



Causal Factors of Divorce among Couples of Church Leaders in Kinshasa City

Pitshou Moleka

Affiliation: Managing African Research Network

sodecordc1@gmail.com

Abstract

The value of marriage is declining even among pastors. The rate of divorce is growing with all kinds of consequences in the church and among Christians. This is due to several factors. Infidelity or adultery is the principal cause of divorce, and the mismanagement of success in ministry or pastoral office among pastors in Kinshasa City. Through this reflection, I try to seek to understand the causes of this scourge among pastors in order to better fight. It weakens the church and its testimony.

This article has four parts namely: introduction, methodology, results and discussion, and conclusion.

Keywords: marriage, divorce, pastors, leaders, Kinshasa, causal, factors

1. Introduction

In many Christian communities, the pastor is considered a model, a spiritual guide, and a guarantor of Christian values. Divorce causes instability in the church. Some churches divide or decrease in membership. It is important to ask the questions what is marriage, and what is divorce? In a Christian context, marriage is a social and legal union between a man and a woman under the blessing of the clergy, and divorce is the “separation of husband and wife by a competent court for sufficient cause” (Browne, 1902). In addition, the divorce of pastors is a factor in the proliferation of new independent churches with self-appointed leaders who lack the know-how.

2. Method

I will use interviews. For Maleba (2004) this method is about “the lived experiences of people as they occur and it helps to understand a social problem (Cresswell, 1994). I had interviews with 16 church leaders who are divorced from August 2020 to December 2020, to better understand the question of divorce.

The following are their profiles:

Duratio n of marriage	Age of marrie d	Christian affiliation	Educational level of the man	Educational level of the woman	Numbe r of childre n	causes of divorce
5 years	30-40	Protestant, Pentecost or evangelical	Bachelor degree	Bachelor degree	3	Domestic violence (verbal and physical), death threats
10 years	30-40	Protestant, Pentecost or evangelical	Bachelor degree	Bachelor degree	4	Poverty (financial difficulty)
1 year	30-40	Revival church	No degree	Bachelor degree	0	Domestic violence (verbal and physical), infidelity (adultery)
15 years	40-50	Revival church	No degree	Bachelor degree	3	Infidelity (adultery) of the man, mismanagement of fame, search for a richer or a more beautiful woman
10 years	40-50	Revival church	Doctoral degree	No degree	3	Infidelity (adultery) of the man, mismanagement of fame
10 years	40-50	Revival church	Bachelor degree	No degree	4	Infidelity (adultery) of the man, mismanagement of fame, search for a richer or a more beautiful woman
10 years	40-50	Revival	No degree	No degree	3	Infidelity (adultery)

		church				of the man, mismanagement of fame, search for a richer or a more beautiful woman
3 years	30-40	Revival church	No degree	No degree	2	Infidelity (adultery) of the man
3 years	30-40	Revival church	Bachelor degree	Bachelor degree	1	Domestic violence (verbal and physical),
2 years	30-40	Protestant, Pentecost or evangelica l church	Bachelor degree	Bachelor degree	1	Domestic violence (verbal and physical),geographica l and physical distance
10 years	40-50	Protestant, Pentecost or evangelica l church	Bachelor degree	Bachelor degree	2	Infidelity (adultery) of the man
25 years	50-60	Revival church	No degree	No degree	4	Infidelity (adultery) of the man and woman
10 years	30-40	Protestant, Pentecost or evangelica l church	Bachelor degree	No degree	3	Infidelity (adultery) of the man
20 years	40-50	Protestant, Pentecost or evangelica l church	Bachelor degree	No degree	4	Poverty (financial difficulty)
5 years	40-50	Revival church	Bachelor degree	No degree	4	Poverty (financial difficulty)
15 years	40-50	Revival	No degree	Bachelor	3	Domestic violence

		church		degree		(verbal and physical)
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3. Results and discussion

Among the leaders concerned in this sample, the duration of marriage is 9 years; their average age is 40-50. 10/16 (62, 5%) are from revival churches and 6/16 (37, 5%) are protestants or evangelicals. 1/16 (6, 25%) holds a doctoral degree, 9/16 (56, 25%) a bachelor degree, 6/16 (37, 5%), and have no degree. Concerning their women's education, 8/16 (50%) hold a bachelor's degree and 8/16 (50%) have no degree. They divorce generally after having 2-3 children.

Causes of the divorce of church leaders are:

-Cause number 1: infidelity or adultery. 8/16 (50 %) couples are concerned by the problem of infidelity or adultery, most of the time the adultery is practiced by the man: 7/8 (87, 5%), only 1/8 (12, 5%) case is about woman adultery. Among these leaders, 7/8 (87, 5%) belong to revival churches, 1/8 (12, 5%) belong to protestant or evangelical churches. Among the causes explaining this high rate of adultery among revival churches leaders, is the lack of spiritual authority (a spiritual father, a coach, a mentor, or any other leader who can blame or discipline pastors and suddenly everyone does whatever he want, whatever looks good to him). Self-proclaimed pastors often fall into cases of immorality, adultery, and divorce. The lack of submission to a higher authority means that the pastor considers himself to be Melchizedek. He is not accountable to anyone.

Concerning protestant leaders, to be members of a structured church with norms and sanctions constitutes an element of the low rate of divorce. In many of these churches, when a pastor divorces, it displays lack of his effective leadership, in revival churches; the pastor is himself the law, the norm.

-Cause number 2: domestic violence (verbal and physical). 5/16 (31%) couples are concerned. 1/16 (6, 25%) concerns death threats. 3/5 (60%) are leaders in revival churches and 2/5 (40%) in protestant or evangelical churches. One woman who was a victim of the domestic violence testifies in these words: "I had abortions twice because my husband had to hit me hard in the stomach and I filed for divorce because my life was in danger", and another says:" repeatedly he wanted to stab me even when I was not available for sex".

-Cause number 3: the mismanagement of fame and the search for a richer or a more beautiful woman 4/16 (25%).When glory comes, the church grows great, the pastor starts to earn a lot of money, he becomes famous and politicians consult him, his wife seems overwhelmed, old-fashioned. The couple is destabilized following the blessing. They become unstable emotionally and in thought. Some pastors divorce after a real calculation of the profit which will result.

Some church leaders believe that spirituality can be an opportunity to acquire goods, comfort, and a means of social valuation. For them the ministry creates opportunities and the divorce becomes the means of access favorable to personal development.

Suddenly, the pastor's divorce seems to be a source of promotion, a means of enrichment for all those who use it as a strategic acquisition method for goods and meeting expectations.

Divorce sometimes results from a rational choice for the satisfaction of expectations related to personal development. It can be a source or a means of social repositioning.

Barham, Devlin, Yang (2008) develop an economical model of marriage and divorce where they show that similarity among partners in tastes or economical capacities give often a stable couple. A contrario, the couples where there are great disparities tend to divorce. In this marriage market, "marriage generates a surplus, in the sense that, when married, two individuals can both achieve a higher level of well-being than they would as singles" (Chiappori, 2020).

The American sociologist Jessi Streib in "The power of the past" (2015) shows the role played by a disparity of social origin and education during childhood to explain the tensions and divergences of points of view that arise within couples or households.

Spouses who have different social origins often have conflicts over subjects such as education, career, hobbies, than those who have come from identical or close backgrounds (homogamy or similarity).

-Cause number 4: 3/16 concerns the problem of poverty (financial difficulty). With poverty, the couples are unable to satisfy their needs and those of their children. If it lasts, it can create tensions between the married and destroy their relationship.

4. Conclusion

Other Church leaders in Kinshasa City are concerned by the issue of divorce. According to this research, the principal cause of divorce in Kinshasa City is infidelity or adultery.

Counsellors ought to work not only among church members but also for the treatment of the clergy. Before legally recognizing a church or a ministry, the State must ensure that the pastor in question has prescribed qualifications and that; he or she is not self-proclaimed.

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