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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### THE EMERGING ALTERNATIVE TO POLYGAMY IN RONGO TOWN, KENYA

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#### ABSTRACT

Extra-marital affairs are a common phenomenon in marriages in Rongo town, Kenya. Extra-marital affairs are an emerging alternative to polygamy. Formal polygamous marriages are diminishing and are being replaced by extra-marital affairs. Men and women prefer to keep other sexual partners besides their legitimate spouses for convenience. In Rongo town, Kenya, these sexual partners are referred to as side dish or 'mpango wa kando' in common parlance. The study found out that the prevalent nature of extra marital affairs in Rongo town is emotional sexual affairs and transactional affairs. Generally, communication breakdown has been discussed as one of the major causes of extra-marital affairs. However, this study established that the cause of extra-marital affairs in Rongo town is the shift of communication due to family roles. The study also found out that men engaged in extra-marital affairs for sexual pleasure and for adventure while women engaged in extra-marital affairs to seek love and money. The study found out that men and women experienced positive and negative consequences as a result of extra-marital affairs. In regard to attitude towards extra-marital affairs, the study established that men felt that extra marital affairs were necessary while women felt they were necessary but evil. This study adopted a mixed approach in the generation and analysis of data. The study employed case study as the research design. It applied questionnaires and interviews as data generation techniques. Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that programmatic guidance and counseling that enables couples to secure and sustain their marriages should be put in place by expert organizations. The continuous guidance and counseling should focus on the changing roles in marriage and communication in marriage

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## INTRODUCTION

The term polygamy is derived from the Late Greek word *polugamos*, which literally means 'often marrying'. In popular speech, the term 'polygamy' refers to the simultaneous union of a husband to multiple spouses or a practice or custom of having more than one wife at the same time (Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary, 2011: 1123). This meaning is technically incorrect. In its correct and wide sense, polygamy refers to a marriage, which includes more than one partner (Koktevdgaard, 2008: 2). Generally, it exists in two forms: polygyny and polyandry. Polygyny is when a man is married to more than one wife, whereas polyandry refers to an arrangement where a woman is married to more than one husbands. Several commentators in the area use the term polygamy in this technical sense, referring to an arrangement wherein a man is married to one or more women at a time.

Perhaps one of the practical reasons why polygamy came to refer to polygyny is the fact that polygyny is prevalent whereas polyandry only exists notionally (Chapman, 2001: 11). According to Cook (2007) polyandry is an 'ethnological curiosity.' In his research, Murdock (1949) found it to exist in only 2 societies: the Marquesans of Polynesia and the Todas of India. The rationale advanced for the practice of polyandry is that it is resorted to when the population of man outnumbered that of women in a given society. The argument that has been used to counter this assertion is that today in China, there is a shortage of women on ground of one-child policy and female infanticide, but polyandry is not practiced (Cook, 2007: 236). A more comprehensive definition of polygamy is articulated by the Law Reform Commission of Canada. In its 1985 report on bigamy, it authoritatively defined polygamy as follows:

*... Polygamy consists in the maintaining of conjugal relations by more than two persons. When the result of such relations is to form a single matrimonial or family entity with the spouses,*

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*this is regarded as polygamous marriage (Law Reform Commission of Canada, 1985: 13).*

In the Kenyan context, according to the Marriage Act 2014, polygamy means the state or practice of a man having more than one wife simultaneously. Polygamy in sub-Saharan Africa is not only a type of marriage but also a value system (Hayase 1997). As a value system, it has been highly resistant to the competition of the imported ideology of monogamy and to the impacts of various structural changes. As a reflection of the persistency of this value system, the decline in polygamous unions in the urban areas of sub-Saharan Africa has been accompanied by the growth of various forms of multiple and/or serial informal marriages which involve rather irregular "girl friends" and somewhat regular "outside wives" (Karanja 1994; Mann 1994). In Kenya these irregular girlfriends and outside wives commonly form a mutual union referred to as "mpango wa kando" in Kiswahili language – the national language in Kenya. Polygamy has metamorphosed into extra marital affairs also popularly known as side dish or mpango wa kando. According to the marriage Act 2014 In the Kenyan Constitution polygamy is legal however majority of the Kenyan men opt for "mpango wa kando" and not polygamous unions. It is not only married men who opt to engage in extra – marital affairs but also married women in Kenya. Thus this study investigates married men and women in Rongo town, Kenya who engage in these informal polygamous unions.

### Background of the Study

Extra- marital relationship is a violation of the commitment to sexual loyalty by one or both members of a committed romantic relationship (Penn and Stacy 1997). Extramarital relationships have been reported as a major reason for divorce and marital problems (Shackelford, Besser, & Goetz, 2008). People have likely been engaging in these kinds of relationships for as long as they have been getting married (Crawford & Popp, 2003; Marks & Fraley, 2006). Percentages of those who engage in extramarital sex vary from survey to survey. Kinsey et al. (1948, 1953) reported that about half of all married men and 26% of women have intercourse with persons other than their partners at some time during their marriage.

Other studies (Athanasίου, Shaver, & Tavrīs, 1970; Bell, Turner, & Rosen, 1975; Blumstein & Schwartz, 1983; Hite, 1981; Hunt, 1974; Johnson, 1970; Levin, 1975; Maykovich, 1976; Nass, Libby, & Fisher, 1981; Pietropinto & Simenauer, 1978; Athanasίου, Shaver, & Tavrīs, 1970; Wolfe, 1980) have found similar or higher incidences. More recent surveys (Gass & Nichols, 1988) indicate that up to 66% of men and 55% of women engage in extramarital affairs at some point in their marriage. Although gender differences in infidelity have been found in almost all past research, male and female rates of infidelity are becoming increasingly similar, particularly in younger cohorts in developed countries (Atkins et al., 2001; Choi et al., 1994; Laumann et al. 1994; Feldman & Cauffman, 1999; Oliver & Hyde, 1993; Wiederman, 1997) Wiederman (1997) found no gender differences in extramarital sex among men and women under age 40.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Types of affairs

Extra marital affairs (EMA) hereafter appears in several different forms: first, those that are sexual but involve no emotion-"one-night stands" or encounters with a prostitute (Hurlbert, 1992); second, those that are both sexual and emotional, indicating a more intense emotional involvement (Thompson, 1984); and third, those that are emotional but not sexual (Sarrel, 1984). Pittman (1989) believes that all these affairs violate a couple's tacit agreements on issues of intimacy. Kenkel (1985) highlighted and defined the following as the different kinds of affairs; one night affair which mostly happen unintentionally and there may not be a sexual affair at all, emotional outbreak affair that generally happens when the marriage is experiencing problems and during those times, one partner turns towards a friend or companion of the opposite sex, emotional sexual affair in which unfaithful spouse does not only give the body but also the heart and there are slim chances of reunion, sexual addict affair is an affair in which the sexual addicts use sex over and over again to cause inner pain and emptiness

Lawson (1988) provides another typology: parallel, traditional, or recreational affairs. Parallel affairs are known by the spouse but tacitly condoned. Traditional affairs are not known to the spouse and would be a violation of the marital agreement. Recreational affairs are generally found in "open marriages." These usually entail inviting additional persons to the marital bed, are most often consensual, and are not usually in violation of any tacit agreements. Technological advances in the twentieth century have facilitated other forms of infidelity such as phone and cyber sex (Penn and Stacy 1997).

### Reasons for engaging in extra marital affairs-'mpango wa kando'

Dissatisfaction with the marital relationship is one possible motivation for having an extra marital affair. It is difficult, however, to determine the exact relationship between marital dissatisfaction and EMAs. Given that much research into infidelity is retrospective. One study's result showed that individuals who had engaged in an EMA felt the affair was caused by marital problems, while their spouses believed that their marital problems were caused by the EMA (Spanier & Margolis, 1983). Another problem in correlating marital satisfaction with EMAs is that relationship satisfaction is defined differently across research Jacobsen, (2001).

Lack of marital satisfaction is one possible motive for an EMR. Another explanation for relationship infidelity is based in evolutionary psychology (Buss and Schmitt, 1993). According to this theory, it is evolutionarily adaptive for men to be sexually involved with multiple partners. Thus, men should be more interested in and more tempted by short-term sexual relationships than are women. Women, on the other hand, should earn some reproductive advantage by selecting emotionally available partners who may be willing to commit resources to the relationship, and thus should be more attracted

by EMAs that have a high emotional component. They may thus be more tempted by love than by sex.

Glass and Wright (1992) surveyed 148 men and 155 women about EMA activity and motivation and created a motivational model with four dimensions: Sexual, Emotional, Extrinsic (i.e. revenge, career advancement), and Love. Men did endorse the sexual motive more than women, and women were more likely to endorse the love motive than were men. The emotional intimacy motive and extrinsic motive were endorsed equally by both genders.

Barta and Kiene (2005) dispute this model and argue that a motivational theory based on evolutionary ideas about sex versus emotional intimacy is not comprehensive enough. They surveyed college students regarding motivations for infidelity; their factor analysis produced a different solution, based on emotional justifications. This model also has four dimensions: Dissatisfaction, Neglect, Sex, and Anger. Barta and Kiene argue that this model explains their data better than does a 2-factor (emotional versus sexual) model. They found that when they controlled for attitudes related to sexual activity gender differences in sexual motivation were no longer significant. However, Barta and Kiene's (2005) research used unmarried, college undergraduates as participants. Since it is probable that differences between marital and dating relationships exist, Glass and Wright's (1992) model may still be the most comprehensive theory with demonstrated results in a married sample. This study also explores the influence of communication on extra marital affairs. It also focuses on the married men and women who have engaged or are currently involved in EMAs.

### Consequences of Extra-marital affairs

Effects of extramarital affairs cannot be overemphasized in that it affects every member of the family either the one cheated or the one who cheats and also the children. The financial and the economic status of the family is affected. This is because the little income for the family would have to be shared to feed the family and the one (s) outside. Man's extravagant spending for his outside lovers may prevent him from taking care of his family. A spouse involving in extra marital affairs will not have much time for his/her partner and this may lead to loneliness on the parts of the cheated one (Sexton 1993). Studies by Alexis et al (2010), on motivations and emotional consequences of extra marital relationship indicate that people experience both positive and negative emotions in relation to their infidelities.

However, a considerable minority, mainly men, stated that they had experienced no negative emotional consequences at all. In the reporting of emotional outcomes, there are definite gender differences. Men and women report feelings of happiness, love, guilt and anxiety. However, feelings of increased desirability and also disappointment in the outcome of the affair are reported more frequently by women, while feelings of sexual satisfaction were reported more frequently by men. These results seem to indicate that women may place more emotional weight on extra marital relationships than do men, being more affected in terms of self-esteem and having greater expectations for the outcome of an affair.

This study investigates the effects of extra- marital affairs on the men and women involved.

### Attitudes towards extramarital affairs

A large body of research with American samples indicated that men have a stronger desire to engage in sexual infidelity (Prins et al., 1993), are more likely to engage in sexual infidelity (Allen & Baucom, 2004; Atkins, Baucom, & Jacobson, 2001), have more extra-dyadic sexual partners (Blumstein & Schwartz, 1983; Wiggins & Lederer, 1984), have more episodes of infidelity, including short or long term affairs and one-night stands (Brand, Markey, Mills, & Hodges, 2007), have more physical contact with an extra-dyadic partner (including intercourse) (Wiederman & Hurd, 1999), cite more sexual motivations for infidelity (e.g., Barta & Kiene, 2005), and are less likely to fall in love with an extra-dyadic partner (Glass & Wright, 1985). Husbands are also more suspicious of a wife's potential sexual infidelity, as well as more likely to discover a wife's affair (Brand et al., 2007).

Women, on the other hand, tend to have a greater emotional connection with the extra-dyadic partner (Spanier & Margolis, 1983), report more intimacy and self-esteem motivations for infidelity, are more likely to feel this behavior is unlike them, and are more concerned about the negative judgments of others when they are unfaithful (Brand et al., 2007). Moreover, among women, the strength and frequency of affairs are related to the degree of dissatisfaction with the primary relationship, whereas among men the desire to engage in infidelity is less dependent on the state of the primary partnership (Prins et al., 1993). Although women are more distressed about their own infidelity (Van den Eijnden, Buunk, & Bosveld, 2000), Allen and Baucom (2006) report that American women are less concerned about hurting their spouse. Perhaps the lower level of marital satisfaction experienced by women leads them to feel more justified about their infidelity.

### Research questions

The research is guided by the following questions:

- What are the prelevant kind of extra-marital affairs in Rongo, town, Kenya?
- Why do the married males and females in Rongo town, Kenya, engage in extra-marital affairs?
- What are consequences of extra-marital affairs on the involved males and females in Rongo town ,Kenya?
- What is the attitudes of the males and females towards extramarital affairs?

### MATEIALS AND METHODS

This study employed the case study method. According to Creswell (2007) case study is a piece of research which involves the study of an issue explored through one or more cases within a bounded system. Ong'ondo (2010) concurs that a case study is a process of inquiry. Jwan & Ong'ondo (2011) concur that a case study is "a process of inquiry". The case study method allows for an in-depth understanding of different perspectives of an issue using multiple techniques of data

generation and involving participants within their real life contexts within the boundary of the case. Accordingly, the case study method gave us the chance to analyze the experiences of the participants in depth using multiple techniques (triangulation) to generate data. This study was a case of extra-marital affair; an emerging form of polygamy in Rongo town, Kenya. Accordingly, this gave us the chance to analyze the emerging form of polygamy in Rongo town, Kenya in-depth, using multiple techniques to generate experiences from married respondents who are engaging in extra-marital affairs. Cases for study are all selected because they hold large sums of information and are illuminative (Gillham, 2005).

### Study Population and Sampling

A research population entails the entire group of persons or objects that are of interest to the researcher. According to Somekh and Lewin (2005), a study population refers to all the people or phenomena under study, from whom a sample will be selected for research. In this study the sample population was arrived at through non - probability sampling. Non - probability sampling suited this study because as Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) assert, the focus was on in-depth information on a particular issue and not on making inferences or generalizations.

Hence, the study targeted participants who were known to have the information that served the purpose of this study (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). The major aim of sampling in research is to identify the participants who are likely to give rich and in depth information on the issue being studied so that we learn the most about it (Dörnyei, 2007). Creswell (2007) adds what we consider important aspects of sampling in case study. In this study, we selected 30 married men and 30 married women who are involved in extra-marital affairs. The total number of participants for the study sample is 60.

### Data Generation

The techniques of data generation which were used for the study are interviews and questionnaires. Research on views, perceptions, feelings and attitudes is best done using questionnaires and interview schedules (Bell 1995). The data was collected using questionnaires which are self made. The questionnaires were administered to 20 men and 20 women. Questionnaires are used to collect information from a substantial number of people (Kothari, 1990). They can be used to gather data over a wide area (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). In the view of Nkpa (1997), a questionnaire elicits responses to certain facts, opinions, beliefs, attitudes and practices.

On the other hand interviews as a technique of generating data involve direct verbal interaction between individuals. It is intended to get to what a participant in the research thinks the attitudes of that person and/or to explore a person's reasons for thinking in a certain way or for carrying particular perceptions or attitudes (Cohen et al, 2007). Interviews are one of the most important sources of data in research (Mugenda and Mugenda, 1999) and are advantageous in that they provided in-depth data which was not possible to get using questionnaires.

Interviews made it possible to obtain data necessary to meet specific objectives of the study and also guard against confusing the questions since the interviewer can clarify the questions thereby helping the respondent give relevant responses. The interviews enabled us develop a rapport with the participants and facilitated free exchange of information. According to Gillham (2005) the relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee is responsive or interactive, allowing for a degree of adjustment, clarification and exploration. Interviews suited this study in terms of the factors noted by Gillham (2005) who says that interviews are suitable when: Small numbers are involved, they are accessible, they are key and you can't afford to lose any, your questions...are mainly open and require an extended response with prompts and probes...to clarify answers, if the material is sensitive in character so that trust is involved: people will disclose things in a face-to-face interview that they will not disclose in an anonymous questionnaire.

The interviews for this study, were conducted at the participants' places of work, at social gatherings for instance in restaurants, cafes, pubs and in semi-formal meetings such as group meetings popularly known as 'chama' meetings. They were conducted in the language the participants were comfortable using, that is, English or Kiswahili. English is the official language in Kenya and Kiswahili the national language. Since these are the two languages the participants used, we allowed for flexibility so that the information was delivered appropriately. Interviews were more flexible because we were able to adapt to the situation and get as much information as possible.

Very sensitive and personal information can be extracted from the respondent by honest and personal interaction between the respondent and the interviewer. The interviewer can clarify and elaborate the purpose of the research because respondents give more complete and honest information. Interviewers are however, able to get such information through interaction and genuine conversation. Interviews yield high response rates mainly because it is difficult for a subject to completely refuse to answer questions or ignore the interviewer (Gillham, 2005). 10 men and 10 women were interviewed for the study

## RESULTS

### The nature of extra marital relationships in Rongo Town, Kenya

**Table 1. The nature of extra marital relationships**

| Nature of extra marital relationships | Frequency | Mean Percentage |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|
| Emotional sexual affair               | 32        | 53.3            |
| One night stand                       | 3         | 5               |
| Sexual addict affair                  | 1         | 1.7             |
| Recreational affair                   | 1         | 1.7             |
| Parallel affair                       | 1         | 1.7             |
| Other – transactional affair          | 22        | 33.3            |
| Total                                 | 60        | 100             |

The study found out that 53.3 percent of the extramarital relationships are sexual emotional affairs, 33.3 percent are transactional affairs, 5 percent are one night stand, 1.7 percent are sexual addict affair, 1.7 recreational affair, 1.7 parallel affair

## Reasons for engaging in extra marital affairs in Rongo Town

**Table 2. Reasons why females engage in extra-marital affairs**

| Reasons why females engage in extra-marital affairs | Frequency | Mean Percentage |
|---|-----------|-----------------|
| Seeking love  | 12        | 40              |
| Seeking approval                                    | 5         | 16.7            |
| Seeking money                                       | 8         | 26.7            |
| Revenge   | 4         | 13.3            |
| Sexual pleasure                                     | 1         | 3.3             |
| For variety   | 0         | 00              |
| TOTAL   | 30        | 100             |

The study found out that 40 percent of females engaged in extra-marital affairs to seek love, 26.7 percent to seek money, 16.7 percent to seek approval, and 13.3 percent to seek revenge while 3.3 percent got into extra-marital affairs for sexual pleasure.

## Reasons why males in Rongo Town, Kenya engage in extra- marital affairs

**Table 3. Reasons why males engage in extra- marital affairs**

| Reasons why males engage in extra- marital affairs | Frequency | Mean Percentage |
|--|-----------|-----------------|
| Sexual pleasure                                    | 15        | 50              |
| For variety  | 10        | 33              |
| Seeking approval                                   | 2         | 6.7             |
| Seeking love                                       | 1         | 3.3             |
| Revenge  | 1         | 3.3             |
| Seeking money                                      | 1         | 3.3             |
| TOTAL  | 30        | 100             |

The study found out that 50 percent of males engaged in extra-marital affairs for sexual pleasure, 33 percent for variety, 6.7 percent to seek approval, 3.3 percent to seek love, 3.3 percent for revenge and 3.3 percent to seek money.

## Shift in communication as a reason for engaging in extra-marital affairs in Rongo Town

The study sought to find out whether partners communicate the same way they used to when they were courting. This question was therefore asked;

### Do you communicate the same way you used to when you were courting?

**Table 4. Whether partners communicate the same way they used to during courtship**

| Whether partners communicate the same way they used to during courtship | Frequency | Mean Percentage |
|---|-----------|-----------------|
| Yes   | 50        | 83.3            |
| No  | 10        | 16.7            |
| Total   | 60        | 100             |

The study found out that 83.3 percent of partners do not communicate the same way they used to when they were courting while 16.7 percent stated that they still communicate the same way.

## Whether the shift in communication has influenced the respondents to engage in EMA

**Table 5. Whether it has influenced the respondents to engage in extra- marital affairs**

| Whether it drove the respondents to EMA | Frequency | Mean Percentage |
|---|-----------|-----------------|
| Yes                                     | 45        | 75              |
| No                                      | 15        | 15              |
| TOTAL                                   | 60        | 100             |

75 percent of those involved in extra-marital affairs indicated that the shift in communication motivated them to engage in extra-marital affairs. They were striving to get what they lost in their marriages in extra-marital affairs. So for them extra-marital affairs are a refuge for their tribulations. They indicated that the manner in which their partners communicated with them changed; they were no longer referred to as darlings, honey, love..., even the tone of voice in communication had changed totally.

The chit chats diminishes, the conversations are reduced to which responsibilities should be fulfilled, which bills need to be paid. The non verbal communications also change; the buying of gifts, the lunch outs, the dinners are no more. The role of communication in marriage is also for tracking whether a partner is engaging in extra-marital affairs.

*'On phone, our conversations centre on where I am and who I am with. Face to face, when we are not talking about the family needs that should be fulfilled, the conversations takes the form of an interrogation on what relationships I have with a certain member of the opposite sex' Verbatim hereafter (V) V1, V2, V4, V8*

This shift in communication drives couples to seek for alternatives in extra-marital affairs.

## Effects of the extra-marital affair on the men in Rongo Town

Most men reported feeling of sexual satisfaction after engaging in extra-marital affairs, they reported that they felt appreciated more hence had boosted egos, they however, reported negative financial implications as a result of extra- marital affairs. They also reported feelings of guilt when their families suffer as a result of the affairs.

## Effects of extra-marital affair on the women in Rongo Town

The women reported both positive and negative outcomes; they reported momentary feelings of being loved, sexual satisfaction but they also reported that most of their expectations were not met.

*'In the beginning, it is exciting, the sex is good you feel loved, but after a while the man stops giving so much attention, the gifts, the time together diminishes that is when it dawns on you that the ideal man is a mirage'' V1, V5, V10, V12*

### Attitudes towards extramarital affairs in Rongo Town

Most men felt that extra-marital affairs are necessary as they are an avenue to flee from their marital problems.

*'Marriage is full of conflicts; the nagging from women, the constant complaints and fights, you need an extra-marital affair to keep your sanity' V3, V5, V6, V7, V9, V10, V11, V13*

Women on the other hand felt that extra-marital affairs were bad; they indicated that their husbands drove them to it.

*" Never had I thought that I would engage in extra-marital affair, I only did after realizing that my husband had series of extra-marital affairs; I wanted to get back at him"* V2, V12, V20, V23, V25

### Why extra-marital affairs are an alternative to polygamy in Rongo Town

#### (Reasons why the respondents do not get married to the 'mpango wa kando'-side dish)

The study sought to establish why men engaged in extra – marital affairs yet in Kenya polygamy is legal and men can marry as many women as they wish. Where as polyandry is illegal in Kenya women have the option to divorce and remarry instead of keeping more than one sexual partner so the study sought to establish why women and men preferred extra-marital affairs to polygamy.

Men indicated that it was relatively cheaper to keep an extra-marital affair than to enter into a marriage. For an extra-marital affair, the ties are not binding therefore the resources (time, finances, emotions) committed to it are minimal. The cultural practice of paying dowry and bride price is also an impediment to polygamy.

*" The dowry and bride price have become very expensive venture especially in light Of the tough economic times , so extra-marital affairs are a better alternative , In addition , you are under no obligation to pay her rent, to do her shopping , to pay for her upkeep , you only do these at will , unlike in marriage. Furthermore even the time and emotions invested in extra marital affairs are less than that invested in marriage "* V20, V14, V15, V17

Men also indicated that they chose not to marry because of the negative psychological implications polygamy would have on their families especially their children.

Women on the other hand indicated that they cannot abandon their marriages and remarry due to the stigma they would face.

*'A woman who is separated or divorced faces so much stigma; she is tagged a bad woman who cannot keep a home. In addition, I would rather remain in the unsatisfactory marriage to avoid hurting my children' V1, V6, V11*

The women also indicated that they were unlikely to have a different experience in marriage; the cycle would be the same. The cycle begins with bliss during courtship and early times in marriage then neglect in marriage which eventually drives them to seek for solace in extra-marital affairs.

## DISCUSSION

### The nature of extra-marital affairs exhibited in Rongo town

The study found out that 53.3 percent of the extra –marital affairs are sexual emotional affairs, 33 percent are transactional affairs, 5 percent are one night stands, 1.7 percent are sexual addict, 1.7 percent are recreational, and 1.7 percent are parallel affairs (table 4.1) Most people in Rongo town engaged in sexual emotional affairs relationships where they did not only give their body but also their hearts. In these kinds of affairs the parties are involved physically and emotionally. According to Kenkel (1985), couples engaged in sexual emotional affairs are unlikely to reconcile with their legitimate partners, however according to this study, couples still remained together despite the emotional sexual extra marital affairs.

Different scholars have established different types of extra-marital affairs. Lawson (1988) categorized extra-marital affairs as parallel and recreational affairs while Kenkel (1985) stated that the different forms of extra marital affairs are one night stand, emotional outbreak affair and emotional sexual affairs .In addition to the typologies of extra-marital affairs outlined by Kenkel (1985) and Lawson (1988) this study found out another kind of extramarital affair referred to as transactional affair. In this kind of affair one of the parties involved in the extra-marital affairs; especially the women, are driven into the relationships for monetary gains. Transactional affairs are the second most common kind of extra-marital affair exhibited in Rongo town, Kenya.

### Reasons for engaging in extra-marital affair in Rongo Town

The study found out that 40 percent of women engaged in extra-marital affairs to seek love, 26.7 percent for money, and 16.7 percent to seek approval, 13.3 percent for revenge and 3.3percent for sexual pleasure (Table 4.2).The findings concur with the evolutionary psychology theory of Buss and Schmidt (1996) which postulates that women are tempted to engage in extra-marital affairs in pursuit of love other than sex. The theory also suggest that women earn some reproductive advantage by selecting emotionally available partners who may be willing to commit resources to the relationships thus should be attracted by extra-marital relationships that have a high emotional component. In my view the feminized nature of poverty could also be a reason why women engage in extra-marital affairs, however further studies should be done to investigate why even economically empowered women engage in extra-marital affairs for economic gains. The study found out that 50 percent of men engaged in extra-marital affairs for sexual pleasure, 33 percent for variety, 6.7 percent to seek approval , 3.3 percent to seek love , 3.3 percent for revenge while 3.3 percent to seek money (Table 4.2.1). The findings are concurrent with that of Buss and Schmitt (1996), that men are more tempted by short term sexual relationships than are women. According to Glass and Wright (1992) men endorse sexual motive for extra-marital affairs more than women .The fact that 50 percent of men engage in extra-marital affairs for sexual pleasure is proof of men's acute visual nature where the

real is not ideal. The 3.3 percent of men, who engage in extra-marital affair for monetary gains, is an indication of an emerging trend of men who depend on women for economic and social gains.

### **The shift in communication as a reason for engaging in extra-marital affairs in Rongo Town**

The study found out that the shift in communication due to family roles is a major motivation for engaging in extra-marital affairs. The study found out that the subject of communication during courtship is totally different from that in marriage. In marriage the subject of communication is majorly centred on the responsibilities within the family and the children. This is contrary to courtship where the focus of communications is the needs, feelings and wants of the couples themselves. The content of communication is also limited to the responsibilities that a partner should fulfill. Communication also functions as a tool for monitoring a partner's faithfulness to the marriage. The communication focuses on finding out whether a partner is faithful or not. In marriage when the subject of communication is not focused on duties and responsibilities that should be fulfilled, it focuses on whether one's partner is faithful or not; to ascertain the kind of relationship that exist between one's partner and another member of the opposite sex. The manner of communication also changes in relationships from courtship to marriage. Paralanguage, which refers to vocal characteristics and vocal sounds such as the pitch, tempo, range, tone and resonance, changes in marriage. Other symbolic forms of communication such as going out, the exchange of gifts also becomes minimal or non-existent all together. As much as the mentioned symbolic forms of communication were not originally African they have become an integral part of the lives of couples living in urban centres such as Rongo town. This shift in communication leaves partners out of synchrony with each other. What they have lost in marriage they resolve to seek in extra-marital affairs.

### **The effects of extra-marital affairs on the men and women in Rongo Town**

Most men in Rongo town reported feelings of sexual satisfaction as a result of engaging in extra-marital affairs, they reported that they felt appreciated more hence had boosted egos; they however, reported negative financial implications as a result of extra-marital affairs. They also reported feelings of guilt when their families suffer as a result of the affairs. These findings are not concurrent with the studies of Alexis (2010) which indicate that men do not experience negative emotional consequences due to engagement in extra-marital affairs. In line with the studies of Alexis (2010), women in Rongo town reported both positive and negative outcomes as a result of extra-marital affairs. The women reported momentary feelings of being loved, sexual satisfaction but they also reported that most of their emotional and financial expectations were not met.

### **Attitudes towards extramarital affairs in Rongo Town**

Most men felt that extra-marital affairs are a necessary component of marital life. This view is perhaps formed by the

fact that in Kenya culturally polygamy is accepted, in addition, constitutionally polygamy is legal. Therefore men see nothing wrong in having more than one partner albeit under informal unions. Women on the other hand condemned extra-marital affairs; they indicated that they believed an extra-marital affair was bad, they indicated that their husbands drove them into it. The women indicated that if their husbands would remain faithful and attentive to their needs then they would not indulge in extra-marital affairs. This is in line with the study by (Spanier and Margolis, 1983), that women report more intimacy and self-esteem motivations for infidelity and are more likely to feel this behavior is unlike them

### **Why extra-marital affairs are an alternative to polygamy in Rongo Town. (Why people in Rongo Town resolve to keep extra-marital affairs instead of remarrying)**

The study sought to find out why people opt to keep extra-marital affair instead of remarrying, in spite of the fact that in Kenya, polygamy is legal for men while women have the option of divorce to pave way for remarriage. The study found out that men prefer to keep their marriages and engage in extra-marital affairs because marriage is expensive and time consuming. In Kenya men have to pay bride price as well as dowry, a cultural practice which has become quite expensive. In addition, the man has to provide totally for the woman as opposed to when she is a 'mpango wa kando'- a side dish. In Kenya, when a man marries a woman he has to provide her with shelter, food and other basic needs. When she is a 'mpango wa kando'- a side dish-, a man is under no obligation to provide these needs. Furthermore, men indicated they opted not to remarry because of the negative emotional and financial implications polygamy would have on their families particularly on their children. The study found out that women keep their marriages and engage in extra-marital affairs due to the stigma associated with separation and divorce in Kenya. The patriarchal culture in Rongo, Kenya, judges a separated or divorced woman harshly; she is considered an outcast, a deviant woman who cannot keep her home. This finding concurs with the studies of Brand et al. (2007) that women are more concerned about the negative judgments of others when they are unfaithful. The women also remained in the unsatisfactory marriages to protect their children from the instability that characterizes divorce and separation. The women also indicated that they would not remarry because they believe they would go through the same cycle. The cycle begins with bliss during courtship and early times in marriage then neglect in marriage which drives them to seek for solace in extra-marital affairs.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The study found out that the nature of extra-marital affairs prevalent in Rongo town is emotional sexual affair and transactional affairs. The study found out that the shift in communication in marriage due to the changing family roles is a cause for extra-marital affairs in Rongo towns. In addition, men indicated that they engaged in extra-marital affairs mainly for sexual pleasure, for variety and to seek approval. The study found out that women, engaged in extra-marital affairs mainly to seek love, to seek money, for revenge and for sexual pleasure. According to the study, both men and women experienced positive and negative consequences of extra-

marital affairs. Men reported feelings of sexual satisfaction, approval and boosted egos; they however reported negative financial implications as a result of engaging in extra-marital affairs. In addition, they reported feelings of guilt when their families suffer as a result of the extra-marital affairs. Women reported momentary feelings of being loved, sexual satisfaction and eventually disappointment. In regard to attitudes towards extra-marital affairs, the study established that men felt that extra-marital affairs were necessary, while women felt that an extra marital affair was a necessary evil. According to the study, men prefer keeping extra-marital affairs to polygamy; women too opt to remain in marriages that they considered unsatisfactory as opposed to divorcing and remarrying. Men prefer to keep extra marital affairs to polygamy as they are less time consuming and economically involving. Women prefer to remain in unsatisfactory marriages because of the stigma associated with divorce, in order to protect their children from the negative implications of divorce, also because they are apathetic to men and marriage.

The study recommends that couples should have pre-counseling sessions where they are prepared for the changing roles that come with marriage so that they can deal with the challenges effectively without straining the communication process. The study also recommends that institutions such as churches and even employers should organize forums where partners are encouraged to focus on the primary goal of their union. In such forums, communication in marriage, 'marital communication', should be emphasized for this can be major remedy for marital problems which culminate to extra-marital affairs. Important to note is that even reasons for engaging in extra-marital affairs such as sexual dissatisfaction, seeking approval, revenge can be resolved in marriage through communication. The guidance and counseling programmes should be programmatic, that is, it should be continuous. The programmes should run from the pre-marital stage to the different marital stages. The guidance and counseling should focus on the lifecycle of marriage in order to deal with the unique characteristics of each stage of marriage. Workshops, forums and seminars geared towards building marriages that last should be organized by organizations, such as churches, professional guidance and counselors, employers, the media to help couples deal with challenges of marriage. Higher institutions of learning should design counseling programmes that educate the youth on family, sex, marital counseling so as to get their minds prepared on the roles they should take up when they get married and how marriages can be sustained and fulfilled.

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