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Abbreviations

PEASE-WQ: Psycho-emotional and Socio-economic Wellbeing Questionnaire; SA: Strongly Agree; SD: Strongly Disagree

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Research Article

Examining the Psycho-Emotional and Socio-Economic Wellbeing of Remarried Widowed Christians

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Abstract

This study examined the Psycho-emotional and Socio-economic Wellbeing of Remarried Widowed Christians in Ankpa Town, Kogi state, Nigeria. The study employed the descriptive research design. The particular descriptive design used was survey. The population for the study was 100 remarried widowed Christians located in the 75 local church denominations in Ankpa town. Since this population was not large, it was not sampled. The instrument for the study was the Psycho-emotional and Socio-economic Wellbeing Questionnaire (PEASE-WQ) designed by the researcher. The psychometric properties of the instrument were established before it was administered on the respondents. The data collected were analyzed using statistical mean, standard deviation and t-Test. The results of the findings were that both the males and the female Christians that were bereaved and later remarried claimed to have overcome the psychological, emotional, social and economic challenges that they faced during bereavements. However, the female respondents had higher mean levels than their male counterparts on each of the four variables measured. But, the test of significance that was run on each of the four variables showed that the mean differences were not statistically significant. Based on these findings, it was recommended that widowed Christians that are not too advanced in age should remarry and if possible, they should marry one another and that such marriages should be in accordance to Christian tradition.

Introduction

Spousal loss or bereavement is a global phenomenon that is not sensitive to class, level of education, ethnicity, nationality, age in marriage as well as religion. Nobody seemed to have immunity against this tragedy. Muslims as well as Christians, the rich and also the poor, experience this tragedy across all cultures of the world. The pain associated with the death of a spouse is better imagined than experienced as the bereaved partner reels in serious agony and sorrow of heart and mind. There is hardly any partner that will not suffer serious psychological and emotional pains as they mourn this great loss. This emotional pain will still be so much even if it is in a bad marriage [1]. The exit of the deceased spouse will undoubtedly create lots of vacuums in the house difficult to fill in the short or even long run if improperly handled or managed. Little wonder, stress scholars (Holmes and Rahe) claimed that widowhood is one of the most distressing of all the life transitions [2].

The degree or intensity of the pain of being widowed may vary depending on the role and responsibilities that the deceased spouse had left behind in addition to the state of closeness with one another as well as whether the relationship was polygamous or monogamous. Sexor gender is also another factor that could determine the intensity of this pain [1]. The pain, disorganization or trauma seemed to be greater in women than in men whenever either loses their spouse Fasoranti et al. in Trivedi, et al. [1]. This assertion was reported earlier in a study conducted by Chen et al. [3] that widows had higher mean levels of traumatic grief, depressive and anxiety symptoms compared to widowers. These findings agree with the beliefs in most cultures that women are more highly emotional than men even when many studies on gender expressions of emotions had reported mixed results [4-6]. According to Smith [7], to answer correctly the question of whether women are more emotional than men will depend on the type of emotion, how it is measured, where it is expressed and lots of other factors. In psychology, two individuals are never the same and so the fact that gender is a factor in the study of emotion is normal. And it is again important to stress that the results of these studies did not in any way rule out the fact that widowers go through serious traumatic grief, depressive and anxiety syndromes. The effects of spousal bereavements on both sexes are immense even if it is in a bad marriage, as noted by Trivedi, et al. [1] earlier cited. For example, a study indicated that men experience a more negative health outcome when their wives die than women do when their husbands die [8]. When a spouse dies, the widow or the widower is undoubtedly left face to face with a new reality of a physical separation with its concomitant psycho-emotional, social and economic or financial challenges. There is a sudden downward slope in a hitherto progressive or steady socio-economic, psychological and emotional curve the couple used to enjoy.

In Christian marriage, monogamy rather than polygamy is clearly God's intention [9]. According to the book of Genesis 2: 22-24, "And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore, shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh [10]. In Christian marriage, a man is expected to be married to one wife. He is, as noted by Christianity.com [9] a one-woman man. And the wife is notably to be a one-man woman. There is no room for adultery and or extra-marital sexual intimacy. Many church denominations in adherence to this biblical injunction do not conduct church weddings for a man that takes on a second wife except in the event of the death of the wife in the first marriage. Consequently, spousal bereavement seems to hit harder on monogamous marriage than in a polygamous one or a relationship (monogamous or polygamous) where infidelity is condoned.

From this background of what a Christian marriage is one can imagine why spousal bereavement could be excruciatingly painful among devoted Christian couples. A corollary also is the fact that a spouse is expected to be a helper as noted in Genesis 2:18, "And the lord god said it is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an helpmeet for him" [10]. Both the man and the woman intending to marry come into this relationship as helpers of one another. This is illustrated more in Ecclesiastics 4: 9-12, where the scriptures say that two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour [10]. When a Christian man or woman marries, they two come into this relationship with the intention to leverage one another economically, financially, emotionally, psychologically, socially as well as spiritually. In fact, the economic responsibility of a



Christian home is supposed to be collective as both have their contributions to make. Children's education or training, food, health of family members as well as infrastructural provisions is achieved through collective efforts. The wife as well as the husband engages in frank economic or commercial activities to supplement each other's efforts and every property in the home of Christian couples, car(s), house(s), income from either or both of the couple's activities all belong to the family and are used for the common good of the family. Responsibilities from both sides of the in-laws where necessary and as agreed upon by the spouse, will be adopted into the family. It is therefore very wrong for a spouse particularly, a widow, to be driven from family inheritance in the event of the death of the husband as is the practice of some families. In addition to economic benefits, christian couples reinforce themselves psychologically, emotionally and socially. The psychological and emotional warmth that christian couples generate and share in a relationship is again immense. Together, Christian couples share ideas and feelings, occasionally attend some social functions. All these have capacity to prevent or reduce feelings of rejection, suspicion, and loneliness which bereavement orchestrates. Spousal relationship indeed is sweet, rich and most times rewarding because of the benefits that the couples enjoy. After God created man, He noted that man was not complete without a woman and so He made woman for man in Genesis 2: 18, "And the Lord God said it is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him [10]. If it's not good for man to be alone, it is also not good for a woman to be alone [11]. And it's not an exaggeration to say that it is worse for the widowed man or woman that had experienced the sweetness of marriage to be alone.

Marriage, particularly, christian marriage and more particularly, monogamous christian marriage is essentially good in almost, all ramifications. It promotes good health, sexual fidelity, better sleep and long life [8,11,12,13]. Studies have found out that cohabiting men are four times more likely to cheat than husbands, and cohabiting women are eight times more likely to cheat than wives [12]. There is no gainsaying that widow and widowers are highly susceptible to sexual promiscuity or infidelity by their precarious widowed position. The ground of widowhood upon which they stand is slippery so much that many had smeared their names and made people to criticize their faith as christians. Children also benefit greatly in intact marriage. In fact, according to City Journal [11], mountains of research tells us that children reared outside of intact marriages are much more likely than other kids to slip into poverty, become victims of child abuse, fail at school and drop out, use illegal drugs, lurch into premature sexual activity, become unwed teen mothers, divorce, commit suicide and experience other signs of mental illness, become physically ill, and commit crimes and go to jail. It is believed and very correctly too that children in intact marriage lead healthier and longer lives [11,13].

The material and financial benefits in marriage are also tremendous. Marriage according to City Journal [11] and Stromberg [14] is a productive institution. Married couples build more wealth on average than singles or cohabiting couples [13]. Also, being married changes people's lifestyles and habits in ways that are personally and socially beneficial [13]. The greatest benefit in marriage of all according to Danan [12] is love and companionship. But the sudden death of a spouse brings either a temporary or in some cases a permanent stoppage to some of these benefits. There is a sudden decline or loss of companionship as one is faced with the stark reality of an empty matrimonial bed, loneliness, sudden loss of appetite, frequent sighing and hissing, weeping and loss of interest and occasional or prolonged insomnia and general apathy. What about the stark reality of the personal effects of the deceased spouse- dresses, shoes, pictures and certificates- that confront the survivor at every twist and turn of the rooms? What about his/her place in the sitting room, bedroom, the dining, in the car and also the church that have suddenly become vacant? He/she is everywhere in the room while in reality is not. These problems are in addition to what some widows suffer such as disinheritance, suspicion, degrading in human treatment, poverty and economic deprivation, marginalization, poor relationship with in-laws, difficulty in social interaction, harassment, rejection, eviction, rituals and forceful marriage [15-17]. All these are what make spousal loss most times painful. One's spouse is usually one's confidant and this role is brought to an abrupt end unsolicited for by death.

Incidences of spousal bereavements are common among christians as in other religions of the world. Many church denominations have the presence of widows and widowers among them. There are some church organizations or denominations that have welfare programmes for them like it was noted among the early christians in Jerusalem as recorded in Acts of the Apostles 6: 1, "And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations" [10]. Caring for widows is not very paramount among many church leaders not to talk less of widowers. In churches where there are widows there are also widowers as the deceased spouse may be a member of the same local church denomination. But what is common is that widows always outnumber widowers. The reasons for this lopsidedness are not farfetched as married

men are believed to die more than married women [1] and the deceased husband may also be married to more than one wife in traditional African setting. Another plausible reason is that women largely marry men that are usually older than them although the gap is narrowing [1,2]. This is added to the fact that more widowers remarry than widows [18,19]. Again, unlike the widower that could remarry any time after the mourning period without the raising of eyebrows, a widow is expected to stay for a longer time before she could start thinking of remarrying [17]. In addition, Isaac [19] also noted that fewer men are available as women age and also that women tend to live longer than men although the gap is narrowing [8,19]. It is also claimed that women handle widowhood a lot better than men (Fitzpatrick (2015) [2,20]. Observations of remarried widowers in the location of this study also revealed in addition that most of them that remarried got married not to widows but ladies that had not being married before.

If widowers as a rule were to remarry widows, the number or gap between widows and widowers that remarried would have narrowed greatly. The opportunity for a widow to remarry a young man that had not been married is rarer than for a widower in Africa and more particularly, in Nigeria, Kogi state and Igala land (Ankpa) where this study was domiciled. It is socially denigrating for a young man that had not married before to espouse a widow with or without children. But all the same, there are some widowers and widows that have remarried and are remarrying as a measure to overcoming the challenges that spousal bereavement pose. This is to be encouraged by stakeholders because some studies noted that remarriage is one of the most important determinants of physical and economic well-being among the widowed [4,19] (Duncan 1991). In fact, Issacs [19] noted that the greater psychological well-being for both sexes is associated with remarriage and other romantic relationships but that some could thrive on other paths. The challenges of spousal bereavement that this study identified were put in the categories of psychology, emotion, social and economic. These challenges are critical in spousal loss as noted by the Gerontologist [2]. How well do the widowed but remarried christian couples in Ankpa measure on these variables? This is what has given rise to this study that was titled, "Examining the Psycho-emotional and socio-economic wellbeing of widowed but remarried christians". The essence was to encourage the widowed that are within the age of remarrying to give healthy consideration to this thought as one sure way to get rid of the pain of spousal loss accompaniment and live their lives again to please god and overcome the temptation of widowhood. In addition, this study was also intended to bring living hope to the couples who were bereaved of their spouses that their sun could rise again, their joy and happiness could return in full or fuller measures and that god can give to them double portions for the loss in the first marriage. That god could raise a father/mother for the children in their first marriage, if ever they had one and if not, the new marriage could be procreative and graciously productive like it was for the biblical widowed Ruth that later got married to Boaz and had her story line changed for good forever in Ruth 4:1-22.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the psycho-emotional and socio-economic wellbeing of widowed but remarried christians in Ankpa town, Kogi state, Nigeria. Specifically, the study found out:

- i. The psychological wellbeing of widowed but remarried Christians in Ankpa town.
- ii. The emotional wellbeing of widowed but remarried Christians in Ankpa town.
- iii. The social wellbeing of widowed but remarried Christians in Ankpa town.
- iv. The economic wellbeing of widowed but remarried Christians in Ankpa town.
- v. Whether the psychological wellbeing of widowed but remarried Christians in Ankpa town is responsive to gender.
- vi. Whether the emotional wellbeing of widowed but remarried Christians in Ankpa town is responsive to gender.
- vii. Whether the social wellbeing of widowed but remarried Christians in Ankpa town is responsive to gender.
- viii. Whether the economic wellbeing of widowed but remarried Christians in Ankpa town is responsive to gender.

Research Questions

The study answered these following questions

- i. What is the psychological wellbeing mean score of the widowed but remarried christians in Ankpa town?
- ii. What is the emotional wellbeing mean score of the widowed but remarried



- christians in Anka, town?
- iii. To what extent will the mean score of the widowed but remarried christians in Anka town reflect their social wellbeing?
- iv. What is the economic wellbeing mean score of the widowed but remarried christians in Anka town?
- v. To what extent will the psychological wellbeing mean score differ for the widowed but remarried christian men and women in Anka town?
- vi. What is the mean score difference between the male and female respondents on an instrument that measured emotional wellbeing of the widowed but remarried christians in Anka, town?
- vii. What mean score difference exists between the responses of the male and female widowed but remarried christians in Anka town on an instrument that measured their social wellbeing?
- viii. To what extent will the economic wellbeing mean score of the widowed but remarried christian men and women in Anka town differ?

Hypothesis

H01: There is no significant difference in the psychological wellbeing mean scores of the male and female widowed but remarried christians in Anka town

H02: The emotional wellbeing mean scores of the male and female widowed but remarried christians in Anka town will not differ significantly

H03: The social wellbeing mean scores of the male and female widowed but remarried christians in Anka town will not differ significantly

H04: There is no significant difference in the economic wellbeing mean scores of the male and female widowed but remarried christians in Anka town

Scope of Study

This study was limited to remarried widowed christians in Anka town in Kogi state, Nigeria. The contents examined were their psychological, emotional, social, and economic well being.

Methods

Design of the study

This study employed a descriptive research design. Specifically, it was a survey that sought opinions of respondents on the variables of psycho-emotional and socio-economic well-being of widowed but remarried christians in Anka town Kogi state, Nigeria.

Population of study

The population for this study was made up of only widowed Christian men and women that already have remarried in all the seventy five (75) local churches in Anka town. These sets of people were not very many as the study did not cover all christian widows and widowers but the christian widows and widowers that have remarried. Their population was 100 with 80 remarried widowers and 20 remarried widows. This population was not sampled because it was not large.

Instrument for data collection

The instrument for data collection was the Psycho-emotional and Socio-economic Wellbeing Questionnaire (PEASE-WQ) for the bereaved but remarried Christians. PEASE-WQ was a 25 items instrument that was personally designed by the researcher. Each of the four variables examined had question items that addressed them. Variable one that measured the psychological well-being of the bereaved but remarried christians had 9 items that addressed it while emotional, social and economic well-being matrixes had 5, 6 and 5 question items that measured them respectively. These items were prepared on a five-point scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD).

Instrument validation

The instrument was face validated by two colleagues in the department of educational foundations of the University of Jos, Plateau state, Nigeria. The items on the instrument were drawn from personal experience of the researcher as a onetime widower but now remarried, and also from valuable literatures and interactions with those bereaved of their spouses within and without the environments of the study.

Administration of the instrument

The instrument was administered with the assistance of the resident pastors of the churches were either or both of the target respondent (s) (remarried widows and or widowers) were found. Distributions were done on a sunday through these pastors as the researcher moved round the churches. And after one week of distribution, completed questionnaires were returned through the same pastors.

Data analyses

The 8 research questions were analyzed using mean and standard deviation statistical tools while t-test, tested the four hypotheses that were formulated for significance. Since it was a five response rate instrument, a mean response of 3.0 and above indicated satisfaction or good wellbeing in the new relationship while below 3.0 would mean a rejection or inadequate or lack of satisfaction or wellbeing in the new relationship on the variable measured.

Results

The results for this study were presented according to the research questions asked and the hypotheses formulated.

Research question 1

What is the psychological wellbeing mean score of the widowed but remarried christians in Anka, town?

The answer to this question is presented in (Table 1).

Table 1: The psychological wellbeing means and standard deviation scores of widowed but remarried christians in Anka, town.

| S/N | Psychological wellbeing: Now that I have remarried | X | SD |
|---------|--|------|------|
| 1 | I am no longer feeling depressed | 3.4 | 1.42 |
| 2 | I am no longer feeling lonely | 3.7 | 1.4 |
| 3 | I am warm and healthier | 3.6 | 0.83 |
| 4 | I don't feel rejected any longer | 4.3 | 0.78 |
| 5 | I have overcome unnecessary fears and anxiety | 4.3 | 1.1 |
| 6 | I think less now of what people will say if they see me with an opposite sex | 4.1 | 1.13 |
| 7 | The pain of the loss of my spouse is reduced | 4.2 | 1.1 |
| 8 | I sleep well most nights now | 4.3 | 1.01 |
| 9 | No longer afraid of who keeps the home front when I travel | 3.8 | 1.19 |
| Grand X | | 3.97 | 1.11 |

Source: Survey, 2021, N=100.

The analyses of data on (Table 1) showed that the christians who were bereaved but later remarried were psychologically healthy. The grand mean of X=3.97 was above the criterion mean of X=3.0. In fact, each of the nine (9) items that examined their psychological wellness all rated above the X=3.0 that was the criterion mean.



Research question 2

What is the emotional wellbeing mean score of the widowed but remarried Christians in Ankpa, town?

(Table 2) provided answer to this question

Table 2: The Emotional wellbeing means and standard deviation scores of widowed but remarried Christians in Ankpa, town.

Table with 4 columns: S/N, Emotional wellbeing: Now that I have remarried, X, SD. Rows include items like 'I don't feel sad frequently again' and a Grand X row.

Source: Survey, 2021, N=100.

(Table 2) revealed that the christians who remarried after the loss of their spouses were emotionally satisfied in their new relationship. This was evident from the grand mean of X=3.94 that was rated higher than the criterion or reference mean of X=3.0.

Research question 3

To what extent will the mean score of the widowed but remarried Christians in Ankpa, town, show their social wellbeing?

(Table 3) provided answer to this question

Table 3: The social wellbeing means and standard deviation scores of widowed but remarried christians in Ankpa, town.

Table with 4 columns: S/N, Social wellbeing: Now that I have remarried, X, SD. Rows include items like 'Life has again returned to my family' and a Grand X row.

Source: Survey, 2021, N=100.

The analyzed data on this table showed that the bereaved but remarried christians in Ankpa, township have found social satisfaction in their spouses. They reported enjoying the company of their spouse, and that they have overcome the problem of social isolation that they had when they were bereaved.

Research question 4

What is the economic wellbeing mean score of the widowed but remarried christians in Ankpa, town?

The answer to this question is provided on (Table 4).

Table 4: The Economic wellbeing means and standard deviation scores of widowed but remarried christians in Ankpa, town.

Table with 4 columns: S/N, Economic wellbeing: Now that I have remarried, X, SD. Rows include items like 'My family source of livelihood has improved' and a Grand X row.

Source: Survey, 2021, N=100.

(Table 4) showed analyzes of data on the economic wellbeing of the christians in Ankpa who were bereaved of their spouses and later remarried. The grand mean of X=3.96 is above the criterion mean of X=3.0.

Research question 5

To what extent will the psychological wellbeing mean score differ for the widowed but remarried Christian men and women in Ankpa, town?

The answer to this question is presented on (Table 5)

Table 5: The psychological wellbeing means and standard deviation scores of male and female widowed but remarried christians in Ankpa, town.

Table with 6 columns: S/N, Psychological wellbeing: Now that I have remarried, Male (X, SD), Female (X, SD). Rows include items like 'I am no longer feeling depressed' and a Grand X row.

Source: Survey, 2021, N=100.

The analyzed data on (Table 5) showed that both the male and female christians in Ankpa, township who were bereaved and later remarried were able to overcome the psychological problems that accompanied their bereavements.



to have scored higher X=4.25 than the male respondents with X=3.90 on the variable of psychological wellbeing that was measured.

Research question 6

What is the mean score difference between the male and female respondents on an instrument that measured emotional wellbeing of the widowed but remarried Christians in Ankpa, town?

The answer to this question is presented in (Table 6).

Table 6: Emotional wellbeing means and standard deviation scores of widowed but remarried male and female Christians in Ankpa, town.

Table with 6 columns: S/N, Emotional wellbeing: Now that I have remarried, Male (X, SD), Female (X, SD). Rows include items like 'I don't feel sad frequently again' and 'I feel lighter and happier'.

Source: Survey 2021, N=100.

The analyzes on (Table 6) showed that both the male and female christians that were bereaved and remarried later had mean scores of X=3.96 and X=4.06 respectively that were above the criterion mean of X= 3.0.

Research question 7

What mean score differences exist between the responses of the male and female widowed but remarried Christians in Ankpa, town on an instrument that measured their social wellbeing?

(Table 7) presented the responses of the respondents to this question.

Table 7: Social wellbeing means and standard deviation scores of widowed but remarried male and female christians in Ankpa, town.

Table with 6 columns: S/N, Social wellbeing: Now that I have remarried, Male (X, SD), Female (X, SD). Rows include items like 'Life has again returned to my family' and 'I enjoy the company of my spouse'.

Source: Survey, 2021, N=100.

The data analyzed on (Table 7) showed that the mean scores of both the male and female respondents differ although very minimally on the variable of social wellbeing after remarriage.

had at bereavement when they remarried (Male X=4.0; Female X= 4.23).

Research question 8

To what extent will the economic wellbeing mean score of the widowed but remarried christian men and women in Ankpa town differ?

The answer to this question is presented in (Table 8).

Table 8: Economic wellbeing means and standard deviation scores of widowed but remarried male and female christians in Ankpa, Town.

Table with 6 columns: S/N, Economic wellbeing: Now that I have remarried, Male (X, SD), Female (X, SD). Rows include items like 'My family source of livelihood has improved' and 'Meeting the family needs is by our joint efforts'.

Source: Survey 2021, N=100.

Analyzes on (Table 8) showed mean differences of X=3.96 and X=4.14 for the male and female respondents respectively on the measured variable of economic wellbeing.

Results of hypotheses

H01: There is no significant difference in the psychological wellbeing mean scores of the male and female widowed but remarried Christians in Ankpa town.

Table 9: Means, standard deviation and t-Test data on psychological wellbeing of widowed but remarried male and female christians in Ankpa, town.

Table with 8 columns: Group, Pop, X, SD, t-Calculated, t-Critical, P, Dec. Rows for Male and Female.

Source: Degree of freedom (df=98).

The data on (Table 9) showed that there was no significant difference between the mean and standard deviation scores of the male and female respondents on their psychological wellbeing.

H02: The emotional wellbeing scores of the male and female widowed but remarried Christians in Ankpa town will not differ significantly.

Table 10: Means, standard deviation and t-Test data on emotional wellbeing of widowed but remarried male and female christians in Ankpa, town.

Table with 8 columns: Group, Pop, X, SD, t-Calculated, t-Critical, P, Dec. Rows for Male and Female.

Source: Degree of freedom (df=98).

The data on (Table 10) showed that the mean differences between the male and female respondents did not differ significantly implying that the stated null hypothesis is



accepted. The calculated t-value of -0.306 is less than the critical t-value of 1.984 at 0.05 level of significance and the degree of freedom of 98.

H03: The social wellbeing scores of the male and female widowed but remarried christians in Ankpa town will not differ significantly.

(Table 11) presented the result for this test of significance.

Table 11: Means, standard deviation and t-Test data on social wellbeing of widowed but remarried male and female christians in Ankpa, town.

| Group | Pop | X | SD | t-Calculated | t-Critical | P | Dec. |
|--------|-----|------|------|--------------|------------|--------|----------|
| Male | 80 | 4.05 | 1.3 | -0.601 | 1.984 | < 0.05 | Accepted |
| Female | 20 | 4.23 | 1.17 | | | | |

Source: Degree of freedom (df=98).

The result of the data on (Table 11) showed a no significance difference in the responses of the male and female christian respondents that were bereaved and later remarried. The t-calculated value of -0.601 was less than the critical value of 1.984 at 0.05 level of significance and the degree of freedom of 98. What this means is that the opinions of the male and female christians that remarried after their bereavements did not differ significantly. By this analyzes, the stated null hypothesis is upheld.

H04: There is no significant difference in the economic wellbeing mean scores of the male and female widowed but remarried christians in Ankpa town.

(Table 12) provided answer to this question

Table 12: Means, standard deviation and t-Test data on economic wellbeing of widowed but remarried male and female christians in Ankpa, town.

| Group | Pop | X | SD | t-Calculated | t-Critical | P | Dec. |
|--------|-----|------|------|--------------|------------|--------|----------|
| Male | 80 | 3.96 | 1.3 | -0.56 | 1.984 | < 0.05 | Accepted |
| Female | 20 | 4.14 | 1.28 | | | | |

Source: Degree of freedom (df=98).

The data on (Table 12) showed that there was no significant difference between the mean scores of the male and female respondents on the measured variable of economic wellbeing. The t-calculated of -0.560 is less than the critical t-value of 1.984 at 0.05 level of significance and the degree of freedom of 98. This meant that the divergence in their opinions concerning their economic wellbeing was not significant demanding therefore, the acceptance of the formulated null hypothesis.

Discussion of Results

This study was not a comparison between the respondents' first and second marriage after bereavement. Rather, the study sought the opinions of the bereaved about whether or not they had found satisfaction in the second marriage by overcoming the psycho-emotional and socio-economic challenges that bereavement brought their ways. Therefore, one of the findings of this study was that the bereaved christians in Ankpa town that remarried claimed to have overcome the psychological, emotional, social and economic challenges that they faced at bereavement. The respondents reported to have satisfaction in all the four variables measured. By their opinions, remarriage had helped them to come out of their psychological, emotional, social and economic challenges. The data on (Tables 1-4) reported this as the grand mean of X=3.97, 3.94, 4.05 and 3.96 respectively were above the criterion mean of X=3.0. These findings align with the earlier findings of Fitzpatrick [7] Denan (2017), For your marriage [12], City Journal [10] and Stromberg [13]. According to them, marriage promotes good health, sexual fidelity, better sleep and long life. Also, being married changes people's lifestyles and habits in ways that are personally and socially beneficial [12]. The social, economic, psychological and emotional benefits that are inherent in marriage are great and enormous. God realizing this at creation had to say that "it was not good for man to be alone" in Genesis 2:18. So He (God) quickly made eve and brought her to Adam as his companion. Adam was satisfied with eve and referred to her as the "bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh" and Adam called her "woman" because she was taken from man (Genesis 2: 23). Spouses by divine design are to find satisfaction and fulfillment in one another. One's spouse is one's confidant with whom feelings, love, fear, worries, anxieties, concerns, warmth and future plans are shared. Their absence by way of dearth is a distortion that could paralyze the living spouse economically, socially, emotionally and even literally.

The pain of spousal loss is better imagined than experienced. And a sure palliative measure is remarriage for as many of them as are not too old to remarry. In fact, Smith, et al. [4] and Isaac [18] asserted that remarriage is one of the most important determinants of physical and economic wellbeing of the widowed. Specifically, Isaac said that the greater psychological wellbeing for both sexes is associated with remarriage and other romantic relationships even though some could thrive on other parts. Economically, spouses also benefit from each other and this is one of the findings of this study. Marriage according to City Journal [10] and Stromberg [13] is a productive institution. Married couples build more wealth on average than singles or cohabiting couples [12]. The benefits inherent in a healthy marriage are multidimensional. In many christian homes, spouses enjoy their relationships by reinforcing one another economically, socially, emotionally and psychologically so much that the sudden departure of one by way of death could be hellish for the living partner who undoubtedly will need to be helped out of this situation. The study also found out that there were slight differences in the opinions of the male and female respondents on their psychological, emotional, social, and economic wellbeing. (Tables 5-8) presented the data for this assertion. However, the tests of significance that was conducted and reported on (Tables 9-12) showed that the differences of the respondents on each of these four variables measured were not statistically significant. The stated four null hypotheses were accepted. These findings align with the findings reported by Isaac [18] that both sexes enjoy psychological wellbeing when they remarry. There are several studies that have queried gender or sex as a factor that could determine the intensity of the pain of spousal loss [1] while results of others were mixed. In the opinion of Fazoranti et al. cited by Trivedi, et al. [1] the pain, trauma or disorganization could be greater in women than in men whenever either loses their spouse. Similarly, Chen et al. [3] found out earlier that widows had higher mean levels of traumatic grief, depressive and anxiety symptoms compared to widowers. The findings of this current study could be seen to align with these earlier findings. This is because the widows showed higher mean levels on all the four variables (psychology, emotion, social and economic) than the widowers. It is likely that their claims of better psychological, emotional, social and economic wellbeing could be because they felt the burdens of these challenges more. Nonetheless, the results of this study showed that both sexes expressed great relieve from the challenges of spousal loss or bereavement by remarriage.

Conclusion

Spousal loss is a great loss that the concomitant pains and injuries that accompany it are enormous. Nobody has immunity against this loss. It is possible that as this paper is being read, somebody somewhere is losing a spouse. This paper was intended to encourage those that had been bereaved, and are being bereaved from the survey of the opinions of those that have passed through this way and who had obtained the mercies of God to conquer their bereavements. When one loses one's spouse, one's world seemed to have collapsed. Life becomes meaningless, appetite for anything gets lost and it will take time and faith in god for one to pick up one's pieces. The thought of remarriage is always abhorred and probably the least of all options to consider. Many in this condition had vowed never to remarry either for fear that they may not find love in the new spouse or that they would not want to be widowed the second time or that they may be considered disloyal to their deceased spouse, or for any other reason they may term "best known only to me". No matter what, there is great succor in remarriage. Marriage is beneficial in all ramifications. Hear god saying in Genesis 2:18 that "it is not good for man to be alone." If it is not good for man to be alone, then it cannot be good for a woman either and worse still for a widowed man or woman that had experienced and enjoyed marriage.

Suggestions

Based on the findings of this study, this paper suggested as follows:

- i. That widowed Christians that are not too advanced in age should remarry. Remarriage is one of the ways to overcome the psychological, emotional, social, economic and other pains and grieves that accompany widowhood or bereavement. The widowed males are encouraged to take this step to minimize greatly their pains and frustrations as well as for the effective management of their homes
- ii. It is prohibited culturally for a lady to propose marriage to a man in many African countries. For a lady to do this, her chastity will be doubted. It is more prohibited if the lady is a Christian and much more if the lady is a christian widow. What this means is that even when they have the intention to remarry, until a man proposes to them, they will remain unmarried. The suggestion here is for them to wait on god, trust him with their desires to direct the right suitors their ways as he did for the biblical Ruth. They should remarry if they have found rightful husband in a man but it must be according to the christian tradition. Remarriage is an antidote to their precarious and vulnerable position of widowhood.



iii. There are more christian widows than there are widowers for so many reasons that are statistically established through research. If widowers consider remarrying widows (not as a rule anyway), this gap can be narrowed. It is therefore suggested that as much as it is possible, let remarrying christian widowers espouse Christian widows around them according to christian tradition. This is because it is easier for widowers to marry single ladies that had not married before than a widow marrying a man that had not married before.

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