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THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHALLENGES FACED BY
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ALLEVIATION IN EMUHAYA DISTRICT,
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Obwoye Hezekiah, Dr. K. Onkware, Dr. C. Iteyo



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^{1*}Obwoege Hezekiah

Post Graduate Student, Maseno University

*Corresponding Author's E-mail: obwoegezek@gmail.com

²Dr. K. Onkware

Lecturer, Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology

²Dr. C. Itoyo

Lecturer, Maseno University

Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of the study was to assess the socio-economic challenges faced by CoG-Kenya in poverty alleviation in Emuhaya District, Western Kenya.

Methodology: This study was a cross-sectional research that sought to give an examining and descriptive scrutiny of the CoG-K's activities in Emuhaya District of Western Kenya. This study sampled a total of 312 respondents (1 Bishop, 1 General Secretary, 1 General Assembly Trustee, 1 General Assembly Treasurer, 16 Directors, 282 Pastors, and 10 Elders) through purposive sampling method. Oral interviews, questionnaire methods and focus group discussion were used to collect data from the respondents. Observation method was used to validate the information obtained through oral interviews and questionnaires. Secondary data was sourced from published and unpublished literature. Data was analyzed using the theological method of induction (TMI).

Results: The study concludes that as much as the CoG-K has made concerted attempts towards development in Emuhaya District by influencing the peoples thinking on legitimacy of wealth and education, and on the moral value of saving and investing. However some of its programs and ceremonial functions like ordination, baptism, marriage and weddings tend to retard these efforts of alleviating poverty. Although such programs and celebrations serve the poor at the grassroots level, they delay change in behavioural and institutional transformation capable of sustaining economic growth.

Unique contribution to theory, practice and policy: There is a need to change cultural practises that tend to retard development among the adherents of the CoG-K in Emuhaya District. The study posits that cultural practices surrounding marriage and death that are repugnant and detrimental to change should be discarded if development is to take place.

Keywords: *socio-economic challenges, poverty alleviation, Emuhaya District, Western Kenya*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The present economic situation of Africa in general and Kenya in particular appears to be characterized by poverty and suffering which form relatively high levels of material deprivation. Poverty is a state of human deprivation with regard to personal income, clothing, housing, health care, education, sanitary facilities and human rights (World Bank, 2001). Poverty or being poor in the church's understanding commonly means a state of or lack of what ought to be (Myers, 2000). In both the Bible's Old and New Testament, the poor are the oppressed by both socio-cultural and economic conditions. They are the deprived and the needy beggars. Thus, the theological basis for the option for the poor in the church is that the poor possess a sacramental function in the society (*Ibid.*).

In Kenya, the 2007 Human Development (HD) Survey showed that the people living in abject poverty constituted 56.3% of the Kenyan population, and that the situation was deteriorating further as it has continued to rise from 30% in early 1990's to 56% by 2007 (MDG Centre, 2009). Over 65% of the people living in Emuhaya District where the Church of God - Kenya herein referred to as CoG-K is the most dominant denomination, live below the poverty line and are food poor (ESDP, 2008). This means that more than a half of the population in Emuhaya District is in some state of poverty. Whereas poverty, religion and corruption may account for some of this plight, many of the poor are victims of natural disasters, famine or drought. Farmers on the other hand, often cannot make an adequate living from their small and infertile land. In addition to suffering, sheer lack of income, the poor are often uneducated and afflicted with physical sickness (*Ibid.*).

Furthermore, the Kenyan situation could rightly be cited as the best example of glaring disparity between the economically empowered on one side and the marginalized masses on the other. The wealthy have access and control of the market, whereas the poor remain at the mercy of the market dictates even where their own produce is concerned. A report by the Society for International Development (2004) revealed that only a tenth of the 30 million Kenyan controlled the nation's resources and income and that 42 percent of the total wealth of the country is concentrated in the hands of the 10 percent of the population (Galgalo, 2005). This implies that a tenth of the population is gobbling nearly half of the available resources.

In recent history, there has been an inclination to look at development almost entirely in economic terms (Ogot, 1999). Although very important, economics cannot be relegated to the deepest levels of life. The 2007 United Nations Development Program's (UNDP) report on Kenya shows that despite an economic growth rate of 5.8 percent, 50 percent of Kenyans lived below the poverty line (Zacharia, 2007). According to Zacharia (2007: 45):

Compared to the year 2004, human poverty has increased marginally in all provinces. 16 million Kenyans are living on less than a dollar a day, while 18.9 million can hardly afford a meal with more than a dollar at their disposal. The gap between the rich and the poor also continue to widen. Poorer people have little or no hope of bringing up a child to the age where they can benefit from free primary education introduced by the government in 2003, let alone taking them to secondary school.

As a result, these have continued to marginalize certain sectors of the society, especially the women, children and rural inhabitants. Compounding this enormous problem is the recent emergence of HIV/AIDS pandemic in virtually all African countries (Saitoti, 2002).

Until recently, it was believed that rising poverty could be tackled by increased economic growth that would lead to higher incomes. Growth was seen as a natural process which could be nourished through the application of correct and timely input. Likewise, it could be impeded through bad conditions, but once these constraints were removed the process would continue (Verhelst, 1990:56). Development was seen essentially as a question of increasing gross levels of savings and investment both internally and externally, private and state – until the economy reached a take-off point into self-sustaining development.

Development and economic growth was seen as a matter of applying appropriate levels of investments after taking into consideration the rate of population growth, the capita: output ratio and desired rate of growth (Burkey, 2000). A combination of domestic savings, the international investments and international aid would provide the fuel to drive the process through stages of growth which would ultimately bring the benefits of modernization to the entire population. However, it was found out that various traps and barriers to development were to be found in the traditional or primitive sectors. It then became necessary to reduce population growth, improve health, introduce new seed varieties and then growth and development would occur so long as investment was sufficient (Prandervand, 1990). This strategy has however, been limited in reducing poverty and it has been argued that growth alone may not be sufficient to reduce poverty. Accumulated information pointed towards a growing poverty complex: marginalization, mass unemployment and recurrent starvation crisis.

The emerging crisis has prompted the continuing search for appropriate approach to, and strategies for solving the problem. Poverty alleviation has been the subject of subsequent National Development Plans, Session Papers, Presidential Commissions, Task Forces, and studies in Kenya. The large range of contributions reflects the pressure on the Government to find solutions to the persistence of poverty in Kenyan society. However the government of Kenya on its part has not sufficiently addressed these needs due to increasing national population growth and the concurrent costs (EDSP, 2008). This inadequacy has been greatly felt in Emuhaya District because of its high density as compared to other rural areas in Kenya (*Ibid.*). It is in this process of taking initiative in development that existing churches in Emuhaya District have played role in development.

Presently in Emuhaya District are a wide range of churches which are known to actively take part in human development through its agencies such as Compassion International, Youth Empowerment Programs and World Vision. These churches include the Anglican Church of Kenya, Church of God in Kenya, Pentecostal Assemblies of God, Coptic Church, Israeli Nineveh Church, African Interior Church, Salvation Army, Revival Church (CoG-K, 2007), just to mention a few. While acknowledging the role played by these churches in both spiritual and social-economic development, the present work delves its attention to the role played by the CoG-K in poverty alleviation to the populace in Emuhaya District. The Emuhaya District has a population of about 250,000 inhabitants according to the 2009 population's projections (EDP, 2010). Currently, the birth rate is estimated at 3.5% per annum (*Ibid.*). Nevertheless, poverty is a complex phenomenon that cannot be eradicated solely by politics, economic policies and financial investments. It is a social construct that

cannot be limited to mere economic growth. In order to be authentic, it must be integral; that is, it has to promote the good of each individual and the whole person. Material and spiritual values must be brought together (Pope Paul VI, 1967).

Accordingly, the existing challenges in relation to the various dimensions of poverty require an understanding that poverty can be fought from many fronts, which include using religion. We cannot ignore the fact that religion is an economic institution as it participates in the economy and is an economic 'force' as it influences various economic activities. Today, religion is believed to seep into all aspects of life in the society including economic aspects (Mbiti, 1969). It is viewed as the most effective stimulus for economic growth and social change in general. As stated, the economy is one of the society's most important institutions and religion is in a continuous reciprocal and interdependent relationship with the economy. Although religion is often viewed as a semi-autonomous social system paralleling other institutions, it is itself in various ways part of the inclusive economic system of the society.

Poverty is a major concern of the church, and countless poverty alleviation programs and campaigns have been developed over time, across the regions. Poverty is defined as having numerous manifestations and characteristics that include low and unreliable income, poor health, and low levels of education, insecurity, disempowerment and isolation from the mainstream of the economic development (Cavanaugh, 2008). These characteristics are also referred to as indicators of measuring poverty (*Ibid.*). The biblical word on the relation of the community of faith to poverty is clear and unambiguous because God identifies himself with the poor, so too the community of faith is called to special concern for these persons.

Historically, many scholars, policy makers, and practitioners working broadly in programs aimed at poverty alleviation are in agreement that development coincides with religious vision in viewing history as a process of salvation (Tarino, 2005; Bryant, 1999; Sinclair, 1980). Religions teach people to believe that happiness is either in the present or in the future and compels those who abide in it to act in a particular manner (*Ibid.*). In consequence religion performs the following role:

Contributes to the advancement of knowledge and commitment; such an influence is vital in fashioning values system. The spirit of commitment and creativity, as necessary components of wealth creation, arise from inside the person. Such convictions influence the material well being of individuals and communities. Economic prosperity cannot be achieved without taking into account the power of the human spirit and determination (Tarino, 2005:40).

One's belief makes a difference in the way of organizing one's life and in the perception of the good. Beliefs allow certain conditions and thinking under which the desired values could be unfolded and thereby effect action. Beliefs structure relationship between people and affect the destiny of human life (*Ibid.*). Within a religious culture, one finds that the way of life, the behavior patterns, the whole meaning of existence is knit together by reference to God, to the deity – to the 'Supreme Being'. Consequently, religion and life are intimately connected, and the proper action and behavior is that which is pleasing to God and what is commanded by God.

Evidently, the important place of spirituality in human development has been acknowledged (Gumo-Kurgat, 2004; Bryant, 1999; Nyaundi, 2003; Vinay, 2005). Secular groups involved in development are beginning to take seriously the religions of communities with whom they work. Scholars are seeking for ethics and morality in development strategies. Therefore, true development be it Christian or non-Christian, requires addressing the spiritual, because it is

not possible to alleviate poverty without the spiritual facet. It is in this regard that the church and Christian organizations have made concerted attempts towards answering the cries of the poor in the society. This contribution of the church in alleviating poverty is likely to be enhanced by the fact that Christianity in Africa is growing greatly. This study aims at assessing the role of the CoG-K in alleviating poverty in Emuhaya District of Western Kenya.

1.2 Problem Statement

Poverty is a widespread phenomenon that is of interest to all stakeholders of the development processes including the Church of God in Kenya (CoG-K). Documents of earlier studies have focused on the economic systems while underestimating the power and influence of religion in the eradication of poverty; thus, relegating religion to a matter of spiritual significance. Emuhaya District experiences very high poverty levels that stand at 65% of the total population of Kenya (GoK, 2010; KNBS, 2010; ESDP, 2008). Furthermore, 52.3% of the households in the district live below poverty levels. Thus, the district's contribution to national poverty is 3% (*Ibid.*). However, it is evident that economic systems alone to date have been inadequate and the growth of poverty has not been reversed (Speckman, 2001; Ogot, 1999; Nandy, 1998). People do not live by economics or science and technology alone. Thus, the role of religion in poverty eradication has not been studied yet human spirit and determination are cornerstone for poverty alleviation and wealth creation.

Christians believe that the religious perspective in development has to be prominent in dealing with human beings, especially in an attempt to improve the quality of the human life. This view is not only based on the belief that human beings are created in God's "image and likeness" (Genesis 1:2) but also on the theological view, that religion creates a symbolic universe that legitimizes earthly structures, thereby giving people the will to live. Thus, people have concepts, beliefs and value systems which engage the priorities and qualities of the social relations. Consequently, this study seeks to examine the role of religion in addressing the phenomenon of poverty. In particular the study seeks to assess the socio-economic challenges faced by CoG-Kenya in poverty alleviation in Emuhaya District, Western Kenya. At the moment, CoG-K has gained a wide acceptance among the people of Emuhaya District of Western Kenya and also influenced their way of life.

1.3 Objectives of the Research

To assess the socio-economic challenges faced by CoG-Kenya in poverty alleviation in Emuhaya District, Western Kenya.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Empirical Review

The challenges facing the church in alleviation poverty Africa in general and in Kenya in particular could precisely be pointed to the case of the glaring disparity between the economically empowered on one hand and the marginalized masses on the other. The wealthy have access and control of the market whereas the poor remain at the mercy of the market dictated even where their own produce is concerned. However, according to Okullu (1974) the church has a significant role to play in many spheres of development especially in medical and educational fields and it is wrong for national leaders to consistently warn it not to interfere with politics. This implies that the church is a stakeholder in East Africa due to

the investments it has made in educational and medical areas, among others. Although, Akubue (1999) cited CoG-K mission programs that were meant to spread the gospel, he does not analyze their impact on the population that received the Gospel. For instance, he cites mission hospitals, schools, women's guesthouse and compassion program in the church. According to Akubue, the church in general has sponsored some educational and medical institutions. Therefore Okullu's and Akubue's works show that the church should be involved in progress because it is a stakeholder in development. Okullu further posits that the church must go on to foster projects and teaching, which give initiatives and creativeness to local people. This is emphasized by Kilonzo's (2008), examination in Vihiga District on the impact of various Christian groups on the different development activities employed in development process. Okullu's (1974), Akubue's (1999) and Kilonzo's (2008) literature also contributes to this study by providing a framework through which the role of the church in development is analyzed.

The church must create the agenda for a more sustainable and humane way of life. It is too important to leave the agenda to politicians, economists, and scientist (Elliston, 1987). When the church takes seriously its mission, there will be a qualitative difference in the way Christians and Christian agencies approach the question of assisting the vulnerable:

Whenever our relationship with God is changed, our association with our poor neighbor transformed, and our care of the environment marked differently, we begin to fulfill the imago dei and missio dei, we will together begin to realize a new shalom, and the kingdom will near (Elliston, 1987:46).

Lehmer (1986) documents the historical beginnings and development of the kingdom of God in Emuhaya district. Furthermore, Lehmer writes from the perspective of a long-term Kenyan missionary and brings to light the many hardships, struggles, milestone and triumphs experienced by the dedicated individuals who carried out this important work in Kenya. The history of the mission work of the CoG-K is intriguing and has its roots stemming from the pioneer works of missionaries like A.W Baker, Twyla, John Ludwig, Jewel Hall, Hick and Grace Donohew and many others. The book presents both the costs and rewards of true commitment to Christ's call to the foreign mission field, but it fails to tackle the role of CoG-K in combating poverty, which is prevalent in Emuhaya District.

Alela (2007) gives a descriptive model for holistic Christian ministry in Bunyore. His study, explores a holistic Christian transformational development model for all Christian churches. Typical of all holistic practitioners, he underscores the ways which can help the church in general, at the expense of programs meant to alleviate poverty. For this reason, there is need for in-depth studies to programs in the CoG-K in relation to development. Evidently, holism is much more in the mind and heart of the practitioner (Myers, 1999). The social science and even much mission theology, reflect a world in which the spiritual and the material are unrelated realms.

Holistic practitioners need to develop a deep understanding of the complexity of poverty and its many dimensions and expressions. They need to be able to use lessons of social science and of scripture to understand the causes of poverty – material, spiritual, cultural and sociopolitical. They need to be able to develop understanding of the local socio-political, economic, and religious context and how this contexts work against well being of the poor. This is where this study is important. Alela's (2007) work lacks in the understanding of the worldview and its impact on development. Both the practitioner and the community are in need of the world view that has God of the bible at its centre.

Taylor's (1972:87) admonition to missiology scholars and holistic practitioners is just as relevant to religious development scholars and this study in particular. Consequently:

We need to come off our religious high horse and get our feet on the lowly, earthly grounds of God's primary activity as creator and sustainer of life. We must relinquish our missionary presupposition and begin with the facts on the ground. Thus a need for more studies using others approaches in this regard. This means humbly watching in any situation in which we find ourselves in order to learn what God is trying to do here and then doing at with him (Ibid.)

As seen in the above citation, Tylor's work despite being important in this study seems suggests that development professionals need to develop an attitude of seeking reversal as an antidote for professionalism becoming an impediment for the poor finding their identity, voice and place.

Barret (1975), remarks that the missionary activity not only brought the evangelical message of the Gospel, but also introduced another way of life to African populace. This is witnessed not only in the fields of religion and moral conception but also in the domain of technical capability, habits of consumption, ways of life and hygiene. He further observes that all socio-economic activity of the church is secondary to its work and preaching of the word and is to be considered originally to prepare youth for the priesthood or to give a Christian education to the youth. But it is clear that at the same time they did a great service in the field of socio-economic progress. Barrett's work is related to the present study in that it deals with socio-economic change and way of life of the people. His contribution to this study will assist in examining the CoG-K not only in its involvement in evangelism of the general populace in Emuhaya District but also to analyze some of the challenges the CoG-K faces in alleviating poverty.

Makokha (1970) documents the history of the Church of God in Bunyore, Western Province based on the Church of God publications without reference to the church's challenges in poverty alleviation in Kenya. Makokha makes use of oral interviews to trace the growth of the churches in Bunyore down to the 1970s. The thesis provides an account of need based evangelism at the grassroots, but it has little to say about its impact on the development in Emuhaya district. For instance Makokha (1970: 47):

The COG-K indigeneity in Bunyore has resulted from the patterns in which believers' developed into congregations on the basis of their clan units. The family ties among the believers and non-believers, within given clan units, remained physically unbroken.

In his assessment of the CoG-K, Makokha uses a historical perspective to report the phenomenal growth. This historical work is very important in this research because it gives the background information of the study, hence pointing to the lacuna of knowledge, which this study hopes to fill. For instance, the church has often failed in its task as ideal witness to the justice of Christ. Yet, elements for a total restructuring and renewal of society, and transfiguration of the individual within the society that Jesus was promoting is contained in what has come be known as "social teaching of the church." Even though recently rediscovered and given impetus by the highest magisterial in the church, the identification of the proctology with divine social order is clear throughout in the Old Testament.

As we have noted, the claim of identification of the mission of Jesus (soteriology) with the re-establishment of this order goes back to Jesus Himself. This is the one aspect on which the writings of the New Testament are clear. But the New Testament presents a realistic view; human beings must involve themselves in this soteriological work of Jesus, slowly

transforming this world by humanizing their relationship, until God completes it in His own good time (eschatology).

There is without doubt growing realization among scholars that faith dimension should be added to development work (Belshaw, 2001). The church is involved in development work because their memberships include the poor. Belshaw's view is that if there is any specific group that lives, understands and identifies with the poor in Africa, it is the church. When the church talks of the poor, it is talking of its own. It is the church with the poor and of the poor. Thus, the church must use its identity to the community's advantage. It is a better mediator for development aid and an effective channel since it has a biblical basis for that kind of work. Belshaw however, does not consider the CoG-K's role in development of the poor populaces.

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is a cross-sectional research that sought to give an examining and descriptive scrutiny of the CoG-K's activities in Emuhaya District. This study was carried out in Emuhaya District of Vihiga County. The district borders Vihiga District to the West, Kakamega South District to the north, Siaya District to the east, and Kisumu West District to the south. This study targeted Emuhaya District which has a population of 180,000 people who are members of the CoG-K (CoG-K Assembly, 2007). These were represented in all the 141 CoG-K congregations in Emuhaya District. Other participants who were thought to have important information for the research were the CoG-K leaders, directors and the church elders who were purposively sampled as discussed under sampling procedures. Within the CoG-K's population, a sample size of 312 respondents was sampled for oral interviews, administering the questionnaire and focus group discussions. Saturated sampling technique was used to opt for the 4 administrative heads of the CoG-K namely the Bishop, the General Secretary, CoG-K Treasurer, CoG-K trustee and the 16 heads of departments for in-depth interviews. To obtain data for analysis, qualitative methods of data collection, which include in-depth oral interviews, focus group discussion, observation and documentary analysis, were employed. Data collected through the questionnaires, personal interviews, focus group discussions and observation was synthesized systematically and logically compiled to determine the role of CoG-K in alleviating poverty in Emuhaya District. Data was coded manually and organized under different themes. Data was then synthesized systematically and logically compiled and presented descriptively through use of narratives and frequency tables. Conclusions were made according to the findings of the study in light of the research questions, objectives and theoretical framework.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Challenges Facing the CoG-K in Alleviation of Poverty

The study affirms that heightened poverty has been one of the challenges for the church's development efforts. Though poverty is a problem that the CoG-K aims to resolve, there are challenges that limit the extent to which the church can explore its contribution to alleviate poverty in Emuhaya District. It is therefore fundamental to discuss these programs and activities of the CoG-K in Emuhaya District in this study. These programs are categorised into social, cultural and spiritual programs. The social and cultural programs include marriage and funeral programs, while the spiritual programs include baptism and ordination programs.

4.1.1 Social Cultural Challenges

4.1.1.1 Marriage

Marriage is a vital program and a socio-economic institution of prime importance in the CoG-K believes and practices. Regardless of the social status of the adherent, marriages in the CoG-K are believed to be sanctioned by God thus, not a union where a pastor presides over marriages of nominal Christians in the church. Marriage in this context means any formal commitment between a man and a woman to cohabit permanently (Litunya: OI, 28/12/2007). The covenant is not only between a husband and wife, but also between that couple and God. However, it has both economic and theological ramifications, thus curtailing the efforts of the CoG-K in alleviating poverty in Emuhaya District.

Khayundi (OI, 18/08/2008), reported that:

In the CoG-K doctrine marriage fulfills God's plan of creation; for we are created in the image of God, and blessed as male and female. Moreover the doctrine of marriage is so integrally built into existence that it provides a paradigm for God's relation to humanity. In an analogy, God is to us as a loving husband to a wife and this ratiocination is echoed where Christ is pictured as the bride groom in the Gospels. From these, Christians may deduce that the mystical wedding of God – in - Christ to the church is in human marriage.

The CoG-K require a marriage ceremony in the church, even though they recognize the validity of civil or customary marriage for their adherents, imposing certain conditions on them and invite them to ask for the church's blessing on their marriage. A Christian marriage is the total commitment of a man and woman first to God and then to each other; thus, it is a requirement that one is "saved" first before he or she is married (Makomere: OI, 02/01/2009).

According to Wesangula (DN: 24/05/2009):

A church wedding is considered holy, and the bride often dressed in a white gown to symbolize purity. It is normally made very colorful and complete with a program that must be strictly adhered to. Friends and relatives are informed in advance and transport arrangement in good time. In fact, the bride and the groom worry over nearly everything - from how beautiful the church looks, how the food tastes, whether the colors match, how happy the guests are to the weather.

For a church wedding to take place, at least one of the spouses to be must be a member of the CoG-k. It could take up to a whole year to arrange and even a modest one will still cost the couple upward of 100,000 Ksh. The affluent members of the CoG-K spend up to Kshs. 800,000 (Siberenje: OI, 23/12/2008). Unfortunately, "the marriage dynamics and other CoG-K programs like baptism and ordination have changed. Consequently, people feel that there is too much bureaucracy and too many rules in the church that make life unnecessarily expensive, people are yearning for simplicity in the programs" (*Ibid.*) but according to Ochwanyi (OI, 01/01/2009), Christian marriage is an obligation in which there is no holding back anything, an undertaking of mutual fidelity and partnership of mutual submission. Both the man and woman ought to be in living a holy life that was exemplified by Christ.

The church marriage rate, therefore, refers to the number of marriages recognized each year by the church per 1000 of its church population. The CoG-K's way of computing the size of their own church population consists simply by baptism, marriage and the saved ones. Although, as Hasting (2002) admits, the church marriage rate is concerned with wedding or blessing in church rather than with Christian married life, the church has regarded a church

wedding as a decisive element in determining acceptability for communion. On the CoG-K's own criteria, therefore, a high or low church marriage rate is extremely important. Anjere (OI, 11/12/2008), for example, interprets the declining church marriage in Kenya between 1997 and 2007 as a turning away from the church itself, but this is evidently too far from the facts on the ground. It is even common experience to find christians in irregular marriage situations in Kenya and who despite being barred from the reception of the sacraments, remain fervent and active members of the CoG-K.

Tianga (OI, 11/01/2009) shows that fear of the indissoluble, monogamous marriages is generated among the youth of the CoG-K by their experience for social instability. This instability is the direct result of the emancipation of the younger generation, an emancipation to which the church has contributed by its concentration on education, health and work among the younger generation. Consequently, there is a generation-cum- education gap. The young people handle their own affairs and choose the payment of the so called "money to speak". Subsequently, negotiations are bedeviled by the fact that the choice of marriage partner cannot be separated from the payment of bride wealth. The raising of bride wealth by the bride's parents and the postponement of payment by the young man are interacting factors. CoG-K marriage officers refuse to officiate at a wedding until bride wealth has been paid, and the result is that most marriages go through an uncertain, trial period which, even if it does not end in separation, is seldom rendered definitive by the church marriage (Mulima: OI, 29/02/2008). Evidently, both cultural and christian forces are at work in influencing the economic interpretation of marriage in the CoG-K.

The mentality of those who postpone church marriage indefinitely is further illustrated by this study. It was observed that less than a third of the respondents were married to actual partners in a church ceremony. For those without a church marriage, a few had been married in the church to an earlier partner from whom they were separated, and this fact prevented the regularization of their union. A slightly larger number had not married in the church because their partners belonged to another church or faith, nearly half of all the respondents said they were "not ready for the church marriage". Some respondents spoke of bride wealth not being paid yet because they perceive it as a financial burden. Although "not ready" for the church wedding, over 40% of the respondents had been in their present marriage for a period of three to ten years, and a similar period of eleven to over thirty years. Fear of childlessness, break-up of marriages, when marriages were of such long standing and almost unanimously blessed with children.

It was again observed that 89% thought it no sin for a christian boy and girl to cohabit after customary engagement. On the other hand, 74% thought it definitely better for them to live together for a time, rather than get married immediately, in order that they might get to know one another (Okwiri: OI, 11/12/2008). Nearly half of the respondents were not married in the church because they did not "know each other", there is deliberate "trial", the bride wealth had not been paid, or there was opposition from parents. According to Ochola (OI, 10/01/2009):

Marriage is a human institution, belonging to the human community, and the church has no right to undermine such an institution by making it expensive. Their aim is to strengthen them with and build them up. The CoG-K, therefore, must work with the community, not in opposition to it. Everything must be done to minimize the distinction between the customary celebration of marriage and its Christian celebration of marriage. There are frequent anomalies in the Christian celebration of a marriage that has also been celebrated in customary form, and these must be removed. Nowhere is

this more evident than when a church marriage is performed along after the couple began to live together and long after birth of children. Even in every text of the Christian service which speak about “entering into marriage” and which pray for the birth of children make nonsense of the rite.

The process of marriage therefore, required serious contemplation by all members of the CoG-K. Most CoG-K members who are parents are involved in the process of engagement of their children by identifying a marriage partner from a family, which is not associated with immorality and bad omen (Siaunya: OI, 19/11/2008).

Marriage within the clan is prohibited (Alembi: OI, 26/08/2008) thus, *Omusundi cannot marry omusundi*. ‘*Omusundi*’ is an analogy used to mean people who have blood relationship and hence cannot marry each other or else a curse is invoked. CoG-K tolerates marriage partners between different clans and communities that is they have “*Obwikho*” (blood relationship). Polygamy is discouraged in the CoG-K (*Ibid.*). Emisiko (OI, 19/08/2008), however, strongly disagrees:

The scripture at no point ‘clearly forbid’ the practice of polygamy, nor is it equated to adultery, as it is so often argued. The scripture is to be found in loving, fully reciprocating relationship, it seems to me, reveals the idea of marriage, and not a culture form such as monogamy or polygamy. The scriptures teach that God enters into a relationship with a man just where he finds him, and then leads him towards an ideal. There is no reason why He will not do the same with a polygamist.

According to Ochieng (OI, 15/12/2008), polygamy had the function of catering for the sexual needs of men and minimizes the chances of promiscuity and prostitution in the society. More important, polygamy helped to satisfy the need and desire of having a large family, while at the same time it kept the fertility rate of the women at a low level. Polygamy also catered for childless union and offered a kinder solution than that of divorce when a wife was barren. Imende (OI, 21/08/2008) agrees that polygamy used to cater for the sexual needs of men whose wives were pregnant or breast feeding and who were forbidden to have sexual intercourse with their husbands, as well as for the needs of men whom wives were not available. Polygamy demands a modicum of wealth, both for the outlay required by multiple bride wealth and for the upkeep for the several wives and their children. However, in Emuhaya District, which is a rural situation, once the initial outlay has been made, polygamy becomes more of an asset than a liability.

Marriage in the CoG-K is a lifetime bond and therefore a partner especially the young people must be chosen wisely. Nevertheless, most CoG-K members encourage their children to marry from their own ethnic group because it enables them to cope up easily with cultural expectations of a community they know well. Payment of bride price in terms of cattle, goats, and sheep, among other forms of presents is required in the CoG-K to symbolize an appreciation of care to the parents of the bride (Luvembe: OI, 23/12/2007). Any amount of bride price can be paid to the bride’s family depending on the economic ability of the husband.

Generally, CoG-K members demand a dowry of seven head of cattle, a sheep or goat; an overcoat, gumboots, two blankets and a bed sheet, and negotiable amount of money depending on the educational achievement of the bride. However, those are only traditional demands and during negotiations of the bride price, both parties are expected to be flexible enough to arrive at an agreed figure. However, the number of cattle is constant especially if the bride has not given birth at her parents’ home. Bride price (bride wealth) or dowry is a

sign of a covenant between the two parties (Matere: OI, 28/12/2007). However, the transfer of property occurred in installment payment over a period of time. This was meant to encourage virginity and extensive faithfulness within the family.

Among the CoG-K adherents in Emuhaya district, the reasons for marital breakdown include incompatibility, wife's infidelity, desertion, laziness, drunkenness, or illness. The failure to have children is also mentioned, but appears to play a small role among the motives for divorce. The researcher may conclude this section by remarking that the role of the church in alleviating poverty has been impeded by the requirements of church marriage.

4.1.1.2 Death and Funeral

Death, burial and mourning are an intricate part of the CoG-K's beliefs and practices. Death is part of the physical separation of a person from the church, community and provides the individual the opportunity to join the ranks of the departed (Smith-Akubue, 1995:152). Procedure followed and the amount of money spent when burying a CoG-K member showed a number of variations according to the sex, age, and social status as well as certain peculiarities of the deceased. According to Kageni (2008:34):

Kenyan are burying more than Sh 7 billion every year in funeral expenses and burial ceremonies. This year, at a time when the country is trapped in a biting economic crunch fanned by inflation and high fuel prices, more money than that allocated to some key government ministries for development this year will go into graves. The church is the main culprit.

Kenyan have not adjusted funeral costs downwards and invested the money productively for bereaved kin (Anjeho: OI, 13/02/2008). Readiness by the CoG-K members to splash money on the dead has given rise to a thriving funeral service industry that is visible in every market place in Emuhaya District. For instance, the casket making workshops are numerous at Luanda market. Statistics of death of CoG-K members in Emuhaya District released by the church (CoG-K: 2006), and the vast fortune buried annually is a contradiction to terms for poverty-stricken members of the CoG-K. Managers of leading and upcoming funeral homes, on the other hand, celebrate, as CoG-K members in Emuhaya district indicate no desire to turn back from their ruinous way of forking out money. Yet the church hierarchy has no official policy towards the spending of its members toward funerals (*Ibid.*)

Observation carried out among the CoG-K members in Emuhaya District show that all the transactions for funeral services are paid in cash. No funeral home offers services on credit. This means the hefty budgets drawn in respect of funerals have to be raised in an average time of two weeks, between death and burial. Western Kenya stands out in lavish burials and elaborate feasts (Obunde: OI, 11/12/2008). Transporting bodies over long distances also contribute to the higher costs. The 'send-off depends on the status of a person'. The living people believe that the dead watch over them. As Anjere (OI, 11/11/2008) reports:

The funeral of a common person takes place on the day following his death, so that there is one full night for keeping vigil by the dead and permits even those of his relatives who live far to receive the death message and to come and see their dead kinsman before burial. Elders of higher social status are buried on the second or third day after death, and in the case of the clans-head the burial may even be delayed until the fourth day. Such a delay is founded on the belief that it will please the spirit of the deceased to remain in the company of the living as long as possible, so that he may "see" the mourners and watch the performance of the cattle-drive and the sham fight while he is not yet buried. Infants and small children, on the other hand, are usually buried a few hours after they have died, a custom which is in accordance with the prevailing notion that the spirits of children are "powerless" and that it is therefore not necessary to take much trouble over them.

An average funeral expense list covers the meeting venue, transfer of body (mostly from hospital mortuary to funeral home), daily storage charges, post-mortem examination, embalming, body make-up, advertisement and epitaph stone. Other expenses go to food before and on the burial day, attire for close kin and even video coverage. The list below shows, for example, the expenses of a businessman's burial at Mumbita Village in Emuhaya District.

(Permission was granted by the Ombima's family to use their budget for their deceased as an example in this study).

Table 1: Funeral Budget

ITEMS	COST	ITEMS	COST
Meeting venue	@1,500 per day 15,000	Transport of mourners from Nairobi to Luanda	50,000
Transfer of body to funeral home	3,000/=	Lowering gear	10,000
Daily storage charges	@ 1000 per day 10,000	Epitaph stone	5,000
Autopsy	10,000	Food	50,000
Embalming	15,000	Attire for close kin	20,000
Body maker	5,000	Public address system	5,000
Advertising four days	32,000	Video	8,000
Coffin	50,000	Still photographs	5,000
Hearse from Nairobi to Kisumu then to Luanda	40,000	Miscellaneous	5,000
Air transport from Wilson airport to Kisumu	19,000		
TOTAL			357,000

Source: Field Data

The above budget culminates in the grave shown below, thus indicating how much money was used during funeral and burial ceremony:

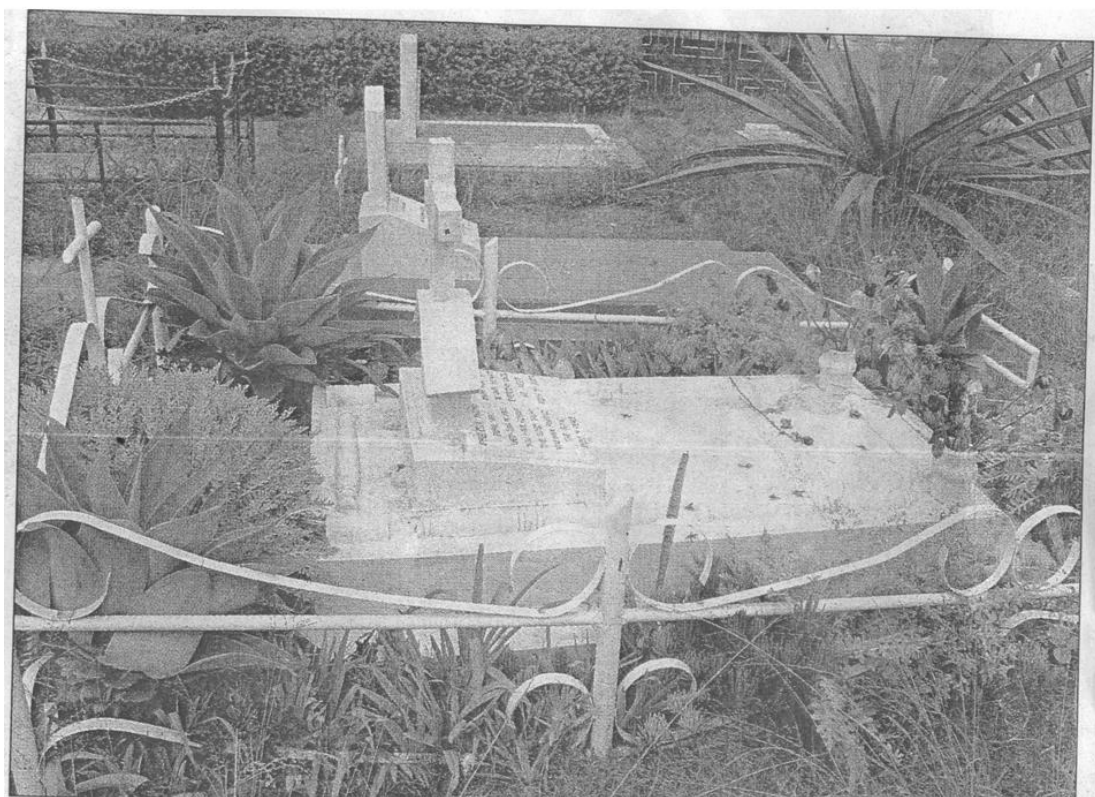


Figure1: Grave

Source: Field Data

The send-off depends on the status of a person. The higher the social status of the person, the more pompous the send-off. The living believes that the dead are still watching over them in a spiritual form. Death is transformation into another form, thus the dead continue to interact with the living and so the dead are always handled with respect lest they return to haunt the living. Ochola (OI, 11/11/2008) cites naming of children after the dead as proof of this belief. Naming children preserve the memory of the dead after them, a concept called nominal reincarnation (*Ibid.*). This means the character of the dead is expected to be manifested in the newborn. The send-off is a product of socialization. For example, People who acquire leadership roles in society are deemed more important, thus when they die, are accorded posh funerals compared to children or uncelebrated people. This explains the great feasts and huge funeral expenses when the aged and leaders die.

Among our people, visitors are accorded warm welcome and food. During funerals, host tries to create a lasting impression, lest they annoy the spirits. It is inherent in African culture where people tend to love each other, they show that is extended when one dies (Imbayi: OI, 08/08/2008).

That belief is strong among the CoG-K members. It is not the money thinking but cultural thinking. People are not looking at the cost involved but the proper handling of the dead (*Ibid.*). The more prominent and important the person, the more people are willing to contribute to accord him/her a decent send-off.

The CoG-K holds that the last very important celebration a person can receive is the last rites performed at the funeral service. The importance of this ceremony is driving evil spirits out and praying for God's blessing for the dead person. Songs of joy accompanied by dancing,

jumping and limping predominates the mourning atmosphere. During the burial worship celebration, the preacher uses this forum to ask members to contribute generously towards the bereaved family so as to meet other financial costs that they might have incurred.

The most important ceremony held for the person who had died where again a lot of money is used is the memorial meeting, forty days after burial. Just as Jesus ascended to heaven forty days after his resurrection; according to Acts (1:1-11), the dead person is thought to go to heaven on that day if he or she had been a faithful Christian. A meeting attended by many people, both members and non-members is held and there is much singing and joy to celebrate the dead person's final residence in heaven. People's actions are remembered and when they die, everything they had done is looked into. The judgment as such is not described much by the members of the CoG-K, since they believe that God can see one and all, and that He knows all the things that one does (Okoko: OI, 11/12/2008). Therefore, no one can hide anything from Jesus Christ who will be the judge.

In this context, God and Jesus appear to be looked upon as judges. What is seen as important is the belief in the judgment and as such, not the way in which it will be carried out. It may be significant that Jesus can be described as the judge because there is no talk of mercy in connection with the judgment. Once you have died, nothing can be done to save you; once you have entered the grave, there is no way to be saved. Your actions while alive are the only factor that decides whether you will be accepted in heaven or sent to the sea of fire.

The notion of life after death is not something new that was introduced into the people's ways of thinking by christian missionaries. Among the CoG-K adherents, the continuation of life beyond death was taken for granted. When people died, their spirits were thought to leave their bodies for the spirit land (Otiato: OI, 18/08/2008). As has already been seen, these spirits were believed to retain a certain relationship with the living. They could visit living relatives in their dreams, and had the power to influence their health and general well-being in a positive or negative direction (Wagner; 1949: 159). But, as Mbiti pointed out, this way of looking at life after death in the traditional African religions gave nothing for which to hope (Mbiti; 1969:165). There was no hope of resurrection or of growing towards God. Rather, the existence of the spirits was thought to be timeless. They were believed to gradually lose more and more of their human nature, until eventually their individual characters were completely forgotten and they became incorporated into the collective body of impersonal spirits (*Ibid.*).

What was new in the missionaries' teaching, therefore, was the emphasis on heaven as a better place than the present world. They did not preach simply the immortality of the soul, but rather its resurrection to the highest salvation in heaven. A new hope was introduced and the reinterpretation of an expectation of a life after death had a great impact on the people who came to form the CoG-K. As long as the traditional cultural pattern was untouched and the life of the clan was still looked upon as an integrated whole, the old way of looking at life after death was sufficient.

The continuation of the existence of the spirit in a spirit world was not thought to be radically different from these traditional beliefs (Muhia: OI, 28/12/2008). But when the patterns of life were broken down by the introduction of colonialism with its many and radical changes, this traditional concept of life after death became unsatisfactory. Many of the old institutions in which the spirits of the ancestors played an important role were broken down, and it was therefore difficult to uphold the belief in the spirit world in its old form.

At the same time, the missionaries came with biblical teachings about future dimension of time in which this old world would come to an end and a new, perfect world would come into existence (Anjere: OI, 23/12/2007). In the colonial situations, with all the insecurity it brought to the Africans, this message was received eagerly because it created a hope that someday the oppression, moral evils and instability they were experiencing in this world would stop and a new harmonious life would begin. They still wait for this goal to come. This explains why the CoG-K questions the relevance of the missionary teachings in the face of the continued occurrence of death, suffering and poverty among their Christian relatives.

The question that emanates from the foregoing discussion is whether culture promotes or retards the spiritual and economic development among the CoG-K adherents in Emuhaya District. This has partly been answered by the respondents' arguments by several respondents. Cultural observation by the people according to some CoG-K leaders, to some extent retard development. The major example that emerged was death and funeral practices. Some CoG-K programs were also reported to retard economic growth; this includes church programs like ordination, baptism and marriage. These were noted to exploit the already poor people due to the expenses that accompanied such celebrations

4.1.2 Religious Challenges

4.1.2.1 Baptism

The CoG-K holds sacrament of baptism with the Holy Spirit to be a very important aspect in the being of the believers. However, it has posed challenges to the church's efforts towards alleviating poverty in Emuhaya District. Since it is a requirement by the CoG-K, lots of finances are used to celebrate this event, both individually and in the church. It is believed that people who have been baptized have been freed from the power and dominion of Satan and evil spirits and thus are able to contribute to the society both religiously and economically (Obunde: OI, 27/08/2008).

This second birth, a spiritual one, is through baptism which is received in the name of the father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The following scripture is usually quoted during this exercise and also to serve as justification of it:

Unless a man", says Jesus, "is born through water and the spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. What is born of flesh is flesh, what is born of the spirit is spirit (John, 4:5).

In baptism, water is used to signify an interior cleansing of the dirt of sin. The water of baptism is not only a symbol of cleanliness but a sign of what really happened. Through baptism the members' experience God's presence and receive His power to overcome all evil. This is felt as a great and true revelation, one for which there was a real need because of their traditional conception of God as being at the same time far and near, good and bad (Suchia: OI, 28/02/2008). When they receive the outpouring of the Holy Spirit they also receive assurance of salvation.

The social conditions, under which the Holy Spirit people live, with extensive changes and growing insecurity, increase the importance of these phenomena. The tensions of everyday life are released and, through the fellowship of the group, they come together, enabling these people build a new identity. The interplay of these factors, the needs created by their traditional background and social situation, made the CoG-K people highly receptive to the message of baptism with the Holy Spirit for the holiness sake. According to Ambani (OI, 29/08/2008):

This doctrine of baptism has put a burden on the adherents in such a way that they must spend a lot of money to the church and also on the celebrations so as one can receive this rite. In reality some members have had to give cash or a chicken to the pastor so as to be accepted in the catechism class. This has contributed to the poverty levels of families who have the call to serve God.

However, the essence of the Christian message is that of proclaiming Christ to those who do not know him, of preaching, of catechizing, of conferring baptism and the other sacrament such as marriage. Spreading the message of God always must be the preoccupation of the CoG-K

(Muyela: OI, 01/03/2008). “The beginning of our ministry is in our baptism in the sense that we have been initiated into the royal priesthood of Christ” (*Ibid.*). Thus, this conviction has led many CoG-k members to regard this rite as the paradigm for pastoral care.

In the CoG-K, the faithful may take some Christian names like the name of the Apostles, or the Saints, but many have biblical names like Zebedayo, Joel, Joshua, Samson, Obadiah, Aaron, Solomon, etc. Historically, the emphasis on Christian names received impetus from the ecumenical council of Trent in Italy (1545 – 1563) which insisted on the orthodoxy of the veneration of saints against protestant denial (Lipakhala: OI, 16/02/2008). Evidently, the purpose of baptism in the CoG-K ministry is to foster individual spiritual or religious growth in the midst of the community. Thus it is a response to God’s prior claim.

4.1.2.2 Ordination

This constitutes one of the most important programs and foundations in the CoG-K beliefs and practices. Nevertheless, this ecclesiastical requirement which is held after every quarter of a year has posed economic challenges in the CoG-K and its efforts in alleviating poverty in Emuhaya District. The CoG-K adherents are required to support the religious function financially and by physically attending the celebrations. Thus, CoG-K requires both the adherents and the ordination candidates to bring forth to the church the following items:

Table 2: Requirements for Ordination

	Requirement	Respondents	Percentage
Ordination Candidate			
Ordination fees at KIST	21,000	42	14
Fee for the Robbs	4,000	32	10
Convocation fees	1,400	57	19
Food for those to attend	1,000	72	24
Adherents			
Support ordination candidates	500	284	9.4
Attend and give offering	100	31	13
Food for the occasion	200	14	4.5
Others	-	9	3.0
Total		300	100

Source: Filed Data

Table 2 indicates that the requirements for ordination have caused financial challenges both for the ordination candidates and the adherents of the CoG-K in Emuhaya District. However, this “churching” activity is the means through which the CoG-K draws revenue to manage itself at the national level (Obunde, OI, 22/12/2007).

According to the EDP (2010: 13):

The CoG-K in Emuhaya District has had some negative impact in its train. First, it has made our people lose vision in productive work. Many people have fragmented the churches into independent grouping with a view to using them as tools of income without active working. They have devised schemes for ordination by getting followers to give tithes and offerings for their upkeep and seeing no need to work.

Secondly, many active working hours are spent on meetings of one nature or the other throughout the week. People do not work but spend lots of time ‘churching.’ The Bible says there is time for everything. A time to work and a time to worship

Lastly, our churches have encouraged greed on the part of the minister thereof.. They appear to make visitation from house to house in the guise of evangelizing and drain away the little resources of their hosts who go out of their way to please the men of God in expensive cookery and send-away

envelopes. In so doing, both the visitor and the host do not work but spend time in these rounds. We must stop this practice and abide with God commandment regarding work.

However, ordination is a religious process by which a pastor receives anointing so as to conduct church business. It is the setting apart of a person for work of the ministry (Siaunya: OI, 19/11/2008). Ordination involves laying on of the hand by the bishop of the CoG-K and the chosen elders in the church. 'Laying on of the hands' symbolize receiving of the Holy spirit in the persons heart and thus continuation of living a holy life (Ong'oyi: OI, 08/11/2008). Ordination conveys authority which is granted to the pastor by the CoG-K to preach and teach the word of God, to administer sacraments, to conduct worship, to evangelise, to engage in pastoral care with those person entrusted to his or her, and participate in government of the general assembly of the CoG-K. It is justified by the readings from the scripture during worship:

Do not neglect the spiritual gifts within you, which was bestowed upon through prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by presbyters (I Tim. 4:14).

Receiving of the anointing by the Holy Spirit is a clear indication that the pastor will from hence forth continue to serve the Lord God at all time. Before one goes through the process of Ordination, he/she must undergo teachings in catechesis at Kima International School of Theology (KIST), where he /she it taught the CoG-K doctrines (Emisiko: OI, 19/08/2008).

At the inception of ordination in CoG-K in Kenya in early 1900s, it did not have this process, but one was chosen to serve God if you showed commitment. This process was initiated in 1996 when the then leadership saw the need to serve in the church full time, thus conferring of titles like reverends and bishop. The clergy who were in placed in position of leadership were George Abura, Fanuel Siberenje, Nelson Obwoye and Ainea Mukabana in the absence of Byrum Makokha who had proceed to the USA to compile the history of the CoG-K (Muyela: OI, 19/11/2008). The original purpose of ordination was to prepare CoG-K pastors for special ministry of preaching and prophesy, but there was later use of producing marriage officers and a way of collecting revenue for the church in general. The procedure and requisite for ordination constitute a critical problem for the certification of persons as ordained ministers of the CoG-K (Muyea: OI, 2/02/2008). This exercise has become very expensive for the persons aspiring to serve God (Malanda, OI, 01/11/2008). For one to become an ordained clergy, a payment of 12,000 shillings towards the general assembly is required besides the fees to pay at the ordination school. The principal of the catechism school, Anjere (OI, 11/11/2008), reported that learning is done on how to conduct weddings, funerals, child and house dedications, evangelism and exorcism. According to Ochango (OI, 11/11/2008):

This church program has been misused by the church hierarchy and that this activity has become a money minting process to the advantage of the poor leadership populace in the church hierarchy. It has in fact increased corruption and simony in church because now anyone can become an ordained clergy as long as one pays the dues to the hierarchy. Sources revealed that there is an influx of laymen into ordination process without a 'calling' to serve God. They are able to pay 'something' to enter ministry. Thus church ministry has become a place where retirees come to 'pass time' at the expense of the people called to serve God.

The foregoing observation revealed a process that is both flawed and expensive for the adherents of the church. The CoG-K program have become a financial burden to some members (Ombwanga: OI, 18/08/2008). Consequently, it has increased the economic

hardship for the general populace and specifically those who have a calling to serve God in the CoG-K. From this observation, Ochola concludes that “the CoG-K celebrations are often accompanied by wasteful consumption of scarce societal resources, which prevent the CoG-K adherents from enjoying the fruits of the considerable investments that have been made over the years in CoG-K projects” (OI, 12/08/2009). However, according to Khayundi (OI, 18/08/2008) these activities in the CoG-K have been looked down upon by the elite class in the church and described as led by human wisdom and hunger for prestige and titles that are useless. Let the church be the church and serve the children of God without putting a lot of economic hurdles in their lives (*Ibid.*).

The study found out that the chief problem in the CoG-K seems to lay in the concept of ministry and ordination, which appears far removed from the freer and more flexible approach that is found in the New Testament. Evidently, ministry therein is service, not hierarchy, status or authority, and should be characterised by the attitude Christ commands in Mark 10:42 - 43:

And calling them to Himself, Jesus said to them, “you know that those who are recognized as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them; and their great men exercise authority over them. But it is not so among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant. And whoever wishes to be first among you shall be a slave of all. For the son of man did not come to be served but to serve, and give his life a ransom for many.

In consequence, the validity of ordination in the CoG-K must be judged by its function and spiritual worth.

5.0 DISCUSSION CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Discussion

The study has found out that the CoG-K’s adherents participated in various religious, social and economic activities that posed a challenge to its programs aimed at alleviating poverty in Emuhaya District. There is a tendency to use huge amounts of resources for celebrations and ceremonial functions, weddings, ordination to priesthood, and funerals. On funerals, for example, the practice of slaughtering the livestock for celebrations has fuelled poverty within families and local communities. From this observation, the study shows that the CoG-K celebrations are often accompanied by a wasteful consumption of scarce resources, which prevents adherents from the fruits of considerable investments that have been made over years

These activities were mainly influenced by the adherent’s worldview in Emuhaya District. Consequently, poverty in Emuhaya District may persist, with people’s participation in the social cultural and spiritual activities that impede the development. The study concludes that material concerns of the church were as relevant as the spiritual needs of the people in Emuhaya District. Thus, the church is expected to help her members by liberating and reconstructing their lives by alleviating poverty amongst them.

5.2 Conclusions

The study concludes that as much as the CoG-K has made concerted attempts towards development in Emuhaya District by influencing the peoples thinking on legitimacy of wealth and education, and on the moral value of saving and investing. However some of its programs and ceremonial functions like ordination, baptism, marriage and weddings tend to

retard these efforts of alleviating poverty. Although such programs and celebrations serve the poor at the grassroots level, they delay change in behavioural and institutional transformation capable of sustaining economic growth.

5.3 Recommendations

There is a need to change cultural practises that tend to retard development among the adherents of the CoG-K in Emuhaya District. The study posits that cultural practices surrounding marriage and death that are repugnant and detrimental to change should be discarded if development is to take place.

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