

**rites of passage of the JIE community of Kotido District: A case
study of marriage in JIE County**

BY

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DECLARATION

I Ejoke Denis declare that this dissertation titled “Rites of Passage of the Jie Community of Kotido District: A Case Study of Marriage in Jie County” is my original academic work and has never been submitted for any award to any other University or institution of higher learning before. All the information here is the result of personal work unless otherwise cited or quoted.

Sign Date

EJOKE DENIS

APPROVAL

This dissertation that has been carried out and prepared under our guidance and supervision is wholly Ejoke’s original academic work. It is now ready to be submitted for examination.

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DEDICATION

This Dissertation is dedicated to the Jie community for upholding culture amidst modern developments that are rapidly redesigning other African communities' way of life. Besides the Jie, my family members too deserve this dedication for their patience and encouragement during my studies and compilation of this dissertation.

ABSTRACT

The study explored “Ritual Dimension of Religion of the Jie Community of Kotido District: A Case Study of Marriage in Jie County”. For many decades, the Jie marriage rituals are poorly understood due to lack of specialized studies and documentation on Jie marriage rituals. The main objective was to analyse ritual dimension of religion of the Jie community of Kotido district: a case study of marriage in Jie County. The study was guided by a theoretical framework which adopted cultural relativism and ethnocentrism theories. Relevant literature was reviewed and the major gap revealed is that there are no specialized non-fictional studies on rites of passage in the Jie community in particular among the Karamojong cluster. It adopted qualitative design, ethnographic and snow ball’s approach, descriptive and survey techniques. In-depth interview and participant observation were specific methods used to achieve the specific objectives and to answer the research questions. The data were collected using an Interview Guide and an Observation Guide. It was analysed using thematic approach and presented using descriptive narratives. Findings showed that several rituals are deeply rooted in marriage ceremonies of the Jie. Beginning with *Ewori*, Next is *Eloto*, after that, *Atukokin* Followed by *Akirirar*, besides that, *Ebilani* and *Apudor*, Then *Akiram ngatuk*, leading to the girl’s handover in *Akumun* ritual. *Ekimwomwor* ritual to mention but a few. These marriage rituals are deeply rooted in values like cultural preservation, spiritual beliefs, gender equality, morality, and responsibility, etc. this study also found that contemporary socio-economic developments such as education, legal frameworks etc. brought significant transformations to Jie marriage rituals and their cultural context. Like reduced instances of rape (*Ewori*), access to employment opportunities etc. conclusions and recommendations like conducting additional specialized research on Karamojong communities.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AIDS:	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AIR:	African Indigenous Religion
ATR:	African Traditional Religion
HIV:	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
L C:	Local Council
NGOs:	Non-Governmental Organizations
R A:	Research Assistant
SDGs:	Sustainable Development Goals
UBOS:	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
UNFPA:	United Nations Population Fund
UNPHC:	Uganda National Population and Census

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter comprises of introduction, background to the study, problem statement, main objective, three specific objectives, three research questions, purpose of the study, significance of the study, scope of the study, rationale of the study, theoretical frame work, limitations to the study, delimitation, and definition of key terms.

1.1 Background to the study

Karamojong people of which the Jie are an integral part, belong to a group that migrated from Abyssinia in the present-day Ethiopia around 1600-1700 A.D (Friis-Hansen, Esbern, 2017). When that group reached the area around the modern Kenyan-Ethiopian border, they fragmented into two branches. One branch moved to present day Kenya to form the Kalenjin group and Maasai cluster. The other branch, called Ateker, migrated westwards.

Ateker further split into several groups, including Turkana in present-day Kenya, Iteso, Dodoth, Jie, Karamojong, and Kumam in present-day Uganda. Ateker also includes Jiye and Toposa / Topotha in the south of present day southern Sudan. Friis-Hansen, Esbern, adds that the Dodoth, settled in Apule in the northern part of present-day Karamoja, the Turkana settled in Kenya. It is believed that, the Jie of Uganda split from the Turkana and settled in today's Kotido district.

The main section of Ateker continued southwards, reportedly consisting of seven clans. Some settled in today's southern Karamoja that eventually became the three main clans; that is to say the Matheniko in the east around Moroto Mountain, the Pian in the south in the present day

Nakapiripirit and Nabilatuk districts, and the Bokora in the west of Karamoja sub region in present day Napak district. Due to harsh climatic conditions, the other clans wished to continue west wards. They disagreed with those who had settled and tired of further movements. Williams, V. R (2020), explains that the clans that continued to the west coined the name “Karamojong”, and that the capable ones used the phrase “*Ekar Ngimojong*” meaning “elders are tired and cannot walk any further”.

The group which coined the name “Karamojong” continued west of Karamoja presently known as “Moroto”. It formed the Iteso and Kumam that settled in the west of Karamoja. So, currently the settlement of the Karamojong is as follows; Matheniko and Tepeth in Moroto district, Bokara in Napak district, Pian in Nakapiripirit and Nabilatuk districts, Pokot in Amudat district, Dodoth in Kaabong district and the Jie in Kotido District. All these groups are known as “Karamojong Cluster”. Gulliver (1953), confirms this in his work, historical reconstruction of the Jie and other pastoral Central Paraniotic peoples in the 1950s.

The Jie, a specific tribe within the Karamojong Cluster, have particularly cultivated a reputation for their distinctive rituals and customs in the rites of passage particularly those linked to marriage. The exploration of Jie rituals in the rite of marriage not only offers insights into their religious beliefs but also enriches our understanding of the diverse cultural tapestry of the Karamojong Cluster. The Jie have garnered a reputation, as described by Jones (2019), for their perceived traits such as violence, uncivilized behavior, and notoriety as cattle raiders, and stubbornness.

It’s worth noting that, unlike other Ugandans, many Karamojong, especially the Jie, eschew Western-style clothing in favor of unique attire with significant cultural and symbolic value. One

such garment is the “*Nakatukok*” a blanket-like shawl often adorned with vibrant colors like red, green, and black. Beyond being a mere fashion statement, the “*Nakatukok*” embodies the cultural identity and heritage of the Karamojong. It is worn in a way that signifies one’s affiliation with the native Karamojong community. This attire carries profound cultural significance, passed down through generations.

Joseph Lodungokol, an elder in the Jie community, recalls that:

“In the early 1960s, the “Nakatukok” served as more than just clothing. It functioned as bed sheet, jacket, coat, and trousers, among other things. Remarkably, the “Nakatukok” was never washed; instead, it was treated with butter to acquire a scent resembling that of cattle and was darkened in color to facilitate camouflage during cattle rustling and livestock protection, activities deeply embedded in Karamojong culture.”

Karamoja region is characterized by dry grasslands, semi-nomadic cattle herders, extreme poverty and significant caches of unregistered firearms (Global Press Journal, 2019). Despite the challenging circumstances in which the Karamojong live, Uganda has aligned its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with the Global 2030 Agenda, aiming to address inequalities in opportunity, wealth, and power, according to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA, 2018).

However, Karamoja sub-region, including the Jie community, continues to lag behind in various facets of contemporary socio-economic development, encompassing education, science and technology, globalization, the impact of Christianity and Islam on African traditional communities, media representation, human rights and legal frameworks, literacy rates,

employment levels, participation in civil society, security, modern agriculture, and more. Global Press Journal (2019), adds that this lagging behind is due to limited surface water, a hot arid climate, and a short rainy season that has led to land degradation, resulting in food insecurity.

Within the Karamojong Cluster, the Jie are notably recognized for their exceptional behavior, particularly as formidable warriors who steadfastly pursue victory in conflicts and fights. They are also renowned as cattle rustlers, firmly believing that all cattle belong to Jie men while sorghum, their staple food is designated for Jie women and it is locally referred to as "*Ngimwa Ngaberu*" which means "Cattle of the Women". Residing in Karamoja region of north eastern Uganda, the Jie community's reputation for unbecoming behavior, coupled with enduring poverty and underdevelopment has led to limited academic exploration of their unique culture. The Jie community has remained relatively insulated from external cultural influences, preserving a traditional African way of life among them.

In this context, the Jie people continue to embrace indigenous practices many of which remain undocumented and unexamined academically. Studying these practices can bring new knowledge to academia and unveil the rich cultural traditions of the Jie, a community that has received limited research attention. By doing so, outsiders can devise strategies to engage with the Jie community and potentially contribute to their development and integration into modern society.

Joseph Lodungokol, an elder and native of the Jie community, attributes their unique behavior to an animal known as "Ekor," a Honey Badger/Ratel. "Ekor" serves as a totem symbolizing fierceness and unwavering self-defense among the Jie. This animal is renowned for its courage in battling any creature, regardless of size or species, until it emerges victorious. The Guinness

Book of World Records in its 2002 edition corroborates the Jie's perception of the Honey Badger by dubbing it the "Most fearless animal in the world" (South African National Biodiversity Institute, 2020). Ekor possesses a mystique, as it will only succumb to defeat if its dying process is witnessed by another person or animal. In cases where a human kills Ekor, information must be disseminated to all Jie community members to prompt elders to conduct a cleansing ritual known as "Ekor Ceremony" to avert misfortunes associated with killing this totem.

In addition to their distinctiveness among the Karamojong, the Jie community is home to prevalent but undocumented cultural practices, one of which is forced marriage. In this ritualistic practice, men capture, wrestle, rape and force girls into marriage, even against their will. Such practices are out of sync with the prevailing legal frameworks, human rights, and women's emancipation movements of the 21st century. Due limited specialized forensic studies on Jie marriage rituals, such practices remain academically unexplored and therefore misunderstood.

The Jie people's unwavering adherence to their indigenous religio-cultural practices and resistance to Western influences has preserved their traditional way of life. Documenting and analyzing these rituals in an African non-fictional conceptualization promises to deepen our understanding of the Jie community's social dynamics, power structures, gender relations, and overall cultural richness in its crude form.

Given this historical and contextual backdrop, this research is driven by an anthropological curiosity to explore the "Ritual dimension of religion in the Jie community: a case study of marriage." The study aimed to assess the ritual elements embedded in Jie marriage ceremonies, examine the values attributed to these rituals, and assess how contemporary developments have impacted these elements within the Jie community's marriage rites. Ultimately, this research

sought to enrich the broader academic discourse concerning the Jie community, the Karamojong people, and their role within the global community.

1.2 Problem statement

The Jie community of Karamoja faces multifaceted challenges in preserving its traditional marriage rituals. Increasing modernization, urbanization, and external influences in Karamoja region pose a threat to the Jie marriage ritual. Those developments are eroding traditional practices leading to gradual loss of cultural authenticity. The younger generation is increasingly out of touch with their cultural heritage, leaving the young disconnected from ancestral traditions. The history of conflict and displacement in the Karamoja region has disrupted traditional social structures and cultural practices. Understanding the impact of these factors on the Jie marriage ritual, including changes in practices or adaptations to new contexts, is crucial for comprehending the community's cultural landscape and the resilience of their traditions.

It is clear from scanty literature available that all challenges highlighted above is due to a significant problem of limited specialized scholarship on the Jie marriage rituals leading to lack of documentation of such rituals and perpetration of poor understanding of the traditional marriage rituals of the Jie community worldwide. When this is not addressed, it hinders the preservation and accurate portrayal of Jie cultural heritage, including the intricate details, symbolism, and cultural significance of traditional marriage rituals. This knowledge gap also puts at risk the loss of a vital aspect of the Jie's cultural identity.

This study shall address the gap identified by ensuring a comprehensive specialized academic scholarship that documents and analyzes the traditional marriage rituals among the Jie

community. By exploring traditional marriage rituals among the Jie, the significance of those rituals, symbolism and the impact of contemporary socio-economic developments on them.

1.3 Objectives the study

1.3.1 Main objective

The main objective was to analyse ritual dimension of religion of the Jie community of Kotido district: a case study of marriage in Jie County.

1.3.2 Specific objectives

1. To assess and document the rituals in the rite of marriage of the Jie community in the Karamoja sub-region.
2. To examine the values embedded within the rituals of the Jie marriage ceremony in Kotido district, and their significance within the cultural context.
3. To assess the impact of contemporary socio-economic developments within the broader Karamoja sub-region on the Jie marriage ritual and its cultural context.

1.4 Research questions

The research questions for the study were:

1. What rituals are involved in the rite of marriage among the Jie community in the Karamoja sub-region?
2. What values are embedded within the rituals of the Jie marriage ceremony, and how do these rituals contribute to the cultural context of the Jie community in Kotido district?
3. What is the impact of contemporary socio-economic developments within the broader Karamoja sub-region on the Jie marriage ritual and its cultural context?

1.5 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the rites of passage of the Jie community of Kotido district: a case study of marriage in Jie County. This was meant to establish, describe and document rituals in the rite of marriage, examine the values of rituals those rituals and explore the impact of the contemporary socio-economic developments on the rite of marriage among the Jie. Therefore, this research aims at illuminating the indigenous marriage practices and beliefs shaping the Jie's religious and cultural traditions.

1.6 Significance of the study

The study provides a unique African perspective on the rites of passage in the Jie community, which constitutes what Ninian Smart termed as "Ritual Dimension of Religion" (Smart, N 1999). This area of study was chosen because limited attention has been paid to have specialized academic studies on the rites of passage among the Jie, more so "The marriage rituals".

There is scanty documentation and very limited publication on rites of passage or conducting studies focusing on how the Jie construct the concept of seven dimensions of religion of which rituals is among. Ninian Smart identified these dimensions of religion as Narrative/Mythological, Doctrinal, Ethical, Institutional, Material, Ritual and Experiential. Smart, terms them as "Religious Frame Work for exploring and understanding religion at a broader perspective" (Smart, 1999).

Academically, this study fills a critical gap in existing literature by providing a comprehensive exploration of the traditional marriage rituals and of the Jie community. By documenting and analyzing these rituals, the study enriches the understanding of the Jie's cultural heritage, shedding light on their unique traditions, values, and social dynamics. This research contributes

to the broader field of anthropology, cultural studies, and African studies by providing valuable insights into the diverse marriage cultural practices within the Karamojong Cluster and highlighting the importance of preserving and promoting cultural diversity.

Additionally, this research has practical significance for the Jie community and the broader Karamoja sub-region. It helps community members better understand their cultural identity through the examination of Jie marriage rituals. This, in turn, can enhance social cohesion, pride, and a sense of belonging, which are integral aspects of cultural preservation and community well-being. By fostering a stronger cultural identity and community cohesion, the study contributes to the overall cultural and social development of the Jie community and the Karamoja sub-region.

Additionally, the study's assessment of the impact of contemporary socio-economic developments on the Jie marriage ritual provides crucial insights for policymakers, cultural practitioners, and community leaders in designing strategies for cultural preservation and sustainable development. Understanding how external influences and socio-economic changes shape cultural practices allows for informed decision-making, ensuring the preservation of the Jie community's traditions while embracing positive aspects of development.

1.7 Scope of the study

1.7.1 Geographic scope

The study focused on the Jie community residing in Jie County, Kotido District, within Karamoja sub-region. Jie County represents a predominantly rural setting, and it was anticipated that the study would gather credible and reliable information on the genuine marriage tradition of the Jie people. This choice was motivated by the assumption that the rural setting is less

influenced by modernity and has a higher likelihood of preserving the traditional aspects of the Jie culture that the study sought for.

1.7.2 Content scope

The content scope of this study encompassed three key areas: the exploration of traditional rituals in the rite of marriage of the Jie community, the examination of values embedded within the rituals of the Jie marriage ceremony and their significance within the cultural context, and the assessment of the impact of contemporary socio-economic developments on the Jie marriage ritual and its cultural context. Delving into these areas enabled the study to provide a comprehensive understanding of marriage as a rite of passage among the Jie.

1.7.3 Time scope

The time scope of this study spanned from 1962 to 2023. This timeframe encompasses significant historical events and socio-economic changes that have shaped the context in which the Jie marriage rituals exist. By starting from 1962, the study captures the post-independence period of Uganda, during which the country went through various political, social, and economic transformations. This timeframe allowed for an examination of the changes that have occurred within the Jie community over several decades, shedding light on the impact of historical events and socio-economic developments on the Jie marriage rituals and its cultural context.

1.8 Rationale of the study

The rationale of this study stemmed from the need to understand, preserve, and promote the traditional marriage rituals as cultural practices of the Jie community within the Karamoja sub-region. Several factors contribute to the significance of this study.

Firstly, the Jie community's traditional marriage rituals are an integral part of their cultural identity and heritage. By conducting a comprehensive investigation into these rituals, their values, and the impact of the contemporary socioeconomic developments on them; this study records and preserves the important aspect of the Jie's cultural heritage. Secondly, the impact of contemporary socio-economic developments within the broader Karamoja sub-region on the Jie marriage ritual and its cultural context is a pressing concern. With increasing modernization, urbanization, and external influences, there is a risk of erosion or modification of traditional practices, leading to a loss of cultural authenticity.

Overall, this study's rationale was in the need to exhibit the religious dimension of Jie marriage rituals, document them, understand their cultural significance, and address the challenges posed by contemporary socio-economic developments. By doing so, it contributes to the preservation of cultural heritage, intercultural dialogue, and the promotion of cultural diversity.

1.9 Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework of this study incorporated two significant theories: Cultural Relativism and Ethnocentrism. Cultural relativism, proposed by Franz Boas, emphasizes understanding a culture's beliefs, values, and practices from within that culture's perspective. It recognizes that ethical practices vary among cultures and rejects the notion of one culture being superior to another. Researchers employing cultural relativism focus on describing cultural practices rather than comparing or criticizing them.

Cultural relativism promotes tolerance and acknowledges the diversity of moral codes across societies. However, it may face criticism for potentially undermining the possibility of moral actions. Nonetheless, according to Nickerson (2022), this theory allows researchers to seek

transcendent principles and share understanding with individuals from different cultures.

Ethnocentrism, in contrast, encourages individuals to view the world through the lens of their own culture. In this study, both theories are essential. Cultural relativism guides the researcher to objectively understand the elements of the marriage rituals within the Jie community's cultural context, recognizing their significance and natural expression. Ethnocentrism enables the researcher to use standards and values from other cultures to evaluate the impact of contemporary socio-economic developments on the Jie marriage ritual.

By employing this theoretical framework, the study aimed to approach the research with cultural sensitivity. It recognized the importance of cultural relativism in understanding the Jie community's marriage rituals and considered the insights gained from an ethnocentric perspective in assessing the impact of socio-economic developments on Jie marriage rituals.

1.10 Limitations to the study

The study was limited by the following factors.

Insecurity. Some areas in Jie County were not easily accessed because they were occupied by warriors who don't associate with strangers since they were suspicious that the army officers might be the ones investigating them and so getting information in such a setting became challenging.

Lack of zeal to participate in the process by some respondents. Since most strangers in this communities are always the security personnel, it happened that some informants feared to discuss with the researcher thinking that they are interviewed by people with nonacademic motivates, more so the security personnel.

Language barrier. Since the researcher was not a Jie, language barrier was still a challenge though the researcher's language (*Ateso*) is closely related to *Ngajie*, the native language spoken in *Najie* (Land of the Jie). The barrier in these two closely related languages is due to the fact that there are some technical meanings of most key words unique to the religio-cultural experiences and understanding of *Ngijie* (The Jie) which is not the religio-cultural world view of Iteso.

Next, limitation was the Poor electronic services in the area. The researcher had a challenge in getting efficient computer services which could help in the process of typesetting, making analysis of data, printing out work done, etcetera.

Last but not least, financial constraints. Due to the long distance between Kyambogo University and Kotido district, it the entire process of study became costly and affected the smooth running and timely completion of the programme.

1.11 Delimitations of the study

Insecurity: To overcome this limitation, the researcher established relationships and trust with the community members through local community leaders and key informants. This approach helped gain access to areas that were occupied by warriors and mitigated any suspicions about the nature of the study.

Lack of zeal to participate: The researcher employed culturally sensitive and participatory research methods to engage with the respondents. Especially use of participant observation where the researcher immersed himself in the community and freely mixed up with the natives so as to build good rapport with them. Researcher also had to clearly explain the purpose and

benefits of the study, giving encouraging feedback and ensuring confidentiality to address any fears or concerns they had about sharing information.

Language barrier: To overcome language barrier, the researcher carefully selected, trained and collaborated with a research assistant who was fluent in both the Jie language (*Ngajie*) and English. The research assistant facilitated communication and translation during data collection, ensuring effective interaction with the informants.

Poor electronic services: Given the potential challenges with electronic services in Jie County, the researcher adopted alternative data collection methods, such as paper and audio recordings. This flexibility ensured that data was collected even in the absence of reliable electronic services.

Financial constraints: To address the financial constraints associated with the distance between Kyambogo University and Kotido District, the researcher saved some money, and resided in the study area during the period of the study.

1.12 Definition of key terms

Ritual: In the context of this study, a ritual refers to a set of ceremonial actions and practices that hold religious, traditional, or cultural significance within the Jie community. These rituals are performed in a prescribed order and often mark important life events or transitions.

Rites of passage: Series of ritualistic ceremonies celebrated to mark various transitional of stages of one's life time.

Rite of marriage: This, in the context of this study, encompasses the ceremonial and symbolic practices associated with various stages of life within the Jie community. Specifically, it refers to the meticulously observed rituals and customs during the Jie marriage ceremony. These rituals

hold profound cultural and social significance, marking significant milestones in the lives of the individuals involved.

Marriage: Marriage, in the context of this study, refers the union between a man and a woman within the Jie community. It represents a significant rite of passage that signifies the establishment of a family unit and encompasses the culturally and traditionally distinct customs, rituals, and traditions observed during the marriage ceremony.

Socio-economic: Socio-economic relates to the interaction and interdependence of social and economic factors within a given society or community. In this study, it focuses on the influence of socio-economic factors on the Jie marriage ritual and its cultural context, considering aspects such as economic development, social structures, and demographic changes.

Contemporary: Contemporary, within the scope of this study, refers to current or present-day transformations that encompass factors such as alterations in livelihoods, education, access to resources, and economic activities within the broader Karamoja sub-region. These developments will be analyzed for their influence on the traditional Jie marriage ritual, considering how modern socio-economic factors intersect with and impact the cultural context of the Jie community.

Developments: Developments, within the context of this study, encompass a wide range of socio-economic changes and transformations occurring within the broader Karamoja sub-region. These changes include shifts in livelihoods, alterations in traditional employment patterns, adjustments in housing and lifestyle, as well as modifications in cultural practices, such as dressing and economic activities.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents literature review from various studies about the rituals in the rite of marriage of the Jie people, the values of the rituals and the impact of the contemporary socio-economic developments on marriage rituals in the cultural context of the Jie. The review is presented in themes implied in the specific objectives of this study.

However, on reading through this literature review, it is noticeable that some sources cited are dated more than ten years ago. They are old sources, but this does not mean the facts presented are out dated. Instead, it is a justification that current and specialised studies/scholarship on specific Karamojong communities is very limited. This scenario calls for urgent academic attention to bring all Karamojong communities on board through specialised scholarship on their way of life.

2.1 The rituals in the rite of marriage of the Jie people.

To have a deeper understanding of rituals, it is worthwhile knowing what a ritual is. According to Bernd Brabec (2014), a ritual is a term used to describe an action or a series of actions that are fixed and symbolic according to a given context with in a particular community. Etim, F (2019 citing from Fromm, 1950), explains a ritual as a custom or a rite with a series of actions that are always carried out in the same way especially as part of religious ceremonies or sociocultural actions which is a shared action expressive of common striving rooted in common values. Those observations mean that a ritual involves is a practice with prescribed steps and conducted to meet a particular goal in life either as an individual or a group. Besides that, in the two explanations

above, we acknowledge rituals being practices that appeal to both sacred and profane situations depending on the interest of the practitioners. Since they are symbolic and mysterious in one way or the other, we can deduce that rituals have impact on human way of life. According to Egun (2014), marriage holds significant importance in the lives of Africans, particularly in the past, as it is the foundation of family and the means through which children are born.

Mbiti, J. S (1969:133) avers that;

“For African people, marriage is the focus of existence. It is the point where all the members of a given community meet: the departed, the living and those yet unborn. All the dimensions of time meet here, and the whole drama of history is repeated, renewed and revitalized. Marriage is a drama in which everyone becomes an actor or actress and not just a spectator”.

When Mbiti says, “All the dimensions of time meet here, and the whole drama of history is repeated” he means that life is cyclical thus I do agree with him since it is implied in the rites of passage. William Abraham (1987:22) explains marriage in African tradition as the joining of two families through the union of one man and one woman and their children, always to the exclusion of all other men as regards the woman, and in monogamous societies, to the exclusion of all other women as regards the man. I partly agree with Abraham in that normal marriage in Africa should be between a man and a woman. However, I feel he skipped some things that are important in this definition. That is, one man and one woman join as “A husband and a wife” with the view of getting children. In his definition when he says “one man and one woman and their children”, it seems he means marriage begins when children are born already which is not true because in Africa, virginity in new marriages more so on a girl are highly treasured.

However, this study borrows Mbiti's and Abraham's paradigms of marriage and looks at rituals in marriage involving a man and a woman as a husband and wife not those rituals in other sex and marriage deviations like homosexuality.

Ugobude (2019) consequently names several examples of rituals associated with the rite of marriage in Africa. These include kidnaping the bride among the Himba of Namibia and the Frafra of Ghana, bearing two children before full bride wealth payment among the Nuer of South Sudan, secret counselling of the bride called "Bana Chimbusa" followed by "Chilanga Mulilo" which is taking gifts to the groom's family among the Bemba of Zambia. In the Zulu culture, the wedding "Umabo" has different procedures. First, payment of loboba "Bride Price" followed by Izibizo "Giving gifts to the bride's family" and the Umbondo "Bride reciprocates by buying groceries for the groom's family" (Ugobude, 2019).

Africa (2022) in the article "7 Unique African Marriage Traditions" adds that some of the rituals like Marriage mentor hides under the bed. This is done to prove if the couple is rightly putting in practice what they were indoctrinated to do during mentorship. The practice is done by people of Swahili origin and occupying coastal parts of Kenya and Tanzania. Further Africa records another ritual among the Masai, where after payment of bride price and the usual gifts, on the wedding day, the father of the bride blesses the daughter by spitting on the head and breasts before she leaves his home. It goes ahead to assert that in Uganda, among the Bagwere, there is "Ritual Bath". This occurs after "Okutona" where the groom offers gifts to the girl's family. After a ritual called "Kunaabya Omugole" where the couple bathe together with herb laced water under a tree then the couple consummate the marriage.

In Karamoja that this study targeted, the story is quite unique. There are no critical specialized studies on rites of passage among the Karamojong communities. Therefore, the scanty scholarship which exists about the Karamojong leaves a big gap of no specialized studies on Jie marriage rituals. It requires immediate attention so as to avert fictitious conceptualization of Jie marriage rituals. However, this study intended to specifically and forensically explore and extrapolate Jie marriage rituals so as to fill the above-mentioned gap.

Nevertheless, Save the Children, Uganda (2020), generally observed Karamoja and reports that;

“Legal age for marriage is eighteen years but the law is rarely enforced in Karamoja. Local traditions override the law especially in rural areas. Girls are faced with a sad reality of being seen as a source of wealth usually in the form of cows. When parents discover that a girl has started menstruation or developing breasts, they force her to get a suitor regardless of age but wealth. This suitors rape young girls to book them for marriage.”

To clarify on the last statement by Save the Children Uganda; in Karamoja, a girl who has been raped (non-consensual sexual acts) by a suitor has to maintain that very boy and the boy maintains her till they get married. Therefore, it should be noted that forcing a girl in sexual intercourse with the aim of marrying her is not considered rape or criminal act among the traditional Karamojong. This forced sex is never done for pleasure but it is a sign that the boy is mature enough and ready for marriage. So, a boy wrestles and rapes only a girl he has chosen for marriage to secure her for marriage. It is only when one goes on raping (non-consensual sex) unnecessarily i.e. without the aim of marrying when it becomes a crime in Karamoja.

Ebun (2014) states that marriage among the Karamojong, as in many parts of the world, is a gradual process that unfolds in stages over time, as opposed to being a one-off ceremonial event. He adds that “The stages involve several types of rituals which are required to be fulfilled before the marriage can be counted as completed. Generally, the rituals include among others, transfer of assets and associated rituals as part of the formal and informal processes that seal the marital union.” Ebun’s observation that, “The stages involve several types of rituals which are required to be fulfilled before the marriage can be counted as completed,” reveals that there must be other rituals in the rite of marriage among the Karamojong of which the Jie is among besides raping girls that are not explored and documented. Therefore, this is a gap which warranted a specialized study to be done in particular communities that form Karamoja hence this study became necessary since it intended to fill that inadequacy by it investigating rituals in the rite of marriage among the Jie.

Novelli (2009) observed that in Karamoja, the prospective groom and his family provide bride wealth, traditionally in livestock but at times in cash (as a substitute or complement to the livestock) to the family of the prospective bride. Feinstein International Centre (2020), highlights that, in Karamoja, marriages without bride wealth are unofficial, and neither the women nor the children from such unions become official members of the man’s community or clan. So, what is not clear from literature is the impacts of this on the social cohesion and stability of the family. However, my study addressed this concern in its specific objective two.

Gulliver (1953) corroborates to the above and observes that two types of ritualistic transfers often precede the full bride wealth payment, namely *ekicul*, and *akirop*. The former, *ekicul*, is paid by the man upon the birth of each child born while the woman is still living with her parents and is meant to help the woman’s family provide for the child. What I can clarify more on

Gulliver's observation is that "Ekicul" is paid by that man who hasn't paid bride price but cohabiting. The latter, *akirop*, often referred to as a "surety payment," is a down payment on the total bride wealth. If he is able, a man will often pay *akirop* after the second or third child is born, but before the woman moves to his homestead. To clarify this, "Akirop" is paid by the man who makes up his mind to marry a woman that he has produced with before marriage.

In conclusion, the literature presents scanty information which is general for the Karamojong. This renders scholarship on the Jie rites of passage lacking. This called for immediate academic attention, and this study did it.

2.2 The values of the rituals in the rite of marriage among the Jie

Sage (2018) defines values in a narrow sense as that which is good, desirable or worthwhile. It adds that values are the motive behind purposeful action. Therefore, in line with that paradigm, this study looked at values as significance or why marriage rituals are important to the Jie.

Stanley & Stites (2007), a man's inability to pay the expected bride wealth affects his suitability to marry and, with this, his social status and self-esteem is reduced. They add that, "Some young women have previously explained that they assessed suitors to see if they had the capacity to pay bride wealth and care for children through his ability to fulfil marriage rituals. These evaluations linked closely to values of manhood." This means that a man's inability to fulfil marriage rituals is an indicator that he is not ready for marriage and he can't be responsible in a family and so a girl shuns close sexual relationships with such men.

Stanley & Stites (2007) observation above agrees with Ebus (2014), who found that women in Karamoja who intend to marry mainly look at the number of cattle a man has. Their parents tell them to value cattle because it is a source of survival. They also weigh whether the person is man

enough to take up the household responsibility of being father to their children. “Man enough” refers to a man’s degree of maturity, ability to provide for the family, care for family members etc. Gray further explains:

“An unmarried man in Karamoja is likely to have lower standing within his community and may be limited in his ability to own property and participate fully in public life. For example, young people who are unmarried are undermined when their friends speak about them being unmarried at their age and look down on them. Once married, the young men can own property, but because of delay to marry, people start to doubt them and wonder whether they are normal or abnormal to reproduce.”

From statements above, it is concludable that among the Karamojong, a man’s capability to fulfil marriage rituals present him as mature with enough resources to sustain marriage and life in the family. Not deviating from the above, Gulliver (1953), asserts that importantly, without official marriage among the Jie, a man has no official claim on the woman or children born of the relationship. To further clarify Gulliver’s observation, among the Karamojong, another suitor with sufficient bride wealth can marry the woman and adopt the children she produced already as well. Moreover, if the marriage was unofficial, the first husband who failed to fulfil marriage rituals forfeits his right to his daughters’ bride wealth; when his daughter marries, the cattle would be transferred to the maternal as opposed to the paternal family.

Meekers (1992), also avers that parental approval is required before a young woman joins her husband in his home. In the absence of such approval, the union is considered an elopement, with the potential for long-term tension between the families at the perceived intentional avoidance of bride wealth discussions. The knowledge gap which remains on this issue is whether or not this remains the case even today, since for other tribes these days, even without

parental approval, there is growing acceptance of cohabitation in the absence of official marriage, a major shift in marriage practices in the region. My study filled this gap when answering research question three that is to say “How does the contemporary socioeconomic development inform the rite of marriage in the cultural context of the Jie?”

This implies that fulfilling marriage rituals makes a woman well recognised and valued in both her clan and the husband’s. Since the number of bride-wealth livestock is so considerable, Karamojong men tend to marry (and father children) relatively late in life.

Gulliver (1953) observed that “For a Jie man, marriage before the age of 30 is rare”. Moreover, Jie men continue to marry additional wives much later in life than in some other African societies, and it is not uncommon for an elder in his late 60s to marry a third or fourth wife. In such cases, there is often a span of 70 years between the birth of a man and his youngest surviving son.

2.3 Impact of the contemporary socio-economic developments on the rite of marriage

Agricultural and Environmental Data Achieve (2013) defines socioeconomic development as the process of social and economic development in the society. It is measured with indicators like gross domestic product (GDP), life expectancy, literacy and levels of employment. Changes in less tangible factors are also considered such as personal dignity, freedom of association, personal safety and freedom from fear of personal harm and extent of participation in civil society.

Adelman, I. (nd) corroborates to the above. He asserts that economic development combines self-sustaining growth, structural change in patterns of production, technological upgrading, social, political and institutional modernization and widespread improvement in human

conditions. So, this study focused on impacts of such socioeconomic developments mentioned above on the Jie marriage rituals. Still, the gap seen was limited information on the theme due to no specialized scholarly works on the Jie marriage rituals which this study illuminated.

Livestock is important, not just for the purpose of marriage, but as a means to strengthen women's status and role within the home and community. In the absence of animals, women's sense of "womanhood" is diminished. Nonetheless, Meekers (1992), continues to explain that;

There are two forms of status in Jie families. Officially married women, i.e. from a marriage which included paying dowry, gives men the feeling that they own the women. And the marriages that are not official, i.e. no bride wealth exchanged. This difference here is women who have been officially married face more severe forms of domestic violence than those wives whose bride wealth payment is incomplete. Those who are not formally married have greater autonomy. Among the Jie, men who have not paid bride wealth normally limit their beatings of their wives, as they fear that the women will leave if they are treated too roughly.

Carlson, K. et al (2012) corroborates to the above. They observed that, the lack of livestock leads to elders' loss of authority over the youth. Cattle, as the purveyors of status and livelihood is of central importance to customary institutions and the maintenance of social cohesion. A shortage of livestock, which elders have been unable to address, undermines the give-and-take social compact that informed traditional culture among the Jie. The consequences of this reverberate for youth in the rites of marriage (e.g. the inability to provide bride wealth), a loss of livelihood, and the absence of economic security to provide for their families and themselves. In other words, livestock shortages weaken both the carrots and sticks available to customary institutions.

Stites (2013), poverty is a significant factor among the Jie today. Most parents, friends, and relatives are no longer able to support young men with bride wealth contributions due to poverty, reduction in livestock holdings, and the reduced number of households with cattle. Previously, bride wealth could be one hundred cattle or higher and, on average, ranged between forty to fifty heads of cattle or more, depending on the households, clan, or pastoral group. Sites, ads that today, transfers range from as low as three to as high as sixty heads of cattle, and five to fifty for heads of goats.

However, the inability to fulfill bride wealth, or other associated costs results from a number of factors, and the lack of livestock and the detrimental impacts of these low assets leave most men unable to finalize marriage.

Carlson, K. et al (2012), highlights that limbo or inability to officially complete marriage has important social and personal consequences for both men and women. Many young people reporting feeling “stuck” in their current life phase due to their inability to officially marry. They add that generally, a man’s ability to pay the expected bride wealth affects his suitability to marry and, with this, his social status and self-esteem. So, it is noticeable that without cattle, the marriage unions are weak. The absence of official traditional marriages rituals leads to lack of respect among families and households. Furthermore, the absence of livestock has led male youth to no longer have respect for young women. There is a high rate of sex deviant behaviour. For instance, elopement, cohabitation, fornication, etc.

Knighton (2005), asserts that, official marriage determines, in part, the rights and protections accorded to women and children, as well as the social status of men and women, and their ability to cohabit. This means that if officially married, a woman and children are part of the man’s

clan, and will be supported and protected by clan members. The clan is expected to provide for the family even if the husband cannot; for example, if a child needed emergency medical care, an officially married woman would have the right to go to the husband's clan for support with expenses. If widowed, a woman would either be inherited by another male relative (discussed in more detail below) or if past childbearing age cared for as a clan member. In contrast, if not officially married, the clan has no official obligation to the woman or children, and she may be sent home to her natal kin if she is widowed.

The shift in marriages has brought changes to young people's everyday life, residency, roles, and responsibilities. Some of those changes have been positive, such as the shift in gender and generational roles and responsibilities within households, the increased sharing of labor and resources between men and women, and the possibility for couples to cohabitate without the bride wealth payment. Feinstein International Centre (2020), also highlight that, for young women, in particular, unofficial marriages have allowed the potential for more rights, agency, and autonomy, particularly when spouses are negligent, abusive or unsupportive.

2.4 Jie traditional religion

Petnah Africa Tours (2020) assert that the Jie have a strong traditional belief system and have shunned most organized religions such as Christianity and Islam. Instead, they believe in a god called Akuj, who they believe gave them the birthright of all the cattle in the Karamoja region. The Karamojong's traditional religion governs and defines their way of living, and they have a series of rites that are central to their culture.

Knighton (2005) argues that the traditional religion of the Karamojong people, specifically the Jie subgroup, is deeply rooted in their cultural identity and worldview. One key aspect of the

Karamojong traditional religion is their animistic worldview. They believe in a multitude of spirits that inhabit the natural world, such as mountains, rivers, and trees. These spirits are believed to have a direct influence on the daily lives of the Karamojong, affecting everything from weather patterns to the success of their livestock. During cultivation which is practiced in a small scale for food purpose, the community looks towards the sacred for rain. The elders offer sacrifices of oxen under the sacred tree called '*akiriket*' also a name for the gathering, on the behalf of the entire community asking the mighty one for rain. This rain serves the purpose of not only making the crops grow, but more need fully for pasture and water for the animals, which saves them the trouble of moving for long distances in search for these precious gifts.

Novelli (2009) adds that the help of God is not forgotten or taken for granted during initiation rites for both men *asapan* and women *akiwor angapesur*. These are moments of consecration and acknowledgement of their manhood and womanhood. Therefore, being an important moment in the life of those involved and the society, the blessings of the deity '*Akuj*' are invoked. Sacrifices are the obvious requirements for the ceremony. The chyme got from the entrails of the animal is smeared on the fore head and the chest of the newly initiated youngsters. As the elder does the smearing, he recites the ancient tenable of blessing and beckoning the help of *Akuj* on the initiated. This is to enable them grow as responsible members of their families and the society. There is facing *Apule*. It is a place of origin. It is a sacred place which is a symbol of life for the Jie community in Karamoja.

African Wilderness Tours (2016) also notes that rituals and ceremonies are central to the Karamojong traditional religious practices. Among these, the bull ceremony holds particular importance. Bulls are considered sacred animals and are often sacrificed to appease the spirits and seek their blessings for a good harvest, healthy livestock, and protection from harm. These

rituals are communal events that strengthen the social bonds within the community. The Karamojong also have spiritual leaders, known as "Ikimongole," who serve as intermediaries between the community and the spirits. These leaders play a crucial role in conducting rituals, interpreting omens, and providing guidance on important decisions. The Ikimongole's wisdom is highly respected, and their role is passed down through generations, maintaining the continuity of the traditional religious practices.

However, despite the enduring strength of their traditional beliefs, the Karamojong's religious landscape has experienced changes in recent decades. Influences from neighboring regions and the impact of Christianity and Islam have introduced new elements to their spiritual practices. This dynamic interaction between traditional and external influences adds complexity to the religious fabric of the Karamojong people.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter focused on research methodology which was used in undertaking this study. It comprises of research design, specific research methods, area of study, population, the target Population, sample size and sampling techniques, research instruments, assurance of validity and reliability of research instruments, data collection procedure, data processing and analysis and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Design

The study adopted qualitative research design and ethnographic approach so as to establish descriptive facts embedded in the variables studied. According to Policy-Making Training Curriculum, University of California Libraries (2016), Qualitative research design is an inquiry that develops understanding on human and social sciences to find the way people think and feel in terms of behavior, experience, attitudes, intentions and motivations on basis of observation.

The study used descriptive and survey techniques. Descriptive research technique aimed at systematically obtaining information to describe a phenomenon, situation or a population. Survey is a methodology used to investigate populations by selecting samples to analyze and discover occurrences. It provides numeric descriptions of some part of the population, describes and explains events as they are (Oso, 2009). Oso adds that it is useful in describing characteristics of a large population since it enables rapid data collection and ability to understand a population from a part. Therefore, the two techniques are deemed suitable for this study because they allow proper collection of data to justify rites of passage of the Jie

community of Kotido district: a case study of marriage in Jie county and effective and timely coverage of respondents.

3.2 Specific research methodology

3.2.1 In-depth interviews

In this study, the researcher employed a qualitative research method known as “In-Depth Interviews”. This interview involved purposeful and intensive individual conversations with a small number of respondents within the Jie community. The objective was to explore their thoughts, experiences, and perspectives, particularly regarding the Jie marriage rituals.

The choice of In-Depth Interviews was deliberate for several reasons. Firstly, the Jie community exhibits a high illiteracy rate. In-Depth Interviews allowed for a more nuanced and context-rich understanding, accommodating participants who had difficulty in expressing themselves in writing or structured surveys.

In-depth interviews created an environment where participants could freely share their insights without external influence. The interviews followed a predetermined set of questions outlined in the interview guide. These questions were designed to systematically cover various aspects of the Jie marriage rituals, ensuring a comprehensive exploration of the topic.

The Interview Guide was developed by constructing questions around the objectives of the study. The structured, pre-determined questions facilitated a consistent approach across all interviews, making it easier to compare and contrast the responses during data analysis. Moreover, it helped ensure that key aspects of the Jie marriage rituals were addressed in a systematic manner.

3.2.2 Observation

According to Muutos (2012), observation is a data collection method in which a researcher gathers knowledge of a researchable phenomenon through observations of the phenomenon when it occurs. This study employed participant observation which according to Tegan, G. (2012), is where the researcher immerses him/herself to a particular social setting or group then observes the behaviours, interactions and practices of the participants. It was vital for this study because the researcher was partially a member of this community since he worked in Kotido Primary Teachers' college for three years and was involved in outreach activities of the college implemented in the Jie community. This gave the researcher opportunity to mix up with the Jie easily while conducting this study. Besides that, participant observation allowed deeper understanding of the Jie experiences in the rite of marriage. Not only that but also it enabled the researcher to record audios, videos, take photos and taking notes for any relevant phenomenon exhibited as also stated by Caldwell & Atwal (2005).

3.3 Study area

This study was conducted in Jie County, which is located in Kotido District, Karamoja sub-region, Northern Uganda. This was because among Karamojong clusters, the Jie community has got limited specialised forensic studies on rites of passage of which marriage is among. Furthermore, Jie County was selected over Kotido Municipality due to its predominantly Jie population and the preservation of primitive traditions. Unlike Kotido Municipality, which is characterized by multiplicity of tribes and cultures, Jie County retains a more homogenous cultural setting. This rural and primitive environment was deemed ideal for obtaining authentic and untainted information about the Jie marriage rituals, as it minimizes the influence of external cultural, social and economic factors.

Jie County has one hundred sixty-eight villages. The researcher hoped to interview two informants in each of those villages unless the data reached saturation point. Surprisingly, by the time the researcher reached the tenth village, information was almost the same. The researcher continued to other villages but on reaching the thirteenth to fifteenth village, findings had reached saturation point. This means that the information given in these villages was similar to the one given in the first ones. So, fifteen villages out of the one hundred sixty-eight became representative enough. These fifteen villages include Kadoikin-East, Kadoikin West, Lodere-1, Nakapelimoru, Ngadakori, Napwatapuli-Losilang, Modokonyang, Lodipidip, Lodoket, Kagole East, Kagole West, Naburbur, Kamoru North, Nakoreto South, Kamoru South.

By conducting the study in Jie County, the research aimed to capture the nuances and intricacies of the Jie marriage rituals within their cultural context, providing valuable insights into the preservation and significance of these traditional practices.

3.4 Study population and samplings

3.4.1 Target population

The target population for this study was the Jie community residing in Jie County. Jie community has an estimated population of one hundred sixteen thousand six hundred people, based on the 2014 National Census Projections for 2020. This is because a majority of those people still live in their aboriginal way of life with elders having a great deal of traditional influence in the community.

3.4.2 Study sample

From the Jie population, a study sample which consisted of elders, both male and female, aged sixty years and above was drawn. According to Uganda National Housing and Population Census Report of 2014, there are a total of five thousand three hundred ninety-eight individuals in this age group within the Jie community. These elders possess valuable knowledge and experience regarding the traditional marriage rituals of the Jie community. Elders were sampled due to the fact that by virtue of being old and in most cases entrusted with cultural leadership positions, it was hoped that they are resourceful in matters pertaining traditions. They are calm, approachable and willing to share their cultural experience with other people.

3.4.3 Sample size population

From the study sample, the objective of the researcher was to interview two respondents both male and female using snowball's approach till saturation point is reached. By reaching saturation point, it means that, the information given by respondents has become similar to the one given earlier. Therefore, particular number becomes representative enough for the population being studied when saturation point is reached.

Upon actual interviews, by the time the researcher reached the twentieth respondent, findings started getting repeated. The researcher added more ten, but by that time, information had reached point of saturation. Elders at this point started giving the same information given by others earlier. So, of the thirty respondents, fifteen were male and fifteen were female. Gender representation is balanced because the researcher was interviewing one male and one female elder in each village. This is because the researcher wanted to get experiences from both sexes so as to ensure equal representation of gender to ensure gender equality.

Therefore, since the researcher was dealing with marriage rituals within the same community, it was deemed necessary to stop at this point because the total of thirty respondents he interacted with and by virtue of being elders were a good representative number for this study. So, the size was determined basing on the principal of saturation in order to ensure comprehensive coverage of relevant perspectives within the available resources and time constraints.

3.5 Sampling techniques

The study used non-probability methods which included the following.

3.5.1 Purposive sampling.

It was deemed suitable for elders in this study because they possess characteristics relating to the information the study sought to explore. According to Cillieers, F. P, Davis, C and Bezuidenhout, R. M. (2014:142), purposive sampling is applied to a sample drawn from a population that has characteristics relating to information that research questions seek for and disregard those that don't have. Therefore, it suited Jie elders because they are the chief custodians of the Jie tradition who officiate the execution of marriage rituals.

3.5.2 Convenience sampling.

According to Cilliers, Davis, & Bezuidenhout (2014), it is a non-probability sampling technique used for capturing the accessible population available at the time of the study. This sampling technique allowed for flexibility in selecting respondents based on their availability and willingness to participate in the study. It was chosen for this research due to the challenges of access, concerns related to approaching strangers in the Jie community, and the limited time frame which was available for data collection. To apply this method, I selected participants based on their immediate availability and willingness to participate. This was justified by the need for

flexibility, allowing for a quicker and more practical approach to participant recruitment, considering the constraints of time and resources.

3.6 Research instruments

3.6.1 Interview guide

It is a form containing pre-determined structured questions covering all three themes derived from the specific objectives of this study that the interviewer asked the interviewees. It was specifically prepared for clan heads and old women to participate in this exercise. An Interview Guide is suitable where the respondents may not be literate enough to fill questionnaires, for example Jie County. The interview guide was designed based on the specific objectives of the study. It had a question seeking for an informant's consent and questions seeking for demographic information. Besides that, the researcher set predetermined questions, sectioning them in to A, B and C basing on the themes in the specific objectives so as to capture information that answer the objectives and research questions appropriately.

3.6.2 Observation guide

It constituted key elements such as time, activity, actors and behaviour portrayed that the researcher keenly considered when participating or observing proceedings of some ritualistic events relating to marriage. A smart phone was also used for capturing some data during observation, for instance taking photos and recording audios and videos.

3.7 Data collection procedure

The researcher; upon getting a letter from the University permitting him to collect data on the academic study "Ritual Dimension of Religion of The Jie Community of Kotido District: A Case study of Marriage in Jie County", the researcher went to settle in Kotido municipality for the

purpose of security. First two days, the researcher identified one primary school teacher, a native Jie in one of the schools in Jie County. The researcher chose a male because males closely socialise with various Jie groups. For instance, drinking during leisure time, and so they are more exposed to Jie culture than female teachers whose exposure is limited by their husbands.

The researcher then trained this male teacher to become a competent research assistant (RA). The RA was briefed on the academic nature of the study, focusing on the specific topic of the "Ritual Dimension of Religion in the Jie Community, with a Case Study on Marriage. He was then subjected to comprehensive training on how to conduct interviews and make observations in a standardized manner. The research assistant also received thorough training on the research tools, including interviews and discussions, which were to be used during data collection.

This training included instructions on maintaining a neutral and non-biased approach, using consistent probing techniques, and recording accurate and detailed observations in order to ensure in-depth interviews with informants. Having trained the research assistant, on the third day, they tried the research tools with a small number of Jie elders around them using convenient sampling and snowball's approach so as to ascertain the validity and reliability of the tools to be used in actual data collection.

After ascertaining suitability of tools, the research assistant guided the researcher to reach out the actual villages for data collection in Jie County. On reaching each village, the researcher and his assistant always reported to the Local Council 1 chairperson (LC 1) of the village. They identified and introduced themselves to the LC1 then the research assistant took lead in explaining to the LC 1 in the area language (Ngajie) the purpose of the visit which is an academic study on the rituals in the rite of marriage among the Jie.

The LC1 chairperson was important in that he helped to identify and mobilise resourceful elders in those villages that are responsible for officiating some marriage rituals. LC 1 chairperson assured the informants of ethical considerations that the research assistants briefed him during introduction as named above and so they participated in the exercise freely. The research assistant led the interviews and discussions meant to collect data in the local language so as to bridge the gap of language barrier and fear for strangers.

Each time the researcher encountered new elders, he made sure the research assistant explained in detail the same facts and the purpose of the research which was purely academic to the respondents. After that, the researcher embarked on data collection process as planned. The responses from informants were recorded in the area language by the research assistant then later translated in to English incase the respondent didn't know English.

3.8 Data presentation

The qualitative data obtained through interviews and observations was presented using descriptive narratives. The researcher provided detailed explanations and interpretations of the data, highlighting key themes, patterns, and insights related to the traditional rituals in the rite of marriage, the values embedded within these rituals, and the impact of contemporary socio-economic developments. The use of direct quotes from the participants was also incorporated to enhance the authenticity and richness of the data presented.

3.9 Data analysis

For the qualitative data collected through in-depth interviews and participatory observation, a thematic analysis approach was employed. This involved transcribing the interviews, carefully reviewing the transcripts, and identifying key themes and patterns within the data. The researcher

coded the data, categorized the codes into themes, and analyzed the content to gain a deeper understanding. The analysis involved an iterative process of coding, categorizing, and identifying relationships between themes to derive meaningful insights from the qualitative data.

3.10 Validity and reliability of instruments

3.10.1 Validity

Validity refers to the appropriateness of the evaluation instrument for a group of individuals and not to the instrument itself (Taale & Ngman-Wara, 2015). It is the degree to which a research instrument measures what it is proposed to measure. Validity covers at least two aspects, namely content and face validity. The statistical standard for good validity depends on the specific type of validity being assessed. Content validity is typically assessed qualitatively, rather than through statistical measures. So, in this study, we focused on content validity, which is established through a process of expert review and pre-testing. Having trained a research assistant, the researcher with the help of research assistant pre-tested the research tools with a small number of Jie elders around them. They used convenient sampling and snowball's approach so as to ascertain the validity and reliability of the tools to be used in actual data collection.

The interview guide and observation protocol were developed based on an extensive review of relevant literature and consultation with experts in the field. This process helped ensure that the instruments captured the key aspects of the research objectives and were aligned with the research questions. Pilot testing was also conducted to assess the clarity and effectiveness of the instruments before the actual data collection. Feedback from the pilot test participants was taken into consideration to refine and improve the instruments, further enhancing their validity.

3.10.2 Reliability

Reliability denotes the consistency with which a test measures what it measures from one measurement to another, over and over again. In this study, the reliability of research instruments was ensured through careful and consistent implementation. The research assistant received comprehensive training on how to conduct interviews and make observations in a standardized manner. This training included instructions on maintaining a neutral and non-biased approach, using consistent probing techniques, and recording accurate and detailed observations.

3.11 Ethical consideration

The Several ethical considerations are recommended when performing research, including at least three major practical ethical principles (Fleming, 2018) as briefly discussed below.

i. Obtaining informed consent:

This is the cornerstone of ethical research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). “Informed” means that research participants are fully informed of what they will be asked about, how the information they give will be used, and the likely consequences they will face owing to their participation, if any. Based on such information, the participant(s) must then provide active, explicit and signed consent to participating in the study, having understood their rights of access to information and of withdrawing at any point during the study. In this study, respondents were asked if they were willing to participate after explaining the purpose of the study to them and their opinions were highly respected.

ii. Risk of harm, anonymity and confidentiality

A research study must not deliberately and without strong justification expose participants, the wider community, and the University/institution to harm or discomfort (Fleming, 2018). In this

study, the risk of harm to participants was minimized by ensuring that participant's identity is kept confidential and anonymous. Assurances will be given beyond just protecting their names but also avoiding self-identifying information from the research instruments. To the institution, namely Kyambogo University, the risk of harm, for example to the reputation, will be minimized by obtaining written permission from the ethical review committee of Kyambogo University before proceeding to the study area to carry out the study.

iii. Conflict of interest

A researcher's prior activities or even existing relationships can possibly create a conflict of interest that the researcher should typically report on for ethical clearance. In this study, the researcher declared no conflict of interests when applying for ethical clearance from Kyambogo University.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

4.0 Introduction

The findings are based on data collected through in-depth interview and participant observation. The chapter begins with an overview of the research participants, including their demographic information and their role in the marriage rituals. This is followed by a detailed presentation and analysis under 4.3. Thereafter, in 4.4, there is a comprehensive discussion of the traditional marriage rituals observed in the Jie community, highlighting their significance and symbolism. The values embedded within these rituals are then examined, shedding light on the cultural beliefs and practices that shape the marriage ceremony. Next, the chapter explores the impact of contemporary socio-economic developments within the broader Karamoja sub-region on the Jie marriage ritual and its cultural context. The findings are presented using a thematic approach, with each theme representing a distinct aspect of the specific research objectives.

4.1 Demographic information

The research participants consisted of elders, both male and female who were actively involved in the marriage rituals of the Jie community. Gender equality was ensured in order to capture experiences from both sexes so as to assert authenticity. They were selected basing on their knowledge, experience, and participation in the traditional practices associated with marriage. The participants represented a range of age groups, from sixty years and above, as this age bracket is considered to possess the wisdom and authority within the Jie community.

In terms of gender, the participants included 15 male and 15 female elders, ensuring a balanced representation and capturing diverse perspectives. The roles of the participants in the marriage rituals varied, with some serving as clan leaders, others as witnesses, and some having officiated

in the rituals themselves. Some rituals like *Eloto*, *Atukokin*, *Ebilani*, *Akiram Ngatu*, etc. are usually officiated by men while rituals like *Akumun/ekuman* and *akinyony* are usually officiated by elder women. This diversity of roles provided a comprehensive understanding of marriage rituals and cultural significance according to the experience of those elders as discussed below.

4.2 Presentation and Interpretation of Findings

4.2.1 Rituals in the Rite of Marriage of the Jie People

Premarital ritual of forcing a girl into sexual intercourse (Ewori). It is one of the rituals this study established. One informant, an elderly woman from Napwatapuli-Losilang village, provided insight into the procedure of this ritualistic practice. She recounted that;

"During our time and now in rare occasions, when a boy admires a girl for marriage, he plans with a friend or two to seize an opportunity when that girl is alone or with a small group of girls. The boy and friends would then chase after the girl or her group until they/he catch (es) the girl. Subsequently, he wrestles her until she falls down, if the girl is strong, a friend or friends help him to wrestle her down, hold her then he rapes her. As a girl, you are always over powered. So, after rape, you feel ashamed yet for them (rapist and friends) they are very happy. A girl hurries back home to report to her parents so that they follow it up so that you are married because once a boy rapes you, no other man will attempt to approach you because they know you are booked by someone."

This account illustrates the culturally significant role of *Ewori* ritual in the Jie society in ushering young people to traditional marriage and family life which is also part of African traditional religious practices. Another old man from Modokonyang village corroborated to the above experience but added that:

“For us the men, to make a girl feel for you, after raping, you begin to ridicule her by making utterances like we have seen your privacy. If you don’t accept our friend for marriage, we shall expose you to other people. You are even pregnant already and if you refuse our friend, no one will help you with that child because you are already considered booked. If you refuse our friend, then you are a prostitute. Who will marry a prostitutes who are well known for spreading HIV/AIDS?” (Source, an elderly woman and man of Napwatapuli-Losilang village and Modokonyang village respectively).

According to him, such vulgar words pain a girl so much that she will cry while going back home this touches parents to get concerned and have you marry the girl. Shockingly in further discussion with the informant, it was revealed that this act is not considered rape or criminal among the real traditional Jie but rather serves as a means to prove the boy’s maturity and manhood. It only becomes rape and criminal when a man forces already a booked or married woman to sex or does it to a single woman without the view of marrying her.

According to the experience of the Jie on *Ewori*, there is a notable harmony with literature as cited by Save the Children Uganda (2020), regarding the practice of a boy attempting to rape a girl before marriage. According to this study findings; *Ewori* is a means to prove a boy’s maturity and manhood within the Jie community. When a boy fails to rape the girl, he is considered premature, weak and unable to provide security and basic needs to the family. He too

is considered to have ashamed his clan and friends. Interestingly, Jie girls could reject boys who failed to rape them, considering them weak. Ewori is not done for fun. It is only mature males with the worth to pay bride price who can do it to a girl one has admired to marry. So, it is done once someone is ready for marriage both physically and economically. Ewori, is also a boy's direct communication to his parents and relatives that he is ready for marriage. A boy does this when he has half or more of the anticipated bride price that the girl's parents will want. The literature review presented the perspective that the Karamojong people in general engage in the practice of raping young girls to book them to marry those suitors, as mentioned in *Save the Children, Uganda*. However, this study's findings clarify that the practice of *Ewori* is specific to the Jie culture and should not be generalized or condoned. It is important to approach this finding with cultural sensitivity as assumed by Cultural Relativism, a theory that guided this study as discussed under the theoretical frame work. This is because cultural relativism helps us to recognize that the above ritual reflects the beliefs and traditions of the Jie community and should not be viewed through the lens/ norms of other cultures. Therefore, the religious implication here, is that Ewori is an African traditional practice that conflicts with the Christian culture.

Ritual during Negotiations for Marriage (*Eloto*). After Ewori, the next ritual is *Eloto*. Informants in the community shared their experience with, one elderly man describing this practice, stating that:

“Once a boy successfully rapes a girl, their sexual relationship is established and so they can be free to talk to each other (courtship). The boy then declares his intentions to his parents that very day or the following day. So, raping a girl is not for fun but it is only that one who is ready for marriage who does it once. The boy is not supposed to rape this girl again when they meet. To please girl's relatives, his parents then organize an event

called “Eloto”. In case the girl’s parents seem to be negative, the boy’s relatives will yell utterances that curse and ridicule the girl till her relatives are touched and give in to the marriage. For instance, they can say we have impregnated your daughter already and if you don’t give her to us, no one will help her with the baby and she will be a prostitute. She will never marry again and if she tries, she will not settle. Etc.” During Eloto, if the parents of the girl approve a boy for marriage, the necessary arrangements for the marriage are made. During that day, the boy’s parents host the girl’s parents.

They prepare local food items like cucumbers (Ngikolil), meat from a black sheep or a bull. It is just boiled. If there is groundnut or simsim paste, they paste it. Chicken and fried food stuffs are avoided because in Jie culture if they are eaten at this stage, marriage fails or will be problematic in future. This food is shared with the ancestors, with ancestors eating it first. The elder in the family where people are sitting will take lead to offer it to the ancestors by getting samples of this food, then throws to all directions while making pleas to the ancestors to accept to share with them. In case some food/sauce pours down, it is not supposed to be picked and eaten. This is because the Jie believe that their living dead called for that food to eat. However, in rare cases where the girl's parents refuse marriage proposal by the boy's relatives, the boy would be advised to look for another potential partner. (Source: Interviews with Jie community elder of Lodipidip village).

Analysis reveal that this ritual aligns with the literature's emphasis on the importance of parental consent and family involvement in the Jie marriage process cited in Meekers (1992). The literature mentions the significance of parental consent and the role of negotiations in formalising marriages. According to the Jie, a family in which boys are unable to marry people's

daughters is ranked poor with very low social status. Therefore, once a boy initiates marriage by successfully raping a girl, his parents become serious and follow up the matter so as to fulfill rituals of the impending marriage to avoid reproach. Similarly, on the girl's side, if a girl is raped and not married by that man, her family is considered a home of bad luck, harboring a prostitute who has HIV/AIDS (*Lodiim*). To be suspected to be having *Lodiim* in the Jie community makes one a social outcast. Due to fear of such labels, the Jie always want to see that they harmonise marriage arrangements and make it successful once a boy initiates it so as to maintain their integrity in the community. The social implication of this ritual in the Jie community is creation of harmony through no conflict means and religiously, this ritual informs forgiveness, being proactive when coping with stressful events and ensures unity in diversity.

Ritual in Soliciting Bride Wealth (*Atukokin*). Following *Eloto* is the ritual of *Atukokin*. The ritual marks the beginning of the collection and pledging of property meant to raise bride wealth for the boy to marry the girl he has secured. One informant from Lodoket village provided insightful details about this ritual. He revealed that:

Atukokin is where the parents of the boy convene a clan meeting, involving not only their relatives but also friends and in-laws from their clan. The clan head presides over this gathering, which centers on discussions regarding raising bride wealth for the boy. There is a significant event on a particular item during this ritual: a straight stick called "Akaliye." This stick, approximately the thickness of a thumb, is cut to the length of a walking stick. It is anointed with a mixture of raw butter, blood, and cud from a black sheep. A ram is preferred because we believe its blood and cud possess mystic powers that are capable of attracting blessings and calming down rough situations. So, anointed Akaliye symbolizes an assignment of responsibility and authority to the one who will hold

it which is an important aspect of the ceremony. Thereafter, relatives begin pledging what they wish to contribute as part of bride wealth to help the son. (Source: Interviews with an elder of Lodoket village).

In-depth interview with this elder revealed that, the Jie community believes that the raw butter, blood, and cud from the black sheep or a bull possess mystic and inherent power. They consider a black sheep to be a cold and peaceful animal. Using its blood and cud for anointing is believed to ensure smooth and successful proceedings, as it fosters meekness and positivity among those involved in the ritual. During the anointing of the stick, specific utterances are made to symbolize blessings and prayers for the successful arrangements of the marriage. Such utterance according to another informant from Kadoikin-East village whose experience matched that one are;

“Tarau yong imwe ngibaren lu, ngun elothia isua akisitia akiuta ikotere lokokukothi. Ngini ikirumi iyong kangace mam, Akuj kiira! Then others say Keira!”

This means "May you be used to drive animals that we are going to use to marry a wife for our son. May the one who holds you be successful! God hear us! Then others yell, he has heard!" The religious implication here is that the Jie believe in God's intervention in their marriage arrangements. Therefore, through this ritual, the Jie invoke and enterprise with a supreme being. After the anointing and blessing of Akaliye, relatives begin pledging their contributions to support the son in the upcoming marriage. In the case of cows, goats, and sheep, the color and size of the animal is mentioned while making a pledge. On the day designated for collecting these animals, the one holding the anointed stick and their companions collect the specific animals pledged, ensuring that the animal received matches the colours and sizes pledged.

Therefore, the ritual of soliciting bride wealth (*Atukokin*), as highlighted in the findings, add depth to the literature's discussion on the financial dynamics and communal involvement in Jie marriage traditions. The literature mentioned the role of the bride wealth in determining social status and security, while this study's findings provide specific rituals and practices associated with raising the bride wealth and gathering the required cows for the marriage. This ritual symbolises blessings, prayers, and communal participation, further emphasizing the cultural significance of financial, communal and economic dynamics within Jie's rite of marriage.

A Ritual in receiving anointed stick (*Akirirar*). Having done *Atukokin*, *Akirirar* is the next ritual. One elderly informant from Kadoikin-West village, according to his experience explained that;

"In Akirirar ceremony, we married elders come together, and we receive the anointed stick called "Akaliye." From the clan head. This stick together with the horn of a wild animal which is filled with pounded or ground tobacco (Ngetaba) are entrusted to the chosen son in our clan, the one responsible for collecting the pledged property from relatives. He can be accompanied by other boys of attested character. Before he embarks on his duty, we elders bless him, (The one who holds the stick and horn)". The leader of the elders says, "Tolot ke ekithil!" others respond, "Tolot!" The elder continues, "Torereng" and the response from the community is, "Kiyokin!"

That blessing means "Go in peace!" others yell, "Go!" "Be successful, others yell let it be!". The religious implication here is that these godly allusions and exchange signify Jie's trust in a deity for successful marriage preparations and good wishes for a successful and fruitful mission. Further discussion with that elder made him emphasise the significance of the anointed stick and the tobacco in the horn. He explained that, *Akaliye*, serves multiple purposes, symbolising

authority, accreditation, a walking stick, and assistance in driving the cows required for the cultural marriage event. The pounded tobacco in the horn is meant to keep the chosen son alert and courageous during his mission whenever he sniffs it.



Figure 1 son entrusted with Akaliye on his way with a colleague to collect pledged animals

Ritual during Readiness to Fulfill Marriage ceremony (*Ebilani*). “*Ebilani*” is then the next ritual. This supports the observations on the gradual progression and fulfillment of obligations in Jie marriage customs by Gulliver (1953). An elder from the Jie community provided insights into this significant ritual. He explained that;

“During the ritual of Ebilani, the boy's parents invite a few representatives from the girl's clan to discuss the actual bride wealth available. These representatives arrive and engage in discussions. They inquire about the number of animals, their colors, and sizes that the boy's parents have prepared for the marriage.”

“After obtaining this information, the boy's clan elders request that the girl's relatives identify for them deserving individuals from the girl's clan who will receive cows as a reward, apart from the girl's parents and elder brothers. This identification is an integral part of the ceremony.”

*“The boy's father makes a solemn vow, stating, “We shall not change our minds” locally said as; *Ikongio isua ngibelekinoi*. Following this vow, both clans' representatives stand up, raise their walking sticks above their heads, and slightly hit each other's sticks as a sign of consensus. They yell in unison, “*Eira akuj, Emam jik ngibelekinoi*” which means “God has heard, we shall not change”.*

“The girl's clan relatives in that gathering are then tasked to inform the girl's family to prepare for the arrival of a delegation from the boy's clan, signaling their readiness to proceed with the marriage.” Source: Interviews with Jie community elder of Kadoikin-West village).

This description provides insights into the *Ebilani* ritual and the processes that take place during this phase of the Jie marriage customs. It has a religious implication of making covenants or vows in the name of a god. The covenant is sealed by hitting walking sticks of each other a sign of total commitment to fulfil the vow.



Figure 2 Jie Elders affirming their commitment in Ebilani Ritual.

Ritual during Declaring Bride wealth Prepared to a Girl’s Clan (*Apudor*): In *Apudor*, when the girl's clan is ready to receive a delegation from the boy's clan, they extend an invitation to the boy's relatives to go and disclose the exact details of the preparations made for the bride wealth. The parents of the boy, along with clan elders and other married clan members, make their way to the girl's home for this crucial ceremony. One elderly woman explained that;

“When the boy's relatives arrive at the girl's residence, they enter the house of the girl's mother, where they find a delegation representing the girl's clan already seated. This house is distinguished by a flag-like sheet or shawl known locally as "Nakatukok". The seating arrangement within the house involves using locally crafted stools for men and animal skins for women. Leadership roles are clearly defined, with the leader of the either clan occupying a bigger locally made stool known as “Ngemakuk”. The ceremony commences with the leader from the boy's clan initiating the declaration, starting with what is locally called “Apogandar ngatuk”. This means to declare the number, sizes and colours of cattle, goats and sheep prepared for bride wealth. By doing this, the boy’s clan

is confirming to the girl's clan what their delegation was told in Ebilani ritual. This signifies total commitment to fulfill marriage promises made earlier.”

“Additionally, the leader seeks input from the leader of the girl's clan regarding which other relatives, apart from the girl's parents and elder brothers, are entitled to receive a portion of the bride wealth so as to confirm what the delegation that they hosted in the former ritual declared to them. This is because relatives of the boy do not want to leave out any deserving girl's relative complaining as it is thought to attract curses to the new couple. This information is then conveyed accordingly.” (Source: interviews with an elder of Lodere-I village)

However, thorough discussion with the informant revealed that, following the formalities of the declaration, the participants engage in feasting, enjoying local brew known as “*Abutiya or Nsangatha*” made of sorghum. Local foodstuffs are prepared and eaten. After *Apudor* ritual is concluded, the boy's clan returns to organise for the impending marriage ceremony, marking a pivotal step in the progression of the marriage process.

It is noticeable that, the ritual of *Apudor* as outlined in the current study, align with the literature's recognition of feasting, singing, dancing, and communal celebration associated with marriage in the Karamojong culture. The literature acknowledged the cultural activities and festivities involved in marriage rituals. The current study findings provide specific details about these rituals, emphasising their significance in marking various stages of the marriage process and the communal blessings and celebrations that accompany them.

Ritual during Handing Bride Wealth to Girl's Relatives (*Akiram ngatuk*): One elder shared his experience in this ritual as below;

“Upon arrival, visitors (girl's relatives) proceed directly to the kraal, which is the cattle enclosure located at the entrance, referred to as "Ekidori". During this part of the ceremony, the father of the boy who is to marry is entrusted with the anointed stick. This stick holds special significance, as it has been used in the earlier stages of collecting property from relatives.”

“The purpose of the anointed stick at this point is to assist in pointing out animals that are part of bride wealth, driving them out and defense in the assessment process that follows in case some animals are fierce. The girl's relatives meticulously evaluate each cow in terms of its color, size, and overall condition to ensure that they meet the predetermined standards declared to them earlier. Any cow that does not meet the criteria is promptly rejected and replaced to maintain the integrity of the bride wealth.”

“Once all the cows have been assessed and approved, the leader among the girl's relatives formally confirms that the conditions are in alignment with the initial agreement in Ebilani and Apudor rituals. At this point, the animals are then driven to the girl's relatives, marking the culmination of this significant ritual. Blessings and expressions of goodwill are offered, often led by the elderly initiated women present.” (Source: informant from Nakapelimoru village).

An informant from another village had similar experience but added valuable insights into this ritual, sharing that the blessings typically include utterances such as:

“Kitopoloritoi Akuj nginaebwaikini akiuta. Itereng inges ngidweyok nakolongit na alotoma akiuta. kimwek kes topita ka torop ateker na. Kiyokin!”. (Source: an elderly woman from Lodera-II village).

The utterance above means “We honour God who initiated marriage, may he bless our children who are getting united today through marriage, let them be productive and reward this clan more. These blessings are often followed by the affirmation of others, who yell, “*kiyokin!*” signifying their acknowledgment of the goodwill expressed.

Subsequently, the elders gather inside the kraal, where they partake in the consumption of “*Ngasanga*” or “*Abutiya*” a local brew made from what Jie call cattle of women (sorghum). While enjoying this communal gathering, they continue to bestow blessings and witness the formal handing over of the bride wealth.

Ritual during Handing the Girl to the Boy’s Clan (*Akumun/Ekuman*): This study also established *Akumun* as one of the marriage rituals among the Jie. One elderly woman shared her experience in this event asserting that;

*“When the boy’s clan fulfills conditions set by the girl’s clan in the earlier on discussed rituals, they will be ready to hand the girl to the boy’s clan. During this event, it is us the married and initiated women from the boy’s clan who go for that woman. When the girl reaches the boy’s home, we take her direct into the house of the boy’s mother. There, we undressed all the casual clothing and then dress her in the cultural wear which includes *Abwo*, *Ekalungur*, local dressing made of an animal skin, star grass (*Ngemuria*) and she*

is smeared with the raw butter “Akimet Ngatu ngina ajonon”. The leader of these women anoints and blesses the girl saying “Ikokukothi kijaunitai nawina. Topit. Akuj kiira. Others respond, Keira!” (Source: in-depth interviews with female elder of Ngadakori village).

This means “Our daughter, we welcome you to this clan, may you be productive; God has heard us. Then others yell, “He has heard!” The cultural implication in this ritual is that the girl is entrusted in the hands of mature married and initiated women of the boy’s clan to ensure that she is properly nurtured and indoctrinated in to the cultural norms of that clan. This is geared towards achieving discipline and stability in marriages. Religiously, the implication is that the initiated women are already entrusted in the hands of ancestors of that clan who watch over them. Therefore, the new woman being in the hands of initiated women is a way of introducing her to ancestors of that clan who are believed to be able to accord productivity to such a woman.

Ritual during completing bride wealth payment (*Ekimwomwor*): In case bride wealth was not completed in Akumun ritual, the boy’s clan is given some grace period to look for the balance of that bride wealth. When the boy’s clan is ready with it, they invite the girl’s clan to get it. This step is always critical in Jie marriages because once this is done, the boy’s clan is free to proceed with other rituals on the girl according to the norms of their clan. For instance initiation of women according to the traditions of that clan. One elder explained that;

“In Ekimwomwor, both clans come together for a feast and celebration, where the couple receives blessings from elders and community members. While at this ritual, a big bull symbolizing completion of marriage locally called “Lokiriket” is handed to the elders of

the girl's clan. It is accompanied by a cow called Natwo. This cow must be suckling a calf."

"This cow and calf are handed to the youngest stepmother of the girl. At this point, she is fully married. So, she will be anointed by one initiated woman from the boy's clan using raw butter on the face, chest, back and waist according to the regulations of the boy's clan. After that, she is dressed in a cultural attire called "Abwo and Adwal" all made of goat's skin. "Abwo and Adwal" are also worn by women during cultural dances to depict Jie tradition. The elders wear their headdress decorated with feathers of an ostrich. They symbolise accreditation and authority in the clan. Then feasting begins." (Source: informant of Kagole West village)



Figure 3: Last bit of bride wealth



Figure 4: Fully married couple



Figure 5: Elders' decorated head dress



Figure 6: Nabwo, a cultural wear worn around waist during a traditional dance to crown Akimwomwor ritual

Ritual of Initiation of Women (Akinyony Aberu): The Jie community member who shared insights into this ritual provided valuable information on its significance and the intricacies involved, saying:

“Akinyony Aberu is a ceremony that occurs when the community deems a woman suitable for initiation, marking her readiness to be fully integrated into her husband's clan. In preparation for this ceremony, it is the responsibility of the husband to organize and oversee the proceedings. During Akinyony Aberu ritual, the woman is entrusted to a group of initiated elderly women who bear the responsibility of imparting further instructions and indoctrination concerning the expected conduct and behaviors of initiated women within the clan. A pivotal aspect of this process is the woman's voluntary vow to abide by these teachings and to honor the customs and traditions of her husband's clan.”

“The ceremonial preparations include the use of two significant elements: butter, locally referred to as "Akimet Angatu," and star grass known as "Ngemuria." These items hold symbolic value and are central to the ritual. Nemuria symbolises continuity of productivity and Akimet Angatu symbolises modesty.”

“The ritual unfolds within the woman's house, where she is asked to undress, signifying her readiness for this transformative experience. The elderly women conducting the ceremony tie star grass (Ngemuria) around her waist and neck, further enhancing the symbolism of this ritual in predicting prosperity and productivity in marriage. Following this, they smear her body with the special butter, with particular attention given to the private part (vulva).”

“Throughout this process, the elderly women recite sacred words that carry profound meaning. These utterances serve as blessings and guidance for the woman, reinforcing her commitment to her husband and husband's clan. The words convey sentiments such as, “Akolongit na iyu isua iyong noi alo bukukothi, ngicam ecie ekile ikitapi iyong, mati lokokukothi bon. Ikitolalaunai isua alobuku alo. Tourianar noi. Ikitererengi isua iyong noi. Ikijenu iyong anakan anakothi kujo ngunaikitemete iyong jik.” (Source: Interviews with Jie community female elder of Kamoru-North village).

The utterances above mean, “Today we have fully accepted you in our clan. Don't accept any man to touch you except our son. Multiply us in this clan, be productive, we bless you, and entrust you into the hands of our ancestors who shall watch over you.”

The underlying purpose of these sacred rituals is not only to welcome the woman but also to protect the sanctity of the marriage. In the event that she engages in infidelity, this ritual serves

as a safeguard. If she strays from her marital commitment, and a child conceived outside of marriage begins to exhibit signs of illness or emaciation, it is believed that this mysterious affliction is a result of her transgression. This illness may extend to affect her husband and even other family members. According to addition by one male elder whose experience matched the above discussed one, a cleansing ritual is always performed once infidelity is realised. He explained that;

“To cleanse this perceived transgression and restore balance, a ritual known as "Elome" is performed. It is essential for reinstating harmony and ensuring the woman's fidelity to her marital vows.” (Source: informant from Naburibur village)

Ritual of Initiation of a Woman to a Husband’s Young Brother (*Akinyonyokin Aberu Lo Kile Lodoochi*): In some cases where the husband is impotent, and the woman is fully married, the Jie allow for the initiation of such a woman to the husband’s younger brother who is productive. Once the clan deemed this event necessary, it begins by elders of both clans talking to both the husband, his wife and the young brother to whom the woman is to be initiated to. The console, counsel and guide the properly in relation to cultural identity and lineage continuity. The younger brother is cautioned not to take away that woman but he is only guided that his role is to produce children for his brother through that woman. Once the woman becomes pregnant, he has to let her continue with her normal duties with her husband in their family. The Jie do this because they want to ensure that children born in their clans really are from men of that clan.

In case the young brother is also married, his wife to in engaged in the planning meetings that elders convene. This is because, elders want to get the consent of parties involved before the actual ritual is done so as to ensure harmony in those families. In the event that the young brother

is not married, he has to marry his own wife though he has a responsibility in his elder brother's family as well. Once agreement is reached, the elders shall perform a ritual of "*Akinyonyokin Aberu Lo Kile Lodoochi*" which is initiating a woman to the husband's young brother. According to one elder of Nakoreto south village, the procedure of the ritual is as below;

"A black sheep is sacrificed, and the brother is seated with the woman at the doorway of the husband's house. The elderly initiated woman (Akimat) smears them with the mixture of blood and cud of the animal (akimodimod) while making certain utterances of plea to God to be gracious to his children and reward them with children." (Source: Interviews with Jie community elder of Nakoreto South Village).

Another informant of Kamoru North Village had similar experience but she added that after the pleas and blessing of the young brother and the woman, some mixture of blood and cud from the sacrificed black sheep together with meat are taken to the girl's home. This is to signify recognition of the husband's brother as an in-law as well. That meat is boiled and eaten by the girl's relatives. The girl's parents are smeared with the mixture of blood and cud signaling their consent to accord respect to the young brother as an in-law as well. Some of this mixture is thrown to different directions in the girl's family compound by the head of that family a sign that both clans appeal to their ancestors to recognise the young brother also as an in-law and to bless them to have children and to watch over them.

After commitment of both families successfully executing the ritual, the young brother is then officially allowed to fulfill the husband's conjugal duties, specifically impregnating the woman only. The woman continues to live with her husband normally, but the clan must be aware of who is responsible for the pregnancies. (Source: Informant of Kamoru North Village).

Following key issues raised by informants in in the ritual described above, the cultural implication is vivid that the Jie are after peace, harmony, productivity and continuity of family lines in their clans. We also see elders as concerned people who play a pivotal role in ensuring stability in marriages. Therefore, they possess a lot of authority in the clan. Religiously, it is portrayed that the Jie believe in the intervention of supreme spiritual powers in helping to sort challenges they encounter. Therefore, culture and religion among the Jie are inseparable.

Ritual of Church Marriage (*Ekuutan Ekelethia*): In the contemporary context, as the winds of modernity and religious transformations sweep through the Jie culture, certain families have embraced Christianity or Islam, along with the accompanying educational advancements. These shifts have influenced their perspective on traditional rituals, leading them to make choices that align with their evolving religious and social beliefs. Notably, one of the rituals most affected by these modern developments is the Initiation of Women, and many such families now opt for Church Marriage to solemnise their union as husband and wife.

An elder who is also LC1 chairperson shared his experience and explained that, the nature of rituals in church marriage varies depending on the religious tradition to which the couple belongs. This informant gave example that;

“When couples choose to have church marriage instead of initiation of a woman to a man’s clan, rituals are performed by a religious leader from their faith and we elders of that clan are passive. These rituals vary depending on the specific religious tradition. For example, in the Catholic Church, the couple declares their intentions to wed to the priest, who announces and introduces them to the congregation. One unique aspect of the Catholic Church Marriage process, according to the LC.1, is the congregation's discreet

role as observers. They are encouraged to provide any pertinent information to the priest that might impede the marriage. This information may relate to concerns such as one of the parties being underage, experiencing mental health issues, having multiple sexual partners, or being unbaptised. The congregation's collective vigilance ensures that the marriage adheres to Catholic traditions and aligns with the ethical and moral standards of the faith. If the couple meets the prerequisites, the priest proceeds to preside over the church marriage performing rituals accepted by the catholic faith.” (Source, interviews with an elder of Kamoru South Village).

According to the experience of the elder above, the implication is clear that initiation of women is gradually eroding to influence of foreign religious cultures that the Jie have adopted. Besides that, factors like exposure and education have enlightened some Jie to the extent that they have decided to consider some cultural practices primitive and have opted for modern practices which match with the generation of this time. This is why church marriage is not an interruption of African traditional heritage but it is well tolerated in most societies including Jie community. So, this hybridization of religious practices weakens African cultural heritage due to the dynamic nature of culture.

Ritual of Reversing Production of Same-Sex of Children (*Akilacor*): While the course of marriage life among the Jie people generally proceeds as expected upon fulfillment of major rituals to count marriage complete, there are instances where a couple experiences a unique challenge. The consistent production of children of the same sex. This phenomenon can introduce a level of instability into the marriage, as the desire for children of both sexes is deeply ingrained in the culture. To address this issue, the Jie have a ritualistic procedure designed to

reverse the production of same-sex children. According to one elderly woman of Nakapelimoru village;

“When a couple encounters the situation of consistently producing children of the same sex, steps are taken to initiate a remedy. The process begins with the woman producing same sex of children being reinitiated by another elderly-initiated woman from another clan known for its ability to produce children of the desired sex. An elder woman, representing this specialized clan, takes the lead in conducting the ritual. During the ceremony, a significant symbolic act occurs; the sacrifice of a sheep or a black bull. This sacrifice holds great cultural and spiritual significance as it marks the commencement of the ritual aimed at reversing the sex of the children to be born to the couple. The woman undergoing reinitiation is anointed with the mixture of blood and cud of the sacrificial animal as specific invocations and pleas are made to the divine. These petitions are directed towards God, beseeching a reversal of the pattern of producing children of the same sex.”

“Following the ritual, when the reinitiated woman becomes pregnant once more, an intriguing change takes place in her care. The woman who initiated the reinitiation process assumes the responsibility of massaging her using the back of her palms, deviating from the customary approach. This distinctive method of massaging is significant because it signifies that the entire reproductive process is intended to reverse, allowing for the possibility of producing children of the desired sex”. (Source: Interviews with Jie community elder of Nakapelimoru Village)

This ritual is deeply rooted in the belief that it will yield the desired outcome. It serves as a poignant example of how the Jie community employs ritualistic traditions of ATR to address unique challenges within the context of rite of marriage and reproduction. Therefore, this study's findings, expand on the literature's discussion of cultural practices and beliefs surrounding fertility, integration, and the role of religious institutions in Jie marriage customs. The current study provides specific examples of rituals and practices related to these situations, further illustrating the cultural dynamics and beliefs within Jie marriages.

A Ritual to Affirm Widow Inheritance (*Akiruma*): The findings of this study also mention widow inheritance (*Akiruma*) as ritualistic event in the Jie community, which corresponds to the literature's acknowledgment of cultural norms surrounding marriage and the responsibility of the clan in ensuring the welfare of widows within the community. The literature recognised the cultural practices and beliefs related to widowhood in Jie society, while the study's findings provide further details on the inheritance of widows by one of the late husband's brothers as an official practice.

In the Jie culture, widow inheritance, known as "*Akiruma*," is a significant practice that occurs under specific circumstances. When a husband dies, customary burial procedures are diligently observed, taking into account the circumstances of the husband's death and his standing within the community. However, one year after the husband's passing, a crucial meeting is convened by clan elders to address the widow's inheritance.

According to an elderly Jie woman, during this meeting, one of the deceased husband's brothers is chosen, more so the one who follows the deceased in the order of their birth to officially inherit the widow. The chosen man undergoes a distinctive and solemn ritual that takes place within the

widow's home and house. This informant further shared her experience and offered insights into the process of this ritual. She averred that:

“On the designated night, the chosen inheritor enters the widow's house, where he will remain inside until the following day. During this night, a black bull or sheep is offered as a sacrifice, signifying the gravity of the occasion. As dawn breaks, both the chosen inheritor and the widow emerge from the house, taking their places at the doorway. The elder in charge presides over this significant ritual. He initiates the process by anointing both the man and the widow with a mixture of blood and cud (Akimodimod) from the sacrificial animal. While performing this anointing, he offers prayers and invocations to God. The elder asks divine blessings for the couple, praying for their productivity and well-being. He implores “Our dear God, bless our children, let them be productive. Protect and provide for them. God has heard us!” In unison, the gathered community members respond, affirming, “He has heard!” Following the anointing and prayers, a celebratory feast ensues. This gathering is marked by the consumption of meat, local dishes, and the partaking of local brew i.e Abutiya and Nsangatha made of sorghum. Importantly, the younger brother of the deceased husband is officially recognized as the widow's new spouse. He is to be accorded the same respect and status within the family of the girl as the late husband had been. The inheritor is expected to help the widow look after the orphans and also continue to produce more children for his late brother.”

(Source: Interviews with informant from Modokonyang Village)

This ritual of widow inheritance, deeply ingrained in the Jie culture, serves as a means of providing for widows within the community while also upholding the sacred bonds of family and marriage, even in the face of loss and adversity.

A Ritual to Cleanse Adultery (*Elome*). Adultery is a sensitive issue within the Jie culture, and how it is addressed is deeply rooted in their cultural practices. When a married woman is found to have committed adultery, two primary options are available to the husband: divorce or forgiveness. If the husband chooses the path of forgiveness, a cleansing ritual is performed to address the transgression. An elder explained the process of this ritual asserting that:

*“When a husband decides to forgive his wife for her act of adultery, a specific cleansing ritual (*Elome*) becomes necessary. The man who intruded to the marriage is subjected to a fine of sixty cows and subsequently sent away. Conversely, the woman involved in the adulterous affair undergoes a purification ceremony. During this purification ritual, an elderly initiated woman (*Akimat*) of unquestionable integrity takes charge. She prepares a mixture using the blood and cud from a sacrificial animal, typically a black sheep or a bull. With great solemnity, the elder anoints the repentant woman. The anointing process encompasses the chest up to the breasts, the face, the back, and the waist, including the genital area (*Vulva*). As she carries out these anointing, she utters words of admonition and forgiveness: “Woman, we have forgiven you. May you live according to the regulations of this clan, never disobey us anymore. Our ancestors, forgive her”. Following the anointing, the woman is required to make a heartfelt vow of apology. She must then abide by a strict condition – she cannot wash away the cud mixture or bathe until it naturally dissipates yet she must move within the community performing normal duties.”* (Source: Informant from Kagole East Village)

This profound ritual, described through an elder's account, illustrates the meticulous and symbolic steps taken by the Jie people to address adultery within their community. It reflects their emphasis on reconciliation, forgiveness, and adherence to their cultural norms and

traditions even in challenging situations. Besides that, invocation of ancestors to forgive and restore blessings for the repentant woman, is an implication of strong believe in the intercession of supernatural powers in the Jie community.

A Ritual to Cleanse Incest (*Aitiak Acamun angijenen*): In the Jie community, the occurrence of incestuous courtship between a boy and a girl is considered a grave taboo, and such relationships are promptly dissolved through a cleansing ritual known as “*Aitiak Acamun angijenen*”. The process involves specific steps to address this cultural transgression.

During the ritual, elders take the responsibility of constructing a rudimentary grass-thatched like hut using sticks obtained from shrub trees, with a preference for materials from trees like “*Emaa, Akaliye, and Ngalakatha*”. They are shrub like plants that are totemic according to Jie culture. This hut is erected in a swampy area within the same day the ritual is to take place. The victims, in this case, the boy and girl involved in the incestuous courtship, are then instructed to enter this small grass-thatched hut, which will play a significant role in the cleansing ceremony.

With the victims inside the hut, clan elders proceed to set it ablaze. As the flames consume the hut, the elders guide the victims through a specific process. They are directed to run out of the burning structure in different directions while simultaneously being caned on their backs. The caning continues until each victim has run to a distance of approximately twenty meters from the hut. Then running back to the hut where elders are. This physically and symbolically represents the severance of the incestuous relationship. According to one elderly man:

“After the running and caning phase, the victims are summoned back to the elders. Here, they sit down and are required to make a solemn vow never to continue their forbidden relationship. To underscore the shared blood relationship between them, the victims are

asked to swallow beads of the same color, symbolizing their commitment to living and relating to each other as relatives. Following the completion of the ritual, the clan elders play an essential role in consoling and counseling the victims. Subsequently, the victims are reintegrated into their respective homes and communities, having undergone a culturally significant cleansing and reconciliation process.” (Source: interviews with informant of Lodoket Village).

In-depth interviews with the elder revealed that, burning the hurt while victims are inside symbolises destroying the sinful thought hidden in two victims. This cultural practice has a correlation with the Christian teaching against incest. Therefore, some African cultural practice are meant to guard sanctity of the communities before the divine.

Ritual to Grant Divorce (*Atiak aberu ka ekile*): In Jie culture, divorce is a significant life event, and it involves a series of customary practices and considerations. When a couple faces irreconcilable differences and their compatibility is in question, the intervention of clan elders becomes necessary to determine the fate of the marriage. The process and outcomes of divorce in Jie culture vary depending on which party initiates it, be it the man or the woman.

According to one elder:

“If a divorce is initiated by the man, except in cases of adultery, the bride wealth is not returned to him. In essence, this means that the man forfeits the bride wealth he paid during the marriage. This practice underlines the gravity of the decision to divorce and discourages men from initiating divorce unless there are compelling reasons, such as adultery.” (Source: informant from Napwatapili-Losilang village)

On the other hand, if it is the woman who seeks a divorce, the elders are more likely to grant her request. However, a distinct custom comes into play in this scenario. The responsibility for

returning the bride wealth to the man falls upon the woman's parents, and they are required to do so promptly. This practice is rooted in the cultural belief that Jie women are entrusted with the responsibility of maintaining strong and harmonious marriages, fulfilling their marital duties, and avoiding actions that could lead to the dissolution of the marriage. Returning the bride wealth by the woman's parents serves to prevent any potential disgrace and maintain the family's honor.

In summary, divorce within the Jie culture is approached with careful consideration, and the outcomes differ based on whether the man or the woman initiates it. While men who initiate divorce may forfeit the bride wealth, women seeking divorce require their parents to return the bride wealth to the husband, reflecting the cultural values and expectations placed on marital stability and the roles of men and women in maintaining it.

Overall, the findings of the current study complement and enhance the literature review by providing specific insights into the rituals and customs observed in the marriage rites of the Jie people. They add depth, detail, and cultural context to the existing literature, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of Jie marriage traditions. It is important to approach these findings with cultural sensitivity, recognizing that they represent the traditions and beliefs of a specific community and avoiding generalizations or passing judgments just as guided by cultural relativism theory in the theoretical frame work.

4.2.2 Values Embedded in the Rituals of the Jie Marriage

First of all, Uniting Boy's and Girl's Clans: One prominent value that emerged from most informants through interviews was the importance of uniting the boy's and girl's clans through marriage. This means that the Jie marriage traditions act as a unifying force, bringing together two distinct clans and forging a bond between them.

Secondly, a good number of informants identified promotion of Jie culture as a value of marriage rituals. Coupled with the researcher's observations, the Jie marriage traditions play a pivotal role in promoting and preserving the rich cultural heritage of the Jie people. This means that these traditions serve as a platform for the transmission of cultural values, customs, and rituals from one generation to another.

Thirdly, Appeasement of the Spirits of the Jie Living Dead. In Jie culture, it is firmly believed that the spirits of their ancestors continue to exist and influence the lives of the living. The ancestors are regarded as benevolent beings who watch over their descendants and the community as a whole. They are seen as intermediaries between the living and the divine realm, capable of bestowing blessings or curses upon the living, depending on the conduct and adherence to cultural norms. Therefore, rituals conducted during the Jie Marriage Ceremony, such as *Atukokin* and the anointing of *Akaliye*, are deeply intertwined with the concept of appeasing and honoring these ancestral spirits. These rituals are not merely symbolic but are viewed as direct connections to the spiritual world, where the ancestors reside.

Fourthly, it is also observable that marriage rituals increase "Value and Respect" for Jie Women. The significance of Jie marriage rituals, such as *Eloto*, *Apudor*, *Ebilani*, and the Initiation of Women, can be understood in their role in elevating the status of Jie women within their society. Analysis reveal that these rituals symbolize deep appreciation for women's contributions to the marital union, their families, and the clan. Through practices like bride wealth, women are recognized as valuable members of their community, and the sanctity of their marriages is rigorously upheld, fostering gender equality and emphasizing the essential role of women in the well-being and prosperity of the Jie community.

Fifthly, experience of Jie elders, their world view on some behavior especially towards sexuality and observable norms reveals that admiration to fulfill marriage rituals so as to be recognized as a responsible individual in Jie community helps to “Check Sex Deviations” among the Jie. One notable thing among the Jie is that a boy should only rape or begin courtship with a girl when he is so sure that he has some good number of cattle (Usually more than ten) that the relatives will just top so as to marry for him that girl. Such a cultural norm shows that sexual relations are not secret and for fun among the Jie but elders should know and be involved so that the son or daughter is not considered a prostitute due to having multiple sexual partners before marriage thus checking sex deviations.

The sixth value of marriage rituals identified by informants is that these rituals challenge both boys and girls to be responsible before and in Marriage. According to the experience of the informants of this study, it means that Jie marriage traditions extend beyond mere ceremonial practices and actively promote a sense of responsibility among both boys and girls.

In the seventh value, just like in other global communities, the findings reveal that the Jie perceive a male Jie who fulfills marriage rituals as someone of good record, very industrious and responsible to the extent that someone’s daughter can be entrusted in his hands. This conceptualisation increases love and trust between husband and wife and their families including clans. So, the Jie marriage traditions serve as a catalyst for fostering love and trust within families.

Sequel to the above is the eighth value which is promotion of Socialisation. Some informants according to their experience explained that, Jie marriage traditions provide a platform for socialisation. For instance, meeting new people, freely interacting and sharing with them,

selectively borrowing way of life of other clans and copying with ways to suit multicultural society. It is observable that the various ceremonies and marriage rituals among the Jie bring together individuals from different families and clans, facilitating social bonds and connections. This means that these gatherings offer opportunities for community members to engage in dialogue, exchange ideas and gifts, and build relationships. The shared participation in marriage traditions fosters a sense of camaraderie, reinforcing the social fabric of the Jie community.

Last but not least, according to the informants interviewed, the unforgettable value of marriage rituals among the Jie is Source of Wealth. In the Jie community, some families look at girls as a source of wealth because once a boy initiates marriage process through *Ewori*, the girls relatives will be ready to receive over sixty heads of cattle, sheep and goats respectively. Elders in their worldview shared during interviews revealed that the Jie marriage traditions have an economic dimension. This means some rituals like receiving bride wealth (*Akiram ngatuk*) and completion of bride wealth (*Ekimwomwor*) act as a source of wealth within the community.

4.2.3 Impacts of Contemporary Socio-economic Development on Jie Marriage Rituals

Contemporary socio-economic development within the broader Karamoja sub-region has significantly transformed Jie marriage rituals and their cultural context. The impact of these developments can be assessed by examining various indicators, including education, sustainable development goals, science and technology, globalization, influence of Christianity and Islam on the Jie community, the media, human rights and the law, literacy and levels of employment, regional, national, and international market dynamics, personal dignity, personal safety, freedom from fear of physical harm, and participation in civil society. All those are implied in Adelman's definition of socioeconomic developments discussed in theme two of the literature review.

However, the findings highlight how the Jie marriage rituals have been impacted on by indicators of socioeconomic development discussed under 2.3 of the literature review.

One of the notable impact of contemporary socio-economic development is the reduction in the practice of forcing girls into sexual intercourse before marriage (*Ewori*). In the past, Jie marriage traditions involved a distressing practice where boys would attempt to rape girls to prove their maturity and manhood. However, increased access to education and awareness of human rights have led to a shift in cultural norms. This means that the focus has shifted towards promoting respect, consent, and mutual agreement in marital relationships, condemning practices that violate individual dignity and rights.

Secondly, there is a shift in the significance of bride wealth. Traditionally, bride wealth played a central role in establishing social status and ensuring marriage stability among the Jie. However, contemporary socio-economic developments, including changes in education, values, and economic opportunities, have reshaped the concept of bride wealth. Therefore, Younger Jie boys and girls and enlightened parents and relatives now prioritize personal compatibility, love, and shared values over material possessions when choosing marital partners. This shift signifies a changing cultural context where non-material aspects have gained prominence in the formation of marriages.

Thirdly, Influence of external cultures, media and changing societal norms. Some Jie elders view contemporary socio-economic developments negatively, particularly the influence of external cultures and the media. Analysis show that exposure to different cultures through radio and other media channels has led to social vices like elopement, cohabitation, unstable marriages, prostitution, and fornication.

The fourth impact is the influence of foreign religious traditions. Findings through observation reveal that Christianity and Islam are dominant religious traditions in the Jie community. Therefore, the conversion of most Jie to Christianity and Islam has led to the substitution of some traditional marriage rituals with Christian or Islamic ones. For instance, initiation of women into men's clans.

Not only the above but also contemporary socioeconomic developments like increased awareness of human rights, existence of legal frameworks, women representation in legislative assemblies, open access to the market, employment opportunities strong security networks, easy transport and communication etc. have also impacted on Jie marriage rituals by leading to reduction in early marriages. So, such contemporary developments have fought ignorance among most Jie leading to a decrease in forced and early marriages within the Jie community.

Another observable impact is decline in polygamy. Polygamy, once common within the Jie community, has witnessed a decrease due to contemporary socio-economic developments. This means, factors such as financial constraints, the desire for monogamous partnerships, foreign religious teachings, and changing societal norms have contributed to the declining prevalence of polygamy.

Last but not least, incorporation of factory-produced food items to the Jie traditional food items is another notable impact. The increased availability and affordability of factory-produced food and beverages due to easy transport and communication networks have introduced new options into Jie marriage rituals, alongside traditional cultural foods and drinks. This reflects the impact of globalization, easy access to markets, and changing dietary preferences within the Jie community.

4.3 Discussion of Findings

4.3.1 Rituals in the Rite of Marriage of the Jie People

To begin with, at the stage of Maturity and Manhood, the ritual of *Ewori* is unique to the Jie culture, and involves a boy attempting to rape a girl before marriage as a means to prove his maturity and manhood. This shows a notable harmony with literature regarding the practice of a boy attempting to rape a girl before marriage. According to this study findings *Ewori* is a means to prove a boy's maturity and manhood within the Jie community. When y fails to rape the girl, he is considered weak and unable to provide security and basic needs to the family. He too is considered to have ashamed his clan and friends. It is no done for fun. It is only mature males who have the worth to pay bride price who can do it once they are ready for marriage. *Ewori*, is also a boy's direct communication to his parents and relatives that he is ready for marriage. a boy does this when he has half or more of the anticipated bride price that the girl's parents will want. The literature review presented the perspective that the Karamojong people in general engage in the practice of raping young girls to book them to marry those suitors, as mentioned in Save the Children, Uganda (2020). However, this study's findings clarify that the practice of *Ewori* is specific to the Jie culture and should not be generalized or condoned. It is important to approach this finding with cultural sensitivity as assumed by Cultural Relativism, a theory that guides this study as discussed under the theoretical frame work. This is because cultural relativism helps us to recognize that the above ritual reflects the beliefs and traditions of the Jie community and should not be viewed through the lens of other cultures.

Besides the above ritual, the ritual of seeking parental consent (*Eloto*) follows. This event aligns with the literature's emphasis on the importance of parental consent and family involvement in the Jie marriage process. The literature mentions the significance of parental consent and the role

of negotiations in formalizing marriages. According to the Jie, a family in which boys are unable to marry people's daughters is ranked poor with very low social status. Therefore, once a boy initiates marriage by successfully raping a girl, his parents become serious and follow up the matter so as to fulfill rituals of the impending marriage to avoid reproach. Similarly, on the girl's side, if a girl is raped and not married by that man, her family is considered a home of prostitutes harboring HIV/AIDS (*Lodiim*). Due to fear of such labels, the Jie always want to see that they harmonise marriage arrangements and make it successful once a boy initiates it so as to maintain their integrity in the community. The implication of this ritual in the Jie community challenging the two clans to sort issues maturely and maintain a healthy relationship.

The next ritual is soliciting bride wealth (*Atukokin*) ceremony and the beginning the collection of pledged property (*Akirirar*) ceremony, as highlighted in these findings, add depth to the literature's discussion on the financial dynamics and communal involvement in Jie marriage traditions. The literature mentioned the role of the bride wealth in determining social status and security, while this study's findings provide specific rituals and practices associated with raising the bride wealth and gathering the required cows for the marriage. These rituals symbolize blessings, prayers, and communal participation, further emphasizing the cultural significance of financial and economic dynamics within Jie marriages.

Apart from those mentioned above, readiness to fulfill marriage (*Ebilani ritual*), identified in the current study findings, and corresponds to the literature's recognition of various stages and rituals in Karamojong marriages. The literature discussed the gradual nature of Karamojong marriages, involving a series of actions and processes. Findings of this study show *Ebilani* ritual in the Jie marriages as the phase where the parents of the boy convey their readiness to release

the bride wealth, initiating the next phase of the marriage process. This supports the literature's observations on the gradual progression and fulfillment of obligations in Jie marriage customs.

Furthermore, rituals like, receiving of a delegation from the boy's clan rituals (*Apudor*), handing of bride wealth to girl's clan (*Akiram ngatu*) and completing bridewealth payment (*akimwomwor*) as outlined in the current study, align with the literature's recognition of feasting, singing, dancing, and communal celebration associated with marriage in the Karamojong culture. The literature acknowledged the cultural activities and festivities involved in marriage rituals. The current study findings provide specific details about these rituals, emphasizing their significance in marking various stages of the marriage process and the communal blessings and celebrations that accompany them.

The findings of this study also mention widow inheritance (*Akiruma*), which corresponds to the literature's acknowledgment of cultural norms surrounding marriage and the responsibility of the clan in ensuring the welfare of widows within the community. The literature recognized the cultural practices and beliefs related to widowhood in Jie society, while the study's findings provide further details on the inheritance of widows by one of the late husband's brothers as an official practice.

Not only the above but also the rituals addressing various situations such as reversing the production of same-sex children (*Akilacor*), initiation of women into the husband's clan (*Akinyomy*), initiation of women to the husband's younger brother in cases of impotence, and church marriage (*Ek uut an ekelethia*), as mentioned in this study's findings, expand on the literature's discussion of cultural practices and beliefs surrounding fertility, integration, and the role of religious institutions in Jie marriage customs. The current study provides specific

examples of rituals and practices related to these situations, further illustrating the cultural dynamics and beliefs within Jie marriages.

Last but not least, the current study findings also discuss rituals related to adultery (*Eloto*), incest (*Acamun ngijenjen*), and divorce (*Atiak aberu ka ekile*), which correspond to the literature's recognition of the Jie community's approach to addressing breaches of marital fidelity, dissolving incestuous relationships, and managing divorce. These rituals provide insight into the cultural norms and values of the Jie people regarding these sensitive issues, highlighting their unique perspectives and practices.

Overall, the findings of the current study complement and enhance the literature review by providing specific insights into the rituals and customs observed in the marriage rites of the Jie people. They add depth, detail, and cultural context to the existing literature, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of Jie marriage traditions. It is important to approach these findings with cultural sensitivity, recognizing that they represent the traditions and beliefs of a specific community and avoiding generalizations or passing judgments just as guided by the theoretical frame work.

4.3.2 Values embedded within the Rituals of the Jie Marriage Ceremony

Through interviews with members of the Jie community, several key values emerged, shedding light on the multifaceted nature and cultural significance of these traditions. This section will delve into each value individually, exploring its meaning and implications within the Jie society.

The findings of this study align with the literature on the values embedded within Jie marriage traditions. First of all, the importance of uniting the boy's and girl's clans through marriage is a prominent value that emerged from interviews and is supported by previous research (Gulliver,

1953). This emphasis on clan integration promotes collective identity and shared responsibility within the Jie society. This union not only strengthens familial ties but also fosters social cohesion and harmony within the broader community. By emphasizing the integration of clans through marriage, the Jie community upholds the notion of collective identity and shared responsibility, laying the foundation for a cohesive society. Similarly, the promotion of Jie culture through marriage traditions is well-documented in the literature, with rituals serving as a platform for the transmission of cultural values and customs (Gulliver, 1953).

Secondly, a good number of informants identified promotion of Jie culture as a value of marriage rituals. Through marriage ceremonies and associated rituals, such as “*Eloto and Akirirar*”, the Jie community reaffirms its cultural identity by conducting the rite of marriage following steps acceptable by Jie community. It also ensures the continuity of its unique traditions involving strict adherence to marriage rituals, anointing using a mixture of blood and the curd of the black sheep or a bull etc. By actively engaging in the preservation and promotion of their culture, the Jie people maintain a strong sense of pride and belonging.

Thirdly, Appeasement of the Spirits of the Jie Living Dead. The belief in the spiritual presence of ancestors and the rituals performed to honor them align with the literature on the deep reverence the Jie community holds for their forefathers (Gulliver, 1953). By acknowledging and respecting the spirits, the Jie believe that their ancestors are still part of them and so they seek blessings, protection, and guidance from their ancestors. The pouring of libations, the offering of sacrifices, and the recitation of invocations during these rituals are all expressions of gratitude, respect, and a plea for blessings and protection from the ancestors.

Interviews with Jie elders revealed that according to their experience, the Jie community holds a deep reverence for their ancestors and believes in the spiritual presence of the deceased within their daily lives. Indeed, the Jie Marriage Ceremony serves as a platform for the living to seek the approval and blessings of their deceased forebears for the union about to take place. It is believed that the spirits of the ancestors must be appeased and informed of the upcoming marriage, as their approval is essential for the union to be considered legitimate and prosperous.

Some marriage rituals that involve elders making a pronouncement of a curse like when they are denied to marry a girl or blessings when they are receiving a girl in the boy's clan or anointing someone or an object like *akaliye stick* require elders to plea to the ancestors to intercede in their proceedings this serve as a means to honor and appease the spirits of the Jie living dead because their value is recognized at a certain stage of a ritual, abolish a spiritual connection between the living and the deceased so as to make things possible and also blessing the newly married through the intercession of ancestors can have a peaceful family life since ancestors recognize and approve the girl to be part of their clan by allowing all proceedings go peacefully by acknowledging and respecting marriage traditions set earlier by their forefathers.

Fourthly, it is also observable that marriage rituals increase "Value and Respect" for Jie Women. The findings highlight the significance of Jie women within their society. The recognition of women's contributions to the marital union and the emphasis on gender equality and empowerment are in line with previous research (Gulliver, 1953). By bestowing honor and respect upon women. This is evident in a in the experience a community member share as discussed in in the ritual of initiation of women to a man's clan (*Akinyony*). In his experience, women who are fully married and have gone through initiation are never disturbed by men for sexual relations that led to adultery. So, to have a woman go through such a ritual is a way of

elevating her status in the clan to those women of dignity who are entrusted to nurture and indoctrinate others hence upon completion of such a ritual, one adds value to herself and becomes a role model to the women and girls in the community.

Thus, according to the experience of Jie elders, it is also reality that a fully married and initiated woman in Jie culture is not disturbed by other men because they know that tempering with her is inviting curses, misfortune and burdens to oneself. For instance, becoming sickly, or paying heavy fines equivalent to sixty cattle in the case of adultery (*Elome*) with a fully married Jie women. Fear of such scenarios make men respect women who have gone through marriage rituals discussed above. By bestowing honor and respect upon women who are married, the Jie community emphasizes the importance of gender equality and the empowerment of women within their social structure.

Fifthly, findings reveal that marriage rituals help to check sex deviations in the Jie community. The study also established that the Jie emphasize on fulfilment of marriage rituals so as to regulate sexual behavior and inculcating in to the young generation a sense of upholding societal norms. The emphasis on virginity and fidelity during courtship and marriage acts as a mechanism to discourage deviations from traditional marital relationships and reinforce the sanctity of marriage. This aligns with the literature on the importance of adherence to strict marriage customs and rituals (Gulliver, 1953). So, the adolescents and youth strive to keep excellent record in the community so that the clans easily and with pride approve them for marriage when that time comes. By adhering to strict marriage customs and rituals, the Jie society seeks to discourage and prevent sex deviations from traditional marital relationships. For instance, fornication, incest, adultery etc. this is because for the Jie, rape of unmarried girl with the intent to secure her for marriage is tolerated if the girl is old enough but it becomes deviant

sexual practice and a crime if one does it without the intention of marriage. It should be noted that to wrestle and rape a girl, one should have made up his mind to marry and own her for life. Those who indulge in fornication are considered prostitutes and so they hardly find a partner for marriage because they are perceived to have contracted HIV/AIDS (*Lodiim*). So for a girl or a boy to be accepted by the either clan, he or she must have a very good record. Once married especially women, no man disturbs them for sexual relationships. They are accorded respect. Such status of married women make girls to jealously keep their virginity till mature age when a serious man breaks it and marries her. So, for boys, they avoid sex deviations so as to be approved for marriage easily by elders.

Therefore, emphasis on virginity and fidelity during courtship and marriage acts as a mechanism to ensure societal norms and expectations are upheld, fostering stability, and reinforcing the sanctity of marriage. By placing importance on a girl's chastity, the community instills a sense of responsibility and self-discipline, preparing girls for their future roles as wives and mothers. This value underscores the significance of moral values and the preservation of cultural norms surrounding sexuality and relationships within the Jie community.

The sixth value of marriage rituals identified by informants is that, the rituals challenge both boys and girls to be responsible before and in Marriage. As observed earlier under presentation and analysis, according to the experience of the informants of this study means that, Jie marriage traditions extend beyond mere ceremonial practices and actively promote a sense of responsibility among both boys and girls. These traditions serve as a rite of passage, marking the transition from youth to adulthood and signaling the expectations and responsibilities that come with marriage. By engaging in the rituals and fulfilling their roles within the marriage traditions,

boys and girls are challenged to embrace maturity, commitment, and accountability in their future marital relationships.

In the seventh value, the Jie perceive a male Jie who fulfills marriage rituals as someone of good record, very industrious and responsible to the extent that someone's daughter can be entrusted in his hands. This mind set increases love and trust between husband and wife and their families including clans. Once love and trust is inbuilt in the couple and clans, there is likelihood that such marriages are stable and can last because there is care, respect, hard work, good planning and effective communication in the family and also support from relatives. Such attributes are indicators of development in the family. Besides that, admiration to be recognised as a capable Jie with express approval to marry someone's daughter challenges Jie youth to strive to work hard to acquire their own property that can be used as bride wealth at a time one is mature enough. Therefore, fulfilling marriage rituals helps one to earn and maintain status in the clan.

The Jie marriage traditions serve as a catalyst for fostering love and trust within families. By adhering to the prescribed customs and rituals, families are brought together, establishing bonds of affection and mutual support. The shared experiences during marriage ceremonies create lasting memories, strengthening the emotional connections between family members. The emphasis on unity and cooperation during these traditions promotes a sense of belonging, love, and trust within the family unit.

Interviews with informants highlighted promotion of socialisation as the eighth value. It is observable that the various ceremonies and marriage rituals among the Jie bring together individuals from different families and clans, facilitating social bonds and connections. These gatherings offer opportunities for community members to engage in dialogue, exchange of ideas

and gifts, and build relationships. The shared participation in marriage traditions fosters a sense of camaraderie, reinforcing the social fabric of the Jie community which is undetectable from their culture.

However, the ninth and unforgettable value of marriage rituals among the Jie is Source of Wealth. Elders in their worldview shared during interviews reveal that the Jie marriage traditions have an economic dimension, acting as a source of wealth within the community. The exchange of livestock and other valuable gifts during marriage ceremonies, such as the pledging of cows and the accumulation of bride wealth, in rituals like *Akiram ngatuk* and *Ekimwomwor* discussed above under rituals in the rite of marriage contribute to the economic prosperity of both families involved and the broader community. These transactions not only symbolize the material wealth of the families but also strengthen interdependence and reciprocity among community members.

The findings of this study show the diverse values embedded within Jie marriage traditions. These values encompass cultural preservation, spiritual beliefs, gender equality, societal norms, personal responsibility, family unity, social cohesion, and economic prosperity. Understanding the significance of these values provides valuable insights into the intricate tapestry of the Jie community and their deep-rooted traditions. By embracing and upholding these values, the Jie people maintain a strong sense of identity and ensure the continuity of their cultural heritage.

While these findings largely agree with existing research, it is important to note some contrasting perspectives. For example, the findings suggest that the Jie community's emphasis on strict marriage rituals and the requirement of bride wealth may create challenges for individuals who are unable to fulfill these expectations. This can result in social consequences, such as lower social status and limited participation in public life (Stanley & Stites, 2007). Next much as other

people in the community accord fully married women honour and respect, at times husbands to those women can abuse them by treating them as property. For example, some men beat women in case of some disagreements with the view that they own them because they paid bride price.

Generally, the current findings provide valuable insights into the diverse values embedded within Jie marriage traditions. These values encompass cultural preservation, spiritual beliefs, gender equality, societal norms, personal responsibility, family unity, social cohesion, and economic prosperity. While they align with existing literature, it is important to acknowledge contrasting perspectives on the potential challenges and evolving practices within the Jie community.

4.3.3 Impact of Contemporary Socio-Economic Development on Jie Marriage Ritual

The findings highlight how the Jie marriage rituals have been impacted on by indicators of socioeconomic development discussed under 2.3 of the literature review. Just as in 4.4.1, the rituals in the rite of marriage, photographs have also been used under this section to substantiate the discussions made.

The findings highlight the impact of contemporary socio-economic developments on the Jie marriage ritual and its cultural context. One significant change mentioned is the reduction in the practice of rapping a girl to secure her for marriage. This is attributed to increased awareness of human rights, the law, education, religious intervention for instance Christian and Islamic teachings on marriage and the importance of consent in modern societies of which the Jie is part. The law now as enshrined in Uganda's 1995 constitution prohibits rape whether it is a cultural practice or not. Besides that, ethnocentrism, one of the theories that informed this study asserts that all cultures are not equal. Therefore, other cultural norms can be used to judge and influence change in cultures that are deemed primitive. It is against such a background that forcing girls

into sexual intercourse to book them for marriage can be understood as rape globally and so it becomes a criminal act once someone lodges a complaint to courts of law.

NGOs and other organisations work hard to discourage the practice in the area through sensitisation of community members. This has informed mindset change of Jie due to fear for the harsh penalties associated to rape. For instance, Perpetrators of this practice are punished according to chapter 120, article 123 of the penal code act. In this article, rape is defined as “Unlawful carnal knowledge of a woman or a girl without her consent or with her consent obtained by force or by means of threats or intimidation of any kind or by fear of bodily harm or by means of false representations as to the nature of the act, or in case of a married woman, by personating her husband, commits the felony termed rape”. Clause 124 provides that any person convicted of rape is liable to suffer death or life imprisonment without corporal punishments. Attempt to commit rape is committing a felony liable to imprisonment for life (Penal Code Act Section 125 amended by section 1, clause 2 of act 8 of 2007).

With such above tough conditions provided by Uganda’s law in the 21st century, the Jie are conditioned to relinquish some of their traditions that conflict with contemporary developments like human rights and the law so as to avoid serving punishments prescribed in the penal code act. Therefore, we can now deduce that the law has over ridden some unbecoming traditions in the Jie community hence enlightening most of them to adapt modern acceptable norms of living that align with global demands of observance of human rights.

To supplement above discussion, education has exposed not only some parents but also the younger generation to diverse perspectives, instilling values of respect and consent. Most girls in Jie County, area targeted by this study are now enrolled in schools hence curbing the practice of

forced and early Marriages as seen in figures 7, 8 and 9 below. These were conveniently sampled schools during primary school music competitions held on 24th of August, 2023 at Jie County.



Figure 7



Figure 8



Figure 9

Besides the above, it is also noticeable in the Jie community that socioeconomic developments like improved road network, means of transport and Easy access to regional, national and international trade, education and employment opportunities have impacted on the Jie by leading to decline in the significance of bride wealth in Jie marriage rituals. As mentioned in the findings, it is consistent with the literature by Carlson et al. (2012). They discuss the inability of many parents, friends, and relatives to support young men with bride wealth contributions today due to poverty and a reduction in livestock holdings. Besides poverty, the researcher observed that livestock in the Jie community is severely reducing because livestock is no longer kept for prestige but modern developments like competitive quality education for children that some Jie have embraced, building of permanent houses, high costs of modern medicine for treatment, engaging in other businesses like trade where their cattle are exported to other regions, high costs of modern marriages etc. this has condition the Jie not to look at livestock as pride and as the only source of wealth but they sell them to acquire other basic needs hence reducing amount of bride wealth. This has resulted in a wide range of many men unable to fulfill the traditional expectations of all marriage rituals. However, the inability to complete marriage rituals officially

also has social and personal consequences, affecting the social status, self-esteem, and respect among families and households, as mentioned in the literature.

The findings also mention crop up of deviant behavior among the Jie youth in relation to traditional practices of marriage such as elopement, cohabitation, fornication, and prostitution due to contemporary socio-economic developments. Such deviancy according to Jie elders who were the informants of the study is due to misuse of developments like the media, modern leisure activities like games and sports. Furthermore, it is observable that, the hard-economic status of most youth due to poor family backgrounds of some Jie caused by factors already discussed make their girls to engage in deviant sexual practices such prostitution etc. this is due to need to acquire basic needs from their sexual partners who are able to provide which was not the case with the Jie a way back around independence period. Therefore, it is predictable that, as the Jie community becomes more influenced by external factors, especially media, the younger generation is at risk of diverting from their cultural orientation and adopting uncultured behaviors.

Findings of this study also established influence of foreign religious traditions on the religious way of life of the Jie as one of the impacts of contemporary socioeconomic developments. Much as the Jie are rigid to their religio cultural practices and the fact that culture is dynamic, it is observable that enculturation in the Jie community has made them to practice both Christian and their African traditional religious practices. This has led to religious hybridity in the Jie community. Because of such religious coexistence, it is evident that foreign religious traditions are informing the religio-cultural way of life of the Jie community.

This has made some enlightened ones among them to deem some practices ungodly or criminal because they have adopted foreign way of thinking as proposed by ethnocentrism theory in this study's theoretical frame work. An example is, traditionally the final ritual confirming a woman's full marriage, that is to say "initiation of women to men's clans (*Akinyony*), has seen a decline. Many couples now prefer church weddings, viewing initiation as a form of witchcraft. Therefore, influence of foreign religions has rendered some Jie marriage rituals obsolete, as the community seeks to combine cultural heritage with modern religious beliefs.

Alongside the above, regarding church marriages, the findings indicate an increase in their prevalence among the Jie community. It is noted that church marriage is mushrooming among the Jie as a substitute to initiation of women to a man's clan. Among the Christianized and Islamized Jie families, after all other marriage rituals, wedding crowns marriage confirming a man and woman as husband and wife. So, this contemporary social development blends cultural traditions with religious ceremonies. This integration reflects the impact of contemporary socio-economic developments and the growing embrace of foreign religions especially Christianity among the Jie. This aligns with the literature by Gray (2000), which states that official marriage determines the rights, protections, and social status of men and women. Officially married women and children are supported and protected by the husband's clan, while non-officially married women may have less support and may be sent back to their natal kin if widowed.

Not only the above but also findings reveal that contemporary socioeconomic developments have led to reduction in forced and early marriages. It is noticeable that contemporary developments like increased access to education, awareness of child and human rights, and legal protections have positively changed the mindset of most Jie. At least a good number of families now value education of both boys and girls to at least primary seven. It is also clear that in Karamoja sub

region, special education reforms have been made to inculcate a sense of positive attitude to education though some learners are over aged for their classes. For instance, in the Jie community, most learners of lower primary are over thirteen years and in upper primary a good number is over sixteen years. This means that if these learners are to complete the primary school cycle, they will have reached eighteen years and above.

Therefore, by this time even if someone is financially constrained and fails to continue with education, at least his/her thinking is different from the primitive ones who didn't try school. A youth who has completed primary school cycle, if he/she opts for marriage is able to make better considerations for him/herself because he/she has reached mature and legal age for marriage hence this curbs the practice of early and forced marriages. Besides that, efforts to promote education and empower young girls have shifted societal attitudes towards forced marriages, emphasizing individual rights and consent.

It should also be noted that existence of strict laws and economic opportunities like trade has opened up minds of most Jie not to look at girl children as a source of wealth. This gives most girls opportunities for education. Therefore, developments like the law, the media, SDGs play a significant role in challenging and discouraging these traditional practices among the Jie as mentioned in the findings above. This aligns with the literature by Feinstein International Center (2020), which discusses the positive changes brought about by unofficial marriages, such as increased agency and autonomy, particularly for young women who may have more rights and the ability to leave negligent, abusive, or unsupportive spouses.

Decline in Polygamy is another impact established. As discussed in other findings, Jie community has been invaded by a lot of foreign influence, in reference to the neighbouring

cultures, media and the like. Apart from that religious hybridity in the jie community has made some converted Jie to foreign religious traditions to relinquish some traditional practices hence shifting their world view from cherishing polygamous marriages to admiring and adopting monogamy so as to enjoy its associated virtues. For instance, enjoying church marriage, having a manageable family size to cope with pressing economic constraints, etc.

Findings also reveal incorporation of factory-processed items in to the jie cultural functions as an impact of contemporary socio-economic developments. As seen under presentation of findings, 4.3.1 above, it is clear that in the early 1960s, factory processed food items and beverages were avoided in traditional functions such as marriage. Traditional drinks like *Abutya* and *Nsangatha* made of pure sorghum and ground using grinding stones locally known as *Ngamoru* were used. For food items, local bread made of sorghum (*Ngatap*) and sauce made of cucumbers (Ngikolil), boiled meat from a black sheep or a bull and butter were used.

Chicken and fried food stuff were avoided in the marriage rituals till actual marriage is done in the ritual of (*Akiram Ngatuk*). According to in-depth interviews with jie elders, it was believed that eating chicken and non-traditional food items in the formative stages of marriage rituals makes the marriage unstable and problematic.

However, job and business opportunities outside Jie land as a modern social development has led to preference to modern food items. This is because contemporary developments challenge the Jie to move outside their land, meet new friends and adapt other cultures. Due to exposure to other cultures, the Jie no longer adhere to such customs. It is evident that easy access to market, transport and communication, and mind set of modernity, most Jie now cherish use of modern factory processed food items and beverages alongside traditional ones so as to make their

cultural functions colourful. For instance, wine, purified and bottled water, whisky spirits, soda and others are preferred in weddings and traditional marriages as well depending on the status of the parties involved. Figure 10 and 11 below substantiate the discussion above.



Figure 10: Modern factory drinks and cake used alongside local ones in marriage rituals



Figure 11: wine, soda, bottled water alongside local bread made of sorghum (Ngatap)

Overall, the findings on the impact of contemporary socioeconomic developments support the literature's arguments regarding the impact of contemporary socio-economic developments on the Jie marriage rituals and its cultural context. Reduction in raping girls, a decline in bride wealth, shifts in marriage practices such as elopement, cohabitation, and fornication, decrease in prostitution, increase in church marriages, decrease of forced and early marriages, decline in polygamy, and the use of factory food items and drinks alongside cultural ones are among the notable changes influenced by these developments. These transformations highlight the dynamic nature of the Jie community as they adapt to evolving socio-economic conditions, demonstrating the ongoing process of cultural change and adaptation within the Jie marriage traditions.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary which is based on the specific objectives of the study and therefore is thematically organised in line with themes implied in the objectives, conclusion were drawn from the study's findings and pave way for recommendations for further research, preservation of cultural traditions and policy intervention. It reflects on the significance of the study in contributing to the understanding of Jie marriage customs, values, and the impact of contemporary socio-economic developments on these practices.

5.1 Summary

5.1.1 Rituals in the rite of marriage among the Jie

The study established the following as rituals that the Jie engage in in the rite of marriage; Pre-Marital Ritual (*Ewori*). This is where a boy showcases his strength as a man by forcing a girl into sexual intercourse to win her for marriage. Another is Marriage Negotiations (*Eloto*). Eloto is meant to create harmony with the girl's clan since the boy-initiated marriage arrangements by raping a girl. Next is Soliciting Bride Wealth (*Atukokin*). It is meant to help the young man who intends to marry to raise bride wealth so as to avoid reproach in case he fails to marry the girl. After atukokin is receiving anointed stick (*Akirirar*). Here, elders send the chosen son with the anointed stick to collect all animals pledged by relatives in support of the boy intending to marry. Readiness to Fulfill Marriage (*Ebilani*). Besides that, other rituals to make marriage successful follow like Declaring Bride wealth Prepared to a Girl's Clan (*Apudor*), Handing Bride Wealth to Girl's Relatives (*Akiram ngatuk*) and Handing the girl to the boy's clan (*Akumun/ekuman*). In case the boy's clan does not pay bride wealth at once, they are given some grace period to

complete it in a ritual called completing bride wealth payment (*Ekimwomwor*). When bride wealth is fully paid, the boys clan is then in full control of the woman and so they can pursue other rituals as per the norms of the boy's clan for instance Initiation of Women to a boy's clan (*Akinyony*). In rare occasions, if a man is important and the clan deems the woman good, such women are initiated to the husbands young brother in a ritual called "Woman Initiation to the Husband's Younger Brother (*Akinyony*)". Some families now that are influenced by foreign religious traditions like Christianity opt for the ritual of church marriage (*Ekootan Ekelethia*) instead of initiation of women. Then other rituals follow like reversing production of same-sex of children (*Akilacor*) in case a woman produces same sex of children, widow inheritance (*Akiruma*), in case a husband dies or cleansing rituals like ritual of cleansing adultery (*Elome*), *ritual of cleansing* incest (*Acamun angijenen*) and finally Divorce (*Atiak aberu ka ekile*) in case a husband and a wife don't reconcile after adultery.

5.1.2 Values of rituals in the rite of marriage among the Jie

Uniting Boy's and Girl's Clans this is due to joint execution and celebration of some marriage rituals. Another value is promotion of Jie culture. This is because through observance of marriage rituals diligently, tradition is handed to other generations. Next is appeasement of the spirits of the Jie Living Dead. This is done when the Jie invoke spiritual guidance and direct their pleas to the ancestors while executing some rituals for instance in the ritual of initiation of women, handing the girl to the boy's clan etc. apart from that, rituals, according to the ji increase value and respect for Jie women. This respect precedes full bride wealth payment in the ritual of *Ekimwomwor* and initiation. Among the Jie a fully married woman is never disturbed by other men because disturbing such a woman in an attempt to established sexual relationship is daring ancestors that watch over her from her husband's ancestry. Another notable value is that

marriage rituals check sex deviations among the Jie. This because heavy fines or punishments are attached to breaching regulation of marriage rituals e.g. in rituals to cleanse Elome (adultery), incest and divorce. Besides that, marriage rituals challenge both boys and girls to be responsible before and in Marriage because weak or lazy boys and girls are never recommended for marriage by elders since they are perceived to nurture problematic marriages. Not only that but also marriage rituals maintain dignity of the clan, family or an individual since those who fulfil them are perceived as real Jie who are capable of preserving jie cultural identity. Other values include promotion of socialization, for instance, meeting new people, freely interacting and sharing with them, selectively borrowing ways of life of other clans and copying with ways to suit multicultural society. Last but not least, marriage rituals like “*Ekootan*” is a Source of Wealth. Here, the girl’s family receives bride wealth which is shared among deserving relatives.

5.1.3 Impacts of contemporary socio-economic development on rituals

Reduction in the practice of forcing girls to sexual intercourse before marriage. This is because the legal frame works are strong and ignorance is no defense against the law. There is influence of foreign religious traditions that has led to the substitution of some traditional marriage rituals with Christian or Islamic ones. For instance, the ritual of initiation of women to a man’s clan is greatly eroding and being replaced by church marriage. Another impact is decline in polygamy which is also a result of foreign religious influence on Jie religio-cultural practices. Furthermore, it is noticeable that incorporation of factory-produced items, more so food items aggravates decay of autochthonic dietary norms of the Jie in relation to marriage rituals. Last but not least, on the negative side, contemporary socioeconomic developments have led to increase in social vices like elopement, cohabitation, unstable, marriages, prostitution and fornication. This is due

to the fact that Jie community is exposed to negative social media material in form of drama, films, videos, etc.

5.2 Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that Jie marriage rituals are rich in cultural traditions. Their values are of both cultural, religious, social and economic importance. For instance, payment of bride wealth addresses such multifaceted dimensions because a girl child is seen as a source of wealth in form of cattle, marriage encourages socialization and bonding of clans, it's also a fulfilment of a rite of passage which is a cultural tenet and invoking a deity during blessing of objects, new couple etc. addresses the religious aspect. It is also concludable that Jie's African indigenous religion has been hybridised since rituals like church marriage are highly practiced alongside traditional marriage rituals hence church marriage too is now traditional because it is handed down to other traditions since the contact era to date. Therefore, ATR is living and practiced much as there is religious hybridity in the Jie community. Besides that, it is also noticeable that other marriage rituals besides rape which is orally over spoken exist as discussed in chapter four. Furthermore, forcing a girl in to sexual intercourse with the view of marriage is not considered rape and so it is not a crime among the Jie but instead it is considered a necessary step in the rite of marriage. Therefore, when a boy who has cattle forces a girl into intercourse and succeeds, it becomes good news to the girls clan because they are going to be rewarded with cattle and on the side of the boy, his clan becomes happy because he has exhibited real manhood by managing to force a girl into intercourse. Next is that values attached to marriage rituals challenge the Jie's young generation to adhere to the tradition of the Jie hence preserving Jie's culture and promoting tradition including religious tenets embedded in those rituals. Apart from the above, much as the Jie are rigid to their culture, it has

been impacted on positively and negatively by modernity. For instance findings show that there is reduction in the practice of forcing girls in to sexual intercourse or forced marriages this is due to developments like the law, human rights, and children's rights, enlightenment from education, etc. this is evident in the fact that the boys and girls who would be perpetrators of this practice are now days studying in schools where they are enlightened to avert such primitive practices.

Not only the above but also but general this study can sum up the conclusion stating that changes like the declining significance of bride wealth, the decrease in traditional practices, the integration of foreign religious ceremonies to traditional ones, and the decline in polygamy reflect the ongoing process of cultural change and adaptation within Jie marriage traditions. Then as emphasised by cultural relativism, a theory used in the theoretical frame work, the Jie's marriage rituals should be approached with a lot of cultural sensitivity, recognizing that they represent the beliefs and traditions of the Jie community that matter in the lives of the Jie and avoiding generalizations or passing judgments. Last but not least, lack of specialised studies on Karamojong communities more so in the rites of passage, makes some of their practices to be misunderstood and perceived negatively by the outsiders. This calls for address of the recommendations laid below.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the study's findings, the following recommendations are suggested for further research and the preservation of Jie marriage traditions:

Further Research: Conducting additional research on the Jie community and their marriage rituals would provide a deeper understanding of the cultural nuances, variations, and changes over time. Exploring the perspectives of different stakeholders, including Jie elders, community

leaders, and women, would enrich the understanding of the cultural significance and evolution of Jie marriage traditions.

More specialized studies and scholarship should be conducted on the rites of passage among the Jie and other Karamojong communities so as to illuminate, document and Preserve the rituals, customs, and oral traditions associated with Jie marriages and the broader Karamojong cluster. This includes recording interviews with community members, documenting rituals through audiovisual means, and archiving relevant materials. Such documentation ensures the preservation and transmission of Jie and other Karamojong cultural heritage to future generations.

Cultural Education and Awareness: Promoting cultural education and awareness programs within the Jie community and among the wider society can help foster understanding, respect, and appreciation for Jie marriage traditions. This can be achieved through community workshops, cultural festivals, and educational initiatives that highlight the significance of these rituals and their role in maintaining cultural identity.

Balancing Tradition and Change: As Jie society continues to evolve, there is a need to strike a balance between preserving cultural traditions and adapting to contemporary socio-economic developments. This requires open dialogue and engagement with the community to ensure that cultural values and practices are respected while addressing the changing needs and aspirations of individuals within the Jie society.

Empowering Women: Recognizing the importance of gender equality within Jie marriage traditions, efforts should be made to empower women and promote their agency and decision-

making power. This can be achieved through educational opportunities, economic empowerment programs, and initiatives that challenge harmful gender norms and practices.

Collaboration with Stakeholders: Collaboration between researchers, community leaders, governmental organizations, and NGOs can help support initiatives aimed at preserving and promoting Jie marriage traditions. This collaborative approach ensures a holistic understanding of the cultural context and fosters sustainable efforts for cultural preservation.

For policy intervention, there is need to enforce existing policies so as to completely avert negative cultural practices like forced marriages, that hinder achievement of the national aims of education in Karamoja sub region. It would even be better to devise policies specialised to address concerns of Karamoja in particular basing in the existing need. For instance the Alternative Basic Education for Karamoja (ABEK).

By implementing those recommendations, there is a greater likelihood of preserving the unique cultural heritage of Jie marriage rituals while ensuring their relevance and vitality in the face of contemporary socio-economic changes.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Appearance and Details on Honey Badger (*Ekor*)



Deadly Honey Badger (Ekor), a totem among the Jie. It eats poisonous snakes, porcupines, raids bee hives for honey, kidnaps baby cheetahs and steals food from hungry lions.

(Source: <https://medium.com/startup-grind/you-are-a-ceo-you-are-a-honey-badger-b37d532f39ad>, <https://www.weirdfacts.com>)

Appendix 2: Photo of the Researcher and Key Informant



*Researcher and reputable Jie elder discuss the
Mystic nature of Honey Badger (Ekor) and how it informs
The fierce character of the Jie as it is their highly regarded totem*

**Appendix 3: Photos of Modern Jie Youth In Comparison To the Traditional Youth in the
21st Century**



Civilized Jie youth impacted on by contemporary socio-economic developments discussed in this study having up-to-date outlooks



Some local Jie youth wearing Nakatukok in a traditional style .Nakatukok is also used as a flag to mark the mother in law House during Apudor ritual.

Appendix 4: List of villages in Jie County in alphabetical order.

- | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Acholi Inn | 24. Kaekar | 47. Karamoja Seeds Scheme |
| 2. Acholi Quarters | 25. Kagole East | 48. Karukadong |
| 3. Caicaon | 26. Kagole West | 49. Katap |
| 4. Cillapus | 27. Kairwata | 50. Kejus |
| 5. College Community | 28. Kakuloi | 51. Kesimen |
| 6. Dodoth College | 29. Kalekori | 52. Kogiligili |
| 7. Entebbe, | 30. Kalemu-Arengan | 53. Kokoria |
| 8. Government Quarters | 31. Kalere | 54. Kokorio |
| 9. Grazing Area | 32. Kalobur | 55. Kokuwam |
| 10. Grazing Area | 33. Kalogwala | 56. Kongesia |
| 11. Grazing Area | 34. Kalogwang | 57. Kongole |
| 12. Grazing Land | 35. Kalogwel | 58. Kotido Mixed, |
| 13. Grazing Land | 36. Kalojuka | 59. Lobongia |
| 14. Grazing Land | 37. Kalolet | 60. Lochedomue |
| 15. Grazing Land | 38. Kamoru North | 61. Lodera |
| 16. Grazing Land | 39. Kamoru South | 62. Lodera I |
| 17. Illa | 40. Kanalobae | 63. Lodera II |
| 18. Itakwara | 41. Kanameriongor | 64. Lodere |
| 19. Jimos | 42. Kanamwar | 65. Lodipdip |
| 20. Jimos | 43. Kanayatareng | 66. Lodoket |
| 21. Kadokin East | 44. Kapadakook | 67. Lodoket |
| 22. Kadokin West | 45. Kapelok | 68. Logole |
| 23. Kadukan | 46. Kapuyon | 69. Logoman |

70. Lokadeli	93. Lopedot	116. Nakiporet
71. Lokatap	94. Lopedur	117. Nakirioni
72. Lokiding	95. Lopie	118. Nakodiokodoi,
73. Lokitela-Angatuk	96. Loputuk	119. Nakongmutu
74. Lokitera-Arengan	97. Loriu	Central
75. Lokochil	98. Losogot	120. Nakongmutu North
76. Lokodokodio	99. Lotome	121. Nakongmutu
77. Lokore	100. Mamlope	South,
78. Lokore East	101. Masula I	122. Nakoreto
79. Lokore West	102. Masula II	123. Nakoreto South
80. Lokorwa	103. Meriwala	124. Nakosoburin
81. Lomejan	104. Ministry Of Works,	125. Nakwalet
82. Lomokori	105. Modokonyang	126. Namam-Moe
83. Lomonia	106. Morungor	127. Namogosit
84. Lomudit	107. Naadoi	128. Namonic
85. Lomukura	108. Naapong	129. Namonicek
86. Lomukura	109. Naapong	130. Namukur
87. Lomukura	110. Nabuin East	131. Namukur,
88. Longelep	111. Naburibur	132. Nangelekek
89. Longelep	112. Nachele	133. Nangolemuria
90. Longelep	113. Nadome	134. Napeet
91. Looi	114. Nakaal	135. Napeet
92. Loonei	115. Nakarengan	136. Naponga

137.	Naputir,	147.	Natedekitoi	158.	Police
138.	Napwatapuli- Losilang	148.	Natir,	159.	Rutom
139.	Naregai	149.	Nawapet	160.	Special Area,
140.	Narengemoru,	150.	Nayese	161.	Special Area,
141.	Narikapet	151.	Nayonai	162.	Tepeth
142.	Nariwo	152.	Ngadakori,	163.	Teso,
143.	Nasapir	153.	Nyakwae	164.	Toroi,
144.	Nasiriamamoru	154.	Old Shops,	165.	Um Um,
145.	Nasiyon	155.	Oyapwa,	166.	Um-Um North
146.	Nataparekale,	156.	Poet	167.	Um-Um South
		157.	Poet,	168.	Watak

Appendix 5: Research Tools

Interview guide for Elders

Dear elder, I am Denis Ejoke, a tutor in Kotido PTC and a student of Kyambogo University. I am currently conducting an academic research study on “Rituals in the rite marriage”. I am glad to meet you. I would like you to share with me briefly your experience on ritual elements in the rite of marriage among the Jie. All information will be kept confidential. Are you willing to discuss with me? Than you. (NB: Researcher shall deal with the one willing).

Section A: Demographic Information

1. What is your name?.....

2. How old are you? 40-45, 45-50, 50-55, 55-60, 60+

3. What is your level of education?

Nil Primary Secondary Tertiary University

SECTION B: Rituals in the Rite of Marriage in the Jie Community

4. Have you ever officiated, participated or witnessed any ritual in the rite of marriage?

..... (NB: researcher shall deal with only those with experience of these rituals)

5. Basing on your experience, may you mention ritual elements in the rite of marriage among the Jie.

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SECTION C: Values of Rituals Elements in the Rite of Marriage in the Jie Community

6. As a Jie, list and briefly explain the values of rituals in the rite of marriage to the Jie.

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SECTION D: Impact of the Contemporary Socio-Economic Developments on the Rite of Marriage

6. According to your experience, is the rite of marriage conducted the same way it used to be during your time, around 1950s or some things have changed?

1. No change 2. Slight change 3. A lot has changed

7. For the case of “2 and 3” above, may you mention what has changed and briefly explain how it has changed. (Explain various ways modern developments have affected rituals in the rite of marriage).

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Thank you for your cooperation.

Observation Guide

The researcher will be keenly observant in the following key areas; describable behavior, traditional and modern tools and artifacts used and worn during the practice, Body language and facial expressions of respondents and practitioners, the setting and organization of the place and events and the unfolding of events then summarise basic information on the table below.

Date Place.....

Time	Activity	Actors	Behaviour