



AFRICA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

AN EXPLORATION ON THE KIPSIGIS' PERCEPTIONS OF CHILDLESSNESS  
AMONG THE CHRISTIANS IN FORT-TERNAN, KERICHO COUNTY,  
AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR MISSION

BY  
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## ABSTRACT

This study sought to explore the perception of Childlessness among the Kipsigis Christians in Fort-Ternan region, Kericho County. The study also sought to draw missiological implications of the perspectives with a view to help the church develop an authentic and biblical view even in her practical approaches to meet the needs of the couples dealing with the problem. Interviews were carried out among the church members of Full Gospel Church. Purposive sampling was used in the selection of 99 respondents including childless men and women; the pastors, and ordinary members. In order to achieve the objectives of this study, three research questions guided this process:

1. How does the Kipsigis community (in the sample) perceive childlessness?
2. What implications does this perception have for mission?
3. What can the church do in response to the needs of childless Christian couples?

The research questions were answered through a qualitative research design. In-depth face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions were adopted in gathering information. Hiebert's critical contextualization process was applied in identifying the perceptions of Childlessness as well as transformational ministry approach.

The research findings revealed the worldview level as key factor influencing the Kipsigis Christians' perspective of childlessness as well as the response. Further, the findings showed that childlessness was treated as shameful, abnormal, a taboo and a bad omen; hence, represents failure. These perspectives are driven by cultural beliefs and value systems concerning childbearing as a result of a worldview that has been shaped from childhood and has not been impacted by the Gospel. Furthermore, the study showed that the church's response methodology seems ineffective. As a result, socio-cultural systems are negatively impacting the couples' "self-image" and perception of their struggles. Missiological implications drawn from the findings indicate that the church needs to embrace a positive view of childlessness as she seeks to meet the needs of infertile couples and respond with a corresponding truth from the Bible. This research recommends that the Kipsigis Christians and their churches need to acquire full knowledge and understanding of childlessness in biblical perspective in order to offer a transformed view that is biblically directed and intentionally engaging towards the needs of the childless couples, and in line with God's mission.