

# Prevalence on Witchcraft Beliefs and The Psychological Well-Being of Elderly People in Masaba South Sub-County Kisii County Kenya

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**Abstract:** Witchcraft is a world phenomenon. Some people do believe in it on their daily life and this has brought a lot of anxiety, fear from the threats given to the victims. This study investigated the prevalence on witchcraft beliefs and psychological well-being of elderly people in Nyakumbati Sub-location in Masaba South Sub-count, Kisii County Kenya. The study adopted a mixed method approach; a convergent parallel design was employed to enable the researcher investigate the relationship between prevalence on witchcraft beliefs and the psychological well-being of elderly people. Simple random sampling was employed to select a sample of 164 respondents from the 280 elderly people receiving cash transfer from the Kenyan Government in Nyakumbati Sub-location. Data was collected using questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics using statistical Software Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 22. Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient was used to ensure reliability of research instruments. The findings indicate that majority of the elderly People believe in witchcraft (56.3%). Many elderly people (48.3%) agreed that beliefs in witchcraft have interfered with relationships in the community. Also majority of the elderly people (60.3%) agreed that Witchcraft practices are dangerous in the community. Witchcraft practices are feared within the community this was taken by 61.6% of the respondents. At the same time majority of the elderly people (62.3%) agreed that Witchcraft practices are carried in hidden manners and finally 41.7% of the elderly stated that they are vulnerable to witchcraft activities. The findings on the relationship between psychological well-being and witchcraft beliefs show that there was: a weak relationship of 0.061 on self-acceptance, a moderate relationship of 0.331 on positive relations and a moderate relationship of 0.530 on purpose in life. The final findings show that there is a weak relationship between prevalence on witchcraft beliefs and the psychological well-being of elderly people. The study recommends and appeals to government leaders, educators and church stakeholders to strive further towards addressing witchcraft related issues. Additionally, social workers, counselors and psychologists should be assigned through the cooperation of church and government to cater for the psychological well-being of the elderly people in the community.

## I. BACKGROUND

Beliefs in witchcraft are widely spread across the globe and this has made it a world phenomenon. A belief in witchcraft is the ability of certain people to use supernatural techniques to cause harm or acquire wealth at the expense of others Gershman (2018). On the other hand, witchcraft is a

construct of modernity that addresses tensions within society, and provides an explanation for events, which have no logical explanation, such as illnesses, sudden death, misfortune, bad luck and crop failure (Saunders, 2003).

On prevalence on witchcraft beliefs Africa has not been left behind. In Africa it has been noted that not only witchcraft, but also witch-hunts and witchkillings (killing of witches) have been a serious problem in South Africa during the last decades. The following statistics highlight the enormity of the problem. For example in the Limpopo Province of South Africa 445 witchcraft-related cases were reported to the police between 1990 and 1995. During 1996 a total of 1,182 cases were reported; during 1998 a total number of 554 cases and between January and September 1999 a total number of 739 cases were reported. Between 1990 and 1994 over 300 people were killed, and between April 1994 and April 1995, 228 people were allegedly killed as a result of witchcraft accusations/suspicions. In the year 2000, 1 300 witchcraft-related crimes were reported to the police in this province (Wyk, 2004).

The belief that persons are able to master occult forces is a socio-cultural phenomenon of great importance in Africa south of the Sahara. Particularly in Western Africa, magic and witchcraft have been deeply-rooted for generations, regardless of social strata and urban or rural settings. Magic may be applied for good or bad ends. However, belief in "black" magic, or witchcraft, used to harm other people for selfish purposes, is the most problematic aspect of this belief. Most Africans, that is, peasants, business people or politicians' alike, even internationally renowned scientists and leaders of Christian churches, are convinced that witchcraft constitutes a real threat to society in Africa (Kohnert, 1996).

Prevalence on witchcraft beliefs differs with places and people. According to Gershman (2021) on his study; Witchcraft Beliefs, Social Relations, and Development across 95 countries and their territories in the world. From this study there is a clear indication of relatively low prevalence of witchcraft beliefs in most of Europe and the United States. On the other hand, witchcraft beliefs are very common in North Africa, the Middle East, and some countries of Sub-Saharan Africa. But there is also a striking variation within the world

regions. For instance, in Europe as a whole, the share of witchcraft believers varies from about 10% in Scandinavia to over 60% in Latvia, Ukraine, and Greece. The prevalence on witchcraft beliefs appears to be different with different people.

Mwashinga (2017) did a research on the relationship between witchcraft and socioeconomic status in Africa. He realized that witchcraft beliefs, as a cultural phenomenon, are still alive and well throughout the continent of Africa. More than 50% of people interviewed in one study of some societies indicated that they personally believed in witchcraft, which means that one in every two people in Africa may hold some sort of witchcraft belief. This shows that the influence of witchcraft on the socioeconomic status of many Africans is a matter of great concern. This cultural phenomenon seems to impact the social and economic status of more than a billion people living on this continent.

Sesi (2018), Did a research on understanding witchcraft among the Digo muslims community who lives in the coast of Kenya. From the research he realized that despite being over 90% Muslims, Digo people still associate most calamities and problems with witchcraft and they also seek traditional methods of solving socio-economic problems. Witchcraft beliefs among the Digo people goes in hand with the belief in Christianity. This study is supported also by Mbogo (2017) did a study on the effects of witchcraft on the well-being of high school students in Nairobi County. The results from the study shows that Seventh (70%) of the respondents claimed to have witnessed a case of witchcraft among their peers face-face; a school principal explained that in every group of 20 students, about 8 are affected by the witchcraft phenomena.

Onyancha (2014) did a research and on his analysis he realized that the natives beliefs that their poor agricultural production is due to witchcraft influence. The belief could be based on ignorance and especially the factors that affect crop production such as sufficient supply of rainfall, soil fertility and even having the right seeds. In Gucha District (Gucha Sub-county), although rain is sufficient round the year, soil fertility is highly in doubt. The average farms are small and have been farmed throughout the year, under the same crop causing soil exhaustion. This is one fact farmers do not take into account as they resort to belief in witchcraft. Obviously, this belief has a negative psychological impact in terms of people's disposition and response to crop production challenges. Their responses could be inhibiting the real problems which are basically natural and would require scientific redress rather than magic.

#### *Levels of Psychological Well-Being*

Usually the positive psychological function has six different dimensions named as levels of psychological well-being. These dimensions include positive assessment of an individual's life and personal history (self-acceptance), the feeling of continuous growth and development as an individual (personal growth), the individual's belief that life is meaningful and purposeful (purpose in life), establishing

quality relations with other individuals (positive relations with others), the ability of the individual to direct his/her life and the world around him/her (environmental mastery), making individual decisions (autonomy). (Positive Relations with Others) which involves strong emotions of empathy and love established with others in a clear and reliable way (Arslan & Saricaoğlu, 2013). The researcher used three levels of psychological well-being, which involved: Self-acceptance, Purpose in life and Positive relations with others.

Self-acceptance is a kind of self-evaluation that is long-term and involves awareness, and acceptance of, both personal strengths and weaknesses (Singer & Ryff 2008). Because of the belief people have in witchcraft; women in Nepal face the possibility of being branded a witch and subsequently tortured, run out of their village or killed. In one account, a Dalit woman was stripped naked, beaten and forced for the third time in three years to eat human excrement. Previously she had been fined 3,000 rupees for supposed witchcraft, her husband was fired from his job, and now she has been banned from participating in religious events (Schnoebelen, 2009).

Boonzaier (2010) conducted a study in South Africa about Racist accusations in contemporary South Africa: lessons from studies of witchcraft. The researcher on his early studies of witchcraft emphasized that the marginalized and powerless bore the brunt of accusations. The researcher goes ahead to say that Witchcraft provides an explanation for misfortune as racism provides a way to account for the misfortune and adversity that befall individuals and society.

According to Atata (2018) on her study Aged Women, Witchcraft, and Social Relations among the Igbo in South-Eastern Nigeria; she noted that elderly women are often labeled witches, and as a result of this, they are subjected to various forms of human abuses such as excruciating and extrajudicial killings resulting from beating, burning, exclusion, discrimination, stoning, and isolation in the smallest social institution (the immediate family) in Igbo society. This witchcraft is among the Igbo people in South-Eastern Nigeria undoubtedly poses a threat to the security and human rights of aged women.

According to Angi stone and Butera (2010) in East Africa, traditional beliefs about the causes of disability continue to be prevalent. Cause is important to consider because beliefs about cause may influence how a person or family is treated. Different approaches have been used to classify and explain beliefs about the causes of disability in three categories: Firstly, traditional animism includes beliefs that disabilities are punishments for bad deeds or the result of witchcraft exercised by other people. Secondly, Christian fatalism beliefs revolve around notions that disability results as an act of God's will. And finally Medical determinist beliefs accept the explanations of modern medicine as to the cause of disabilities.

According to Mbogo (2017) from the study she did on the effects of Witchcraft on the Well-Being of High School

Students in Nairobi, Kenya and their Implications for Educational Leadership; she realized that some students blamed witchcraft for poor academic performance. But in reality academic performance may also be a result of secondary effects related to absenteeism from school. This came from one of the teachers who explained that some students, especially those who hear voices or faint, are disrupted in the academic studies. As a result they were sometimes sent home to seek help.

Omare (n.d) did a study the role of Abagusii religious beliefs and practices in violence to witch suspects in kisii county kenya. From his study the results are that; vulnerable people accused of an act of witchcraft can be divided into various categories. The first category are people with a physical disability (or any physical abnormality, including a large head, swollen belly, red eyes, etc.); those with a physical illness (epilepsy, tuberculosis, etc.) or disability (autism, Down Syndrome, etc., or even those who stutter); or especially gifted people. This study is relevant to the current study because it addresses the effects of witchcraft beliefs.

Purpose in life involves the feeling of direction and purposefulness in life. It is thought that purpose in life is closely connected with individualism and freedom (Arslan and Saricaoğlu, 2013). In England according to Jackson (2006) did a study concerning witches, wives and mothers and their persecutions and confessions on witchcraft. He tried to deal with Christina Hole's problem of voluntary confession. In conclusion the Suffolk women who confessed that they were witches were also confessing that they were bad mothers, bad wives and bad neighbors. The cultural, social and psychological impact of the county-wide witch-hunt cannot be over-estimated the knowledge that 'witches' existed and were rife at home and abroad may well have caused every woman to examine her life very closely, and some to come forward and confess. Women's insecurities about their roles as wives and mothers were being played out within the context of the witchcraft confession.

Biri and Manyonganise (2022) conducted a study "Back to Sender": Re-Visiting the Belief in Witchcraft in Post-Colonial Zimbabwean Pentecostalism. They pointed out that witchcraft is one of the most disdained practices among the Shona (the largest tribal group in Zimbabwe). They realized that the children of witches are mocked and have a difficult time finding a marriage partner. Witchcraft is perceived as one of the major causes of retrogression in every aspect of life.

According to Gershman (2015) in the study *Witchcraft Beliefs and the Erosion of Social Capital: Evidence from Sub-Saharan Africa and Beyond*. In Southern Zambia the researcher noticed that fears of witchcraft can weaken mutual monitoring of loan use. On the one hand, villagers may try to hide their relatively high yields to avoid bewitchment by envious neighbors and accusations of using witchcraft to promote own productivity. On the other hand, villagers who are too curious about their neighbors' plots may be accused of witchcraft in the event of crop failure.

According to Pritchard (n.d) while doing a study among the Azande people from North Central Africa, he says among these community witchcraft is found everywhere and it plays its activity in every part of life; in agricultural, fishing and hunting pursuits; in domestic life of homesteads as well as in communal life of district and court; it is an important theme in mental life in which it forms the background of a vast panorama of oracles and magic. Also witchcraft influences law and morals, etiquette and religion, it is prominent in technology and language. If bright seizes the ground-nut crop it is witchcraft, if the bush is vainly scoured for game it is witchcraft, if women laboriously bale water out of a pool and are rewarded by but a few small fish it is witchcraft, if the wife is sulky and unresponsive to her husband it is witchcraft, if a prince is cold and distant to his subjects it is witchcraft, if in fact, any failure or misfortune falls among anyone at any time and in relation to any of the manifold activities of his life it may be due to witchcraft. This study is relevant to my study because it shows how people's purpose in life has been totally interfered with due to the belief in witchcraft

According to Gershman (2015) in his study *Witchcraft Beliefs and the Erosion of Social Capital: Evidence from Sub-Saharan Africa and Beyond*. Based on her fieldwork in the districts of Ulanga and Kilombero, the researcher concluded that the ubiquity of witchcraft beliefs and accusations in one way or the other has contributed to a culture of suspicion and mistrust of kin and neighbors, in which those seeking to establish businesses or succeed in their agricultural activities feel perpetually under threat from those whom they know to be jealous and whom they believe wish them to fail. Similarly, in the Tanzanian town of Singida widespread witchcraft beliefs breed has resulted in uncertainty, suspicion, and mistrust among the people, while people are afraid that their fellow business owners may practice witchcraft in order to get rid of competitors.

Generally, among the Gusii people; witchcraft beliefs feed on popular rumours and fears and not necessary on any empirical proof. Indeed, the belief constitutes ontological, epistemological as well as moral consequences to the entire community. These consequences mostly have a negative effect on the general well-being of individuals in society. Economically, for instance, the belief in witchcraft is known to lead to the destruction of property. The lynching of suspects under the pretext of punishment is also a violation of people's personal rights as they are not subjected to the due process of law (Miencha, 2014).

Positive relations allows individuals in a community to be friendly and have pleasant and trustworthy relations, concerned with the others' peace and comfort, able to stay in unanimity and companionship, and perceiving human relationship during interactions (Fariba et al., 2011).

In Tudor and Stuart England; suspicions often build through a series of minor conflicts, but generally a specific incident triggers an accusation. Thus, witches and their accusers are nearly always the members of the same community, and a

denunciation in one way or the other nearly always grows out of some personal antipathy, erupting when one person feels that he or she has been harmed. Accusers mostly ascribe damage of a personal, rather than general, nature to witches, sometimes blaming them for damage to property, but most frequently for causing injury to people or animals. They believe that witches causes such harm through an occult power manifested either on the spur of the moment or through ritual attack (Bever, 2000).

According to Ashfort (2015) in the study conducted in Malawi on Witchcraft, Justice, and Human Rights in Africa. The study shows that perpetrators of witchcraft are dangerous and powerful figures, not members of vulnerable groups, however frail-seeming they may be. Witches are said to cause illness, death, suffering, and misfortunes of all kinds. They are, in essence, perpetrators of criminal violence, albeit of a particular kind. For people who live in a world with witches, the dangers they pose are real and present. In such places the primary concern is security: how to protect against witchcraft and other forms of violence. A secondary issue is justice: what to do about perpetrators of harm when injury has been done. For people who live with the fear of witchcraft, the issue of justice in relation to witches is clear. Innocent people are being attacked, harmed, and killed.

Atata (2018) did a study among the Igbo tribe in Southern Nigeria concerning Aged women, witchcraft, and social relations. He realized that aged women in Igbo land are alleged to be witches by their family, household, and community members, and this usually is a result of the socioeconomic problems in society. This study further revealed that the level of education and social attainment do not influence the belief in the existence of witchcraft and abuse of aged women in the region. The forms of violence against aged women are physical, socially, economical, and psychological, such as induced or forced death of any aged woman labeled a witch, beating, deprivation and neglect/seclusion, starving of food, and withholding basic amenities such as health care.

According to Gershman (2015) in Mkamba village, Tanzania, witchcraft beliefs have made people to be reluctant to cooperate and help each other due to witchcraft-related fears. For instance, they refuse to provide food assistance to their neighbors because they are afraid of witchcraft accusations in case someone gets sick after eating the contributed food. Most villagers admitted in a survey that one of the main reasons for the decline in trust is the danger of witchcraft accusations.

In Kisii County due to witchcraft beliefs different categories of people have been accused of witchcraft. Those people showing any unusual behavior, for example people who are stubborn, aggressive, thoughtful, withdrawn or lazy and wives who cannot be easily controlled by their husbands have been put in the group of witches (Omara, n.d).

## II. METHOD

### *Research Design*

The study set to identify the relationship between Prevalence on witchcraft beliefs and the psychological well-being of elderly people in Nyakumbati Sub-location Masaba South Sub-county, Kisii County. The study employed convergent parallel mixed method design. According to Creswell (2014) this method allowed the researcher to collect both quantitative and qualitative data, analyzed them separately, and then compared after the results the researcher checked on the findings to check whether they confirmed or disconfirmed with each other. This was used to allow the researcher to make sure that both qualitative and quantitative data provide different types of information often detailed views of participants qualitatively and scores on instruments quantitatively and together they yielded results that should be the same.

### *Location of the Study*

The study intended on the Gusii elderly people of Masaba South Sub-County. The study was carried in Nyakumbati Sub-location this is one of the largest and colonial sub-locations in the sub-county. The area has 21 villages with 23 village elders. The study area was chosen because there have been a lot of persecutions and killings, neglect and isolations due to allegations of witchcraft. The Gusii people despite the population density and scarcity of land still they combine farming with animal husbandry. Cattle herding is highly regarded especially due to the socio-cultural significance of livestock, such as the paying of bride wealth. In this area periods of peace with neighboring communities have been experienced and this has led to intermarriages with the neighboring communities.

### *Target Population*

The study population comprised of elderly male and female living in Nyakumbati Sub-location from the 21 villages whose ages are from 70yrs and above. For proper identification of this study population, the researcher used the elderly who were receiving cash transfer from the government of Kenya. From the social services office in Masaba South Sub-County those who had attained the age of receiving cash transfer from the government in Nyakumbati Sub-location were 280. The researcher decided to use elderly people as the study population because they are the most experienced people in life and long serving in the study area. Because of their experience in life they were able to give a detailed experience concerning the study. On the other hand, elderly people were be honest and free to share.

### *Sample Size and Sampling Procedures*

Kumar (2011) says that Sampling is the process of selecting a few (a sample) from a bigger group (the sampling population) to become the basis for estimating or predicting the prevalence of an unknown piece of information, situation or outcome regarding the bigger group. And he goes ahead to

say that A sample is a subgroup of the population that a researcher is interested in. In this study the researcher used random sampling where each individual in the population had an equal probability of being selected. Simple random sampling will be applicable for the researcher. The total study population in Nyakumbati Sub-location is 280 people. To get the working sample size, the researcher used the Yamane Taro formula for determining the sample size. According to Israel (2013) while citing Taro Yamane (1967) sampling formula provides a simplified formula to calculate sample sizes.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

n= Signifies the sample size  
 N= Study Population  
 e= Margin of error  
 $n = \frac{280}{1 + 280(0.05)^2}$   
 $n = \frac{280}{1 + 280(0.0025)}$   
 $n = \frac{280}{1 + 0.7}$   
 $n = \frac{280}{1.7}$   
 n=164

The total sample is 164 respondents where the respondents were selected randomly by the researcher using the list of those who are receiving cash transfer from the government in Nyakumbati Sub-location in Masaba South Sub-county, Kisii county Kenya.

*Research Instruments*

Data were collected using questionnaire Data were collected using questionnaire that comprised of self-developed sections assessing prevalence on witchcraft beliefs of the respondents. Furthermore the questionnaire comprised of a standardized scale. According to (Kumar, 2011) A questionnaire is a

written list of questions, the answers to which are recorded by respondents. In a questionnaire respondents read the questions, interpret what is expected and then write down the answers. The questionnaire was administered collectively because the researcher targeted the elderly people receiving their cash transfer in different places within the sub-location. This ensured a very high response rate because on receiving their due they turned in large numbers. Also the questionnaire involved Ryff scale of psychological well-being for the respondents. This is a set of 18 item 7 point Likert scale. In this study, the Ryff had only 9 items to measure 3 dimensions of wellbeing. According to (Croudace, 2009) one of the most widely used survey instruments is Ryff’s multi-dimensional Psychological Well-being scales (PWB).While citing(Ryff 1989; Ryff and Keyes 1995), he realized that this scale was specifically defined to measure positive aspects of psychological functioning along six theoretically-motivated dimensions: independence and self-determination (autonomy); having satisfying, high quality relationships (positive relations with others); the ability to manage one’s life (environmental mastery); being open to new experiences (personal growth); believing that one’s life is meaningful (purpose in life); and a positive attitude towards oneself and one’s past life (self-acceptance). The researcher used three motivated dimensions: Self-acceptance, positive relations and purpose in life.

Table 1

*Prevalence on Witchcraft Beliefs*

The study sought to explore the phenomenon of prevalence on witchcraft beliefs among the elderly people in Nyakumbati Sub-location in Masaba South Sub-county.

Table 2: Prevalence on Witchcraft Beliefs

Prevalence of witchcraft Beliefs	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	A little Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	A little Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
People believe in witchcraft	85	27	12	14	2	5	6	151
	56.3%	17.9%	7.9%	9.3%	1.3%	3.3%	4.0%	100%
Beliefs in witchcraft have interfered with relationships in the community	73	27	17	16	4	5	9	151
	48.3%	17.9%	11.3%	10.6%	3.6%	3.3%	6.0%	100%
Witchcraft practices are dangerous in the community	91	20	20	8	1	4	7	151
	60.3%	13.2%	13.2%	5.3%	0.7%	2.6%	4.6%	100%
Witchcraft practices are feared within the community	93	14	18	10	1	4	11	151
	61.6%	9.3%	11.9%	6.6%	0.2%	2.6%	7.3%	100%
Witchcraft activities are carried out in hidden manners	94	19	11	15	3	5	4	151
	62.3%	12.6%	7.3%	9.9%	2.0%	3.3%	2.6%	100%
People are vulnerable to witchcraft activities	63	31	17	17	2	5	16	151
	41.7%	20.5%	11.3%	11.3%	1.3%	3.3%	10.6%	100%

From the table the results show that 85 respondents with the 56.3% strongly belief in witchcraft compared with 6 respondents with 4.0% strongly disagree to belief in witchcraft. Also 73 respondents with 48.3% strongly agreed that Beliefs in witchcraft have interfered with relationships in the community compared with 9 respondents with 6.0% who strongly disagreed with the same idea. On the other hand, 91 respondents with 60.3% strongly agreed that Witchcraft practices are dangerous in the community compared with that of 7 respondents with 4.6% who strongly disagreed with the same idea. On the fourth statement, 93 respondents with 61.6% strongly agreed that Witchcraft practices are feared within the community compared with 11 respondents with 7.3% who strongly disagreed with the same idea. Moreover, 94 respondents with 62.3% strongly agreed that Witchcraft activities are carried out in hidden manners compared with that of 4 respondents with 2.6% who strongly disagreed with the same idea. Finally, 63 respondents with 41.7% strongly agreed that People are vulnerable to witchcraft activities compared with 16 respondents with 10.6% who strongly disagreed with the same idea.

Table 3: Correlations Between Witchcraft Beliefs and Self-acceptance

		Witchcraft Beliefs	Self-acceptance
Witchcraft Beliefs	Pearson Correlation	1	.153
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.061
	N	151	151
Self-acceptance	Pearson Correlation	.153	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.061	
	N	151	151

From the study the relationship between witchcraft beliefs and self-acceptance scores ( $r=0.061$ ). This belongs to  $|0.000| \leq r < |0.300|$  and this implies that the strength of relationship is weak. This implies belief in witchcraft has affected the self-acceptance in a weak way among the elderly people.

The findings agrees with Atata (2018) who investigated witchcraft and social relations among the Aged Women, in Igbo South-Eastern Nigeria; she noted that elderly women are often labeled witches, and as a result of this, they are subjected to various forms of human abuses such as excruciating and extrajudicial killings resulting from beating, burning, exclusion, discrimination, stoning, and isolation in the smallest social institution (the immediate family) in Igbo society. Also it agrees with to Angi stone and Butera (2010) in East Africa who on their investigation realized that traditional animism includes beliefs that disabilities are punishments for bad deeds or the result of witchcraft exercised by other people. On the other hand it agrees with Mbogo (2017) she realized that some students blamed witchcraft for poor academic performance.

Table 4: Correlations Between Witchcraft Beliefs and Positive Relations

		Witchcraft Beliefs	Positive Relations
Witchcraft Beliefs	Pearson Correlation	1	.080
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.331
	N	151	151
Positive Relations	Pearson Correlation	.080	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.331	
	N	151	151

From the study the relationship between witchcraft beliefs and positive relations scores ( $r=0.331$ )  $|0.300| \leq r < |0.700|$  implies that the strength of relationship is moderate. This implies belief in witchcraft has affected the positive relations moderately on the elderly people. These agree with Atata (2018) who did a study among the Igbo tribe in Southern Nigeria concerning Aged women, witchcraft, and social relations. He realized that aged women in Igbo land are alleged to be witches by their family, household, and community members, and this usually is a result of the socioeconomic problems in society. This study further revealed that the level of education and social attainment do not influence the belief in the existence of witchcraft and abuse of aged women in the region.

Table 5: Correlations Between Witchcraft Beliefs and Purpose in Life

		Witchcraft Beliefs	Purpose in life
Witchcraft Beliefs	Pearson Correlation	1	.052
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.530
	N	151	151
Purpose in life	Pearson Correlation	.052	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.530	
	N	151	151

From the study the relationship between witchcraft beliefs and purpose in life scores ( $r=0.530$ )  $|0.300| \leq r < |0.700|$  implies that the strength of relationship is moderate. This implies belief in witchcraft has affected the purpose in life moderately of the elderly people. The findings agree with Pritchard (n.d) who says that among the Azande people witchcraft influences law and morals, etiquette and religion, it is prominent in technology and language. If bright seizes the ground-nut crop it is witchcraft, if the bush is vainly scoured for game it is witchcraft, if women laboriously bale water out of a pool and are rewarded by but a few small fish it is witchcraft, if the wife is sulky and unresponsive to her husband it is witchcraft, if a prince is cold and distant to his subjects it is witchcraft, if in fact, any failure or misfortune falls among anyone at any time and in relation to any of the manifold activities of his life it may be due to witchcraft.

Table 6: Prevalence on Witchcraft Beliefs and Levels of Psychological Well-Being

		Witchcraft Beliefs
Wellbeing	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.035
Self-acceptance	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.061
Positive relations	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.331
Purpose in life	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.530

Pearson correlation shows both magnitude and direction of the relationship between two measured variables. In regard to magnitude of relationship, correlation coefficient ranges from -1 to +1. A correlation coefficient of -1 implies a perfect negative correlation while a correlation coefficient of +1 implies a perfect positive correlation. A correlation coefficient of zero implies that the two variables are not related. Pearson correlation shows both magnitude and direction of the relationship between two measured variables. In regard to magnitude of relationship, correlation coefficient ranges from -1 to +1. A correlation coefficient of -1 implies a perfect negative correlation while a correlation coefficient of +1 implies a perfect positive correlation. A correlation coefficient of zero implies that the two variables are not related. A correlation coefficient in the range of  $|0| < r < |0.300|$  implies that the strength of relationship is weak, a correlation coefficient in the range of  $|0.300| < r < |0.700|$  implies that the strength of the relationship is moderate, a correlation coefficient in the range of  $|0.700| < r < |1|$  implies that the relationship is strong (Muriithi, 2019).

From the study the relationship between witchcraft beliefs and psychological well-being scores ( $r=0.035$ ). This belongs to  $|0| < r < |0.300|$  and this implies that the strength of relationship is weak.

From the study the relationship between witchcraft beliefs and self-acceptance scores ( $r=0.061$ ). This belongs to and this implies  $|0| < r < |0.300|$  that the strength of relationship is weak. This implies that there is a weak relationship between belief in witchcraft and self-acceptance among the elderly people.

The findings agrees with Atata (2018) who investigated witchcraft and social relations among the Aged Women, in Igbo South-Eastern Nigeria; she noted that elderly women are often labeled witches, and as a result of this, they are subjected to various forms of human abuses such as excruciating and extrajudicial killings resulting from beating, burning, exclusion, discrimination, stoning, and isolation in the smallest social institution (the immediate family) in Igbo society. Also it agrees with to Angi stone and Butera (2010) in East Africa who on their investigation realized that traditional animism includes beliefs that disabilities are punishments for bad deeds or the result of witchcraft exercised by other people. On the other hand it agrees with Mbogo (2017) who realized that some students blamed witchcraft for poor academic performance.

From the study the relationship between witchcraft beliefs and positive relations scores ( $r=0.331$ ). This belongs to

$|0.300| \leq r < |0.700|$  which implies that the strength of relationship is moderate. This finding agrees with Atata (2018) who did a study among the Igbo tribe in Southern Nigeria concerning Aged women, witchcraft, and social relations. He realized that aged women in Igbo land are alleged to be witches by their family, household, and community members, and this usually is a result of the socioeconomic problems in society. This study further revealed that the level of education and social attainment do not influence the belief in the existence of witchcraft and abuse of aged women in the region.

From the study the relationship between witchcraft beliefs and Purpose in life scores ( $r=0.530$ ). This belongs to  $|0.300| \leq r < |0.700|$  which implies that the strength of relationship is moderate. The findings agree with Pritchard (n.d) who says that among the Azande people witchcraft influences law and morals, etiquette and religion, it is prominent in technology and language. If bright seizes the ground-nut crop it is witchcraft, if the bush is vainly scoured for game it is witchcraft, if women laboriously bale water out of a pool and are rewarded by but a few small fish it is witchcraft, if the wife is sulky and unresponsive to her husband it is witchcraft, if a prince is cold and distant to his subjects it is witchcraft, if in fact, any failure or misfortune falls among anyone at any time and in relation to any of the manifold activities of his life it may be due to witchcraft.

### III. DISCUSSIONS

The findings show that the belief in witchcraft is widely prevalent among the elderly people. This is supported by the study that was done globally in Central India among the Oraon society. The findings of the study show that the Oraon tribe believes that there is a strong belief in potent powers of a witch and thought to be productive of the greatest misfortunes and disease. The witches are considered as a great threat to whole society and looked upon with fear and suspicion. They are believed to cause harm to animals, property, agricultural land, gains and individuals. They can cause severe harm to the whole community. Among Oraons witches are locally known as *bisahi*. Both men and women can become *bisahi* although references to female *bisahis* are more frequent. Most of the female witches are reported to be old women or childless women (Joshi et al., 2006).

The prevalent in witchcraft beliefs has been witnessed highly. According to Biri and Manyonganise (2022) did a study on witchcraft among the Shona people extensively. The Shona people constitute the largest tribal group in Zimbabwe and they comprise a number of divergent ethnic groups such as the Zezuru, Karanga, Manyika, Budya, and Korekore, among others. From the study they points out that witchcraft is one of the most disdained practices among the Shona: the children of witches are mocked and have a difficult time finding a marriage partner. Witchcraft is perceived as one of the major causes of retrogression in every aspect of life. This study is relevant to the study because it shows how a large population

in the ethnic groups in Zimbabwe belief in witchcraft up to the point of avoiding to marry children of victims of witchcraft.

The belief in witchcraft is also prevalent among the young people. According to Mbogo (2017) did a study on the effects of witchcraft on the well-being of high school students in Nairobi County. The results from the study shows that Seventh (70%) of the respondents claimed to have witnessed a case of witchcraft among their peers face-face; a school principal explained that in every group of 20 students, about 8 are affected by the witchcraft phenomena.

Studies show that self-acceptance has been interfered with due to witchcraft beliefs. According to Atata (2018) on her study Aged Women, Witchcraft, and Social Relations among the Igbo in South-Eastern Nigeria; she noted that elderly women are often labeled witches, and as a result of this, they are subjected to various forms of human abuses such as excruciating and extrajudicial killings resulting from beating, burning, exclusion, discrimination, stoning, and isolation in the smallest social institution (the immediate family) in Igbo society. This witchcraft is among the Igbo people in South-Eastern Nigeria undoubtedly poses a threat to the security and human rights of aged women.

According to Angi stone and Butera (2010) in East Africa, traditional beliefs about the causes of disability continue to be prevalent. Cause is important to consider because beliefs about cause may influence how a person or family is treated. Different approaches have been used to classify and explain beliefs about the causes of disability in three categories: Firstly, traditional animism includes beliefs that disabilities are punishments for bad deeds or the result of witchcraft exercised by other people.

According to Pritchard (n.d) while doing a study among the Azande people from North Central Africa, he says among these community witchcraft is found everywhere and it plays its activity in every part of life; in agricultural, fishing and hunting pursuits; in domestic life of homesteads as well as in communal life of district and court; it is an important theme in mental life in which it forms the background of a vast panorama of oracles and magic. Also witchcraft influences law and morals, etiquette and religion, it is prominent in technology and language. If bright seizes the ground-nut crop it is witchcraft, if the bush is vainly scoured for game it is witchcraft, if women laboriously bale water out of a pool and are rewarded by but a few small fish it is witchcraft, if the wife is sulky and unresponsive to her husband it is witchcraft, if a prince is cold and distant to his subjects it is witchcraft, if in fact, any failure or misfortune falls among anyone at any time and in relation to any of the manifold activities of his life it may be due to witchcraft. This study is relevant to my study because it shows how people's purpose in life has been totally interfered with due to the belief in witchcraft. This study differs with the current study because it is a descriptive study with the aim of describing witchcraft oracles and music among the Azande people in Egypt.

According to Gershman (2015) in his study Witchcraft Beliefs and the Erosion of Social Capital: Evidence from Sub-Saharan Africa and Beyond. Based on her fieldwork in the districts of Ulanga and Kilombero, the researcher concluded that the ubiquity of witchcraft beliefs and accusations in one way or the other has contributed to a culture of suspicion and mistrust of kin and neighbors, in which those seeking to establish businesses or succeed in their agricultural activities feel perpetually under threat from those whom they know to be jealous and whom they believe wish them to fail.

Generally, among the Gusii people; witchcraft beliefs feed on popular rumours and fears and not necessary on any empirical proof. Indeed, the belief constitutes ontological, epistemological as well as moral consequences to the entire community. These consequences mostly have a negative effect on the general well -being of individuals in society. Economically, for instance, the belief in witchcraft is known to lead to the destruction of property.

According to Gershman (2015) in Mkamba village, Tanzania, due to witchcraft beliefs have made people to be reluctant to cooperate and help each other due to witchcraft-related fears. For instance, they refuse to provide food assistance to their neighbors because they are afraid of witchcraft accusations in case someone gets sick after eating the contributed food. Most villagers admitted in a survey that one of the main reasons for the decline in trust is the danger of witchcraft accusations.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Elderly age is a crucial stage that needs a lot of care and concern from the surrounding environment. This age that needs humble time for awareness and acceptance of personal strengths and weaknesses, individualism and freedom. If all these are met; it will create a friendly and pleasant environment full of trustworthy relations, concerned with the others' peace and comfort. Under this situation the elderly will be able to stay in unanimity and companionship environment and this will improve their psychological well-being.

The study recommends good environment for the elderly and through the cooperation of the church and the environment social workers, counselors and psychologists will be assigned to cater for the mental wellness of the elderly people.

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