

**THE CHURCH AND BEREAVEMENT: A STUDY OF PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF EAST AFRICA, MILIMANI SOUTH PRESBYTERY, NAIROBI
COUNTY**

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C50/83834/2016**

**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF A MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE IN
RELIGIOUS STUDIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

2017

DECLARATION

I declare that this research project report is my original work and has not been submitted to any other university for examination.

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This research project has been submitted for examination with our approval as the university supervisors.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my late father Nahashon Muthima Kariuki whose death gave me a drive to write this project, after lacking proper pastoral care before, during and after burial. It is with intention that through this project the bereaved will be able to cope with the loss in case of any eventuality.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

With lots of gratitude, I would wish to acknowledge the University of Nairobi (UON) Department of Philosophy and Religious studies for offering me the opportunity to do my studies. I also wish to thank my supervisors Dr. Abraham Wambua and Dr. Peter Mumo whose suggestions, invaluable support, creative insights and constructive criticism have made this work manageable. The study would not have come to fruition without their guidance and encouragement.

I would also want to honestly thank my employer the teacher service commission (TSC) for granting my study leave, my county director and my head teacher who approved my study leave. Other acknowledgement goes to the presbytery moderator Dr. John Gicheru who encouraged me to follow my passion and to enhance my academic potentiality. To all the other ministers in the respective parishes and my informants in the whole presbytery and my research assistant Joel Kinuthia and Joyce Mwenda for being patient with me, and willing to help me where they could. Without forgetting my husband and my entire family members especially my mum who always told me (Wihe hinya gutiri kiumaga hega) meaning I should be resilient for nothing is served on a silver platter. Lastly, I would like to thank the libraries at CUEA, Tangaza, AIU, Hekima, and Macmillan for the necessary assistance they accorded me while undertaking this study.

ABSTRACT

The research study sought to establish the extent to which the PCEA Milimani South Presbytery support bereaved families before, during and after the burial. The primary aim of the study was to assess the programs that the presbytery churches use in giving pastoral care to the bereaved, investigate the support that the presbytery church members give to the bereaved families before, during and after the burial, examine the role played by the presbytery church leaders in addressing the challenges encountered by the bereaved families and identifying the challenges that the presbytery encounters in supporting the bereaved before, during and after the burial. It is interesting that even when faith has never really played a particularly central role in their lives, many people instinctively turn to the church to help them grieve the passing on of loved ones. It was hypothesized that there were no proper programs, adequate support to the bereaved families before, during and after the burial by presbytery churches to their members. The study adopted both qualitative and quantitative method where bereaved members from 7 parishes within the Milimani South Presbytery took part in the interview and filling in of questionnaires in order to identify the challenges encountered by the bereaved families before, during and after the burial. It is the church's mandate to give pastoral care to its church members. They normally have hope for support during times of difficulties and blessings. Death affects everyone whether sudden, through diseases, fire, accidents, catastrophe or old age. When members are not fully supported by their church members and leaders during the hour of need they are discouraged and feel not cared for. This affects their healing, recovering and adjusting to live process. It was established that there were no programmes but a few activities to support the bereaved though not entirely formalized or documented. Those activities which church leaders or members use to support the bereaved are prayers, visitation, counseling, preparation of burial, financial support although this depended on status of the bereaved member in the church. Widows had major challenges of loneliness, raising children alone and adjusting to new status in life and in church. Spirituality was key in helping them overcome. It was also noted that large parishes, lack of transport, long distance, financial constraints, lack of skills and training were among the challenges that the presbytery leaders faced in giving pastoral care. Parishes may be subdivided to ease work for the pastoral caregivers. Pastoral caregivers lacked adequate training on how to handle the bereaved. More training is needed to help the leaders give proper pastoral care. The theories used were from Kubler-Ross and Worden's grief task. Kubler-Ross stage model indicates that during the grieving process the bereaved need to be supported by others to enable them to move from one stage to another finally accept the loss. The research sampled one hundred members who includes; bereaved adults, youth, children, widows and widowers irrespective of whether they are leaders or not. It was fully revealed that the support given to bereaved families was mainly upto the burial. It was found that 80% of the respondents agreed that there is no proper church involvement programs provided before, during and after burial. The Presbyterian Church should give to the bereaved families' adequate support and proper programs and should be uniform in all PCEA churches.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

PCEA	-	Presbyterian Church of East Africa
CITAM	-	Christ is the Answer Ministry
PP	-	Practice and Procedure
AIU	-	African international university
TSC	-	Teachers Service Commission

Operational Definitions of Key Concepts and Terms

Presbytery

A geographical area covered by seven parishes and one Nendeni area under Milimani South Presbytery. The presbytery oversees both the spiritual and administrative growth of the churches within its jurisdictions (Wesh , 2006). Its composition has two categories; category A and the full ministry. The full presbytery is made up of members of the category. Along with presbyterial group leaders.

Parish

A geographical area covering one or several congregations in the PCEA. Kirk session serves each parish.

Kirk Session

This is the smallest or the lowest court of the Presbyterian courts which consists of a church minister and the elders within that parish. The role of Kirk session is to do administration and provide pastoral care. Every elder takes charge over a designated geographical area in which the membership of the parish resides.

General Assembly

The senior policy making body of the PCEA and the supreme court of appeal for any disputes originating from the lower courts. It is made up of all the presbyteries. It

has two categories; one minister drawn from all presbyteries and the corresponding number of elders. They are also known as commissioners. The second category is made up of the board members and a section of group leaders known as Delegates.

General Administration Committee

One of the main committees of the general assembly, it meets every year when there is no general assembly. This year it was held at Alliance Girls High School. It is divided into two categories; category one is made up of ministers drawn from presbyteries and a corresponding number of elders (Pakers, 2013). They are known as commissioners. The second category is made up the board members and a section of group leaders known as delegates. Its office bearers are the officials of the general assembly.

Courts

A government by elected elders, meeting in representative assemblies in ascending order in the PCEA. The church has three major courts namely; the parish session (Kirk session), the presbytery and the general assembly.

Elder

A layperson in the PCEA appointed from among PCEA full members and ordained for life by the parish session with authority from the presbytery category “A” the elder assists the church minister in the administration of the church business and oversees spiritual work in a district.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

According to birth and death rate ecology global network (2017), the current population in Kenya stands at 47,975,747.

Figure 1: The birth and death rate in Kenya

Birth rate	Death rate
19 births/1,000 population	8 deaths/1,000 population
131.4 million births per year	5.3 million people die each year
360,000 births per day	151,600 people die each day
15,000 births each hour	6,316 people die each hour
250 births each minute	105 people die each minute
Four births each second of everyday	Nearly two people die each second

National transport and safety authority NTSA road safety status report 2015/11/16 states that more than 1.24 million people die in the accidents each year globally. Accidents are the leading cause of death for people aged 15-29 years. Moreover, an estimated 3,000 deaths from road crashes occur annually in Kenya and about 40% are pedestrians. It will be disastrous if no policy measures are formulated and implemented for responding effectively to this demographic trend by churches. So research on various aspects of the bereaved support is essential as a source of information for policy making and planning programs for the bereaved. PCEA is a mainstream church which was started in 1891 in Kenya and has, in the recent years experienced challenges of supporting the bereaved before and after the burial. This is because there is no formulated or documented policy on how the PCEA should support the bereaved. Large parishes have

made the pastoral team members in adequately serve the bereaved families. This then makes the members defect to other churches feeling neglected and also fail to trust the church leaders.

Mugambi and Kirima (1984:108) share the view that among the African traditional communities, close relatives continue to mourn with the bereaved for months. The social cohesiveness embodied in the African philosophy as put by Mbiti (1971:113) “I am because we are and since we are therefore I am” made it the bounder duty of one’s kin to help support and maintain a non-going relationship with the bereaved. The bereaved felt appreciated and supported in their time of grief. Their loneliness was shared by others and this enabled them to recover from the loss easily. Paul also instructs the Galatians to “carry each other’s burdens” (Galatians, 6:2).

According to Ngewa (2006 p. 242), a burden is any hardship whether physical, emotional, mental, moral or spiritual. Nonetheless, the hardships that the bereaved go through are sometimes unbearable. Since some people are never able to come to terms with the loss, it is, therefore, important to have people offer counseling through this process of grieving. The presbytery leaders have not addressed this grieving process. Death cases are on the increase due to road accidents, fire outbreaks, terrorism, cardiac arrests, HIV/AIDs pandemic, cancer and other related illnesses such as the war catastrophes. For that reason, PCEA Milimani Presbytery should come up with programs which are helpful in addressing the grieving process issues that follow. It is worth noting that death has a negative impact on the physical, social, economic wellbeing on the bereaved persons. Therefore, this study is important because it supports that if, appropriate help is offered to the bereaved, church growth will be experienced. Various members tend to leave the church in resentment because of not being visited when faced with such challenges. If support and care are provided, the role of faith and religion will be respected. This study contributes to the body of knowledge in different ways that can be used to help church members after the burial.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Bereavement is a universal phenomenon common to all people regardless of their cultural background or social status (Perks, 1997. p 3-9). S. Mbiti however defines bereavement as the most disruptive phenomena in life. However, it is unclear how the spiritual leaders handle the grieving process. Among the Africans, the community supported bereaved families. Likewise, the role of the church is to support the bereaved during the loss period. In addition, it's the pastoral mandate of the church to take care of the bereaved families. The number of death cases in Kenya in the past two decades has been worsened by the prevalence of HIV/AIDS, accidents, cancer, stresses and other related causes. According to (NASCO) death caused by HIV/AIDS stands at more than three times from other causes. National transport and safety authority (NTSA) road safety status report 2015-2016 states that more than 1.24 million people currently die through road accident in the world each year. Globally, it is the leading cause of death for people aged 15-29 years. It is therefore not very clear how the presbytery conducts its bereavement process.

In this regard, the researcher seeks to establish if the presbytery has set up programs and structures which support bereaved families before, during and after the burial. The researcher also intends to examine the role played by the presbytery church leaders in addressing the challenges encountered by the bereaved families. The study sought to investigate the support that the presbytery church members give to the bereaved families before, during and after the burial. Further, the study will attempt to identify the challenges that the presbytery encounters in supporting the bereaved families during and after the burial. In addition, the researcher has a personal experience of loss when her father died suddenly, and the researcher did not get proper pastoral care; hence it provoked her to carry out this research. The researcher also aims to include widows, widowers, bereaved adults, youth, and children in the study, because they have also gone through the loss. However, if the issue of church support to the bereaved families is not addressed with the seriousness it deserves, the bereaved may feel disappointed, depressed, and angry towards the church leadership in general hence contributing to members leaving the church as well as low productivity of income. This study will add to

the body of knowledge on the presbytery, religious organizations, policymakers, psychologist, pastoral caregivers, chaplains and many more organizations hence the need for the study.

1.3 Research Questions

The study will be tackling the following:

1. What are the programs that the presbytery churches use in giving pastoral care to the bereaved?
2. What support does the presbytery churches give to the bereaved families before and after the burial?
3. What are the roles played by the presbytery church leaders in addressing the challenges encountered by the bereaved families?
4. What are the challenges that the presbytery encounter in supporting the bereaved families before, during and after the burial?

1.4 Research Objectives

The study has the following objectives:-

1. Assess the programs that the presbytery churches use in giving pastoral care to the bereaved.
2. Investigate the support that the presbytery church members give to the bereaved families before and after the burial.
3. Examine the role played by the presbytery church leaders in addressing the challenges encountered by the bereaved families.
4. Identify the challenges that the presbytery encounter in supporting the bereaved families during and after the burial.

1.5 Justification of the Study

Bereavement affects people from all walks of life. Hence Christianity has a role to play in preparing people to deal with death. Christianity requires that people take care of brothers and sisters in the church. According to Elizabeth Kubler Ross, stage model of grief and wardens grief tasks model of theories states that the bereaved need to be supported to be able to deal with pain. This research will not only be helpful to the researcher who is doing this research, but also to other bereaved persons who have undergone a striking and shocking moment of life due to the sudden death of their significant others. The researcher went through a very difficult time and experience which she never found anyone who could help her cope with the loss. The church leaders said that the researcher was a strong believer and therefore she would recover quickly.

The study aims to sensitize the presbytery to support all members of the bereaved families during and after the burial of beloved ones. The amount of emotional support a grieving person can receive is critical on how successful one copes with grief. The more friends, family and community are present and supportive the more the grieving person is able to accept offered support the better the outcome. Oronjo (2014, p.68) argues that isolated people tend to harden with time. However, it is known that bereaved individuals, in general, are at risk of a long-term mental and physical health disorder. Therefore, it is advisable that bereaved families be provided with an ongoing support system to monitor the outcome of grief or to seek professional interventions. Therefore, the researcher found it adequate to do this research because it will be significant not only to the presbytery but also to the chaplains, counselors, teachers, clergy, community health workers, caregivers, widows and widowers and the community as a whole. For that reason, there is need to support the bereaved families during and after the burial.

The study is significant because the findings on support to the bereaved was helpful to the presbytery in setting up a ministry geared towards helping bereaved families and enlightening the Christian community in need to help the bereaved families during and after the burial.

1.6 Literature Review

1.6.1 Introduction

In PCEA Practice, Procedure Manual and the Church Service Book, there is an update description of the work of the church courts, and the functions and the responsibilities of the office bearers. It included accounts of all the changes made by the General Assemblies especially the 5TH GA in 1967 in the church code of discipline. There is little information written or documented on bereavement, and therefore there are not enough materials. It is the task of PCEA church to comfort each other in the Lord and to encourage one another during and after the burial. In some of the churches, the Milimani South Presbytery has not entirely been taking part in comforting the bereaved after the funeral. There is no evidence of resources provided in the books to show how the presbytery handles the challenges when supporting the bereaved.

According to Talitwala (2002, p.124), the normal grief is complicated long term process that takes at least 1-2 years. The researcher admits that sometimes one needs “no specific help” to heal and recover from being able, to move on with life because grief takes care of itself. The researcher intends to find out the help the presbytery leaders’ offer to its bereaved members to help them heal and recover from the loss. What people need during that process are individuals who are willing to provide a shoulder to cry on and listen to them as they begin to talk about the loss but this has never been the case in the said presbytery. The researcher wishes to look for various programs that can assist the bereaved during and after the burial which can help them realize their dream again. In bereavement, people feel as if they have lost part of themselves. The bereaved people experience an alarming array of physical problems in the aftermath of loss. Moreover, they may experience fatigue (the loss of energy), insomnia (loss of sleep and changes in sleep patterns) anorexia (loss of appetite) or bulimia (excessive eating habits. They may also experience body aches such as headaches, back pain, muscular aches and tightness of the throat or chest (Talitwala, 1999). Therefore, the researcher feels that there is a gap that needs to be filled in addressing problems related to bereavement because healthy person lead to a healthy family, church, and the nation. The researcher has a great concern on how such issues can be resolved, investigating some support systems that the

presbytery members can give to the bereaved to cope with the loss. The presbytery has not satisfactorily been taking care of the bereaved after the burial, and that is what the researcher is trying to find out from whether there has been anything in place to be able to handle the challenges when supporting the bereaved.

Vamik, Voulken & Civil (1993) argue that although grief is not an illness, health professional and health care institutions have important roles to play in caring for the bereaved both before and after the death of the person which has not been considered as much necessity by the Presbytery. The researcher needs the presbytery to consider it a necessity. He continues to say that no one has the right formula on how to grieve or how to address the issue of grieve. In another discussion, there is no schedule prescribed by any constitution for the same purpose. People tend to express different emotions differently, and it is natural to do so, to allow the healing process to take place. A mixture of sorrow, anger, regret, emptiness, longing sometimes even guilt and sometimes more to the mixture is common experiences. It is here that people need proper guidance and care which is not found and not well practiced in the presbytery. However, the researcher noticed that there is a gap where the processes and procedures of dealing and taking care of the mourning and grieving through pastoral care in the congregational context are on the thin side. If the presbytery leadership addressed challenges encountered by the bereaved families, some grief stages outlined by Kubler-Ross stages including denial, numbness, shock, anger bargaining, depression, and acceptance would be controlled or avoided in a better way and result in a healthy life of people after bereavement. Mbiti (1969, p.70) presents a detailed study of death where he acknowledges death as the most disrupting phenomenon in life. Since death is a disrupting event in life, the researcher wishes to find out what the bereaved presbytery members can be assisted with to help them forge forward after the loss. The current study investigated the presbytery leader's role in addressing the challenges the bereaved families go through.

Odera (1991, p.36) argues that if there were no death, there would never be enough food and space for everybody. But the researcher criticizes the statement because the bereaved families are not counseled, guided, or spiritually supported thus they are not

able to produce enough food. This is because they will either die or become deformed. The researcher found a gap that needed to be filled to enable the bereaved walk on their own and be productive in all other fields. The presbytery has entirely ignored any future plans to offer the bereaved families to cope up with life after the loss. Odera does not explain the programs or support system that can be used to help the bereaved cope with the loss which the researcher wanted to research and come up with a good and set program or set up some support system which would enable people to cope with the challenge of the loss.

Wachege (2002, p.73) has addressed the subject of death and dying, and it was well outlined in "*Living to Die.*" It expresses the certainty of death a view which is upheld in both Christian and African traditional religions. In this part, Wachege does not give or explain the support system that should be given to bereaved during and after the death, and it is the key objective of the researcher's study. According to Wachege (2002, p.75), there are various outstanding types of death. The researcher tries to find out what can be done to help the bereaved to have hope again. In both PCEA practice and procedure manual and the church service book, there is little information written about bereavement, and therefore there are no enough resources on bereavement.

Ikam and Elizabeth (1993, p.102), states that at the age of two or three years, the child may be able to understand something or the concept of death with adult help simply because the child has most likely seen something like a dead bug, a flower or a pet. Even if grief is not an illness health professional and health care institutions have important roles to play in caring for the bereaved, both before and after the death of a person. One hundred years ago, most people were born and died at home, and now things have changed since most are born and die in hospital. The widespread perception of hospitals as bureaucratic impressions that the psychosocial needs of dying people are often underserved, that families are provided with no regular help in understanding and coping with death. Therefore, the researcher of this study sees the need for ways in which Milimani South Presbytery Church leaders can help the families of the sick and the dying people to come to terms with the loss. More so attempts were made to learn that social support was available to each family, provide for further support groups and arrange for

materials. Medical institutions are not commonly expected to have a continuing responsibility to family members once a patient has died, the fact that there may be no one else to fill that vacuum has promoted a range of experiments within institutional bereavement programs. As such, the committee believes that health care professional should not withdraw from this process but rather should remain involved, because of the familiarity with death and dying patient and their opportunity for a special closeness with family. This may not be the case because no one is familiar with death since every person grieves differently. For that reason, the researcher feels there is a need for the presbytery to have structured programs which can help the bereaved families or people.

Practical support or counseling provided after death should be responsive to the expressed concerns and needs of the bereaved. However, social workers, nurses, and physicians can be a powerful force in solving some of the difficulties that may arise when survivors experience cannot be explained by culturally acceptable categories of reality. Staff members pursuing research about bereavement can also be helpful to families, but the problem is that they are not available when called to do so leaving the grieving families in distress. In Boston Massachusetts, the administrators of Jewish Cemetery (www.jewishcemetery.com) employ the services of public relation officers to offer support and practical advice to the widows and widowers who are buried in the cemetery. Such services are lacking in the Milimani South Presbytery. The cemetery administrator organizes an annual conference, for the widows where invited speakers empower bereaved and educate young people on the psychologist on bereavement and other relevant topics. This is not done in Kenya and even in the presbytery, which the researcher wishes to fill in the gap. Most of those who attend the conferences appreciate the service provided and invite their male counterparts to attend. According to one of the bereaved, there could be a day where they shall have a widows/widowers conference at Kasarani Stadium.

According to Collin (1972, p.173), the person who is most valued during and after the burial is not the one who sticks around quietly, but the one gets on with day to day household tasks and makes few demands upon the bereaved. The researcher feels that there are no people who can successfully be committed to doing that, hence finds a

missing gap. The ideas of career, marriage, church responsibilities and parenting have a high demand for those who can be sympathizers. The researcher suggests that if there are well-structured programs, it will ease the burden of the bereaved.

According to Murray (1972,p.75), attempts were made to learn that social support was available to each family, provide for further support groups and arrange for materials. Although medical institutions are not commonly expected to have a continuing responsibility to family members once a patient has died, the fact that there may be no one else to fulfill that function has promoted a range of experiments within Institutional bereavement programs. The committee bereaved that health care professional should not withdraw from this process but rather should remain involved, because of their familiarity with death and dying patient, and their opportunity for a special closeness with the believe families. It may be impossible to devote to displace some extent, the social isolation, and personal distress that bereaved may experience. Practical support or counseling provided after death should be responsive, adequate and to the expressed concerns and needs of the bereaved. Due to lack of qualified personnel, the presbytery needs to come up with some powerful force in resolving some of the difficulties that may arise when survivor's experiences cannot be explained by culturally acceptable categories of reality (Mbugon, 2002, p. 59). Nevertheless, staff members pursuing research about the bereavement can also be helpful to families.

Mbugon (2002, p.69), states that the role of religion in the socialization process will depend on the meaning that is attached to it as a family. Moreover, Alphonse Depervilles (1963, p.24) Guizot wrote to Remosat who was plunged into deep mourning to "Count only on yourself withdraws into your heart, there is the wound, but there also lays the strength to bear it." Philippians 4:13 emphasize that "I have the power for everything through him who empowers me." Gregory (2003) explained some experiences possess as "reality" for most people, and they only pose as a dark distressed image to restore to individuals. It is only in the book of St. Paul that supports "we see indistinctly as in a mirror" (Corinthians 13) but he can only find ourselves back to the world as God intended it to be if we take Eden as our model. Religious institutions and the clergy have been involved with the bereaved throughout the history (Wolfelt, 1988, p.3-7). However,

it is interesting to note is that this relatively new found interest in death, dying and grief for clergy and other care givers is an interest that has been present since the beginning of time. Kinoti (1994, p.182) notes that many African communities supported and cared for their widows and widower and the parties were valued and respected, and their needs met including their proactive sexual ones.

1.6.2 Biblical Teaching

The gospels record several examples such as the raising Jairus daughter where Jesus found a "commotion with people crying and wailing aloud," (Mark 5:38; Mathew 21: 18; John 11:33; Luke 7:11). Paul in Roman 12:5 urged the Romans to mourn with those who mourn. Barker et al. (2002, p.1766) interpret it to mean that identification with others in the joys and sorrows is the Christianity responsibility. In Acts 6:1, poor widows in the apostolic times were offered good care. Moreover, widows with no family to support them were put on a list for church assistance so that their needs were met adequately and equitably, subject to certain conditions regarding their age and lifestyle (1 Timothy 5:31); Keener 1993,p.10-18). It is recounted in Genesis that the members of Joseph's household and his relatives offered him long-term moral and material support when his father Jacob died. For instance, the 70 days of grieving after burial for Joseph has not been realized in the Milimani South Presbytery. Joseph's family mourned for seventy days before burial (Genesis 50: 3) and a further seven days after burial (Genesis 50: 30). This reveals that Joseph's relatives had recognized that there was the need to support a bereaved family not only during the short period before burial but even afterward. From this point of view, the researcher will find out whether this is the case in the contemporary church, due to the vast number of needy cases and few personnel. The PCEA has not been able to resolve that exhaustively. The authors of the Old Testament present God having compassion for widows and orphans as their defender (Deuteronomy 10:18), who cares for them and protects them (Psalms 68:13; 129:9 Proverb 15: 25). God declares that the widow and her children can depend on him for sustenance (Jeremiah 49:11).

Mumo (2006, p.811) argues that the Greek word for widow comes from an Indo-European root "widhawa" that means "left empty." A woman who is left without a husband is potentially "left empty." In many parts of the world, widows are likely to suffer a loss of status, funeral support, property, health and even their own identities after their husband's death. This seems the case in the presbytery as many are not recognized due to their identity crisis. Therefore, the researcher argues that there should be some support programs introduced in the Milimani South Presbytery to address the issue of widowhood and to help them come out from the valley of grief. Bereavement means to be deprived of someone by death. The death of someone one loves is one of the greatest losses that can occur. However, feelings of bereavement can also accompany other losses, such as the loss of your health or the health of someone one cares about, or the end of a significant relationship through divorce, e.g. grief is a normal healthy response to loss. Therefore, the researcher who carried out this study intends to give the support to its presbytery members. There are certain stages of the process of mourning. Firstly, it starts with recognizing of loss and continues until a person eventually accepts that loss. Secondly, is the acceptance of the loss that may take longer to different people; therefore the presbytery should offer some supportive guidance and counseling to those bereaved to be able to cope well with the loss. People's responses to grief will vary depending upon the circumstances of the death such as whether the death was as a result of chronic illness, HIV, cancer, among others that may have been expected. Regardless of the death as a result of chronic diseases, the church leaders should be able to address such eventuality clearly. Even if death led to an end of the person's suffering and the family comes to a stage of acceptance, grieving process could take longer. This is because the duration of bereavement depends on both how attached the person was to the person (or pet) who died, the amount of preparation time and anticipation of the loss.

Following the work of the Wothnow et al. focus was on the individual's capacity to face life events, observing that religious individuals-capacity face stressful life event, noting that religious individuals tended to include religion. As such, pastoral care involves not only the care of the persons and families but also the care of the community itself. Moreover, pastoral care entails the thoughtfulness; re-interpretation of the tradition brought into biological relationship with contemporary culture and its impacts on the

community of Christian as well as individual members (Gerkin, 1997, p.181). The church sought to hold competence in the field of bereavement and grief, so that the organized support may be helpful emotional, financial or existential. The church also has a unique responsibility to come up with a support program for those who are in grief. Fellowships, as held in churches, provide a sense of belonging and bringing relationship thus can be a good platform to address the issue of bereavement.

1.6.3 Scope and Limitation

The study will be carried out in the Milimani South Presbytery in Nairobi County, south-west of the capital city of Nairobi. The presbytery is served by 12 active parochial ministers and four retired ministers. There are seven parishes and thirty-seven congregations with over 10,600 members. The researcher chose the presbytery due to its accessibility and its central location as it's the headquarters of the named presbytery. The PCEA archives are found within this presbytery, and finally, the researcher serves in one of the churches in this presbytery making the presbytery a choice of study. The researcher selected three members from each parish. The scope was limited to the few bereaved members in this presbytery. This includes the children, youth, adults and the widowed.

The Presbytery of Milimani south was halved from the larger Milimani presbytery on 8th December 2013. And since its inception, the presbytery has experienced numerical and spiritual growth. The presbytery is located in a semi-urban area covering parts of Nairobi County, Kiambu County, and Kajiado County with its offices based at Riruta satellite church. The Presbyterian Church has been established throughout the world by the missionary movement in the nineteenth and twentieth century's. Therefore, the PCEA Milimani south is about one hundred and twenty-six years old. The church was started in 1891 as an effort of Scottish Presbyterian missionaries from Scotland and America hence the Presbyterian appeared first as a private venture directed towards Kibwezi (Macpherson, 1970, p.21). The PCEA is one of the oldest mainstream churches in the areas, and the said presbytery has people of all classes, ethnic diversity as well as accessible to all. The researcher administered questionnaires to hundred bereaved members including; the youth, young adults, middle-aged and the adults. According to

Kubler Ross theory, children below six years do not understand death; therefore, the researcher did not administer questionnaires to the bereaved children below six years.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

Rapid social change theory is a sociological explanation which is used to examine how society and individuals change. This means that there are internal and external causes of those changes. According to Kubler-Ross the initial reaction to death is shock and denial. When denial subsides, bereaved people contrast the loss with anger and bitterness. They then bargain with God to allow the misfortune to pass. When this fails, they sink into depression. As the reality of death begins to actualize, the grievors come to terms with death. In all these stages, it is important for the Milimani South Presbytery Leaders to walk with the bereaved members. The internal causes are those which the individual inflicts upon themselves or the society upon itself. The external causes are those that come from outside and those that the individuals or society has no control over. Some of the internal causes which change the individuals conditioned include: seeking other education, acquiring new friends among others.

The presbytery churches have to create other methods of retaining the bereaved in the church with a lot of understanding and love. Just as the bible instructs “the men of Issachar understood the times and knew what Israel should do” (1 Chronicles 12:32) so those in the leadership of the presbytery should understand the times and do the necessary to support the bereaved before, during and after the burial. There are several theories on grief and bereavement. Kubler-Ross theory (1969), outlined five stages theory of coping with imminent death, but the stages have also been used to identify the grief of individuals after a loss (Rendo, 1994). The first stages of coping are denial, isolation, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. Observations of how individuals respond to the loss of a close relative should move through their success in phases. These phases are not clear, and any individual may oscillate for the time back and forth between one of the two. It is, therefore, important for the church leaders to exercise their role of registering their presence and giving its members a shoulder to lean on. As the individual yearns and searches for the missing figure, it is important if the bereaved may find a person who can comfort and offer a shoulder to cry on. However, even though the

bereaved may feel disorganized, it is good for the presbytery church leaders to come up and help them to reorganize themselves. After the reorganization, the same person needs a person close to him/her for support and expression of emotions.

Kubler-Ross theory states that mourning is a long process and that the bereaved need the support of others. This is clearly brought out in jobs story where his three friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar went to condole with him when they heard how much he had been suffering (Job 2:11). It is also supported by Parkes (1975, p.21) and Payne Hom and Relf (2002, p.72) who argues that grief is a long-term process and that the bereaved need the support of the people in resolving their grief.

1.7.1 Hypotheses

1. Lack of proper programmes for the bereaved in the presbytery has made the bereaved not satisfactorily cope with the loss.
2. Due to inadequate support to the bereaved families before and after the burial by its church members, makes them isolated and neglected.
3. The role played by the Presbytery has been wanting in addressing the challenges encountered by the bereaved families hence members, feel discontented with the church and its entire leadership.
4. Since it is hard to plan for death, then it becomes a challenge to support the bereaved families before, during and after the burial efficiently.

1.8 Methodology

1.8.1 Introduction

This section describes the methods which were applied in the carrying out of the research study. The theories used were from Kubler-Ross and warden's grief stage model theory which states that the bereaved need to be supported to help them cope with the loss. The willing respondents filled a consent form.

1.8.2 Research Design

The study employed a survey research design in order to gather information on how the PCEA Milimani south presbytery supports bereaved families. This design was suitable for the purpose of describing a population that is too large to observe directly Mugenda and Mugenda (1999: 165). Data collected through survey was highly representative of a large population (Stroebe, Stroebe and Schut, 2003:235). It allowed the researcher to draw conclusions that can be generalized to a much larger population. Data gathered from the seven parishes could be generalized represent the whole presbytery.

1.8.3 Population and Sampling Techniques

The researchers targeted one hundred bereaved members from various parishes within the presbytery who includes the children, youth, adult, widows, and widowers. The total number of targeted parishes and population is as it appears in the next paragraph 1.8.4.

1.8.4 Sampling Techniques

The researcher focused on the presbytery which has 7 parishes and 37 congregations. The researcher focused on seven congregations which have a population of ten thousand members. The researcher studied the following congregations stated below; because they are within her jurisdictions and they are also within the stipulated period of time that the researcher had. They are: - PCEA Nairobi West Parish, Langata Parish, Mutuini Parish, Dagoretti Parish, Waithaka Parish, Karen Parish and Riruta Parish.

Table 1: Respondents from different congregations

Parish	Clergy	Elders	Bereaved Adults	Bereaved Children	Bereaved youth	Widowed	Totals
N/west	1	3	3	2	2	3	14
Langata	1	3	3	1	2	3	13
Karen	1	3	3	1	2	3	13
Mutuini	1	3	3	1	4	3	15
Waithaka	1	3	3	1	4	3	15
Riruta	1	3	3	1	4	3	15
Dagoretti	1	3	3	2	2	3	14
Total	7	21	21	9	20	21	100

The researcher focused on the above figures. Each parish has one minister. Three bereaved elders, three bereaved adults, two and four bereaved children and youth respectively, three bereaved widowed to bring to a total of one hundred people. The number of the bereaved youths and children varied from one parish to the other because of the population in the respective parishes. The research was governed by a specific deadline and timeline. This helped the researcher to know what and when must be done. These included questionnaires, conducting interviews and finally a collection of questionnaires, analyzing and research presentation.

Problems encountered

Taboo

Many respondents feared death, and they never wanted to discuss much on the loss and what they went through. The researcher got a lot of problems from particular respondents who said that they would not fill in the questionnaire or be interviewed because talking about the death of their loved ones who had died would bring death to the living. However, the researcher was admitted twice to the hospital during her questionnaires distribution, and this delayed her to collect her data and do her analysis. Most of the questionnaires though prepared in English most respondents from Kijiji

village in Langata parish preferred to speak Kiswahili, and they felt that the topic of death was sensitive and they could shy off. The researcher prepared and distributed 100 questionnaires and they were returned, but a few that were to be filled by the children were left blank.

The other group was for the youth, they filled three-quarters of the questions posed, and the rest were left blank. They said most of the time they were left out and not involved when such incidence took place. Some few married couples were also not able to fill the questionnaires because they felt that it was not so long since they buried their members of the family. Most of the respondents took a lot of time to fill the questionnaires, and the researcher often reminded them through calls. The respondents would promise her that they would fill, only to find that they have not filled them. A few number of PCEA leaders were not willing to be interviewed. Especially in the General Assembly office, they would always refer me to their successors claiming that they had a lot of work in the office or they are out of duty, outside the country. Others like chaplains could say that they have a lot of responsibilities at their working place. The researcher worked with the willing chaplains who were concerned with the bereaved.

It was also not possible for any group concerned with bereaved members. Most respondents said that such groups are only held once per year especially when they have family Sunday. Sometimes the researcher had to travel a far distance and mostly in some slums like, Kibera, Kabiria, Kijiji, Kuwida and Mutu-ini all were villages of parishes on the study, were a bit risky because it was only accessible by motorbikes as means of transportation. Sometimes the researcher would pay her assistant only to say that he was charged higher than usual because of the overtime. From nine p.m., it was much higher since it was the only time one would get some of the respondents after work. Some of the interviewees could not understand the reason why they were asked to fill in answers on death and the death of their beloved ones had nothing to do with them. Others were not sure of the intended objectives of this study. The churches in various parishes were distanced so one could hardly cover a lot in a day. The researcher had to divide her questionnaires amongst the days that she had.

How the Researcher Overcame the Limitations

The researcher was able to alias with responsible church workers like the parish ministers, evangelists, youth coordinators, children coordinators and few church elders. Due to suspicion the researcher would inform them the purpose of those questionnaires and promise that confidentiality was paramount. Due to unavailability of church leaders, the researcher would make calls to arrange when to meet the bereaved.

1.8.5 Data Collection Techniques

Questionnaires, interviews and participant observation were the main tools for data collection. The selection of these tools was guided by the nature of the data to be collected, the time available as well as the objective of the researcher. The researcher used both primary and secondary data. The primary data was collected through questionnaires, interviews, and observations. The secondary data was collected through different kinds of literature books, journal, articles, thesis and other published materials which were of relevant to this research. The main focus of this study was church support and the kind of pastoral care given to the bereaved families before and after the burial, and to be able to access the challenges they encounter when church support is not given. Questionnaires were used where variable such as perception view, knowledge, opinions and seeing of the respondents could not be directly observed. The target population did not experience difficulty in responding to questionnaire items since they are literate.

1.8.6 Data Analysis

Data collected from the field was analyzed in order to make deductions and inferences. It involved organizing, accounting for and explaining the data that is making sense of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories. Quantitative and qualitative data gathered from both the questionnaires and interviews was used to confirm and analyse the data obtained. Primary data and secondary data were used. The information obtained was recorded by use of computer Ms Word, Ms PowerPoint, Internet information and communication, tables, pie charts, notebooks, papers, camera, bible and telephone services.

CHAPTER TWO

ASSESSMENT OF THE PROGRAM THAT THE PRESBYTERY CHURCH USE IN GIVING PASTORAL CARE TO THE BEREAVED

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher sought assessment of the program that the presbytery church use in giving pastoral care to the bereaved, investigate the support that the presbytery church members give to the bereaved families before and after the burial. Examine the role played by the presbytery church leaders in addressing the challenges encountered by the bereaved families and finally identifying the challenges that the presbytery encounter in supporting the bereaved families during and after the burial. Therefore the researcher found that there are no proper programs in this presbytery which addresses concerns for the bereaved. Therefore, bereaved have not been understood and given the serious support that is needed. In this chapter, the researcher is assessing the programs that the presbytery churches use in providing pastoral care to the bereaved. The parishes within the presbytery have on several occasions organized some programs to cater the needs of the bereaved, even though not all programs originate from the church leaders or are provided for in the church calendar. The researcher noted when the presbytery churches organize talks and seminars for the bereaved; there were no regular church programs but impromptu.

The former Moderator of PCEA church of 19th-20th general Assembly Rev Gathanju when interviewed, he said the PCEA has no programs set to cater for the bereaved (Gathanju,2017). He added that the PCEA church is late in bringing up some programs. He also argued that churches like Christ is the Answer Ministry (CITAM) have programs that cater for all people in the church. Rev Gathanju stated that the only presbytery that has organized such in PCEA is Nairobi North and there is none in Milimani South Presbytery. The one that has been in existence are activities which have neither been well formalized nor documented. It is only done to cater for individual Presbytery members.

The former Moderator Rev. Gathanju through the interview recommended that the church should have well-structured and documented programs for the following groups particularly the youth and children (Gathanju, 2017). The researcher attested to what the former moderator Rev. Gathanju said because when the church organizes talks and seminars for the bereaved, there is no single time when the children and the youth have ever been brought together to be mentored on bereavement. The only program that the young people are called to take part in or listen, are on the performance, self-awareness, spiritual maturity and team building among others.

In the questionnaire given to the respondents, they recommended that the PCEA Milimani South Presbytery should come up with programs which will be able to help its members cope with death and emotions especially when they go higher. In case of someone who has lost his identity one can be assisted on how to deal with social status after bereavement and manage the loss too. In all those suggested programs, the researcher was of the opinion that the content of any grief support program is crucial and must be carefully planned and prepared in order to address the needs of the bereaved. Mollica (2017) has highlighted the goals of grief counseling and support which include, helping the bereaved person to accept the loss by helping the person to talk. However, it was also needful to help the bereaved to identify and express feelings related to loss such as anger, guilt, anxiety, helplessness, and sadness. He continues to say, that it is good to help the person to let go and make their own decision. It was needful to help the bereaved to separate himself/herself emotionally from the person who died and to begin a new relationship. In addition, he says that people need to provide support and time which are lacking from the members of the presbytery and focus on grieving on important times such as birthdays, anniversaries in providing a continuous support even after the burial (Mollica, 2017).

2.1.1 Pre-Death Fear

In the questionnaires given, it has come out clearly that people do not prepare themselves for the death. Some informants said one cannot discuss death before it has occurred. It was argued that it is a taboo to speak about death. Therefore in the presbytery, pre-death preparations have never been done, discussed or given attention of

any kind. The Milimani South Presbytery has clearly shown that there are no programs set for the pre-death preparation. For instance, Kim, a youth member, said that he was ready for the death of his father when the doctor told them to go home and expect the will of God to take place. Later the same day their pastor came and started preaching. On his sermon, he stated the importance of being watchful because the Lord will come like a thief. He later said that having a prolonged sickness does not mean one can die although when one has suffered for a long time with illness people need to release the person and let the will of God to take place.

2.1.2 Pre-Death Preparations

Even though the leaders preach and say that the Lord will come like a thief, hence people should be prepared, Nyokabi narrated a story of how a man known as Ole Kango had called his family and told them that since he is about to die, he wanted to prepare his grave and that of his wife (Nyokabi, 2017). The family and the surrounding were shocked to see that it did not take long before the man died. Later his five sons died each at his own time differently. The people of that village concluded that they have died because it is a taboo to prepare a grave. The researcher is of the opinion that people need to be taught on how to deal with pre-death since death is a cruel, heartless enemy and comes unexpectedly. The impending death of a loved one is always a difficult emotional time, but knowing what to expect during a loved one's final days can help one prepare to handle the event. Frankline's (1996, p.32), in his famous quote "by failing to prepare, one is preparing to fail" is very relevant in this context.

Wangira (2017), a Christian union teacher in Kabiria, said: "We need not think that we are immortal, the old joke is that only two things in life are for sure, death and taxes." Therefore it is important for the entire church to sensitize people. Just as the church is employing people to come and teach on retirement, the same church should come up and teach on the death eventuality how to cope and to prepare for the death. In the same way, the former moderator Dr. Gatu had prepared his eulogy; there were no single changes that were done (Gatu, 2017). In addition to that, the former moderator Rev. Muindi, according to the daily Nation 4th June 17, the churchman wrote a eulogy and picked clothes. The PCEA former Moderator who died on a Sunday wrote his eulogy

and picked the clothes he wanted to be buried with. PCEA clerk Bildard Mathai said Rev. Muindi called him before his demise. Rev. Mathai recalled that after a small talk at the private residence, he was handed over two cartons that contained books that he said that should be used for reference and the other was to be kept in archives and bid everyone goodbye. This does not usually happen often and in PCEA hardly does one hear of such. Therefore, if the pre-death preparation is done and planned well, issues like inheritance and disputes of lands would not be an issue to the bereaved. The researcher recommends that the presbytery for that reason should start up some topics of death so that they will be able to overcome the loss and be able to move on. Therefore, the respondents suggested the following programs and activities to be of great importance.

2.1.3 Biblical Modes of Pastoral Care

The Bible is the source of knowledge regarding the beginning of pastoral care of “the community of people who worshipped one God “Yahweh” because it is through the Bible that encounters people's earliest pastoral ancestors”(Gerkin 1997, p.23). However, a good example is when Job's three friends Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite heard all about the troubles that had come upon him, they all set out from their homes and met together by agreement to go and sympathize and comfort him. When they saw him from a far distance, they could hardly recognize him. They began to weep aloud, and they tore their robes and sprinkled dust on their heads. They sat on the ground with him for seven days and seven nights. No one said a word to him because they saw how great his suffering was (Job 2:11-13). In support to Gerkins, the bible Matthew 5:4 says that blessed are those who mourn for they shall be comforted. In the same manner, Jesus visited Martha and Mary when their brother Lazarus had died.

2.1.4 Course for Pastoral Caregivers

The Presbyterian church of Ireland program witness:-ppatton@presbyterianireland.org has designed a course on pastoral care for elders, pastoral care teams, small group leaders and everyone else involved in delivering pastoral care in congregations. This type of program is hardly found in PCEA Milimani south. The course primarily covers care for a bereavement which aims to increase understanding of pastoral care for

anyone suffering from loss. Such programs and courses are lacking in the presbytery churches according to the research that has been done. Due to lack of proper bereavement programs, it has resulted that many people lack faith in their religion. There are no programs that have been set to give pastoral care. The activities like seminars and visitations have not been formalized. Although the church is required to give pastoral care wholly to its members, the PCEA Milimani South has been neglecting the children.

2.1.5 Children Support Program

Parachini (1999, p.70) in his book pastoral care in helping children deals with the loss states that the impact of death can be a wrenching, lifelong issue if they do not receive the support they need or if they lack proper programs to help them absorb, address and ultimately accept the loss. When a child is grieving, grief educator Harold Ivan Smith writes; “Bad, unbelievable, unfathomable thing happen to children. Most of the bereavement books are lacking in the presbytery. If they are available, our young children and youths would be able to cope with the loss and help shape the future of the child forever. It is not so much on what happens to the child, but how the child and the adults in the child’s life interpret and reinterpret the death or loss, and how those adults recognize the child’s need to mourn on the child’s time framework”.

Table 2: The Extent of Absence of Bereavement Programs for Various Groups

Respondents	Yes (%)	No (%)	No Response (%)	Total (%)
Children & youths	2(6)	23(78)	5(16)	29(100)
Adult	2(9)	16(76)	3(14)	21(100)
Widowed	3(14)	13(62)	5(24)	21(100)

However, when the researcher asked the bereaved groups whether there are programs for the bereaved in their churches the following came out clearly: The outcome showed that 80% of the respondents had not received adequate programs for the bereaved. Therefore, this needs to be taken with a lot of seriousness.

Gerkins (1997, 110) argues that the loss of a significant person in the life of a child, a parent, grandparent, sibling, relative is far common than most people believe. When there is death, children like adults grieve. However, their grief may be harder to access because they do not have the vocabulary or the life experience to express their feelings and needs easily. Mostly, in the presbytery, children are taken casually as if the loss has not taken its course on them. Therefore, the researcher can attest with Gerkins on the pastoral care given. It's the mandate of the church leaders such as the clergies, elders, chaplains, evangelists to understand that the role of the church is important for most victims/survivors because their answers to religious questions from their view of life, death, and meaning. Many people do not know their position or religion until death occurs, and therefore their religious faith and beliefs are formed. It is necessary for the pastoral caregiver to understand that there are so many aspects that need to be considered when giving pastoral care which are lacking in the presbytery. The mandate of the church is to give pastoral care to the bereaved through well-organized programs. As part of the programs of the presbytery, bereaved members came up with the following suggested programs which featured clearly.

2.2 Pastoral Care

It is the mandate of the church to give the pastoral care to the bereaved and as "Boume (1997, p.171), asks in his book when death arrives, what are one's pastoral responsibilities. It is important to give the pastoral care since funeral tends to reach a minister doorstep with little notice. Pastoral care is a means of providing comfort to those suffering as a result of life challenges including long-term or life-limiting illnesses and death of a loved one. Gerkin emphasizes the importance of pastoral care on an individual and community in the following ways; pastoral care involves not only the care of the individuals and families but also the care of the community itself. Pastoral care also entails the thoughtful re-interpretation of the tradition that shapes Christian identity as

that tradition is brought into dialogical relationship with contemporary culture and its impact on the community of Christians, as well as its individual members” (Gerkin 1997, p.111). It came out clearly through interview and questionnaire that pastoral care is a key factor in supporting the bereaved family before and after burial. The church as a community of believers has spiritual obligations to work together with grieving families. From the interviews and questionnaires administered the following featured prominently as programs and activities that were given or were supposed to be given by pastoral care givers. These include prayer, sermon, rituals, burial ceremonies, memorial service, programs for the burial among others.

2.2.1 Prayers

Prayer is a core thing during bereavement. Everybody tend to run into prayers during bereavement or during any other bad situation. (1) A Book of Common Prayer protestant Episcopalian church in the USA 1979 gives a prayer for a person in trouble or bereavement.

O merciful father

Who has taught us in the holy word that thou dost does not willingly afflict or grieves the children of men.

Look with pity upon the sorrows of thy servant for whom our prayers are offered.

Remember him O lord, in mercy nourish his soul with patience, comfort him with a sense of thy goodness, lift up thy countenance upon him and give him peace through Jesus Christ our Lord”

In similar circumstances, many people get stronger and stronger. Keziah Wangui (2017) who had met the death of a husband through a sudden accident said that through the prayers that were conducted during that period gave her strength and ability to reason. She also said it was through prayer that she was able to come back to her senses. In several occasions when people need prayer, and they don't get people to pray with them during bereavement, they tend to be stressed and confused as Mwangi narrated during the

death of his sister who died due to on alcoholism and people had labeled her a great sinner. Through the few people and the pastoral care that he received from the church leaders of his church, he was able to coordinate the burial preparation.

Mwangi (2017) continued to say that throughout the whole period he felt strong and some people were even asking him “why do you look so strong? You mean the death of your one and only sister has not hit you?” Mwangi felt God had even remembered his sister Angela even though she was dead (2017). Omondi also narrates how he felt strong when his pastor, Joel Okoth conducted a prayer during the demise of their only daughter who died of pneumonia (Okoth, 2017). The pastor asked Omondi to repeat the prayer after him that said:-

By day, I pour out my heartbreak to you,

By night I give you my racing thoughts.

In you I take refuge.

In you I trust not be afraid for you hold me strong.

You hold me safe

Calm my fearful heart O God

Still my anxious mind O Lord

For all my life is found in you.

You restore my soul

In strong storm, you still help me swim through

In Jesus name, I pray. Amen.

When Omondi finished, he felt completely strong.

Esther (2017) narrated that it was through prayers that her mother prayed to her, that gave her strength and hoped that she will get another child after she lost a baby during delivery. Therefore, prayers are a very core thing during and after burial because they give one hope, peace, comfort, feels secure and loved

2.2.2 Sermon

A sermon is word of God that is preached to strengthen, comfort, encourage and nourish the souls of the bereaved. Most of the sermons that are sometimes preached tend to affect a bereaved person psychologically. In 1Thessalonians (4:13-18), "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that you sorrow not, even as others which have no hope." It is always good to let the person cry or scream because it helps the person relieve his/her anger. According to (Mollica 2007, p.11), when a person is not allowed to cry or scream it makes the anger intense. A good number of them alleged that the sermon which was preached in their home made them feel so much stressed because it talked about God hating the sinners. The way the pastor put it he was judgmental. This made Mary to hate and to be stressed (Mary, 2017). Therefore, it is always important that the sermon delivered should be relevant to the occasion. According to the Brian croft (2017), conduct gospel-centered funeral, do not be judgmental or personalize without forgetting that your primary responsibility is to set forth the gospel of Christ to the bereaved.

2.2.3 Rituals

During the burial of the deceased, different rituals are usually done which either makes the bereaved get healed or either stressed. The church angered Mary whose husband committed suicide due to the way the rituals were conducted during the burial ceremony. She said that the card and the badge that are normally given to the family during the burial ceremony were not done because of the form of death. She was called by Presbyterian Church Men Fellowship (PCMF) for a fundraising she asked them why they were coming to ask her to be a guest of honor during the men's fund drive and the way they treated her and her late husband. Mary said she would have accepted if they gave him a decent burial without being judgmental.

Wangezi (2017) another member said that the pastor told the Woman's Guild member not to wear headscarves when going for Maombolezi (Macakaya) because her husband had committed suicide. This pained Wangezi so much because according to Kubler-Ross (1969, 58), suppression of emotions following bereavement by the death of a loved one, deny people to express their pain in order to respond to the realities of what happened.

2.2.4 Burial Ceremony

It was also found out that burial ceremony is also another important step that if not done properly can leave the bereaved wounded. For instance, Mwangi (2017) said that during his brother burial the pastor could not wear the full ceremony attire because the brother was not a full member. This broke him very much because his brother was committed to church activities. Another man who never wanted to be mentioned said that the pastor asked the family to throw the soil together with the elders because he was not a full member. The issue was that a full member the soil is first thrown by the pastor and the elders. This made the person dissatisfied and said he wished this did not happen in the jurisdiction of his pastoral care given. We need to preach in all areas and in all ways. The bereaved are likely to remember much of what people say, but they will remember that people stood with them in their loss. This is clearly shown in the 1st and 2nd plate.

2.3 Visitations

It has come out very clearly that after the burial; the bereaved family does not receive the same support as before the funeral as being the mandate of the pastoral care requirements. After the burial, only closest persons to the family pay some minimal visit such as if the pastor were a close friend of the family, one would see him pay a visit. Woe to them that either does not have a close relationship with the pastor or the elders because they are left without anyone to take care of them. In the presbytery, it has clearly shown that they rarely visit the bereaved oftenly after the burial unless it is during the district fellowships. Therefore, there is a great need for the presbytery leaders to come out clearly and support the bereaved.

Wamuyu (2017) said that she received so many visitors when the burial preparations were taking place and the time they were burying the husband, but after the burial, she hardly saw anyone else coming to visit her. She said that it was important to have some visitations after the burial. It was observed that after the burial, the bereaved family did not receive the same support as before the funeral. According to Mwiti (1999, p.567), “Bereaved persons go through a grieving process in their journey towards healing. Also, according to the HUNNABAIL family funeral group states that it is important to realize that it is normal to experience a wide range of feelings and people can sometimes feel a sense of intense loneliness if they don’t have family friends to support them.

Waruta and Kinoti (2005, p.5) noted that “it is the responsibility of the church minister to be available when God’s people are suffering and to help them towards the restoration of their wholeness.” But this has not been the case because most of the ministers have many congregations to attend to and therefore so little is done. That is why the researcher feels that there is a gap in giving pastoral care to the bereaved. A concerned person who was receiving an insurance cover said that the cover was withdrawn from her because the husband had died and there was no way she would continue receiving the dues. She was not called and told that they have stopped offering that services. This was realized immediately after burial and the wife developed some complications which required her to be given medical attention. Therefore, proper care and visitations are critical to the bereaved persons. Another child was told to go and play with other boys when his father died. This denied him mourn gracefully because they thought this would affect them. Most families, children are forgotten during the bereavement. Even the ones to pay them visits they don’t give the children time to express their feelings and to face the reality of death for proper grief regulation.

2.4 Formation of Groups for Bereaved

It has fully come out clearly that after the burial there are minimal visitations to the bereaved home if any. Therefore above 50% of the respondents suggested that there should be programs for the seminars after the burial to help them be in a position to cope with the loss. These groups for the bereaved should be facilitated by people who have

been bereaved or who have ever gone through that situation and those trained in counseling. This was because most of the bereaved people especially the widows/widowers are not always understood and sometimes they are neglected. One widow said that most of the investment they had invested with her husband were taken over by the younger brother of her husband and she had no knowledge how she would recover them. It was not until she was given an advice by another widow who had attended a seminar and told her what she did and few of the items were recovered. The researcher felt that the groups for the bereaved could be necessary before and after the burial because the bereaved will not have recognized themselves and the reality of death had not stricken them. It was noted that in Milimani South presbytery where the research is done from, there has never been fewer groups for bereaved before after and during the bereavement period. There were only two parishes in this presbytery that have groups for the widows/widowers that are conducted. In PCEA Langata, they have formed a group called the beloved of God who comes together every month, for prayer breakfast. This is budgeted for in the annual expenditure. The other one is PCEA Nairobi West Parish. This has made them grow and see life in a better way. See plate 3 and 4. When the researcher asked the bereaved in the questionnaire given whether there were seminars organized for them they responded in this way.

Table 3: Percentage of the Support offered to the Bereaved.

	Yes (%)	No (%)	No Response (%)	Total (%)
Children and the Youth	2(6)	18(62)	9(32)	29(100)
Adult	1(5)	17(80)	3(15)	21(100)
Widowed	16(77)	2(9)	3(14)	21(100)

After the result, it was clearly shown that there were not many seminars for the bereaved youths, children, and adults as opposed to the widows and widowers who seems to be given more seminars.

Wanjiku (2017) said even though there are such meetings that do not always have similar needs. Therefore, the researcher feels there is a need of having different groups of widows/widowers depending on the needs, and age group. Another lady by the name Annabel said that seminars could be the only source of relief for her loss. Annabel (2017) who was married to a senior person in the government said the idea of her going through secondary loss whereby a person loses status and identity made her to isolate herself from people hence trying to attend the seminar everywhere they were called upon. The fact that Annabel had lost her identity could not be noted and they expected her to come to terms easily. People who were friends with her husband and who called her most often have never called her again. She decided to isolate herself from people even in different social groups. The researcher feels that there is a dire need for support among bereaved groups. Widowhood is seen to be the most disruptive since younger adults are generally lost prepared emotionally and practically then older adults to cope with the loss (Sperks, Stroebe & Stroebe 1997).

2.5 Counseling

Counseling was another aspect that came up so strongly. This is because most bereaved persons achieve some reorganization after receiving support from families and the community through counseling. Simfukwe (2006, p.1462) states that at times, misinformed Christians prevent other bereaved Christian from crying, overlooking the fact that the Bible does not negate or forbid expressions of the emotions of grief. Some of the people are often seen weeping in the bible, for example, Joseph wept over his father's body (Genesis 50:1), Job shaved his head and tore his robe (Job 1:20) and Jesus himself wept over Lazarus death. (John 11:35). Some said that they were barred from expressing their emotions since there are significant others were Christian they had gone to rest with Christ.

Another respondent who was not able to come to terms said that a friend of her mother came to her using terms that would prevent her from taking death as a reality. She used words like, your mother has been promoted to higher glory, she has rested from heavy work, she has passed on to this life, and now she is with the Lord and much more, but all this did not bar her from expressing my emotions. It is unfortunate that even

though people recommend for counseling, we have so few qualified personnel to do that task. Joy (2017) through the interview remembers a call she got from an elder about the grief counseling groups as something good. She was pleased with the way the deacon had contacted her children to check whether they had interests in joining the group as well. She said that she felt so sorry for the other group members who had no one to inform them. It is worth noting that assisting and counseling people in grief may be one of the ways the church cares for its members, and also reaches out to the surrounding community. The researcher attests to Sigmund Freud that the bereaved must separate their thoughts and feelings from the deceased person in order to move on in their life, and for them to separate themselves from the deceased, they require qualified counselors to do that work. Confidentiality is another thing that can help the bereaved. If they can only be assured of confidentiality, they can easily open up and disclose their fears without any problem and therefore contribute to quick healing. Given the above programs, the informants suggested more ways that can enhance pastoral support.

2.5.1 Media

The use of the media can also be helpful in giving pastoral care. The use of the mobile phone calling an individual and enquiring of the progress, pray with the person and encourage the other persons can be of great importance. In Milimani South Presbytery it is clearly shown that they would suggest the media use to be done but being limited to the financial notion. Although media has a challenge, Margaret narrated how she got the information about the death of her husband on TV. This shocked her and found herself in hospital. Many of the interviewees suggested the following as ways to enhance pastoral support to the bereaved families after the burial; Radio would be used as a tool to educate them on grief and various ways to overcome it. It was also suggested that more programs could be aired and addressed on bereavement instead of announcing death only. In the questionnaires, some said that music could also be relevant to their souls as they will be used as consoling and comforting tool. However, other interviewees who are widowed argue that due to the loneliness, rejection, and suspicion subjected to them, they suggested that games and sports can be good ways and favorable for them to express their emotions hence healthy souls. Anything that an individual feel may help

them to remember their loved one, forging connectors for binding continuity (Klass et al. 1996, p.78). Those may be jewelry, clothing or personal items like a handbag, walking slide huts e.t.c.

Wanjiku (2017) told the researcher that there is a jacket that her husband used to wear which made him happy and she never threw it away. Therefore, this reminded her of her late husband. Apart from the archives that people keep, the minister’s gown, Milimani South Presbytery should have other mementoes kept as reference to help the bereaved members.

2.6 Spirituality

According to Carhouns Tedeschi (2004, p.140), certain stances taken by psychologist’s pastoral counselor and other clinicians are desirable if they are to provide the best support to bereaved persons as they struggle with religious and spiritual issues. Therefore, the Milimani South Presbytery should then develop the necessary skills to deal with client’s spiritual concerns in ways that will be most helpful to the client’s since social constraints can prevent bereaved persons from exploring openly the spiritual and religious concerns raised by the death of a loved one with the people in their social group.

In other aspects that came up as suggestions from questionnaires administered, the widows and widowers said the following topics were not taught or tackled; Investments and transition process, thus when a spouse dies it becomes a challenge to transit to a new life after being widowed. However, the idea of coping into new social status was also another issue that needed to be addressed. The interviewers when asked in the questionnaires on what they would like improve; a few argued that there was a demand for a separate group of young widows and widowers since they have different interests.

Table 4: Widows and widowers response on being grouped differently

	Yes (%)	No (%)	No Response (%)	Total (%)
Widows & Widowers	16(76)	3(15)	2(9)	21(100)

This shows that there was an urgent need for the presbytery to react to it. Children were left out mostly in the whole research because people don't think that they need to be walked with. The children have emotions and therefore needs to be given pastoral care to be able to cope with the loss. The youth was also left out because it was thought that they would be able to sort themselves on their own since they view death much like an adult but lack coping skill. The youth can highly benefit greatly via support from peer groups especially those who have had some experience. To the church leaders whose work on bereavement has not fully been felt they need to understand the importance.

2.7 Conclusion

It has come out clearly that in Milimani South Presbytery; there are no major programs to assist the bereaved. Instead of the programs, they have activities which look like programs, but they have not been formalized or documented. Other programs that are done in this presbytery are not entirely effective such as social welfare for the bereaved, next of kin and much more. The programs involve only a few people and omitting the youth & children who also require their own program like the role modeling good grief, advice from a counselor. Dougy centre of grieving children and families. Thus states that's "children watch adults to get clues about how they are "supposed" to grieve. They learn from watching, imitating the adults around them. The few widows/widows said that the seminars in the meeting which they hold don't match with age. There should be some age consideration because they don't have the same interest.

CHAPTER THREE

SUPPORT THAT THE PRESBYTERY CHURCH MEMBERS GIVE TO THE BEREAVED MEMBERS BEFORE AND AFTER THE BURIAL

3.1 Introduction

Death is not a respecter of any person. This is because it affects both young and old. Some die due to prolonged terminal illnesses such HIV/AIDS, cancer, while other die tragically and unexpectedly due to accidents. The grievied tend to look for answers as well as comfort. Therefore there is a need for the church to have a purpose and plan for ministering and supporting those who are grieving the loss of a loved one.

Ongwae (2011, p.57), points out that the toughest and difficult period is when people have lost a loved one. It is a time to grieve even though some claim to be strong enough to cope with such an emotional moment alone. It takes the support of others for one to go through the trying period of transition of a beloved member of the family. Therefore, the researcher investigated the support that the presbytery church members give to the bereaved families before and after the burial. The researcher observed that the respondents held a strong loyalty and belief towards the church in general. Therefore, the church members seemed to be a good ground for support and socializing. It has clearly shown that pastors, youth pastors, children coordinators, and evangelists are the ones who are responsible for taking care of the bereaved from the time the death has occurred until the burial day when they perform the burial rites. It is very clear from the respondents that no more pastoral care is given to the bereaved after the burial. People get down to their daily duties; relatives go back to their homes. Children of the bereaved are taken to the school, and the bereaved are left alone to grieve for him/herself. Rev. Mbutia stated that these are the most crucial days and this is the time when these people need a lot of support. It is only the church members who can, therefore, be counted as the support system to the bereaved.

According to the respondents, it was clearly stated that there is need to organize a support system for bereaved, as routines for these are not strongly rooted in the individualistic culture.

3.2 Loss and Grief

Loss and grief and the need to mourn are experiences common to all families. Congregations are uniquely positioned to help congregants and members of the community with death, loss, and grief.

According to Daily Nation May 31, 2017, on last expenses cover Mwololo states that dealing with the loss of a loved one and preparing for their burial can be emotionally and financially draining yet funerals are unavoidable events in life, and all burials however modest, involve unplanned for expenditures.

3.3 How to Help the Bereaved

According to William Wordens 199-80 four tasks of mourning any congregational church members have a particularly strong position to help the survivors with the following which are lacking most in the presbytery. The congregation church members should help the bereaved acknowledge the reality of the loss with the burial and memorial opportunities. However, they should be present without judgment which allows the bereaved to experience the pain of the loss. Moreover, the church service ceremonies help mourners begin to adjust to the environment with the deceased. It is also the role of the church members to help bereaved begin to withdraw emotional energy from the deceased and reinvest it in other ways.

According to Sunday Daily Nation May 8, 2016, Colleta a widow says it has not been easy bringing up children single-handedly it's tough. I have to work ten times harder to provide food, clothes, and shelter for them. And when you add school fees to that, it becomes a heavier burden for a single parent. She says it is tough for a woman bringing up a boy because they like a father figure. Boys tend to be unruly and untamable especially if they are being brought up in Eastlands where vices like drug abuse and crime thrive.

Challenge

Despite the many challenges she faces, Colleta says her belief in God and constant prayer has kept her going as a mother. She is also grateful to financial

institutions, such as Faulu Kenya for making it possible for her to access educational loans, which have ensured her children are never sent away for lack of school fees.

Karen (2017) another widow says she is delighted that her son Peter will be turning six this month which is a (mother's day). According to the internet Source, mother's day is a day for celebrating the mother of the family, as well as motherhood, maternal bonds and the influence of mothers in society. Societies, being patriarchal, still look down upon single women who bring up children without fathers (Juliet, 2016). Women are always expected to be docile creatures who cannot express themselves openly. Having a child outside of wedlock and being able to take care of that child ably like a good mother is a strong expression and defiance against the gender 'tyranny. According to Education-Sunday Nation (2016), Stella Wanjiru who was being sponsored by Mama Lucy Kibaki speaks at the funeral services at Othaya Approved school ground – Othaya.

Wanjiru (said she was lucky because Mama Lucy kept her promise to sponsor her education, showed her love and offered guidance which was rarely the case for many young Kenyan. There was one man, however, a deacon, who had checked up on my wife and me regularly during her illness. After her death, he called and visited every couple after a week for talking things, through with him helped tremendously. When you've lost someone, you need to find somebody you can trust to talk to. It doesn't help to "man up" or pack the memories away. After about five to six months, I starting thinking clearly again and eventually, I remarried. But grief has its own timetable you can't rush it or ignore it and, in some ways, it will always be with you.

3.4 How to Help Widows/Widowers

Ask them how they are doing and let them know you want a real answer, not first what they think you want to hear, don't stop asking how they are doing once the funeral is over, when they tell you how they are doing, listen and so without feeling like you have to give the perfect advice. Just let them talk or cry and reassure them that you are there whenever they want to talk again

Mary Nyakudi lost her husband after a long battle with leukemia. He was in such a terrible shape that at the end, she was actually praying for him to die. Once he did, for about two weeks, eventually the reality set in, however and it was terrifying. She tried several things to cope first; she found a parish that had a grief meeting. The nun who led it kept telling me she knew what I was going through, but I had a hard time with that ““Unless you’ve lost your spouse” I finally told her “You don’t know what I’m going through but I had a hard time with that. “ Unless you’ve lost your spouse” I finally told her “You don’t know what I’m going through. You might understand grief but not mine”. I have friends from work who were supportive during the funeral, but may be two weeks later; they were over it. When they asked “How are you” they expected to say “Fine” so I learned to say “fine.”No matter how you feel, it’s what people want to hear. Right after her death, it was easy for people to ask “How are you doing.” But after a few weeks, they don’t want to ask that question anymore. I think they were afraid of setting me back.

3.5 Support Given to the Bereaved by the Church Members

What is the congregation role?

The church members have a big role to pray according to Dr. Wolfelt’s who enumerates the six needs of mourning for bereaved children. Acknowledge the reality of death, move towards the pain of loss while being nurtured physically, emotionally and spiritually, convert the relationship with the person who has died from one of presence to one of memory, develop a new identity based on life without the person who died, relate the experience of the death to a context of mourning, and experiencing a continued support verses adult presence in future years. Congregations are well positioned to meet these needs of mourners through the programs in the congregation and natural helping systems in the church which are not practiced by the presbytery, and which should help the bereaved who are voiceless. Therefore, as Mr. Fitzgerald states “when life hangs in the balance” to when death comes, funerals, grief, feelings, resuming your life, the particular tough situations like suicide, murder and AIDS, the future, secrets and their impacts and dealing with friends. This is a guide that is helpful to the youth with a web called <http://www.beliefment.com>. It is also clearly shown on plate 5, 6 and 7.1

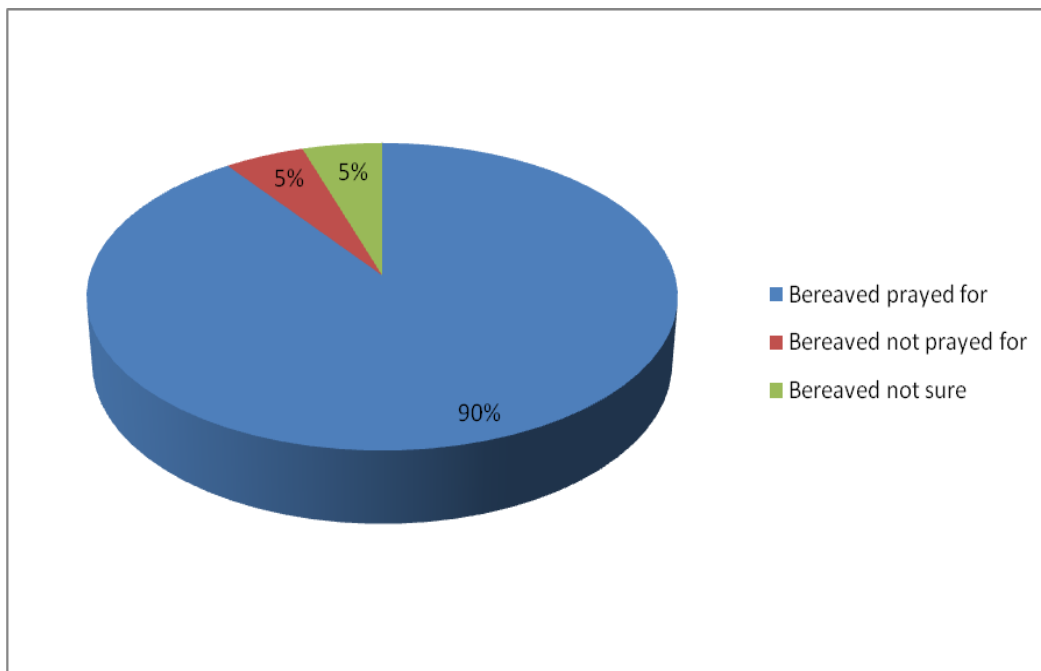
3.6 Role of the Church

The following are the support that clearly dominated from the questionnaires that the presbytery members offer to the bereaved families.

3.6.1 Prayer

It is clear that 90% of the respondents said prayers that were offered during the funeral were of great help to them. They felt strong and able to cope with the loss. But Wamwari said that there was a need for those prayers to continue even after the burial because she never got people to pray with her after the burial. Most of people who came later, said she was young and needed someone who can walk with her. This made her furious and worried.

Figure 2: Prayers for the Bereaved Family



Wamwari (2017) said that this period is a very tough period whereby she was not able to pray for herself. She says that the church should have a way whereby prayers can continue in the same home even if it is after six weeks. The support of prayer was very paramount to Viona (9th May 17) who was not a frequent member of her church, but she was able to receive support from the members of the church where her parents

used to go for fellowship. Mugoiri (2017) said that through the districts fellowship she was able to receive support that she could not have gotten if she was all alone.

3.6.2 Fellowship

The Bible records that (Psalm 133 how pleasant it is when brothers live in fellowship. In (Roman 12.9-16) be happy with those who are happy and weep with those who weep.

Nafula (12th May 17) narrates how she was encouraged to see members of her district coming for fellowship. They would come with different choirs because she was a member of the choir and she was able to sleep very well without any problem. They could also say some Bible verses that her husband liked to mention and this made her strong.

Rose (2017) who is a Taita said that during the burial of her dead mother, groups of people would surround the dead body and her seated near the deceased mother, and they would cry, scream, yell and sing several songs to praise her late mother and this helped her to cope first with the loss. Fellowship helps them grow spiritually, mind and body in the new state. It also create a sense of unity and belonging as a man despite the loss of the beloved one.

3.6.3 Finances

This was a core thing that featured to almost all the respondents. Nick a teenage said that he was happy that after the burial of his father his fees were paid in full the whole year. This made him have a smooth learning in school because he was not chased back home for fees as he used to before. Mwamba (2017) said that the church was able to offset a huge bill that was left by the deceased which he could not have been able to offset alone. Even though some huge bills and preparation require a lot of money, it is important to support the bereaved.

Edward Kipkorir (2017), church elder said the church was able to buy a coffin and pay for the house which could have prolonged the period of the burial because of the bill. Edward said he will forever be indebted to the church for the good deed they

portrayed. He also said that the colleagues at work were also of great importance during that period.

3.6.4 Material support

Most of the respondents said that they received a lot of support by bringing the firewood, cars for transport, tents, and chairs, public systems, Others brought assistance of food, cooking and also gardening. Mukanda (2017) said after the death of her mother the women come in large numbers and they cultivated the whole shamba without asking for the pay.

Other types of support that the respondent got was:

Social Support

Some colleagues at work according to Munyau (2017) said that they invited him for sports and the clubs to have fun together. They would also play table tennis, rugby, and other different games. Munyau the most exciting game that he enjoyed during that period after the burial was hiking. He felt refreshed and relaxed.

Spiritual Support

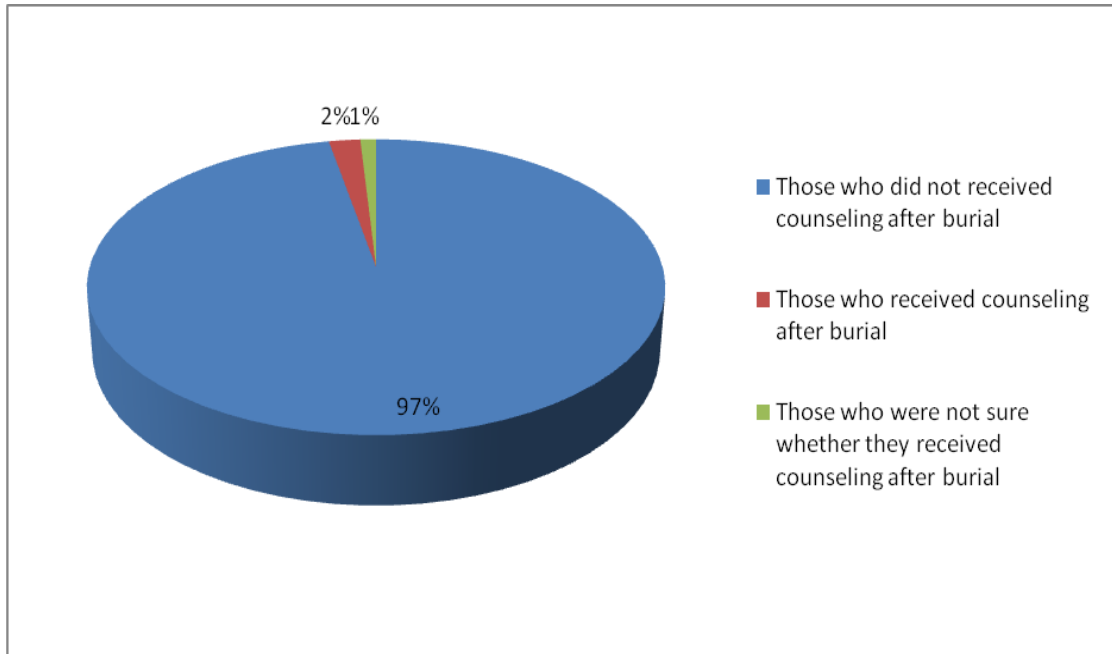
Miriam (2017) a deacon in Waithaka said that her friend invited her to join BSF (Bible Study Fellowship) which made her closer to God. She also said that she found a lot of solace from the BSF. She said through the fellowship she was able to gain a lot and to help others much.

3.6.5 Counseling

Sometimes people tend to have differently change of attitude is noted but not many are able to recognize that there is a problem in change after the loss. Wangui Kinoti said that it was through counseling that she received from the church elder which helped her cope with the loss and come to terms with the death. Even though many people do not recognize the importance of counseling and the church does not have counseling office for that use, Wangui Kinoti said it was through her church elder who introduced her to the counselor who assisted her. Many times people do not realize that

they sometimes become abnormal when death strikes and therefore people need a lot of support to be able to understand ourselves and our tantrums.

Figure 3: Percentages of Counselling Session after the Burial



3.6.6 Quality Support

Another respondent who never wanted to be mentioned said that he was not well supported. This was because he never attended church or any district regularly which could have helped him to be known. He said that the PCEA church elders are discriminative because they would have considered his situation and assist. They only assisted my mother who was a member of that church and does not plan for death. Therefore no resources were set aside for that since it is a taboo to discuss and plan for death.

3.7 Visitations after the Burial

According to the respondent, it was clearly revealed that the church members did not continue visiting after the burial. Most of the respondents said since the funeral they have never been visited. Others said that they received some few visitors which lasted for

six weeks. These visitations helped them cope with the loss for a while even though grief is a long-term process. Talitwala (2005, p.5), argues that grief is a long-term process that takes a long time usually one or two years for social functioning to be restored.

Mary Muloki (2017) said that she got several visitors during and after the burial of her husband due to her condition (fractured leg) which made many people to identify with her and also for the young baby who was two months old which she had gotten through cesarean section.

Muthoni Ndwiga (2017) stated that she was not visited after the burial because she got transferred immediately after the burial. So many people in the new place could not understand her situation. In the questionnaires administered the widows were asked whether they were visited after the burial.

Table 5: Percentage respondents visited

	Widows & Widowers	% of widows & widowers
Visited	6	29%
Not visited	10	48%
Not sure	5	23%
Total	21	100%

It was evident according to the respondents that 79% of widows and widowers were not frequently visited after the burial even though minimal visits were made after the funeral and other said that they were not sure. However, after the researcher asking them why they were not sure, they said that was not the time to talk about the loss even though others said that time would tell.

Damaris (2017) said that it was only the group of the widows in the church who were able to visit her twice in a period of one year which she says that she appreciated a lot through the widowed in their church were more elderly than her and could not cope

with them freely. The researcher concludes that more groups can be put in place for the widows and widowers and arranged according to their age. There were a few children that were mentioned who are always forgotten and forsaken. Mostly they think that the children do not require a lot of assistance after the death of their parents.

3.7.1 Precautions

Those visiting the bereaved should note that children need concrete reassurance that they are safe, such as locking the doors, windows at night and pray with them and provide age-appropriate explanations and preparations. Hence give the children clear, definite explanations of what occurred and what is going to happen next. The more they know about what really happened the less time they will spend imagining such possibilities. It also applies even when the child has witnessed the incident, as they are not always able to understand what they have seen. However children's fear should be taken reassurance seriously and truthful information can address immediate fears about safety, and the safety of other family members such as those who may be absent

3.8 Conclusion

Although many insurance companies in Kenya have in recent years introduced what is commonly referred to as last expenses cover PCEA Milimani has not benefited. It is evident that the main source of support for the members is basically the church, family among others. Therefore, it is crucial for the church to come up with clear arrangement to aid the bereaved before, during and after burial. To accomplish this, prayers, fellowship, finances social support, counseling are among the many roles the church can take part in to help the bereaved overcome the suffering.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE CHALLENGES THE PRESBYTERY ENCOUNTERS IN SUPPORTING THE BEREAVED FAMILIES DURING AND AFTER THE BURIAL

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher identifies the challenges that the presbytery encounter in supporting the bereaved families during and after the burial. During the interview, the researcher realized that a church like PCEA Langata visit a bereaved person with a token of Ksh 5000 after death since it was very difficult to plan for death. It was clear that there was no budget allocated at hand to support when death occurs by the bereaved. Some of the challenges that came up so apparently from the clergy, youth pastors, Evangelists, children coordinator, Elders, Women Guild leaders and PCMF leaders and Brigade office were as follows:

4.1.1 Financial Constraints

The issue of finance has come out clearly from all the leaders that the researcher interviewed from this presbytery. It was noted that in the Milimani South presbytery, the only funds that are accounted for is for the presbytery members. The moderator of Milimani South presbytery Dr. Gicheru said that the presbytery caters for the minister and his/her spouse in case of a coffin and the same presbytery conducts the service for the concerned person. If it only caters for the coffin only, then the money can't be enough to provide for all other expenses. In case a member of the presbytery had left a bill to pay, the presbytery can only come in as a friend but there is no policy on how to deal with such cases in case they occur. It is unfortunate that there is no standard amount of contribution that is set to cater for its members.

Rev. Njoroge (2017) whom I interviewed said that there is a need for the church to come up with a policy to help the needy and are members of this church to receive grand send-off during the burial without any problem. In parish levels, different churches depend on voluntary contributions from the congregations and well-wisher, but sometimes it can fail to meet the cost.

Rev. Njoroge said that only money that is set and well put in place is the money for the late minister's children education fund. This cash is only given to children after the burial of the minister. It was not very clear whether the spouse of the late gets any amount after the burial unless the committee decides to have a major fund drive for the minister's children. The assistance stops immediately after the burial.

4.1.2 Large Parish

The scarcity of parish ministers has also been a challenge to the presbytery.

The minister is in charge of one parish with six congregations, and the congregations have around 2000 members each. This becomes a significant problem in ministering the pastoral mandate. It was clearly shown that some ministers who have many congregations have not been able to give effective pastoral care. A parish like Dagoretti where a parish minister has five congregations, members are not well given the pastoral care. Even though the elders stand in for the minister, the members are never contented since they think that their minister is the only one who is mandated to give pastoral care. In some cases a lady who never wanted to be mentioned said that when her father was in the hospital, the minister never came, when the father died, he also did not attend maombolezi, but during the burial, the minister managed to come. This displeased the member since she wanted the minister to walk with her during that period. Therefore large parishes can also cause a lot of conflict amongst the church members if they cannot understand he has other congregations. The elder district may also not be able to meet the needs of all the members of the district because they claim that they are not employed by the church thus not given or paid money to do the pastoral work. Some churches may be situated in a slums area where the member of the district may not easily be gotten because of the nature of their work.

Mbuvi (2017) an elder happened to be in his pastoral duties and entered a village in Mutu-ini village and met one of his district members in another man's house sleeping. This member was his deacon therefore Mwangi was very unhappy to see that happening and therefore demanded to be given a small area but not near those slums.

The researcher views that it is important for the Milimani South Presbytery to have more servant and to have more subdivision to help the concerned leaders to serve their members well without any problem. Like in Milimani South Presbytery alone it covers parts of Kajiado, Kiambu, and Nairobi and if one minister is expected to be efficient and to do well, then such coverage area might not be possible for him.

4.1.3 Transport Challenges

In Milimani South Presbytery according to the researcher, she says that some roads are not well accessible in order for the leaders to reach to their members in case of death or illness. Even though the presbytery is situated near Central Business of Nairobi the traffic jam is also another factor that has contributed to giving pastoral care. A children coordinator said that she was expected to go and pray with a mother whose child passed on that very morning (Mirriam,2017). However, due to traffic for over three hours she delayed getting to the hospital until the mother thought that the children leader had deceived her. As a result, the mother became bitter with her since she could not understand why she took that long to get to the hospital. The issue of mode of transport to some leaders was a problem that came up so apparently. Some do not have vehicles they rely on motorbike or bicycles, and it becomes cumbersome. Others may possess vehicles, but the church is not able to cater for the fuel depending on the distance.

4.1.4 Work Load

It was noted that the research carried out from the Milimani South presbytery that ministers have very tight schedules and an overwhelming church work. The moderator and the parish minister of Nairobi West Parish says that sometimes it is not possible to administer the pastoral duties properly because he has always been having a tight schedule (Dr. Gicheru, 2017). For instance, I remember when I was interviewing him, he received several calls reminding him of the hospital visit he was to make that afternoon, the evening he was going for maombolezi and late evening he had a pastoral session. This was overwhelming since he had excused himself in order to receive the call. He said that is how tight and busy a minister can be. The researcher concludes that if all the leaders in the presbytery are like that, then it is not possible to reach all the bereaved members

needs after or even during the burial where they always want the minister to attend even in the burial programme committee.

4.1.5 Skills and Training for Church Leaders

According to Parkes (1996), assumption of support to the bereaved stated that “the person qualified to understand and help the problem of a bereaved person is another bereaved person” But that has not been the case according to the research done. It shows because one is chosen as a leader he/she thinks he is able to tackle issues of bereavement. Some people become euphemistic meaning they use words to children like “Your dad is asleep” “Your dad has gone for a trip” because they lack proper knowledge to address such issues. In most cases, the ministers and evangelists are entitled to handle death cases, and in most cases, they have general counseling knowledge only. They do not have loss and grief bereavement knowledge, and they are expected to handle and to tackle, yet in their pastoral ministry burial and bereavements are key duties. This shows that there is a gap that needs to be filled.

Evangelist Leah who is a leader in this presbytery of Milimani went to console a lady whose husband had died that morning, and she kept on telling that lady, “Don’t cry you are a born-again Christian, you should portray Christ who was strong in all through in his service.” (Leah, 2017) Leah had forgotten that even Jesus wept when he went to console the family of his friend Lazarus. The researcher agrees with the statement of Pilgrim's Hospice (2008, p.1) professional like social workers, psychologists and psychiatrist due to their professional training experiences and code of ethics will be more effective in rendering bereavement services. Since Leah had no skill knowledge and training on the same, she forgot that in such incidence every family or patients goes through the “five stages of death” according to Kubler Ross (2000, p. 134) which are.

4.1.5.1 Denial

The first reaction to learning of the terminal illness, loss or death of a cherished loved one is to deny the reality of the situation. “This isn’t happening,” “This can’t be happening”, people often think it’s a normal reaction to rationalize overwhelming reactions.

4.1.5.2 Anger

Here reality and its pain re-emerge. We are not ready. There we direct our anger to other things like friends, family or even to the dying or deceased loved one, like why had you to do this to us? Children said when his husband committed suicide. Why are you so selfish can't you think about these little children

4.1.5.3 Bargaining

The normal reaction to feeling of helplessness and vulnerability is often a need to regain control if only we had sought medical attention, opinion among others. When researcher's father died of the clot, the mother started saying if only I had a chemical to put in his head to emulsify the blood clot he would not have died. There are two types of depression primary and secondary depression. Primary depression worry about the cost of the burial in case of the bill left though assurance can be a major solution. On the other hand, the secondary loss is when the person losses his/her identity and status. How will she be referred such as widow from a wife sometimes all we need is a hug.

4.1.6.5 Acceptance

To reach to this stage of mourning is a gift not affordable to anyone. Withdrawal and calm mark this phase. This is not a period of happiness and must be distinguished from coping with loss since ultimately personal and singular experience- nobody can help you go through it more easily or understand all the emotions that you are going through. But others can be there for you and help comfort you through this process. The best thing you can do is to allow yourself to feel the grief as it comes over you. Resisting it only will prolong the natural process of healing.

4.1.7 Difference in Age

Age has been an issue that has clearly been noted within the leadership of the presbytery. The two parishes interviewed, I realized that they have an informal program is PCEA Langata and PCEA Nairobi West where the widows/widowers are called and given a seminar by a person who is either bereaved or not bereaved. Nairobi West Parish

Dr. Kimani handles the issue of the bereaved. The parish is lucky because it has trained personnel. The problem is the other parishes which do not have such personnel.

In the presbytery, the researcher has noted that they were not able to separate the groups of the widows & widowers because they are few and the same time they think they have similar problems. Most of the widows according to the researcher says that they go to other churches where each need of every widow/widower is addressed. This will hence reduce the giving in the church. At the same time, there is no single time either the widows/widowers are being addressed each separately. They are always together. Mwara (2017) a widower said that “they are assumed that men are strong and they are expected to keep to their feelings to themselves. The researcher view is that perhaps because of the expectation that they are strong, they are left out even when they lose children. The researcher also feels that the age gap is something that has been a challenge in addressing the issue of bereavement.

4.1.8 Social status

In this presbytery, there is a combination of urban, semi-urban and rural churches. Those in the urban churches want to be addressed by people of their status or higher above. King’ori (2017) said that he cannot waste his time listening to their elder because he had nothing to offer as he is not educated like him. The ones in the rural settings also say likewise that they do not want to be attended to by those people of a high class because they may not understand their problems. Therefore there is a need for the Milimani South presbytery to look to diverse dynamics to be able to address the challenges that they face in supporting the bereaved families during and after the burial. The youth in town and children would also recommend someone who is of their status, and therefore it becomes difficult to address issues on bereavement to the families.

4.1.9 No Policies Set in Place

In this presbytery, there is no clear-cut policy which has been laid down and structured to be used in future. The table below shows the respondents who said whether there is any policy for the bereaved.

Table 6: Percentage policies for the Bereaved from Different Respondents

Respondents	Policy (%)	No Policy (%)	Not sure (%)	Total (%)
Children & youth	6(20)	7(25)	16(55)	29(100)
Adults	5(24)	11(53)	5(23)	21(100)
Widows & widowers	4(19)	10(48)	7(33)	21(100)
Elders	3(14)	12(58)	6(28)	21(100)
Clergy	2(28)	4(58)	1(14)	7(100)

It has clearly shown that the presbytery should come up with a well-elaborated policy which can be used by every bereaved person in this presbytery. From Table 4, 55% of youth and children, 23% of adults, 33% of widows and widowers, 28% elders, and 14% clergy, they were not sure whether there was any policy for the bereaved since they are being left out when the issue of death is being discussed. Therefore, the presbytery should arise to address the occasion. The parish deals with the issue of bereavement on their own according to their strength. This can also divide the members because they will always compare themselves to other parishes and think their leaders are not considering them.

4.1.10 Identity Crisis

Elder Edward felt guilty and wasted knowing that he was trying to fulfill his pastoral mandate only to get into the problem. After Elder Edward narrated the episode to his wife, the wife became wild and told him he must have been sleeping with that widow for a while which brought a lot of conflicts, and at the end, the wife reported him to the church whereby investigations were done, and Elder Edward was found guilty.

4.1.11 Challenges From the Social-Cultural Context

Individual are influenced by social-cultural factors of different levels from the persons in the immediate environment up to the broader “Microsystems” and “exosystem” that include large groups of people (Class 2005 & Stuart 2004, p.111).The response of others to the bereaved person’s proximate environment may have the particularly strong influence of how they experience their grief (Class, 1999P.122).

4.1.12 Poor Communication

Even though we are in the era of digitalization, it was noted that in Milimani South Presbytery, communication had been a great challenge. According to the hierarchy of PCEA, deacon passes on information to the Elder district, and he passes on to the minister in charge. In case a member disagreed with an elder concerning an issue, sometimes the information cannot reach the minister in time. In some cases, other quarter informs the minister and wonders why the concerned elder had not passed the information.

4.1.13 Insecurity

According to Rev. Dr. Gicheru, a minister of Nairobi West Parish and the moderator of the presbytery said, “It is sometimes difficult to visit a widow/widower alone because his identity and that of the bereaved will be questioned. Edward (2017) a church elder narrated how he received a call from a widow who wanted some prayers in her home because she was sick. On arrival the widow welcomed the elder and asked him to kindly pray with him while sleeping on her bed, as she stretched her hand to show the Elder the bedroom which was near the sitting room, she said that when she stood, she would always faint or fall. Elder unconsciously entered into the bedroom of the sick lady. Upon his entering the lady undressed herself locked the door and threw the key through the widow. He asked Elder Edward to satisfy her sexually. The elder resisted, but the lady said: “if you don’t, I will scream all over and say that you wanted to rape me.” There was nothing much that elder Edward had to do other than to sleep with the lady because she wanted the lady to embrace him.

4.1.14 Widows and Widowers mistaken

In the questionnaire given, it was noted that the Presbytery, there were few churches that widows have been ordained as elders unless a spouse dies while in service. In PCEA Langata, the group of widows and widowers were so excited when they witnessed an ordination ceremony of elder Rachael whose husband had died some years back. The members may sideline her and think that she might effectively support those that are widowed because she was a widow.

Murage (2017) said that they fear working or going to a district with a widow because it would be hard to convince people that one was seriously on a pastoral mission. Wanjiku, a widow, justifies herself and say even though she was mistaken she always take refuge in God.

4.1.15 Double taboo

According to Oswin (2001), double taboo refers to as death and disability over protectiveness often leads to disempowerment. For instance, some individuals may not be encouraged to say goodbye to their loved ones, may not attend the funeral of their loved ones until many months or years later. Indeed some may never be told about the death of a family member. Therefore the Milimani South presbytery has not given this priority and if they have no record shown.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE ROLE PLAYED BY THE PRESBYTERY CHURCH LEADERS IN ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED BY THE BEREAVED FAMILIES

5.1 Introduction

The PCEA church has not entirely addressed the challenges faced by bereaved families. However, it is a pastoral mandate for every leader to offer comfort to the bereaved families through the scripture reading and their presence. In most cases, the bereaved families may unlikely remember much of what was said, but they will remember those who offered support in their loss. In addition, during ordination into the priesthood, the clergy are exhorted to extend the ministry of pastoral care and counseling to those who require it particularly the sick, the poor, and the lonely. The researcher interviewed different leaders. These included the Reverends, Elders, Youth pastors, Chaplain, Evangelists and the Children Co-coordinators. According to the study, it showed that most leaders were in the age bracket of between twenty-nine to forty. There were no leaders who were below twenty-five years. This is mostly considered that after twenty-five years you are mature and you will be able to hold any office.

Most of those leaders have been in the church leadership between 7 to 12years. In the questionnaire given, the bereaved were asked who were the first people to arrive at the scene or at home after the loss? Most of them said that their Reverend was the first person and the evangelist. When the same people were asked who in your church is entrusted in counseling the bereaved families? They replied that it was the parish minister who was highly noted, followed by the elder and the evangelist. The following pie chart shows how the bereaved rated their pastoral caregivers. This means that the parish Minister has a great role to play in addressing the challenges encountered by the bereaved members.

Kellen (2017) a bereaved adult said that even though she was a Presbyterian, most of the people who visited her home after the death were her neighbors later her workmates the pastor come during the burial which she felt that she was okay though,

she expected her parish minister to have been the first person. However, various roles prominently featured in the questionnaires that the PCEA leaders played in addressing the challenges encounters by the bereaved families.

5.2 School Fees Payment

In the PCEA Langata parish, it has clearly shown that the leaders have a church organization that is called the Board of social responsibilities where orphans or the children from the low-income family's school fees are fully paid. The leaders of the Woman's guild also have the role to play in that they also identify the needy case and pay for five children every year. Apart from fees, they also make a point of visiting the family once in a while to pray with the family. At PCEA Kuwinda in Karen parish when their houses and items were destroyed, the church leadership mobilized members to come in and give a hand in assisting those who were affected. This is because the loss is not determined by death but also through the loss of important things. A family at Kijiji said that it was through the parish minister and district elders' effort that their house was reconstructed after the earthquake.

5.3 Fund Drive

Joan (2017) narrated a story of how her two sons were joining the University of Nairobi when his husband was shot by thugs and became bedridden. The money they had set a part was used for the medical bill of his husband who later passed on before the sons had joined the university.

Joan (2017) said that the role the elders and the entire church did was grateful. They organized for a good Harambee which raised enough money for their school fees for the whole course and paid for the other siblings who were in the secondary school. This made Joan love her church and was very committed to her church to date. Mwende (2017) also said that after the death of her both parents due to HIV/AIDS her church in Dagoretti assisted her with paying fees for her brothers through a fund drive.

5.3 Prayer

Most members said that a lot of prayers were organized in their homes by the elders. Jack (4th June 2017) a youth member of PCEA Karen said that he was able to know that something was wrong when he was called home from school and found so many people than he used to see during district fellowship. He found people praying and asking God to comfort the ones who were left behind. That is when Jack realized that something bad had happened. Even though he felt that he needed to know through the right channel, he was able to cope quickly through observing people character.

Meldrin (2017) said that the prayers that were offered during the loss of her child in the maternity ward were more.

5.4 Burial Preparation

The other role played by the church leaders was burial preparation. Peter (2017) a member of the PCMF Presbyterian churchmen fellowship said that he would forever be grateful to PCEA leaders and all the district members of PCEA Mutu-ini and particularly to Kabiria district. Peter said that the death of his son came unexpectedly when he was drowned while swimming. He said he was unable to know where he would start and where he would finish. His district elder Janet Mwai (2017) allowed people to calm down and later told them since it is true that your son has died we have to start the burial preparation. The elder said that she would become the chairman of the committee since the rest had refused to take the position. The elder together with the family members prepared the whole burial, and it was a perfect ceremony that the couple who had lost the son enjoyed and were happy about it. Wamuyu (2017) from the same district was however not happy because the affection that Peter was given was never accorded to her. She was left wondering why the PCEA leaders have discrimination when it comes to assisting in the burial preparation. Different ways to support the full members during the funeral is shown in plate 8.

5.5 Solving Disputes

It is the role of the church leaders to solve disputes where they can. Muigai's two wives were in disputes over who was to sign the death certificate and where the husband was to be buried. Even though both were his wives and dowry was paid to each, the church leaders thus the parish minister told them that according to Kenyan law the one who has legally been allowed to sign was the wife who had done the wedding with the late husband. That is how the dispute was solved. Even though the place of burial brought a lot of problems, they finally settled to bury him in a cemetery where everyone could claim any position of the land.

Kasaine (2017) whose husband had died and was laid in Kajiado Mortuary required an intervention by police and church leadership where the two wives each come with a coffin to bury their own husband. Due to the leadership response, the husband was buried with the coffin that was brought by the eldest wife even though they had not officiated a wedding. Therefore the presbytery should shed light on such issues if they occur and in that case, it is important for the PCEA to teach its members for such eventualities in case they happen or they don't.

5.6 Counseling

Most of The PCEA Members said that they were counseled immediately the death took place. According to Kioko (2017) more counseling session would have helped him come up with the loss which he never got. Kioko said that in PCEA church very few sessions are done before, and after burial if any, which are needed.

Monica (2017) said that she didn't see the need for counseling because she was expecting her father to die after a long fight with cancer. She said that the counseling would have been helpful before her father died. Therefore the presbytery should support pre-death counseling which would help the bereaved cope with the situation.

Financial Support

Even though the finance that the leaders give to the bereaved may not be enough, it is important for the church to come up with a supportive group system which can help

raise the amount of money that can be needed. The idea of people getting back to their pockets after such an incident sometimes it can be draining as Mwololo (Daily Nation May 31, 2017) states of how burdening burial preparation can be.

Wanjiku (9th June 2017) whose husband died and he was a PCEA church elder said that the financial support that she got from the church that the husband was serving was overwhelming. The challenge was that any other financial support was not received after the burial.

5.7 Feeding the Hungry

Hunger does not know whether you are bereaved or not. Therefore the PCEA church has willingly been feeding the hungry in various homes for the orphans, aged and those who are poor. It has been noted that in all parishes in the Milimani presbytery, the Woman's Guild members always visit, pray and feed the hungry as the bible requires in (Matthew 25:35-40) that 'I was hungry, and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger you invited me in, I was naked, and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me. I was in prison, and you came to visit me.'

The greatest challenge according to the study was that much of the assistance was given during the burial preparation until burial but very little that has been noted done after the burial unless it was done individually. Joyce (2017) a member of PCEA Waithaka said that the church leaders visit her when they want her to be a guest of honor during the church project, but they don't want to know how she has been progressing after the death of her husband. The study calls of the PCEA to come up with after burial programs or activities which can help the bereaved express their wishes and move on after the loss. Those who were dissatisfied with the PCEA leadership offered several points.

5.7.1 Requirement of the Bereaved

The church should allow widows/widower to start a group which can support them even after the burial. The church leaders should also be well conversant of how to handle the issue of death of their members in case it happens. However, the

widows/widowers are mostly criticized when they behave abnormally. They need to be treated with the respect they deserve. They also need to be involved in church leadership e.g being elected as an elder to be a voice of others. There should be children programs that also need to prepare them in case any eventuality.

5.8 Visitations

In the questionnaire given, it was clearly shown that most of the bereaved were visited by their leaders although some were dissatisfied with the visits of some leaders. Muniu (9th June 2017) said that the visitation that he received was full of accusation and judgment since he was suspected to be the one who had killed his son due to the family misunderstanding. Therefore, the leaders never inquired the information the right way, and therefore this made many people not to support him through visitation. Elder Mwangi said that the district concerned should take the burdens of the burial which is not the case in any other home in case of such issue. Therefore it has become evident that visitation of PCEA leaders is one among other roles because, it is through them that bereaved are encouraged, comforted and they may share their experiences. It was also well shown that the leaders assist the bereaved also by listening to them and having fellowship with them.

Overcoming loss

The researcher had also asked the leaders how they help people overcome death. They had the following: They visit them in the hospital or at home and give them hope of eternal life. They tell them that there is life after death and life must continue even after death. However, they also help keep record right with the family by assisting them on advisory issues. Another elder from Waithaka said that she gave them shoulders to lean on. They would also pray with them and counsel though to some they would not expect death to take place. In other words, the harder they struggle to avoid the inevitable death, the more they try to deny it, the more difficult it will be for them to reach this final stage of acceptance with peace and dignity. It was noted that the burden of leaders in helping the bereaved could be higher if the leaders have skills and knowledge on how to go about loss.

According to the study, it shows that there are so few people who can offer their time daily in walking with the bereaved due to career, family, profession, church and many more. Therefore the PCEA churches should rise to the occasion and address the roles of the leaders in dealing with the bereavement. Most often than not some roles done by the church leaders in addressing the challenges of the bereaved families are done by local people, who have no knowledge or skills. Children and youth were not included in any setting because there is an assumption that they deal with the loss in their own way. PCEA church should also have a proper policy, well formalized and documented showing clearly the role of the leaders.

In addressing the challenges encountered by the bereaved families in the questionnaires of how the bereaved families react when not assisted after the burial. They said the following: They withdraw themselves from the church thus making the church growth to reduce and hence the church income to drop. More so the bereaved members take too long to heal, even though healing is a process that differs from each individual to the other. They blame the church leaders although some of them feel misused and wasted. However, there are others who say that they feel betrayed, disheartened, disillusioned, discouraged and other feel left out, and some decide to take a back seat even though they are capable. Others migrate to other churches to look for solace, other insight others due to anger and frustration.

Therefore, the PCEA church needs to put its record right and address the challenges that the bereaved families encounter in order to have a high yield or to be more productive. If the PCEA Milimani does not come up with solutions and way forward, the church will remain wounded rather than being a healing ground

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The chapter gives a summary of the entire study. It will first present the findings; later present the recommendations of the research on bereavement support systems.

6.2 Summary

The study dealt on church and bereavement; a case study of the presbytery in supporting the bereaved families before, during and after the burial. The chapter one was an introduction to the study with an assessment of the programs that the presbytery churches use in giving pastoral care to the bereaved. In the second chapter, the study investigated the support that the presbytery church members give to the bereaved families before, during and after the burial. The third chapter examined the role played by the presbytery church leaders in addressing the challenges encountered by the bereaved families. Finally, the fourth chapter identified the challenges that the presbytery encounter in supporting the bereaved families before during and after the burial. The data obtained was through the oral interviews, questionnaires, group discussions, and secondary sources. In the assessment of the programs that the presbytery churches use in giving pastoral care to the bereaved, it was established that there were no programs but few activities that have not entirely been formalized or documented. It was evident that no program has been laid down in the PCEA manual book (PP) practice and procedure on bereavement.

In the assessment, it was evident that the groups that were purely planned for, programs were for the bereaved adults, but rarely of children and the youth. The programs available after the burial had taken place but no pre-death programs. It was also noted that programs for the widows specifically did not feature in the whole study. This meant that there were no programs that have been put in place for widowers. The widows were mostly given most opportunities as opposed to the widowers. It was said that

widowers come to terms quickly than widows because they remarry not so long after the burial.

The other chapter on investigating the support that the presbytery church members give to the bereaved families before, during and after the burial, it was evident that the members of the presbytery members support the bereaved families greatly before and during the burial but minimal after the burial. The church members support them financially, socially, emotionally, spiritually and many more. It has shown that the bereaved appreciated the support that they received from the members. Nevertheless, all members were not supported equally. Those who were active members or full members of their churches were supported highly than those who were just members, and they rarely attended the district fellowships. In the fourth chapter, the role played by the presbytery leaders in addressing the challenges encountered by the bereaved families is well discussed. It has clearly shown in the study that the leaders in the presbytery face a lot of challenges such as financial, lack of transport to take them from one place to the other, large congregations where they can't be able to handle all the bereaved families. The high expectation from the parishioners is too high for them to handle. There is also lack of knowledge and skills to handle loss and grief, tight schedule, no structured programs and policy and many more. There was much assistance before and during the burial forsaking the after burial. The church leaders should note with the seriousness that after the burial, the bereaved requires them substantially to help them be in a position to reorganize themselves.

In the other chapter on identifying the challenges that the presbytery encounter supporting the bereaved families before, during and after the burial, It clearly shows that they encounter several challenges such as financial constraints, time, lack of professionalism, lack of trust from members especially the widows. Some of the bereaved are not cooperative. The high number of the bereaved as opposed to the previous years when death was not as rampant as it is today. It was evident that the bereaved were not visited frequently because they are many and overwhelming and some others isolate themselves from people, other migrates from other churches if their issues were not taken with the seriousness that they deserved.

Conclusion

It was evident from the study that there are no programs put in place to assist the bereaved and no adequate support offered to the bereaved before, during and after the burial. This has made it difficult for the bereaved to cope with the loss as they feel neglected and isolated. It is worth noting that instead of programs, the Presbyterian Church has formalized activities such as social welfare to assist the bereaved. However, the church members themselves try their level best to support bereaved families socially, financially, emotionally and spiritually but the magnitude of the support depended whether the person was a full member or active church goer. The role the Presbyterian Church leaders play in addressing the challenges encountered by the bereaved were not adequate leading to members feeling discontented with the church and its entire leadership. The challenges were due to large parishes and congregations hence not able to give pastoral care adequately. This led to some members leaving the church and stop involving themselves in church activities completely. The bereaved members should not be blamed for not reintegrating into the church life and activities since healing is slowed down it could take a long time for the bereaved members to recover.

It also came up clearly that the church should elect more leaders to ease the work of giving pastoral care to the bereaved since it is hard to plan for the death as it happens suddenly. It also becomes a challenge to support the bereaved family before, during and after the burial efficiently due to budget allocation constrains. Therefore, putting in place support programs can assist the bereaved members in overcoming the loss. However, professionalism in handling the bereaved was also a factor that required a lot of priorities as some members are not open. Lack of skills makes the leaders fail to give support required during the sorrowful season, and some bereaved families lack trust in their church leaders. Therefore, the leaders should be trained professionally on matter pertaining to bereavement, so that they are in a position to understand the behavior of the bereaved after death has occurred. The Milimani presbytery tends to focus more on widows who are many but widowers are left out and the solution to remarry immediately crop up. Moreover, children also tend to be left out from being given pastoral care although they are affected like grown-ups. Therefore, putting in place programs and

offering support that incorporate all members can be of great importance to bereaved in overcoming the loss

6.3 Recommendations

The Presbytery should come up with a clear policy on post-burial bereavement support system to be understood by all its members. The system should show clearly the support that the church gives to the bereaved families which should be uniform in all PCEA churches. The solution that was found was that long-term support after the burial was urgently required on the bereavement. The presbytery should ensure that the church leaders thus minister, evangelist are well-trained and equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to deal with bereavement.

Bereavement should be a mandatory subject in theological colleges since pastors are the major caregivers and specialized training in areas of loss and grief should intensively be addressed. Other books on bereavement should be available since there are very few works of literature on bereavement. It has shown that in Kenya, few people have written on bereavement as opposed to South Africa, thus making the local scholars to rise up to the occasion and save this crisis. The presbytery should come up with post-burial programs for the widows and widowers of different ages since they have diversity of interests as opposed to the old aged adults who may have been left by their spouses when they have been called grandparents. More elaborate programs for children and youth should be initiated. The church should also facilitate the bereaved to form support groups with psychosocial aspects. This will help address challenges experienced by the widowed like loneliness, rejection, suspicion, disintegration, question from children, readjustment to their new social status, associated with adultery and much more. Therefore the presbytery members should be encouraged to talk and share the loss without any problem. Therefore the presbytery leaders should encourage their members to join the district or home-based fellowship to be able to be given good services and support when the need arises such as during bereavement.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: INTRODUCTION LETTER



UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES

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P.O. Box 30197 – 00100,
Nairobi
Kenya

7th March, 2017

Dear Sir/ Madam,

REF: MAINA ALICE WANGARI- C50/83834/2016

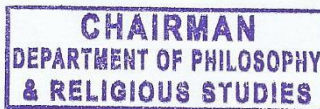
This letter supports that **Maina Alice Wangari** is a post graduate student in the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies at the University of Nairobi. **Mrs. Maina** is undertaking a Master of Arts Degree programme in Religious Studies and has successfully studied, been examined and completed her first year of study. She is now in her second year and is in the process of writing her final project report.

Apart from being her head of department, I am humbled to comment that she is a good communicator who is committed to academic excellence in her area of specialization. I would like to express that, **Mrs. Maina** is a very outgoing person, honest and relates well with her superiors and peers. I therefore, have no hesitation to strongly recommend her for any possible favour that you may deem appropriate.

In case you need to be furnished with more information, please do not hesitate to contact me on: 0723716790/0722593746 and my email addresses are: drifedha@uonbi.ac.ke or drifedha@yahoo.com.

With regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen I. Akaranga'.



Prof. Stephen I. Akaranga
Chairman, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies

APPENDIX II: SURVEY/QUESTIONNAIRE CONSENT FORM

I, _____ (participant's name), understand that I am being asked to participate in a survey/questionnaire activity that forms part of _____ (student's name) required coursework in the above-noted) university course. It is my understanding that this survey/questionnaire has been designed to gather information about the following subjects or topics:

- Bereavement
- Grief
- Self-disclosure
- Mourning
- Loss

I have been given some general information about this project and the types of questions I can expect to answer. I understand that the survey/questionnaire will be conducted in person/by phone/by email/on the internet and that it will take approximately _____ of my time to complete.

I understand that my participation in this project is completely voluntary and that I am free to decline to participate, without consequence, at any time prior to or at any point during the activity. I understand that any information I provide will be kept confidential, used only for the purposes of completing this assignment, and will not be used in any way that can identify me. All survey/questionnaire responses, notes, and records will be kept in a secured environment. The raw data will be offered to me within four months of the completion of the course assignment. If I decline it, it will be destroyed by the researcher. I will also be provided with a copy of the student assignment at my request.

I understand that the results of this activity will be used exclusively in the below-named student's (university course assignment and none of the information I provide will be published, in any form, in any journals or conference proceedings.

I also understand that there are no risks involved in participating in this activity, beyond those risks experienced in everyday life.

I have read the information above. By signing below and returning this form, I am consenting to participate in this survey/questionnaire project as designed by the below named university of Nairobi student.

Participant name): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX III: CLERGY AND CHURCH LEADERS

My name is Alice Maina. I am currently pursuing a masters of Arts in Religious Studies at the University of Nairobi. Please fill in the following questionnaire and give additional information which will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will be used for the MA thesis.

Answer all questions by either filling in the blank or ticking the option that applies to you. Questionnaires for church leaders.

Section A

Personal Details

(a) Age

19-28

29-38

39-48

49 and above

(b) Gender

Male

Female

(c) Marital status

Married

Single

Divorced

Separated

Widowed

(d) Highest level of education

Primary

Secondary

Tertiary

University

(e) What position do you hold in church?

General assembly official

Moderator

Parish minister

Nun

(f) How long have you been in church leadership?

1-8 years

7-12 years

13-19 years

Over 20 years

Section B

To establish the support the PCEA milimani presbytery leaders give to the bereaved families.

1. After how many days does the church visit when a member dies and why?
2. Do you openly share grief with members of a family when they lost a loved one?

Yes

No

3. How long does the church mourn with the bereaved?

Till burial

After burial

What period should the mourning take place?

Six weeks

Few days after burial

After 2 years

4. Does the church have specific program for the bereaved members of the church?

Yes before the burial

Yes after burial

Nil

If yes after burial mention them.

Which programs do you think suite the bereaved? Mention them.

5. How do you as a leader deal with pre-death preparation for our members?
-

(i) How do you help people to criticize death in case of dying person?

(ii) How does the church pronounce to the members of the family in case they are called to do so?

(iii) Does the church leadership have policy on visiting or helping the bereaved. If any mention the policy.

6. Are the church leaders trained to provide necessary help to the bereaved professionally?

Yes

No

If yes explain _____

If no explain _____

7. Does the church organize training programs for the church leaders to enable them help the bereaved families overcome grief?

Yes

No

If yes which program

If no why do you think they fail to organize training programmes?

8. Which challenges does the church encounter in helping the bereaved mention them if any

9. In which ways do we do to avoid those challenges?

10. At what extent does the church support the bereaved before and after the burial?

11. What role do you think the church have played in addressing the challenges encountered by the bereaved families?

If any mention them

If no mention the roles you think are good in addresssing the challenges encountered by the bereaved families?

12. Do you think the church leadership have been able to address the challenges encountered by the bereaved families

Yes

No

If yes mention

13. Who are entrusted by the church leadership to counsel the bereaved before and after the burial?

14. What manner of assistance does the church leadership offer to the bereaved families before and after the burial ?

15. Why do you think some bereaved members migrate to other churches after the burial?
If any mention

APENDIX IV: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE BEREAVED CHILDREN

1. What is your age?

10-12 years

13-14 years

15-16 years

17-18 years

2. Are you in primary or secondary school

Primary

Secondary

3. How old were you when a member of your family died? _____ years

4. Who was the family member who died Brother

Sister

Father

Mother

5. When did the member of your family die? 2010-2011

2012-2013

2014-2015

2016-2017

6. Who were the first people to visit you when a member of your family died?. (You can tick more than one)

Neighbors

Church representative

Relatives

Schoolmates

Chief

7. If the church representative visited you, tick the help they gave you (you can tick more than one)

Food/clothing

Prayers Money

Counselling

None of the above

8. Were there other groups of people who visited you before the burial?

Yes

No

If Yes, who Clergy Neighbor Friends Not sure

If yes, who

Clergy

Neighbor

Friends

Not sure

9. How often does the church leadership accompany the bereaved back home after burial?

Always

Sometimes

Rarely

Never

Not sure

Are there social groups outside the church which support bereaved families?

Yes

No

If yes write them down

10. In which of the following stages did those social groups offer support?

Before burial

During burial

After burial

(You can tick more than one choice as it applies to you)

List down the type of support they gave during and after burial

APPENDIX V: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE BEREAVED ADULTS

1. Gender

Male

Female

2. Age

15-19

20-25

25-40

40 and above

3. Education

Primary

High school

Certificate/diploma

Degree

College/ university

Post graduate

4. How long have you been bereaved?

1-4

5-8

9-12

13 and over

5. Whom did you loose?

Child

Husband

Wife

Mother

6. Mention if any other and what role he person played in your life

7. Which way did the church assisted you?

Pastoral care

Finance

None

8. Does the church have programmes for the bereaved?

Yes

No

Not aware

If yes, which one _____

If No why _____

If not aware why _____

9. Has the members of the church assisted you in anything?

Finance

Cooking

Arrangements

None of the above

10. What was your feeling after you were bereaved?

Guilt

Shame

Anger

Hatred

11. Which one best describes your church leadership in response to church bereavement?

Initiate involvement

Offer support when needed

Giving assistants only when there is a problem

Talking and criticizing

12. Does the church have subgroups with certain age in order to address their needs perfectly?

Yes

No

If yes, name them and their age group _____

13. Are the members involved in preparation of the burial?

Yes

No

Explain your answer _____

14. Does your church sometime have methods and programmes for the bereaved?

Yes

No

Name them

SECTION B

1. After how many days does the church visit when member dies?

2. Do you openly share grief with members of a family when they lose a loved one?

3. How long does the church mourn with, the bereaved?

Till burial

After burial

4. Does the church have specific programmes for its bereaved members of the church?

Yes, before burial

No, after burial

If yes after burial mention _____

5. Do the church leaders have knowledge and skills to provide the necessary help to the bereaved?

Yes

No

Does the church organize training programmes for the church leaders to enable them to help bereaved families overcome sorrow?

If yes, which programmes? _____

Mention the areas of training

APPENDIX VI: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR BEREAVED YOUTH

Section A

(a) Age

19-23

29-38

39-48 49-58

59 and above

(b) Gender

Male

Female

(c) Marital status

Married Single

Divorced

Separated

Widowed

(d) Occupation

Civil servant

Unemployed

Self-employed

Casual

Private employed

(e) High level of education

Primary

Secondary

University

None

(f) Age of most recently deceased at the time of death

0-10 11-20 21-30

31-40 41-50

51 and above

(g) Year of death

2000-2005

2006-2011

2012-2016

(h) Your relation to the deceased

Wife Husband

Brother

Sister

Son

Daughter

Father

Mother

(i) Cause of death

Short illness

Long illness

Accident

Suicide

Murder

(j) Place of death

Hospital

Home

Abroad

Unknown

(k) Where were you at the time of death?

Present

Absent

To establish the support to the bereaved by the church leadership

1. How long have you been a member of a PCEA?

2. When you lost your family member, did the church representatives visited you?

Yes

No

If yes, tick in the list below those who visited you:

Moderator

Clergy

Pastoral team

Elder

Briefly explain how you informed them about the death.

3. How soon did they visit you after they learnt about the death?

Immediately

One day

Four days

Seven days

4. In the list below, tick the help they offered you (you can tick more than one as it applies to you).

Financial

Material

Fellowship

None of the above

5. What other help would you have expected from them? Briefly mention.

6. If your answer in question 3 is that the church leadership gave you some help, did they help you minimize your sorrow?

Yes

No

If yes, briefly explain how

7. Name any other groups of people who assisted you

8. Mention the help the groups gave you

9. Did the church leadership encourage you to openly express your grief as a result of your sorrow?

Yes

No

Briefly explain their reaction

10. How else did they show that they shared in your sorrow⁷? Briefly explain

11. After burial, did the church leadership continue visiting the family?

Yes

No

If yes, how long did the visits continued?

One week

One month

One year

20 years

12. If your answer was yes in number 10 above, state the type of help the' church leadership offered in die follow up visit.

13. In your own view, did you feel that the church support enabled you to recover from the grief?

14. Do you belong to any group of die bereaved i n the church?

If not why? _____

15. Does your church have programs to support the bereaved?

Yes

No

If yes, write down those programmes

16. How often does the church leadership accompany the bereaved back home before the burial?

APPENDIX VII: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE WIDOWED

My name is Alice Maina. I am currently pursuing a masters of Arts in Religious Studies at the University of Nairobi. Please fill in the following questionnaire and give additional information which will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will be used for the MA thesis.

Answer all questions by either filling in the blank spaces, or ticking the option that applies to you.

1. Age
 - 19-28
 - 29-38
 - 39-48
 - 49 and above
2. Gender
 - Male
 - Female
3. Marital status
 - Married
 - Single
 - Divorced
 - Widowed
4. Highest level of education
 - Primary
 - Secondary
 - Tertiary
 - University
5. How long have you been in the PCEA church?
 - 1-10 years
 - 11-20 years
 - 21 and above years
6. Do you hold any position in the PCEA church?
 - Yes
 - No
 - If any other mention _____
7. How do the members take you as a widow/widower while serving them?

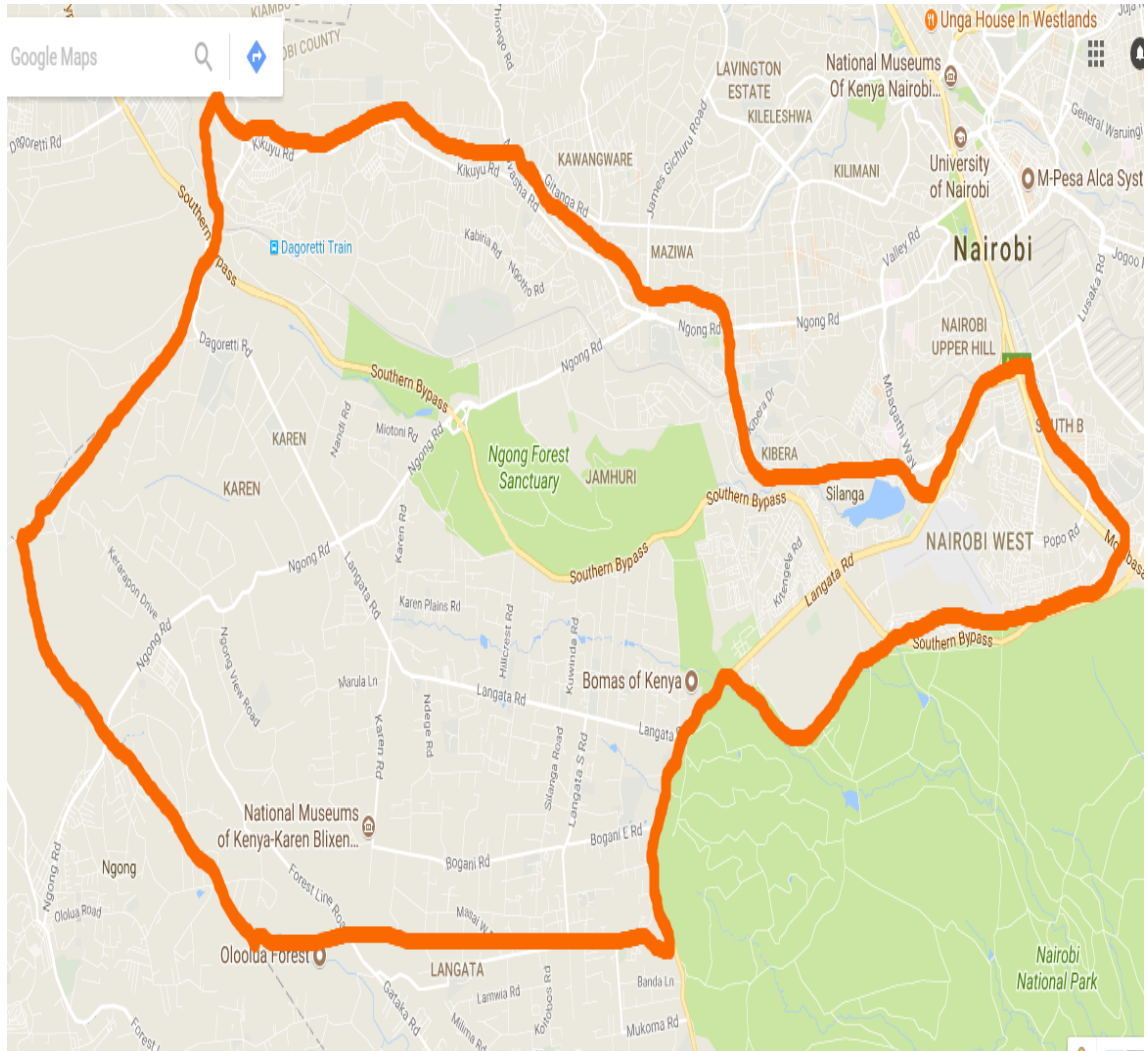
8. How long have you been widowed?
- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-15 years
- 16 and above
9. What was the cause of death?
- Accident
- Sickness
- Murder
- None
- If there is any other cause mention _____
10. How soon did the PCEA church visit you?
- _____
11. How did you receive the message of the demise?
- _____
12. How did the church members receive the news?
- _____
13. What support did the PCEA church offer to you if any?
- _____
14. Did you receive other sources of support apart from the PCEA church?
- Yes
- No
- If yes mention _____
15. What support did the PCEA church offer to you that you would recommend it done to others if any?
- _____
16. What support did the PCEA church not offer that you would recommend it not done to others? If any
- _____
17. What other support did you get from the PCEA church after the burial?
- _____
18. Out of your own recommendation would you recommend a PCEA member to remain in PCEA after bereavement?
- _____
19. Does the PCEA church have programmes for the widows/widowers?
- Yes
- No
- If yes mention _____

If no mention the programmes that you find appropriate for the widows/widowers, in your church.

-
20. What challenges do you go through during your widowhood if any
-
21. How have you been able to overcome those challenges?
-
22. What roles are played by the presbytery church leaders in addressing the challenges encountered by the widows/widowers. If any mention.
-
23. Mention the challenges that the presbytery leaders encounter in supporting the widows and the widowers.
-
24. What do you think that the PCEA church should do to avoid losing its members after bereavement if any?
-
25. Do you think the PCEA church has done well in addressing the challenges the widows and the widowers go through before, during and after the burial?
-
26. Does the PCEA church leadership have policy/ies of visiting or supporting the bereaved before, during and after the burial? if any mention the policy/ies
-
27. What would you recommend the PCEA church to use to lessen the burden of widowhood?
-
28. Do you think that the PCEA Milimani presbytery should come up with a post-burial support programme to help the bereaved?
-
29. Mention the post burial programmes that the presbytery should put in place to assist the widows and the widowers overcome the grief.
-

A Map showing the PCEA Milimani south presbytery

Map 1: PCEA Milimani south presbytery



Plates showing various funeral services for different members of PCEA Milimani south presbytery



Plate 1: Ministers giving a final send off to one of their members in the presbytery



Plate 2: Ministers giving their last respect to their colleague minister



Plate 3: Seminar of the bereaved at PCEA Langata



Plate 4: Widows and widowers in their bereavement forum



Plate 5: A burial of a Presbyterian men fellowship at PCEA Mutuini



Plate 6: Church members carrying the body of one of their full members



Plate 7: Church funeral service for a minister



Plate 8: The moderator of the general assembly welcoming the president at the funeral service of one of their members

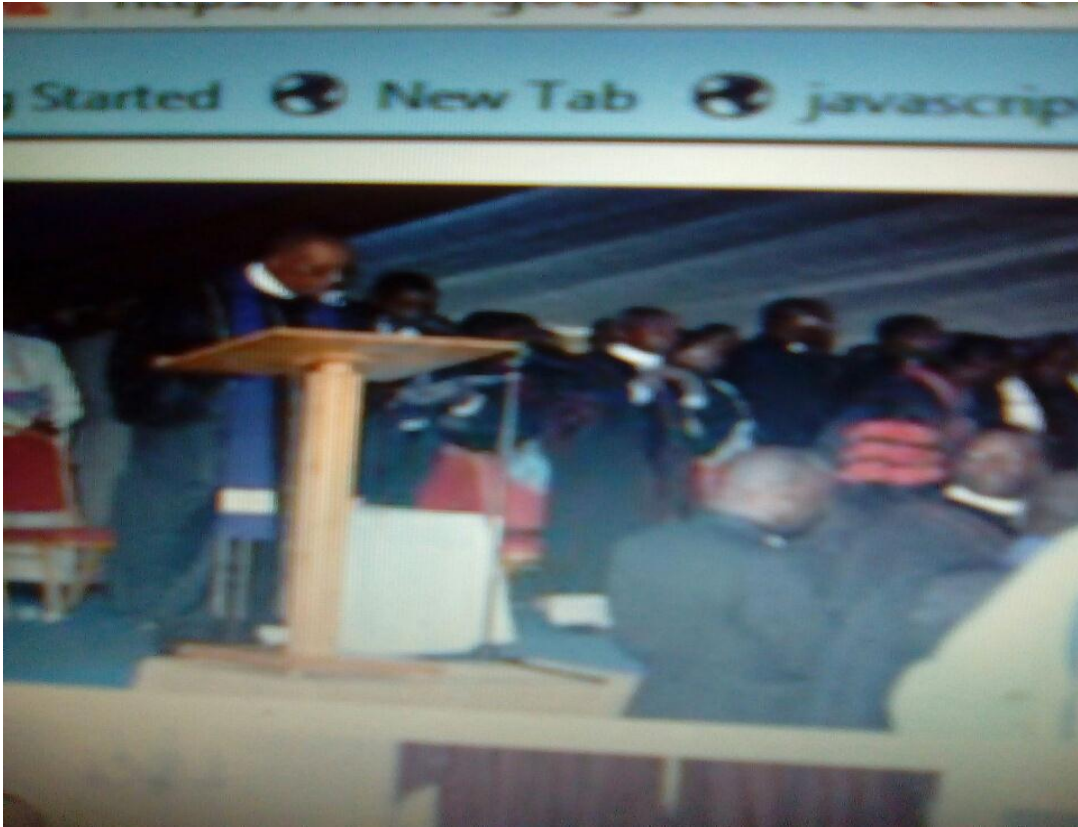


Plate 9: A minister preaching in the funeral of a women guild member within the presbytery

APPENDIX VIII: LIST OF INFORMANTS

Dr. John Gicheru	Moderator Milimani South	26/4/2017
Rev. David Gathanju	Former Moderator PCEA	28/4/2017
Rev. Francis Njoroge	Former Deputy Secretary	29/4/2017
Wangira	Christian Union Patron	5/5/2017
Nyokabi	Sunday school teacher	5/5/2017
Kim	Youth member	5/5/2017
Mwangi	Youth member	6/5/2017
Lael Omondi	Youth member	5/5/2017
Angelo Mwenda	Youth member	6/5/2017
Joel Okoth	Counselor	6/5/2017
Mary wangeci	Elder	6/5/2017
Liz Wamuyu	Member	6/5/2017
Margaret Wanjiku	Member	6/5/2017
Anabell Kinoti	Member	6/5/2017
Joy Okumu	Member	6/5/2017
Karen Mbechu	Elder	8/5/2017
Juliet Rugendo	Elder	8/5/2017
Christine Wamwana	Member	9/5/2017
Viona Mwingi	Elder	9/5/2017
Mugoiri Mbogori	Youth pastor	9/5/2017
Wafula Wekesa	Guild member	12/5/2017
Rose Kibet	Brigade	12/5/2017
Brian Mwamba	Elder	18/5/2017

Edward Kipkorir	Elder	18/5/2017
Mary Mukanda	Member	10/5/2017
Miriam Mathenge	Children coordinator	10/5/2017
Rev. Kamau	Parish minister	18/5/2017
Rev. Maina	Parish minister	18/5/2017
Mary Muloki	Member	20/5/2017
Muthoni Ndung'u	Youth pastor	20/5/2017
Damaris Otieno	Member	20/5/2017
Samuel Gitonga	Evangelist	23/5/2017
Ngure Muriigi	Youth pastor	24/5/2017
Henry Muchengi	Evangelist	24/5/2017
Job Mburi	Brigade officer	24/5/2017
Leah Wanjiru	Member	26/5/2017
Mary Mwaura	Evangelist	29/5/2017
Edmond Kivutu	Elder	29/5/2017
John murage	Deacon	30/5/2017
Marion Wanjiku	Deaconess	30/5/2017
Joan Kinoti	Deaconess	30/5/2017
Brian Mwende	Youth	6/6/2017
Jesica Mwenda	Member	6/6/2017
Meldrin Mwende	Youth	6/6/2017
Peter Kamau	Youth	6/6/2017
Janet Mwangi	Youth	7/6/2017
Wamuyu Kuria	Sunday school teacher	7/6/2017

Jane Kosaine	Elder	7/6/2017
Kioko Muli	Member	7/6/2017
Monica Ngetich	Member	8/6/2017
Wanjiku Muhoya	Deacon	9/6/2017
Joyce Mwaniki	Member	9/6/2017
Rev. Mbuthia	Parish minister	9/6/2017