

**CONTEXTUAL STUDY OF 1 SAMUEL 1:1-20 IN RELATION TO NAMING
PRACTICES OF THE LUGBARA**

BY

WADIKO IREN

17/U/14430/GMAR/PE

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MASTERS OF ARTS DEGREE IN
RELIGIOUS STUDIES OF KYAMBOGO UNIVERSITY**

JULY, 2019

DECLARATION

I, Wadiko Iren, declare that this dissertation entitled “**Contextual Study of 1 Samuel 1:1-20 in Relation to Naming Practices of theLugbara**” is my original work that has never been submitted to Kyambogo or any otherUniversity or institution of higher learning for any academic award.

Signature: Date:

Student: Wadiko Iren

APPROVAL

SUPERVISORS

I declare that this research project was supervised by me and is ready for submission.

Signature: Date:

PRINCIPAL SUPERVISOR: Dr. Kuloba Robert Wabyanga

Signature: Date:

CO-SUPERVISOR: Dr. Kizito Michael George.

DEDICATION

In a very special way, I would like dedicate this research to all those who have contributed positively to my journey of education. They include Onzubo Samuel, Anguaku Moses, Ajionji Joshua, Nyakuni Jackson, the late Afayo Benya and my sister O'daru Milka. This is the fruit of the seed that they sowed in me.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work is a combined effort of different people who have contributed to it in many and various ways. Some have given me financial support; others have given spiritual support, while some gave me words of encouragement and the relevant information for the study. It is therefore very important to express my sincere words of appreciation towards their effort as follows:

I want to thank Kyambogo University for the necessary support provided for me to accomplish this task. You provided free internet services which helped me to get information online. Thanks for the research grant in which I participated as a mentee. I was able to receive money for tuition and data collection which helped a lot in my studies. I thank Dr. Kizito who was the principal investigator.

I wish to express my gratitude to my principal supervisor, Dr. Kuloba Robert Wabyanga for his guidance. He was so committed to this study that at a certain point, one may think that he is the student. He would read my work on time as if it was the only thing he was doing. He took an extra step of availing resources valid for my study, for instance, relevant books, and making us to submit work online which saved money for printing, transport, and time.

He kept encouraging and rebuking me where necessary which created a sense of seriousness in me. Dr. Kuloba kept setting deadlines and reminding me that he had taken long without reading my work, as if my work was food for him. This interest he had in reading my work made me to love my topic hence doing it with passion. My words of thanks may not be enough, but, may God richly bless you. This is not my first time of doing research, but I have loved research, and can never call it 'an animal' as most students do.

In the same spirit, I want to thank my co-supervisor Dr. Kizito Micheal George, who would ever ask me questions which tasked me to do my work. He is a man of few words, but each time we met, whether it been on the compound or in his office, he asked questions like 'how far?' This made me to work hard and finish my project.

Special thanks goes to the Late Rev. Fr. Dr. Kenyi Gowan, who acted like a parent to me before he died. Dr. Kenyi would even tell my supervisor that he wants me to finish in time and if I do not work hard, he should tell him so that he comes to beat me. Oh...what a care! Thanks

Dr.Kenyi these words have kept me in the pace because I knew there were people like you who were looking forward to my completion. May your soul rest in eternal peace.

I also want to thank my friend, course mate and classmate, Nadunga Annet, who has been friendly to me and with whom we have toiled in this journey of academics. Annet has been a catalyst in my studies. Each time I saw her doing her work, I felt like, I was left behind, and would also settle down to do my work. So, thanks for creating a competitive environment for me.

Above all, I want to thank the Almighty God for His provision and gift of knowledge for carrying out this research. It was Him who assigned the right people to help me in the journey of academics and granted me good health up to this time. I give Him the Glory and Honor.

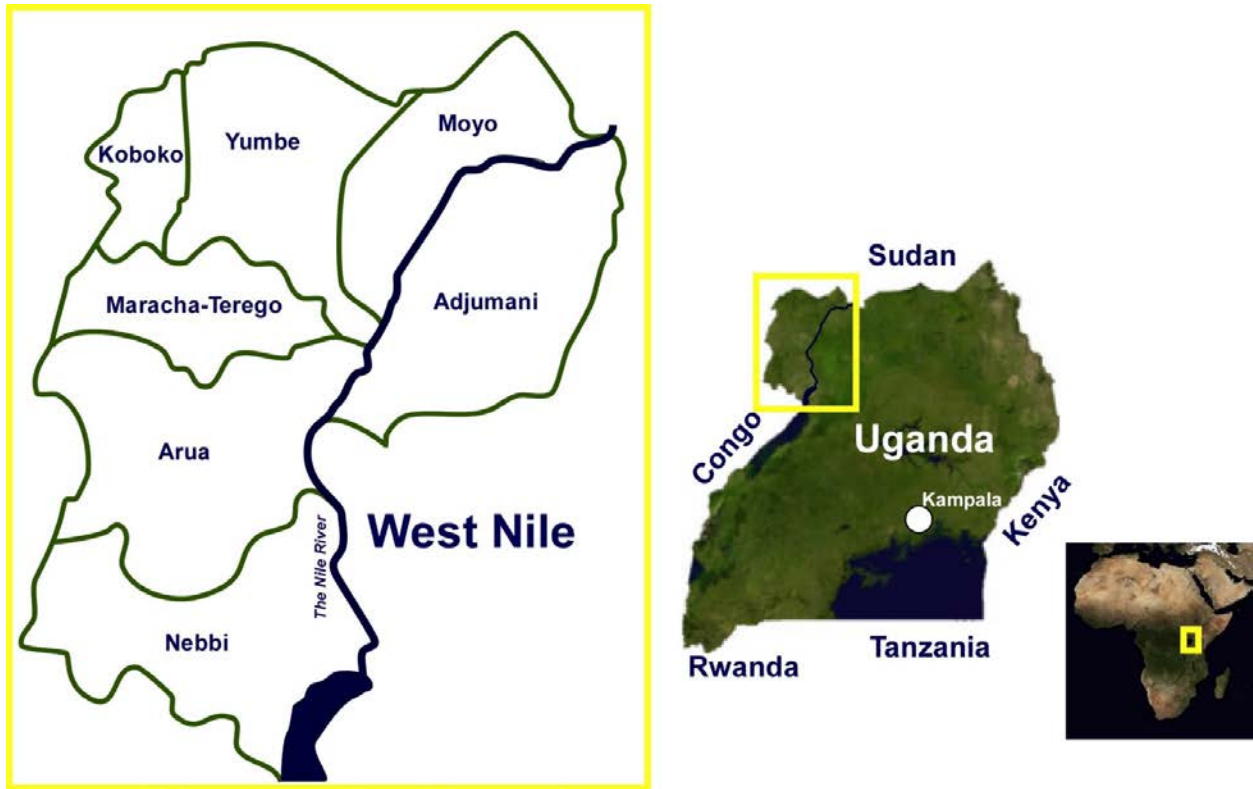
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MAP OF WESTNILE SHOWING THE DISTRICTS



Source: <http://beatradio.co.ug/west-nile/27/09/2018>.

ABSTRACT

This study was carried out on the contextual analysis of 1 Samuel 1:1-20 in relation to the naming practices of the Lugbara. The study sought to discuss the text in relation to family life and naming practices, analyze the Lugbara family life and naming practices and establish the contextual relationship between the text and the Lugbara society in relation to family life and naming practices. A sample of ninety respondents was selected from the three districts by purposive sampling method. The study used interviews, observation and sampling as methods for collecting data. And the theoretical frame work of the study was African Bible Hermeneutics.

Detailed contextual study of 1 Samuel 1:1-20 was done followed by the discussion of the text, in which major issues arising from it were paid attention to. The study examined the Bible and its context of naming where discussions were carried out on the Ancient Near Eastern naming practices. The study then proceeded to analyze Biblical naming practices. And numerous naming practices in the Bible were discussed.

The study also found out that Lugbara people have patriarchal families which are characterized by the rule of men. It also found out that polygamy and barrenness affect women negatively. It was found out that it is the mother who names her child, and the name is influenced by her experience in marriage. In the analysis of the findings, the researcher found out that the family life and naming practices in 1 Samuel 1:1-20 share similarities with Lugbara family life and naming practices. And the study concludes that, Lugbara naming practices are therefore Biblical hence need not to be thrown away by the Christians who have been influenced by the colonialists, Western civilization and missionaries.

The study recommended that other scholars should do contextual study of the Biblical text in relation to the naming practices of other African societies. And scholars were also called upon to do contextual study of Biblical texts in the light of, Lugbara sacrificial practices which is one of the practices that has been rendered evil among the Lugbara people.

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter comprises; background to the study, objectives, research questions, problem statement, scope of the study, significance of the study, and the methodology applied in carrying out the research.

1.1 Background to the Study

1.1.1 The Lugbara Society and the People

In Uganda, the Lugbara people are located in the West Nile region which is the scope of this research. They speak Lugbara language which according to the Uganda Tourism Center is "a Central Sudanic language similar to the language spoken by the Madi, with whom they also share many cultural similarities."¹ The Lugbara people in Uganda occupy the districts of Arua, Maracha, Yumbe and Koboko. They are divided into different dialects; which are Ayivu, Vurra, Terego, Maracha, and Aringa.

1.1.2 The Socio-cultural Organization of the Lugbara People

It is observed that, "in the early days, the Lugbara were a mainly chiefdom based community. They did not have kingdoms and kings presiding over them as like other ethnic groups in Uganda. They mainly had chiefs who were their leaders. They formed friendly alliances with neighboring chiefdoms so as to ensure their security against attacks from other ethnic groups.

¹ Lugbara People and their culture. <http://ugandatourismcenter.com/place/lugbara-people-and-their-culture/> accessed on 23/09/2018.

The earlier Lugbara did not have soldiers or an army in their chiefdoms. Every able bodied man had the duty to protect his village hence all able bodied men were automatically considered soldiers though this was not a permanent duty."² So, the more men a clan or a family had, the more secured it was. Hence male children are valued more than female ones.

Both the Lugbara and Bible traditions value male members differently from female members of the same society. Boys are the heirs of their father's property while girls in most cases have no right to their father's property. That is why in the Biblical setting, a woman always prays to God to give her a male child, an example is Hannah's prayer in 1Samuel 1. Lugbara people extend this tradition to other privileges like education. It is common among the Lugbara people that male children are given the first priority to go to school, while for the girls; it is like the crumbs that fall from a master's table. Their work is to do house chores and get married so that the bride price is used for getting wives for their brothers. She is a passerby in her father's house, and her permanent place is at her husband's home where she does not even have the right to his property. In the event a couple produces only girls, it is perceived as having no children yet, so, the man is allowed to marry another wife who would produce for him boys, while blaming the mother of the girls for failing to give birth to boys. This practice of taking girls (women) to be less human is also common in the Biblical setting. For instance, it is reported that when Jesus fed the five thousand people, the number was five thousand men. Women and children were not counted (see Mathew 14:21).

1.1.3 Family Life and Naming

²Lugbara People and their culture. <http://ugandatourismcenter.com/place/lugbara-people-and-their-culture/> accessed on 23/09/2018

Like in the Bible, the Lugbara people cherish family. Both contexts are patriarchal where masculinity is emphasized over femininity. Without undermining the roles women play within patriarchal setting, their roles are however in the private and domestic realms as household workers, mothers and servants of men, compared to the ideologically perceived public roles of men as politicians, masters of society, owners of wealth and heads of families. I call it ideological because some women like men are now doing public works like being politicians, owning wealth and even being heads of families as single mothers. However, despite the public roles women play, an interview with ‘Bayo Lameki, a 70 year old Lugbara man shows that in traditional Lugbara setting, a woman is still a domestic worker while a man is a public figure. When asked what the role of a woman and a man are, he said that; “a woman is responsible for the daily domestic works. When people at home sleep hungry, it is because she has not cooked. When the husband does not put on clean clothes, it is the woman’s problem, when the house is dirty, she is to be blamed. While, providing for the family and leading a society is what a real man is to do.”³

When it comes to family setting, the Lugbara people have extended families. The family is comprised of father, mother, children, grand-children, grand-parents, brothers, sisters, and other distant relatives. Polygamy is common in both the Lugbara and Biblical family settings. Most famous men in these settings are polygamous—with many wives and even concubines. Some of the reasons for polygamy include: prestige, barrenness, producing only one sex of children (especially girls), old age of the wife, few number of children, diseases, among others. This came out clearly in an interview with Candia Moses, a 65 year old Lugbara man with twenty six children from four mothers. He said that, “I married many women because at first, my marriage

³ Bayo Lameki. Personal interview. 16/6/2019

had issues, the first wife of mine did not give me a child, and this made us to separate. When I got the second one, she only gave birth to girls yet I needed a boy to inherit my property. The third one had complications after producing two boys for me which was not enough. So, I married the fourth one who was older than me by two years and reached menopause. So, I had to marry the fifth one who is my last wife. I feel so happy to see these children and my grandchildren on my compound each time I have problems.”⁴

In both settings, child bearing is very important in marriage. However, in the event a couple does not produce, the blame goes to the woman. She is humiliated, despised, rejected among others. We shall look at the perception of barrenness in both Biblical and Lugbara setting in the following chapters.

In both contexts, naming of children is very important, and the selection of names is carefully done. A person's name connects to his or her soul in such a way that once it is mentioned, makes the person alert. In Hebrew language, the word for name is שֵׁם (Shem), which means “brand, mark, as a representative, reputation, fame, glory, byword, in token of ownership, substitution for word,”⁵ among others. In the Biblical setting, a name has power over the name bearer as his/her brand or mark of identity or a representative of oneself or a repute, fame or glory that one wields. However, the picture in the Lugbara setting is different as a name expresses sentiments of the name giver. The definition of a name varies from one society to another and from one name giver to another. We shall revert to the discussion on naming and family life in the following chapters.

⁴ Candia Moses. Personal interview. 16/6/2019

⁵Brown F., S. Driver-C. Briggs. Hebrew and English Lexicon, United States of America: Hendrickson publishers 2015 (p.1027-1028).

In Africa, different societies are careful in naming their children. This is because names are important in ways of giving social and religious identity, collection of memories, as a wish or blessing. These different societies have specific traditions by which children are named. For instance, the Wolof of West Africa name their children one week after birth in a ceremony that is performed in the mornings, where the child's birth occurred. The Akamba of Kenya name children on the third day, in a ceremony that is marked by feasting and celebrations.⁶ There will be a discussion on the Lugbara in the foregoing chapters.

However, these traditions and the naming systems have been undermined in such a way that some African societies (Lugbara people inclusive) are no longer proud of their names. This poses a challenge to the African cultural heritage, which is partly enshrined in African names. This trend admittedly is attributed to factors such as colonialism, missionary activities, Western civilization and slavery.⁷

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The Study was guided by both general and specific objectives.

1.2.1 General Objective

To do a contextual analysis of 1 Samuel 1:1-20 in relation to family life and naming practices of the Lugbara.

1.2.2 Specific Objectives

1. To examine the family life and naming practices in 1 Samuel 1:1-20.

⁶ Mbiti S. John. *African Religions and philosophy*. Great Britain: Heinemann. 1969 (p.119-120).

⁷ Especially in the case of the returned slaves in Liberia

2. To analyze the family life and naming practices of the Lugbara.
3. To establish the contextual correspondences between 1 Samuel 1:1-20 and the Lugbara family life and naming practices.

1.3. Research Questions

1. What family life and naming practices exist in 1 Samuel 1:1-20?
2. What family life and naming practices do the Lugbara people have?
3. What are the contextual correspondences between 1 Samuel 1:1-20 and the Lugbara family life and naming practices?

1.4 Problem Statement

Traditional names are one of the cultural heritage, identity and history of the Lugbara people. Unfortunately today, the Lugbara people are massively embracing Western names at the expense of the traditional names. This is because most Lugbara names are erroneously perceived to be having negative meanings. For instance; Candiru means 'miserable,' Ati'buni means 'I have produced for the grave,' Onzima means 'I am Bad,' Acidri means 'I suffered,' Dramuke means 'it is good that he/she died,' Drani means 'for death,' among others. Incognizant of the fact that in the Lugbara culture, names express the life circumstance of the name giver, Lugbara people are leaning to a strange culture that the meaning of a name follows the name bearer; hence, they are dropping Lugbara names in naming their children in favor of Western names. This trend is cancerous to the Lugbara cultural heritage, identity, history and Lugbara philosophy of family life. It is in this context that 1 Samuel 1:1-20 is engaged in the African Bible Hermeneutics as a

tool of cultural validation; in the broad postcolonial analytical discourse, that focuses on the Bible text and context as informative and liberating tool.

1.5 Scope of the Study

This study was limited to; content, time and geographical scope.

1.5.1 Geographical Scope

This study was conducted in Lugbara community of West Nile, in the districts of Arua, Maracha, and Yumbe. The study targeted the name bearers and parents who are the name givers of this place. The three districts were chosen because it is where the Lugbara people mostly live.

1.5.2 Content scope

In the study, 1Samuel 1:1-20 is the lead text. The text is analyzed in its socio-cultural milieu. Focus is on the family life of ancient Israelite community in the text, and how this family life corresponds with the African traditional setting-the Lugbara society as the case study. The study entails at length on family relationships and how family circumstances affect the naming in both text and context.

1.5.3 Time scope

This study is limited to the time scope of 19th century up to date. This is because it is from this period (19th century) that the colonial influence in Africa started taking roots which has made the Western culture to replace African culture including naming practices.

1.6 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Inculturation: The New Catholic Encyclopedia defines inculturation as a term that “denotes the presentation and re-expression of the Gospel in forms and terms proper to a culture. It results in the creative reinterpretation of both, without being unfaithful to either. Evangelization respects culture as part of the human phenomenon and as a human right.”⁸

Enculturation: Umoremdefinesit as“a process of learning from infancy till death, the components of life in one's culture.”⁹

Important names: These are names given by the people, for the people and whose meanings are known by the people.

Useless names: These are foreign names whose meanings are not known by both the name givers and the name bearers, but used due to social demand.

Christian names: These are Western names which have been ideologically accepted by the Christian missionaries as names that make one to join the Christian community at baptism. They are also referred to as, baptismal names.

Home names: These are names in African languages, which originate from African homes and culture.

African names: These are the names that reflect the socio-cultural context of the African people and its meanings are known and are relevant to the people.

⁸New Catholic Encyclopedia. Inculturation-Theology. <https://www.encyclopedia.com> accessed on 19/6/2019

⁹U.E Umorem. Enculturation and Inculturation: The Gospel of Liberation and the Culture of African Womanhood. <https://sedosmission.org> accessed on 19/6/2018

Biblical names: These are the names got from the Bible by Christians and given to the African children as Christian names.

1.7 Significance of the Study

There is scanty information about the Lugbara naming practices which makes some Lugbara people shy of their names as the names sound negative. This study will therefore provide knowledge of why the people have such names hence appreciate their culture and become proud of themselves once again.

The issue of name replacement is something which the Europeans brought to Africa at large, which makes most African societies to prefer European names to their cultural names, when people from such societies read this thesis, they will realize that it is good to appreciate one's culture hence be positive about their naming practices.

More so, this research provides knowledge about the meaning of some Biblical names to people worldwide. And the meaning of these names comes after the event that leads to the particular names, especially, the Ancient Near Eastern events which is not so much written on by other scholars. This thesis therefore adds knowledge to the Biblical Study.

While carrying out the research, some of the meanings of the Biblical names are given from their etymology, in which Hebrew language is used. This provides the urge for the Biblical languages which many people have ignored. It therefore shows to other Biblical scholars or those who wish to do Biblical studies, the importance of knowing these languages.

1.8 METHODOLOGICAL AND THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. 8.0Introduction

This study takes postcolonial methodological and theoretical frameworks in the analysis of Lugbara culture. It is a cultural hermeneutics. The study falls under the postcolonial Biblical Interpretation,¹⁰ specifically African Bible Hermeneutics. Though the study shares some etymologies with feminism, this project is not on gender or feminist Bible interpretation. In this case, theories of gender analysis have been not given prominence and attention deliberately.

1.8.1African Bible Hermeneutics

This is a “methodological tool that makes African social cultural contexts the subject of interpretation.”¹¹ Specifically, the study makes the Lugbara culture the subject of Biblical interpretation. 1 Samuel 1: 1-20 offers the tools for engaging the Lugbara naming practices in Lugbara family contexts. Inevitably it examines the Lugbara cultural systems.

Adamo defines African Bible Hermeneutics as

“a methodological resource that makes African social cultural contexts the subject of interpretation. This is a methodology that reappraises ancient biblical tradition and African world-views, cultures and life experiences, with the purpose of correcting the effect of the cultural,

¹⁰ For studies on postcolonial Biblical interpretation, see works of Lazare S Rukundwa. *Postcolonial Theory as a Hermeneutical tool for Biblical reading*. HTS 2008.; R.S. Surgirharajah. *The Postcolonial Biblical Reader*. United Kingdom:Blackwell Publishers. etc

¹¹ Adamo David Tuesday. *What is African Biblical Hermeneutics?*<https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/yblt20> accessed on 26/6/2019

ideological conditioning to which Africa and Africans have been subjected in the business of biblical interpretation.”¹²

Adamo further notes that African Bible Hermeneutics

“is the rereading of the Christian scripture from a premeditatedly Africentric perspective. African biblical Hermeneutics is contextual since interpretation is always done in a particular context. Especially, it means that the analysis of the biblical text is done from the perspective of an African world-view and culture.”¹³

In this study, 1 Samuel 1: 1-20 is going to be analyzed in the culture and world-view of the Lugbara people.

Adamo suggests various approaches to use in African Bible Hermeneutics and these include; Africa and Africans in the Bible, the Bible as power approach, using Africa to interpret the Bible, using the Bible to interpret Africa, African comparative approach and reading with the ordinary readers approach. This study employs two of these approaches that is, using Africa to interpret the Bible and using the Bible to interpret Africa.

Using Africa to interpret the Bible; According to Adamo, this approach “is the use of Africa and Africans to interpret the Bible. [In this method] African Biblical scholars attempt to evaluate the Bible in the light of African cultures, religious belief and practices.”¹⁴ So, this study uses the Lugbara naming practices to interpret Hannah’s naming of her child in the text or it evaluates the text in the light of Lugbara family life and naming practices.

¹² Adamo David Tuesday. *What is African Biblical Hermeneutics?*<https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/yblt20> accessed on 26/6/2019

¹³ Ibid

¹⁴ Ibid

The second approach that is engaged in this paper is using the Bible to interpret Africa. Adamo defines this method as “the use of biblical texts to judge a particular issue in Africa or the church within a society. After employing the historical critical method to analyze a particular Biblical text the relevance of that particular text to Africa is illustrated.”¹⁵ And so, this study uses 1 Samuel 1; 1-20 to judge Lugbara family life and naming practices. It starts by analyzing the text in its context in chapter 3, followed by the Bible and its context of naming in chapter four, then the examination of the Lugbara family life and naming practices in chapter five, and then proceeds to analyze the text and the Lugbara context giving the relevance of this text to Lugbara family life and naming practices.

1.8.2 Cultural Hermeneutics

Laney defines cultural hermeneutics as “the use of ancient culture to help in our understanding and interpreting of scripture.”¹⁶ In this, the ancient culture is a very important tool for interpreting the Biblical text. Wabyanga notes Musimbi R.A Kanyaro’s recommendation of cultural hermeneutics for Biblical interpretation that “the culture of the reader in Africa has more influence on the way the Biblical text is understood and used in communities than the historical culture of the text. ...that African[s] ... should read the Bible in the eyes of their cultures and apply a mirror-image reading. That this will help them read their cultures and also their cultures can give meaning to the text of the Bible,”¹⁷ as such, this study uses the Lugbara traditional

¹⁵ Adamo David Tuesday. *What is African Biblical Hermeneutics?*<https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/yblt20> accessed on 26/6/2019

¹⁶ Laney J. Carl. The Cultural Hermeneutic in Biblical Studies. <https://transformedblog.westernseminary.edu> accessed on 28/6/2019

¹⁷ Wabyanga Robert Kuloba. *The Berated Politicians*. U.S.A: LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing. 2012 (p.41)

naming practices and family life for interpreting 1 Samuel 1:1-20 where Hannah's naming of Samuel is read using a Lugbara woman's¹⁸ cultural lenses of naming.

1. 9.1 Research Design

The study is descriptive and analytical, using qualitative research approaches. It describes and analyses the Biblical text of 1 Samuel 1:1-20, in relation to the Lugbara family and naming systems. The study is inevitably ethnographic and a comparative analysis—engaging scholarly theories of postcolonialism like contextual Bible interpretation and inculturation; describing and analyzing both the Bible texts in itself and its context, and its socio-cultural resonance with the Lugbara setting. The purpose of using qualitative research approach is to describe the socio-cultural environment of the Israelites in the text and the Lugbara context and the findings of the study into details by use of words. It gave the respondents the liberty to express their situations.

1. 9.2 General Characteristics of the Respondents

The study was critical on the following characteristics of the respondents;

First is gender. The study showed that most of the respondents are females. This is because in the traditional Lugbara families, it is the mother who names the children. Therefore, why the mothers give their children the specific names can best be explained by them. However, there was a special case for the sake of the respondents who were name bearers, that is, gender was not an issue because anybody can ask about the meaning and the history behind his or her name regardless of the gender. However, this category was small in number since the information got from them was not firsthand information.

¹⁸ A Lugbara woman's lenses are used because in Lugbara tradition, it is the mother who names her child.

On the issue of age, the study specifically got information from adults. That is, those above 45 years of age. This shows that information was got from mature traditional people with experience of naming. And it is from their experiences in marriage that they name their children. More so, at this age, it is believed that the child would have had enough time to interact with his/her parents, hence can rightly tell the history behind his or her name (for the sake of respondents who are name bearers).

Concerning the marital status, information was got mainly from married, separated or divorced mothers and single mothers. These mothers have experienced family life among the Lugbara people which in turn affects the naming of their children. For the sake of the name bearers, information was got from both single and married people who had got the story behind their names from their mothers.

When it comes to the education level of the respondents, most of the respondents were not educated. This is because it was from the Lugbara names that a person has, that he/or she or the mother was considered for selection. Most educated Lugbara people have given their children English names since they think that Lugbara names with negative meanings are bad, hence they were left out since the study was interested in the Lugbara traditional names.

1. 9.3 Study Population

This study targeted the Lugbara name givers (who are the mothers) and the name bearers in the districts of Arua, Maracha and Yumbe. The researcher was interested in the name givers because they give the firsthand information about why they give their children the names the children have. Concerning the name bearers, it is assumed that since naming is an important thing among the Lugbara people, most people are interested in knowing why they are having the names they

bear hence, can give valid information about the history of their names. It is not clear, how many Lugbara people are there in the three districts since districts do not normally contain the natives alone. However, out of the unknown population, the study targeted about two hundred members.

1. 9.4 Sample Size

A representative sample was taken out of the target population. The aim of using sampling was to ensure that information is gathered from the various parts of the districts, since this is a vast area which cannot all be reached. Ninety respondents were interviewed from the three districts who expressed the history of their names and/or the names they have given to their children and the socio-cultural background of the Lugbara people.

1. 9.5 Sampling Methods

In this study, non-probability sampling method was used, that is, purposive sampling. In this, respondents were selected by their Lugbara names or by the names of their children. The purpose of using this sampling method was to get information from the category of people who have named and/or known the history of their names so as to make factual claim and conclusions which aids in achieving the aim of the study. The method made it possible to single out the target group who were able to give the reliable information about naming hence ensuring reliability of the study.

1. 9.6 Research Instruments for Data Collection

The information in the study was collected from both primary and secondary sources.

1.9.6.1 Tools for Collecting Secondary Data

For collecting secondary data, documentary analysis was used. In this, the researcher used books, magazines, journal articles, lexicons, online information, some of which were published while others were not.

1.9.6.2 Tools for Collecting Primary Data

1.9.6.2.1 Interview Guide

The researcher prepared relevant questions to the study. In the interview process, the researcher introduced herself to the respondents and gave them the purpose of interviewing them. This made the respondents to relax and trust the interviewer, hence feel free to give information. The researcher used simple language mostly, local language for conducting the interviews.

1.9.6.2.2 Observation guide

During and before the interviews, the researcher kept on observing the family life of the Lugbara people, especially the way women are treated in families for instance, how other family members are staying while a woman works the whole day, how women are not involved in decision making, among others and how men are handled by their wives and vice versa. More so, this ill treatment of women was observed by the researcher during the interviews when some women who are name givers were telling their stories while crying.

1.9.7 Validity and Reliability

The validity and the reliability of the research were ensured by the researcher by checking the research instruments. In this, the researcher was careful in designing the questionnaires for collecting data, ensuring that the questions asked covered the content of the study and the objectives of the study. Also, by using purposive sampling method, the information collected

was reliable as the selected respondents gave their true life stories which gave authentic information for the study.

1.9.8 Research Constraints

The researcher faced the problem of some respondents not being open enough to give the information and some were expecting to be paid. The researcher solved this problem by convincing the women that she is also a woman like them and referred to their problems as “our problem.” The researcher also assured the respondents of the confidentiality of the information before, during and after the study; this made the respondents to open up. The problem of payment was solved by the researcher by telling the respondents that it was an academic research but not for business.

The researcher also faced the problem of inadequate funds for carrying out the research. Money was needed for transport, buying internet data, air time, printing, photocopying, among others. This is because the area under study was vast, that is, the three districts of Arua, Maracha and Yumbe which needed a lot of transport. The researcher solved this problem by using research assistants to get information from some of the places, who recorded the discussions and sent to the researcher. In some instances, the researcher carried out phone call interviews which were less expensive than using transport.

There was also the problem of inadequate information about the area of study. This is because there is nearly no comprehensive literature about Lugbara naming practices and the Biblical naming practice, in particular, ancient Near Eastern culture. The researcher solved this problem by using mostly, primary sources for information about the Lugbara people and for the sake of Biblical names, the researcher used the Hebrew lexicon which helped a lot in getting the

meaning of some of the Biblical names. Use of E-sources also helped a lot in getting the relevant information.

Emotional instability was another big problem that the researcher faced. Being a Lugbara woman, some of the stories of the respondents were reminding the researcher of what she goes through. This made the researcher to break down at some points, and, rests for some days to recover, which delayed the process of data collection. However, this problem was solved by the researcher by revising the research plan and was solved by the supervisor by reminding the researcher of the deadline of the research.

1.9.10 Ethical Considerations

In this study, the researcher applied the following ethical measures in the process of data collection and analysis.

Bearing in mind that the participants must agree voluntarily to participate in the study, the researcher assured them confidentiality during and after the research in case of sensitive information. She sought permission from them to include their names in the research.

The researcher was also open and honest with the participants. This was done by giving them the aim and purpose of the study. This made the participants to avail the relevant information to the study. It also made the respondents to agree with the researcher on the convenient time for the interviews.

The researcher concurred with research protocol by seeking a written permission from the university which acted as an official instruction in the field of investigation. This made it easier for respondents to trust the researcher with the information they were to give, hence opening up.

1.10. LITERATURE REVIEW

1.10.0 Introduction

This section entails what others have written about 1 Samuel 1:1-20, importance of a name, and causes of the disappearance of African names.

1.10.1 1 Samuel 1:1-20

Abasili has written about this text. He views it as Hannah's ordeal of childlessness and interprets it through the prism of a childless African woman in a polygamous family. He paid attention to polygamy and the challenges of childlessness, Hannah's affliction in Elkannah's family versus the ordeal of childless married woman, Hannah's prayer to Yahweh; a mirror of the prayer of a childless married African woman, and he concludes by looking at the contextual implication of Hannah's ordeal of childlessness.¹⁹ As he takes this direction, in my study I am looking at how family life and naming practices in the text mirrors a Lugbara woman's family life and naming practices.

Suomala has also written about this text and in the text, she views Hannah as the woman who gives voice to the suffering.²⁰ In this, she concludes that Hannah's prayer in this text "just doesn't sound like the simple prayer of thanks we might expect from a new mother. This is a song of *revolution* where the bows of the mighty are broken and the poor are raised from the dust. Hannah's song penetrates the surface, pointing to the pillars of injustice that must be pulled down. Some of those pillars may be the very ones that put her in such a desperate situation in

¹⁹ Abasili I. Alexander. Hannah's ordeal of childlessness: Interpreting 1 Samuel through the prism of a childless African woman in a polygamous family. <https://planobiblechapel.org>. 29/6/2019.

²⁰ Suomala Karla. Commentary on 1 Samuel 1:4-20. <https://www.workingpreacher.org>29/6/2019.

the first place.²¹ As she focuses on Hannah's prayer due to injustice, my study looks at not only prayer but Hannah's life in the family and how she names her child and rereads the text from a Lugbara woman's eye.

Shalom has also looked at this text, but he has only taken verse 11 of the text. He has studied it as a "rejoinder concerning 1 Samuel 1:11."²² In his study, he discusses the verse in its context not reading it from an African perspective. However in my study I take a different direction of reading the whole text using the context of a Lugbara woman who gives names to her children.

Brown et al (ed) also studied this 1 Samuel 1:1-20. In their study, they took the whole text, divided it into two sections that is, verses 1-8 is called Elkannah and his family and 9-21 is called Hannah's petition.²³ And their discussion of the text is in its context. They did not read it from the lenses of Africans which my study is interested in.

Like Shalom, Westbrook in a journal article has taken the same path. He studies only 1 Samuel 1:8 and discusses it in its context. He focuses on Elkannah's words of consolation to Hannah: "Hannah, why do you weep and why do you not eat and why is your heart afflicted? Am I not better to you than ten sons?"²⁴ He looks at it deeply, giving it meaning. However, he did not read it in the eyes of a Lugbara woman. My study focuses on the whole text as a mirror of Lugbara name giver's (woman's) family life and naming practices.

Adeyemo is another scholar who studied 1 Samuel 1:1-20. In his study, he looks at the text in its context, like those of Brown, he divides the text into sections. But he came up with three sections, that is verses 1-8 which he calls as conflict in Samuel's Family, 9-18-Hannah's

²¹ Ibid

²² Shallom M. Paul. *Journal of Biblical Literature*. The society of Biblical literature, 2011 (p.45).

²³ Brown E. Raymond. *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*, Great Britain:Prentice-Hall. 1968 (p.165)

²⁴ Westbrook Raymond. *Journal of Biblical Literature*, The society of Biblical literature. 2011 (p.115)

response and 19-20 as birth and naming of Samuel.²⁵ He studies the text in its context and applies it in the African context of naming. However, his focus was not on the Lugbara family life and naming practices which this paper is doing.

David and Pat Alexander are yet other scholars who have studied this text. They did not do a detailed study of the text, rather they paid attention to issues in the text which matter to them and gave it contextual meaning. And these issues are; phrases like “to sacrifice at Shiloh, I will give him, only her lips moved, when she had weaned him.”²⁶ They gave the text its context and did not in any way connect it to the African context. In my research, African context in particular the context of the Lugbara people is the key tool for interpreting this text.

In conclusion, as seen from above, 1 Samuel 1:1-20 which is the reference text in this study can be read or interpreted in various ways depending on the interpreters approach or interest. One can take the whole text or focus on a particular verse as seen from above examples. This study takes this text as a family life and naming practice of Hannah which mirrors a Lugbara woman’s family life and naming practice.

1.10.2 African Naming Practices

When it comes to the issue of naming practices, it is a general thing that is important to all human beings. As such, I am not the first person to write about it. There are other people who have written about it, hence, in this section, attention is paid to what others have done.

1.10.2.1 Definition of African Names

²⁵ Adeyemo Tokunboh. Africa Bible Commentary, Nairobi: Wordalive 2006.

²⁶ David and Pat Alexander. The lion Handbook to the Bible, London: Lion publishing. 1984.

According to Mphande, the answer to the question of what a name is “depends on the particular culture from which it is framed,”²⁷ This is basically influenced by the importance of a name to that particular culture. It is therefore vital at this point to look at the importance of a name to the Africans, from which the definition of a name can be derived.

1.10.2.2 Importance of a Name

It should be noted that a name is a very important thing in the lives of Africans, one of this is that, it helps people to identify themselves in a given society, in other words, it is one of the ways through which people trace their origins. This is because every African society has its own way and language of naming which identifies the society. Liseli in his theses has rightly summarized this when he writes that "names ... aid in the construction of identity."²⁸ So, to an African, a name is a societal tag or badge.

Africans also use names to thank and praise gods or spirits. This makes theophoric names to be common in African societies. These names have got the name of god in them and most of them are phrases. For instance the Yoruba people in Nigeria give their children names like “Oluwasegun (male and female) meaning God is victorious, Oluwaseun (male and female) meaning we thank God, Oluwatoyin (male and female) meaning God is worthy of praise, Oluwaseyi (male and female) meaning God did this.”²⁹ The Banyankole of Western Uganda also have such similar naming practice. They give their children a name like Asiimwe which means praise God, the Lugbara give their children the names Adrouni or Munguni meaning for God, Mungufeni meaning its God who has given, among others. Such naming system is among very

²⁷Lupenga Mphande. Naming and Linguistic Africanisms in African American Culture. Ohio State University.

²⁸ Liseli A. Fitzpatrick. *B.A.African Names and Naming Practices: The Impact Slavery and European Domination had on the African Psyche, Identity and Protest*. The Ohio State University. 2012 (p.ii).

²⁹ Debopriya Bose. African names and their meanings. <https://aptparenting.com>. 18/4/2019.

many African societies which have not been mentioned here and the purpose is to thank God for the gift of the child or life and other things. This is because in Africa, children are a gift from God. And so, they have all the reasons to thank him for such a wonderful gift. And giving such names is one of the ways of doing it.

Liseli notes further that to Africans, a name “concretize a people’s collective memory by recording the circumstances of their experiences.”³⁰ It becomes a memory of the past experience because some African societies such as the Lugbara people give their children names based on the circumstances in which the child was born or what they were going through. Therefore, by calling the child’s name, the name giver or the people who understand the context in which a particular name is given are reminded of the past.

Africans also use names to describe the name bearer. In this case, they give their children nicknames based on the appearance of the child. These names come later after the name givers have seen the child. Some even acquire such names when they are matured based on their achievements, for instance, Akwekum notes that “names in Akan frequently describe the characteristics of the named individual. This is why people are able to acquire new names, appellations and by-names based on their personal achievements.”³¹ Such names among the Lugbara people include Aboloto for a fat baby, O’dukunyaa for a tiny baby, Ombere for a lame child or the one who has taken long to walk, among others. Adelaide also notes the same system among the Somalese who give children nicknames. She notes that “these nicknames often pick on the negative physical traits of the bearer, if he is male. Some common nicknames for men include Langare (limpy), Coryaan (handicapped), Lugay (one leg) or Genay (missing

³⁰ Liseli A. Fitzpatrick. *B.A.African Names and Naming Practices: The Impact Slavery and European Domination had on the African Psyche, Identity and Protest*. The Ohio State University. 2012 (p.ii).

³¹Agwekum Kofi. *The Sociolinguistic of Akan Personal Names*. University of Ghana, Legon. 2006 (p.209).

tooth). Women, however, mostly get flattering nicknames like Lul (diamond), Macanay (sweet), Cod Weyne (rich voiced), Dahable (golden) and Indho Daraleey (gazelle eyes).³²

Another role that a name plays in Africa is that, it is for personal identity. This has been rightly observed by Agyekum that “every person in this world has a name that solely identifies and marks him/her from all other peoples in the world.”³³ The Hebrew lexical definition of a name fits well in this context, for it defines it as a “brand, mark, as a representative ... byword substitution for word,”³⁴ This has created order in societies where one is known by his or her name which when mentioned makes the person to feel responsible for the call, hence responds to it without confusion.

In Africa, another importance of a name is that it acts as a wish of the name giver and a blessing to the name bearer. This is seen in societies that give their children names of prominent people whom the society believes were blessed. It is their wish that the name bearer becomes as blessed as the person he or she is named after. This same view is given by Temba Mafico as noted by Chitando that, “Africans believed that a name could shape a person’s character and have a bearing on future behavior. Thus, it acted as a benediction, a wish, a motto and blessing to the bearer.”³⁵ The chairman of the African People’s Socialist Party whose name is anonymous in the article has noted it in another way that, “it’s like a vocation given to you at birth. They want you to be this person or they want to see you emulate someone in the past, in your ancestry like a century or two centuries ago. And it’s powerful because when you carry a name of somebody

³² Adelaide Arthur. Africa's naming traditions: nine ways to name your child. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa>. 18/4/2019.

³³ Agwekum Kofi. The Sociolinguistic of Akan Personal Names. University of Ghana, Legon. 2006 (p.208).

³⁴ F. Brown, S. Driver-C. Briggs. Hebrew and English Lexicon, United States of America: Hendrickson publishers 2015 (p.1027-1028).

³⁵ Brown, S. Driver-C. Briggs. Hebrew and English Lexicon, United States of America: Hendrickson publishers 2015 (p. 145).

who was respected, who was a leader, and that tempers you. Whenever you do something [wrong] and your grandparent calls you by that name you know it means, ‘That’s not how you’re supposed to behave. You carry that name!’”³⁶ Hence you begin to adjust according to the expectation. Such African names are therefore the omnipresent teachers.

Africans also use names to tell when the child was born, for instance Adelaide notes that “certain names are selected depending on the time of the day or season a child is born. Kibet means day and Kiplagat means night (Kalenjin in Kenya) Mumbua and Wambua means rainy season for boys and girls (Kamba in Kenya).”³⁷ Among the Lugbara people, there is a common name Onyaa which means during white aunts. Among the Lugbara community, white aunts are so much treasured that almost everyone is aware of its season. It normally comes in the month of May, so a child named as Onyaa is that one who was born in May, hence the birth month is not forgotten.

A name is also used for cultural heritage. As Osueke observes that in Africa, “tradition is in a name.”³⁸ A name is the archive and the history book of the African people. Most of the African traditions are not recorded in books, but can be read in some of the African names. “they tell stories of communities that no history book could compete with.”³⁹ This is so because African names are influenced by the cultural practices of the society in which the name giver is brought up. Cultural elements are therefore found in African names, hence, African cultural heritage.

³⁶African People’s Socialist Party. <http://apspuhuru.org>. Whats-in-an-african-name-history-identity-and-self-determination. 18/04/2019.

³⁷ Adelaide Arthur. Africa's naming traditions: nine ways to name your child. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa>. 18/4/2019.

³⁸ Osueke Beulah. Significance of African names. <https://face2faceafrica.com/article/18/4/2019>.

³⁹Osueke Beulah. Significance of African names. <https://face2faceafrica.com/article/18/4/2019>.

Africans use names to honor their ancestors. Worship of ancestors is one of the key things in the traditional Africans' lives. As such, Mbiti observes that in Africa, "after the physical death, the individual continues to exist.... He is remembered by relatives and friends who knew him in this life and who have survived him. They recall him by name... But while the departed person is remembered by name, he is not really dead: He is alive, and such a person I would call *the living-dead*"⁴⁰Some societies do this by giving their children the names of the living dead while others do it by giving names that imply that the birth of the child is the replacement of the departed. For instance, among the Yoruba, children are given names such as "Yewande (female) meaning mother or grandmother has returned, Babajide (male) meaning father (diseased) has returned,"⁴¹ In Africa therefore, such names are important to honor the departed who are the ancestors.

Besides social identity and being a collection of peoples' memory, Chitando identifies religious identity as another importance of a name in Africa. He writes that "personal names serve, in fact to preserve religious ... identity...."⁴² It is therefore not a surprise to hear theophoric names in Africa. These are names which have religious element or God's name in them. For instance, Mungufeni in Lugbara means 'it's God who has given.' Byaruhanga in Luganda means 'for God,' among others. However, the importance of a name as a religious identity is more relevant in the current situation where Africa has been taken up by foreign religions. From one's name, you can tell whether the person is a Moslem or Christian. Though the names are foreign, they are real in Africa today. They are seriously replacing African names; hence it is important to see the causes of the disappearance of African names.

⁴⁰Mbiti S. John. *African Religions and philosophy*. Great Britain:Heinemann. 1969 (p.25).

⁴¹The importance of names in Yoruba culture.

https://www.africastyles.com/culture/yoruba_names1.html18/4/2019.

⁴² Chitando Ezra. Signs and Potents? Theophoric names in Zimbabwe. University of Zimbabwe. 2001 (p.144).

1.10.2.3 Causes of the Disappearance of African Names

With the many importance of the African names as discussed above it is contradicting to hear that African names are disappearing among Africans which is a very big problem to the African people. This section is therefore to elaborate on the causes of the disappearance of these names. Attention is paid to this because a problem can only be solved well when it is handled from the root cause. And the following are the causes;

Colonialism is one of the major factors that led to the disappearance of African names. Baur observes that, “colonialism had denied Africans their own proper civilization and decried their cultural traditions as barbaric.”⁴³ And one of the African traditional cultures in question is naming practices. There is now conflict in the worldview between the African tradition and the European cultural influence in Africa in the names of civilization. They looked at Africa as a ‘dark continent’ that was still backwards. So, in the names of civilizing Africa, they imposed their culture and made it to look superior calling it modernization. Today, most Africans consider anything from Europe as modernity; including European names while African things as backwardness. So, people have gone ahead to give their children European names whose meanings they do not know in the name of looking modern. This is making African names to disappear at a very high speed.

Missionaries, also contribute a lot to the disappearance of the African names. When missionaries came to Africa, it did not take long for some Africans to realize that they were colonial agents. They preached exactly what their masters wanted. Just as their masters regarded African cultural traditions devilish, they too preached against them, and one of which is African naming

⁴³ Baur John. *2000 years of Christianity in Africa*. Nairobi: Pauline’s publications Africa. 1994 (p.430).

practices. Hence, in the eve of the coming of the missionaries, African names were rendered useless and they were asked to adopt European names which they regarded as Christian names or Biblical names; whose meanings are not known, making them to replace 'important' names with 'useless names.' For instance: Chitando observes Zimbabwe as a case study that, "In the traditional Shona culture of Zimbabwe, parents gave their children names that reflected their socio-cultural context."⁴⁴ But when the missionaries came to Africa, African names, regardless of the roles they play, are rendered evil by the missionaries and their trained church leaders even today. For instance, in the mainstream churches, if a child is given the name Emmanuel, it is called a baptism name and the child is baptized, but if this name is translated in the local language which is, Amabe in Lugbara, it is regarded as 'home' name and the mother is asked to get a baptism name for the child. This makes Lugbara names to disappear. For instance, Ezama observes that "today conflicts in worldviews is seen when the Lugbara Christian think that almost all Lugbara traditional names are with the power of inflicting what they literally represent without seeing the real meaning."⁴⁵

Slavery is one of the key reasons for the disappearance of African names. Slave trade in Africa was mainly operated by the Portuguese of Angola. When this started, the Roman curia condemned the enslavement of the blacks, but Baur observes that, "the Portuguese developed another argument which in the eyes of Europeans seems to justify the slave trade. In the interior of Africa, they argued that there were very underdeveloped tribes which led a sub-human life, 'similar to animals.' Through enslavement, they would learn a more descent way of life- and as all slaves in Angola would be baptized- they could win citizenship in heaven. But if they

⁴⁴ Chitando Ezra. Signs and Potents? Theophoric names in Zimbabwe. University of Zimbabwe. 2001 (p.144)

⁴⁵ Ezama Roffino. Epistemological challenges of conflicting worldviews (Christianity and Lugbara) among the Lugbara people of Uganda. 2015 (p.69).

remained in their own regions where a missionary would never penetrate, they would die in their sins and go to hell.”⁴⁶ Because of this, the Europeans took Africans as slaves to their home and changed their names as noted by Mphande that “African slave personal names have disappeared, replaced largely by the Anglo-American names of their owners.”⁴⁷ This led to the disappearance of the African names that these people were having.

Monopolization of the social systems in Africa by the Europeans. Most of the social systems are influenced and operating following what the Europeans had started, for instance, schools that were introduced by the missionaries uses European syllabus and ways of doing things, an example is that, an African who has got informal education from his or her parents is considered uneducated. Their medicines in their hospitals are the ones considered the best while African herbs are demonic, among others. Such kind of attitude is imparted in the Africans while passing through European systems hence rejecting African ways of doing things including naming practices. For instance, Ezama observes that among the Lugbara people, the Christian name "is the preferred name as one introduces oneself."⁴⁸ People ‘get spoilt’ while passing through these systems and so they are seriously imitating Europeans from dress code up to naming practices hence disappearance of African names.

In conclusion therefore, despite the importance of African names to the Africans as discussed above African names are still disappearing. And the root causes are mainly, colonialism, missionaries and the slave trade that took place some time back, which has led to the European monopoly on the African social activities today, as discussed above

⁴⁶ Baur John. *2000 years of Christianity in Africa*. Nairobi: Pauline’s publications Africa. 1994 (p.96).

⁴⁷ Lupenga Mphande. *Naming and Linguistic Africanisms in African American Culture*. Ohio State University (p.107).

⁴⁸ Ezama Roffino. Epistemological challenges of conflicting worldviews (Christianity and Lugbara) among the Lugbara people of Uganda. 2015 (p.69).

CHAPTER TWO

1SAMUEL 1:1-20: TEXT IN ITS CONTEXT

2.0 Introduction

The chapter begins with a detailed description of the text, followed by the discussion of the major issues arising in the text and analysis of the major characters in the text. The text entails the circumstances that surround the birth of Samuel the son of Elkanah and Hannah, where Elkanah's family relation is discussed.

2.1 Description of the Text

Verses 1-3, deal with the ancestral and family background of Elkanah with its patriarchal lining of the fore fathers from Jeroham to Elihu to Tohu to Zuph an Ephraimite. He is introduced as a man from Ramathan, a Zuphite from the hill country of Ephraim. And his family as a polygamous one where he has two wives whose names are Peninnah and Hannah. Peninnah is introduced as the mother of Elkanah's children while Hannah is portrayed in this text as childless. And this family is a devoted religious one as shown by Elkanah's sacrificial ritual and worship at Shiloh year after year. The priests there were Hophni and Phinehas the sons of Eli.

In verses 4-5, Elkanah is portrayed as a man who loves one wife (Hannah) more than the other (Peninnah), as he would give portions of meat to Peninnah and her sons and daughters and give Hannah a double portion of meat because he loved her. And Hannah's childlessness is shown as been caused by the Lord closing her womb.

Verses 6-7, portray Hannah's co-wife as provoking and mocking her because she was childless. She kept provoking Hannah year after year in order to irritate her, which made Hannah to weep and not to eat whenever she went up to the house of the Lord.

Verses 8-9, describe Elkanah's response to Hannah's emotional distress. Hannah is not eating so he tries to console her. He did this by asking Hannah questions like, *Hannah, why are you weeping? Why don't you eat? Why are you down hearted? Don't I mean more to you than ten sons?*

From verse 9-16, in the meeting at Shiloh, in the presence of Eli the priest who was sitting at the door post of the temple, Hannah stood up and wept much *in bitterness of soul*. And turned to the Lord in prayer making a vow in which she called herself "your servant," then, requested God to remember her and give her 'a son'. Hannah vowed that *'I will give him to the Lord for all the days of his life and no razor will ever be used on his head.'* Hannah prayed in her heart and her lips were moving but the voice was not heard. She was misunderstood by Eli who thought she was drunk. He therefore asked Hannah for how long she would continue to get drunk and asked her to get rid of her wine. Hannah explained to Eli that she was a woman who was deeply troubled and was pouring out her soul to the Lord asking Eli not to take her for a wicked woman.

Verse 17, shows Eli as having understood Hannah and blessed her with the words *"Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant you what you have asked of him."* And verse 18 shows Hannah's response, in which *"she went her way and ate something and her face was no longer down cast."*

In verses 19-20, Hannah and Elkanah went back home and *"Elkanah lay with Hannah his wife and the Lord remembered her."* She finally produced a son as she had asked, and named him Samuel, saying, *"because I asked the Lord for him."*

2.2 Discussion of the Text

The text begins with the ancestral background of Elkanah with its patriarchal lining of the fore fathers from Jeroham to Elihu to Tohu to Zuph who was an Ephramite. According to Adeyemo, "Elkanah is described as an Ephramite because he lived in the Hill country of Ephraim."⁴⁹ And Ephraim is one of the tribes of Israel named after Ephraim who according to the ATS Bible Dictionary is "the second son of Joseph, born in Egypt, (Genesis 41:52). The portion of Ephraim was large and central, and embraced some of the most fertile land in all Canaan. It extended from the Mediterranean across to the Jordan, north of the portions of Dan and Benjamin and included Shiloh, Schechem, etc."⁵⁰No wonder in verse 3, Elkanah went to Shiloh to sacrifice to the Lord Almighty.

In the text, Elkanah's genealogy is traced up to the fourth generation. This leaves us with a question, why? From the text, the answer to this question is not given, however, scholars such as Baldwin, notice that, "Elkanah's genealogy to four generations serves as an indication of his standing in society, though nothing more is known about those named here."⁵¹ Similarly, according to Brown et al "the genealogy gives Samuel an identity in terms of people and places. His parentage is given to the fifth generation a detail that hints at noble descent."⁵²

The text portrays, Elkanah as a polygamous man. He has two wives-Peninnah and Hannah. Peninnah is introduced as the mother of Elkanah's children while Hannah is portrayed as childless. In this, there are two major issues to be noted that is, polygamy and barrenness, which are common in the Bible.

⁴⁹ Tokunboh Adeyemo. *Africa Bible commentary*, Nairobi: worldalive 2006 (p.328).

⁵⁰ ATS Bible Dictionary, Ephraim. biblehub.com/topical/e/ephrain.htm#20/6/2018.

⁵¹ Joyce Baldwin. *Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries. 1 and 2 Samuel*. London: Intervarsity press. 1988. (p.52)

⁵² Brown et al. *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*, Great Britain: Printice-Hall, Inc. 1968 (P.165).

2.2.1 Polygamy in the Bible

Polygamy in the Bible started right before the time of the Patriarchs. There are many scriptures where famous men are portrayed as practicing polygamy, for instance:

Abraham in agreement with his wife Sarah's request took her maid servant Hagar as a wife and made her pregnant. So, both Sarah and Hagar became his wives. (See Genesis 16:1-5). This made Abraham to become polygamous. Also, chapter 25:6 portrays Abraham as a man who had concubines, therefore, an indication of polygamy.

In the marriage narrative of Jacob, who is the grandson of Abraham, we see polygamy being practiced. Jacob wanted to marry Rachael the daughter of Laban. Laban gave him Leah who was older than Rachael as the tradition did not allow for the younger sister to get married before the older one. So, he was asked to work for another seven years to get Rachael, which he did. He therefore ended up marrying the two sisters (see Genesis 29:15-30). And in his marriage with Rachael, they did not bear children. Rachael gave him her maid servant Bilhah as a wife; Jacob slept with her and bore a child. Leah also gave her maid servant as a wife to Jacob when she stopped producing at old age (See Genesis 30:1-13). Jacob became a husband of four wives hence polygamous.

Esau at the age of 40, is portrayed as marrying two wives whose names are Judith the daughter of Beerli the Hittite and Basemath, daughter of Elon a Hittite too (see Genesis 26:34). Marrying two women is practicing polygamy. Esau is therefore one of the people who practiced polygamy in the Biblical narrative.

Gideon is portrayed as a father of seventy sons, for he had many wives. He also had a concubine, who lived in Shechem (see Judges 8:30-31). These many wives of Gideon and the concubine clearly shows that he was a polygamous man.

In listing the sons of David while reigning in Hebron, the writer mentioned their mothers (David's wives) too. And these are; Amnon whose mother was Ahinoam, Daniel whose mother was Abigail, Absalom whose mother was Maacah, Adonijah whose mother was Haggith, Shephatiah whose mother was Abital and Ithream whose mother was Eglah. While in Jerusalem, he also had other wives and concubines. By having these many wives, David is one of the polygamous men in the Bible.

In the narrative of King Solomon's wives, the writer shows that the king loved many women besides Pharaoh's daughter, some of whom are; Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians and Hittites. In total Solomon had seven hundred wives of royal birth and three hundred concubines (see 1Kings 11:1-4). King Solomon with all this number of wives is one of the outstanding polygamous men in the Biblical narratives.

In family narrative of Rehoboam, the son of King Solomon who succeeded the king, he is shown as the husband of Mahalath, Maacah and others. In summary, the number of Rehoboam's wives is given as eighteen and sixty concubines, twenty eight sons and sixty daughters (see 2Chronicles 11:18-21). King Rehoboam therefore, is one of the good examples of polygamous men in the Bible.

After Abijah the king of Judah defeated Jeroboam in a war battle, he grew strong and is portrayed as a king who married fourteen wives with twenty two sons and sixteen daughters (See

2Chronicles 13:21). This means that after his victory he became polygamous. His marriage is therefore one of the examples of polygamous marriages in the Bible.

From the above examples of polygamous practices in the Bible, one may ask: What were the causes of polygamy? The answers to this question can be got directly from the Bible and also from scholarly views as follows:

From Biblical narratives, the chiefcause of polygamy is childlessness. For instance; when Sarai, Abram's wife failed to produce for him, she asked him to sleep with her maid servant. And this made Abram to have both of them as his wives hence becoming polygamous(See Genesis 16:1-5). As such, scholars like Brown et al, have attributed Elkanah's practice of polygamy to childlessness when they write that, "The causal reference to polygamy would argue for its acceptance at the time, which possibly grew out of the fear of childlessness."⁵³So, barrenness seems to be a strong reason that would lead men to practice polygamy in the biblical context.

From extra Biblical sources, Kadari gives the same view when he writes that, "Rabbis state that Hannah was Elkanah's first wife; after they had been married for ten years, and he saw that Hannah bore him no children, he also took Peninnah as a wife (Pesika Rabbati 43). The Mishnah ordains that when a couple has been married for ten years without bringing any children into the world, the husband is required to take a second (or additional) wife in order to fulfill the commandment to be fruitful and multiply⁵⁴ (M Yevamot 6:6).

More so, Kadari observes that, "another tradition has the initiative to marry Peninnah coming from Hannah. Realizing that she was childless, she said to herself: If I tell Elkanah to take an additional wife, God will see that I brought a rival wife into my house, and He will remember me

⁵³ Brown et al. *The Jerome Biblical Commentary* , Great Britain: Printice-Hall, Inc. 1968 (P.165).

⁵⁴ Tamar kadar. Penninah: Midrash and Aggadar. <https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article>. 20/6/2018.

(Pesika Rabbati 43). The Midrash thus likens the narrative of Elkanah and Hannah with the narratives of the patriarchs and matriarchs (Sarah and Hagar, Racheal and Bilhah), in which the beloved wife who is barren, initiates the taking of an additional wife in order to produce offspring.⁵⁵

Much as Hannah seems to be Elkanah's first wife from the above scholarly arguments, it could be that she is Elkanah's second wife. This is because polygamy was a very common practice in Israel. And barrenness was not the only cause of it. For instance, Mendelson observes that "Canaanite and the Israelite families were polygamous. The Ugaritic god Baal has three perfect brides. The Deuteronomic law takes it as a matter of fact that the normal well-to-do family consisted of two wives. Since polygamy was the rule (with the exception of the poor) a man could have as many wives and concubines as he could financially support."⁵⁶ And we noted earlier on that, showing Elkanah's genealogy to the fourth generation in verse 1-2, was to show that he comes from a noble family background, and so, qualified to marry more than one wife. Therefore, the argument that he married Peninnah as the second wife because Hannah was barren is not strong enough, but seems to come from the ideology that polygamy is a bad practice.

An imbalance in the number of males and females is another cause of polygamy. For example, according to Whyte, in Ancient Mesopotamia, "Children, particularly, sons were seen as the best source of economic and financial security."⁵⁷ So, boys were seen as being more important than girls. In such an environment, if a couple produced only female children, they were not comfortable with it, hence, men in such situations went ahead to marry more wives to produce male children, leading to polygamy.

⁵⁵Tamar Kadar. Peninnah: Midrash and Aggadah. <https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article.20/6/2018>.

⁵⁶ Mendelson, The Family in the Ancient Near East. <https://wit-resources.s3.amazonaws.com.29/08/2018>.

⁵⁷ Jonice P. de Whyte; Woman; a cultural narrative reading of Hebrew Bible Barrenness. 2014 (p.65).

The need to produce large number of children to work herds and/ or fields led people to become polygamous. For example, according to Whyte, "numerous children are encouraged in this Sumerian proverb, 'marry a wife according to your choice! Have children to your heart's desire!'"⁵⁸ He explains this as not only having sexual life but as having to do with producing many children. An example of how such a situation led to marrying more wives is seen between Leah and Jacob. In this, when Leah saw that she had stopped producing, she gave her maidservant Zilpah to her husband (See Genesis 30:9). The purpose is to produce more children.

The desire to increase the prestige and wealth of a household through multiple marriage contracts is yet another cause of polygamy. In the Bible, this is clearly portrayed by the writer of 2 Chronicles. He puts it clear that, in the war between Abijah the king of Judah and Jeroboam, Abijah won, and the Lord struck Jeroboam down but Abijah grew in strength, and his growth is followed by marrying fourteen wives (see 2Chronicles 13:1ff). This must have been a prestigious practice among the Israelites.

Also, cultural beliefs are another cause of polygamy. This is clearly seen in the marriage narrative of Jacob and Rachael. In this, Jacob wanted to marry Rachael the daughter of Laban. Laban gave him Leah who was older than Rachael as the tradition did not allow for the younger sister to get married before the older one. So, He was asked to work for another seven years to get Rachael, which he did. He therefore ended up marrying the two sisters, (see Genesis29:15-30).

In another instance in the Bible, God allowed polygamy. For instance, in giving miscellaneous laws, God commanded Israelites that, if brothers are living together and one of them dies without

⁵⁸Jonice P. de Whyte; Woman; a cultural narrative reading of Hebrew Bible Barrenness. 2014 (p.30)

a son, his brother is to marry the widow and produce with her. And the first son is to bear the name of the dead brother so that his name will not be blotted out of Israel. (Deuteronomy 25:5-6). In this law, there is no indication of whether the brother who is to marry the widow has to be single or not. Therefore, it means regardless of his marital status, he is to marry the widow. So, if this happens when he is already married, he will be forced to marry a second wife, hence becoming polygamous.

Therefore, as seen from above, in Israel, people had reasons for practicing polygamy. However, Elkanah's polygamy is attributed by many scholars to barrenness. So, barrenness is worth paying attention to.

As noted earlier, Hannah is portrayed as a barren woman. And from the above discussion, it is known that barrenness is one of the causes of polygamy in the Bible. This now brings us to answer the question: How was barrenness perceived in Hannah's context?

2.2.2The Perception of Barrenness in Israel

In Israel, children were a means by which a man continued to live even after death. For instance, while giving miscellaneous laws, the Lord commanded that if brothers are living together and one dies without a son, the other should marry the widow and the first son born in this marriage is to be named after the dead brother so that his name will not be blotted out of Israel (see Deuteronomy 25:5). To add onto that, Buttrick et al observe that in Israel "a man could not look forward to personal survival after death. But he could survive in his children, who would keep

his name alive among men. It was therefore a great indignity for a wife to be unable to bear her husband children."⁵⁹ In such a context, Hannah must have lost her dignity.

Also according to Barker, in the Biblical context, "barrenness was a biblical tragedy for a married woman (Gen 11:30; 15:2-4; 16:1-2; 25:5). Hannah initially has pride of place, probably because she was Elkanah's favorite. Later however, Peninnah is mentioned first, no doubt because she was a prolific child bearer (cf. v.4)."⁶⁰ So, the writers of the text must have looked at Hannah, a barren woman, as less important than Peninnah. This must have been Hannah's tragedy.

In the Ancient Near East, barrenness brought disgrace to the family. This is because every woman was expected to produce children. Whyte puts this clearly when he writes that, "The desire and expectation for fertility was ingrained into persons from childhood. From babyhood until she was married and left for her husband's house, a girl was being trained to be what every woman should be—a mother. For instance, in ancient Mesopotamia, the stress was not on simply becoming a wife, for if a woman got married and could not bear healthy children it brought great disgrace to her, her husband and both of their extended families. And the wider ancient Near Eastern context encouraged and expected women to live up to the ideal of motherhood."⁶¹ So, if failing to be a mother disgraces the whole family, then the barren woman must be the most disgraced in the Ancient Near Eastern family.

Barrenness also meant being rejected by a man and his family. In other words it disqualified a woman for marriage. Whyte observes that, "Boys were also socialized to prioritize fertility over other 'womanly' attributes. More than desiring a woman who would only satisfy sensual

⁵⁹George Arther Buttrick. *The interpreter's Bible*. United States of America: Abingdon press 1981. (p.877)

⁶⁰ Kenneth L. Barker and John Kohlenberger. *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*. United States of America: Zondervan 1994 (p.381).

⁶¹ Jonice P. de Whyte; *Woman; a cultural narrative reading of Hebrew Bible Barrenness*. 2014 (p.66).

pleasures, young men were counseled to desire wives who were 'hot limbed,' in the sense that she could give birth to numerous children. For instance, in this Sumerian proverb, 'marry a wife according to your choice! Have children to your heart's desire!' and, the Instruction of Ptah-hotep refers to the wife as 'a profitable field for her lord.' While this metaphor appears to be only sexual in nature it is closely tied with the conception of bearing children. An infertile individual was 'regarded as being less than a complete human being.'"⁶²

In the Ancient Near East, barrenness also led to loss of honor. For instance, according to Whyte, among the Mesopotamian people, "more than being a wife, a woman's fertility in marriage was the way she could obtain honor. Failure to produce children was sure to leave her without prestige and social status. This therefore belittles this woman in her marriage, and even in her parents' family. This is because Honor was ascribed not only to an individual but to his/her family and community. Thus, if one person 'earned'honor, then the honor reflected on the whole family, and conversely if one person was shamed that too reflected on the family or group with which the person was associated."⁶³

Also, in Ancient Near East, barrenness was an economic loss for the woman after the death of her husband. For instance, according to Whyte, in Ancient Mesopotamia, "brides felt some responsibility in ensuring the continuation and financial prosperity of their husband's household. But, a childless woman may have been seen as one who endangered her husband's property and financial prospect because she could not give him children to inherit that property and wealth. Childless women faced the challenge of a lack of financial support in their dotage, especially in the case of widowhood. In a matrilineal context, if a woman's husband died she was not only in

⁶²Jonice P. de Whyte; Woman; a cultural narrative reading of Hebrew Bible Barrenness. 2014 (p.66)

⁶³Ibid (p.68)

danger of being left without his financial aid but also of losing her dowry, which would be absorbed into his estate. A woman was only able to access or manage her dowry once she had given birth to children. Consequently, if a woman did not have children then her dowry could be absorbed into her husband's estate that would then be taken over by his next of kin."⁶⁴ She therefore loses it all.

Again in the Ancient Near East, barrenness also meant psychological torture. For instance, according to Whyte "the celebration of motherhood often involved specific rituals. A Hittite woman's successful delivery was commemorated by a festival of birth. It is recorded that the delivered woman would sit on the birth stool while the priest, her husband and attending women would bow low to her. The birthstool was believed to hold an almost sacred status. Whatever ideological agendas were behind the sacred status of the stool it is evident that the new mother received reverence."⁶⁵ A barren woman misses such a respect and so, when she sees this, she obviously regrets not having a child hence she gets tortured psychologically. Also, from Biblical narrative, it can lead to jealousy which then results into psychological torture. For instance, in the Rachael-Leah narrative, when Rachael saw that he was not bearing children for Jacob, she became jealousy of the sister Leah (see Genesis 30:1), which tortured her psychologically.

Barrenness was also considered to be sin, sickness, and a disgrace. For instance Whyte observes that, "One Mesopotamian woman's prayer to the goddess Ishtar reflects such a belief, the prayer is: 'may my transgression be forgiven and my guilt be remitted ... Give me a name and a descendent! May my womb be fruitful.' The woman's plea for forgiveness of her sins may

⁶⁴Jonice P. de Whyte; Woman; a cultural narrative reading of Hebrew Bible Barrenness. 2014 (p.68)

⁶⁵ Ibid

indicate that ancient women would have questioned if they had done something deserving of an ill fate. The added burden of spiritual anguish likely added to the pain of infertility."⁶⁶ However in Hannah's narrative, her bareness is shown as the Lord closing her womb (see 1 Samuel 1:5).

According to Kalya White , in the Ancient Near East, "a barren wife represents a seemingly insurmountable obstacle to one of the primary functions of marriage: to produce heirs capable of assisting with the subsistence and economic stability of the family. One could even say that in some situations, "a childless marriage was not a full-fledged marriage."⁶⁷ In this case, Hannah must have been looked at as an obstacle to the primary function of marriage.

Kalya also observes that, in the Ancient Near East, "Another option evidenced in some contracts is to "adopt" a woman as a wife to the husband and slave to the first wife, as demonstrated in CT 8 22b: "To Bunene-abi (Husband) she is a wife, to Belessunu (Wife 1) she is an *amtum*. This type of marriage contract is also beneficial to the first-ranking wife, for any children born to the slave wife expressly belong to the first-ranking wife. Although she may retain some rights and privileges, she loses her position as primary wife and "mother" to any children born."⁶⁸ So, barrenness was a source of discomfort to the wife.

Therefore, as seen from the above perceptions of bareness, it is right to deduce that, in this text, barrenness was Hannah's plight.

Verse 3 portrays Elkannah and his family as devoted religious people as shown by his sacrificial ritual and worship at Shiloh. And Brown et al note that, "the custom of an annual visit to the sanctuary may be taken as a favorable comment on the piety of Elkannah and his

⁶⁶ Jonice P. de Whyte; Woman; a cultural narrative reading of Hebrew Bible Barrenness. 2014 (p.85)

⁶⁷Kalya White The Legal Status of Barren Wives in the Ancient Near East.<https://www.cbeinternational.org> 18/07/2018

⁶⁸ Ibid

family."⁶⁹ Meaning Elkannah and his family's act of being religious was a good thing. Why at Shiloh? According to Adeyemo, "Shilo was where the tent of meeting had been set up after the conquest from the Promised Land."⁷⁰ It was therefore a place set apart to worship the Lord. And Brown et al further add that "Shiloh is the present day Seilun South of Nablus between Shechem and Bethel."⁷¹

In the marriage context, Elkannah is portrayed as a man who loves one wife more than the other, as he would give Hannah a double portion of meat. But the question is, why would he love a childless woman much? It is not clear in the text why Elkannah loved Hannah more, as the Bible does not give us the circumstances under which he married Peninnah. However, it can be argued that Hannah must have been the first wife, because in the Ancient Near East, first wives were respected. For example Whyte observes that, among the Hammurabi, "the second wife, regardless of whether she is a female slave or a free woman, shall not claim equality with the first wife."⁷² Therefore, in such a context, if Hannah was the first wife, Elkannah had all the reasons to show her that love.

Hannah's childlessness is shown as been caused by the Lord closing her womb. From this, a question arises, why did the Lord Close Hannah's womb? In the Ancient Near East, there were several causes of barrenness, such as:

Sin

In the minds of the Ancient near Easterners, barrenness was a punishment for past sins. For instance, according to Whyte, One Mesopotamian woman's prayer to the goddess Ishtar reflects

⁶⁹ Brown et al. *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*, Great Britain: Printice-Hall, Inc. 1968 (P.165).

⁷⁰ Tokunboh Adeyemo. *Africa Bible commentary*, Nairobi: worldalive 2006 (p.328)

⁷¹ Brown et al. *The Jerome Biblical Commentary* Great Britain: Printice-Hall, Inc. 1968 (P.165).

⁷² Jonice P. de Whyte; *Woman; a cultural narrative reading of Hebrew Bible Barrenness*. 2014 (p.42)

such a belief, "'may my transgression be forgiven and my guilt be remitted ... Give me a name and a descendent! May my womb be fruitful.' The woman's plea for forgiveness of her sins may indicate that ancient women would have questioned if they had done something deserving of an ill fate."⁷³ So, sin was a valid cause of barrenness. This was because it was believed that God is the giver of children. For example in the Mesopotamian Legend of King Etana, the king of Kish, Whyte observes that, when the king failed to produce, "King Etana seems desperate and appeals for the deity's help on the basis of his blood libations; animal sacrifices; incense offerings; and honor and respect for the gods and spirits."⁷⁴ From this, it is clear that the king believed that the gods and the spirits would give him children. Another man who proactively seeks solution for sterility is Danil, of the Aqhat epic. "Danil makes food and drink offerings to the gods at the temple."⁷⁵ With such in mind, Adeyemo is right to conclude that, "the statement *the Lord had closed her womb*, simply states that the Lord had not given her children."⁷⁶ From the Biblical narrative, why the Lord closed Hannah's womb is anonymous, but it can be deduced from this argument that, the writer of the text wanted to show that it is the Lord who gives children

Other Causes of Bareness in the Ancient Near East

Visitation by demons

It was sound in the mind of the Ancient Near Eastern people that demons were causes of infertility, miscarriages, and stillbirth. This is evidenced by the figurines Whyte observes when he writes that, "Lamashtu and Lilitu, give concrete expression to what seems to be the apparently deep-rooted fear of infertility. They represent the jealous woman without children, counterpart of

⁷³Jonice P. de Whyte; *Woman; a cultural narrative reading of Hebrew Bible Barrenness*. 2014 (p.42)

⁷⁴Ibid

⁷⁵ Ibid (p.48)

⁷⁶ Ibid

the happy mother."⁷⁷ He continues to add that, "From the late Babylonian period a magic incantation bowl, YBC 2364, tells the story of a female demon, Bguzan-Lilit. Bguzan enters a particular household and changes her appearance so as to seduce the husband. During her seduction she manages to steal the man's semen"⁷⁸ thereby making the man incapable of impregnating a woman. But Hannah's barrenness was not as a result of visitation by demons.

Witchcraft

In the mind of the Ancient near Easterners, witchcraft so much led to barrenness. For instance Whyte notes that, "in ancient Assyria failure to bear children or marry could also bring the suspicion of witchcraft onto a woman. A woman cavorting with demons was seen as incapable of conceiving or carrying a child to full term, since both demons and witches were known to "eat" babies before or at the time of birth."⁷⁹ Just like visitation of demons and sin, from Hannah's narrative, witchcraft is not the cause of her barrenness.

Therefore, from the above discussion, the causes of barrenness such as sin, demons, witchcraft, among others, are not the cause of Hannah's barrenness, but one can conclude that her cause of barrenness which according to the text is 'the Lord closing her womb' comes from the ideology of the people that it is the Lord who gives children. That is why, the writer brought Hannah's conception of Samuel after her fervent prayer.

Verses 6-7, portray Hannah's co-wife as a rival, the rival kept provoking her year after year which made Hannah to weep and not eat. Rival in Hebrew comes from the root *kaph*, *Ayin Mem*, which according to the Brown Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon, means to "vex, or provoke

⁷⁷Jonice P. de Whyte; Woman; a cultural narrative reading of Hebrew Bible Barrenness. 2014 (p.42)

⁷⁸ Ibid

⁷⁹ Ibid (p.44).

to anger."⁸⁰ So, by calling Peninnah a rival means the one who provoked Hannah to anger. This provocation took place year after year when Hannah went to the house of the Lord. What happens in the house of the Lord is inferred from verses 3-5, where Elkannah would sacrifice and give the portions of meat to Peninnah and her children and to Hannah he would give a double portion. The question is why does the provocation come at this particular moment? There is no clear answer to this, but it can be deduced that, Peninnah, got jealous because Elkannah gives Hannah a double portion. According to Walton et al, "meat was a rare item in ancient meals."⁸¹ So, Elkannah's failure to distribute it equally must be the chief reason for Peninnah's action. We do not know what this double portion means, that is whether it was double of what one person would get, or doubling everything that was given to Peninnah and her children.

Verses 8-9, portray Elkannah as a loving husband who consoled Hannah in her torment. He tried to tell Hannah that he was more important to her than 10 sons. According to Kadar, the phrase 10 sons, depicts the number of sons Peninnah had. For instance, he writes that, "according to Midrash, she had ten sons. This tradition is based on Elkanah's question to Hannah (v.8) 'Am I not more devoted to you than ten sons?' He thereby seeks to console Hannah by asserting that his love exceeds that of Peninnah's ten sons. "But verse 9-10 shows that even Elkanah's love could not wipe away Hannah's tears of childlessness. And so, a happy family moment of eating and drinking turned into a moment of weeping for Hannah and in this tough moment, she prayed to God. Hannah's bitterness due to childlessness is a parallel of other women in the Bible such as, Sarah (see Genesis 16:1ff), Manoah's wife (See Judges 13:2).

⁸⁰F. Brown, S. Driver-Briggs. Hebrew and English Lexicon, United States of America: Hendrickson publishers 2015 (p.495).

⁸¹ John H. Walton, Victor H. Mathews and Mark W. Chavals. *The IVP Bible Background Commentary-Old Testament*. United States of America: Intervarsity press. 2000 (p.282)

Verse 11 gives Hannah's vow. One may ask, why did Hannah have to make a vow to the Lord? The answer to this question is likely what Whyte observes; that, in Israel, "infertile women would make offerings to the gods but when they really wanted to intensify their petition they would make a vow to ensure fertility."⁸² So, Hannah is just one of the women who made such vows. From the Hebrew Bible, other narratives that contain vows include: Israel made a vow to the Lord when they were going in for war with the Canaanite king of Arad. In the vow, they said, *If you will deliver these people into our hands, we will totally destroy their city*(see Numbers 21:1-3); When the Lord appeared to Jacob in a dream and promised to be with him, Jacob made a vow to Him saying *If God will be with me and watch over me in this journey I am taking and provide me food to eat and clothe to wear so that I return safely to my father's house, then the Lord will be my God* (see Gen. 28:10-22).

Also, when Jephthah wanted to go into war with the Ammonites, he made a vow to the Lord saying *If you give the Ammonites into my hands, whatever comes out of the door of my house to meet me when I return from the triumph from the Ammonites will be the Lord's and I will sacrifice it as a burnt offering*(see Judges 11:30-40); Coming back to our text, Hanna's vow says that, *Oh Lord Almighty, if you will only look upon your servant's misery and remember me and not forget your servant but give her a son, then I will give him to the Lord for all the days of his life...* (see 1 Sam. 1:11). These vows are conditional. In a similar view, Cartledge observes that "in the Hebrew Bible, vows are always conditional promises to God, to be fulfilled only when and if God answers the petitioner's request. Narrative vows uniformly have an 'if ...Then'

⁸² Jonice P. de Whyte; *Woman; a cultural narrative reading of Hebrew Bible Barrenness*. 2014 (p.54).

structure in which the protasis states the petition and the apodosis contains the promise."⁸³ Hannah's vow fulfills this condition hence, it is a narrative vow.

In Hannah's vow, she called herself "your servant" which according to Barker is "a word that indicates her submissive in the presence of a superior."⁸⁴ And request God to remember her and give her 'a son'. One may ask, why did Hannah ask for a son but not a daughter? Church's view on this is that, "She was very particular, and yet very modest in her petition. She begged a child, a man-child that it might be fit to serve in the tabernacle."⁸⁵ This may be true in the religious point of view, however, Knowles gives a different reason that, "children especially sons would continue the names of Elkannah's fathers (1Sam 1:1) and transmit their possessions for years to come." Close to this view, Whyte observes that, in the Ancient Near East for instance, among the Mesopotamian people, "due to their labor potential and inheritance rights, it has long been assumed that male children were preferred over and above female children. Male children provided security for their mothers when their fathers died, so that the woman would not be a destitute widow."⁸⁶ Therefore, much as Elkannah had children with Peninnah, Hannah wanted her own children, probably for such a security.

Hannah vowed that 'I will give him to the Lord for all the days of his life and no razor will ever be used on his head.' According to Baldwin, this "implies a Nazarite vow, like that prescribed by the angel of the Lord for Samson (Jdg 13:5 cf. Nu 6). The verb nazar means 'to separate,' 'to consecrate'. Hannah voluntarily undertook the vow on behalf of her son who would be known by his uncut hair to be consecrated to the Lord. The origins of this practice appear to go back into

⁸³ Tony W. Cartledge. *Vows in the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East*. London: JSOT Press. 1992(p.18).

⁸⁴ Kenneth L.Barker and John Kohlenberger. *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*. United States of America: Zondervan 1994 (p.381).

⁸⁵ Leslie F.Church (ed). *Mathew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible in one Volume*. Great Britain: Marshall Morgan and Scott.1960.(p.282).

⁸⁶ Jonice P. de Whyte; *Woman; a cultural narrative reading of Hebrew Bible Barrenness*. 2014 (p.31).

Semitic culture."⁸⁷ For instance, according to the Jewish Virtual Library, "the uncut hair of the Nazarite is his distinction. From the verb nazar which means 'to separate,' 'to consecrate', a Nazarite is therefore, a person who is set apart or consecrated to work for God. Cartledge confirms this when he writes that, "the modern concept of the Nazarites refers to people who serve for a predetermined period of time and who are prohibited from cutting their hair, drinking wine, or coming into contact with the dead."⁸⁸ In other words, they are set apart. "Since hair continues to grow throughout life, it was considered by the ancients to be the seat of man's vitality and life-force, and in ritual it often served as his substitute. For example, a ninth century B.C.E. bowl found in a Cypriot temple contains an inscription on its outside surface indicating that it contained the hair of the donor. The offering of hair is also attested in later times in Babylonia (Prichard, text, 339-40), Syria (Lucian, *De dea*, 55, 60), Greece (K.Meuli), and Arabia (W.R Smith)."⁸⁹ So, the Nazarite vow of uncut hair was a common practice among the Semites. Cartledge observes that "a Nazarite's hair referred to the head piece of a king, or high priest which served as his sign of distinction."⁹⁰ Hannah's vow of not cutting the hair of the son that God would give her was therefore a sign of distinction of the son from others.

Verses 12-14, portray Hannah as a woman who "was praying in her heart and her lips were moving" but the voice was not heard. And "*Eli thought she was drunk.*" According to Barker, "Eli misunderstood Hannah's actions. Prayer in the ancient world was almost always audible and

⁸⁷ Joyce Baldwin. *Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries. 1 and 2 Samuel*. London: Intervarsity press. 1988. (p.52)

⁸⁸ Tony W. Cartledge. *Vows in the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East*. London: JSOT Press. 1992(p.18)

⁸⁹ Jewish Virtual Libray. Nazarite, <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/18/07/2018>.

⁹⁰ Tony W. Cartledge. *Vows in the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East*. London: JSOT Press. 1992(p.18)

drunkenness was not uncommon of festal occasions. He therefore mistakenly rebukes her."⁹¹
This therefore means that Hannah prayed out of order.

Verse 17, shows Eli as having understood Hannah and blessed her with the words "*Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant you what you have asked of him.*" And verse 18 shows Hannah's response, in which she went her way and ate something and her face was no longer down cast. This is because she believed she was going to get a son. This therefore implies that only having a son would wipe away Hannah's tears. And Hannah showed her faithfulness by believing in her prayer and the blessings of Eli.

In verses 19-20, they went back home and "Elkannah laid with Hannah his wife and the Lord remembered her." She finally produced a son as she had asked, and named him Samuel, saying, "because I asked the Lord for him." According to the Brown Driver Briggs Hebrew Lexicon the name Samuel means "name of El or his name is El."⁹² In Hebrew, El means God. In other words Samuel means, name of God or his name is God as Barker observes, "Hannah called him Samuel (lit 'Name of God')."⁹³ To Church, "some make the etymology of this name to be much the same to that of Ishmael-heard of God because the mother's prayers were remarkably heard and he was an answer to them. Others because of the reason she gives for the name make it to signify 'asked of God.' Mercies in answer to prayer are to be remembered with peculiar expressions of thankfulness."⁹⁴

⁹¹ Kenneth L.Barker and John Kohlenberger. *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*.United States of America: Zondervan 1994 (p.381).

⁹² Brown et al, *The Brown Driver Briggs Hebrew Lexicon*. United States of America: Hendrickson Publishers. 2017 (p.1028).

⁹³ Kenneth L.Barker and John Kohlenberger. *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*.United States of America: Zondervan 1994 (p.382).

⁹⁴Leslie F.Church (ed). *Mathew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible in one Volume*.Great Britain: Marshall Morgan and Scott.1960.(p.282).

Hannah is portrayed as the giver of the name and this name must be carrying a message in the context of Hannah's plight. According to Adeyemo, "Hannah was the one who named her child. In Israel... the father usually chose the name, although occasionally the mother might announce the name but usually in conjunction with her husband. But Hannah seems to have been allowed to name this child, possibly because her husband may not have been as desperate for a child as Hannah was."⁹⁵

2.3 Analysis of Characters in the Text

The major characters in the text are, Elkanah, Hannah, and Peninnah. Worth noting are the interrelationships between these characters.

Elkanah

Elkanah is a husband, has a polygamous family, he has children and does not seem to have balanced love as he gave Hannah double portion of meat against Peninnah. He is a religious man as he goes to Shiloh year after year to sacrifice to the Lord.

Peninnah

Peninnah is portrayed as the mother of Elkanah's children, his wife and Hannah's co-wife. Her relationship with her husband and children is not emphasized, but much emphasis is put on her relationship with her co-wife-Hannah. She is portrayed as Hannah's rival who kept on provoking and irritating the latter. (See verse 6-7). In this, Peninnah is a jealous woman.

Hannah

⁹⁵ Tokunboh Adeyemo. *Africa Bible commentary*, Nairobi: worldalive 2006 (p.328)

In this text, Hannah is a childless wife, who is deeply troubled. Her barrenness is shown as the Lord closing her womb. Due to childlessness, he was weeping for two reasons. One, she was provoked by her co wife and the other is that she wanted children of her own. The climax of her weeping was at Shiloh when they had finished eating and drinking.

To the husband, Hannah was more loved than her co-wife. However, she was ever weeping as her co-wife kept provoking her. Hannah's response to this provocation is weeping and turning to the Lord in prayers. (See verse 10).

She is a faithful woman. This is shown by her response to Eli's blessing in verse 18, where she went, ate and her face was no longer down cast. She did not do this because she had conceived but because she believed in her prayers and Eli's blessings, showing her faith.

Hannah, finally, became the mother of Samuel. She is the giver of his name. According to the text, she gave him this name saying, "*Because I asked the Lord for him.*" This therefore shows that Hannah believed that Samuel was given to her by God.

Eli

Eli is the father of Hophni and Phinehas in the text. His role in the text is to officiate in the religious ceremonies with his children. It is this religious ceremony at Shiloh that gives the setting for Hannah's prayer. Eli's other role is his response to Hannah's prayer which ends with a blessing.

In conclusion, the major characters in the text are Elkanah, Hannah and Peninnah. Elkanah is a husband, father and has a polygamous family which is a common practice in the Bible. Peninnah is the mother of Elkanah's children, his wife and a co-wife who provokes her rivalry. Hannah is

Elkannah's other wife who suffered the effect of barrenness in a polygamous family from mainly her rivalry, but was loved by her husband, which could not console her until her own child was given to her by God; hence she ends up giving a theophoric name to the child.

It is clear from the text that Samuel is a result of an answered prayer. Hannah went through the pain of barrenness and asked God to give her a son. The family was a polygamous one where Hannah's co-wife had children while Hannah did not. And so, her co-wife (Peninnah) kept provoking her. Her courage to do this must have been influenced by the perception of barrenness in the Ancient Near East such as a tragedy for a woman, disgrace to the family, rejection by a man and his family, an end to a lineage, loss of honor, an economic loss for the woman, psychological torture, sin, sickness and disgrace as discussed above. Although in the text, Hannah's barrenness is portrayed as being caused by the Lord closing her womb, other causes of barrenness in the Ancient Near Eastern minds are: sin, visitation by demons, and witchcraft among others. These perceptions of barrenness made Hannah to suffer in the polygamous family, which caused her to ask God for a son in prayer and vowed to give him to serve God. The gift of a son brought joy to Hannah and named him Samuel which scholars have interpreted as 'name of God or his name is God,' or 'heard of God,' or 'asked of God.' This name seems to be influenced by the circumstances that surrounded the birth of the child. And in the text, Hannah is the one who named her child. The question is: Is this how naming is done in the Ancient Near East and the Bible? This therefore brings us to the naming practices in the Ancient Near East and the Bible, which is reverted to in the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

NAMING PRACTICES IN THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST

3.0 Introduction

This chapter entails the naming practices in the Ancient Near East, and the Bible. It elaborates on how people name their children and what a name is to them. In the two contexts (Ancient Near East and the Bible), the question of who names a child is also answered in this chapter.

3.1 Naming Practices in the Ancient Near East

Bauer has rightly argued that, "among the Semites a name is far from being a mere empty word. Rather, it means something powerful, something which, the moment it is used, makes the person named present."⁹⁶ Semites are the groups of people from Southwest Asia, who speak Semitic languages. Semitic languages include; Accadian, Canaanite, Aramaic, Hebrew, Syriac, Tigrinya, and Arabic. In the same view with Bauer, Pumphrey notes that, "to the ancient, the name was an element of personality and of power. The power of the name is so crucial that Ancient Near Eastern parents normally gave their children names with a positive meaning, and many times the name contained theophoric elements in hopes that the god or goddess would bless that child."⁹⁷ This discussion shows how children were named among the Ancient Near Eastern communities; such as: Canaanites, Babylonians, Sumerians, Akkadians, Phoenicians, ancient Assyrians, Ancient Egyptians, among others.

In the Ancient Near East, personal names had meanings, like, the theophoric names. They expressed religious attitude. For instance, among the Ancient Assyrians, Campbell gives us

⁹⁶ Johannes B. Bauer. *Encyclopedia of Biblical Theology*. Great Britain: Sheed and Ward. 1970. (p.611).

⁹⁷ Nicholas Benjamin Pumphrey. *The concept of Secret Names in the Ancient Near East*. 2009 (p.7)

names such as "Adad-Nirari-meaning 'Adad is helper' from God's name Adad combined with Akkadian *neraru* meaning helper. Hannibal means 'grace of Ba'al' from the Phoenician hann combined with the name of the god Ba'al. Nebuchadnezzar (Babylonian), from (Nevukhadnetzzar), the Hebrew form of the Akkadian name Nabu-kudurri-usur meaning 'Nabu protect my eldest son', derived from the god's name NABU combined with *kuduru* meaning 'eldest son' and an imperative form of *nasaru*, meaning to protect."⁹⁸ This shows that people had positive attitudes towards their gods as they see him as a protector, helper, graceful, among others. They are therefore a religious people who believe in God as they use His name in their personal names.

Names were also given to send away evil spirits from attacking the child or taking its soul. Pumphrey illustrates this with the 'brit milah', where "naming will be postponed or the child will receive a false "double" name until the culture feels it is safe to give the real name."⁹⁹ He also gives fowler's statement as an example that "Akkadian names ...such as Enlil is 'father of the weak.' If the demon hears the name that represents a child who is lame or un-healthy, the demon will probably not strike the child with an ailment or kill it, for it is already ill."¹⁰⁰

Children were also named after their grandparents. Children are given names of significant religious personalities which were regarded as holy. And this according to Seymour is "probably linked to the belief that since the grandfather (and his name) was successful in rearing a family, the name was lucky or blessed. The name giver drew the name from a culturally acceptable pool of names which from experience had proved to be lucky or at least not harmful."¹⁰¹ In this case,

⁹⁸ Mike Campbell, Behind the Name: Ancient Near Eastern Names. <https://www.behindthename.com>. 18/10/2018.

⁹⁹ Nicholas Benjamin Pumphrey. The concept of Secret Names in the Ancient Near East. 2009 (p.8)

¹⁰⁰ Ibid

¹⁰¹ Seymour Timothy. Personal Names and Name Giving in the Ancient Near East. <https://escholarship.org/uc/item>. 19/10/2018.

children would be given only the names of grandparents who were good, but the ones who were bad would be left out. Names of good people therefore continued to exist.

Names were also given to protect the child from dying as observed by Pumphrey when he writes that "another way to deter the death of children is to name the child after a dead relative. The spirit or demon will see that the name bearer is already dead and will leave the child alone."¹⁰²

This therefore means that a name is a tool by which children are protected from being killed. Seymour also observes that, the Shiites of Iran have been known to name a child long before birth in order that a beneficial name might protect it from disease or miscarriage."¹⁰³

In the Ancient Near East, names also show connection with parents. This was common among the Akkadian society. For instance, Campbel notes an Akkadian name Puabi which "means 'word of my father,' from Akkadian *pu* meaning mouth and *abu* meaning father."¹⁰⁴ This shows the name giver's relationship with his father. In other words, the father must have said something related to the child's birth. Hence, the name shows his relationship with the name giver.

Personal names also reflect the situation at birth. This was common among the Mesopotamians as, Seymour observes, "the Sumerian MI.AM ("It-is-a-Girl") and A.A.MU.DAH ("The-Father-Rushed-Toward-the-People [to announce the birth of the child])."¹⁰⁵ In the event where the mother gives birth to children when she has been losing relatives, she gives them names pointing to that circumstance. Seymour calls this "substitution names."¹⁰⁶ An example of this is Sennacherib which is an Ancient Assyrian name. This according to Campbell is "From Akkadian

¹⁰² Nicholaus Benjamin Pumphrey. The concept of Secret Names in the Ancient Near East. 2009 (p.9).

¹⁰³ Seymour Timothy. Personal Names and Name Giving in the Ancient Near East. <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/19/10/2018>.

¹⁰⁴ Mike Campbel, Behind the Name: Ancient Near Eastern Names. <https://www.behindthename.com>. 18/10/2018.

¹⁰⁵ Seymour Timothy. Personal Names and Name Giving in the Ancient Near East. <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/19/10/2018>.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid

Sin-ahhi-eriba meaning 'Sin has replaced my (lost) brothers', from the god's name SIN combined with the plural form of *ahu* meaning brother and *riabu* meaning 'to replace'.¹⁰⁷ Though it is not clear how these brothers got lost, it is a common ideology that through death, one loses relatives. So, the name giver sees this child as a replacement of the lost brothers. Hence, it becomes a substitution name.

A name was also given to show the character of the name bearer. One of the Ancient Near Eastern names that Campbel gives us under such a circumstance is the name Cucuphas. It is from "Phoenician origin with the meaning of 'he who jokes' or 'he who likes to joke'."¹⁰⁸ Giving a child such a name requires that the child is first born and then his or her character is observed for some times, and the name is given based on the character. For instance, Seymour notes that, "In pre-Islamic Iran parents often waited and observed the child for some time after birth in order to give it a name descriptive of its appearance or behavior. This practice also took place occasionally in Mesopotamia."¹⁰⁹ In this case, a name, tells who the name bearer is.

In Ancient Near East, children were given names after the day on which they were born. Seymour notes this when he writes that, "another common Semitic practice was to name a child after the day of its birth, particularly when that day coincided with a feast day. Akkadian examples include Mar-Isini ("Son-of-the-Festival") Mar-um-20' ("Son-of-the-Twentieth-Month-Day [a festival day]"), and Ishaggum-reshashu ("The-Festival-Jubilee-Threatens")."¹¹⁰ Therefore, in this context, there was no need to think about the person's name, but the day would tell who

¹⁰⁷ Mike Campbel, Behind the Name: Ancient Near Eastern Names. <https://www.behindthename.com>. 18/10/2018.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid

¹⁰⁹ Seymour Timothy. Personal Names and Name Giving in the Ancient Near East. <https://escholarship.org/uc/item.19/10/2018>.

¹¹⁰ Seymour Timothy. Personal Names and Name Giving in the Ancient Near East. <https://escholarship.org/uc/item.19/10/2018>.

the person would be called. Could it be that they attached so much importance to the festivals? This is not our concern here. It can be advanced in another study.

It should also be noted that change of name was a common practice in the Ancient Near East. This as Seymour notes may happen due to "change in the person's status in society or before the gods."¹¹¹ This can as well be called as a rite of passage from one stage to another. Such a name therefore distinguishes the person from the old and the new. Examples of change of name among the Ancient Near Easterners include what Seymour writes as: "... one in which a princess of Mari, upon her marriage to the son of the Ur III king UrNammu, changed her name to "She-Loves-Ur."¹¹²

Another circumstance in which a name can change according to Seymour was "when the name bearer found himself in dire extremity."¹¹³ For instance, "In the Mesopotamian setting a few types of names suggest indirectly that a like practice may have been operative. Akkadian names such as Ati-matum ("Until-When?"), Mat-ili ("When-MyGod?"), or mina-Arni ("What-is-My-Sin?") suggest a name taken during some misfortune. The names Hammu-rapi ("Hammu-is-the-Healer"), Ilum-asum ("God-is-a-Physician"), or Shamashshullimanni ("Shamash-Make-Me-Healthy") may represent similar entreaties by persons facing illnesses or other calamities."¹¹⁴ This therefore means that a name would be used to communicate with God.

It is also important to know, who names a child in the Ancient Near East. Fathers are the ones who mostly named their children. This is especially common among the Sumerians and the Akkadians as Seymour observes that "This is suggested in one Sumerian text, which states 'the

¹¹¹ Seymour Timothy. Personal Names and Name Giving in the Ancient Near East. <https://escholarship.org/uc/item.19/10/2018>.

¹¹² Ibid

¹¹³ Ibid

¹¹⁴ Ibid

father who has engendered him has given his name.' In a Hurrian myth from Boghazkoy, the god Appush sets his newborn son on his knees and bestows upon him a 'sweet' name which prefigures the happy destiny the child will enjoy in the story. Similarly, in the Hittite myth of Ullikumish the father of the newborn god has the infant placed upon his knees by a midwife before bestowing the name."¹¹⁵ In answering the question of when is a child named? Seymour notes that, "In most, if not all, Hittite myths the child is named shortly after birth."¹¹⁶ However, we do not know how short this 'after birth' is.

3.2 Biblical Naming System

Name is a Hebrew word שֵׁם (*Shem*), which according to Brown Driver-Briggs means a "brand or mark."¹¹⁷ This is the etymological meaning of the word. Lockyer observes that, "In many cases names are fragments of ancient history, revelations of the divine purposes, expressions of hopes and prophecies of the time."¹¹⁸ My view is that, the best way of defining name is to examine the context in which a particular name is given, in other words, why is someone given the name A but not B?

In the Biblical world, some names point to the titles of individuals. This is what Kandy calls as "Titles and kinship terms."¹¹⁹ For instance, the name אַבִּימֶלֶךְ (Abimelech) comes from the Hebrew words אָבִי which means 'my father' and מֶלֶךְ which means "king"; So Abimelech means 'my father is king.' This name therefore shows the title or the occupation of the person's father.

¹¹⁵ Seymour Timothy. Personal Names and Name Giving in the Ancient Near East. <https://escholarship.org/uc/item.19/10/2018>.

¹¹⁶ Ibid

¹¹⁷ Brown Driver-Briggs. *Hebrew and English Lexicon*. United States of America: Hendrickson Publishers Marketing, LLC. 2017 (P.1027).

¹¹⁸ Herbert Lockyer. *All the Men of the Bible*, United States of America: Zondervan Publishing house. 1958. (p.11)

¹¹⁹ Kandy Queen. Holman Bible Dictionary. <https://www.studydrive.org.23/10/2018>

Biblically, Lockyer observes "names denote natural or personal qualities,"¹²⁰ In other words, a person's name reflects his or her character. This is seen in the David, Nabal and Abigail narrative, where Nabal responded foolishly to the king's request by hurling insults at his servants, which angered the king to destroy Nabal. But Abigail (his wife), calmed the situation by asking for forgiveness and responding positively to the king which made the king to refrain from war. So, the wife made the king to know that her husband was just like his name, for his name Nabal means 'Fool.' (See 1 Samuel 25:1-25). The Hebrew word for Nabal is נָבָל, which according to the Brown Driver-Briggs, means "foolish, senseless."¹²¹ Indeed, the writer portrays him acting foolishly. This therefore means that, the meaning of Nabal's name denotes his quality.

More so in the Bible, one is named after who one would become. Hartropp confirms this when he writes that, "Isaac's child 'Esau' is so named simply because his name means 'hairy', and Esau is indeed hairy. His brother Jacob is so named because Jacob means 'he grasps the heel', which is a Hebrew idiom for 'he deceives'. In this case, Jacob really is named after what he will become."¹²² We can see the story of Jacob together with the mother deceiving the father Isaac, to get his blessing that was meant for Esau, (see Genesis 27:1-40). In this case, a name describes the name bearer.

Names were also symbolic or prophetic. Lockyer gives an example of this as, "Shear-jashub, which means 'a remnant shall return' (Isa. 7:3),"¹²³ which is prophesying the coming of the Messiah. To add onto that, the meaning of most of the names of the biblical prophets denote

¹²⁰ Herbert Lockyer. *All the Men of the Bible*, United States of America: Zondervan Publishing house. 1958. (p.11).

¹²¹ Brown Driver-Briggs. *Hebrew and English Lexicon*. United States of America: Hendrickson Publishers Marketing, LLC. 2017 (P.614).

¹²² Hartropp Joseph. Why names are so important in the Bible. <https://www.christiantoday.com/23/10/2018>.

¹²³ Herbert Lockyer. *All the Men of the Bible*, United States of America: Zondervan Publishing house. 1958. (p.11).

their prophetic works. For instance, Amos means "burden bearer or one with a burden."¹²⁴ The name Amos comes from two Hebrew root words; עמש and עמס which according to the Brown Drive- Briggs mean "load or carry a load." And he is a prophet of social justice. One can only fight for justice if one has the heart for the marginalized. Amos' concern was mainly for the poor and oppressed, which means he bore their burden of oppression, which is connected to the meaning of his name. Isaiah means, "Jehovah is helper or Salvation is of the Lord"¹²⁵ And his message was a messianic one, which denotes the meaning of his name.

Names are also connected with family relationships. Such names include: אָהָב (Ahab) (see Luke 1:59), which means 'father's brother; it comes from two Hebrew words אָח which means brother and אָב which means father. אָבִיבָן (Ahban), means 'brother is son', coming from the Hebrew words אָב and בֵּן which means son. אָבִיחֻ (Abihu) (see Exodus 6:23) means 'my father is he.' So, in all these names, we see the name pointing to the fatherly relationship, hence showing family relationship.

Names also indicate religious relationships or significance. This system of naming is common in the Hebrew names in which the idea of God is present in some names. According to Kandy, "Compound names in the main are theophoric, employing the divine names El and Yah (for instance Elijah, Ishmael.)"¹²⁶The names contain the divine name *El*, which means God and *Jah* or *Jeho*, which come from *Jehovah*. Such names include: *Eliakim*(see 2Kings 18:18,26, 37), which according to Lockyer means "God is setting up or doth establish"¹²⁷*Eleazar* (Exodus 6:23, 25) means "God is helper."¹²⁸*Elijah* (1Chronicles 8:27), means "God is Jehovah."¹²⁹*Jehu* (1Kings

¹²⁴Herbert Lockyer. *All the Men of the Bible*, United States of America: Zondervan Publishing house. 1958. (p.11).

¹²⁵ Ibid

¹²⁶ Kandy Queen. Holman Bible Dictionary. <https://www.studylight.org.23/10/2018>.

¹²⁷ Herbert Lockyer. *All the Men of the Bible*, United States of America: Zondervan Publishing house. 1958. (p.99).

¹²⁸ Ibid (p.97)

16:1,7,12), means "Jehovah is he."¹³⁰*Joram* (2Kings 1:17; 3:1). It means "Jehovah is high or exalted."¹³¹*Jehoshaphat* (2Samuel 8:16) means "Jehovah is Judge."¹³²*Joash* (1Chronicles 7:8) means "Jehovah supports."¹³³*Joshua* (Numbers 13:8), means "Jehovah is salvation."¹³⁴ אִשְׁמָאֵל (Ishmael) which means 'man from God'. It comes from Hebrew words אִשׁ, which means man, the preposition מִן which means from, and אֱלֹהִים which means God. From these names, it is therefore clear that Biblically, giving names which has religious attachment between the Hebrews and their God (Yahweh), is common. A name therefore indicates the relationship between the people and Yahweh.

Also, a name reveals transformation in character. Kandy confirms this when he writes that "Changing of name could occur at divine or human initiative, revealing a transformation in character or destiny (Genesis 17:5 ,Genesis 17:5,17:15 ; Genesis 32:28 ; Matthew 16:17-18)." Abram which means "Father of height"¹³⁵ was changed to Abraham which means "the father of a multitude."¹³⁶(See Genesis 17:5). Indeed he became the father of nation. Sarai to Sarah which means princes for she would bear many children and all the kings would come from her. (See Genesis 17:15). These names were changed to show what God wanted to do with these people. So, by giving them the new names, it is perceived that it will change their characters to the meaning of the new names. At this point therefore, a name reveals transformation in character.

¹²⁹Herbert Lockyer. *All the Men of the Bible*, United States of America: Zondervan Publishing house. 1958 (p.99).

¹³⁰ Ibid(p.180)

¹³¹ Ibid(p.178)

¹³² Ibid(p.179)

¹³³ Ibid (p.191)

¹³⁴ Ibid (p.205)

¹³⁵ Kandy Queen. Holman Bible Dictionary. <https://www.studydrive.org>.23/10/2018.

¹³⁶ Ibid

There are also substitutional names in the Bible. That is, they are given to imply that the child is the replacement of the lost relative. This can be seen in the Abel-Cain narrative. (See Genesis 4:1-26), where Adam and his wife got a son and the wife named him Seth, *saying, God has granted me another child in place of Abel, since Cain killed him.* (Gen 4:25). This name comes from the Hebrew root letters שׁוּת which according to Brown Driver-Briggs means, "put, or lay hand upon."¹³⁷ This implies that, Eve saw this child as being 'Put' or God has 'laid hands' on him to replace Abel.

Some names are also taken from the animal creation. For instance, According to Lockyer, "Caleb (Numbers 13:6), means dog, Dan means lion's whelp, Shaphan means rock-badger, Achbor means mouse, Parosh means flea. Aquila (see Acts 18:2), means "Eagle."¹³⁸ In the same view, Kandy observes that "the use of animal names in early times, Deborah means 'bee'; Jonah means 'dove'; Rachel means 'ewe,' are attested."¹³⁹ One may ask, why would people give their children animal names? But this is not our interest here.

Biblical names also describe the work the bearer does. Jesus' name in Hebrew is יְשׁוּעָה (*Yeshua*), which according to Brown Driver-Brigg, means "deliverance or salvation by God."¹⁴⁰ And according to the New Testament, Jesus' purpose of dying on the cross is to save mankind and deliver them from their afflictions (see Luke 4:17-19). Therefore, the meaning of his name is connected to his work.

¹³⁷ Brown Driver-Briggs. *Hebrew and English Lexicon*. United States of America: Hendrickson Publishers Marketing, LLC. 2017 (P.1011).

¹³⁸ Herbert Lockyer. *All the Men of the Bible*, United States of America: Zondervan Publishing house. 1958. (p.51).

¹³⁹ Kandy Queen. Holman Bible Dictionary. <https://www.studylight.org/23/10/2018>.

¹⁴⁰ Brown Driver-Briggs. *Hebrew and English Lexicon*. United States of America: Hendrickson Publishers Marketing, LLC. 2017 (P.447).

Names also express hopes. Lockyer confirms this when he writes that, "Sometimes a name expressed some hope or aspiration on the part of the parents."¹⁴¹ Such names include; Jorim (Luke 3:29) which means, "he who exalts the Lord."¹⁴² Caiaphas which means, "a searcher or he that seeks with diligence."¹⁴³ Children are named while still babies and nobody knows who they will become when they grow up. So such names show the parents' hope on how they wish their children to be in future.

Some names were influenced by the circumstance under which the child is born. A typical example of this is the name Samuel, which Hannah gave to the son. The circumstance in which this child was born is clearly discussed under the contextual study at the beginning of this paper. However in summary, Hannah got the child after suffering from childlessness. She was mocked by the co wife, so when she got a child, she named him Samuel which means "Heard, asked of God, offering of God or appointed by God."¹⁴⁴ In other words, the Child is a result of her prayer. In the same view, Kandy gives such names when she writes that, "reflecting circumstances of birth Rachel called the child of her death, Ben-oni, 'son of my sorrow' (Genesis 35:18). Jacob was named 'the supplanter' for 'he took hold on Esau's heel' (Genesis 25:26). Moses, the 'stranger in a strange land,' named his son Gershom (Exodus 2:22). Conditions of the times proved imaginative as well: Ichabod, 'The glory has departed from Israel,' (NRSV) came about by the ark of the covenant falling into Philistine hands."¹⁴⁵

It is also important to know, who names a child according to the Bible. Naming in the Bible is done basically by three categories of people. That is parents, non-parents and God Himself.

¹⁴¹ Herbert Lockyer. *All the Men of the Bible*, United States of America: Zondervan Publishing house. 1958.(p.12)

¹⁴² Ibid(p.201)

¹⁴³ (p.80)

¹⁴⁴ Ibid (292)

¹⁴⁵ Kandy Queen. Holman Bible Dictionary. <https://www.studyight.org.23/10/2018>.

Kandy summarizes this when he writes that, "In Biblical tradition the task of naming a child generally fell to the mother (Genesis 29:31-30:24 ; 1 Samuel 1:20) but could be performed by the father (Genesis 16:15 ; Exodus 2:22) and in exceptional cases by non-parental figures (Exodus 2:10 ; Ruth 4:17). The last son of Jacob and Rachel received a name from each parent; Jacob altering the name Rachel gave (Genesis 35:18). Naming could be attributed to God originating through a divine birth announcement (Genesis 17:19 ; Luke 1:13)."¹⁴⁶ And we see God naming Hosea's children. In an agreement with this view, Hartropp writes that "In the prophecy of Hosea, God tells Hosea to marry a prostitute, Gomer, and name her children 'Lo-Ruhamah' and 'Lo-Ammi', which mean 'not loved' and 'not my people' respectively."¹⁴⁷

However, much as naming was done by God, non-parents and parents, most scholars observe that, the task mainly fell into the hands of women (mothers). For instance, Hacham notes that "the overwhelming majority of naming reported in the Bible are done by a parent, more often the mother."¹⁴⁸ The same observation is in Kandy's statement that, "In biblical tradition the task of naming a child generally fell to the mother"¹⁴⁹ As if that is not enough, Bridge observes that, "when parents are narrated in the Hebrew Bible as actively naming their children, mothers naming children occurs more frequently than fathers naming."¹⁵⁰

It is also important to answer the question; when were children named? According to Kandy, "naming took place near birth in the Old Testament and on the eighth day accompanying

¹⁴⁶Kandy Queen. Holman Bible Dictionary. <https://www.studylight.org.23/10/2018>.

¹⁴⁷ Hartropp Joseph. Why names are so important in the Bible. <https://www.christiantoday.com23/10/2018>.

¹⁴⁸Hacham Isaac S.D.Sassoon. Baby Naming: Biblical Ritesand Mother's Rights. <https://thetorah.com . 23/10/2018>.

¹⁴⁹ Kandy Queen. Holman Bible Dictionary. <https://www.studylight.org.23/10/2018>.

¹⁵⁰ Edward J. Bridge. A Mother's Influence: Mothers Naming Children in the Hebrew Bible. <https://www.jstor.org. 23/10/2018>.

circumcision in New Testament narratives.”¹⁵¹ For instance, in Luke 1:59, John was named on the eighth day, and in Luke 2:21, Jesus was named on the eighth day during his circumcision.

Therefore in conclusion, the naming practice in the Bible seems to be the replica of what was happening in the Ancient Near East. For instance; giving children theophoric names, naming after grandparents or substitutional names, showing family relations or connection with parents, reflecting the situation at birth, names showing the character of the name bearer, among others are common ways of naming children in both contexts. More so, in both, change of names is common and children are named shortly after birth. This similarity is expected because Ancient Near East is the socio-cultural environment of the Bible. Meanwhile there are some slight differences like; in the Ancient Near East, fathers are the ones who mostly name children, which is not the case in the Biblical naming. In the Bible, three categories of people name children, that is; parents, non-parents and God. But it is observed that, it is mostly mothers who name their children. This is because there are very many issues in the Bible that affect women, for instance, barrenness, polygamy, inheritance, among others, and Hannah is an example as discussed in the previous chapter. Biblical naming is therefore influenced by the Ancient Near Eastern naming practices.

¹⁵¹Kandy Queen. Holman Bible Dictionary. <https://www.studydrive.org/23/10/2018>

CHAPTER FOUR

LUGBARA FAMILY STRUCTURE AND NAMING PRACTICES

4.0 Introduction

This chapter encompasses two major issues, that is, Lugbara family structure and naming practices. It will start with the discussions on the family structure because it is what influences the naming of children in the Lugbara community. In discussing the family structures, there are important issues that are paid attention to, and these are; the perception of barrenness, child bearing processes, Lugbara understanding of a woman and a man respectively. All these will be the part (a) of the chapter. In part (b), discussions will be on the Lugbara naming practices which answers the questions like, what kind of names do the Lugbara people give to their children and why? The question of who names a child in Lugbara society is also answered.

4.1 Lugbara Family Structure

When it comes to Lugbara family structure, it is observed that, "the Lugbara recognized patriarchal descent. They trace their origin "from two brothers—Heroes—who entered the country from the north, found and cured many leper women, and then married them, their sons becoming the founders of some sixty clans. Genealogies from the founders to the present are usually between nine and twelve generations in depth."¹⁵² This is a myth among the Lugbara people which explains where the Lugbara people came from.

¹⁵² Lugbara people and their culture. <http://ugandatourismcenter.com/place/lugbara-people-and-their-culture> 23/09/2018.

Incest is forbidden among the Lugbara people. In fact among the Ayivu people (where I come from), when related people marry, they are asked to buy a white sheep which is slaughtered for the two families to eat, they are then prayed for and separated there and then by the elders.

Marriage is effected by the transfer of cattle as bride-wealth from the groom's to the bride's close patrilineal kin. These animals are grouped into various categories depending on the purpose they serve. The categories include; *Jotile* -literally translated as 'door.' This includes goats. Most people give four goats and above, chicken, plus a sack of cassava flour, depending on the financial status of the groom and his relatives. In some clans within Lugbara community, these goats are slaughtered for the clan members to eat while in some, it is for the parents of the bride. *Ali* -this comes from the word *Ali'baza* literally translated as 'sexual intercourse.' Lugbara people so much condemn sex between unmarried people. So, when a man marries a woman, he has to pay for sleeping with her. One cow is paid as *Ali*, to the bride's relatives to legalize their sexual intercourse. Then the other category falls under *Aje* -literally translated as 'buying.' All the remaining cattle fall under this, for instance, if the man pays ten herds of cattle, one is removed for *Ali*, and nine remain for *Aje*. The number of cattle paid for *Aje*, is determined by the agreement between the two families. Being a patriarchal society, this sitting includes the paternal relatives. In fact, women do not say a word during this time. A mother does not know how many animals are to be paid for the daughter.

More on the family structure, Lugbara people live in extended families where, “the household is a close-knit and mutually dependent unit.”¹⁵³ In this extended family, the definition of a good or bad woman is determined by the in-laws who judge based on how much domestic work this woman does. She is expected to cook for all the members of the family, in addition to her other

¹⁵³ Lugbara people and their culture. <http://ugandatourismcenter.com/place/lugbara-people-and-their-culture> 23/09/2018.

roles like garden work such as harrowing, weeding, harvesting, among others. She is also responsible for taking care of the husband, like washing for him, the children, ironing and polishing his shoes. She is expected to cook delicious meals every time. In fact, she is under the supervision of the in-laws who can easily influence the husband to either love her or hate her.

When it comes to the division of labor among the Lugbara people, it is well distinguished. Much as men and women share agricultural tasks, it has been observed that, "the men open the fields and the women do most of the remaining work. Men hunt and herd cattle; women do the arduous and the time-consuming everyday domestic tasks. Formerly, men were responsible for the physical protection of their families and for waging feuds and war."¹⁵⁴ This division of labor is instilled in individuals right from childhood. For instance, a parent who has both boys and girls will always assign domestic work like cooking, cleaning, washing among others to girls, while other works like looking after cattle, opening the land among others are assigned to boys.

It is also observed that, in families, "the socialization of children is traditionally by parents and older siblings. There are no forms of initiation at puberty, but children of about 6 undergo forehead cicatrization and excision of the lower four incisors."¹⁵⁵ These practices are now phasing out among the people.

Moral upbringing of children among the Lugbara community shows that, it takes the whole village to raise a child. For instance, when an elderly person finds children fighting, he beats all of them, and the parents do not blame him or her. Wisdom is passed onto children through proverbs and wise sayings. For instance, children are told that, if you beat someone with a soft broom, the person will not produce. This makes them not to scatter brooms. They are also told,

¹⁵⁴Lugbara people and their culture. <http://ugandatourismcenter.com/place/lugbara-people-and-their-culture>
23/09/2018

¹⁵⁵Ibid.

when you sit on the road, your mother will die, which is not true. The logic behind this is that children should not sit on roads to avoid accidents. This is because children love their mother so much that they will always avoid her death by not sitting on the road. Story telling is also another way of passing wisdom to children.

Concerning the choice of a wife, traditionally, "parents make choices of wives for their sons. Once a girl is identified by the relatives of the boy, the two families become friends. The parents of the girl watch over her and teach her women's roles and responsibilities. She is taught how to take care of the husband by her mother."¹⁵⁶ As such, if a woman fails to take good care of the husband and his relatives, she will be sent back with the words *'Imu nga mi andri ma imba mi dika*. Literally translated as-You first go and let your mother teach you again. In other words, the laziness or carelessness of a female child is blamed on the mother. Other women are married through widow inheritance.

When it comes to Property inheritance, it is male children who inherit the property of the parents. For instance, when a Lugbara man is dividing land among his children, the girls do not have a share. This according to the Comboni Missionaries team is because, "they believe girls are visitors who will go away at one point in time when they get married."¹⁵⁷ So, property inheritance is for the boys.

It is also observed that among the Lugbara people, "polygamy is a male ideal, about a third of the men having more than one wife; most secondary wives, however, are those inherited from their

¹⁵⁶ Osua Jackson. Personal Interview. 23/09/2018.

¹⁵⁷Comboni Missionaries. uganda-lugbara-the-name-giving-ceremony.
<http://www.combonimissionaries.co.uk/index.php>. 23/09/2018

brothers or fathers' brothers."¹⁵⁸ In such a family, the wives compete to win the love of the husband and the in-laws as their attitude towards them can determine the man's love for them. How do they compete? By working hard to please family and the clan members a hard working woman is called by a special name-'*Baandre*. Such a woman is the last to go to bed and first to wake up.

The hierarchy of power in a family is in such a way that a husband is the head of the family. He is called *Aku e'i*-literally translated as 'the owner of home.' As the owner of the home, he makes decisions in the family. For instance, the Uganda Tourism Centre observes that, "Men hold formal authority over their kin, but older women informally exercise considerable domestic and lineage authority."¹⁵⁹ The wife does not decide on any matter unless the husband approves of it. In most cases, a husband does not respect the wife's decision because of a common stereotype that, a man who listens to his wife ceases to be the *Aku e'i*. In fact, Lugbara people tell such a man that, *Oku su mi dri Jebaa*-literally translated as 'a woman has put your head in the pocket.' meaning she is controlled by a woman which sounds like an abomination in the ears of Lugbara men. A Lugbara man would rather respect the decision of his son, than his wife.

Talking about divorce among the Lugbara people, it is observed that divorce "is relatively unusual, and may traditionally be made only by the husband, the cattle being returned except for one cow for each child born; the most common grounds are adultery and the wife's barrenness."¹⁶⁰ Why not by women? Simply because the man is the *Aku e'i*-literally translated as the owner of the home. This means he owns the wife, children and the property of the home. So, this gives him the authority to do whatever he wants in the home, including whether to send

¹⁵⁸ Lugbara people and their culture. <http://ugandatourismcenter.com/place/lugbara-people-and-their-culture/> 23/09/2018.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid

¹⁶⁰ Ibid

away the wife or not. When it comes to the reasons for divorce, they mainly apply to women. The community does not blame men for being adulterous but when it is a woman, it becomes a bad omen to the family. In fact there is a charge for it. That is such a woman is to ask the man with whom she has slept to buy a cock and she slaughters it for her husband to eat, if not, it is believed that he can get accidents or their children become sickly. Another reason for divorce is barrenness. How is barrenness perceived among the Lugbara community?

4.1.1 The Perception of Barrenness among the Lugbara People

In Africa, child bearing is a key thing in marriage. This is true among the Lugbara people. However, there are cases of barrenness in the community. And it is observed that "the woman is always blamed for not having children."¹⁶¹ There is so much value attached to children that, barrenness is perceived negatively, as discussed below:

Barrenness is perceived as an obstacle to the stream of life. According to Mbiti in Africa, "inability to bear children blocks the stream of life."¹⁶² This is true among the Lugbara people. It is like ending a genealogy. It is through children that one is remembered after death. Thus, when a barren person dies, he or she is easily forgotten by people, for he or she does not have children who can carry on his/her name. Mbiti further observes that, in Africa, "after the physical death, an individual continues to exist....He is remembered by relatives and friends who knew him in this life and who have survived him. So long as the living dead is thus remembered, he is in the state of personal immortality. This personal immortality is externalized in the physical continuation of the individual through procreation so that children who bear the traits of

¹⁶¹ Lugbara people and their culture. <http://ugandatourismcenter.com/place/lugbara-people-and-their-culture/> 23/09/2018.

¹⁶² John S.Mbiti. *African Religions and philosophy*. Great Britain:Heinemann. 1969 (p.145).

their parents are progenitors."¹⁶³ This is a general observation, but it is as if Mbiti is writing about the Lugbara community in particular. In fact, when a barren person dies, his death is described as *dra oco le, mva koko* literally translated as- 'he died like a dog without a child.' This does not mean that dogs do not produce, but among the Lugbara people, a dog is the most useless or most abandoned animal. This negative perception of dogs is not only in Lugbara society, but in Africa at large. For instance, Mjamba observes that in South Africa, "recently, there's been much heated debate about employers making their domestic workers walk their dogs. Many black people have labeled this as 'humiliating practice' for black people."¹⁶⁴ He further notes that, "president Jacob Zuma once ... confidently stated that 'spoiling dogs with care is unAfrican.'"¹⁶⁵ If caring for dogs is 'spoiling' then dogs are one of the abandoned animals in South Africa.

When it comes to Uganda, Hasahya observes that, "recent studies estimate that about 730,000 home owned dogs in Uganda (74.3%) roam freely in rural communities.... Many people fear or distrust dogs."¹⁶⁶ Dogs roam around looking for leftovers of food to eat, they sleep outside, they are chased away when they come in human gatherings, and they are not budgeted for in homes, among others. This portrays dogs as animals of less value or importance, although people use them as guards in their homes. When it comes to the Biblical perception of dogs, White notes that, "dogs in the Bible were not well loved. To be called a dog was to be associated with evil and low status."¹⁶⁷ For instance, Hazael after being told that he would be a king, in an exclamation called himself a 'mere dog', (2kings 8:13). This is because he looked at himself as a person of low status, who could not accomplish the task of kingship. Just like the Biblical view

¹⁶³John S.Mbiti. *African Religions and philosophy*. Great Britain:Heinemann. 1969, (p.25).

¹⁶⁴ Khanyo Olwethu Mjamba. Dogs as pets an African's best friend? <https://thisisafrica.me>. 5/11/2019.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ Emmanuel Hasahya. Uganda's stand in the fight against rabies: The unreported disease. <https://www.newvision.co.ug>. 5/11/2019.

¹⁶⁷Ellen White. No No, Bad dog: Dogs in the Bible. <https://www.biblicalarcheology.Org>. 6/11/2018.

of dogs, when the Lugbara people call you a dog, it means you are useless or of low status. This therefore means that a barren person in a Lugbara community is of low status and he 'dies completely' (he is forgotten easily). So, as people 'cheat' death through children and become immortal, a barren Lugbara has nothing to survive death. Therefore, in Lugbara community, a father or a mother is immortal as a barren person is mortal.

Barrenness makes a person to be disrespected. Mbiti observes that, "African concept of the family also includes the unborn members who are still in the loins of the living. They are the buds of hope and expectation, and each family makes sure that its own existence is not extinguished." I grew up observing this among the Lugbara people as a Lugbara woman, where by a barren person is hated up to the extent of in-laws going to pick food from his or her house and gardens without permission. And when questioned, a common statement '*A'dini troni afa nde 'diyi nya niari yo.*' literally translated as 'After all who eats the things here' is thrown on her face. This statement comes even if the person is staying with ten people. Meaning he/she should have had his/her children to eat them. Disrespect for barren people is not only among the Lugbara people but also in other African communities. For instance, Ahammefule et al give us the cry of a barren Nigerian woman as "The problem with infertility is not that you have nobody to help you but also that society does not respect you. For a woman, respect is only due if she is a mother of children. Even young people do not respect you when you are not another of their mates."¹⁶⁸ So, disrespect for barren people is not only for Lugbara people but for Africans at large.

Barrenness leads to a woman's unhappiness in the family and society at large. Mbiti expresses this, when he gives an African view that, "unhappy is the woman who fails to get children for

¹⁶⁸ Innocent Ahammefule et al, The plight of infertile women in Nigeria. <https://www.arabianjbm.com>. 13/11/2018.

whatever qualities she might possess, her failure to bear children is worse than committing genocide."¹⁶⁹ This is because the African concept about children is that "they are the buds of hope and expectation, and each family makes sure that its own existence is not extinguished.... For that reason, African parents are anxious their children find husbands and wives"¹⁷⁰ to bear children. This is so much into the minds of the Lugbara people that, a barren person is reminded of his or her barrenness in various ways, for instance, somebody can just tell a chicken on the compound that, 'I am fade up with you. You just fill toilets, yet nothing good comes out of you.' Even her husband can stop buying food at home, saying, 'I do not have children to eat the food.' Such kinds of statements make the woman to weep all the time. A Lugbara woman's moment of barrenness can best be described using Oduyoye's words as the "years of agony."¹⁷¹ She uses these words to describe the state of a barren woman in Nigeria which shows that it is not only in Lugbara communities that barren women are unhappy, but also in other African societies. In reference to the African women, Baloyi uses Kimathi's statement that "Woman's glory is crowned in childbirth."¹⁷² This leaves a barren woman without glory, hence unhappy. He further writes that " "The Swahili proverb: 'A barren wife never gives thanks' (implying that she would have no cause or joy to give thanks)."¹⁷³

Also, among the Lugbara people, barrenness means incomplete marriage. This comes from the African concept that, "marriage and procreation are a unity: without procreation, marriage is incomplete."¹⁷⁴ In fact, the paying of bride price is completed after a woman has produced. They

¹⁶⁹ Mbiti S John. *African Religions and philosophy*. Great Britain:Heinemann. 1969 (p.110).

¹⁷⁰ Ibid(p.107).

¹⁷¹ Mercy Amba Oduyoye. *Daughters of Anowa, African Women and Patriarchy*. United States of America:Orbis Books . 1995. (p.49).

¹⁷² Magezi E.Baloyi. Gendered character of barrenness in an African context: An African Pastoral Study. <https://www.indieskriflig.org.za>. 13/11/2018.

¹⁷³ Ibid

¹⁷⁴ Ibid (p.133)

can only pay the *Ali* and *Jotile* (mandatory to legalize sexual intercourse between the two), then the cattle for *Aje* which comes from the man's love is paid after the woman becomes a mother. This is also true in other African communities, for instance, in reference to the Amakiri of Nigeria, Hollos observes that "The significant expenses associated with marriage payments come at the time of first childbirth when the child's father is required to present the mother with a number of specified gifts,.... Childless women whose husbands did not have to make the birth payments and refused to pay for the dance are unable to attain full adulthood and are not considered to be properly married."¹⁷⁵ Complete marriage is therefore for those who are able to produce.

Barrenness is also perceived as a curse. Among the Lugbara people, children are perceived as a blessing from God. As such some Lugbara people name their children, *Mugufeni* -Literally translated as 'It's God who has given.' From this perception, a barren person is looked at as being cursed. There are many cases among the Lugbara people where a barren person mostly women (as they are always blamed for being barren), approaches the *'Ba 'wara* (elders) who are called upon to pray for the person to get pregnant. Some approach witch doctors to ask the *Adro* (god) to give them children. Amanziru, narrates her experience as; "It was in August, two thousand that I went to a witch Doctor to ask for a child after failing to produce for five years in marriage. I suffered humiliation from all directions. The witch gave me a charm to tie on my waist. And the condition is that it should never fall down. I wore it, and on the fourth day, it fell down. I cried until I was admitted. To me, my child had fallen down."¹⁷⁶ Her story tells us that, the

¹⁷⁵ Marida Hollos. The problem of infertility in high fertility populations: Meanings, consequences and coping mechanisms in two Nigerian communities. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov> 13/11/2018.

¹⁷⁶ Amanziru Christine. Personal interview. 4/9/2018.

Lugbara people believe in children being a blessing from spirits, because she believes that the witch doctor can help to ask the spirits to give her a child. And so, barrenness is a curse.

Barrenness is a grave reason for polygamy. According to Mbiti, in African societies, "it is a duty, religious and ontological, for everyone to get married; and if a man has no children or only daughters, he finds another wife so that through her children (or sons) may be born who would survive him."¹⁷⁷ This is a common practice among the Lugbara community. Many have ended up being polygamous in search for children (or sons). Old men whose wives have reached menopause end up marrying young girls in order to produce more children, what if these wives were barren? They would end up marrying very many. Men use barrenness as a valid reason for polygamy because women are always blamed for it. Pointing to Africa at large, Baloyi notes that "Some African researchers have revealed that it is usually women who are traditionally held responsible for childlessness. It becomes evident when a man takes a second wife without first seeking medical proof of his wife's barrenness."¹⁷⁸ The same observation is made by Nannyonga in reference to the Buganda community, that, "if a marriage is barren, the woman is the first to be blamed."¹⁷⁹ Becoming polygamous because of barrenness is not only something common in the Lugbara community, but in Africa at large.

Barrenness is also enough reason for divorce. Mbiti observes that in Africa, "the cause of divorce includes sterility or barrenness especially on the part of the wife. This is probably the greatest single cause, since inability to bear children blocks the stream of life."¹⁸⁰ This is true among the Lugbara people. Where, even if the husband is tolerant with the barren wife, the in-laws become

¹⁷⁷ Mbiti S. John. *African Religions and philosophy*. Great Britain: Heinemann. 1969 (p.26).

¹⁷⁸ Magezi E. Baloyi. Gendered Character of Barrenness in an African context: An African pastoral Study. <https://www.indieskriflig.org.za>. 13/11/2018.

¹⁷⁹ Sylvia Nannyonga-Tumusuzza. *Gender, Ethnicity and politics in Kadongo-Kamu Music of Uganda: Identities in contemporary Music in Africa*. <https://docplayer.net> 13/11/2018.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid* (p.145).

so wild with the woman, and some even go ahead to arrange for the man's second marriage advising him to divorce the barren one. In an interview with Asibazuyo, she opened up and said that, "If our marriage was left between me and my husband, we would still be together by now. But my in-laws worked so hard to separate us, just because I have not been able to conceive. I therefore no longer call them in-laws, but rather 'monsters-in-law.'"¹⁸¹ Because of the value attached to children, it is okay to divorce under such condition. So, they do not blame the man for that.

Women who have produced children for their men are called *Anzi Andri*-translated as, 'the mother of children' or *Ayia* meaning-mother. It is hard to divorce them. As an in-law in a Lugbara community, as an in-law, I have attended many family meetings on misunderstandings between husbands and their wives, and in most cases, elders advise husbands not to send away the mother of their children. And it is a common saying among the Lugbara people that *malu 'dia anzi 'diyi si* literally translated as 'Am just here because of these children.' This therefore means that it is very hard to divorce a mother, than a barren woman. Hence, barrenness is a strong reason for divorce. The use of barrenness as a grave reason is not only a Lugbara practice, but also an African thing. For instance, Baloyi quotes Donkor's statement that, "childless women usually encounter unfavorable treatment from their society. A woman might be expelled from her husband's house either by the husband himself or by his family."¹⁸² He further elaborates this by giving Chigundu's observation from Zimbabwe that, "Georgia's husband battered her for eleven years because they couldn't have children. Her father-in-law finally threw her out because

¹⁸¹ Asibazuyo Winny. Personal interview. 4/9/2018.

¹⁸² Magezi E. Baloyi. Gendered Character of Barrenness in an African context: An African pastoral Study. <https://www.indieskriflig.org.za>. 13/11/2018.

she had 'disgraced her family'. Being unable to have children is considered a crime."¹⁸³ And it is a woman's crime.

Barrenness is an obstacle in finding a marriage partner. According to Mbiti, "for a barren woman or one who has passed the childbearing age, finding a husband is more difficult."¹⁸⁴ This is his general view in Africa at large. Lugbara community, being one of the African societies experiences this too. Barren women are called *Ondoo*. Should a man hear that a lady is an *Ondoo*, or may be that her family has the *Ondoogenes*; it marks the end of his intentions to marry her. As we have seen, even after marrying her, if he discovers she is an *Ondoo*, he goes ahead to divorce her. Hatred for barren women is an African thing at large. For instance, Boloyi in writing about Africa in general observes Phoofolo's statement from a man while beating his wife that, "All that comes out of your vagina is nothing but blood."¹⁸⁵ He explains that, "This statement characterized a husband who was tired to see his wife continuing in her menstruation periods, which means she is not falling pregnant as expected."¹⁸⁶ With such an attitude to a barren woman, Africans run away from barren women who in the end can fail to get marriage partners.

Barrenness leads to insecurity in the family and the community at large. From our discussion about the Lugbara security, we have observed that, "the earlier Lugbara did not have soldiers or an army in their chiefdoms. Every able bodied man had the duty to protect his village hence all able bodied men were automatically considered soldiers though this was not a permanent

¹⁸³ Magezi E. Baloyi. Gendered Character of Barrenness in an African context: An African pastoral Study. <https://www.indieskrifliq.org.za>. 13/11/2018.

¹⁸⁴ Mbiti S John. *African Religions and philosophy*. Great Britain: Heinemann. 1969 (p.145)

¹⁸⁵ Magezi E. Baloyi. Gendered Character of Barrenness in an African context: An African pastoral Study. <https://www.indieskrifliq.org.za>. 13/11/2018.

¹⁸⁶ Magezi E. Baloyi. Gendered Character of Barrenness in an African context: An African pastoral Study. <https://www.indieskrifliq.org.za>. 13/11/2018.

duty."¹⁸⁷This means when a family or community did not have children, that community lacked security. Also, sons are the ones who inherit the father's property. And it is through these sons that their mothers enjoy their father's property. And so, a barren woman loses it all. Hence her property (husband's property) is insecure.

Therefore, from the above discussion about the perception of barrenness among the Lugbara people, it is like, for one to stay peacefully in a family or community, the person must be in position to bear children. So, bearing children is very vital.

4.1.2 Child Bearing Process

In discussing birth and childhood in Africa, Mbiti observes that, "in African societies, the birth of a child is a process which begins long time before the Child's arrival in this world and continues long thereafter."¹⁸⁸ He gives these processes as: Pregnancy, the actual birth and the naming of children. This also applies to the Lugbara society.

4.1.3Pregnancy

Among the Lugbara people, a newly married woman (*Arusu*) is expected to start manifesting symptoms of pregnancy like spitting saliva where ever she goes and eating soil, as early as the first month of her marriage. When this happens, she is loved by her family and the in-laws, that she will soon give birth to a member of a family. She therefore becomes a special person, and is treated special by the husband. This special treatment includes: buying for her special clothes, meal (whatever she demands to eat), stopping to beat her, getting for her a helper, among others. This continues up to birth. This happens in the whole of Africa at large, for instance, Ahamafulu

¹⁸⁷ Lugbara people and their culture. <http://ugandatourismcenter.com/place/lugbara-people-and-their-culture/> 23/09/2018.

¹⁸⁸ John S.Mbiti. *African Religions and philosophy*. Great Britain:Heinemann. 1969 (p.145).

et al while referring to Nigerian wives and husbands observe that, "Women, whether as a child or wife, are naturally, biologically and socially meant to be pampered, nurtured, respected and even tolerated. It is believed that women especially wives are fragile. Their husbands are expected to be supporting cushions. In most cases, this expectation is carried out by men when their wives are pregnant."¹⁸⁹ Such a special care for pregnant women among the Akamba is observed by Mbiti, that, "the expectant mother is forbidden to eat fat, beans and meat of animals killed with poisoned arrows during the last three months of pregnancy....for fear that these foods will interfere with the health of the mother or child."¹⁹⁰ He continues to give more examples that, "among the Akamba and Gikuyu, all weapons and all iron articles are removed from the house of the expectant mother before the birth takes place. People believe that iron articles attract lightning. Among the Ingassana, both the expectant mother and her husband are forbidden to carry fire, prior to the birth of the child."¹⁹¹ This is to avoid the fire from burning the expectant mother. All these show how much African men care for the pregnant women, hence attaching value to child bearing.

At pregnancy, the Lugbara man who has impregnated the woman becomes proud that he is a man. This is because when a man fails to impregnate the wife, there is a common question '*mi ce 'di agupi nia; kani mi oku ni?*' Literally translated as 'Are you really a man or you are a woman?' Referring to him as a woman means a non-performer in bed. In all patriarchal societies, men do not want to hear this. This is because manhood is a very important thing men should possess. In fact, it is believed that, the bigger the penis, the better the performance in bed. This same observation is made by Masinde that "It has been stereotyped that all African men have a big

¹⁸⁹ Innocent Ahamefule et al, The plight of infertile women in Nigeria. <https://www.arabianjbm.com>. 13/11/2018.

¹⁹⁰ Mbiti. S. John. *African Religions and philosophy*. Great Britain:Heinemann. 1969 (p.111).

¹⁹¹ Ibid (p.111).

penis, putting pressure and discomfort in African men with a small manhood."¹⁹² And so, when a man's wife gets pregnant, it proves his manhood, hence it is his pride. This makes pregnancy to be a joyful moment in a family. Pregnancy as a joyful moment is also common among the Nigerians as noted by Ahamefule that, "It is the common practice in Nigeria that after marriage, most couples pray and try very hard to achieve pregnancy as early as possible. If the new bride shows signs of fever; it is usually assumed that their expectation is about to be fulfilled. Where this is followed by protruding belly few months later, everyone rejoices secretly."¹⁹³

4.1.4The Actual Birth

Traditionally, Lugbara women give birth at home (they do not go to hospitals). Elderly women act as midwives to attend to them. It is a tradition that the birth has to take place at the home of the father of the child but not the home of the parents of the woman. The placenta is cut and buried under the verandah of the man. In this case, if the woman goes to give birth at her parent's home, where the placenta is buried there, it is believed that this child will have bad luck. Her husband is therefore charged with a goat to be given to her parents. This goat is called *Oresi*, which cleanses the child.

During this time, fellow women fetch water and bring as they come to see the baby, some bring firewood, among others. The woman who has just given birth is called *Kerijo*. Why they mostly bring water and fire wood is because the *Kerijo* needs a lot of water for washing *Dulugani* (the pieces of cloth used for newly born babies) and for bathing. It is believed that she bathes with very hot water, to make the injuries sustained during birth to heal. So, she needs firewood for

¹⁹² Dayan Masinde. When an African Man loves his wife. <https://www.capitalfm.co.ke/lifestyle> 13/11/2018.

¹⁹³ Innocent Ahamefule et al, The plight of infertile women in Nigeria. <https://www.arabianjbm.com>. 13/11/2018.

warming the water (firewood being the most commonly used for cooking). Lugbara people are social. That is why, at such a moment, the friends come in to help.

She is treated well by the husband and in-laws. We have already observed that, a wife is a servant at her marital place while the husband and the in-laws are the judges. But at this point, the in-laws can come in to offer assistance in the house chores. However, in most cases, her mother goes to attend to her in her husband's house, and this is called *Oresi peza*. There is no specific reason as to why it must be her mother, but, it can be deduced from the fact that in Lugbara culture, mothers are the ones responsible for training their daughters to become responsible mothers. So, it could be that she goes there to give her more training on how to take care of an *Odekua* (newly born baby). Another reason could be that the mother goes to bathe the daughter after giving birth. This in Lugbara is called *Yutaa*. After a woman has pushed out the baby, the private part normally sustains injuries. Lugbara people believe that the wounds only heal when washed with very hot water, which the *Kerijo* may fear to do. So, since a girl child is free with and close to the mother, the mother can do this for her, because Lugbara people keep their private parts so private that she may not open it for any other person to wash apart from her mother.

If she gives birth to a boy, she stays indoors for three days, if a girl, she stays for four days. This period is given for the umbilical cord to fall off. And after the period, the *kerijo* can come out with the child. It is not clear as to why there is variation in the number of days based on the sex of the child. During this period, she does not cook, or give water for her husband for bathing, or share a room with her husband.

The staple food for Lugbara is *Enyasa* (mingled cassava flour) which is eaten using the hand. But at this time, she is to eat using a spoon. These practices are because Lugbara people believe

that she is still bleeding and washing her blood therefore she is unclean. After the fall of the umbilical cord, it is also buried at the verandah of the child's father. This is for identity. The Comboni Missionaries Team has rightly observed that, "If it is buried in another man's compound, then that means the child belongs to the other man. This happens because later in life, one is asked where their stump (umbilical cord) was buried for identification."¹⁹⁴ This clearly brings out the Lugbara belief that the child belongs to the father. At this point, the mother can now come out, and the child is given a name.

Every African society handles child birth in its own ways with some similarities and differences with one another. But the most significant is the treatment of the umbilical cord and the placenta. In most African societies, it is treated in a special way. For instance, Mbiti observes that, "the Gikuyu deposit the placenta in an uncultivated field and cover and cover it with grain and grass, these symbolizing fertility."¹⁹⁵ He further gives examples that, "among the Didinga, the placenta is buried near the house where the birth takes place; among the Ingasana it is put in a calabash which is hung on a special tree (*gammeiza*); and among the Wolof the placenta is buried in the back yard, but the umbilical cord is sometimes made into a charm which the child is made to wear."¹⁹⁶ He gives the meaning of this as, "physically, the placenta and umbilical cord symbolize the separation of the child from the mother, but this separation is not final since the two are still near each other. But the child now begins to belong to the wider circles of the society. For that reason, the placenta is kept close to the house or placed in a calabash for everyone to see

¹⁹⁴Comboni Missionaries. uganda-lugbara-the-name-giving-ceremony.<http://www.combonimissionaries.co.uk/index.php>. 23/09/2018.

¹⁹⁵ Mbiti S.John. *African Religions and philosophy*. Great Britain: Heinemann. 1969 (p.113)

¹⁹⁶ Ibid

it."¹⁹⁷The practice therefore integrates the child into the community. This shows the African concept of communal living.

Just like pregnancy, in Africa, child birth brings joy to the family and the community at large. This among the Lugbara community is shown by the husband and the in-laws slaughtering chicken or a goat for the *Kerijo* depending on the financial status of the family, and the man buying meat more frequently for her than before. Among the Akamba, Mbiti observes that, "when a child has been born, the parents slaughter a goat or bull on the third day. Many people come to rejoice with the family concerned...Among the Gikuyu...the husband sacrifices a sheep of thanksgiving to God and the living dead.... Not only is God brought into the picture, but also the living dead since these also participate in the occasion of rejoicing."¹⁹⁸ Giving birth is a moment of rejoicing in Africa.

When it comes to the birth of twins, the Comboni Missionaries team has observed that, "The Lugbaras believe that having twins is a curse to the family and clan and they are never happy to have them. It is believed that in the olden days, twin babies were abandoned or thrown away but today, with the coming of Christianity, this no longer happens."¹⁹⁹ However, Lugbara people still have negative attitudes towards twins. Men see it as a burden of providing for two babies at the same time and women see it as a hard thing to look after them at the same place.

Another African society that perceives twins negatively is the Udhuk. Mbiti observes that in this society, "a woman who gives birth to twins is killed together with the twins."²⁰⁰ However, Mbiti rightly argues that this practice of killing twins should not be judged with emotions but it should

¹⁹⁷ Ibid

¹⁹⁸ Mbiti S.John. *African Religions and philosophy*. Great Britain: Heinemann. 1969 (p.114-115)

¹⁹⁹Comboni Missionaries. uganda-lugbara-the-name-giving-ceremony.<http://www.combonimissionaries.co.uk/index.php>. 23/09/2018.

²⁰⁰ Mbiti S.John. *African Religions and philosophy*. Great Britain: Heinemann. 1969 (p.112)

be noted that "the people concerned experienced them as a threat to their whole existence, as a sign that something wrong had happened to cause the births, and that something worse would happen to the whole community if the 'evil' were not removed. So, they killed the children for the sake of the larger community, to cleanse, to 'save', to protect the rest of the people."²⁰¹ However, there are other African societies that perceive giving birth to twins positively. For instance, "in central Africa they are known as 'the children of God and heaven' (*Tilo*), and when a village is threatened with calamity, people turn to them to pray on behalf of their communities."²⁰² Among the Bagandans, twins are seen as a blessing. They are received with joy in the family. Those who have produced twins are given special names. Like the mother of the twins is called *Nalongo* and the father is called *Salongo*. People are proud to be called by these names; they are respected in the community. Africans therefore have both positive and negative attitudes towards producing twins, varying from one society to another.

The next stage in child bearing after pregnancy and actual birth is child naming. But before discussing it, am going to pose and look at, who is a real man and a real woman according to the Lugbara people. This will give us a background of why the Lugbara people give their children the names as they have them today.

4.1.5 Lugbara Understanding of a Woman

A woman is a gatherer (*Oku*). A real woman in Lugbara is someone who welcomes people at home. She is to be hospitable to visitors to the extent that even when a stranger comes home, she has to welcome him or her. She is supposed to have *si imve* (white teeth) on the compound. This implies that she is to smile with everyone on the compound and when visitors come, she says '*ma*

²⁰¹Mbiti S.John. *African Religions and philosophy*. Great Britain: Heinemann. 1969 , (p.118).

²⁰² Ibid (p.117).

a'i mi ra' (I welcome you) while smiling. In Lugbara culture, when a visitor comes home, the first thing to do is to say, 'I welcome you' while smiling and this has to be repeated several times. Then he or she is given a place to sit on. If there is food and water, it is also given to the visitor. This is because Lugbara people are hospitable. Since women are responsible for domestic work, they are expected to be at home all the time. The hospitable character of the woman makes people to like coming to her home that she is supposed to be good to. She is supposed to stay with her in-laws, and other relatives. Whenever her husband comes home, she is to welcome him with smiles and receive whatever he has come with and give him a seat. If she does not do this, it can be used to support the man's act of polygamy; people normally say that she is the one who has sent away the husband. And so, a real woman is to gather the husband, in-laws, and other people at home. This gathering is not just empty, but she has to cook food and give to them all the time.

A real woman is a mother (*Anzi andri or Ayia*) of many children. A woman who does not produce is a girl. Men can mistreat their wives, but a woman who has children with a man gets some respect from her husband who calls her 'the mother of my children.' This perception of a woman is not only among the Lugbara people but also in other African societies. For instance, Nanyonga observes that, "in Buganda, child bearing defines the identity of a woman."²⁰³ In reference to Nigeria, Oduyoye notes that "all the women in the community become one's mother."²⁰⁴ Masinde while listing the qualities of a great woman, notes that, "She takes care and

²⁰³ Sylvia Nannyonga-Tumusuzi. *Gender, Ethnicity and politics in Kadongo-Kamu Music of Uganda: Identities in contemporary Music in Africa*. <https://docplayer.net/13/11/2018>.

²⁰⁴ Mercy Amba Oduyoye. *Daughters of Anowa, African Women and Patriarchy*. United States of America:Orbis Books . 1995. (p.26).

covers children; whether her own or others."²⁰⁵ This is a role played by mothers. Motherhood therefore makes a real woman, not only in Lugbara community but in Africa at large.

A real woman is the one who has a good relationship with in-laws. Among the Lugbara people, a wife is for the man's relatives. She is to dance according to the tunes of her husband and his people. A woman's relationship with in-laws determines the intensity of love the husband has for her, in that, the more the in-laws love her, the more the husband loves her also. Therefore, in-laws call a woman who has good relationship with them 'our wife.' And this happens when the woman always cooks food and gives to them, and makes them to easily access her husband's properties. In reference to an African man, Mbiti notes that, "when he gets married, he is not alone, neither does the wife 'belong' to him alone."²⁰⁶ Therefore, in events where his wife does not have good relationship with in-laws, she 'belongs' to her husband alone, hence not a real woman.

A real woman is a 'commodity' to be 'bought' by her husband. The Lugbara word for the marriage ceremony is *Aje* which means buying. The item to be bought is a woman by a man who is to be her husband and his kinsmen. During this ceremony, just as commodities do not charge their own price, a woman does not have a say on how many cows will be given to 'buy' her. A woman who is 'bought' puts joy on the face of her relatives. For, she has brought wealth for her parents. It brings respect to her and whenever she comes home and spends some time with her relatives for some months, on her return, her parents send her with food cooked either with a goat or chicken, as a sign of respect to her in-laws. But the one who is not bought goes empty handed. This therefore means that a real woman is the one who has already been bought like a commodity. This is something African. For example, Nannyonga observes that in Buganda,

²⁰⁵ Dayan Masinde. Qualities of a great woman. <https://www.capitalfm.co.ke/lifestyle/25/11/2018>.

²⁰⁶ Mbiti S.John. *African Religions and philosophy*. Great Britain: Heinemann 1969 (p.108).

"Indeed women were and are still commodities that can be bartered in exchange for another commodity or service."²⁰⁷

She is a weak sex. This perception of a real woman among the Lugbara people has made them to think that a woman cannot survive without a man. Therefore she must get married so as to be looked after by her husband, such, when a girl reaches the age at which people think she is supposed to be married, yet she is not seen in relationship with any man, people begin asking what is wrong with her. Some even go ahead to arrange a man for her. When she is still at her parents' home, the parents and her brothers monitor her steps as she cannot keep herself well as a weak sex. Mentally, they also believe that a woman is weak. As such, she cannot make right decisions for herself and her family. Decision making is therefore a man's work. Jobs such as political are therefore for men, while a woman is a domestic worker, she is grouped with children. This similar view of women is also common among the Banyankole of Uganda as noted by Abamwesiga in a proverb "*abakazi babiihwa nkaabana* literally translated as, women are deceived like children."²⁰⁸ Implying you can just play with their mind like children's mind. This view is common in all patriarchal societies as observed by the ScienceStruck staff that, "A patriarchal society believes that it is only the men who are capable of running social, moral, political, and economic life. Women are believed to be weaker, both physically and mentally, and thus incapable of making important decisions on behalf of others."²⁰⁹

She is submissive to her husband. In Lugbara society, a real woman is the one who worships her husband like a god. Everything that the man says has to be obeyed by her. She even makes sure

²⁰⁷Sylvia Nannyonga-Tumusuzi. *Gender, Ethnicity and politics in Kadongo-Kamu Music of Uganda: Identities in contemporary Music in Africa*. <https://docplayer.net> 13/11/2018.

²⁰⁸ Abamwesiga Arabella. The phenomenon of oppression of women and the cultural religious Practices and teachings: A case study of Bushenyi district. (ND). p.33.

²⁰⁹ ScienceStruck Staff. Patriarchal Society: Definition, Examples and Ill-Effect. <https://sciencestruck.com> 22/11/2018.

that she teaches the children to do the same. One of the ways of showing this respect is by not calling him by name. She calls him as the father of one of his children. Everything she wants to do, has to be permitted by the man. Even when she wants to go and see her sick parents, the permission must come from her husband. If not, she is seen as a woman who disrespects her husband, hence not a real woman. Some of my friends have given up their professional jobs because their husbands did not permit them to do the work. I being a Lugbara woman has experienced this even on the matters of sexuality. The man has to choose whether to have sex or not and as a woman, you have to obey whether you are in the mood or not. If not, you become a bad woman. As if that is not enough, a woman is supposed to kneel down as a sign of respect while serving her husband. She is not to see him direct into the eyes as this is disrespect. This respect has gone up to the extent where a woman is supposed to be silent even when the man mistreats her. This is a general thing that happens in all patriarchal societies as observed by the ScienceStruck staff that, "Obedience is one of the key essentials in a patriarchal society. Every wish and order of the husband or the man of the house is to be strictly adhered to, and humility, restraint, respect, and obedience must be directed towards the man at all times. Women and children are not expected to go against anything the patriarch says or does."²¹⁰ For instance, Nannyonga observes that "in Buganda, women were expected to be voiceless when men talk."²¹¹. Oduyoye also observes such practices among the Nigerian community that, "the daughters of Anowa [Nigerian women] are expected to be supportive and to hide from outsiders

²¹⁰ScienceStruck Staff. Patriarchal Society: Definition, Examples and Ill-Effect. <https://sciencestruck.com/22/11/2018>.

²¹¹Sylvia Nannyonga-Tumusuzza. *Gender, Ethnicity and politics in Kadongo-Kamu Music of Uganda: Identities in contemporary Music in Africa*. <https://docplayer.net/13/11/2018>.

their festering wounds." ²¹² In Lugbara community as well as other patriarchal societies, a woman's respect to her husband in which ever forms qualifies her to be a real woman.

She is a domestic worker. A lot has been said about a Lugbara woman being a worker. However more on this can still be said. A Lugbara woman is trained on how to be a domestic worker from childhood by her mother. She is expected to be a good cook, and when she does not know how to cook the staple food that is Enyasa (mingled cassava flour) and traditionally pasted beans, she becomes not a real woman. At her home, her role is to cook for the whole extended family, look after the children; her presence relieves her mother-in-law from domestic chores. In most cases, her in-laws sit and wait for food from her. It is at this point where the home is referred to as belonging to her. It is a tradition among the Lugbara people that, when a woman marries newly. for a good number of months if not years, she does not have a kitchen of her own. She cooks in the kitchen of her mother-in-law who then becomes a supervisor together with her daughters. Kitchen becomes her best place; the main house is for her husband and in-laws. After sometimes, with the permission from her husband, she can now cook from her own kitchen where she still serves the whole family. This going to start her own kitchen is called *futa atuluka ri* directly translated as 'going into kitchen.' On this day, she is to cook a 'good' meal, that is, with meat or chicken and give to everyone. This is simply to start cooking in her kitchen with a nice meal. She washes, and irons her husband's clothes together with the ones of her children, cooks for him, polishes his shoes, as the man and his relatives monitor whether she is doing it well or not. This similar practice is also observed by Oduyoye that "Among the patrairchal- patrilineal Yoruba of Western Nigeria, a wife is a member of work-force in 'her husband's house.'" ²¹³ She continues to

²¹² Mercy Amba Oduyoye. *Daughters of Anowa, African Women and Patriarchy*. United States of America:Orbis Books . 1995. (p.10).

²¹³ Mercy Amba Oduyoye. *Daughters of Anowa, African Women and Patriarchy*. United States of America:Orbis Books . 1995. (p.8)

argue that, "the daughters of Anowa sit, holding their bursting heads in their hands while men mouth political or economic platitudes, speak the language of law and order, or pay lip-service to democratization. When their brothers have unburdened themselves of their many words, the daughters of Anowa pick up the old hoes and their wooden trays and go to the farm to gather the familiar harvest and fire wood so that the familiar soup may be ready."²¹⁴ It is therefore not only among the Lugbara that a woman is a domestic worker, but also in other African societies.

4.1.6 Lugbara Understanding of a Man

A real man is wealthy. Among the Lugbara people, a man's wealth is measured by the number of animals he has. The most common are herds of cattle, sheep, goats, and chicken. Having big harvest is also a sign of wealth. Harvests such as cassava, millet, sorghum, ground nuts, among others. Traditionally, they used to be kept in granaries. The more granaries a man had on his compound, the wealthier he was. Such a man would be respected in the community and he has high self-esteem. This would be seen in case the man gets problems with someone, he asks the person with whom they have issues '*ma nya mirie?*' This is a question which means 'Do I eat from you?' Implying he has everything that he wanted so, he would not go to the enemy to look for food. Such are the men Lugbara parents recommend for their daughters. They see him as a real man. This perception of men is a very common thing in all patriarchal societies as observed by Meyer that, "in several part of Africa, a man receives respect if he is able to provide materially for his family. In these cases, the person will be viewed as 'the man of the house'."²¹⁵ She

²¹⁴Mercy Amba Oduyoye. *Daughters of Anowa, African Women and Patriarchy*. United States of America:Orbis Books . 1995. (p.8).

²¹⁵Juanita Meyer. Dominant Discourses on what it means to be a 'real' man in South Africa: The narratives of adolescent male orphans. <http://www.scielo.org.za> 22/11/2018.

continues to argue that "The participants said that older wealthy men will 'take' their women because they have more power through their wealth."²¹⁶

He is a father of many children. We have already discussed the emphasis that the Lugbara people put on bearing children while discussion bareness, therefore, the more children a man has, the more he is respected and perceived as a 'real' man. This production of children can either be with one wife or many wives. This can be exemplified by my father who has thirty children, and he was proud of that number. However, this is a practice which is common among Africans at large, as Masinde notes "Too many African men are dead beat dads, too many African men have sired children all over. Far too often, it is a common scenario during the death of African man that the women they have been with and their children, show up to want a piece of his inheritance."²¹⁷

He has power and he is respected by his family members. As a Lugbara woman is a weak sex, the man is the opposite. He is so powerful that when he speaks, it is final. A woman should not oppose him. In fact it is an embarrassment for a woman to tell the man what to do. In case a man feels that the wife is not respecting him, he uses his powers to demand for respect. A lot has already been said about the respect given to the man.

He is a land Lord. A Lugbara man is not a man if he does not have a land. Land is allocated to them while still young. In our discussion of property inheritance, it is observed that it is a male child who inherits the property of the father. Which is a general practice in Africa at large, as noted by ScienceStruck Staff in reference to all patriarchal societies that, "In case of inheritance, only the male children of the family receive their share of the family property, finances, jewelry,

²¹⁶Juanita Meyer. Dominant Discourses on what it means to be a 'real' man in South Africa: The narratives of adolescent male orphans. <http://www.scielo.org.za> 22/11/2018.

²¹⁷Dayan Masinde. When an African man loves his woman. <https://www.capitalfm.co.ke/lifestyle>. 22/11/2018

or anything else. The inheritance is only meant for the male lineage."²¹⁸ It therefore looks absurd to see a man without a land. A real man is therefore the one with a land.

He is sexually active. There is no exact way of measuring if a man is sexuality active or not. However, the Lugbara people see it with pregnancy. If a man marries and the wife is not getting pregnant, people ask him whether he is a man or a woman. This implies that a man is supposed to have sex with her wife and pregnancy is the evidence. Also, among the Lugbara people, a man would be seen as sexuality active with the size of penis. They do not undress the men, but, the size that appears from the trouser is interpreted. So, the bigger it appears, the more active the man is perceived to be sexually. Traditionally, most Lugbara men bath in the streams and rivers, where they see the size of each other's sexual organ. But this idea of looking at the sexual organ of men to judge their performance seems to be widely spread in Africa. For instance, Masinde notes that, there is a common stereotype that "An African man must have a big penis..., putting pressure and discomfort in African men with a small manhood."²¹⁹ Therefore, among the Lugbara as well as in Africa, a real man is the one who is sexually active.

He is married. Marriage is compulsory for Lugbara people. Therefore, a man whom people know has reached the age of marrying and yet is not getting married is seen as being abnormal. An unmarried man is not respected. Traditionally, in a gathering, an unmarried man was to sit down on the floor while married men are to sit on the chair. An unmarried man remains a boy until he gets married. It is therefore marriage that makes a boy to become a man. This emphasis on marriage is because Lugbara people want their children to continue to produce. Elderly people normally demand to see their grandchildren who would carry on their names. This is also a

²¹⁸ ScienceStruck Staff. Patriarchal Society: Definition, Examples and Ill-Effect. <https://sciencestruck.com/22/11/2018>.

²¹⁹Dayan Masinde. When an African man loves his woman. <https://www.capitalfm.co.ke/lifestyle>. 22/11/2018.

common practice in Africa at large. For instance, Mbiti observes that "African Parents are anxious to see that their children find husbands and wives, otherwise failure to do so means in effect....diminishing of the family as a whole."²²⁰

He has an extended family. This extended family may include, father, mother, children, sisters, aunts, uncles, grandparents, the children of his sisters, even his married brothers. He is to feed all these members of the family. By doing this, he is seen as a real man. Among the Lugbara people, it is the responsibility of the male children to look after their aging parents. As other people prepare for their old age, the Lugbara peoples' assets to be used at old age are their children, especially the male children, together with their wives. A man who does this therefore considered to be a real man. The concept of having extended family is however, an African thing as Mbiti observes that, "for African peoples the family has a much wider circle of members than the word suggests.... In traditional society, the family includes children, parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, brothers and sisters who may have their children."²²¹

4.2Lugbara Naming Practices

Mbiti observes that, "nearly all African names have a meaning. The naming of children is therefore an important occasion which is often marked by ceremonies in many societies."²²² African names may show the circumstance at which the child is born, it may describe the personality of the name bearer, names can also be given after grandparents, and children can be named based on the day on which they were born or the order of their birth especially for the case of twins, and some are given nicknames. However, the naming practice varies from one ethnic group to another. The question of 'who names the child is difficult to answer since it

²²⁰Mbiti S.John. *African Religions and philosophy*. Great Britain: Heinemann. 1969 (p.107).

²²¹ Ibid (p.106)

²²² Ibid (p.118)

varies from one society to another. However, in most societies, like the Akamba, Mbiti observes that "names are chosen by women who have had children."²²³ Connected to this, among the Lugbara, the mother of the child names the child. In some societies like Shona, naming is "done by the father a few days after birth."²²⁴ Other family members like the Aunties, or grandparents can also name children. Similar to Mbiti's observation, about African naming practices, Mphande has rightly argued that the answer to the question 'what is a name' "depends on the particular culture in which it is framed."²²⁵ In this part therefore, I am going to narrow my discussion on the Lugbara naming practices.

Giving a name to a child is a very important thing among the Lugbara people. In the past, this used to be done ceremonially, where a ceremony known as *Cikiri* is organized. The Comboni Missionary team explains it well when they write that; "Cikiri is a Lugbara name for cow peas. During the naming ceremony, Cikiri is the main dish to honor the ceremony. It's cooked with simsim paste in a traditional way, a cock or goat is also slaughtered and cooked depending on the financial status of a particular family. A local alcoholic drink is also brewed to accompany the food at the ceremony."²²⁶ This ceremony takes place after the umbilical cord has fallen off. "The new born's mother is allowed to give a name, as long as the elders agree to it." This therefore answers the question, who name a child among the Lugbara people?

It is worth noting that much as *Cikiri* is disappearing in the Lugbara community in the contemporary world, a name is still a vital thing to the Lugbara people. As such, the names they give to their children have meanings. The Comboni Missionaries team gives a similar view on

²²³ Mbiti S John. *African Religions and philosophy*. Great Britain: Heinemann. 1969 (p.120).

²²⁴ Ibid (p.119).

²²⁵ Lupenga Mphande *Naming and Linguistic Africanism in African Culture*. Somerville: Cascadille Press. 2006 (p.104).

²²⁶Comboni Missionaries. uganda-lugbara-the-name-giving-ceremony.<http://www.combonimissionaries.co.uk/index.php>. 23/09/2018.

this when they write that, "the Lugbara names given to children all come with meanings."²²⁷The Lugbara naming practices include the following:

Circumstantial Names

Names which fall under this category are historical facts telling plainly what the parents, the family and the clan was going through. They can be categorized into the following:

a) Names Showing the Situation at Birth Whether Good or Bad

For instance: *Abiria* and *Abiriga*, girl and boy-child respectively, is a child born during famine. In most cases, this name is given when the family has financial challenges which cannot allow the parents to provide enough food for the family, and when some clan members start 'laughing at them the mother names it on the child. In an interview with *Alioru*(which means poor one), whose child is called *Abiriga*, she said that, "I gave my son this name because I gave birth to him when there was famine in my home. I would always go around looking for pumpkin leaves to cook, and as time went on, my fellow women began backbiting me. I would always hear them say, *Eyi dri 'di di nyanya* literally translated as 'theirs is too much.' So, when I gave birth, I had to name him *Abiriga* meaning in famine. This makes them to know that I heard what they were saying."²²⁸ The chief reason of making them aware is that, they will fear to talk about it again. In Africa, such practice is also common among the Hausa society. For instance, Adelaide observes the name "*Yunwa* means hunger or time of famine."²²⁹

²²⁷Comboni Missionaries. uganda-lugbara-the-name-giving-ceremony.<http://www.combonimissionaries.co.uk/index.php>. 23/09/2018.

²²⁸ Alioru Jeniffer. Personal interview. 4/9/2018.

²²⁹ Adelaide Arthur. Africa's naming traditions: nine ways to name your child. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa.5/11/2018>.

It is observed that, "*Alioma, Alioru* and *Alio* are names given to mean there is poverty in the family or in the family the man is from."²³⁰ These names literally mean, 'I am poor,' for *Alioma* and *Alioru* and 'poverty' for *Alio*. These names express the situation in which the parents were at the birth of the child. This came out more clearly in an interview with *Alioma*, who said that, "the literally meaning of my name tells exactly what my parents were going through at the time I was born. They were so poor that they could not even afford to buy a piece of cloth for carrying me on the back. My mother told me that she tore my father's trousers, sewed them using a needle, and used it for carrying me on the back. She therefore named me *Alioma* meaning I am poor in reference to this."²³¹

In events where family is going through happy moments, Lugbara women also give children names that express joy or happiness. For instance, in an interview with a friend whose child is called *Ayiko* literally meaning joy, she said that "this is my husband's first child, and in their family, majorities are females. He and his relatives were so happy that I had given birth to a boy child among many girls. So, everybody loved me in the family, and to me, the birth of this child brought joy between me and my husband plus his relatives. Hence, I named him *Ayiko*."²³² The love of this mother is based on the traditional Lugbara belief that a woman determines the sex of the child. And if she continues to produce only boys, she will also be blamed and hated.

b) Names Showing the Event at the Time the Child was Born

²³⁰ Lugbara people and their culture. <http://ugandatourismcenter.com/place/lugbara-people-and-their-culture/> 23/09/2018.

²³¹ Alioma Lawrence. Personal interview. 8/12/2018.

²³² Andru Jeniffer. Personal Interview. 8/12/2018.

Names that fall here are the ones that tell the event at the time the child is born, but not describing the situation of the parents. Some show the season in which the child was born. For instance, *Onyaa* is a name given to a child born during the season of white aunts. In Africa, not every society treasures eating white aunts. But among the Lugbara people, white aunts are very important. Lugbara women gather them from aunt hills, remove their wings and traditionally, grind them into paste, make balls out of them as each ball is wrapped with sorghum or banana leaves, and then cooked thoroughly. After cooking, it can be smoked and eaten for several days. It is eaten with *Enyasa* (mingled cassava flour). The biggest share is served for the husband who will in turn love the wife more. White aunts are seasonal insects that normally come in the month of May. And because of the importance attached to it, everyone knows the month in which it comes. And so, when a Lugbara woman names her child *Onyaa*, it implies that the child was born in May, the season of white aunts. A similar practice is observed among the Kamba in Kenya where Adelaide notes that "Mumbua and Wambua means rainy season for boys and girls."²³³ In this, the birth day of the child can be traced to the months in which the region experiences rain season.

A child born during war is called *A'dia* or *A'diga* for a boy and *A'diru* for a girl, literally translated as 'in war.' At this point, the time in which the child is born can be known by the period in which the war broke. That is, it can tell the child's year of birth since war is so tragedy that people do not normally forget when it occurred. This is similar to the Luo name "Olweny [which] means time of war."²³⁴

c) Names Showing the Place of Birth

²³³ Adelaide Arthur. Africa's naming traditions: nine ways to name your child. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa.5/11/1018>.

²³⁴ Adelaide Arthur. Africa's naming traditions: nine ways to name your child. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa.5/11/1018>.

In events where the child is born when the mother is on a journey he or she is named *Geria* meaning 'on the way.' This was revealed in an interview with a friend called *Geria* who said that, "my name simply means 'on the way.' my mother told me that she gave birth to me when she was going to visit her parents. That she was moving on foot when she suddenly felt sharp pain on her lower back together with water flowing from her body. She knew it was time for labor. So, she called for help and the nearby women ran to help her, each carrying a piece of *Kitenge*. They covered her up and she gave birth on the road side. Hence she named me *Geria*."²³⁵

d) Names Showing the Period of Birth

Some names are given to show the period in which the child was born, that is, special days or festival, for instance, the names *Osuta* (for a boy), *Osutaru* (for a girl) meaning 'wonderful' and *Amabe* meaning 'with us' are names which the Lugbara people commonly give to children born in Festive season. In an interview with Milka whose child is called *Osuta*, she explained that she gave her child this name because she gave birth to him on 25/12/ 2013 because it is one of the names God gave to Jesus in the Bible. "Since he was born on the same day Jesus was born, I feel good to give him the same name with Jesus. But this does not mean that he is Jesus."²³⁶ She was not sure of the Bible verse but this name is found in Isaiah 9:6. In a related interview with Namia, she said that, "I gave birth to my child on 23/12/2000. Just two days to Christmas, so I had to give him this name, one of the names which was given to Jesus."²³⁷ *Amabe* is the short form of *Mungu ni amabe* which means God is with us. It is therefore the Lugbara word for Immanuel as seen in Mathew 1:22. This is a Hebrew word עִמָּנוּאֵל which according to the Hebrew Lexicon literally

²³⁵ Geria Patrick. Personal Interview. 12/12/2018.

²³⁶ O'daru Milka personal interview 13/12/2018.

²³⁷ Namia Robinah. personal interview 13/12/2018.

means "with us is God."²³⁸ This can be put in better English as 'God is with us.' In Africa, a similar practice is found among the Akan people as observed by Kofi in his journal that, "The period of birth may also relate to important festivals of the Akan such as Odwira, Akwamb, Ohum, Aboakyere, and Bakatue. Akans have names like Kwadwo Munufie, Akosua Apo, Kwame Dwira, etc. Christian festivals like Nordic Journal of African Studies Buronya 'Christmas', Yesu Amanehunu, 'Easter' have also brought names like Abenaa Buronya, Kwaku Buronya, Akosua Yesu, etc."²³⁹

e) Names Showing the Manner of Birth

Lugbara people also give their children names which describe how the child was born. Such names include Paparu, E'bea, Egaru, among others. Paparu means 'from the legs.' E'bea means 'in premature.' And Egaru means 'mended.' In an interview with two mothers whose children bear these names, one of them by the names Candiru said that, I named my child Paparu because the way she came out of my womb was not easy. Babies normally come out from the head to the legs, but for me, it came from the legs and the head was the last part of the body. This happened at home for I did not have money to go to the hospital. I suffered the pain, and thought the baby was going to die. So, I have named her Paparu because her birth was so unusual that it needs to be remembered."²⁴⁰ Another mother by the names Bako had two children whose names are E'bea and Egaru disclosed that, "I gave these children these names because of the way they were born. E'bea was born at six months and Egaru came out when she was so weak that I thought she was

²³⁸Brown F. S. Driver-C.Briggs. Hebrew and English Lexicon, United States of America:Hendrickson publishers 2015 (p.769).

²³⁹ Kofi Agyekum. *The Sociolinguistic of Akan personal names*. University of Ghana, Legon 2006 (p.219-220).

²⁴⁰ Candiru Hellen. personal interview 13/12/2018.

not going to make it. She was put in intensive care unit and when she gained strength, I surely realized that her life was restored, hence named her Egaru."²⁴¹

Names Expressing Emotions or Insinuating and Proverbial Names

Lugbara people also name their children out of emotions. Names that fall in this category show what the mother goes through in her marriage. Such names include:

Candia (a boy) and *Candiru* (a girl), *Ocokoru* (a girl), literally translated as 'in misery' and 'miserable' respectively, *Enzama* (boy) and *Enzaru* (girl) literally meaning 'they mistreated me,' are names given to babies which are born at a time when their mothers are going through difficult moments. From our discussion about Lugbara family, it is clear that most issues in the family affect women negatively, like barrenness, polygamy, among others. So, they suffer a lot in their homes, and so, name their sufferings on children.

Titia (a boy) meaning 'because of cows,' and *Tisia* (a girl) meaning 'is it because of cows' are names that Lugbara women give to their children. In Lugbara culture, cows are given as a bride price. And it comes with strings attached. So, when a man gives many cows in exchange for a woman as a wife, he assumes total control over the woman together with his relatives. Such a woman will have to be submissive to them. And even when she goes back to her parents' home in case of some misunderstandings between her and her husband, she is sent back to her husband by her relatives because she has already been 'bought.' Under such circumstance, the woman continues to suffer in the hands of her husband and his relatives. It becomes worse if the man uses the cows that were given as pride price of his sisters to pay his wife's pride price, which is a common practice among the Lugbara people. Each sister will demand for special treatment from the woman, while reminding her that 'it was my cows which were used for 'buying' you'. This

²⁴¹ Bako Suzan. personal interview 13/12/2018

woman sees that the cows that were paid to her parents as bride price is making her to suffer. So, when she gets a child, she names it *Titia* or *Tisia* implying she is suffering because of the cows that were paid as her pride price.

It is observed that, "When a woman has been cohabiting with a man and she gives birth before she is traditionally married or her bride-price is paid, she too will give the baby a name that can spite her husband and in-laws so that they immediately pay the bride-price to her parents or arrange the marriage immediately. The woman will call her boy-child *Ajeku*, or *Ajekuru* for a girl-child, meaning 'they have not yet paid anything for me', or *Maliko*, another girl-child name, meaning that her nominal 'husband's' family 'has nothing to offer her parents'"²⁴² Among the Lugbara, paying bride price brings respect to the woman's family. So, since the tradition does not allow the woman to ask for a bride price, she uses a name to spite the husband and his people to pay it.

A woman whose children always die after producing is always blamed for the death of the children. This is because in patriarchal societies such as Lugbara, men are always right. Ahamefule et al give us Okojie's definition of patriarchy as "a set of social relation with a material base that enables men to dominate women."²⁴³ Since under normal circumstances 'one cannot pierce oneself with a knife' in such an environment, men will always blame women for bad things like death. She therefore names her children *Ejidra*-meaning 'brought death, implying she is being blamed for bringing death in the family.

In an interview with *Draleru*-meaning, 'loving death,' she disclosed that "My mother gave me this name because my people were blaming her for the death of my three elders. implying she loves

²⁴³ Innocent Ahamefule et al, The plight of infertile women in Nigeria. <https://www.arabianjbm.com>. 13/11/2018.

death which shows that she is the cause of the death in the family *Drateru* (for a girl) and *Drate* (for a boy- literally translated as 'waiting for death,' implying her child is waiting for death that she has brought to the family. *Enyadria*- translated as 'in the grave,' implying her children always end up the grave. *Dramaza*-meaning 'meat for death, implying, she always produces a child to die' *Bileni* (for a boy) or *Bileru* (a girl)-meaning 'for grave' implying, she always produces for children who die, *Ajedra*- meaning 'I bought death,' Since pride price is paid to buy a wife, and since men always blame women for the death of children, the woman gives this name to mean that his husband complains that he has bought death, which clearly shows that the woman has brought death in the family. *Mawua*-meaning 'flower,' Lugbara people are well versed with the short span of flowers. So, when they name their children flower, it implies that since her children always die, they are like flowers. *Drani* meaning-'for death,' A Lugbara woman tells her story by saying that she always produces for death, this is in reference to what has happened in the past. In other African societies, such names have spiritual attachment. For instance, Adelaide observes that, "Ajuji (born on a rubbish heap) is a Hausa name given to a baby after those born before it failed to survive. It is believed that giving the child a "terrible" name will deceive evil spirits into thinking the child is not loved and as a result, allow it to live."²⁴⁴

When a woman conceives from her father's home and the father of the child denies being responsible for the pregnancy, she names such a child *Gasi*-meaning 'rejected,' implying she and her child have been rejected. As noted earlier, in Lugbara society, the child belongs to the father and his relatives. So, when the father of the child rejects the child, the child is seen as not having relatives even when it is with the maternal relatives. *Leku*-meaning 'not wanted', implying the

²⁴⁴ Adelaide Arthur. Africa's naming traditions: nine ways to name your child. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa>. 5/11/1018

child's father does not want her and the child. *Amaazi*-meaning 'one of us.' This implies that, since the rightful owner of the child (the father) has rejected him or her, the child becomes one of us in the maternal family. One of the circumstances under which a man can reject a child is, when he feels he does not have wealth or money to look after the child and the mother. This is because in Lugbara community, as being a patriarchal society, the man as the head of the family is supposed to provide for his family as the woman does the domestic chores. And since men want to prove that they are really men, they deny the responsibility when they are incapable, and follow the child later when they are capable. This in Lugbara is called *mva onzeza* literally translated as removal of a child where he is charged with a cow if the child is a girl or a bull if the child is a boy. This cow or bull is called *ezo mangaa...*, which is given to the parents or relatives of the mother of the child as a charge for looking after the child.

A woman whose relatives are few or do not always stand with her during her difficult moments in marriage, like funeral, sickness, when she is beaten by her husband, or in the current religious marriages like wedding for Christians or *Nika* for Muslims, there is session of gifts. At this point, people are keen to see what the woman's relatives have brought as a gift. Should the man's relatives give more gifts than the woman's, everyone starts saying she has no relatives. Under such circumstances, she is undermined by her husband and in-laws. It is worse when she does not have blood brothers or male relatives to stand for her. So, she names her child: '*Bako* (a girl) or '*Bayo, O'dipiyo* (a boy)-meaning 'no relatives,' '*Likico* (a girl) or '*Adriko* (a boy)- meaning 'no brother,' This is because in Lugbara community, boys protect their sisters. They can do this by sending warnings to her husband in case he mistreats the wife or some even go ahead to beat him. They do not imprison in-laws because it is seen as bringing bad luck for the children. In case it happens, there is a charge for it called *Arubaa*, in which the man gives one goat and the

woman's relatives also give one, which is slaughtered for the two families to eat, who then pray for the children to be cleansed from the death which would be caused due to the imprisonment. In case the two families have not sat down for this, the children do not eat anything from the woman's relatives, in case they eat, it is believed that their stomachs swell and they die. So, it is an important thing for a woman to have a blood brother. So, because of this, a mistreated woman's brothers end up beating the man themselves. As such, the more protecting brothers a woman has, the more respect she gets at her marital place. Those with calm brothers, consider themselves as with no brothers, hence they go ahead to give these names to their children to spite their brothers to fight for them.

A woman who is not loved by the in-laws at her marriage place names her children: *Nguma*-meaning 'they hate me,' *Lematia*-, meaning 'they love me from the lips,' *Onzima* (for a boy) or *Onziru* (a girl)-meaning 'I am bad or the bad one. The circumstances under which a woman is hated by her husband and in-laws include: when the couple is barren. This has already been discussed into details in the previous section, when the woman is not hard working, that is does not cook for the whole family, when she eats her food with her husband and children leaving out the in-laws she is called a selfish woman, when the husband marries another woman (all attention is shifted to the new wife), to mention but a few. In an interview with Rose whose child is called *Onzima*, she said that, "I gave my child this name because by the time he was born, my husband had just married a new wife. He abandoned my children; he could not provide food for us. So I would leave my children with my in-laws to go and look for food. By the time I come home, I find my children are hungry and some are beaten. From this I knew it was not only my husband who hated me but also his people. And they were transferring the hatred to my children who are actually theirs. So, when I gave birth, I had to name my son *Onzima* implying, these

children are innocent. I am the one who is bad. So, do not hate them because of you think I am bad."²⁴⁵ Some call their children '*Zibeya*-meaning 'did they consult?'

Traditionally, we have observed that parents used to look for marriage partners for their children. And one of the requirements was that, the woman should be well behaved, and/or should come from morally upright family. This consultation is mandatory before marriage. In the events she is married and her behavior is not as good as the in-laws expected, they begin asking the question, did they really consult people about the behavior of this woman or the family where she grew from? So, she names it on her child.

A woman who produces only one sex of children, names her children; *Ojaku* (boy) or *Ojakuru* (girl)-meaning 'does not change,' *Eleku*-meaning 'no interchange,' *Alurile*-meaning 'the same,' We have already noted that in patriarchal societies, men are always right. So, even if scientifically it is the man who determines the sex of the child, Lugbara people blame the woman for producing the same sex. It is worse when she only produces girls. This is because boys are treasured more than girls, for the reasons discussed earlier. Such a woman does not have peace in the community. She therefore names it on her children to let people know what she is going through. However, after all this torture she happens to get a child of opposite sex, she can name the child *Malunga* meaning 'let them see.' Implying they have been thinking that she can never produce both sexes, now that it has happened, let them see for themselves. Some name such a child *Awani* meaning 'Thanks.' She thanks God for having given her a child of opposite sex that she has been blamed for.

It is also observed that "When a woman takes a long time to deliver after marriage, her first born will be named *Ondoma* or *Onduru* depending on the sex of the child."²⁴⁶ The names mean-'I am

²⁴⁵ Ayikoru Rose. Personal interview. 22/11/2018.

barren' and the 'barren one' respectively. We have already looked at the perception of barrenness among the Lugbara people which is very negative. She therefore names it on the child to tell what she is going through.

Other names given under such circumstances include: *Ayiko'buu*- meaning 'happiness is in heaven.' Having looked at the plight of a barren Lugbara woman under the perception of barrenness, this woman ends up being unhappy all the time. So, she tells the world that her happiness is in heaven. *Orodriyo*- meaning useless, a barren woman in Lugbara community or in Africa at large is a useless woman. Having heard all these humiliating words in the long period spent in marriage without a child, she then names it on her long awaited baby that she is useless.

A' baku-meaning 'I do not create,' Lugbara women believe that children come from God. So, when she is blamed for being barren, she answers the society after giving birth by giving the child this name implying 'do not blame me. It is God who gives children as she does not create human beings. *Aniku*-meaning 'I do not know' (especially the cause), in this name, all the blame that has been put on the woman for being barren, she replies it. This implies that she is innocent.

Ezayii-meaning 'they wasted water (sperm). Traditionally, the ultimate purpose of having sex among the Lugbara people is to produce children. So, if the man has sex with his wife and she does not produce, he and the society sees it as him wasting his sperm. After this woman hearing this several times during her childless years, she then names it on the child when she gets one.

Ezati-meaning 'they wasted cows,' traditionally, Lugbara people pay bride price to 'buy' a woman who is expected to give them children. So, when she fails, they begin saying that they have

²⁴⁶ Lugbara people and their culture. <http://ugandatourismcenter.com/place/lugbara-people-and-their-culture/> 23/09/2018.

wasted their cows for nothing. Hence she names it on her. *Drileonzi*-meaning 'bad luck,' Lugbara people see a barren woman as a bad luck, so, after saying that several times in her days of barrenness, she names it on the child when she produces. *Manze'de* or, *Mayokia*, -meaning 'let them talk here,' Gossiping about a barren woman is a common practice among the Lugbara society. So, when finally she gets a child, she gives this name to reply them that let them talk, but finally God has given me a child. *Pariyo* or *Anguyo*-meaning 'no place' implying as a barren woman, she has no place where she is treated well.

More so, *Wa'diko*-meaning 'not hospitable,' is a name given to a child by a woman (the mother of the child) whose in-laws tell her that she is not welcoming. This is because, among the Lugbara people, a woman is supposed to welcome people home and attend to them, as the name *Oku* depicts. *Oku* is the Lugbara name for woman. It means 'gatherer.' A woman has been perceived by the Lugbara people as the one who gathers people home. So, where the woman fails to do this, people say that she is not hospitable; hence, she names it on her child.

Theophoric Names

Lugbara people also give their children names which have religious connotations in which we find God's name *Mungu* or *Adro* as known by the Lugbara people. For instance, *Mungueconi* meaning, only God can. Implying whatever she or they go through, only God can see them through. This shows the Lugbara people's belief that god is all powerful. *Mungufeni* means 'its God who has given' implying the child is a gift from God. This shows that Lugbara people believe that children come from God. Such theophoric names are found in other African societies as Chitando notes in Zimbabwe, "Other Shona ... names reflect deep spiritual values. Ishewanatsa (The Lord has done well), Mupindishe (Only God gives), Chaitamwari (What God has done) ... are some examples of oral theology. These names are professions of faith and

demonstrate theological sensitivity."²⁴⁷ Among the Akan of Ghana, theophoric names are “names that depict the Akans’ belief in the supernatural beings and their power to give children. These names are normally given when parents have struggled for children for a number of years and all hopes are lost. A child whose parents give birth out of a broom would be called Nyamekyɛ, ‘God’s gift’, Nyameama, ‘God has given’ and Nso Nyame yɛ ‘it is not impossible for God to act.’”²⁴⁸ Molefi et al observe that, "In Uganda, where God is called Katonda and Ruhanga, we find names such as Byakatonda (for or by the creator), Byaruhanga (thing of God). In Rwanda and Burundi, we find names like Bizimana (God knows everything)... Niyibizi (God knows all about it), Ndayiziga (depend on him)...In Nigeria, we find some significant Igbo names like Chukwuka (God is almighty, God is the highest), Chukwuma (God knows), Ikechuku (God is my force), Chigozie (God bless), Chimwanya (God does not sleep), Chiamaka (God is beautiful, God is good)."²⁴⁹ All these names show the African peoples belief in God which is one of the Lugbara peoples' way of naming their children.

Nicknames

Although not so common, Lugbara people also give their nicknames. These names describe how the name bearer looks like. Such nick names include; Iniaa, meaning black. This describes the skin color of the child. Aboloto is a nick name for babies who are very big in size, while Gaa or O'dukunyaa or Gandia meaning small, are nicknames given to children who are very small. Ombere is a nickname for a child who takes long to walk. It means "lame", Abubu is a nick name for a deaf person. Another interesting nickname is Ibinyaa meaning glow warm. In an interview

²⁴⁷ Chitando Ezra. Sign and Portents? Theophoric names in Zimbabwe. <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/23/11/2018>.

²⁴⁸ Kofi Agyekum. The Sociolinguistic of the Akan personal names. <http://www.njas.helsinki.fi/pdf-files/vol15num2>. 23/11/2018.

²⁴⁹ Molefi Kete et al (ed). Encyclopedia of African religion. <https://books.google.co.ug> 23/11/2018.

with Irina, whose child is called Ibinya, She said that "it was my friend who gave my son this name. She came to see the child when he was one month and two weeks. She found the child was very brown. She exclaimed, 'wawooo....'di di ini Ibinyaa ni kaa..' Meaning Oh, this is a glow worm.' So, from this day, I began calling my son, Ibinyaa, which everyone follows including his father."²⁵⁰ This name implies that the child's skin is as bright as the light that glow worms give in darkness. However, these nicknames in most cases are just used by the close relatives, and in most cases, they are not included on documents. Another African society that gives children nick names is Somalia. In this, Adelaide observes that, "Some common nicknames for men include Langare (limpy), Coryaan (handicapped), Lugay (one leg) or Genay (missing tooth). Women, however, mostly get flattering nicknames like Lul (diamond), Macanay (sweet), Cod Weyne (rich voiced), Dahable (golden) and Indho Daraleey (gazelle eyes)."²⁵¹ Nicknaming, as observed in Somalia also, is one of the ways Lugbara people name their children.

Names Given after Grand Parents

As noted by the Comboni Mission's Team, "names can also come from grandparents or ancestors, clan elders and leaders. This is done to keep the names of their parents and grandparents always alive."²⁵² This is not so common among the Lugbara people. Only few families do this. Under this practice, the child is first given his or her own name, and the religious name, then the grandparent's name comes as a third name. For instance, the name of the Local Council Five chairman of Arua district is *Wadri Sam Nyakua*. Wadri is his personal name meaning 'cursed', Sam is his Christian name and *Nyakua* is their grandfather's name. This kind of

²⁵⁰ Candiru Irina. Personal Interview. 23/11/2018.

²⁵¹ Adelaide Arthur. Africa's naming traditions: nine ways to name your child. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa>. 5/11/2018 .

²⁵² Comboni Missionaries. uganda-lugbara-the-name-giving-ceremony. <http://www.combonimissionaries.co.uk/index.php>. 23/09/2018.

practice is also common among the South Africans as Adelaide observes that, "Parents often name babies after senior members of the clan whether dead or alive. But it is considered disrespectful to casually shout or call out the name of a senior family member that has been given to a child, so instead it is common to hear a child affectionately called Ouma (grandma) or Oupa (grandpa) in southern Africa. The *Bamasaba* of the Eastern Uganda also do the same. For instance, I have a *Bamasaba* friend called Nadunga. And when I asked her what her name means, she explained that she does not know. That for them they give names of great people or people whom the clan judges as being good. So, she was given Nadunga using such a system.²⁵³ Another similar naming practice is among the Muteso of Eastern Uganda. In an interview with Asimo Joyce and Tino Catherine, they said that they do not know the meaning of their surnames because they were given to them after their grandparents.²⁵⁴

Names Influenced by Social Institutions or Environment.

Names which fall under this category are influenced by the society or the institution in which the individual lives, and these include:

i) Religious names.

An interesting story came from Adania whose child is called Oli. Oli in Lugbara is air or to cut or to roll depending on the context in which it is used. However, during the interview Adania never attributed the meaning of her daughter's name to any one of these; instead she said that, "Oli was the name of one of the god's of my father-in-law (Mayembe). Whenever a child is born in the family, the child is given this name of the god. This god used to watch over his property in

²⁵³ Nadunga Annet. Personal interview. 19/11/2018.

²⁵⁴ Asimo Joyce and Tino Catherine. Personal interview. 12/2/2019.

such a way that whoever stole was beaten by the god. Hence giving it to his children and grandchildren implies giving them protection."²⁵⁵

ii) Matrimonial names.

This mostly affects women. It is a common practice among the Lugbara people that a married woman is called by her husband's name. She is called 'so and so's wife or by the real name of the husband. The practice is also true among the Christians, especially in the Church where after wedding, a woman is expected to drop her surname and replace it with the man's surname. She is called by the man's name. In an Interview with Ajidiru, She said that "People call me Onzima which is a man's name because it is my husband's name which I acquired on our wedding."²⁵⁶ But these names are not on their academic documents because they acquire them later in marriage.

iii) Relational names.

Lugbara people see it as disrespect to call certain important relatives by their real names. So, they call them by the relationship that they have with the people. For instance, a father is called 'Baba' a mother is called 'Mama', grandfather is also called 'Baba', grandmother is called 'Dede', Paternal uncle is called 'Atapuru' while maternal uncle is called 'Adroyi', paternal aunt is called 'Awupi' while maternal aunt is called 'Andrapuru', in-laws are called 'otuoo' on both sides. These names are not given at birth but are just automatic names which come based on the relationships in the families. That is why you cannot find them on documents. Such practice is also common among the Baganda of central Uganda. For instance, they call father 'Taata,' mother 'Maama,'

²⁵⁵ Adania Jessica. Personal interview. 19/11/2018.

²⁵⁶ Ajidiru Dorah. Personal interview. 19/11/2018.

paternal uncle 'Taata,' maternal uncle 'Kojja,' Paternal Aunt 'Ssenga,' maternal aunt 'Maama,' sister-in-law 'Mulamu' and brother-in-law 'Muko.'

iv) Kiswahili names.

Lugbara people also give their children names in Kiswahili language. The most common ones include; Cheka, Shida, Masikini, among others. In an interview with a mother whose children are Cheka and Shida, she said that "Cheka means laughter. I gave her this name because our problems make other people to laugh at us. Shida means miserable because I have never landed on a man who shows me love like other men show to their women. I brought up these children single handed. Shida being my third born, I knew that her father was also going to abandon me with her like the father of the first two, so, all my life is just miserable."²⁵⁷ Cheka in Lugbara is Oguaru and Shida in Lugbara is Candiru.

The question is, why did she name them in Kiswahili but not in Lugbara? She explained that she just wanted to name them in Kiswahili just like some people feel proud to name their children in English. She reports that "Kiswahili is like English for us who did not go to school. We use it to interact with those who do not know our local language, it is our business language as blockers mostly use it, and we also trade with Congolese who cannot use Lingala with us since we do not know it, so, the most common language for communication is Kiswahili. I learnt Kiswahili during Amin's reign when we used to have many Nubians who were Muslims trading in Arua. They would speak to us in Kiswahili."²⁵⁸ In a related interview with a son of an ex-soldier of Amin, by the names Taban Mohamad, to him, Kiswahili became rampant among the Lugbara people during Amin's reign. It used to be the language of the soldiers and since Amin comes

²⁵⁷ Drabaru Hellen. Personal interview. 18/02/2019.

²⁵⁸ Ibid

from this side, there were very many soldiers who are Lugbaras including his father. He continued to say that people were proud of it just like they are proud of English today.²⁵⁹ However, today, English language is more rampant than the Kiswahili language. Kiswahili is mostly spoken by adults and the young people mostly use English language.

Day Born Names

Lugbara people also give their children names based on the day on which the child was born. However, this is something that must have developed of recent because the day born names are given in English. For instance, some children are called Monday and others are called Sunday. Monday in Lugbara is called O'du alu and Sunday is called Sabatu, but you will not find these Lugbara versions named on a child. Since the traditional Lugbara people did not know English, this must be a recent way of naming children and it is not a common practice. Such practice is also common among the Ghanaians as Adelaide observes, " Even before parents select a western or religious name for their child, the baby already has a name. Among some Ghanaian ethnic groups like the Akan, Ga, Ewe and Nzema, a name is automatically assigned based on the day the child is born."²⁶⁰

Twins' Names

These are names given to children born as twins. Much as the traditional Lugbaras used to kill twins, today, the Lugbara people have accepted twins, so, they give them special names like Ejuru for a girl and Ejua for a boy. These names simply mean 'double'. This practice is also common among the Bagandans as Nairuba explains that if both babies are boys, the one which comes out first is called Waswa and the follower is called Kato. If both are girls, the elder is

²⁵⁹ Taban Mohamad. Personal interview. 19/11/2018.

²⁶⁰ Adelaide Arthur. Africa's naming traditions: nine ways to name your child. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa>. 5/11/2018.

called Babirye and the younger is called Nakato. If the twins are opposite sex and the boy comes out first, he is called Waswa and the girl is called Nakato, and if the girl comes out first, she is called Babirye and the boy is called Kato.²⁶¹ So, twins' names are already there naturally.

²⁶¹ Nairuba Rose. Personal interview. 16/2/2018.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary, synthesis, conclusions and the recommendation of the study.

5.1 Summary

This study focused on the contextual analysis of 1 Samuel 1:1-20 in relation to the Lugbara family life and naming practices. The study sought to discuss the text in relation to family life and naming practices, analyze the Lugbara family life and naming practices and examine the contextual relationship between the text and the Lugbara society in relation to family life and naming practices.

The theoretical frame work of the study was postcoloniality. The Bible passage is interpreted in the context of the Lugbara people. This was done by using African Bible Hermeneutics specifically, cultural Hermeneutics.

The study carried out detailed study of 1 Samuel 1:1-20 in its context where the text was described and discussed in which major issues arising from it were paid attention to. These issues include: polygamy, barrenness and child naming. Polygamy was an institutionalized practice not only in the Bible but also in the ancient Near East. An examination of the perception of barrenness in the Ancient Near East was done which shows that barrenness is perceived negatively which led to Hannah's plight in the text. The study also examined the circumstantial factors that influenced Hannah's choice of naming of Samuel. Major characters in the text were analyzed and these include Elkannah, Hannah and Peninnah.

The study examined the Bible and its context of naming and the Lugbara and its context of naming.

Concerning the Bible and its context of naming, discussions were carried out on the Ancient Near Eastern naming practices and the Biblical naming practices. From the Ancient Near Eastern naming practices, it was found out that, it is the mother who names a child. The children were named to send away evil spirits, after grandparents, to protect children from dying, names also had connections with parents, they reflected the situation at birth, to show the character of the name bearer, there were also theophoric and day born names, among others.

The study then proceeded to analyze Biblical naming practices which indicates that there are three categories involved in child naming, and these are: parents, non-parents and God. However, when it comes to parents naming children, it is mostly mothers who are the name givers. It reveals that names were given pointing to the titles of individuals, denoting the nature or personal qualities of individuals, names were given after who one would become, names were prophetic, they were also connected with family relations, religious relations, revealing transformation in character, substitutional names were also given to children, names from animal creation, circumstantial names, among others.

Concerning Lugbara family life and naming practices, the study finds out that Lugbara people have patriarchal family which is characterized by the rule of men. It also found out that polygamy and barrenness affect women negatively. Polygamy is perceived positively whereas people have negative attitudes towards barrenness, and women are blamed for the cause of

barrenness. Child bearing and naming are so important that barren women are subjected to ridicule in the society. It was found out that it is the mother who names her child.²⁶²

5:2Analyses

In the analysis of the findings, the researcher found out that the family life and naming practices in 1 Samuel 1:1-20 share common similarities with the Lugbara family life and naming practices. It is in this regard that the study nourishes its reading of the Bible text as a Lugbara woman's story, and in effect embodies the plight of Hannah in light of the plight of a Lugbara woman.

In the Bible narrative, Hannah, like a Lugbara woman is in the patriarchal setting. In this setting, the man is the head of the family. As the head, the family and everything in it belongs to him. He is the one who decides in family matters, including going to Shiloh. Although there are three main characters in the text, only Elkannah is introduced by tracing his genealogy up to the fourth generation from Jeroham to Zuph, which according to scholars like Adeyemo, is an indication of his standing in the society.²⁶³ Penninah and Hannah are introduced as the wives to the man. This scenario is reminiscent of the Lugbara culture where a home is addressed using the man's name and a woman is commonly identified as the man's wife.

Polygamy is a male ideal in both settings. A man is free to marry as many wives as he can, and the wives are not supposed to complain. Some of the causes of polygamy include; childlessness, imbalance in the sex of the children, to have many children, for prestige, sickness, among others. For Elkannah's case, scholars such as Kadar have argued that, it is Hannah's barrenness that led to Elkannah's polygamy.²⁶⁴ However, in the Lugbara context, all the outlined reasons are valid

²⁶²Except in situations of twins, family names where names are automatically known. In the event of twins, the Lugbara traditional names for all the twins.

²⁶³ Adeyemo Tokunboh. *Africa Bible commentary*, Nairobi: worlalive 2006 (p.328).

²⁶⁴ Tamar kadar. Penninah: Midrash and Aggadar. <https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article>. 20/6/2018.

for polygamy. A real man in Lugbara context is a father of many children, so they get many wives to produce many children. A real man is also sexually active, and this can be proved by making many women pregnant, a real man is a wealthy man. And children are a source of wealth for instance, when girls get married, the bride price is given to the father. Also, boys help in farming which increases the wealth of the family.

Polygamous family in both settings is characterized by imbalanced love for the wives which leads to jealousy between co-wives. In the text, it is ironic that Elkannah loves Hannah more than Peninnah, as he would give Hannah a double portion of meat, irrespective of Hannah being childless. In a Lugbara family however, an imbalanced love is shown when a man loves the woman who is giving him children. A childless woman is not taken as the real wife of her husband, which shows that she is less loved compared to her co-wife. The barren woman is however not just sent away on the grounds of childlessness in the Lugbara setting especially when she is the first wife but such women are associated with other values like hard work and hospitality. This makes her in-laws to like her, though the man can marry another wife. From the text, we see Peninnah provoking Hannah even when in the house of the Lord at Shiloh. At Shiloh, it is deduced that the provocation comes particularly because of the double portion of meat that Elkannah gave to Hannah, which might have triggered off Peninnah's jealous reactions against Hannah. This picture is not strange to the Lugbara setting, where jealousy accounts for numerous family quarrels, witchcraft and other social conflicts, even among step children belonging to different mothers in the family.

From the above discussion about polygamy in both settings, it is clear that polygamy is a good thing for the man as it helps him to produce more children, have prestige, and prove his manhood, among others. Meanwhile it affects women negatively as there is imbalanced love,

jealousy among them which leads to provocation of one another, at the end of it all, causes lack of peace in the families. It is mostly women who suffer from family wars as they are domestic workers meanwhile, men do not feel this much, because they are public workers who do not spend much time at home.

Child bearing is very important in both family settings. Children are seen as a gift from God. They are a means by which one continues to live. Children are a source of security. They are a source of wealth where by, boys help in family income generating activities like looking after cattle, digging among others while in Lugbara setting in particular, girls get married and their bride price is a source wealth to her parents. Children are also a means by which a woman owns her husband's property, and above all, they are a blessing to the couple and the community at large. Some of these may not be seen directly from the text, but the socio-cultural background of the Bible (the Ancient Near East) attaches these values to children. As such, every marriage is supposed to bear children, which is one of the primary roles of marriage. In the event a couple fails to bear children, the blame always goes to the wife. Needless to say, barrenness is a problem in both contexts. Barrenness is a tragedy for a married woman, it is a disgrace to the woman's family, it means rejection by society, an end to lineage, loss of honor, socio-economic loss for the woman, psychological torture for the woman, and an obstacle to the primary function of marriage among others. And causes of barrenness are sin, visitation by demons, witchcraft, among others, for the case of Lugbara community, while in Hannah case; it is the Lord that has closed her womb. In this case, a critical analysis of the effects of barrenness shows that it affects women negatively. It is therefore a woman's agony. A man's love can therefore not wipe away a woman's tears of barrenness, but only getting a child of her own does.

In both contexts, it is the mother who names a child. According to the Ancient Near East, it is the father who names a child. When it comes to the Biblical setting, naming is done by three categories-parents (mother or father), nonparents and God. In the text, it is Hannah who names her child. And this according to scholars like Adeyemo, is because the child was an answer to her prayer. So, since she was the one who prayed, it was right to let her name her child. For, Elkannah was not as desperate for a child as Hannah.²⁶⁵ Just like Hannah, barrenness and polygamy in a patriarchal family setting affects Lugbara women negatively, hence they are the ones who give names to their children.

It should also be noted that in both settings, barrenness is seen as a spiritual cause. From the text, this is clearly seen by the statement concerning Hannah's barrenness that, *the Lord had closed her womb* (See 1Samuel 1:5). Meanwhile among the Lugbara people like in the text, it is seen by the theophoric names that mothers give to their children.

In both contexts, barrenness makes a woman unhappy and religious. In the text, Hannah is portrayed as going to cry to God for a child in prayers and Lugbara women visit witch doctors as a solution to their problem of barrenness. All these show that in both contexts, women become very religious in the face of barrenness.

In both contexts, male children are preferred over and above female children. In the text, we see Hannah asking for a son, but not a daughter or children. And in the Lugbara setting, male children are a source of security, heirs and a 'shed' since after marriage they remain on their father's compound while girls are seen as visitors in their father's house. Producing one sex of

²⁶⁵ Adeyemo Tokunboh. *Africa Bible commentary*, Nairobi: worldalive 2006 (p.328)

children especially girls is therefore seen as having no children, hence one of the causes of polygamy, because the mother of the girls is always blamed for producing one sex of children.

In both settings, women are voiceless. In the text, scholars like Kadar have argued that Hannah could have been Elkannah's first wife, but because of her barrenness, Elkannah had to marry Peninnah who kept provoking her.²⁶⁶ This view is well suspended on what we read in the story of Sarah and Hagar, where the latter would provoke the former for being childless (see Genesis 16:1-5). In Hannah's plight in this polygamous setting, she was silent. She neither fought back her co-wife nor complained to her husband for having married Peninnah. Likewise in Lugbara setting, a woman remains silent in the plight of barrenness as the society makes her to feel that she is the cause. Instead, she is supposed to be submissive to whatever her husband has decided on. A woman in the text is therefore as voiceless as a Lugbara woman in a polygamous family. She drinks her own tears; she acts as a shock absorber and dies silently.

Therefore, as seen from above, both the textual and Lugbara family setting is not a friendly place for a woman in the face of patriarchy, polygamy and barrenness. The predicament of Hannah therefore resonates with a Lugbara woman's plight. It is in this context that Hannah prays to God for a Child. Details of Hannah's prayer are only summed up to her demand: "*LORD Almighty, if you will only look on your servant's misery and remember me, and not forget your servant but give her a son, then I will give him to the LORD for all the days of his life, and no razor will ever be used on his head.*" (see 1 Samuel 1:11). I opine that Hannah's cry was more than just these few words. Amidst the distress, insults from her co-wife and children, neighbors and other Elkannah's family members Hannah in her soliloquy, to the God who had closed her womb poured her grieve and bitterness: Using the familiar context of the Lugbara people, Hannah

²⁶⁶Tamar kadar. Penninah: Midrash and Aggadar. <https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article>. 20/6/2018.

petitioned her case against the co-wife, and other people who were mocking her. Prayed against the suffering she was experiencing, and that God should save her from the reproach of being barren.

This life circumstances influenced Hannah in the choice of her sons' name: Samuel. This name means, heard of God, name of El (God), his name is God, asked of God, and it is an expression of thankfulness. It is argued in this thesis that; Hannah's story is a Lugbara woman's story. If Hannah was a Lugbara woman, in this regard, she would have given Samuel a Lugbara name, which Lugbara women in similar family life circumstance would give to their children. Hannah would have surely given names of praise, mocking names against her tormentors and names of protest against her enemies as seen below:

Ondoma meaning 'I am barren.' or *Atiku*-meaning 'I do not produce. This research found out that Lugbara people name children after the words used to describe them in marriage or society. And a barren woman is called Ondo, and Atiku is from the word tiku which means 'she does not produce.' Hannah would have given these names to her son because in Lugbara community, a barren woman can never dodge such words, hence naming it on the child to tell how the community used to describe her during her plight of barrenness, which at this point is to mock her tormentors,.

Mungueconi-translated as 'only God can.' Lugbara women normally give this name to their children to show that they have tried what they can to get pregnant, but they failed. Some try it by going to witch doctors; others go for blessings (*Asindriza*) from their relatives, or elders, among others. They do this because of the pressure from the community. So, after trying in vain, and all of a sudden, they get pregnant, and give birth, they tell the ones who have been

pressurizing them that, actually they tried, but only God can give a child, or to mean that only God can see them through in their trouble of barrenness. So, if Hannah was a Lugbara woman, she would have gone through the same, hence named her child *Mungueconi*.

Ayiko'bu- meaning 'happiness is in heaven.' Hannah would have given her son this name because a childless woman in a Lugbara community is a sad woman. She is reminded of her barrenness in various ways as discussed in the perception of barrenness; she is hated by in-laws and/or the husband, laughed at by the co-wives, if any, among others. So, if Hannah was a Lugbara woman, she would not have escaped all these from Peninnah and Elkanah's people, hence, she would have named Samuel *Ayiko'bu*, for, her happiness would only be in heaven, but not on earth.

Orodriyo- meaning 'useless' or *Toko*-meaning 'nothing'. Hannah would have named Samuel *Orodriyo* or *Toko* if she was a Lugbara woman because, among the Lugbara people, a barren woman is a useless woman, or nothing. Since Hannah was barren at first, she would have heard all these descriptions of her in the community, and named it on Samuel, to mock Peninnah and other relatives who have been tormenting her when she was barren.

A' baku-meaning 'I do not create.' Hannah would have given Samuel this name because a barren Lugbara woman is always asked why she does not want to produce for the man. Some people even go around saying 'she just wants to eat the man's money and leave him.' There are cases where in-laws demand to see their grandchildren before they die. All these traumatize the woman when she takes long to conceive. So, when the baby arrives, she tells the world that, she is not the one who creates, but God and finally, He has done it. Hannah would have suffered the same

and named Samuel *A' baku* if she was a Lugbara woman which is a name of protest against her accusers.

Aniku-meaning 'I do not know' (especially the cause). Lugbara women give this name to their children to tell the society that they do not know why they are barren. In a Lugbara community, being barren concerns the whole community. People blame the woman for the cause of barrenness. So when such a woman gives birth to a child, she names him *Aniku*-meaning 'I do not know the cause of my barrenness.' This name is to protest against the accusations. So, if Hannah was a Lugbara woman, she would have faced the same from the society hence given Samuel the name *Aniku*, to express her innocence about the cause of her barrenness hence protesting against her accusers.

Ezayii-meaning 'they wasted water (sperm).' Traditionally, among the Lugbara people, the main purpose of having sex is to produce children. And this must happen as early as in the first month of sexual intercourse in marriage. So, when a woman delays to produce like Hannah, in the minds of the Lugbara people, the man would have wasted his water (sperm) for nothing. And people begin to say it out. Therefore, if Hannah was a Lugbara woman, Peninnah and her people would have said that Hannah is wasting Elkanah's water, hence she would have named Samuel *Ezayii* to mock Peninnah and her people.

Ezati-meaning 'they wasted cows.' As we noted earlier on, among the Lugbara people, bride price is divided into three major parts-namely: *Ali*, *Jotile* and *Aje*. And *Aje* takes the lion share. Many cows are paid as *Aje*, and when divorce takes place, the cows for *Aje* are returned to the man if the woman did not produce for the man. But if they have children, some may be left because of the children. So, it is like children replace the cows the man has paid to the woman's

relatives. Therefore, cows that are paid to the relatives of a barren woman are looked at as being wasted. Hence, if Hannah was a Lugbara woman, she would have heard people say that by paying the bride price of Hannah, Elkannah has wasted cows, hence named her child *Ezati* to mock the people who have said that.

Drileonzi-meaning 'bad luck.' A barren woman in a Lugbara community is a bad luck. Her in-laws would always say that their son has bad luck, that is why she landed on a barren woman. And if Hannah was a Lugbara woman, she would have heard all these statements. Hence she would have named her child *Drileonzi*.

Okuonzi-meaning 'bad woman.' A barren woman can never be a good woman in a Lugbara community, for, a real woman in a Lugbara society is a mother. I have overheard mothers-in-law saying, '*Ma mva ti oku onzi dria-ondo toko.*' literally translated as 'my child landed on a bad wife-a barren woman.' Such kind of statement would have been made about Hannah if she was a Lugbara woman, hence she would have named Samuel *Okuonzi* to mock her tormentors.

Enzama-meaning 'they mistreated me.' Lugbara people mistreat barren women in many ways. For instance, by words of mouth from in-laws which are provocative, by actions like not giving her land for planting her crops, husbands giving them less money for their daily use, among others. And if Hannah was in the Lugbara community, she would have suffered all these forms of mistreatment, hence named Samuel *Enzama*.

Pariyo or *Anguyo*-meaning 'no place.' As the name states, a barren woman does not have a place to rest. Where ever she goes, she will always be blamed for not producing. We have already noted that, Lugbara people as one of the African societies blame barrenness on women. So she is

looked at as the cause. Therefore, if she gets a chance to produce after such trouble, she names it on the child to tell her story. Hannah would have gone through the same and named her son *Pariyo*, or *Anguyo* if she was a Lugbara woman.

Emviimiri-meaning 'you go back to your motherland.' In a Lugbara society, a barren woman is of no value to the man's family. And we discussed before that, it can easily lead to divorce but before divorce, the woman always undergoes quarrels with her husband and his relatives, who in the quarrel tell her to leave their home. And after several hearing, when she gives birth, she names it on the child. And if Hannah was a Lugbara woman, she would have heard it too, hence named her son, *Emviimiri*.

Okumgbarindu-meaning 'the real wife is different.' Barren women are always treated as 'second class' or 'incomplete' women. So, they are mistreated in various ways. But the mother of children is treated as 'the real wife.' When they get to know this, they name it on the child that comes after the suffering to mock the tormentors. Hannah would have done the same if she was a Lugbara woman.

Malunga-meaning 'let them see.' After all the trouble a barren woman goes through from a Lugbara society, if she happens to get a son, she gives this name to mean that, they have been laughing at her, but finally, 'let them see the child.' Hannah would not have escaped such laughter if she was a Lugbara woman. And so, she would have named Samuel *Malunga* just like a Lugbara woman to 'laugh' at them back.

5.3 Conclusion

From the above discussions and findings of this research, a name can therefore, rightly be defined from a Lugbara woman's perspective and the Textual context as follows:

A name is a woman's story. From the above discussions, we see that, whatever a woman goes through is named on the child. This therefore means that, at the mention of the child's name, the woman's past is re-told. A name is therefore, the history of the mother of the child who is the name giver.

A name is a woman's mouth piece. This research has found out that in Lugbara community just like in the text, culture has pressed women so hard that they cannot 'speak' for themselves. To be called 'a good woman' one should be docile and submissive. This makes women to be voiceless in the society. They therefore use child naming as a device to break their silence, in which they reply the society.

A name is a means by which a woman fights back those who accuse her of being responsible for the cause of barrenness. She therefore gives a child insinuating or proverbial or mocking names in order to tell the people that she is aware of the things they say about her. This makes the guilty to stop talking about her. So, a name is a woman's weapon (gun), that she uses for fighting back.

A name is a woman's justice. An examination of the Lugbara background especially the family system, shows that Lugbara women are treated unjustly just like in the textual context. For instance, all domestic works are being done by women, not sitting to decide on their daughter's bride price, only men owning the home, among others. So, when women give names such as *Enzama*-meaning 'they mistreated me,' it can make some men to adjust in the way women are treated hence bringing justice.

Above all, a name is a means by which some negative cultural practices such as oppression of women, polygamy or injustice of any form are addressed. A name is therefore a very important practice when given from the cultural context.

This research finds out that child naming in both contexts is a sigh for the oppressed woman who is the name giver. Therefore, a name has nothing to do with the name bearer; instead, the meaning of a name is connected to the name giver's circumstances which is quite different from the ideological Biblical world and the Ancient Near Eastern minds. Since this research uses the Biblical text in its context, the ideological judgment of Lugbara names as devilish by the missionaries, colonialists, and Christians who claim to base their argument on the Bible is not true. This is because the textual analysis in line with the Lugbara naming practices just shows that Hannah's naming of Samuel is just a Lugbara naming practice in another part of the world, and in another language. Therefore, declaration of Lugbara names as devilish in this context is the same as declaring this Biblical text devilish. If anybody believes in 1 Samuel 1:1-20 as a holy scripture, the person should believe in Lugbara names too. Samuel in Lugbara is Erima, and, if Church leaders accept the name Samuel as a Christian name, they should accept Erima as a Christian name too, for the difference is only in the language.

5:4 Recommendations

The study has found out that African names are important to the Africans. However, it is not only Lugbara naming practices that have been painted black, but the problem affects Africa at large. Therefore, there is a call to do contextual study of the Biblical texts in relation to the naming practices of other African societies using the Africa Bible Hermeneutics. This helps to use the Bible as a tool of liberation for African culture.

This study has also found out that naming practice is just one of the Lugbara cultural practices which have been rendered devilish and discouraged by colonialists, Christians and westerners. The researcher therefore calls upon other scholars to do contextual study of Biblical texts in light of, Lugbara sacrificial practices which is one of the practices that has been rendered evil among the Lugbara people. This will show the similarities between Lugbara cultural sacrifices and the Biblical sacrifices hence energizing the practice instead of discouraging it.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Interview Guide

Introduction

I am Wadiko Iren, a student of Kyambogo University. I am doing a research entitled **Contextual Study of 1 Samuel 1:1-20 in Relation to Naming Practices of the Lugbara**. By answering these questions, you will have contributed a lot to the success of this academic study.

For Name bearers

1. What is your name?
2. How old are you?
3. Who gave you this name?
4. What does your name mean?
5. Why were you given this name?
6. Are you married?

For Name givers

1. What is your name?
2. How old are you?
3. What is the name of your child?
4. Who named the child?

5. What does it mean?
6. Why did you give your child this name?
7. Are you married?