

CHRISTIAN SERVICE UNIVERSITY, KUMASI

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

**DEALING WITH THE CHALLENGES AND IMPACTS OF DIVORCE ON
DIVORCEES: A CASE STUDY OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST - KOTWI
SOCIETY**

PROJECT WORK

(LONG ESSAY)

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DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY

JUNE, 2024

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**A LONG ESSAY SUBMITTED TO CHRISTIAN SERVICE UNIVERSITY, IN
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ADMINISTRATION.**

DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY

JUNE, 2024

DECLARATION

We hereby declare that this project work report is the result of our own original research except for sections of which references have been duly made and to the best of our knowledge no part of it has been presented to this University or any other institution for the award of a degree.

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DEDICATION

To the glory of God, this work is dedicated to Mr. Maximus Frimpong Ansah, to the Head of Department of Theology Prof. Yaw Adu-Gyamfi and also to our supervisor Dr. Emmanuel Twumasi-Ankrah for their wonderful support and knowledge towards the development this work.

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CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Globally, it has become a major concern as to why most people lose interest in marriage and finally end up becoming divorcees. This has indeed become a global nuisance to the general public, and therefore something must be done about it to make marriage attractive to the young ones. Divorce has indeed brought a lot of challenges to the individual and to society at large. Mohammed Taghi Sheyki asserted that, “Divorce is a painful event for families and society and it is increasingly taking place in most societies.¹ It is the beginning of new lifestyles, though some challenges may fade away but new ones will emerge. In post-divorce era. Children highly face problems materially, emotionally and from the viewpoint of caring socialization etc.”² Mohammed continues to affirm the serious impact of divorce on the lives of people by admitting that the USA has the highest number of divorce cases.³ It is not only the USA that is currently facing such a crisis; rather, other European countries are also facing such challenges due to the socio-cultural changes that are currently happening. Formally, divorce was not a problem to be considered. However, in this era where women in industrial countries seek to obtain more rights to divorce, this has resulted in an unusual divorce case.⁴

Divorce in itself has serious implications for both the parents and the children at large. Love Obiani Arugu is of the view that children, on the other hand, will lack parental

¹ Mohammed Taghi Sheyki. “World Perspective of Divorce in selected Countries: A sociological Appraisal.” *World Family Medicine* 16(6) (2020): 60.

² Sheyki. “World Perspective of Divorce in selected Countries.” 60.

³ Sheyki, “World Perspective of Divorce in selected Countries.” 60.

⁴ Sheyki, “World Perspective of Divorce in selected Countries.” 60.

love and affection, which will run the risk of discontinuity in their emotional and intellectual development.⁵ He claims that rampant cases of juvenile crime are the result of broken homes.⁶ It is not only the children that experience this gap of emotional torture, but the parents also face injuries caused by the divorce.⁷ The society frowns at divorcees, and this brings shame, fear, isolation, and hatred, which makes the divorcees pass through a lot of emotional and psychological stress. According to Shelly Clark, Statistics prove a tremendous growth of divorce in the Sub - Saharan Africa, which is a contributing factor to the challenges the society face as a result of high rate of divorce. When we take Nigeria for instance one study found that divorce rate increased from 2-4% in 1980 to 3-6% in 2020. This increment denotes that people are gradually losing interest in the marriage they found themselves.⁸

Ghana, as a country, cannot be left out of the discussion of the challenges divorcees face. Abuduliah Isaah asserted that most of the students who demonstrate poor academic performance may be the result of a broken home.⁹ The child may lack the concentration to study due to a lack of peace and support from the parents. It is the responsibility of the parents to put their resources, such as money, time, and knowledge, together to help their children put up a good performance at school.¹⁰ When the above challenges that divorcees face are thoroughly discussed, it will call for an immediate remedy as to how we can reduce the rate of divorce. This will bring about the need for effective counseling sessions, which will be beneficial for both pre-marital and post-

⁵ Love Obiani Angu, "Social Indicators and Effects on Marriage, Divorce in Africa Societies." *The Business and Management Review* Vol 4 No 4 (2014). 24.

⁶ Angu, "Social Indicators and Effects on Marriage, Divorce in Africa Societies." 381.

⁷ Angu, "Social Indicators and Effects on Marriage, Divorce in Africa Societies." 381.

⁸ Shelly Clark. "Divorce in the Sub- Saharan Africa: Are Unions Becoming Less Stable." *Population and Development Review*, 41(41), (2015): 605.

⁹ Abuduliah Issah, "The Effects of Divorce on Children Education: A Case Study of Walewale in the Northern Region of Ghana." *European Journal Education*, Vol 6, no 2 (2029): 1.

¹⁰ Issah, "The Effects of Divorce on Children Education." 1.

marital couples. It is not only in Christianity that prohibits divorce but the Quran also prove that Allah doesn't want couple to divorce. He put in places measures to make the separation not painful experience. Surah 2:226-227 state that "Those who intend to divorce their wives shall wait four months (cooling off); if they change their minds and reconcile, then Allah is Forgiver, Merciful. If they go through with the divorce Allah is Hearer, knower." This indicates that even in the Quran there is a cooling period for couple to reconsider their decision to stop the divorce proceedings.

1.2 Problem Statement

Divorce is one of the cancers of the society that takes away the peace and happiness of people. This has created divergent views in the minds of people in the church and even beyond. The degree of its effect has created thought in the minds of people that divorce can be one of the best decisions a Christian can opt for if he or she feels very uncomfortable or enduring the marriage instead of enjoying it. Jonathan Gardner et al, is of the view that Marital breakdown is now common.¹¹ In Britain there are approximately 160,000 divorces a year, at the start of 1990s the figure was 30,000.¹² Randy Smith is of the view that divorce is not a sin and should not be misinterpreted.¹³ This depicts how people perceive divorce nowadays that divorce should not be a serious problem that people should even think twice if they are not being treated fairly. On the other hand, there is another group that opposes the above view of seeing divorce as normal. They hold a firm view that marriage is a spiritual union that needs to be treated with reverence. "Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be

¹¹ Jonathan Gardner et al, "Do Divorcing Couple Become Happier by Breaking Up?" [IZA DP No. 1788, 2005, Access online on 12th June 2024], 2.

¹² Gardner, "Do Divorcing Couple Become Happier by Breaking Up?" 2.

¹³ Randy Smith, "Divorce is not Sin" [Access online 12th June 2024, preparationministries@gmail.com]

undefiled for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous” (Heb 13:4-6). It is at this point that this research work becomes very significant because it reveals the lives of a divorcees and its impact of divorce.

1.3 Research Question

The research questions have been categorized into two sections: the major question, which is what the entire research is all about, and the specific question, which has helped bring the relevant issues out for discussion.

1.3.1 *Principal Question*

The major question of the research work was: What are the challenges divorcees face in the Church of Christ, Kotwi Society?

1.3.2 *Secondary Questions*

The Minor Questions Cover the Following Areas:

2. What is the background story of the Church of Christ, Kotwi?
3. What are the challenges faced by divorcees in the church of Christ, Kotwi?
4. What are the impact and challenges of counselors in the lives of divorcees in church of Christ, Kotwi?

1.4 Aim and Objectives

1.4.1 *Major Objective*

The main aim of the study is to examine the challenges of divorcees of Church of Christ, Kotwi Society. The objective of the study includes;

1.4.2 *Minor Objectives*

1. The research survey the background story of the Church of Christ Kotwi Society.
2. To illustrate the impact of the challenges of divorcee as a counselor.
3. To critically analyse the impact of the challenges of divorcees in church of Christ, Kotwi Society

1.5 Scope and Focus of the Study

The work generally covers the study of the life of divorcees and the challenges they face, with particular reference to the Church of Christ in Kotwi Society. The main geographical area for this research work is Kotwi in Atwima Kwawoma district in Kumasi. The study focuses on assessing the challenges divorcees go through during the period of being divorcees.

1.6 Research Methodology

Research method is a specific procedure for collecting and analyzing data. Under this section the most appropriate method employed was the qualitative method which seeks to collect people's ideas, experiences and knowledge through lectureships, interviews, newspapers, counselling program on television, radio programs open debates and so on and so forth.

The approach was a phenomenological approach in ascertaining the needed information for the research work.

1.6.1 *Methods of Data Collection*

This research primarily focusses on the both secondary and primary data that was access to ascertain information necessary for this research work.

1.6.1.1 *Primary Source*

The primary sources of data collection include setting up some questionnaire with the members of the church, the leadership of the church and stakeholders of the community.

1.6.1.2 *Secondary Source*

The secondary sources of data was about the soliciting for information from scholars in the previous works, such as journals, books and internet as a support in gathering the data for this study.

1.6.2 *Sampling Procedure*

This research was not only done by random sampling but also by purposive sampling. A divorcee who has been a divorcee for over two decades was singled out due to her long experience as a single mother, raising four children all by herself. Her experience was very significant in writing this research work. Four counselors were interviewed to confirm the qualifications that were used in selecting counselors in the church and the purpose of those qualifications as well as their experience with divorcees in the course of their work as counsellors.

1.6.3 *Data Analysis*

The data was collected from the field was analyze in a thematic approach to be able to critically analysis the substantive issues on the challenges of a divorcee with the collaboration of the work of the scholars to help the reader to relate to the issue and to be able to come into an educative conclusion.

1.7 Literature Review

Literature review brings to light the similar subject matter that has already been work on. This in directly relation the topic under study. It is simply the knowledge that has been accumulated by scholars.

1.7.1 *What is Divorce?*

According to Michael Kuldiner, “Divorce comes from the Latin word "divortium,” which means separation. It is also equivalent to the words “divort” or “divortere”. “Di” means apart, and vertere” means to turn a different way. The word divorce was known to be in French vocabulary in the later parts of the 14th century and in middle English in the years 1350–1400.”¹⁴ Michael finally defines divorce as a judicial declaration of dissolving a marriage in whole or in part, releasing the wife or husband from the matrimonial obligation to live together. This means that any formal separation of husband and wife according to established custom, total separation, disunion, or dissolution of a marital union is known as divorce.¹⁵ Ubong E Eyo define divorce as a “Legal dissolution of the marriage relation; any formal separation of a man and his wife according to established customs, a complete separation of any kind.”¹⁶ This implies that the man and the woman are no more recognize as couple, because marriage law does permit them to claim that the other as his or her lawful partner of life. Robert H Mnookin recount that “Divorce law provides the framework that governs the circumstance under which a marriage may be bought to an end and spouses are free to remarry.”¹⁷ From the perspective of Eva Meizara Puspita Dewi she is of the view that,

¹⁴ Michael Kuldiner, “History of Divorce, Origin and Meaning.” (November 17, 2012).

¹⁵ Kuldiner, “History of Divorce, Origin and Meaning.”

¹⁶ Ubong E Eyo, “Divorce: Causes and Effects on Children.” *Asian Journal of Humanities and Social Studies*. Vol 6 (2018): 173.

¹⁷ Robert H Mnookin, “Divorce.” [Access online 13th June 2024, DOI: 10.1007/978-1-349-74173-1-122]

marriage as a breakup that is followed by the freedom to disobey rights.”¹⁸ Divorce can be viewed as the formal discontinuity of marriage that provides the spouse to be independently free from the responsibility of a wife or husband. When couple settles for divorce it is belief that they have all one way or the other understood the reason why the marriage cannot work any longer.

1.7.2 Who is a Divorcee?

A divorcee is a person who has been divorced legally before ending their marriage. It has never been a person’s wish after marriage to opt for a divorce, but life situations can cause a person to become a divorcee. Geeta et al, is of the view that divorcee is a person who has formally gone through the legal process of dissolving a marriage to live as a single person who is not under any marital covenant with anybody.¹⁹ Benedict Chidi Ugwuanyi et al, asserted that, a divorcee is someone who “Carry on separate live legally, although the former partner might continue to interact if they had children.”²⁰

1.7.3 Causes of Divorce

In every action, there is a corresponding reaction. Marriage that ends in divorce has its causes. Joseph Osafo et al, revealed in his article that, “Data was obtained from 30 lawsuits consisting of 11 men and 19 women with an age range of 21–71 years. The causes of marital breakups from the above research were collected over a 10-year period (2007–2017), and were from the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. A critical analysis was done on the research, and six main factors were considered as the reasons for the divorce: infidelity, abuse, financial problems, lack of intimacy, third-party intrusion,

¹⁸ Eva Meizara Puspita, “The Meaning of Divorce for Wives: (The Marriage Age 20 years and Above).” *Journal Psikologi Pendidikan and Konselings*, Vol 3 (2017): 2443-2202, 26.

¹⁹ Geeta Tilak and Geetali Tilak, “Quality of life of Divorcee: Cross Case Analysis of Divorce Population.” [Access on line 10th June 2024].

²⁰ Benedict Chidi Ugwuanyi et al, “Psychological Effects of Divorce in Nigeria.” *Sapientia Foundation Journal of Education, Sciences and Gender Studies (SFJESGS)*. Vol 5 (2023): 111.

and gender role ideology.”²¹ The consequences of divorce can be a bitter pill that a divorcee has to find a way to swallow. When a person settles for a divorce, it is his or her own decision, and that decision also comes with its own implications, either positive or negative. In every stage of our lives, there are some challenges that we face, and the state of being a divorcee is no exception. Ludwig Fred Lowenstein is of the view that, divorce does not occur over night but rather there are certain causes that do happen prior to the divorce. These are;

Women independence, Too early marriage and arranged economic factors, poor intellectual and educational and social skills, Liberal divorce laws, sexual factors leading to incompatibility, role conflict, Alcoholism and substance abuse or risk taking behaviour differences between the partner leading to acrimony, Religious factors, attitude to divorce.²²

Paul R Amato et al argue that, “Individual who marry at a young age were more likely to report difficulty in settling down, such as going out with the boys/girls and infidelity.”²³ Debela Lemesa Fura, agrees with other scholars by saying that, the main contributing factor of divorce were the increase in fertility problems, economic problem, difference in religions and ethnic background and early marriage.²⁴ The causes of divorce cannot be viewed from on point but different factors can also be considered as a cause for divorce.

²¹ Joseph Osafo & Kwaku Oppong Asante, “Factors Contributing to Divorce in Ghana: An Exploratory Analysis of Evidences from Court Suits.” *Journal of Divorce and Remarriage* 62(4), (2021): 15.

²² Ludwig Fred Lowenstein, “Causes and Associated Feature of Divorce as seen by Recent Research.” [Access online on 12th June], (2005): 42(3-4): 171.

²³ Paul R Amato and Denise Prevetti, “People’s Reasons for Divorcing: Gender Social Class, Life Course and Adjustment.” *Journal of Family Issues* Vol 24 No5 (2003): 607.

²⁴ Debela Lemesa Fura, “Causes and Consequences of Divorce among Wolisso Town Community.” *Research in Humanities and Social Sciences*, Vol 8 No 19(2018): 16.

1.7.4 Challenges of a Divorcee

Divorcee is a state of being single due to divorce. It comes along with its own challenges which affect the individuals, below are some of the challenges they face.

1.7.4.1 The Stigmatization of a Divorcee

Divorce in itself is something people frown at because; it communicates a lot of thought in the mind of people about you. It can be assumed that the divorcee especially those who have been divorced twice or more are bad people who were not raised with good principles. Mustapha Koray asserted that a divorcee will eventually face the problem of emotional instability and societal rejections; this is as a result of being labelled as a person with bad character.²⁵

1.7.4.2 Financial Burden

Financial difficulty is known to be one of the consequences or challenge that divorcee goes through especially women, since most of them rely on the financial support of their husbands. When there is a divorce, life becomes extremely difficult for them, and some male divorcees. Most men feel very frustrated when the court rule in favor of the women and order the sharing of properties to compensate each other. Tyler Lang once said “If you are considering divorce, it is important to assess and prepare for the far-reaching financial ramification in addition to the emotional toll, as early as possible.”²⁶

A close examination of your assets, liabilities income and expenses are crucial, to understanding how a divorce will be settled in terms of the division of property.”²⁷

Emmanuel Twumasi - Ankrah states that “The PNDC law 111I (interstate Law of succession), many of the accused sexually infidel wives were in the past, driven out of

²⁵ Mustapha Koray Uru, “The Stigmatization of the Divorced Individual.” *Universal Journal of History and Culture* 5(1), (2023): 30.

²⁶ Tyler Lang, “The Financial Impact of Divorce.” (October 20 2022).

²⁷ Lang, “The Financial Impact of Divorce.”

their matrimonial homes without any property to support themselves and the children. This law allows a divorced wife or widow to have the legitimacy to claim a share in the properties acquired during the marital union.”²⁸

1.7.5 Challenges of Divorcees and their Impact on Children

The children in the marriage end up being the victim to the decision made by their parents; most of them end up with deviant behavior which leads them to engage in criminal activities such as fraud, stealing, money laundering, armed robbery, drug abuse and so on. Divorce does not only separate the couple but the children of them as well. David H Demo asserted that children will lack what we called emotional assistance, since there is no bond between them and their parents. When children notice such separation, they become confuse in life and later develop the attitude indecisiveness.²⁹

1.7.6 Challenges of Divorcees and their Impact on the Society

Shmsi Miri Ghaffarzedeh is of the view that, One of the contributors to the societal devaluation is as a result of broken homes.³⁰ When couple divorce, they become lonely in the society and most of them end up involving themselves in social damages like drug addiction, sexual abuse and other violent behaviors.³¹ It is again considered as a means of increasing suicidal cases. Marriage is considered as a building block for every society and when there is a high rate of divorce cases, it affects the development of the society.³² Patrick F Fagan reiterated that the effect of divorce on children hearts minds and souls ranges from mild to severe from seemingly small to observably significant

²⁸ Emmanuel Twamasi-Ankrah, *Sexting and Sexual Injustice against Women in Ghana: An African Theological-Biblical Hermeneutics of Dinah and Tamar* (Kumasi: Assurance Press, 2023), 82.

²⁹ David H Demo, “The impact of Divorce on Children.” *Journal of Marriage and the Family* (1988): 648.

³⁰ Shmsi Miri Ghaffarzedeh & Hassan Nazari, “The Consequences of Divorce on Individual Family and Society,” *Life Science Journal*, 9(4), (2012): 281.

³¹ Ghaffarzedeh, “The Consequences of Divorce on Individual Family and Society”, 281.

³² Ghaffarzedeh, “The Consequences of Divorce on Individual Family and Society”, 281.

are from short - term to long – term.³³ Jarar Ali recount that, it is children that suffer the most when there is divorce, when the court order one of the parent to have in custody the children due to his or her financial capacity, it is likely that the child may lack certain parental support from the other parent.³⁴

1.7.7 Challenges Divorcees Face and their Impact on the Church

The household of faith, which is the church, cannot be left out when discussing the challenges of divorcees because in the end, the church will be needed to help solve the problems of divorcees. The church helps to reduce the rate of divorce. The responsibility of the church increases when there are a higher number of divorcees in the church. The preacher has to prepare programs, teachings, and sermons to enlighten its members about the impact or consequences of divorce and the reasons why couples should re-consider their decisions to divorce and get back into their marriage. Fredrick Kakwata is of the view that the church can't turn a stingy hand on them because the Bible is very emphatic when it comes to helping the needy, in the epistle to the Christians. In Galatia Apostle Paul said "As we therefore have the opportunity let us do well unto all men especially. They should resolve whatever issue could have caused the divorce. "For I hate divorce, says the Lord." (Micah 2:16). This is a direct and emphatic statement by the prophet Micah. We should not separate what God has put together according to the accounts of Matthew (Matt 19:6-7). All these texts reiterate the fact that divorce is not an option in the sight of God. The church will turn into another source that the divorcee will rely on as their source of income to get financial support. One of Christ's missions on earth was to give people relief from their problems or poverty, and

³³ Patrick F Fagan et al, "The Effects of Divorce on Children." *Family Research Council* [Access online on 13th June 2024]

³⁴ Jarar Ali, "Impact of Divorce on Children Life." [Access online 13th June 2024, DOI: 10.13140/RG2.2.34276.50568].

because of that, the church plays a major role in assisting divorcees. Though it is not the will of the church, they had to help, and this becomes a challenge that the church has to deal with.³⁵

1.8 Significance of the Study

The development of every country relies on a formidable home. When the home is broken through divorce, it brings about a lot of problems in the country. This research work is of great significance because of the following:

Economically, the study brings to light the necessity to be trained or acquire a certificate as a professional counselor, which can turn into an occupation for people, and when this happens, the counselor can earn a living out of the counseling profession.

Academically, the research work has added more insight to the knowledge that already exist by scholars that is about the challenges of divorcee in life. Most papers, articles, books and other documents have already given insight as to why couple should not opt for divorce.

Socially, awareness of the implications of divorce and the life challenges of a divorcee can help other people adjust their emotions and improve their relationship skills, which can help them understand different perspectives and appreciate different opinions even if they don't agree with the subject matter.

Religiously, the research work strengthens the faith of believers in their Holy Scripture, which makes it emphatic that God hates divorce, and that concept should be understood

³⁵ Fredrik Kakwata, "The Church and Poverty Alleviation." [Access online on the 5th March 2024] www.missionalia.ac.za.https://doi.org10.7832/48-1-331. 101.

to mean that Christians should guard against the causes of divorce because Satan can use it as a means to get many to lose their salvation at the end of time.

1.9 Organization of the Chapters

This research work has been categorized into five chapters. Chapter one focuses on the general introduction to the topic, problem of study, methodology for data collections and analysis, literature review, significance of study as well as the organisation of the chapter.

Chapter two is about the background history of the Church of Christ-Ghana and the Church of Christ in Kotwi Society. The counseling ministry of the church, how the church trains their counselors, how long the counseling ministry has been in operation, and finally, how did it start?

Chapter three of this research work enlightens its readers about the impact of the challenges of a divorcee and how to solve the problems of divorcee in the church.

Chapter four of this work has revealed to its readers the qualifications and role of selecting a counsellor in the church. The final chapter is chapter 5 which has to deal with the analysis of the findings, summary, conclusions, and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

BACKGROUND TO CHURCH OF CHRIST- KOTWI

2.1 Introduction

The study in general, has already been dealt with in chapter one of this research work. This chapter brings to light the background of Church of Christ-Ghana and Church of Christ - Kotwi society under study. This chapter informs its readers on the history of the church in Ghana. It continues to concentrate on the history of Church of Christ in Kotwi society and not only that, it also shows the mission, vision, organization and leadership structure and the counselling committee of the church in perspective.

2.2 The History of the Church of Christ-Ghana

In a lectureship presentation held by Accra Road Church of Christ at the CCB auditorium (KNUST), Gyan Kesse Sr. recounts how the Church of Christ began in Ghana. According to his presentation, he recounts that the church started in the Central Region of Ghana, in a small town called Agona Nkum. The missionaries of the Church first settled in this town with the purpose of evangelizing the people of the town, and they found a man by the name John Kwabena Gyadu, who happens to be a member of the Salvation Army Church. They preached the word of God to him, and he accepted to be a member of the church. He got baptized, so they converted him to begin the church. The missionaries came to Ghana with some Nigerian missionaries because they first settled in Nigeria and planted a lot of congregations in Nigeria. These missionaries were in the persons of Wendy Groom, Cyril or, and some Nigerian missionaries who came to Ghana. Kwabena Gyadu was a major in the Salvation Army church, and after

he got converted, he was rejected by his family. It was only one of his sons, Isaac Gyadu, who decided to join his father in his new faith.

The first congregation was established in 1958 in Agona Nkum. The church wasn't strong enough to stand up to the influence of the already-existing denominations. The church was not growing and converting people into it as expected. Finally, the missionaries and John Kwabena Gyadu decided to test another soil to see how the church would survive in Ghana, so they moved to the Ashanti Region to a town called Anansu, close to Asante Mampong. When they settled in the town, they started to embark on their mission through public preaching. When they started preaching, something interesting happened that night. The interpreter was struggling to translate the English to Twi, which was making their presentation boring, so a man who was listening to the program decided to offer his assistance in interpreting the preaching. He was called Samuel B. Obeng; he did a wonderful job, and the missionaries were impressed by his performance. They talked to him if he would like to be a member of the church and he responded by saying yes, his acceptance made the missionaries take him back to central region as they were preparing to go back to Nigeria. They took him and his entire family to Nigeria to be trained as a preacher.³⁶ There were another Church of Christ missionaries from the United States of America who came later to Kumasi around 1962, while Samuel B Obeng was in Nigeria schooling to become a preacher. They were in the person of Jerry Reynolds, Dwayne Davenport and Harriot Dell.

They started preaching in places like Tafo, Adum and Amakom and one man called Mr Owusu who was a drug store owner at Adum got converted, and they started their first meeting in his house in Tafo and later moved to Amakom and finally bought land and

³⁶ Gyan Kesse, "Truth Be Told" (Kumasi: Lectureship, KNUST- CCB Auditorium, 2023).

settled in Bomso. Samuel B Obeng came from Nigeria upon hearing the demise of John Kwaben Gyadu, by that time he had finished his program as a preacher, so he decided to come back and join the new converts to strengthen the church in Kumasi. He did very well in making the church well known by many and re-establishing the church in the Central Region and other regions of Ghana It was 1962 that was officially accepted as the year for the commencement of the church.³⁷

2.3 Background to Church of Christ-Kotwi

It was in 2012 that the Church of Christ in Ghana celebrated its fifty-year golden jubilee. The leadership of Ashanti Region Churches of Christ decided to establish a congregation to commemorate the program and used that congregation as a seed for evangelizing Ashanti region. This decision fell on Kotwi society, and the committee placed Bantama Church in charge of the establishment of the church. For one or two reasons, the planting of the church was delayed, which made an elder of Bantama Church of Christ called Thomas Addo Mensah to take it upon himself to mobilize some of the members and arrange a weekly evangelism program to plant the church. God being so good, they were able to plant the church with some brethren, namely Enoch Mensah, Kwadwo Gyua, Kingsley Yeboah, Florence Boaheng, Margaret Kakari, Stephen Mbawom, and Peter Osei Owusu Kwame Adu, just to mention a few. The church was established on October 24, 2012.

It is known to be one of the fastest-growing churches in the Ashanti Region. Some leaders of the church are James Yenyi, Maximus Ansah Frimpong, James Addai, Philip Arthur, Charles Appiah, Richard Obeng, Moses Charwutey, Richard Agyei Justice Quinoo, and others. The church has committees like visitation, worship, welfare,

³⁷ Kesse, "Truth Be Told."

counseling, monitoring and evaluation, finance, projects and sanitation. The church had its first preacher in 2021 in the person of Daniel Owusu Manu.

2.4 Vision and Objectives of the Church of Christ, Kotwi

The church is a living organism in the sense that it is expected to grow both horizontally (spiritually) and vertically (numerically). With this in mind the church should have its vision and mission well defined. This is because it will serve as a motivation to move the church forward despite its challenges.

1. To expand the kingdom of God through evangelism by means of house-to-house evangelism, public preaching, church planting, tract distribution, and the use of media platforms such as television, radio, social media, print media, etc. To spread the gospel.
2. To prove to the world (sinners) the relevance of the cross in the life of the sinner. The divine assistance in offering the sinner the unmerited favor and building their relationship with God.
3. To introduce benevolent programs (Acts 6:1–7), which will be helpful in supporting the less privileged or needy, as a proof of what Christianity is all about and the attitude of the founder when it comes to kindness.
4. To become the light of the world by contributing to societal developments such as hospitals, schools, boreholes, etc. These initiatives will give the church favor in society (Acts 2:47).

2.5 The Organizational Structure of the Church of Christ, Kotwi

2.5.1 *Autonomy Structure*

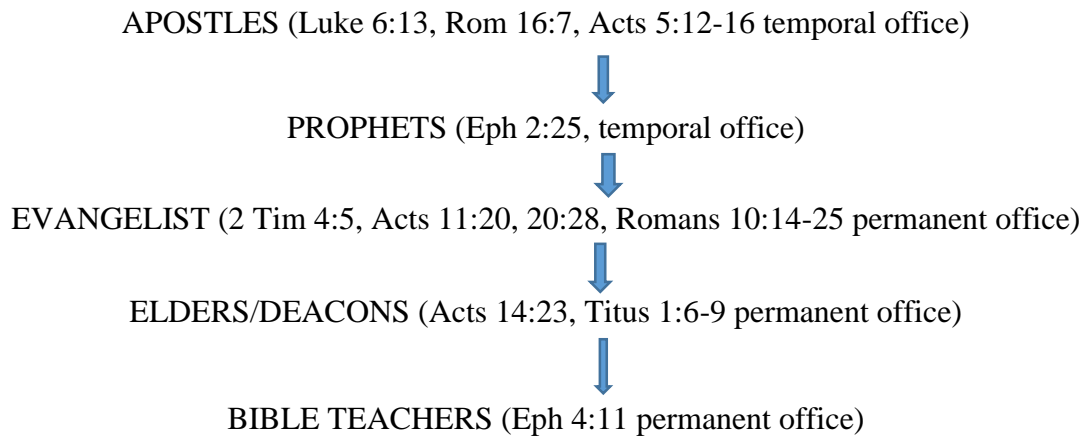
The Church of Christ is autonomous congregation. George John Agich state that “The term autonomy admits a wide range of meaning which include qualities such as self – rule, self-determination, freedom of will, dignity, integrity, individually, independence and self-knowledge.”³⁸ Church of Christ worldwide is an autonomous congregation meaning that they don’t take their directives from a central body or headquarters, every congregation is self -governed and not under the influence of another congregation. Its concept has been enshrined in the church constitution: “There is no system of church government larger or smaller than the local congregation. No man, woman, or group of people is looked upon as the head of the church. All congregations have the same head (Christ), foundation, and mission; preach the same gospel; and constitute a part of the universal body, the church. Acts 14:23, 20:17-28.”³⁹ This clearly affirms that Church of Christ is an autonomous congregation and it should be treated as such.

2.5.2 *Leadership Structure*

When a congregation is labelled as administratively matured, then that congregation should have a hierarchical structure of leadership which is use to govern the church and the church has one. Below is a leadership structure of the church according to Eph 4:11.

³⁸ George John Agich, “Key Concept: Autonomy.” *Philosophy, Psychiatry and Psychology*, 1(4): (2009): 267-269.

³⁹ Church of Christ, Ghana Amended Constitution.



The diagram above denotes that the church has a leadership structure that displays various positions in the church and the role each office is expected to perform. The constitution of the church throws much light on the office of an evangelist as the first permanent, office after the temporal offices of the Apostles and the Prophets. The Apostles such as Peter, Paul, James and many others and also the prophetic office that was exhibited by some disciple like Agabus (Acts 21:9, 10-13) had a temporary office that was not meant to be used today (1 Corinth 13:8-10), according to the teachings of the church. The office of an evangelist is considered to be the immediate office after the temporary offices, followed by the office of an elder, deacons and bible teachers respectively. The constitution states emphatically that, “A local church with or without Elders and Deacons may engage as much as possible the service of an Evangelist, whose special area of work shall be teaching and preaching to save the lost, edifying and equipping the saved to be ready unto every good work. He must be matured, trained and of sound mind.”⁴⁰ The church expressly states in article 3 section 1 about the office of an elder that “Under Jesus Christ as the head of the church every local congregation shall appoint from its members qualified by character and experience as stipulated in

⁴⁰ Church of Christ, Ghana Amended Constitution.

scriptures to serve as Elder (also known as Bishops and Pastors) and Deacons Acts 14:23, Ephesians 4:11.”⁴¹

2.6 Counselling Ministry of the Church

In an interview with James Addai he recounts how the counselling committee of the church started, I was called upon to serve the church as a counseling committee leader. Before then, the church was very young, and the mother congregation was assisting the church in the counseling work by offering counseling to young couples and also solving marital conflicts. It got to a point in time that the numbers were increasing and a lot of problems were popping up, so the mother congregation, which is Bantama Church of Christ, decided to hand over the counseling work to us because we were competent enough to assist ourselves in issues among ourselves such as preparation for marriage, marital disputes, family conflicts, and many others.

We officially developed our marriage policies and church policies in 2021, which were intended to guide our operations. Some members were called upon to assist me in counseling the members; they were Justice Quinoo, Grace Asamoah, Grace Arthur, and Appiah Charles.”⁴² The counselors of the church are expected to participate in any organized lectureship about counseling. They are expected to write a report on every case they sat on, the rationale behind that is to learn the causes and effect of the case, and pick relevant knowledge to assist them solve similar cases for other people. The church assists its counselors to attend external workshop organized by other congregations.

⁴¹ Church of Christ, Ghana Amended Constitution.

⁴² Interview with James Addai, Church of Christ- Kotwi, 2nd June 2024.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter has so far informed its readers about the brief history of the churches of Christ-Ghana and Church of Christ-Kotwi. Attention was paid to the visions and objectives of the church, as well as the organizational structure and leadership structure of the church. The counseling ministry of the church was also considered as a significant tool for addressing issues about divorcees and why counselors are relevant in their lives.

CHAPTER THREE

IMPACT OF THE CHALLENGES OF DIVORCEES AT CHURCH OF CHRIST, KOTWI

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter focused on the background history of the Church of Christ, Kotwi. This chapter covers the impact of the challenges of Divorcees. Impact of the challenges of divorcees can be detrimental to the point that the divorcee will feel very uncomfortable. The impact should be carefully analyze to be able to find the possible solution that can be of help.

3.2 Challenges of Divorcee on the Individual

Every divorcee is linked to one faith or another. One can be a Christian and follow the directives of the church to grow spiritually. Divorce can affect the divorcee's spirituality and they may not be able to grow their Christian life very well. Stormie Omartian shared her experience in her marriage that, "Michael and I have been married, we experience great strife and misery because we tried to do things in the flesh and not in the spirit. We each wanted the other to be a certain way, and we tried to make that happen ourselves instead of relying on the power of God to accomplish it. Our method of forcing things to happen brought about far less than satisfying results. Michael used anger as a weapon to control our lives, and I reacted to it by retreating mentally and emotionally."⁴³

Most of the divorcees come to a point that going to church can't be a remedy for the psychological problems they are going through, when they get to this point it means

⁴³ Stormie Omartian, *The Power of a Praying Husband* (Eugene: Oregon, 2001), 18.

that they are gradually losing faith in God. Mehwish Khalid recount that, “A significant number of women who had undergone divorce encountered symptoms of depression feeling of worthless and anxiety.”⁴⁴ Elisabeth Kuebler Ross et al, are of the view that divorcees face a lot of health challenges such as weight loss or gain, Headache, High blood pressure, upset stomach or digestive problems, fatigue and sleeping problem.⁴⁵ Mulugetu Gebrekidan agrees with other scholars by saying that, “Coming to terms both emotionally and practically with separation or divorce is difficulty for most, especially when children are involved, sometimes the end of a relationship initially leads to depression.”⁴⁶ Mulugetu continue to affirm that, most women who opt for divorce claims that they are set free from dungeon or emotional torture.⁴⁷ However, in interview conducted, Akosua Agyeiwa shared her experience in the interview as a divorcee.

When she decided to end the marriage due to some marital disputes, and upon many forms of arbitrations it became fruitless.⁴⁸ Raising four children as a single mother for twenty years and over was a like a hell to me. She continues to assert that “I was really stranded because it was around that time that my trading business was not flourishing. I had a lot challenges, life became unbearable for me. I couldn’t get money to finance myself and the children; my first-born child, Akua Serwaa, had to drop out of school to assist me in raising her siblings by supporting me in the trading business to help cater for the utility bills. I always feel very sad whenever I share this tragedy of my life: how my daughter had to sacrifice her education due to her father’s attitude of adultery, which

⁴⁴ Mehwish Khalib, “Post – Divorce Issues and Challenges: A phenomenological study of Divorced Mother from District Sialkot, Pakistan.” *Pakistan Languages and Humanities Review*, (2023): 56, DOI: 10.47205/plhr,

⁴⁵ Elisabeth Kuebler et al, “Facing the Challenges of Divorce.” [Access online on 22 May 2024, <https://www.militaryonesource.com/>, 2015]

⁴⁶ Mulugeta Gebrekidan, “Love Alone is Not Enough: The Challenges of Separation and Divorce among Young Couple in Ethiopia.” *Africa Journal of Work*, No 2, (2020): 5.

⁴⁷ Gebrekidan, “Love Alone is Not Enough.”, 4.

⁴⁸ Interview with Akua Agyiewaa, Church of Christ, Kotwi, 3rd June 2024.

made me take the decision not to continue the marriage. He didn't exercise his responsibilities as a father any longer. I tried explaining everything to my parents of blessed memory, but they couldn't comprehend since I was the only child among their children who got divorced. This made my life very confusing and extremely difficult as a single mother.

I was stigmatized by almost my entire extended family, and this made my situation even worse. It even got to the point where I wanted to take my life because the psychological trauma was very unbearable. Divorce is such a bad experience that I will not encourage young couples to go through it because it does not only bring stigmatization but also self-degrading since others will not respect you, as they respected you when you were a married person,”⁴⁹ she lamented. This above experience affirms that divorce can be a very bad experience that can cause a lot more harm than good. In an interview conducted, Joana Asante, reveals some practical life experience as a divorcee. Joana is the fifth child of Mr. Asante, a businessman, a car tire dealer to be precise, and Mrs. Asante, a banker. She got married and became a divorcee. 10 years after marriage, she married a man whose parents were business moguls. “It was one of the extravagant wedding my entire family has ever seen” she reiterated. She continues to say that everybody wished her well after the marriage, not knowing she was entering a worse cage that anybody won't dare to enter. She said “In my mind I thought I was getting married to white angel not knowing I was making a covenant with the devil himself.”⁵⁰

My husband was very abusive; in fact, beating me after any small argument became his hobby. I couldn't take it any longer, so I approached my parents and made a series of complaints to them, but they all fell on deaf ears; this was because his father was a very

⁴⁹ Interview with Akua Agyiewaa, Church of Christ, Kotwi 3rd June 2024.

⁵⁰ Interview with Joana Asante, Kotwi Community, 2nd June 2024.

best friend to my dad. I one day officially made a complaint to the police, which even became worse. He will definitely find his way out, so to a point I took a bold decision not to put my life at risk but rather to put my destiny in my own hands and face the future as a single mother. At the initial stage of life after marriage, it wasn't easy—not the financial side of life but the emotional side of life, because finance wasn't much of a problem to me since I was financially dependent even before marriage. One interesting thing was that my business started growing very well after the divorce. Divorce is a blessing in disguise; who knows, I could have died even before my time. She continues to affirm that “it is better to live as a single mother who is financially dependent than to be a depressed wife.”⁵¹

This statement she made supports those who are of the view that divorce is the best remedy for a marriage that is not working. When a critical analysis is done based on what the scholars have said about the impact of divorce on the individual, most scholars report that life becomes very difficult for divorcees, but in the case of Mrs. Joana, I think it is the other way around; she viewed her experience as the best decision of her life. This means that not all divorcees suffer after divorce, but some of them feel very good, even as divorcees, compared to married individuals. Issac Okyere, in an interview with Anthony Osei Poku, a legal practitioner, reveals that, “customary marriages in the region and declaration of customary divorce at the law court had increased at a high rate from the year 2009 to 2014.”⁵² This confirms what has already been stated: that couples today don't see divorce as an issue for discussion, and being a divorcee is gradually becoming the norm of the day. If he or she feels stressed out about the marriage and thinks he or she is financially capable, divorce may become an alternative.

⁵¹ Interview with Joana Asante, Kotwi Community, 2nd June 2024.

⁵² Isaac Okyere “Mud Rush for divorce as more cases Pile up in Ashanti.” [Access online on 6th May 2024, Modern Ghana], 2015.

3.3 Impact of the Challenges of Divorcee on Children

Children's development mostly depends on the ability of the parents to contribute meaningfully to their children's well-being. Divorce breaks the relationship between children and their parents. Suitynora Kateryna argue that, "The parental divorce reduces the number of family communication, limits the full functioning of the family and affects inevitably at the socialization of children, inadequate assimilation of the sex-role attitude and behavior."⁵³ Suitynora continues to add that, "If a single mother is busy with her personal problems. She takes less care about her child or totally cease to worry about him/her."⁵⁴ This statement supports the claim that divorcees may concentrate much on the divorce issue especially when they think they are not guilty of the divorce, but rather the other partner. This makes some neglect their responsibility of taking care of their children. Hooper James point out the fact that, "aggressiveness and anti-social behavior is common among children of divorce."⁵⁵ Abdelfattah Mesmari asserted that, "Marital conflict does not provide an ideal childrearing environment, going through a divorce can be damaging. Children are of their family's security.

They may feel responsible for the divorce and attempt to bring their parent back together often by sacrificing their own well-being.⁵⁶ In the interview conducted, Akua Kessewaa, as her friends affectionately called her, recounted her experience as the child of a divorcee. She said, "Growing up without a father was a challenging experience. I wanted to become a doctor in the future, but along the way I noticed that we were living with our mother only. I wanted to find out as young as I was, but my mother didn't

⁵³ Suitynora Kateryna, "The Divorce Problem: Reasons and Consequences for the Socialization of Children." [Access on line 1st May 2024 DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.30525/978-9934-571-27-5_51]

⁵⁴ Kateryna, "The Divorce Problem: Reasons and Consequences for the Socialization of Children." 51.

⁵⁵ James A. Hooper, "The Effects of Divorce on Children: A Review of the Literature" *Educated Resource Information Center* (1997): 8.

⁵⁶ Abdelfattah Mesmari, "Impact of Divorce on Children." *Research Gate* (17 March 2022): 6.

disclose anything to us until years later, when she informed us that our father left us for another woman. Our mother traded on the streets in order to make a living.

I remember how life became very difficult without the assistance of a father. One thing that always brings tears to my eyes whenever I share this experience was when my friends at school were having a Parent-Teacher Association meeting, and friends asked me about my father, because a lot of my mates' fathers were around for the meeting. I went and sat at the back of the school block and wept uncontrollably She said.”⁵⁷ The scholarly position to me, along with what the experience of this interviewee lamented, is that the absence of a father or a mother in the life of a growing child is very devastating, simply because every child needs both parents to offer their support physically and emotionally for their growth.

3.4 Impact of the Challenges of a Divorcee on the Society

Society is the composition of families. The growth of every society depends on the strength of families, because they are the people that form the society. Rasika Karunaratne elaborated that, “The trending of divorce cases in the world is untypical moving into social – existence and it give the wrong precedents to people. These prevailing circumstances of dissolution marriage life bring many adverse effects to society.”⁵⁸ Rasika reiterated again that, the divorcee is not only the victim in the divorce situation, but there is a break in social relationship among other family members and the society at large.”⁵⁹

⁵⁷ Interview with Akua Kesewaa, 2 June 2024.

⁵⁸ Rasika Karunaratne, “Divorce and its social impact on society with special Reference to Sri Lanka Context,” *SSRN Electronic Journal*, DOI:102139/ssrn.3862481, (2021): 4.

⁵⁹ Karunaratne, “Divorce and its Social Impact on Society with Special Reference to Sri Lanka Context,” 4.

A second-year student of master degrees at Bukhara State University, Musinora Nozira Mirzadjanovna asserted that, “Divorce can be a source of contention for all involved family members, and friends may have difficulty maintaining relationship with the divorced parties as they feel forced to take sides. It makes some relationship awkward.”⁶⁰ Shahram Abdol Rahimi argue that, divorce can be seen as chain of interconnected events that forever change the live of all victims, children can develop deviant behavior growing up and as result becomes very aggressive in dealing with people around them.⁶¹ From an interview conducted with an Assembly member revealed that there is a great impact of the challenges of a divorcee on the society he reiterated that there are a lot of divorcees who has brought their issues to the unit committee for resolution he continue to say that I feel very uncomfortably when am confronted with marital disputes, in most of our sitting we spent hours trying to settle issues of divorcees which is very disturbing.

We also receive countless financial request from divorcee in our community which is also gradually becoming a burden to us.”⁶² Most divorcees, before becoming divorcees, thought that the consequences of their decisions rested on them alone, not knowing that life is dynamic and things can change at any given time, and sooner or later, the society you find yourself in had to bear the consequences of your actions. The scholars position expounding above supports what the Assembly member put forth: that divorcees do not only suffer alone, but they extend their burden to other stakeholders in the communities, such as the assemblyman, the king, unit committee members, etc.

⁶⁰ Musinora Nozira Mirzadjanovna, “The Effects of Divorce on Modern Society.” *International Journal of Advanced Research Management and Social Science*, Vol 11 No 2 (February 2022): 2278-6236, 53.

⁶¹ Shahram Abdol Rahimi, “Phenomena Effect of Divorce on Families and Society.” *Journal of Basic and Applied Scientific Research*, 2(5), (2012): 4639 – 4647, 4644.

⁶² Interview with Williams Acheampong, Assembly Member, 3 June, 2024.

3.5 Impact of the Challenges of Divorcees on the Church

The church as the body of Christ cannot be left of when discussing the impact of the challenges of the divorcees. One of the core mandates of the church according to scripture is to ensure the welfare of the of its members. Martha Teriki J chebbet reiterated that, “Divorce among Christian couple is a growing reality confronting the church across the world, with potential negative ramification on the well-being of divorcees.”⁶³ Martha continues to assert that the church should extend a helping hand to the divorcees regardless of their situation, because human problems are always bound to happen.⁶⁴ Mary Mnena Tyoakaa et al, in her research work titled “divorce and the Christian church in Nigeria: Issues and challenges” recounted that, the Christian churches in Nigeria are currently facing the problem associated with divorcees, which is making the work of pastors and church leaders difficult.

This is because it appears that those who want to divorce are going contrary to the principles enshrine in the scripture, that God hate divorce as it is stated clearly in Mark 10:9.”⁶⁵ Mary again raise one of the disturbing impacts of the challenges of divorcee on the church by saying that, the losses prominent members who were very strong and vibrant in the church, when they become divorcees they feel ashamed and their interest in serving the church reduces due to that most of them move from that community.”⁶⁶

According to research work conducted by Kimiko Tanaka, he is of the view that good lifestyle can help people to understand the need to live morally upright life in marriage

⁶³ Martha Teriki J Chebbet et al, “Divorce stigma in the church: Implication on the well-being of divorcees in evangelical churches in Nakuru County, Kenya,” *International Journal of Education, Psychology and counselling*, Vol 8, (June 2003): 298-308, 299.

⁶⁴ Chebbet, “Divorce stigma in the church: Implication on the well-being of divorcees in evangelical churches in Nakuru County, Kenya,” 299.

⁶⁵ Mary Mnena Tyoakaa, “Divorce and the Christian Church in Nigeria: Issue and Challenges,” *An African Journal of Art and Humanities* Vol 5 No4 (2019): 2488-9210, 35.

⁶⁶ Tyoakaa, “Divorce and the Christian Church in Nigeria: Issue and Challenges,” 35.

in order to avoid divorce or order their commitment to church will soon be a problem to recon with.⁶⁷ In an interview with Gabreil Amofa, an evangelist in the Church of Christ, he revealed that the life of a divorcee is considered an issue in the church. He continues to say that Christians opting for divorce is not something the church condones or entertains, but since we have individual differences and different levels of spiritual growth and understanding, it is bound to happen. (2 Corinth 13:5-7), by the time we release them as a church, they have dissolved the marriage to become divorcees already. They knew that the church would not support the idea. He again reiterated that, upon critical observation and analysis of the number of cases that come before them as church leaders, they have come to the conclusion that about 95% of the divorce cases are those whose partners are from other denominations. Some also become members of the church as divorcees. Most of the divorcees in the church always request financial assistance to be able to take care of their children. The church can't turn deaf ears to their request, but it can assist them, and it has become a challenge that the church has had to deal with.⁶⁸

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter has elaborated on the impact of the challenges divorcees face on individuals, family society, and the church. This chapter has indeed provided its readers with a degree of the impact and why it is necessary to develop the right remedy to combat the issue. The next chapter will throw more light on the qualifications and roles of counselors in Church of Christ-Kotwi society.

⁶⁷ Kimiko Tanaka, "The Effects of Divorce Experience on Religious Involvement: Implication for Later Health Lifestyle." *National Library of Medicine*, 51(1), (2010):1-15.

⁶⁸ Interview with Gabriel Amofa, Church of Christ, 1st June 2024.

CHAPTER FOUR

CRITICAL ANALYSIS ON THE IMPACT OF THE CHALLENGES OF A DIVORCE

4.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with impacts of the challenges of divorcees. It throws more light on the impacts of the challenges of divorces on the individual, society and the church. When this issue is truly defined and understood will solicit for the remedy as to how we can develop ideas to handle the issue of the challenges of the divorcees.

4.2 Impact of the Challenges of Divorcee on the Individual

The individual (divorcee) is said to be the first person to feel the heat of the impact of being a divorcee. They are the one who faces issues like assault, insults and many others personally and this mostly leads to a lot of problems such as mental disorder, substance Abuse, societal rejection among others.

4.2.1 Mental State of the Divorcee

One of the effects that was identify among the people who were being interviewed amidst the challenges they went through as a divorcee, one of the challenges that was noticed was mental problem that some of the divorcees faced. The mental state of most of them is at stake since they turn to go through a very terrible psychological trauma and as a result, they develop a lot of health complications. Mary Agyei who was interview revealed how she was rushed to the hospital for medical attention after catching her husband cheating on their matrimonial bed, this incident left her in a state of mental confusion. This has indeed affected her so badly that even after their divorce

she is still battling with her mental health and she was diagnosed mood disorder specifically bipolar.⁶⁹

4.2.2 Substance Abuse

The psychological effect of divorce pushes many divorcees to engage in substance abuse. Yigzaw Kebede inserted that, “Drinking alcohol beverages is a learned behaviour, since the drinker has learned that alcohol releases tension and anxiety he turns to alcohol to alleviate his pain and guilt. To the alcoholic alcohol becomes the solution not the problem.”⁷⁰ In an interview with Mr Asante Michael he recount how he experienced the state of loneliness which made him an alcoholic addict. He recounted that he lost virtually everything to this wife after the court rule that his property should be share with his wife due to the divorce. It was at this point that he resulted in drinking alcohol. It later came to the attention of the church and as a matter of urgency the took it upon itself to offer the needed help by given him advise and prayers to recover from the addiction.

4.2.3 Societal Rejection

Divorce in itself has a great impact on the divorcee. It is state that a person finds himself or herself as an outcast in the society. They face a lot of problem that their lives become very difficult. Most of them lose their friends because most people don’t want to associate themselves with a divorcee especially married people. People see them as a people with bad character and lack patients to settle issues. This makes the society to frown at them and in many occasion do not involve them in many activities or programs. The titles like Mr or Mrs are cherished by the society to the extent that the society will prefer to honor someone who is married than a divorcee.

⁶⁹ Interview with Mary Agyei, 4 July 2024.

⁷⁰ Yigzaw Kebede et al, “Substance Abuse: For the Ethiopian Health Center Team.” (April 2005): 9.

4.3 Impact of the Challenges of Divorcees on the Society

According to David Copp, “society is more or less self – sufficient association of persons who in their relation to one another recognize certain rules of conduct is binding certain rules of conduct or binding and who for the part act in accordance with them.”⁷¹

The society is the composition of families and for that matter whatever that affect the society also affect the families and specifically the individual. In an interview with the assembly member of Kotwi Mr. Justice Ankoma. He recounted that he had followed most couple to the police stations to resolve the marital conflict which resulted into violence. In view of that most of the cases he got involve in made him paid some amount of money for the intention of resolving the matter. He shared with me one divorcee who arrested her husband then, for maltreatment of their nine years old son who was in his custody. He had to attend to the police station to give the ex-husband a bail. He again re-emphasize on some domestic cases that took a lot of his time off his busy schedule.⁷²

4.3.1 Degradation of Moral Standard

Every society is guided by it given principles or standards. The future social stability of every society depends on the adults of the society to set a moral precedent for their immediate generation to emulate in order to shape the standard of the future generation. When divorce becomes the order of the day, the children in that society will be prone to it and may see nothing wrong with such a conduct, and may also see it as part of the norms of the society and may not think of the implication of divorce and to talk of the impact of being a divorcee.

⁷¹ David Copp, “The Concept of Society.” (March 1992): 212, DOI: 10.1017/50012217300038518.

⁷² Interview with Justice Ankomah, 10th July 2024.

4.3.2 Increment of Criminal Cases

It is an undisputed fact that most of the prison inmates are young people who couldn't receive proper upbringing by their parents due to divorce issues. They are left to battles their lives as young dependent people who are not under the supervision of their parent. In a brief interview with Kwadwo Frimpong a son of female divorcee in church who has stopped attending church a long time shared his experience with me how he was convicted of conspiracy to commit murdered. This incident happened when a friend of his betted with him in a game center and refused to pay him the sum of money he owes him, this ended up in a fight at first instance but Frimpong decided to fight back later of which he inform his very close friend Anokye to find a way to kill Nana Asare.

It was around 9:00 pm that they decided to wait for Nana Asare as he walk back home, they rush to him and stabbed him several times but fortunately, the people around heard of the noise and came to his rescue. They were charged with conspiracy to commit murder and was sentence to three years in prison with hard labour. He continued to share with me that he blamed his parent for breaking up as couple and couldn't give much attention to him when he was growing up. They couldn't stay together to offer the needed education he wanted. The society can be in a great damage when the issue of divorce is not handled very well because it can be a detriment to the growth of the society. The authority of the society like chiefs, assembly member, Pastors and all stakeholders are expected to contribute their quota to manage divorce which is the source of producing a lot of divorcees into the society.

4.4 Remedy to Reduce the Impact of the Challenges of Divorcees

When a critical analysis of the findings was done it brought to light the necessity to develop the necessary remedy to combat the issue. Divorcee can be left in isolation

which can cause a lot of harm to them. They face a lot of challenges and the findings revealed that divorcee goes through a lot of problems which makes life extremely difficult for them and for that matter some even commit suicide and other unfortunate incidents.

4.5 Role of Families in Combating the Challenges of Divorcees

The extended family of a divorcee can't be left out in the discussion of the challenges and impact of the family of being a divorcee, the extended family is said to be the first point of contact to every divorcee, they have a role to play in their lives by solving their marital conflicts. Most marital conflict that should have caused divorce ended at the sifting of the extended family. Family members are known to be witnesses to the marriage and for that matter the comfort and happiness of the couple should be one of their interest.

4.6 Societal Contribution to Solving the Challenges of Divorcee

The stakeholder of every society such as chiefs, assembly members etc. should organize some periodic lectureship to educate the society to the impact of being a divorcee and the implication on the society. When this awareness is created it gives the people the sense of commitment to their marriages and solicits for assistance if they are faced with marital conflict. Couple will be advice to understand that their marriage is to set a standard for the next generation to emulate.

4.7 The Role of the Church in Solving Challenges of the Divorcees

The church as an entity has a significant role to play in the life of a divorcee. The church consists of the preacher leader and it members who are equally responsible in solving

this issue. In an interview with Madam Grace Asamoah a members of the counselling committee she recounted that the church can never be left out in dealing with the challenges of divorcees because most of the divorcees are members of the church and for that matter the church should sit up and find the necessary remedy to help them. She again highlighted on the necessity to offer a periodic counselling to first the young couple to become aware of the dangers of divorce and how to understand the nature of marriage and also conflict resolution skills.⁷³ The church should be prepared to offer financial support to the needy divorcees in the church and also to offer them a counselling to help them over the challenges.

4.8 Conclusion

This chapter has enlightened it readers about the impact of the challenges of divorcees. The challenges was critically analysis to draw people attention to the fact that the life of divorcee can be unbearable if care is not taken. The role of church, families and society in handling this issue. A lot was captured in this chapter. The next chapter focuses on the summary, conclusion and recommendations of the research work.

⁷³ Interview with Grace Asamoah, 12th July 2024.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The previous chapter focused on the qualification and role of a counselor in the life of divorcees. This chapter concludes the study with a summary of finding, general conclusion and recommendations.

5.1 Summary of Findings

This research work reminds all couples to remember the covenant they made when they were getting married and become aware of breaking it to become divorcee. Thomas B Warren said that, “when we marry, we say till death do us do apart. This is practically a permeant unconditional surrender. It is a gaining of liberty but with stringent limitations. It is liberty regulated by limitation.”⁷⁴ Critical analysis obtained from the research work reveals the impact of the challenges those divorcees in Kotwi Church of Christ. Everything according to the study point out to the fact that most divorcees’ life becomes unbearable after divorce. The impact of the challenges does not only reside on the divorcee as individual but children, family, society and the church at large end up experiencing some challenge as a result from the decision by the divorcee. When one decides to be a divorcee, it may be against his or her wish but circumstances influence them to opt for such decision.

The research work provides knowledge about certain signals that couple should take note which can cause divorce in their marriages. Principles for a successful marriage and the consequence for divorce has clearly been illustrated in this research work to

⁷⁴ Thomas B Warren, *Marriage is for those who Love God* (Moore: Oklahoma National Christian Press, 1994), 36.

help individuals to reconsider their decision to divorce and become a divorcee. The personal interviews conducted in the research work about divorcees, child of a divorcee, assembly member and the church has provided a deep knowledge about the challenges divorcee faces and how they can overcome them in their lives.

Psychologically, divorcees are faced with stigmatization which makes life very uncomfortable for them. Emotional instability can be considered as one of the challenges of a divorcee and it makes divorcee very unstable and as a result they experience personal isolation from people around them. Most divorcee end up developing a lot of social vices like drug abuse, prostitution robbery etc. Most of them who can't take the societal rejection and attitude towards them commit suicide. This has called for the necessity or the need for counselors to intervene and offer their assistance to address the problem divorcee faces.

Financially, the research work has provided to its readers the financial hardship divorcee face. It is severe and as a result they solicit for support from other people. This makes them experience low self-esteem. It also makes the divorced women vulnerable to womanizers as they seek for financial interventions.

5.2 General Conclusion

The knowledge acquired from this research work can give a general picture of the life of divorcee and the challenges they face in life. The role of Counselors in the life of divorcees is nonnegotiable, how they contribute to relieve the burden upon divorcees is very important. According to this research work, most scholar attest to the fact that children, family, society and the church has a role to play in reducing or eliminating the challenges of divorcees. Counseling role is extremely significant and are expected to at least be the first point of contact to divorcees.

5.3 Recommendations

The findings and analysis of the study has helped the researcher to come up with the following recommendations that will go a long way to prevent divorce which is the source of producing divorcees and again give divorce a better life.

Firstly, most of the causes of divorce are lack of the understanding of how marriage works and the negative impact of divorce. When people become aware of the consequences of been a divorcee, they will reconsider their decision to opt for divorce.

Secondly, the church should organize programs, lectures and counseling sessions for divorcees to help them to face the challenges of being in that state. Most of the divorcee came into the church as divorcees and for that matter they need people to guide them in making right choices.

Furthermore, Counselors of the church should be train through internal workshops, external seminars to become aware of the dynamics of problems relating to divorcees. The counselors after such programs acquire knowledge about their work to be able to settle marital dispute, challenges of divorcees, causes of divorce, children up bring and many others to be able to execute their role well as counselors.

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APPENDIX I

PERSONALITIES INTERVIEWED

James Addai, Church of Christ- Kotwi, 2nd June, 2024.

Akua Agyiewaa, Church of Christ, Kotwi, 3rd June, 2024.

Akua Kessewaa, 2nd June 2024.

Joana Asante, Kotwi Community, 2nd June, 2024.

Williams Acheampong, Assembly Member, 3rd June, 2024.

Gabriel Amofa, Church of Christ, 1st June, 2024.

Mary Agyei, 4th July, 2024.

Justice Ankomah, 10th July, 2024.

Grace Asamoah, 12th July, 2024.

APPENDIX II

INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Mad., Sir

I am....., a final year student of Christian Service University College, Kumasi. I am working on the impact of the challenges of divorcees and a counselor's role in the life of a divorcee using Church of Christ, Kotwi as a case study. I therefore plead on your indulgence and involvement to provide me with right answers to some of the questions asked concerning the life of a divorcee.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Part I (All Members of the Church)

- i. Do you know of any divorcee in this Church?
- ii. How many divorced couples do know in this Church?
- iii. How would you describe the condition of the children living with a divorcee?
- iv. Have you heard of any burden or challenges a divorcee faces before?
- v. What are your views as to how a divorcee can be set free from the problems they are going through?
- vi. What can the church contribute to the relief of the burden of divorcees?

Part II (Leaders and Members of the Marriage Committee)

- i. How many divorcees are in the Church?
- ii. What are the measures put in place by the Church to lessen the burden of divorcees in the Church?
- iii. How does higher number of divorcees affect the Church growth?
- iv. How does the children of divorcees?

- v. How effective is the marriage counselling committee of the Church?

Part 111 (Divorcees)

- i. How long have you been divorced?
- ii. What caused the marital separation?
- iii. Are you happy or have you regretted been divorcee?
- iv. If your partner is ready to come back will you reconcile with your partner?
- v. How has the been a divorcee affected you;
 - a. Physically
 - b. Psychologically
 - c. Financially
 - d. Spiritually
- vi. In what ways have the divorce affected the children?

Part IV (Divorcees' Children)

- i. How long have your parents been divorced
- ii. How was life before and after your parents divorced?
- iii. Do you think it was a good step for your parents to divorce?
- iv. How has the divorce affected you;
 - a. Physically
 - b. Psychologically
 - c. Financially
 - d. In terms of Education
 - e. Spiritually