precedence.

Other types of marriages among the Acoli are regarded as supplementary to the traditional marriage and are typically pursued only after the completion of the traditional marriage ceremony. As a result, the traditional Acoli marriage remains common and retains its significance, albeit with minor adaptations.

8.2.2 New Forms of Marriage

There are new forms/types of marriage being practice among the Acoli people of Lamwo with interfaith and inter-racial marriage as the main types. This type of marriage does not seriously affect traditional marriage since move on after conducting traditional marriage. The new form of marriage (interfaith and inter-racial) has made people to have experience and knowledge of custom and norm of other religion and tribes. People are partly united either along religion or tribal line when they married each other.

8.2.3 Changing Pattern

There are changes in the pattern regarding marriage among the Acoli people in Lamwo. The study revealed that this change is normally adopted by educated and employed/financially stable couple.

Since such couple interact with several peoples from different cultural and religious background. Friends normally contribute toward the event; therefore, new things are brought in with the aim of exciting friend who are invited. It has also resulted to even including friends who are not even related to the couples to enter in the house for discussion and presentation of the bride price and other items

8.3 Area of Further Study

Following the complexities and the changing perception of dowry among the Acoli, the study recommends further research on the implications of Ker Kwero Acoli putting in place guidelines for payment of bride price in Acoli traditional marriage.

REFERENCES

- Al-Krenawi, A. (2012). A study of psychological symptoms, family function, marital and life satisfactions of polygamous and monogamous women: The Palestinian case. *International Journal of Social Psychiatry*, 58(1), 79-86.
- American Heritage Dictionary. (1958). Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Asadi, Z,et al. (2013). “Application of Basnet Model in Prediction of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) Against Women”. *The Journal of Asian Women*, 29(1):27–45.
- Barikani, A., Ebrahim, S. M., &Navid, M. (2012). “The Cause of Divorce among Men and Women referred to marriage and legal office in Qazvin, Iran”. *Global journal of health science*, 4(5).
- Barker, E., & Barker, W. (2018). *Recommendation for key management, part 2: best practices for key management organization* (No. NIST Special Publication (SP) 800-57 Part 2 Rev. 1 (Draft)). National Institute of Standards and Technology.
- Bartle-Haring, S., Silverthorn, B., Toviessi, P., and Bhopal, K. (2009). *Identity, Empathy and “Otherness”*: Asian wo- men, education and dowries in the UK. *Race Ethnicity and Education*.
- Billingsley, S. et al (2005). *Historical Overview of Criteria for Marital and Family Success*. *Family Therapy: The Journal of the California Graduate School of Family Psychology*, 32(1), 1-14.
- Blanchard, V. et al. (2009). *Investigating the Effects of Marriage and Relationship Education on Couples' Communication Skills: A Meta-Analytic Study*. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 23(2), 203-214.

- Boss, P. et al (1993). *Sourcebook of Family Theories and Methods: A Contextual Approach*. Springer Science & Business Media.
- Bowen, M. (1978). *Family Therapy in Clinical Practice*. Aronson, New York.
- Braithwaite, S. R., Selby, E. A., & Fincham, F. D. (2011). *Forgiveness and relationship satisfaction: Mediating mechanisms*. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 25(4), 551.
- Brown, H. O. (1997). *Institutions of the English Novel: From Defoe to Scott*. University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Brown, K. et al (2011). *Assessing Adolescent Mindfulness: Validation of an Adapted Mindful Attention Awareness Scale in Adolescent Normative and Psychiatric Populations*. *Psychological Assessment*, 23(4), 1023
- Brown, K. W. & Ryan, R. M. (2003). *The Benefits of Being Present: Mindfulness and its Role in Psychological Well-being*. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 84(4), 822-848.
- Brown, K. W. Ryan, R. M. & Creswell, J. D. (2007). *Mindfulness: Theoretical Foundations and Evidence for its Salutary Effects*. *Psychological Inquiry*, 18(4), 211–237.
- Brown, S. L., & Lin, I.-F. (2012). *The Gray Divorce Revolution: Rising Divorce Among Middle-Aged and Older Adults, 1990–2010*. *The Journals of Gerontology Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences*, 67(6), 731-741
- Brown, S. L., Booth, A., & Crouter, A. (2002). *Just Living Together: Implications of Cohabitation for Children, Families, and Social Policy*. NY: Psychology Press
- Collins, R. (1986). *Weberian sociological theory*. Cambridge University Press.

- Coontz, S. (2005). The evolution of matrimony: The changing social context of marriage. *Annals of the American Psychotherapy Association*, 8(4), 30-34.
- Dehkordi, A. M. (2010). *Relationship Between Women Sexual Function and Marital Adjustment*. *Journal of Behavioral Sciences*. 4(3): 199-206.
- DeLecce, T., & Weisfeld, G. (2016). An evolutionary explanation for sex differences in nonmarital breakup experiences. *Adaptive Human Behavior and Physiology*, 2(3), 234-251.
- Edin, K., & Reed, J. M. (2005). Why don't they just get married? Barriers to marriage among the disadvantaged. *The Future of Children*, 117-137.
- Emdoneni (2023). Zulu Wedding – Umabo. <https://www.emdonenilodge.com/zulu-wedding-umabo/>
- Esiri, M. O. (2021). Social change and marriage structure in Nigeria. *International Research Journal of Management, IT and Social Sciences*, 8(3), 228-235.
- Fact box: Five Facts About Polygamists in the U.S. Reuters. June, 12, 2007.
- Gadban, F., & Goldner, L. (2020). “I Have No Hope”: The Experience of Mothers in Polygamous Families as Manifested in Drawings and Narratives. *Frontiers in psychology*, 11, 608577.
- Geiger, A., & Livingston, G. (2019). *Facts About Love and Marriage in America*. Pew Research Center, 13.
- Gibson-Davis, C. M. (2009). Money, marriage, and children: Testing the financial expectations and family formation theory. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 71(1), 146-160.

- Gibson-Davis, C. M., Edin, K., & McLanahan, S. (2005). High hopes but even higher expectations: The retreat from marriage among low-income couples. *Journal of marriage and family*, 67(5), 1301-1312.
- Glad, J., Jergeby, U., Gustafsson, C., & Sonnander, K. (2014). Social worker and teacher apprehension of children's stimulation and support in the home environment and care-giver perception of the HOME Inventory in Sweden. *The British Journal of Social Work*, 44(8), 2218-2236.
- Gupta, S., Wang, W., Hayek, S. S., Chan, L., Mathews, K. S., Melamed, M. L., ... & Modersitzki, F. (2021). Association between early treatment with tocilizumab and mortality among critically ill patients with COVID-19. *JAMA internal medicine*, 181(1), 41-51.
- Haviland, W. A. (1997). On the Maya state. *Current anthropology*, 38(3), 443-445.
- Iponga, D. M., Mikolo-Yobo, C., Lescuyer, G., Assoumou, F. M., Levang, P., Tieguhong, J. C., & Ngoye, A. (2018). The contribution of NTFP-gathering to rural people's livelihoods around two timber concessions in Gabon. *Agroforestry systems*, 92(1), 157-168.
- Kahn, E. M. (1986). Discussion: Inpatient group psychotherapy: Which type of group is best?. *Group*, 10(1), 27-33.
- Kerr, M. E., & Bowen, M. (1988). *Family evaluation*. WW Norton & Company.
- Kothari, S. P., Ramanna, K., & Skinner, D. J. (2010). Implications for GAAP from an analysis of positive research in accounting. *Journal of Accounting and Economics*, 50(2-3), 246-286.
- Kumar, N. (2005). The power of power in supplier-retailer relationships. *Industrial marketing management*, 34(8), 863.
- Lajul, W. (2014), *African Philosophy: Critical Dimensions*, Kampala: Fountain Publishers.

- Lamanna, M. C., Martínez, R. D., & Smith, J. B. (2002). A definitive abelisaurid theropod dinosaur from the early Late Cretaceous of Patagonia. *Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology*, 22(1), 58-69.
- LaRossa, R., & Reitzes, D. C. (2009). *Symbolic Interactionism and Family Studies*. In Sourcebook of family theories and methods (pp. 135-166). Springer, Boston, MA.
- Le Bourdais, C., & Juby, H. (2002). *The Impact of Cohabitation on the Family Life Course in Contemporary North America: Insights from across the border. Just living together: Implications of cohabitation on families, children, and social policy*, 107-118.
- Lee, Gary. (1982). *Family Structure and Interaction: A Comparative Analysis*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Martin, D., O'Byrne, J., Cates, M. E., Fodor, É., Nardini, C., Tailleur, J., & Van Wijland, F. (2021). Statistical mechanics of active Ornstein-Uhlenbeck particles. *Physical Review E*, 103(3), 032607.
- Mathison, S. (1988). Why triangulate? *Educational researcher*, 17(2), 13-17.
- Mathison, S. (1988). Why triangulate? *Educational researcher*, 17(2), 13-17.
- Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2015). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Miani, C., & Hoorens, S. (2014). *Parents at work: men and women participating in the labour force* (Vol. 2).
- Moore, C. M., Mills, M. M., Arrigo, K. R., Berman-Frank, I., Bopp, L., Boyd, P. W., ... & Ulloa, O. (2013). Processes and patterns of oceanic nutrient limitation. *Nature geoscience*, 6(9), 701-710.

- Mugambe R. (2021). A Look at Buganda Marriage Customs.
<https://www.africanpressclub.com/stories/a-look-at-buganda-marriage-customs>
- Ngundu, O. (2011). Mission churches and African customary marriage. *Africa Journal of Evangelical Theology*, 30(1), 35-51.
- Okwechise, G. (2012). *Marrying Well: Marriage, Status and Social Change in Utagba-Uno Marriage Structure*. Lagos: Delgard Ventures.
- Potton, M. (2002). A day in the life of Maurice Potton. *Early Years Educator*, 4(2), 54-55.
- Robert, S. A. (1998). Community-level socioeconomic status effects on adult health. *Journal of health and social behavior*, 18-37.
- Schoen, R., & Thomas, B. (1990). Religious intermarriage in Switzerland, 1969-72 and 1979-82. *European Journal of Population/Revue Européenne de Démographie*, 359-376.
- Sekaran, U., & Bougie, R. (2016). *Research methods for business: A skill building approach*. John Wiley & sons.
- Sewenet, A. M., Tessagaye, F. M., & Tadele, G. (2017). Interreligious Marriage: Social and Religious Perspectives. *Imperial Journal of Interdisciplinary Research*, 3(6), 233-250.
- Silver, D. (2022). A theoretical framework for studying teachers' curriculum supplementation. *Review of Educational Research*, 92(3), 455-489.
- Smock, P. J., Manning, W. D., & Porter, M. (2005). "Everything's there except money": How money shapes decisions to marry among cohabitators. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 67(3), 680-696.

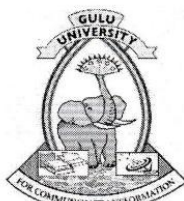
- Speer, D. C. (1970). Family systems: Morphostasis and morphogenesis, or “Is homeostasis enough?”. *Family process*, 9(3), 259-278.
- Spencer, H. (1898). *Principles of sociology* (Vol. 6). D. Appleton and company.
- Stevenson, B., & Wolfers, J. (2007). Marriage and divorce: Changes and their driving forces. *Journal of Economic perspectives*, 21(2), 27-52.
- Stevenson, B., & Wolfers, J. (2007). Marriage and divorce: Changes and their driving forces. *Journal of Economic perspectives*, 21(2), 27-52.
- Sweeney, L. (2002). k-anonymity: A model for protecting privacy. *International journal of uncertainty, fuzziness and knowledge-based systems*, 10(05), 557-570.
- Thiara, R. K., Hague, G., & Mullender, A. (2011). Losing out on both counts: disabled women and domestic violence. *Disability & Society*, 26(6), 757-771.
- Thobejane, Tsoaledi & Flora, Takayindisa. (2014). *An Exploration of Polygamous Marriages: A Worldview*. Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences. 5. 1058-1066. 10.5901/miss.2014.v5n27p1058.
- Twambui (2022). The Kikuyu dowry process (ruracio): The steps and procedure. <https://lughayangu.com/post/the-kikuyu-dowry-process-the-steps-and-payment-procedure>
- Zeitzen, M. K. (2018). Polygamy (Polygyny, Polyandry). *The International Encyclopedia of Anthropology*, 1-2.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Plagiarism

GULU

P.O. Box 166
Gulu, Uganda



UNIVERSITY

Tel: +256-471-32924

Fax: +256 471343095

Emails: ul@gu.ac.ug

URL: www.gu.ac.ug

OFFICE OF THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIAN

PLAGIARISM CHECK

Declaration for Originality Form

This form must be completed and signed for all scholarly work produced.

Name: <u>ORAC JIMMY</u>
Personal File No.(staff) Reg. (student). <u>20/U/2665/MAH/PS</u>
Faculty/Institute: <u>EDUCATION AND HUMANITIES</u>
Department: <u>HISTORY</u>
Title and bibliographic description of the work THE CHANGING THINKING PATTERN OF ACOLI TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE IN LAMWO DISTRICT: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Declaration.

1. I understand what plagiarism is and I am aware of the University policy on this regard,
2. I declare that this ...**Thesis**... (thesis, dissertation, essay, assignment, paper, report etc.) is my original work and has not been submitted elsewhere for examination, award of a degree or publication. Where other people's work or my work has been used, this has been properly acknowledged and referenced in accordance with Gulu University requirements,
3. I have not sought or used the services of any professional agency to produce this work,
4. I have not allowed, and shall not allow anyone to copy my work with the intention of passing it off as his/her own,
5. I understand that any false claim of this work shall result in disciplinary action in accordance with University Policy on Plagiarism.

Signature 

Date 15/11/2023

Originality Report

The article/thesis/document titled above have been subjected to plagiarism check and the level was found to be.....**14%** (percent) this is classified as:

- ☒ **Minor**
☐ Moderate
☐ Serious

Yours sincerely,



Dr. Ongaya Kizito (PhD)

Senior Librarian

APPENDICES

Appendix B: Introduction Letter from Gulu University

GULU
P.O. BOX 166 GULU



UNIVERSITY
TEL: +256471432922;

**OFFICE OF THE DEAN, FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND
HUMANITIES**

13th November 2023

TO : WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to introduce to you Mr. Orac Jimmy (Reg No. 20/U/2665/MAH/PS) a student pursuing a programme of study leading to award of Master of Arts in History, Master of Gulu University.

He is undertaking research on the Topic:

***THE CHANGING THINKING PATTERN OF ACOLI TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE IN
LAMWO DISTRICT: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE***

Which is in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Masters Degree

Any assistance rendered to him in relation to this research work will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

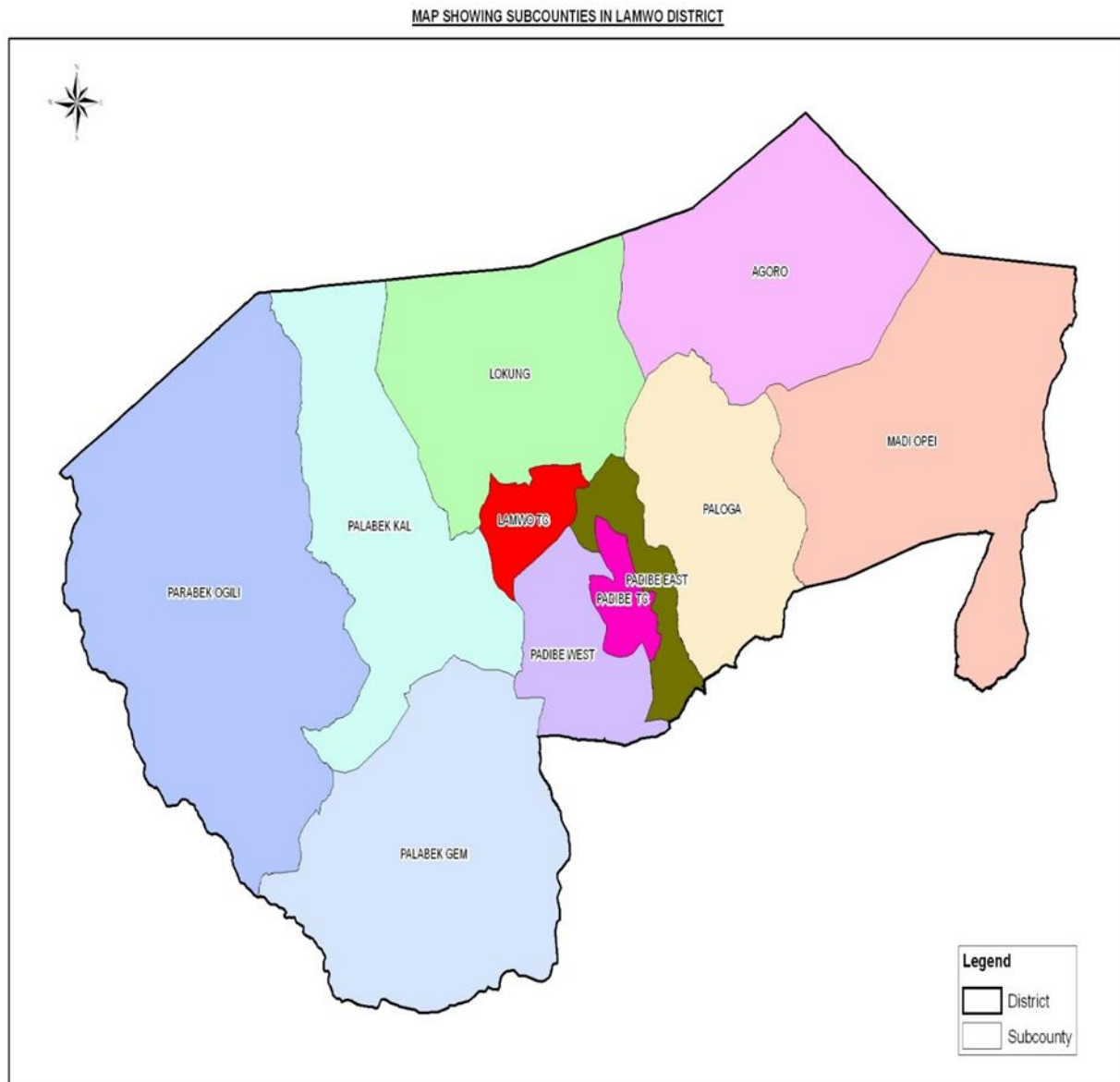
Dr. Denis Thaddeus Ofoyuru

Dr. Denis Thaddeus Ofoyuru
Dean, Faculty of Education and Humanities



APPENDICES

Appendix C: Map Showing Sub -Counties in Lamwo District.



Appendix D: A list of Acoli Traditional Marriage requirements in the past

S/NO	ITEMS
1	Cash (Money)
2	Big Saucepan “ <i>Nywal Ber</i> ”
3	Chair “ <i>Rwot Onino</i> ”
4	Sportsman (Cigarette)
5	Suit for the father of the bride
6	<i>Gomasi</i> for the mother of the bride
7	Match Box
8	Lamp
9	Paraffin
10	Cattle
11	Goats
12	Sheep

Appendix E: A list of the present day (new) requirements as used in Acoli Traditional Marriage.

S/NO	ITEMS
1	Land Titles
2	Electronics
3	Furniture
4	Home Theatre Systems
5	Cars
6	Solar

Appendix F: Coding of Respondents

S/NO	NAME	PARISH	SUB-COUNTY
1	001	Cubu	Palabek Gem
2	002	Cubu	Palabek Gem
3	003	Cubu	Palabek Gem
4	004	Cubu	Palabek Gem
5	005	Labworo Oyeng	Palabek Gem
6	006	Labworo Oyeng	Palabek Gem
7	007	Labworo Oyeng	Palabek Gem
8	008	Labworo Oyeng	Palabek Gem
9	009	Labworo Oyeng	Palabek Gem
10	010	Paracele	Palabek Nyimur
11	011	Paracele	Palabek Nyimur
12	012	Paracele	Palabek Nyimur
13	013	Paracele	Palabek Nyimur
14	014	Paracele	Palabek Nyimur
15	015	Apweta	Palabek Ogili
16	016	Apweta	Palabek Ogili
17	017	Apweta	Palabek Ogili
18	018	Apweta	Palabek Ogili
19	019	Madikiloc	Padibe West
20	020	Madikiloc	Padibe West
21	021	Madikiloc	Padibe West

22	022	Madikiloc	Padibe West
23	023	Madikiloc	Padibe West
24	024	Ogako	Padibe East
25	025	Ogako	Padibe East
26	026	Ogako	Padibe East
27	027	Ogako	Padibe East
28	028	Ogako	Padibe East
29	029	Ogako	Padibe East
30	030	Pangira	Lokung
31	031	Pangira	Lokung
32	032	Pangira	Lokung
33	033	Pangira	Lokung
34	034	Olebi	Lokung
35	035	Olebi	Lokung
36	036	Olebi	Lokung
37	037	Olebi	Lokung
38	038	Olebi	Lokung
39	039	Lawiyeduny	Madi-Opei
40	040	Lawiyeduny	Madi-Opei
41	041	Lawiyeduny	Madi-Opei
42	042	Lawiyeduny	Madi-Opei
43	043	Wigweng	Madi-Opei
44	044	Wigweng	Madi-Opei

45	045	Wigweng	Madi-Opei
46	046	Wigweng	Madi-Opei
47	047	Bang	Madi-Opei
48	048	Bang	Madi-Opei
49	049	Bang	Madi-Opei
50	050	Bang	Madi-Opei
51	051	Bang	Madi-Opei
52	052	Bang	Madi-Opei
53	053	Bang	Madi-Opei
54	054	Bang	Madi-Opei
55	055	Okol Kirombe	Madi-Opei
56	056	Okol Kirombe	Madi-Opei
57	057	Okol Kirombe	Madi-Opei
58	058	Okol Kirombe	Madi-Opei
59	059	Okol Kirombe	Madi-Opei
60	060	Okol Kirombe	Madi-Opei
61	061	Pobar	Agoro
62	062	Pobar	Agoro
63	063	Pobar	Agoro
64	064	Pobar	Agoro
65	065	Pobar	Agoro
66	066	Pobar	Agoro
67	067	Rudi	Agoro

68	068	Rudi	Agoro
69	069	Rudi	Agoro
70	070	Rudi	Agoro

Appendix G: When marrying an Acoli woman, in-laws crawl their way into her home



Appendix H: Bylaw on Acoli Bride Price eases traditional marriage



Apendix I: Questionnaire

Dear Respondent(s)

I am Orac Jimmy a Student of Gulu University pursuing a Master's Degree of Arts in History in the Faculty of Education and Humanities. I am carrying out an academic study on “The changing thinking pattern of Acoli traditional marriage in Lamwo district: a historical perspective”

You are requested to be honest and open as much as possible when providing information since all information provided will be treated with utmost confidentiality and so, it will be used for the purpose of this research only.

You are requested to indicate your response(s) to the questions /statements given below by ticking the appropriate response box or boxes.

Thank you, God bless you

Biographic data

Name (Optional).....

(Tick in the box where applicable)

Gender

Male

☐

Female

☐

Age

10-15

☐

16-25

☐

26-45

☐

45 & above

☐

Level of education

Primary

☐

Secondary

☐

Tertiary institution/University

☐

None

☐

Others (specify).....

Occupation of respondents

☐

Headteacher

Teacher

☐

Political Leader

☐

Parent

☐

Student

☐

Businessmen

☐

Others (specify).....

Marital status

☐

Single

☐

Married

☐

Divorced

☐

Separated

Others (specify).....

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements below in relation to the following questions below;

SA=Strongly Agree (5), A=Agree (4), NS=Not Sure (3), D= Disagree (2), SD=Strongly Disagree

(1)

SN	QUESTIONS	SA	A	NS	D	SD
	The nature of Acoli traditional marriage in the district of Lamwo					
1	Are parents still involve during the process of traditional marriage in Acoli					
2	Bride price is still paid to bride family among the Acoli people in Lamwo district					
3	Other physical items as part of bride price are still given to the bride family during the process marriage					
4	Are both boys and girls given freedom of choice when it comes to choosing partner to marry?					
5	Marriage in Acoli still proceed even if the girl conceived					

6	Is there bi-law in Acoli which govern bride price, marriage, child custody, divorce and widowhood					
7	There is monogamy marriage in Acoli					
8	Polygamy Marriage is still the main types of marriage (as in the past) where some individuals are allowed to have more than one spouse at the same time.					
9	In the past, Men in Acoli were allowed to marry widow of their brothers, and it is still happening.					
	New nature of marriage in Acoli modern society					
10	Have you witness or heard of civil marriage among the Acoli people					
11	Are family of both the boy and the girl involve during civil marriage					
12	Are people from different religion marry among themselves in Acoli					
13	Is church marriage a common form of marriage among the people of Lamwo					
14	Have you ever attended a church marriage					
15	Is there inter-racial/mixed marriage in Lamwo district.					
16	Is the case of mixed marriage common in Lamwo					
	Reason for the changing thinking pattern of Acoli traditional marriage					

17	Is the employment of both men and women bringing change to marriage					
18	When women are employed, their perception on marriage changed.					
19	Does having money by both partners makes them to bring in some other things during marriage like organizing party					
20	Does being financially stable makes people to go into some types of marriages such as civil marriage?					
21	Does government policies regarding marriage changing the ways of conducting marriage					
22	Government polices encourage traditional marriage					
23	The level of education of both partners influencing them to copy other modern types of marriage					

NB: Thank you for the commendable responses given.

May God bless you!

Appendix J: Interview Guide

INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. Describe the process of Acoli traditional marriage?
2. What are the nature/forms of marriage in Acoli?
3. What are the new types/forms of marriage in the district of Lamwo?
4. What were the factors affecting marriage in the past in the district of Lamwo?
5. What are the current factors affecting marriages in the district of Lamwo?
6. What are the reason for the changing thinking pattern of Acoli traditional marriage in the district of Lamwo?