

**THE IMPACT OF SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH'S
PASTORAL MINISTRY ON WOMEN: A CASE STUDY OF SUBA
SUB-COUNTY, HOMA BAY COUNTY IN KENYA**

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DECLARATION

This research project is my own original work and has not been presented for the award of a Degree in any other University.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this research work to my late grandmother Florence Angura for her financial support. The document is a true realization of her cherished dream for me.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the role of the SDA Church of Kenya in ministering to contemporary African Mothers in Gwasssi Sub-Station (Suba Sub-County). The main objective of this study was to explore the impact of the Seventh Day Adventists Pastoral Ministry on women, by focusing on Adventist women in Suba Sub- County. It points to the Church that African mothers have been crying for liberation, as they have been experiencing a serious ministerial gap in their lives. The study was conducted using a case study research design. The researcher undertook an intensive analysis on the prevailing situation using in-depth knowledge of the study variables. The study also employed stratified random sampling technique where various categories of leaders and women in the Church were interviewed. The total number of respondents in the study was 300. A questionnaire was administered to single women, widows, women in polygamous marriages and men. Focused group discussions targeting all women in the Church, pastors and elders were also employed. The study established that the work of SDA Church has not yielded much success in leadership. This has made many women join other churches in the Sub-Station. The study has also revealed that African mothers continue to suffer marginalization within the SDA Church and the church has ignored their plight. The study concluded that, there are many women suffering in Suba Sub-County, but the Church has kept quiet concerning their plight and is only interested in their numerical and financial benefit. The research recommended effective Pastoral Ministry guidance for pre-marital and post-marital counseling programs, inclusion of women in leadership positions and a review of Church doctrines which could be relevant to issues affecting African mothers.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADRA	-	Adventist Development Relief Agency
NT	-	New Testament
GC	-	General Conference
OT	-	Old Testament
RVS	-	Revised Standard Version
SDA	-	Seventh Day Adventist Church
ST	-	Saint
GC	-	General Conference
GNB	-	Good News Bible
T L B	-	The Living Bible

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Adventism is a Christian movement which began in the 19th century, in the context of the Second Great Awakening revival in the United States. The name refers to belief in the imminent Second Coming (or "Second Advent") of Jesus Christ. It was started by William Miller, whose followers became known as Millerites. Today, the largest church within the movement is the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

African Mothers: African women in the SDA Church with/without a child

Church: A community of those who have committed themselves to the person and ways of life of Jesus Christ and who are totally linked with Him as their Savior.

District: A jurisdiction within SDA Church, administered by Pastor

Dorcas Society: Women movement formed in 1898 by Mrs Henry to cater for the welfare of women in SDA Church

Feminist: Are those who critique women oppression and exploitation in the society.

Inculturation: The understanding presentation and concrete interpretations, thought-form and mentality of African about Christianity

Liberation Theology: Theological moment of the experience of Christian faith when it undertakes to consciously transform the world in a situation of dependence of the basis of the Gospel. L.Boff qualifies **moment** with any aspect of mediation.

Millerites: A group of people who believed in William Miller's teaching that in October 1844 Jesus was to come for his believers (Remnant Church in Revelation 14).

Pastor: Clergyman/woman, who offers Pastoral Ministry to Church members. He is also in- charge of District (five to ten Churches)

Seventh Day Adventist, the term "Seventh-day Adventist" is used to refer to that group of religious believers who were first known as "Sabbatarian Adventists", who were officially originally organized in 1863 as a church organization and became known as the "Seventh-day Adventist Church".

Suba Sub- County: An area administered by Sub Country Commissioner (a constituency) in Homa-Bay Country

Women Ministry: Women movement formed in 1990 to cater for welfare of women in the SDA Church members

Women oppression/exploitation: A distorted way of life in which women are dehumanized marginalized and subjugated by being denied their rights as real persons, being treated and mistreated as inferior beings and deprived of growth into human authenticity and self-fulfillment.

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter is the first section of this study and presents the study background, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, justification, literature review and methodology under which the study was carried out.

1.2 Background of the Study

The Seventh Day Adventist Church (SDA) was founded in 1863 by a group of people who believed in William Miller's teachings. Their convictions were greatly strengthened by the message coming from the pen of Ellen G. White when she received the Holy Spirit which instructed her on the way God was supposed to be worshipped in America in December 1844 and October 1848. As time went on they managed to get followers and formed a congregation of SDA Church (*Seventh - day Adventist Encyclopedia (10vol. 1976)*). Just like other Missionaries, the founders thought of spreading their church to other parts of the world. This is why between 1903 and 1905, they decided to send some Missionaries to Africa. The first contingent led by Pastor A.A Carscallen, his wife and Pastor Peter Nyambo was sent to Africa, who reached Mombasa in 1906, but found that Muslims had occupied much of it (Greenleaf, Floyd, 2000). The group then moved to Nairobi by railway, then to Port Florence the present Kisumu city. They unfortunately found the Anglican Church in the area; and then decided to cross the Nyanza Gulf, they reached Gendia village in Karachuonyo and established the first Mission station here. The first African converts were Isaac Okeyo, Thomas Ojiera and four ladies (Hanna Marindi, Maritha Okal, Rebecca Ogowe and Gori Peter). These new members were first taught reading, writing, religious doctrines and then finally baptized. This prepared them for marriage as they continued to maintain their faith. These converts worked with great vigor thus spreading the word of God in most parts of Nyanza, such as Kamagambo, Kisii and Suba Sub-County (Pastor Isaac Okeyo, 1989).

The pastoral ministry in the early church, the New Testament teaching emphasized the caring of all believers, and valuing each member as belonging to God's family. The members were called upon to share in the proclamation of the good news (Acts 15). Other qualities that united the efforts of early Christians included their commitment to Christ's kingdom and empowerment by the Holy Spirit to accomplish God's mission (Acts 6:1-7). It is noted that women who were part of Christ's followers included; the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well who served as the first-recorded public evangelist sanctified woman who provided hospitality and sustenance to Jesus (John 4: 1-28), and Mary who was the first to preach Jesus' resurrection even to the other eleven unbelieving disciples (Mark 16:1-8). The early church grew stronger as women of faith united their individual ministry of teaching, leaderships, prophecy, prayer, and proclamation to build and strengthen God's work through their strength in pastoral ministry (Greenleaf, Floyd, 2000).

Just like in other Protestant Churches which emphasize on Church as a "Family of God" in their teachings, the SDA Church pastor's main obligation is to preach the same message in mainline churches. In addition, pastors are involved in local ministry, such as hospital chaplaincy, visitations, funerals, weddings and organizing religious activities (Jordan, Anne Devereaux, 1988). "Pastoral care", therefore, is to encourage the local congregation and brings new people into the church. The various approaches through which the SDA women get involved in the church ministries define the twin benefit they bring for both the church women and leaders as well. The importance of equipping women for ministry as expected in the early church states that; pastors are right to insist on the biblical guidelines that reserve the office of elder for men and also minister to women; nature and provide gospel help to church members, and to present every man and woman as a complete person in Christ" (Colossians 1:28).

The Seventh-day Adventist Church has a worldwide vision of emphasizing and communicating the gospel message (Church manual, 2005, p13). It is encouraged by its outreach to more races, ethnic communities, and languages

more than any single Protestant body in the world. However, the church is expected to reassess the family situation and reconsider its role in the women's life and how to fulfill it. This is why Ellen G. White stated that, when a great and decisive work is to be done, God chooses men and women to do his work, and he will see the loss if the talents of both are not combined (Seventh - day Adventist Encyclopedia (10 vol 1976).

1.3 Statement of the Problem

One of the key issues receiving the attention of the SDA Church in the past years has been the role of its pastoral ministry in fulfilling the life of women as part of its congregation in Suba Sub- County. Records in log books show that Churches have realized growth in membership, but women who are the majority in the church have been neglected in various church decisions making such as rebaptism of women living in polygamous union after the death of their spouses. It has been proven from local Church records that men have taken additional key roles in the church than women. This has therefore limited the chances of women to address their problems in the society and even its entire church fraternity. Many women have done well in Literature Evangelism but this has been thwarted by men, that is to say, majority of pastors and church leaders are men, for example in Ranen conference (Migori and a half of Homa Bay- County) there are only two women pastors out of eighty five pastors. The problem associated with African mothers such as, stigmatization by the society, isolation (loneliness), financial constrains and stresses have never been pastoral issues. Leaders do not bother to understand women as people who require more effective pastoral care. This study creates awareness to the church to get some insights on the cry of women in our society. This will give women more chances to adequately address their problems effectively.

Women have played a major role in church development and its spread, but the church as a family has not been reflected in Pastoral Ministry in their life.

The study examined the pastoral ministry on women, leadership exclusion and historical background of the church in Suba Sub- County

In Kenya, the SDA church has not taken effective ministry to the African mothers with the seriousness it deserves, especially, the vulnerable within the society such as widows and single African mothers. This is why this study has emphasized on propagating Good News to all in discriminately.

In Suba Sub-County, the church has realized numerical growth of women; as the number grew women have been crying for liberation, but shepherds have assumed their problems though it is recorded in church manual that. “The women ministry department exist to uphold, encourage and challenge Seventh-Day Adventist women on their daily walk as disciples of Jesus Christ as member of his world church with an objective of Ministering to the broader spectrum,” (Vance, Laura, 1999,Church Manual,2005,p126).

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study was to explore the impact of the Seventh Day Adventists Pastoral Ministry on women, and specifically the Adventist women in Suba Sub-County.

1.4.1 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To determine how the SDA Church has promoted leadership among women in Suba Sub-County and the positions given to them.
2. To identify different categories of African Mothers in the SDA Church in Suba Sub-County and how the Church is ministering to them.
3. To investigate how the SDA Churches in Suba Sub-County are ministering to women depending on their marital status.
4. To examine the SDA Pastoral Ministry to African Mothers in relation to Jesus teaching on the Church as a “Family of God,”

1.5 Research Questions

The research seeks to answer the following questions;

1. How does the SDA Church promote leadership among women in Suba Sub-County?
2. What are the categories of African Mothers in the SDA Church in Suba Sub-County?
3. How do the SDA Churches in Suba Sub-County minister to women based on their marital status?
4. How does the SDA Pastoral Ministry on African Mothers relate to the teachings of Jesus on the Church as a “Family of God”?

1.6 Justification of the study

The problems of women are of great concern today not only in the church but also to the society at large. The emergence and numerical growth of women in the church have led to serious implications e.g. need for rebaptism for those in polygamous union across major denominations. The SDA Church is not exempted from these complications which require meaningful holistic approach to Ministry as intended by Jesus Christ, the liberator par excellence. In view of the fact that pastoral ministry has been, and is still, to a large extent marginalized within Adventism, an approach on “pastoral care”, is sought to bring healing, not by applying confessional truths, but rather to integrate, both “theory”, (e.g. Scripture), and praxis in a differentiated way to the women flock. A narrative approach has been used negatively to provide opportunities for “hurting” women who have gone to church to seek divine intervention but have mostly found themselves left alone, struggling with their personal challenges in their communities. The study sought to help the church to make radical change, to foster effective liberation approach which is more relevant and adequately fruitful.

The study is significant and sociologically relevant because it provides insights into the causes of women discrimination and its effects on the women, particularly her spiritual, economic and social development. It unearths certain issues that need to be addressed by the SDA Church policy makers and implementers, organizations, advocacy groups, and the wider society in their endeavor to bridge the gender gap in Suba Sub-County. Over a long time, the SDA Church has been involved in the welfare of women and the common good of their respective families. In reality the commitment has been a half-hearted and inadequate. Single Mothers cannot be grouped under one category and handled “en masse” pastorally because they have diverse categories of needs (P.N Wachege- 2003). This study sought to help the church to make the ministry more relevant to all categories of Africans Mothers.

The study has highlighted some misconceptions, negative cultural practices and beliefs that impede on women’s full participation in church activities. It was therefore necessary to conduct a theological investigation so as to assist the Kenyan society, and specifically the Suba Sub County to either modify such cultural practices or drop them all together.

Finally, the findings are aimed at contributing to the body of knowledge on the SDA’s pastoral ministry in the women lives, and her (church) reflection of Jesus’ teachings on the church as “family of God”.

1.7 Scope and Limitation

This study was carried out in Gwassi Sub- station (Suba Sub-county). Which is inhabited by ethnic groups of people such as the Luhya,Luo, Kisii and Luo Basuba. The study area comprised four SDA Church districts, Sub divided into: 18 Sub districts, the four administrative districts are God Bura, Lwanda, Magunga and Kisegi. All the four districts have a total of over 84 local churches and the station which covers 3/4 of Gwassi constituency, leaving Kaksingri station which is under the administration of Kenya Lake field, while

greater the part of the constituency is under Ranen conference (Migori and a half of Homa Bay County).

The study was limited to some church elders, members and women who gave minimal cooperation due to their personal commitments and fear that the study could reveal the church's weaknesses. A few local churches did not have church buildings and had less than ten active members, while some elders were taken to far places. This explained why less time was spent in evangelism; distance and financial constraints affected sampling of the respondents.

1.8 Assumptions of the Study

The following assumptions were made about the study.

1. That the information given by the respondents was accurate and reliable.
2. The church leaders and members were concerned about laying appropriate strategies that could promote pastoral ministry on women's life in the Sub Station.

1.9 Literature Review

This section comprises literature that discusses the objectives and theoretical framework of the research i.e. Scholars contributions on the SDA Church doctrines, Christianity in African culture and theology, women liberation and mediation theory.

1.9.1 Seventh-day Adventist Church Doctrine and Leadership

In the SDA Church manual, the Department of Women's Ministries uphold, encourage, and challenge Seventh-day Adventist women in their daily lives to emulate disciples of Jesus Christ and serve as faithful members of His world church (Morgan, Douglas, 2001). The mission of Women's Ministries is in the larger sense, common to all Christians; it uplifts Christ in the church and in

the world. The department assesses the needs of women in the local church and community, and utilises surveys and interviews. Emphasis is laid on counselling with the pastor and church leaders, brainstorming, developing strategies, and cooperating with other specialised departments of the church. This is in order to foster programs and activities which minister to women, by planning and implementing these and other initiatives which relate to women's specific needs, in cooperation with the pastor, departmental specialists, and other church leaders. Local church participation in annual programs and activities initiated by the field/mission/conference/union/division/General Conference is facilitated by the International Women's Day of Prayer, Women's Ministries Day, and small group ministries to support women and encourage them in service (Ibid 2001).

In an effort to understand Ellen G. White's position in regard to the ordination of women, her prophetic role and involvement in the founding and nurturing of the Seventh-day Adventist Church (William article nd, p 57). He examined the main passages that are used in support of women's ordination to see what they teach. Emphasis was laid on the Ordination Statement which states in part that, "Women who are willing to consecrate some of their time to the service of the Lord should be appointed to visit the sick, look after the young, and minister to the necessities of the poor..."(Ibid). He concludes that some SDA Church members have thought that the passage calls for women to serve as ministers in the same capacity as men where as it is not: However, young men and young women who should be engaged in the ministry, in Bible work, and in the canvassing work should not be bound down to mechanical employment. The context as per William's view is a call for our institutions to train young people for evangelistic work. Ellen G. White called for greater involvement of women in the work of the church. She not only encouraged a greater diversity of methods of labour, but also wanted women to see what great things they could do to accomplish the Master's mission. Surprisingly she had no concern with today's social agenda roles. Her statements neither

support ordination for women nor explicitly forbid it in the context of cultural diversity which was the purpose of this study.

In another related study focusing on the personal experiences of women working in pastoral ministry and church leadership in the Trans European Division of the Seventh day Adventist Church, Mariane (2013), analyzed how female Pastors and Church leaders experience their work for the Church, where women were asked to describe their personal journey and calling to ministry, as well as their experience on the way females were perceived in the Trans European Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church as pastors and church leaders. The findings revealed that the Seventh-day Adventist Church needs to be more radical in applying the twenty eight Fundamental Beliefs (Ibid 2013). She argued that if the Church is to experience growth and appeal to young people, living in a gender inclusive society, the Church needs to include even more conscious manner, the female voice in the Seventh day Adventist Church leadership. But the SDA Church has been slow in engaging with new thought for a relevant ministry to women. The study creates an awareness of the great need to respond more fruitfully to the African Mothers.

1.9.2 African Mothers

The condition of single motherhood is becoming more common in African society today, traditionally, Women who gave birth to children out of wedlock were either forced to get married to older men who already had other wives as a type of punishment or were physically beaten in some communities Wachege (2003). In some cases, a woman was banished from the village or she ran away from her husband to escape the wrath of being ridiculed by the villagers. Today, people tend to accept or see divorce as socially acceptable, the latest statistic shows that 38% of all first marriages end in divorce and church is not immune from that state (Nancy Van Pelt 1980 p 20).Such perceptions are of great importance to the study in relation to Single Mothers in Gwassu Station, as most of traditional practices are on the decline owing to continuous condemnation of Africa doctrines by Christian Churches and

human rights activists among other contemporary social groups. This challenging situation continues to pose a serious ministerial gap to the SDA Church in the station in her endeavor to effectively minister to this special group which forms part of the flock.

1.9.3 Extra Marital Affairs

The practice of extra- marital affairs, seem to be rampant among adult members in Botswana (Saxon 2011). He discovered that 11.8% of married adults in the survey had at least one secret sexual partner, and 42.6% of singles had an illegal sexual partner(s). Seventh-day Adventist adults' sexuality in Botswana is characterized by hetero-sexual multiple partners. Some of the contributing factors are economic, cultural and spiritual. Despite the prevailing influences, the majority of the adults (68%) still disagree with lax sexual behavior which gives hope to work for their restoration and empowerment. Similarly, Nancy V (1980) argued that the church must be responsible for the needs of their members, recognize the existence of family problems and present continuing education programs to all age groups.

The task of proclaiming the gospel of external salvation to people, no doubt has been the church's highest priority, but broken, suffering, and lost women have been left at the mercy of 'mother nature'. Though, the church has maintained that they have been listening to people and meeting them where they are hurt with real palpable love. Ellen G White posited that "a woman has the right to marry another man but if she has to (any other woman), then she should obtain a divorce legally on the ground that her husband was guilty of adultery, then she is free to be married to whom she chooses" (*Testimony to Monterey Church, June 6, 1863 p4*). Basing on such an argument, the SDA church leaders need to be helped through this study to get more knowledge on how to manage tensions arising within marriages.

In examining extra-marital affairs among the Luo, Wachege (1992) observed that these people have repulsive superstitions, erroneous and repugnant

traditional cultural elements which highly offends women in their very core. As a patriarchal society, the descendants of Ramogi adhere to the father's lineage with the tendency of maintaining a cultural prejudice against women. It then becomes traditionally acceptable among the Luo that women are inferior to men naturally. Similarly, Mugambi (2009) mentioned that the earlier days husband use to abandon all the wives except the first one. This would mean that the future welfare would be shaken. The feminist's interpretation of the Bible according to Elizabeth S F (2001) must be sort through particular biblical text and in a process of critical analysis and function. She noted that some bible texts (Ruth: 4:1 – 18, Genesis 16:1-12) perpetuate patriarchal structure not only in their original historical context but in our contemporary situation.

1.9.4 Church as a Family of God

Family image: In Pauline writings, elements of the church reflected in a family set up is evident in dealing with relationships while viewing church as a family, Paul tells Timothy to act as if all the Church members were members of a larger family (1 Timothy 5:1-2). Jesus Christ told His parents that those who are doing what His father wants are his brothers, sisters and mother (Mathew. 12 48-50). In Colossians 3:12-17, we can trace the family image of the church as a family of God from Jesus words and deeds; His intention was to find a new family; He gave the impression that He wanted to give a new orientation to the people of Israel (Mk: 1: 14-15, Lk: 4:16-19). His reference as the Bridegroom (Mk: 2:19-20; Mt 9:15) is an image related to family. It is through the bridegroom that family is finalized.

African ancestral Trinitology and Christology: Ancestor-ship is a sacred kin-relationship which establishes a right or title to regular sacred communication with one's own kin through prayer and virtual offerings. Throughout Africa, we encounter pastoral challenges such as second liberations, gender oppression, ethnicity and others (Charles Nyamiti, 2005).

Such insight is of great help to the shepherds in offering relevant interventions to the challenges affecting women.

African inculturation- Liberation: The inculturation approach is the starting point for the theory of liberation from socio-economic oppression and other exploitations, where Jesus is to be presented as “I deal Elder, per excellent” who accomplished his liberation mission to women (Wachege 1992). His perception was useful to the study in examining all forms of women oppression and exploitations since it focuses on errors and other forms of evil found in the African traditional dehumanization and dominancy on African women. Which could help the SDA Church on how to assess their pastoral ministry on women’s life.

In the Old Testament, families were expected to create a global family. Adam and Eve were given children so that their family could spread over to the whole earth (Gen 1:28). In New Testament, Jesus is brought up in a home model on the parent-child relationship that is expected of families in Israel. This in turn translates into God’s family which is extended and inclusive to all people in the world (Galatians 4:21-31), thus culture plays a central role in shaping the personal and social existence of an individual.

1.10. Theoretical Framework

The study was guided by the theory of mediation where one of its founder’s Leonardo Boff (1981) stated that, the theology of liberation is nothing other than the theological moment of the experience of Christian faith, which undertakes to consciously transform a world in a situation of dependence on the basis of the gospel. In other words, mediation should be done with regard to liberation theology approach. It begins with the moment of insertion, moment of social analysis, moment of theological reflection which should be done through biblical understanding of text i.e. hermeneutics, and the moment of pastoral planning. Christians should practice Christianity, expecting Christian faith to be faith that transforms human life, where all are treated as brothers and sisters of one father with deep understanding of Jesus word of “a

neighbor”. This relationship emphasizes that the church should be ready to offer meaningful liberation to the oppressed and the exploited one.

In the mediation theory, Wachege (1992) show the parallels differences as well as possible mutual contribution in view of African Mothers’ liberation. He explains that Jesus Christ became the true model and ultimate source of liberation, hence the attribute, “*Liberation*” to which ascribes to him”. In her study Kirima (2012) used mediation theory on the impact of some modes of women liberation in Kirinyaga County. Her study entailed interaction with participants thus confirming the importance of mediation through her practical suggestion.

The struggles of the marginalized people of his country, according to Boff’s works reflect a deep commitment as he pleads for a unitary reading of reality. Reality is one, he says, grace and disgrace are dimensions of this one reality. Stated differently, liberation-oppression/salvation-domination intersects in reality. The situations of oppression and underdevelopment are definitely manifestations of a disgraced reality among women. It is not however, the final word. God’s grace erupts even in such a debilitating situation (Boff, 1981).

The significance of cultural dependence as explained by Boff brought issues on the ideology and cultural forms which have virtually conditioned the thinking of humanity (Ibid). He maintained that his theological reading is mediated by a cultural reading of society. The study was also based on inculturation of the pastoral ministries and by cultural reading means. The critical readings of sociology, economics and political science are emphasized by Boff. These centers would determine what we are to think, what we are to learn, what we are to produce, how we are to produce, what the social relations of production are to be and how the international division of labor is to be organized.

This study was mainly guided by the theory of mediation, other theories such as reconstruction by J.N.K. Mugambi and liberation by G. Gutierrez, were found to be useful in understanding the phenomena under investigation. Reconstruction is about biblical exegesis, and how the context and text relates to a given condition, while liberation explores situations of oppression which are not compatible with Jesus' teaching on a true neighbor.

1.10.1 Theory of Reconstruction

Reconstruction requires considerable efforts of reconciliation and confidence building; it also requires orientation and retaining of the biblical text in reference to traditions (J.N.K. Mugambi, 1991). The theory targets cultural level differences which include cultural, economic, aesthetic, moral, and theological. It is based on the two ways, communication between the text and the context.

In support of the reconstruction theory, Hans Dieter Benz (2001) noted that the New Testament scholarship is all about Reconstruction, indeed, the New Testament itself is the result of the reconstruction. He suggested that the history of early Christianity can only be reconstructed from widely scattered pieces of information and tradition found in the sources. The Theologies of Paul and the authors of the Gospels and Acts are reconstructed by critical analysis of the sources. Much of their meaning has been obscured by thick layers of later traditionalism and needs to be excavated to bring the original contours into focus.

The reconstructive theology operates by treading "across four modes of intellectual activity- descriptive, prescriptive, prospective and postulative". The new world order for Mugambi, will require a new understanding of the church or a new ecumenism and a new corresponding theology that "should be reconstructive rather than destructive...inclusive rather than competitive...." He further acknowledges that the notion of construction and reconstruction is

inspired by engineering and the social sciences. He, never the less, attempts to articulate it as a theological paradigm. Nehemiah in the book that bears his name and Jesus in Mathew 5:7 are viewed as exemplary figures in reconstructive theological text.

1.10.2 Liberation Theology

Liberation theology according to G Gutierrez (1973, p36) is a liberating transformation of the history of mankind. This theology carries the following meanings:-

1. Emancipation from sin and restoration of life in Christ.
2. Freedom from oppressive condition e.g. social, economic, political, cultural ones and authenticity.

Liberation theology is triggered from a situation of oppression/deprivation and has for its finality a situation of freedom or liberty (Wachege 1992). He explains that there is an apparent harmony and concurrence with regard to themes treated by any liberation theologies. He adds that, perhaps it is superfluous to elaborate that a critical analysis of any Christian theology shows the following themes.

1. God preferential option for the poor.
2. A critical questioning of the bible i.e. hermeneutics.
3. Stresses on Justice.
4. Conviction and appreciation of the fact that it is people themselves to liberate, since they are capable of emancipating themselves and others.
5. Suspicion and working for the liberation of (liberation) theology from the shackles of ideologies of the powerful.
6. Justifiable impatience of bitterness with oppressive and unauthentic reality, confronting one's society and especially our African one, saturated with male chauvinism and dominance.

1.11 Hypotheses

1. The SDA church promotes leadership among women in Suba Sub-County.
2. The SDA Church pastoral ministry recognizes different categories of Africa Mothers among its churches in Suba Sub- County.
3. The SDA churches in Suba Sub-County minister to women basing on their marital status.
4. The SDA pastoral ministry on African Mothers is similar to the teachings of Jesus on the church as a “Family of God.”

1.12 Research Methodology

This section on the methodology used in this study, discusses the design, the locale, target population, sample and sampling procedures, research instruments, validity, piloting, data collection procedure and method of data analysis for the study.

1.12.1 Research Design

The study was conducted using a case study research design, where the researcher took time to do intensive analysis on the prevailing situation, using representative samples to give in-depth knowledge, by examining the impact of the seventh Day Adventist Church’s Pastoral ministry on women’s life.

1.12.2 Study Area

The study was conducted in Suba Sub-county, which is part of Homa-bay County. In this Sub-county, the first SDA missionaries were; Pastor Watson, Daniel Onyango and Mr. Spark (Isaac Okeyo, 1989). Here, there are over eighty four churches with a membership of about ten thousand followers. Women in each local Church are an average of 60% of the total populations. The study was conducted in the following locations; Gwassi Central, East,

South, West and North. The locations have been chosen because of the high population and strong historical background on the SDA church.

1.12.3 Targeted Population

In this study, the church leaders and women (married, married in polygamous families, single, widows) in the SDA Church provided information for the study. It was assumed that they are better informed on the pastoral ministerial perspective on their churches and how this has affected their lives as African mothers. The situation analysis was conducted in each District Pastor's office where they provided relevant information in their Districts (Godbura, Magunga, Kisegi and Lwanda). The estimated populations identified were eight hundred people. These were women drawn from three churches within the district and the church pastor together with the elders.

1.12.4 Sample size and Sampling Procedure

A sample is a carefully selected portion or part of the targeted population while sampling is a procedure where a fraction of the data is taken from a large set of data, and the inference is drawn from the sample is extended to the whole group (Mark et al, 2007). Table for determining sample size i.e. for a given population of 800, a sample size of 260 respondents would be appropriate to adequately represent a cross-section of the population (Krejcie and Morgan 1970).

The study employed stratified random sampling technique where various categories of leaders and women in the church were interviewed. A questionnaire was given to single mothers, widows, women in polygamous marriages and men. In addition, focused group discussions on pastoral ministry on women's life included all categories of women in the church, pastors and elders.

1.12.5 Data collection Instruments

In this research, information was sourced from primary, secondary and experiential knowledge from the church members which was facilitated by a

questionnaire and interview guide. The researcher was concerned with views of women and men in the church.

Closed and open ended questions were used to gather information relevant to the study, and a set of questions for Church leaders, members and women in each category were fourteen, eight and ten respectively.

1.12.6: Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted to test the validity and reliability of the research instruments. Pre-testing examined whether the research instruments were formulated clearly to gather valid and reliable data which could be used to answer the research questions. This was done by giving two questionnaires to women who did not form part of the sample size for the main study and interviewing one church leader and Pastor. Any unclear questions in both the questionnaires and interview schedules were rephrased accordingly. The reliability test was carried out using the test-retest method.

1.12.7 Data Analysis

Both qualitative and quantitative data were analyzed. Quantitative data was arranged based on the inference of the study themes, while qualitative analysis involved making inferences from questionnaire and interview guides. Comparison of the study objectives and data collected was done to identify any gap left, the primary and secondary data were reviewed, lastly a summary and recommendations of the study were written.

1.12.8 Ethical Considerations

Before embarking on data collection, the researcher obtained permission to conduct the research from the SDA Station Office. The respondents who were voluntarily chosen to participate in this study were provided with adequate information on the benefit of taking part in the study. Research Assistants were briefed on how the study was to be done in line with confidentiality and code of conduct.

CHAPTER TWO
WOMEN LEADERSHIP IN SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
IN SUBA SUB COUNTY

2.1 Introduction

In this section literature on women leadership under the SDA Church doctrine was carried out through a field study on the leadership positions of women in Suba Sub-County. It shows how the SDA church promotes leadership among women and the actual practices among their churches at the grass root level.

2.2 Leadership and Theology

The biblical emphasis on the social and the political character of God's revelation in history for the weak and the helpless has important implications to the task of leadership and theology today, and there can be no Christian theology that is not social and political in nature. Christian theology is about the God of Jesus who is revealed in the struggle of the oppressed for freedom. The biblical emphasis on God's continuing act of liberation in the present and future means that theology cannot merely repeat what the Bible says or what is found in a particular theological tradition; but it should assist and help all the denominations to acquire deep insight on how to handle the helpless such as the widows and single mothers in their churches. Theological knowledge should include all religious traditions, and tradition of a given society i.e., the Israel culture as recorded in the Bible is to assist in interpreting other cultures at a particular point in time. By studying the tradition, not only do people gain insight into a particular past but the past and the present meet dialectically. With knowledge in tradition people are given the freedom to move beyond it.

The biblical knowledge should centre in liberating the oppressed and the humiliated; leadership without liberation has no salvation and does not go far, leaders should note that theology is a word of judgment for the oppressors and the rulers. Pastors who fail to make this point clear are not doing Christian theology but that of antichrist e.g. the Pharisees thought that they were doing

the will of God while they were not. On Jesus character J. H Cone (1970 p 140) observed that, the historical character of liberation as an essential ingredient in salvation is also found in the New Testament, Jesus' message centered on the proclamation of liberation for the poor, and His exorcisms clearly illustrate that He viewed ministry as an engagement in the battle with the powers of evil that hold people in captivity. The healing of the sick, feeding the hungry and giving sight to the blind means that Jesus did not regard salvation as an abstract but spiritual idea or a feeling in the heart. Salvation is the granting of physical wholeness in the concreteness of pain and suffering i.e. in Mark 8 : 22 Jesus healed the blind man of Beth-saida to show his concern for human life.

Liberation cannot be separated from the historical struggle for freedom in this world. To be liberated is not simply a status one has to acquire, but an action one undertakes as a self- conscious subject. In Jesus ministry, visitation was His greatest concern i.e. sending the twelve disciples to every home (Mark 6:7). This is an area neglected by most church leaders as they minister to their followers. The early church maintained it (Act 5:42) "I... taught you publicly and from house to house". New Testament leaders balanced their personal issues and public ministries. In the contemporary society most churches, especially the SDA Church members are having personal stories which they want to share and they often do not speak about due to fear, and keep it to themselves. If leaders can make visitation as part of their regular ministry, members will grow to respect and trust church leadership and all will be ready to open their hearts, by that members will have the opportunity to see Jesus living amongst them and ready for their helps.

Mzee Songora Marire (O.I, 15/12/2013) asserted that, "a leader or pastor who visits people makes the congregation feel at home in their churches". Home visitation is important for the people because they need to know that their leaders care enough to come to their homes. A leader too will understand his people better, and hopefully love them more as Jesus did to Nain widow (Luke 7:11-16). One of the reasons for which the church exists is to provide a place

where troubled people can come for fellowship and for concern offered by its membership, togetherness, all find strength and spiritually support (Act 1:51-18). Church leaders are to remember their congregations' problems from time to time, and be ready to offer solutions to crisis which require help from someone outside themselves before they can get their lives back into focus. This crisis might result from loss and grief; spiritual, relational or behavioral. Although one may not be trained as a counselor or theologian, there are ways where one can assist them as Jesus did to women of Israel as recorded in Mark 7:24-28:

Then Jesus left and went away to the territory near the city of Tyre. He went into a house and did not want anyone to know he was there, but could not stay hidden. A woman, whose daughter had an evil spirit in her, heard about Jesus and came to him at once and fell at his feet, the woman was a Gentile, born in the region of phoenicia in Syria, she begged Jesus to drive the demon out of her daughter. But Jesus answered, "Let us first feed the children .It is not right to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." "sir" she answered, " even the dogs under the table eat the children's leftover." So Jesus said to her, "because of that answerer, go back home, where you will find that the demon has gone out of your daughter." She went home and found her child lying on the bed the demon had indeed gone out of her (GNB)

A leader who fails to emulate Jesus's character is like a Levite and Priest who passed the person who was beaten, but a Samaritan saw him and his heart was filled with pity. He went over to him, poured oil and wine on his wounds and bandaged them; then he put the man on his own animal and took him to an inn, where he took care of him (Luke 11 33). Shepherds need to be aware of the plight of women who have gone to the church to seek for divine intervention as that Gentile woman.

2.2.1 Biblical Teaching on Women Leadership

While the Bible does not support the practice of women serving as pastors, numerous passages speak clearly and forcefully to the inherent worth and value of women. In the New Testament women engaged in significant ministry, performing valuable service in sometimes-difficult situations. This is

readily seen in the Acts of the Apostles. Both Priscilla and Aquila spoke privately to Apollos at Ephesus (Acts 18:24-26), correcting his incomplete and flawed theology. Further, early Church period, women clearly played a significant role in the work of the Apostle Paul. In his letter to the Romans, Paul identified sixteen significant helpers in ministry (Rom16:1-16), at least ten of them were women who knew that the health of the church at Philippi would not have been for Lydia (Acts 16:13-15), apparently a benefactor to the church, and others such as Euodia and Syntyche (Phil. 4:2-3)? And of course, women made a significant contribution to Jesus' ministry. Luke recalled with appreciation their financial support and company with Him (Luke 8:1-3).

In the New Testament three important observations are made when reading the pertinent texts: 1) there were no known women pastors in New Testament times; 2) none of the instructions regarding church order include instructions for women pastors; and 3) some texts on church order explicitly forbid women to occupy that role. Paul, in 1 Tim. 2:12, states, "I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man" (GNB). This verse is introduced by a statement that women should learn "in silence and all humility," and it is followed by the statement that "they must be quiet." The word silence means being possessed by a calmness of spirit and peaceful disposition. It is set as the opposite to "teaching" and "having authority over a man." Paul does not expect that women will not or cannot learn or teach (compare with Titus 2:3-5 and 2 Tim. 1:5; 3:14:15). He states that they cannot teach nor have authority over men. Thus, they cannot have a pastoral position, or perform the pastoral function, for that puts them in authority over men.

The office of elders/pastors in the New Testament church was evidently suggested by the office of elders among the Jews, and was invested with similar authority. In AD 44, they already existed in the church at Jerusalem (Acts 11:30) Act 14:23, 15:2 – 23). The Seventh – Day Adventist church however, traces its leadership evolution from 1854 to 1855, in 1875 the church had agreed that elders were to visit members, seek the absence of the evangelist and call business meetings (Stefan, 2004). Apostle Peter shared his

view with the early church that elders are not only overseers, but shepherds. Their responsibilities included nurturing and caring for their flocks and they should be further interested in individual church members. There is significant advantage for an elder to give personal care and counseling, on my view individual nurturing of members should be our first responsibility.

In the medieval period, theologians like St. Ambrose, Basil and Francis of Sales believed and said that women and men are equal (The Christian Guardian, 1830). It is cited in this work that, Ambrose considered everybody man and woman must know that he bears God's image and likeness, while Francis' position was that, the woman is equal to man especially in the claim to grace and glory. Basil declared; the woman, no less than the man possesses the privilege of being created after God's image. Both the sufferers have the same dignity, both the same virtue (Ibid). At the face value it is believed that, the contemporary SDA Church members have lived by the equal treatment of men and women, but only at the theoretical level. In practical terms, however, men continue to dominate women as they retain their superior position, in the main district church, hardly would we get a woman holding a key position as a first elder. The study revealed that all churches have given men key positions such as first elder. These findings concur with St Paul's teaching that the instrument of oppression and the sustainer of exploitation to a great scale is present in the church (1Corinthians 7:25-39).

In his prayers, Jesus approached his heavenly father to acquire wisdom. And after choosing the twelve disciples He designated them apostles, commissioned them to be representatives who were invested with spiritual authority , indispensable for spiritual transformation (Mark 9:6). The disciple-making is however, incomplete without experience. It must be directed by knowledge; but lack of it on women who attend church service has been affirmed by the study. It was evident that out of the randomly sampled African Mothers; 38% women who were facing financial and social problems. 8% were divorced or separated and had either migrated to urban centers.

Thirty two percent (32%) were married African mothers who had extra-marital problems; even though they lived at their various homes, while those in peaceful unions were 22%. The study sought to help church members to show compassion as our master showed to the multitudes, because they were weary and gathered, like sheep having no shepherds. (Math 9:30). For the church leaders to be compassionate like Jesus, He required that they go beyond sympathizing, and not only accepting people's imperfections, but they should long to help them grow.

Table 1: Showing socio-economic conditions of African mothers

Economic difficulties	38%
Divorced or separated	8%
In peaceful unions	22%
Extra-marital problems	32%

The prophetic mission of the church in the context of the awareness to African women, according to Anne Nasimiya (2000) suggested that, the Prophetic Ministry should nature, nourish, and evoke liberating consciousness and perception of the dominant culture which tend to marginalize women in their own communities. She further noted that, there are women who are daring to speak out and demand their rightful place in the society where they have been marginalized. Such view should help the Pastors and other leaders to meaningfully incorporate some traditional methods of counseling in their doctrines rather than relying on professional counseling which has ignored the rich traditions of African people, so that women who are in dilemma get a place to seek refuge.

2.3 Jesus as the Principle Leader

The book of Mark 7: records indicate how Jesus showed compassion to the women who were in dire need of his help. The Greek woman born in Phoenicia of Silvia found him and began begging Jesus to drive the demon out of her daughter, but Jesus answered, “Let us first feed the children. It is not right to take children’s food and throws it to the dogs”. Eventually, his disciple told him, “Send her away because she keeps crying out after us.” In explaining why he ignored her, Jesus said, “I have been sent only to the lost sheep of Israel “ Jesus’ heart must have been moved by the women’s earnest appeal yet he again points his first responsibility was to minister to God’s people of Israel. By the action of Samaritan’s women Jesus surely reveals his own tender feeling towards non Jews (Mathew 15:21-28).

In Mark 5:25; it is recorded that, there was a woman who had suffered terribly from severe bleeding for twelve years even though she had been treated by many doctors. She had spent all her money, but instead of getting better she got worse all the time when she had heard about Jesus, so she came in the crowd behind him saying to herself “if I just touch his clothes, I will get well”. The woman realized what had happened to her, so she came trembling with fear, knelt at his feet, and told him the whole truth, Jesus said to her my daughter, “your faith has made you well. Go in peace and be healed of your trouble.” (Mark 5: 25-33, Luke 8:40-48)

In Gwassi Sub-Station, the equal dignity and responsibility of women do not fully justify women’s access to public and church functions on one hand. On the other hand, the true advancement of women requires that clear recognition be given to the value of their maternal and family role as compared to all other public roles. All other professions should be harmoniously combined if we wish the evolution of Christian society, and culture to be truly human. Because the Christian gospel lays claim upon us and pushes human beings into relations with others, we must be open to stories not specifically of the biblical

tradition but to the stories of other denominations/churches, from our surrounding and elsewhere.

The daughter of a certain woman at Mukuyu SDA church fell sick in March 2014 (demon possessed), and when she sought for the assistance of church members, they were hesitant to offer any assistance instead they blamed her for heresy. She was eventually forced to handle the situation by herself, and she sought for assistance of the 'Roho Israel Church'. The above example shows that, a few church members are ready to feel compassion on the women who have been forced by 'mother nature' to stand at a cross road. In another incident, a single widow (Mama Kezia Yongo) had to face a very challenging situation in the same month (March 2014). She narrated that, a member of the village came to her home, accused her of stealing his yoke and chain. She felt offended and sought for assistance from a church member (elder) but leaders turned a deaf ear on her case. She eventually sought for assistance from the chief of the area who offered relief to her. Cases of mistrust are rampant amongst church members and worse are, no single leader has shown any concern. Most of the SDA Church members sought help from the chiefs' offices.

In the early church, many believers had a lot of problems arising from the power of devil (Spalding Arthur Whitefield, 1949). The researcher has observed the same condition among the SDA church members in Gwassi Sub-Station. In Acts 20, St. Paul advised the Ephesus Church elders on how to handle believers' (Act 20: 28 – 32). Paul being the carrier of God's message and a leader, he advised the elders to keep watch over themselves and over all the flock which the Holy Spirit has placed in their care. He urged them to be shepherds of the church of God because; he made it his own through the blood of his son,

And now beware! Be sure that you feed and shepherd God's flock-his church, purchased with his blood-for the Holy Spirit is holding you responsible as overseers. I know full after I leave you, false teachers, like vicious wolves, will appear among you, not sparing the flock. Some of you yourselves will distort the truth in order to draw a following. Watch out! Remember the three years I was with you-my constant watch care over you night and day and my many tears for you. And now I entrust you to God and his care and to his wonderful words which are able to build your faith and give you all the inheritance of those who are set apart for himself (TLB).

The experience in Gwasssi sub-station on the social existence of women, reconciliation is an ideal among the SDA Church members, and reconciliation must start with women who have suffered the pain of a broken community/society, where they are expected to survive in. Unless structures are created to bring women together, church unity among members is not possible. The church should lay a foundation on talks about reconciliation with others. Traditional belief that, the SDA church women are a weaker sex, who can hardly offer meaningful leadership, is a negative perception, and it is unchristian way of thinking. The bible should be interpreted to meet all people's aspirations and needs, which affect Jesus as the model in the liberating women as disclosed in the gospel books i.e. Luke 13:10-13. It is noted that on one Sabbath day, Jesus taught in a synagogue, there was a woman who had an evil spirit that had made her ill for eighteen years; she was bent over and could not straighten up at all. When Jesus saw her, he called out to her, "woman, you are free from your illness!" He placed his hands on her, and at once she straightened herself up and praised God (Luke 13:10-13).

Jesus as an ideal leader as observed by L. Boff (2007), portrays him also as a reconciling liberator. The conciliation and reconciliation are so imminent and universal that Jesus willingly showed on the cross as his way of justice. He further saw Jesus Christ as the liberator who is an expert in establishing healthy, interpersonal relationships thereby giving hope to the hopeless that he is the one who is concerned with the common good of all. In his Christology, Boff (Ibid) saw Him as being loyal to His father's will, especially in His redemptive death and resurrection (Luke 4: 16 - 21, 24. 7). He portrays Him

as the suffering servant of God who is totally committed to the liberation of all. His perception of Jesus should assist the SDA church, so that all members are made aware that women are only different from men in sex but not in any other way, not men's properties but their co-workers, co-helpers, companion but not worthless slaves. (Genesis 2: 18).

Liberation is seen as the over-arching goal (Mugendi 1989, p13), the historical project out of which and for which an African Christian theologian must emerge. Liberation is here understood in terms of multiple processes of societal transformation, leading towards political autonomy (from colonial rule), economic freedom from neocolonial domination and financial debt, culture, self expression (from slavery, racism and western hegemony) and ecclesial independence, from the control by missionaries. Such liberation is regarded as an integral part and a prerequisite for "salvation" Mugenda asserts that liberation without salvation is incomplete, while salvation without liberation is impossible (Ibid).

Theologians should note that when African culture and Christian tradition are in conflict with one another they should play mediatory role i.e. at the time when a woman is in dire need of the church involvement in her difficult situation.

2.4 Leadership in Seventh-Day Adventist Church in Suba Sub-County

In Suba Sub-County, women have realized growth in membership but they have diverse problems which require a different approach, social-economic and spiritual problems. And most of women have been discriminated by church leaders more so, in the contemporary society where various concepts have led to various categories of African mothers such as widows, divorced, separated by choice and new mark. The clear manifestation of bad governance had been realized during burial service where women whose husbands are poor, have been conditioned not to have burial on Sunday, but well to do families like the funeral of late Honorable Omolo Opere father. Pastor was the preacher of the day, more over the burial was on Sunday, a

repeat was done at the funeral of the late honorable Orwa Ojode, such favoritism have made many widows to doubt the leadership in the SDA church.

One informant (a widow), who lost her beloved one when City to City bus was involved in an accident last year (June 2013) at Salga a widow (O.I, 18-1-2014) narrated a very sad story on how the church leaders had treated her after the loss of her husband. The SDA church in Gwasssi Sub Station did not show concern to their faithful member(s) instead expect her/them to offer generously for her daily activities. For instance, in the last year's camp meeting week, a daughter of a church member at Magunga SDA Church had fallen sick, surprisingly, the church had expected her to give and cater for the camp guest, indeed she did all which were needed from her; sadly the fate of her ailing daughter was never taken into consideration. She eventually left and joined God's Last Appeal Church. In the same church a married mother who had lost her child had joined the same movement. The study has revealed that 15% of the SDA women in the station have left their faith and joined other Christian denominations. Thanks to Pastor Mourice Okoth for his stand on Sunday burial, regardless of status he is ready to officiate.

Table 2: On how African mothers have migrated to others churches

Catholic	6%
Other churches	4%
God last appeal	3%
Roho Israel	2%

Mrs Okuku who lost her husband in June 2013 narrated a very painful story on her observation on SDA leadership,

When we got married, my husband forced me to join the SDA church. Though we have been staying in Busia, every time we went home, we fellowshipped at the SDA Church but at the burial of my husband, I only saw the well

wishers. I was informed that Sunday burial had been stopped by the SDA Church so our pastor could not come.

As a leader, Jesus listened to other people's stories. For example, in John 4:21, He listened to the Samaritan woman. In support of Jesus' tender feelings James H. Cone (1969), has suggested that perhaps by listening to stories as we share with one another, we can transcend the boundaries of our past and reach toward a shared future. He further observed that, every person has a story to tell, something to say to themselves, to their children and to the world about how they think, live, and determine their reasoning for being. J.H. Cone adds that, when people can no longer listen to other people's stories, they become enclosed within their social context; such insight should be of great help to SDA church so that they give room for women to lead the church, in order to listen to their counterparts' stories.

The SDA church stand on women leadership is however, open though it is not done with vigor. The study has established that at Ranen Conference, out of ordained 85 pastors there are only two female pastors. The church like any other organization needs to grow due to good leadership. In Ephesians 1:23, elders should hold together God's people and helped to keep alive the mission of the savior to the world. In spite of women being backbone of the SDA church in socio-economic support, their participation is limited to the quantitative level; generally, women participate in the upkeep of pastors and visitors.

2.5 Conclusion

The SDA church has made African Mothers seek refuge in the secular society because the church has rejected them. The practice of sidelining African mothers in church leadership has made many to harbor painful feelings that deprive them the opportunity to be close to their God, who is not ashamed of

hopeless struggling sinner who makes effort in trying to live uprightly. In view of the above insight, the study could assist women to be welcomed to the flock.

CHAPTER THREE

CATEGORIES OF AFRICAN MOTHERS AND THE SDA CHURCH ROLE

3.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with information on various categories of African mothers in the SDA church. It explores the relationship existing between the mothers and the SDA church, specifically the groups of women in their churches and how it deals with issues affecting them.

3.2 Married African Mothers

In traditional Africa, for example, among the Luo, polygamy and wife inheritance are intended as a way of protecting the family of the deceased (Owuor et al 2011). The practice ensures that the wife and children of the deceased are protected to continue the lineage. The home is a primary setting for the restoration of the image of God in men and women. Within the family, father, mother and children can express themselves fully, meeting each other's needs for belonging, love, and intimacy. Here, identity is established and feelings of personal worth are developed. The home is also the place where by God's grace, the principles of Christianity are practiced, and values are transmitted from one generation to the next (Paul Mboya, 1938).

The institution of marriage was divinely established in the Garden Eden between Adam and Eve. It was further affirmed by Jesus to be a lifelong union between a man and a woman in loving companionship (Genesis 2:21-24). For a Christian marriage, commitment to God, to the spouse, and the union should be entered into only between partners who share a common faith (Mathew 19:4). Mutual love, honor, respect, and responsibility are the fabric of this relationship, which is to reflect the love, sanctity, closeness, and permanence of the relationship between Christ and his Church (Mathew 27:32-50). Although some family relationships may fall short of the ideal relationship,

however, married partners who fully commit themselves to each other in Christ may achieve loving unity through the guidance of the Spirit and the nurture of the church. God blesses the family and intends that its members shall assist each other toward complete maturity. Parents are expected to rear their children to love and obey the Lord. By their example and their words, they teach them that Christ is a loving disciplinarian, ever tender and caring. He wants them to become members of His body, the family of God as recorded in Mathew 19:13. Increasing family closeness is one of the earmarks of the final gospel message in the SDA church's Fundamental Beliefs, 28 (church manual 2005).

The family can be a place of great happiness; but it can also be a scene of terrible hurt. In Genesis 4:1-15 God put mark on Cain for having killed Abel. Harmonious family living demonstrates the principles of Christianity truly lived out, revealing the character of God. Unfortunately, the manifestation of these characteristics is altogether too rare in modern homes. Instead, many families demonstrate the thoughts and intents of the selfish human heart—quarrelling, rebelliousness, rivalry, anger, impropriety, and even cruelty. Yet, these characteristics were not part of God's original plan. Jesus said, "From the beginning it was not so" (Matt. 19:8). Genesis 1:26, 27 describes God's creation of the human beings who were to inhabit this earth: "Then God said, 'Let Us make man in our own image, according to our likeness.' . . . So God created man in His own image; in the image of God created him; male and female." The term man as used here (in both the Hebrew and the English) is used in the generic sense, as it is more than 500 times elsewhere in the Old Testament. This term includes both male and female. The text clarified that it was not a case of the male being created in the image of God and the female in the image of the man. On the contrary, both were made in the image of God (Genesis 5:1-3).

3.3 Single Motherhood

There are over twenty eight categories of African single mothers' i.e. broken marriage, widowed, and twenty five causes of single motherhood (P.N. Wachege 2003, p72-126). In support of the rise of single mothers Nancy Van Delt (1980) records that, today people tend to accept divorce as socially acceptable, her findings reveal that 38% of all first marriages end in divorce and the church is not immune from that state. She adds that what has accelerated this state of affairs is due to a number of causes which require special pastoral care, similarly Gangel (1996), observed that, "Today's single mothers belong to different groups each with its own sub-groups with varying needs, pressure points, and social emotional concern".

Among the Luo, Mzee Songora Marire (O.I,15-12-2014), asserted that "single-mother families were as a result of wars, natural disasters, and other calamities that separated adult males from their families". Today, however, most single-mother families result from out-of-wedlock births, separation, and divorce. In the society, single-mother households have long been recognized as a major cause of school failure, family poverty, and juvenile delinquency, problems that intensify as the numbers of single-mother families' increases. The United States leads all other industrialized nations in the number of single-mother families. In the United States one out of every two children will spend a portion of their childhood in a single-mother home. The percentage of children in the United States living in single-mother homes increased from 9 percent in 1960 to 24 percent in 1986.' The 1990 census reported that between 1980 and 1990, single- parent homes headed by females increased to 35.6 percent and homes headed by males increased to 29.1 percent. These unsettling data underline the need to move beyond mere rhetorical responses to a realization that we are facing a national epidemic that demands a concerted and aggressive response.

While single-mother families seem to be an inevitable occurrence in society, the negative impact of such families can be minimized if federal and state

government agencies, private foundations, special-interest groups, community volunteers, and churches band together to respond to the crisis. The family has long been accepted as the backbone of society: if the family weakens, then society crumbles. The dysfunctional families which create a dysfunctional society have been well established in the studies of social analysts. Particularly the concern, then, is the disproportionate representation of African single-mother families. A woman who lost her husband as a result of death is called a widow, in the contemporary society, it has become a reality as a result of sickness, accidents, HIV/AIDS scourge. These are two groups of African mothers whose marriage have been terminated legally on tradition or temporarily entered into legally, or traditionally separate but live independent lives from their spouses (Karen, 1973).

3.4 Challenges facing African Mothers

Church records in Gwassi Sub-station reveal that, African Mothers have faced numerous challenges in their churches, some of which are emotional, social, economic, physical and cultural factors. In handling those who are stressed, there should be mediation between the current situation and the historical Christianity (Janeatte1999). In agreement with her findings on the challenges faced by women, Mugambi (2009) argued that the mandate from God through Jesus Christ is that, the Christian faith should bring about peace on earth and good will to human kind. It is the responsibility of each of us to ensure that we place this challenge as our top priority so that it may be restored amongst those plagued by despair. Such insights affirm the need for the church of Christ to urgently confront matters affecting African mother in despair in the SDA Church.

The imposed loneliness where the feelings of widows and the changes are experience is the most difficult to bear (Wachege, 2003). One of them mentioned that “there is no human being here I can talk or share an idea with. There is no one to unburden myself to, no one to comfort and console me, no

one to utter a word of encouragement of hope. The following questions are raised; what is family life? Could widow inheritance be a solution? or as it merely an escape?" (Ibid). In support, Calvin (1993,p11) noted that, "when a friend lost his wife he knows from his experience, the painful wound which took him seven years to overcome their sorrows of his wife's death". In Africa the well-being of a community and individuals alike was envisioned as a dependent on peoples' observance of proper customs and traditions. These were customs which had the sanction of past generations, which proved as a way of maintaining peace, harmony and prosperity in the community (Hannah W Kinoti and John M. Waliggo, 977 p 115).

3.5. Biblical Teaching on Marriage

The Bible mentions that, marriage is a relationship between two people, which are expected to commit fully and have trust in each other (Gen 2:18, Corinthians 7: 2 – 3). The institution of marriage requires a deep understanding of oneself towards the long journey, which demands love, trust, and respect to one another. Jesus condemns adultery in Mathew 5:27-32, and similarly, St Paul does not support adultery which was experienced in the early church (I Corinthians 5: 1-5). In Matthew 15:7-14, the Bible advocates that those who assemble to worship God should put away evil things unless they are ready to worship Him in spirit and truth and in beauty of holiness. Those families in the church should be in the church family which reflects an organized character of God, love for the church, eventually helping individual to build and maintain strong family relationship. Christian families should show strong membership for the kingdom of God and fosters the reconciliation and healing between generations (Malachi 4:5-6). Marriage should extend support to those who have been injured and hurt by abuse; death and broken relationship.

3.6 Seventh Day Adventist Women Ministry

The organization of the Seventh - day Adventist Women Ministry was founded by Mrs Henry in 1898, but after her death, the organization collapsed

(Seventh - day Adventist church manual, p126). In 1990, some women restarted the Ministry with the aim of upholding, encouraging, and challenging Seventh day Adventist Church women in their daily walk as disciples of Jesus Christ, as members of his world church with an objective of ministering to the broader spectrum of women of his church in the world. This ministry is involved in bringing about their reconciliation in harmony with the divine principle, and restoring wounded relationships (Hosea 3:1-3, Galatians 6:7)

3.6.1 The Role of Seventh Day Adventist Pastoral Ministry to African Mothers

The Africa Mothers in Gwassu sub-station have been seeking places where they could air their views; surprisingly, the church has turned to be a prison for most of them. The gospel message whose essence is to bring liberation and joy to the recipients has denied them their human dignity and self-esteem (Nahason Ndungu, 2006). Hence, there is need for the SDA church to address the social economic challenges facing all the church quotas. They should focus on Adventist ministry within a “believing” and “behaving” framework. In this regard, there is need for a “narrative” approach that does not emphasize reading the Bible from a confessional framework, but seeks to open a dialogue between the stories of the Bible, women’s stories, and the story of all God’s people in the church or priesthood of believers. This approach is part of the wider approach to practical theology and in particular a qualitative-oriented methodology. The narrative approach, however, needs to be open to dialogue with all approaches, including the confessional approach which emphasizes telling “God’s great story” to “hurting” and hopeless women among congregations in the SDA church, but it refuses to be dictated to, or prescribed to by a confessional approach.

Seventh-day Adventism has also been profoundly shaped by its focus on the prophetic writings within Scripture interlay because of its emphasis on the second coming and an apocalyptic eschatology. The Adventists’ believed that,

the Bible as the Word of God is the source of Adventist thinking. Johns (2010) noted that, of all Christian bodies, they (SDAs) are a people who, from their inception, have looked to the Bible as the source and standard for their beliefs.” In this way, the pioneers of the denomination, because of their understanding of what the Scriptures taught did not teach other Christians but separated themselves from the existing churches of their day. This conviction has caused the SDA adherents to claim for a unique identity with special confessions and a strong sense of mission as Remnant Church in Revelation 14. The teachings on the Sabbath emphasize that, Eden shall bloom on earth again, and God’s holy rest day will be honored by all beneath the sun (Ellen G. White, nd p283).

The doctrinal teachings on the distinctive truths of the three angels’ message and the way Spirit of Prophecy had given the message of ‘love and acceptance was regretful by Moltmann (1967). This conservative orientation argues strongly that, the confessions of the church need to be defended because of its mission to this world: “it (the church) will not grow unless it upholds and preaches the distinctive Adventist messages” What seems to be most important about this growth is not caring for “broken” people, but rather church growth is viewed in terms of numeric growth. In this regard, Adventists’ unique doctrines should be preached, and not as per the “gospel”. In the event of this not being the case, then it is believed that we preach the “generic” doctrines of the “first-day” churches. The conservatives, who have a fundamentalist orientation have a rigid position in regard to issues like worship, women’s ordination, music, jewelry and wine, view and use of scripture.

The notion that God and His Word are not interrelated with the stories of human beings, which is simply to be translated into modern language for the believers to accept and appropriate to them in their lives. This thought, however, makes the Scriptures and its usage very mechanical because, it prescribing techniques for counseling, thus promoting an applied pastoral care and Scripture interpretation. This view of, and approach to Scripture, lend

itself to a deductive approach in spiritual interpretation. The emphasis on a strong lexico-graphical approach and a dicta probantia methodology makes the conservatives, especially the fundamental-oriented scholars to focus on verbal inspiration. This conservative orientation emphasizes the importance of approaching Scripture with an exegetical analysis, thereby claiming that Scripture is to be its own interpreter.

Many people who take this scriptural interpretation are included to that form of morality which reflects quite well on their own way of living, the Bible turns out to be in favour of an honest hard days work “for those putting in the honest hard days”, but it is also in favor of the poor, if you ask the poor what it is about. Perhaps, the Bible’s authority is religious or “theological” in other words, what it says about how to live the religious life, or what it says about God strange and far – off cultural ways.

On Bible authority, Richard Wisely (2003, p. 84 – 85) said that,

something similar can be said about notions authority too, and indeed authority and application seem to be two sides of the same coin, in the end, the Bible is not fundamentally about principles to be applied, or about authoritative rules to be obeyed (I will want to say, of course, that it is about Jesus, or at least nearly so, but we will come to that presently) and the book of Nehemiah in any case, is thin on principles and rules that is why it is a particularly bad candidate for applying for us.

The phrase ‘biblical authority’ or ‘authority of the Bible ‘as used in the SDA church should focus more on exegesis so as to decipher which kind of Biblical is authoritative. The emphasis on moral or ethical authority based on the Bible that suggest that all that is recorded in bible says is authentic but when interpreted wrongly the judgment may affect ones faith negatively.

3.6.2 The Seventh Day Adventist Church and Single Mothers

Single-mother Households and widows often rely on churches or the clergy as coping strategies. Many people have unfortunately, reported increased cases of stress and disappointment on how the churches have responded to their needs as single mothers. This disappointment can perhaps be explained by the

tendency for churches to limit their assistance to single-mothers' families in their particular congregation. Single mothers are hesitant to express their needs to fellow church members because; they fear public exposure of their personal business and they also wish to avoid being pitied upon. This leads the church to respond inadequately, based on the person's expressed needs rather than her actual needs, consequently, a single mother who relies on the church as a coping mechanism experiences frustration and increased stress because of the church's response.

When churches work independently of other agencies or with a smaller population, a limited perspective of single-mother family needs is maintained, resulting in inadequate response to the problem. The church has an essential role in addressing the needs of single-mother families. These needs cannot however, be adequately addressed without fully understanding the problem. The first work of Christians according to Ellen G.White (1952) is to be united in the family. She also noted that the more closely the members of a family are united in their work in the home, the more uplifting and helpful will be the influence outside the home. She further suggests that a well-ordered Christian household is a powerful argument in favor of the reality of the Christian religion. This ties her closer to her family tie which is sacred of any on earth.

The importance of the family as argued by Ellen G.White helps in maintaining a relationship to Christ (Ibid). Since marriage was designed to be a blessing to humankind, the concept of "family" has taken on a different meaning for the Seventh-day Adventists especially the African mothers. The SDA church has been slow to respond to the problems of single-mothers due to the lack of substantive documentation. In most cases, children from single-mother homes seem to learn valuable lessons that help in developing strong faith at an early age. Many children learn very early how to depend on God with regard to the spiritual condition of the single parent but they later on get disappointed by church's attitude and practice.

3.6.3 The Church's obligation to support Widows

The term "widow" translated from the Greek word (*chera*) means "bereft" and conveys a sense of suffering loss or being left alone. This term does not tell us how a woman becomes a widow and therefore the cause is not limited to a husband's death. "Widow indeed" in Greek term "desolate" (*ontos*; 1Timothy 5: 5), means "having been left alone." It indicates that no one is able to help her. In ancient times, widows were in special difficult positions because there was no honorable employment for such women. There were also secular institutions to provide services to them. Some widows could receive help through the family or friends, although many of them lived in abject poverty and were not entitled to any inheritance. The outlook on widows was bleak, hence the church needed to assist them. The treatment of widows according to James 1:27, was a test whereby believers demonstrated the genuineness of their faith.

When Christian widows are left alone, they qualify to receive "honor" (Gk., "timao", "to revere" or "value"), if they meet the qualifications that St Paul later mentioned in 1Timothy 5:3-6, whose emphasis is on financial support. The scribes and Pharisees confronted Jesus, saying, "Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders?" (Mathew 15:2), "tradition of the elders" was a large compilation of rules and regulations imposed upon the Jewish people's way of life. It developed from interpretations of Scripture by various Jewish religious leaders but often added to or even contradicted the Scripture. The scribes and Pharisees said, Christ's disciples violated their tradition because they "wash not their hands when they eat bread" (v. 2). They did not understand that washing had nothing to do with sanitation but was directly related to a religious, ceremonial cleansing.

Since the disciples didn't recognize the tradition as being scriptural, they simply ignored it. This is why Jesus responded by saying, "why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? For God commanded, saying, Honor thy father and mother; and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, whosoever shall say to his father or his mother,

It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightiest be profited by me; and honor not his father or mother, he shall be free. Thus have he made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition" (Mathew 15: 3-6). His explanation included a reference to the Ten Commandments about honoring your parents. The Jewish people in the days of Moses understood that to include financial support (Ex 20:12).

The tradition that developed later on contradicted the intent of that commandment. It allowed a person to pledge money to God by saying, "It is a gift." The money could then only be given to the Lord. So if a person didn't want to give money to his needy parents, he would simply pledge it to the Lord. If he later decided to keep the money for personal use instead, tradition also allowed him to rescind his original vow. So, it served that neither God nor family but only selfish interests.

Widows who receive honor are those who deserve assistance as "widows in deed. The Greek term (ontos) translated "indeed" means "in reality" or "in point of fact." They are not only lonely, but are also in need of financial support. So "widows indeed" should be distinguished from widows who have financial means. Some husbands may have left their wives with wonderful resources such as an established home and money. In those instances, the shepherds should still be there to provide for any spiritual or emotional needs. In Kenya, some basic needs are provided to widows, but the scope of their needs is increasingly tremendously. Some of them might desire a Christian education for their children, and the SDA church should set up a scholarship endowment fund towards meeting this obligation. Other widows may have previously lived on a low income, while others may have lived on a higher one but face emotional problems. So, the congregation will need to exercise wisdom to determine which needs are vital. The leaders must be committed to widows who genuinely need assistance, whatever the cost might be. It may mean transferring money out of optional church programs so basic needs can be met.

The SDA believers should be happy to do that because it shows God's compassion toward the destitute. Even when widows have financial resources, the SDA Church needs to come alongside with encouragement, love, and support in every way possible. The increasing collapse of the family unit in our society means could lead to an increase in the number of widows that need to be under the church's care. For instance, A Christian widow who as for instance several children might not receive any help from unsaved parents. It could be good if she moved back into her parent's home as Judah did to her in-law Tamar in Gen. 38:11; Judah said to his daughter in-law: Tamar, "Return to your father's house and remain a widow until my son Shelah grows up." He said this because he was afraid that his Shelah would be killed, as his brother had been, so Tamar went back.

3.6.4 The Church's obligation to evaluate their needs

The church needs to discern the widows who are in genuine need of financial care and not just indiscriminately give it to everyone. The scripture should institute some guidelines on who qualifies and who doesn't. "If any widow has children or nephews, let them learn first to show piety at home, and to requite their parents; for that is good and acceptable before God."

The Greek term translated "nephews" (ekgonos) means "descendants" or "grandchildren." Many widows have children and grandchildren. The Greek term translated "home" (oikos) refers to the family, which indicates a priority of order? Family members are the first ones responsible to care for widows. The first place for children and grandchildren to demonstrate their godliness is in the context of family living, which includes making sure each family member is provided for. In 1 Timothy 5 verses 8 records, "If any provide for others, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than [unbeliever]."

True spirituality reveals itself in the context of family relationships which is emphasized by Paul in 1 Timothy chapter 3, when he said that an elder must

manage his own household well (v. 4), and a deacon must exercise good oversight over his family (v. 12). The burden isn't only on the older family members: godly young people will desire good relationships with their family members as well. An indication of a Godly family relates well to each other. Perhaps, an application of enrollment for a seminary student could include a letter of reference from the parents. The letter might answer what evidences of godliness has been seen in your child's life?

Family members are not only to show godliness at home but also "to requite" (Gk., *amoibe*, "recompense") their parents. Children are expected to reciprocate to their parents, by meeting their financial obligations. Besides providing material items such as food, clothing and housing, parents also require love and encouragement. Children should return a small measure of the tremendous support they have received from their parents.

3.7 Conclusion

The family Ministry to African Mothers in the SDA Church is in place, but, it has not achieved much in relation to ministering to the contemporary African Mothers' families. Adventist Women Ministry which deals with the general welfare of women in the SDA church is not clear in her objectives on how to minister to African Mothers families. There is lack of a clear policy framework in relation to ministry to African Mothers thus causing a major setback to the SDA Ministerial role.

CHAPTER FOUR

SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST PASTORAL MINISTRY ON AFRICAN MOTHERS IN RELATION TO JESUS' TEACHINGS ON THE CHURCH AS A "FAMILY OF GOD"

4.1 Introduction

This chapter gives a biblical perspective from the teachings of Jesus on how the church should treat and care for all categories of women within their congregations.

4.2 Paul's view on Women's life

Biblical exegesis requires sensitivity to contextualize the passage because, the Scripture is taken out of its context, faulty conclusions and blurred perspectives are likely to be noticed. Two matters impact this discussion significantly - the issues of literary context and cultural context. In examining literary context, each biblical writer directs his or her word to specific issues, while the task of a biblical expositor is to determine the precise nature of those issues.

An example of the importance of correct contextual analysis occurs in Galatians 3:28 whereby the explanation the meaning of justification, according to Paul is that in Christ there is "neither Jew nor Gentile, slave or free, male or female." The outstanding social characteristic of Christianity is that ethnic ("Jew nor Greek"), economic ("bond nor free"), and gender ("male nor female") distinctions have no bearing on salvation, nor upon equal standing among all Christians". It is obvious that, the context of the statement is its explanation on the impact of justification. This is soteriological statement explains the doctrine of salvation to all believers, without any regard to social

distinctions, have equal access to God through Christ, and, consequently, are to be unified in the Body of Christ.

Before St Paul's death, ten to fifteen years after the writing of the Epistle to the Galatians, he wrote to both Timothy and Titus, giving them pastoral instructions about how the church is to be organized. The instructions to Timothy and Titus in Galatians 3:28 indicate a hierarchical approach to church order in which men rather than women were to occupy that role. Some people have pointed to Galatians 3:28 as justification for women to serve as pastors. However, this is seen as a misuse of Scripture to produce ecclesiastical patterns from soteriological passages. While St Paul clearly affirms the equality of men and women in salvation, he does not affirm the priority of men in church leadership since there is no substantive conflict, the contextual issue is crucial for an accurate exposition because readers must exercise great care, so as to determine the nature of the issue under discussion in order to understand and apply the message relevantly today.

4.2.1 Biblical teachings on the role of Pastoral Ministry on the lives of Widows

In the Bible, St Peter advises the early church on how to treat women, he records that a wife is to be the special object of her husband's love and care. As "a weaker vessel" (1 Pet. 3:7), she is under his authority and protection. But, if a woman loses her husband, she is often left without any means of financial support. Such women are under God's special care because, the psalmist said the Lord is "a defender of widows" (Ps. 68:5, NIV; cf. Deut. 10:18). God's compassion goes out to them because of their difficult situation. The Bible reveals that it has always been God's attitude toward widows to be cared for.

A. Old Testament Teachings

1. Deuteronomy 27:19—Moses warns Israelites "Cursed be he who perverted the justice due ... the ... widow."
2. Isaiah 1:17-- Prophet Isaiah instructs the Israelites' the way they should live "Plead for the widow."
3. Jeremiah 22:3-4-- Jeremiah's message to the royal house of Judah "Do no violence to the ... widow.... For if ye do this thing indeed, then shall there enter in by the gates of this house kings sitting upon the throne of David ... he, and his servants, and his people."
4. Exodus 22:22-23— Moses explains the will of God "Ye shall not afflict any widow.... If thou afflict them in any way, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry." Old Testament also taught that remarriage was the ideal for a widow. Where remarriage was not possible, a widow could either stays in the house of her parents (cf. Gen. 38:11) or in-laws (cf. Ruth 1:16). Teachings on Levirate marriage (Deut. 25:5-6), indicate that the brother of the deceased husband could marry her. But, if he refused, the next male-of-kin was free to do so. A good example is Boaz who married Ruth in that manner (Ruth 4:1-10).

B. New Testament Teachings

Jesus Christ exemplified the perfect attitude toward widows Luke 4:18, Mathew 25:40 and Mark chapter 12, when Jesus sat on the opposite side of the Temple treasury as worshipers gave their offerings. He noticed that the wealthy gave large amounts of money but, a widow gave only a small amount. Jesus said to the disciples, "I tell you this poor widow put more in the offering box than all the others." (v.43), her generous spirit was evidence in her action of being sincere.

4.2.2 In the City of Nain

As Jesus approached the city of Nain, "there was a dead man who was the only son of his mother, that was a widow, and many people of the city accompanied her" (Luke 7:12). Because of her son's death, no one was left to

care for her. When the Lord saw her, He "had compassion on her, and said unto her, weep not. And he came and touched the bier; and they that bore him stood still. And he said, young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother" (7. 13-15). Jesus was so touched by the widow's plight that He raised her son from the dead so that he could continue to care for her. John 19 tells us that when Jesus was on the cross, "saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he said unto his mother, "Woman, behold thy son!" Then said he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home" (vv. 26-27). Jesus deeply cared about Mary, so He entrusted her to the Apostle John's care.

4.3 The Early Church

The rapid numerical growth of the Church at Jerusalem led to murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews because their widows were neglected in the daily care (Acts 6:1-5). "Hebrews" refers to Jewish people living in Palestine while "Grecians" (also called Hellenists) refers to Jewish people who had been dispersed or scattered outside of Palestine. Hellenists came to Jerusalem for holidays, and some even moved to Palestine to live. Perhaps those referred to in Acts 6 were residents of the city, or stayed in homes with other Christian families, or were housed at various inns.

Hellenistic widows in the church did not receive the same care as those from Palestine. Perhaps, that was because, the Hellenistic people were not part of the original Jewish community. That is why the apostles gathered the believers together and asked them to find "seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom" to care for the Hellenistic widows (v. 3). Honesty was necessary since they would be handling money and food; wisdom and the Spirit's control were necessary to evaluate each widow's need with sensitivity. The plan pleased the Hellenistic believers and seven such men were chosen.

4.3.1 Peter at Joppa

This story is narrated in the book of acts, (Acts 9:36-41).

In the city of Joppa there was a woman named Dorcas (“Gazelle”), a believer who was always doing kind things for others, especially for the poor. About this time she became ill and died. Her friends prepared her for burial and laid her in an upstairs room. But when they learned that Peter was nearby at Lydda, they sent two men to beg him to return with them to Joppa. This he did; as soon as he arrived, they took him upstairs where Dorcas lay. The room was filled with weeping widows who were showing one another the coats and other garment Dorcas had made for them. But Peter asked them all to leave the room; then he knelt and prayed. Turning to the body he said, “Get up Dorcas” and she opened her eyes! And when she saw Peter, she sat up! He gave her his hand and helped her up and called in the believers and widows, presenting her to them, (TLB).

There was probably confusion along with the weeping. Peter was considerate in having them leave the room rather than trying to stop their crying. He probably wanted to be alone to pray as well. This was the second resurrection recorded in the New Testament that benefited widows. The first on was the resurrection of the widow's son in Nain. The brokenhearted widows of Joppa were comforted because the woman so dear to them had been raised from the dead.

The book of James summarizes God's compassion for widows: "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world" (James 1:27). A believer demonstrates his faith by deeds of love and mercy to those in need. Paul wanted the church to demonstrate its faith that way. His lengthy talk on widows (1 Tim. 5:3-16) shows the importance of the subject. In that section, he gave several principles to govern the church's conduct toward widows. It was against their will to be single at marriage

Marriage is only an earthly economy (Matt. 22:30) and, the church is the bride of Christ and will have a corporate beauty in the image of God (Eph. 4:11-16; Eph. 5:25-27). This is analogous to the Godhead since someday "God will be all in all" (1 Cor. 15:28). Prior to the eternal state, however, there is a demand for functional organization. The organization prescribed for churches pictures God's functional organization in the Godhead. Based on these texts and models, a woman's spiritual service is to be in those roles assigned her by God. These do not include the role of pastor. A widow in the biblical sense may be a daughter, a mother, a sister, a niece, or an aunt who loses her husband through divorce, desertion, imprisonment, or especially death. Caring for such a woman is a privilege and a manifestation of God's compassion. St Paul said doing so "is good and acceptable before God". Parents deserve our respect and support, especially those who are widows (1 Timothy 5:4).

4.4 Marital Affairs

In the Bible, God's plan for marriage is a foundation of the wider community of the family, since the very institution and conjugal love is ordained to the procreation (Gen 2:22-25). Love is essentially a gift; and conjugal love which leads the spouses to the reciprocal "knowledge". Making them one person "one flesh" which does not end with the couple, because it makes them capable of the greatest possible gift, the gift by which they become cooperators with God for giving life to a new human person. The couple gives themselves to one another, and the reality is culminated in the birth of children who are a living reflection of their love, apartment sign of conjugal unity, and a living and inseparable synthesis of their being a father and mother. Their parental love is called upon to be visible sign of the very love of God and. a new responsibility, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named. It must not be forgotten; however, that when procreation is not possible, conjugal right does not for this reason lose its value.

Biblical texts on support of the same, "if a man seduces a virgin who is not engaged, he must pay the bride price for her and marry her" (Exodus 22:16).In

Leviticus 18:1-30 God warns Israelites on adultery, v 20 “do not have intercourse with another man’s wife; that would make you ritually unclean”. Jesus advised His disciples that you have heard that it was said that do not commit adultery, but now I tell you any one who looks at a woman lustfully is guilty of committing adultery with her in his heart. On divorce, He commented in Mathew 5: 31 “it was also said anyone who divorce`s his wife must give her a written notice of divorce, but now I tell you if a man divorce his wife for any case other than her unfaithfulness then he is guilty of making her commit adultery also”

When commenting on Ephesians 5:28, John Calvin (2009) said that, “No man can love himself without loving his wife, therefore the man who does not love his wife is a monster” he adds in Calvin (1993 p11) “some men pretend to be very jealous in upholding their wives in their quarrels with others but they are devil to them at home.” In the current study, out of the 80 women who interviewed, 70% were deeply hurt on marital affairs .It was sad to observe that children born out of wed lock were labeled negatively .Some informants gave serious allegation that church elders were the first victim.

The research has revealed that, women who were unhappy had to join other denominations/churches. The SDA church needs to observe that, attraction for the opposite sex is part of God`s original creation plan and He pronounced everything in His creation was good (Gen 31).But Satan has corrupted man`s God given sexual desire because of their sinful natures, sexual immorality is condemned as defiling the temple of the Holy Spirit which is the believers body (1 Cor 7). The SDA Church should note that, it is always very important to have the right notion of the moral order, its values and norms and the importance is all the greater when the difficulties in the way of respecting them becomes more numerous and serious.

4.5 Conclusion

In understanding the church as a family of God, the SDA Church leaders need to get in -depth knowledge on the plight of African Mothers who are in dire need of acceptance, identity and healthy relations with the church of Christ. The laity and clergy need to examine their work to see where they have been; where they are, and where they should be going in relation to the Ministry to the African Mothers. This is only possible through scriptural inspiration and obedience to the word of God.

CHAPTER FIVE

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter the study findings from the field research are presented, analyzed, and interpreted basing on the study objectives and finally is the conclusion.

5.2 Categories of African Mothers in the Seventh Day Adventist Churches in Gwassi Sub-Station

This section presents findings on the various categories of African mother in the SDA congregations in Gwassi Sub-Station. The study has established that majority of African mothers in this Sub Station are women who are currently in marriage. A significant number of single mothers who are referred to in this study are based on the social orientations as means of survival in. The findings show that, single mothers are defined as either, divorce, widowed, and separated, getting children out of wedlock or single by choice were rated at a response rate of 30% were widowed, 10% were either separated or divorced while 2% were single by choice or gotten children out of wedlock and therefore became single by default.

5.2.1 Married Women

The data gathered in Gwassi Sub-Station revealed that, married women form the majority of African mothers by their cry for liberation which has never been a pastoral concern. Some due to their age have decided to remain in the church half heartedly as their expectations have been failed in numerous occasions by their spouses, some have resorted to go to human rights organizations i.e. Family Social and Community Based Initiative (FASCOBI), while others have joined other contemporary social groups in which they can air their grievances and discuss as survival tactics. Some of these groups are Family, Social and Community based initiatives such as “Nyakonya” and

“Nyanam”. Such challenging situations/condition continues to pose serious ministerial challenges to the women in the sub-station. On church responsibilities, 60% of the women said that, they have been given church responsibilities as church treasurers or deaconess. But their cry had never been a ministerial issue, because they only told to keep on praying while the church is busy on other monetary goals in the interest of the church, not on the personal needs of the flocks especially the women. There are instances where married women have been abused by their parent in-laws, brothers’ in-law, Sisters’ in law and the like. The church has remained silent on this. The findings have revealed that, some women have temporarily divorced or separated by moving to far places such; Oyugis, Kisii, Nairobi and Tanzania.

5.2.2 Widowed Single Mothers

The study revealed that there was a higher mortality rate among men than women in Gwassi sub-station although most traditional practices are on the decline due to growth of Christianity in the society, the church’s doctrines have overridden African culture in theory but not in practice. This is because, most women have been crying for liberation but the church has failed to recognize their presence. The researcher observed that some of widows who participated in this study were treated in an unfriendly manner. One of them even narrated how the church had treated her with contempt after the death of her husband, though she had served the church for several years in leadership. She sought assistance from Homa Bay Court in exhuming the body, after they fell off with her in-laws on where and how the burial was supposed to be conducted. The church has also denied some widow access to sacraments due to unconfirmed rumours about their sexual conduct; such women are believed to be “loose” or preying on men carelessly.

In Magunga district at Koga church, a widow said that the church elders had been going to her house as total strangers and leaving hurriedly. Other women have also derided her in the community. She had been nicknamed the “Samaritan lady “and painfully narrated that

While family friends feel that I' m a rebel, the other women look at me as the Samaritan woman who met Jesus at the well. She adds that, the departure of my husband has made people to belittle me in the society. Even the Pastors whom people have a right to demand access to, occasionally had forgotten my status and have joined other on the song of heresy.

The findings have also revealed that the women who happened to slip out of human weakness and engage in sexual relationship with any other men are brutally beaten to death and church members hardly disclosed their cohabiters amongst them. The church has barred some women from receiving sacraments even after undergoing fresh baptism, though; Ellen G White advised the SDA Church that God is calling them to return those who are lost in His house (Testimonies for the Church, v.5 p77).

5.2.3 Single, Separated and Divorced Mothers

The study established that in the church records, there are single mothers in every church in the Suba Sub-County, because either they are divorced or they have separated from their spouses. The researcher established that there were at least five (5) single mothers per church who have separated from their spouses mainly because of socio-economic challenges which always lead to misunderstandings and quarrels. This situation does not exclude even the women who are lucky to be in employment. Most of the women who are employed in the Sub County as teachers represent a significant figure of the separated mothers. This situation has left them with permanent scars and regret as both spouses face challenges as a result of the separation. It is unfortunate to note that some separated single mothers have even gone further to affect the lives of their children because, their father is considered cursed while dealing with numerous abortions of their daughters by juvenile boys due to lack of effective parenting.

The data collected from Magunga church revealed that the single mothers are facing numerous parental challenges, where children have lacked a checked

growth pattern in their life. Women are also the breadwinners, and are kept away from their homes much of the time. In some instances, some children, especially girls, have dropped out of school. For the divorced mothers, the challenge lies in dealing with their new status and finding away to detach themselves from their spouse leading some to depressions and confusion.

5.2.4 Causes of Single Motherhood in Gwasssi Sub-Station

The study findings revealed that death is a major cause of single mother in Suba Sub-County. Other causes include; social and economic difficulties. Out of 10 women interviewed in each local church, death has been observed as the major cause with 70% of respondents in each local church agreeing with the findings; detachments from both tradition and Christian teaching has also resulted into separation as some mothers become tired of daily domestic violence in their families.

Sexual unfaithfulness has also contributed to the separation of married couples. Loose morals and low personal integrity in Suba Sub-County has played a key role in separating families. For instance, information from one of the local churches i.e. at Magunga SDA church, many separations in the church has been due to loose morals; while some men interviewed said that the Non Governmental bodies who advocate for gender equality in the Sub County have overemphasized what is expected from them, leading to disintegration of families. Other causes include; early pregnancies; alcohol addiction and drug abuse.

5.3 The Church as a Family of God

While viewing the church as family of God, the research revealed that Gwasssi Sub-station the SDA church members have not reflected the same view. From the data collected, 80% said that the church has failed the society expectations, their cry has been supported by the cry of women who have been complaining over a sleeping church in their midst. Out of the four churches in the district,

the study found that the numbers of divorcees are increasing at an alarming rate, i.e. at God Bura church there were 5 women who had divorced, Magunga 5, Lwanda 6 and Kisegi had the lowest number 3. The study has also found that in every district an average of up to four widows are moving to town yearly due to financial and social challenges, some have decided to look for employment even in bars. It is sad to note that most of the SDA church widows are roaming in the towns. A good example was God Bura church there are two widows in Nairobi, Magunga district five women have moved to urban areas to seek for employment opportunities, although those women who have separated from their husbands exceed this by far.

The findings show that the SDA church members (women) have sought for financial assistance in other denominations. Thanks to the Catholic Church for her financial support for many of the SDA widows and separated families in Gwassu Sub-Station. Some widows have even looked for assistance in places far from their homes. At God Bura Church, one widow had to go back to Ruiru, where she had been living before the death of the husband to seek for assistance from fellow Christians. That notwithstanding, the researcher observed that even the lame and blind were being told to keep on praying and be “self independent”. Some widows do not have proper shelter but the Pastors have only been mindful of their offerings.

The biblical foundation for the church as the family of God has been given little attention in Suba Sub County, but the SDA church members should understand that we are brothers and sisters to each other in God’s family. John3: 10-18, Eph 3: 14, 2 Cor 6:8. Jesus’ intention was to lay foundation to Christian families, how they should relate to one another, Mk 1:14 – 15, Lk 4: 16-19, Mk 2:19 – 20, Mt 9: 15. It is through Jesus, being the bridegroom for the church that a new family is laid in the world. In fact the situation experienced by many families in various local churches in the Sub Station is highly problematic and chaotic, if not entirely negative. Church institutions and laws unjustly ignore the right of the family and of human person and

society. Far from putting itself at the service of the family; the church has been attacking women violently in its value and fundamental requirements. The family which Jesus intended finds itself as being a victim of the society. Serious allegations have been leveled on the work of the church pastors, for them to appear before their juniors for the wrongs they have done has been impossible.

In the early church, women dedicated their lives to the congregations 1Cor 1:11, 16: 19 Aquila and Priscilla's generous work was extended outward as one of the tangible expressions of mutual Christian unity, such patterns which assumed life, is what should be reflected in the SDA church members so that the women who have been in desperate situation may be showed the love of God as Jesus showered to the women of Israel (Mathew 9: 35-37). He also shared meals with people of different background as part of his ministry Mk 2: 13-22, Lk, 7:36-50, Acts 2: 45, 5:1-10.

The church as a "family of God" according to Charles Nyamiti (2005) is an over searching enrichment where Jesus is seen as an African brother ancestor. His African ancestral trinitology and Christology are the most relevant reflection which the church should emphasize. Wachege (1992) made an elaborate view on Jesus as being an ideal elder in Africans perception using Kikuyu insight. This is of more value to the SDA pastors and leaders in Suba Sub-County, however, in Suba community, family plays a central role in the life of each member of the society, and Jesus too noticed that, the people of Israel had human perception of the word family of God. He told them that, those who are doing the will of His fathers are His brothers and sisters (Matthew 12:48-50). Paul told Timothy to act as if all church members were part of a larger family: 1Timothy 5:1-2, 1Colosians 3:12. The gospel writers have recorded "Jesus Christ as the Bridegroom of the church and the sacrament of matrimony", the communion between God and His people find its definitive fulfillment in Jesus Christ.

After having evaluated the kind of leadership and Africans mothers cry in the SDA church and the extra-marital affairs, the researcher elaborated on congregations' reflection on the church as a family of God in their daily life. It was observed that, the future of the world and that of the SDA congregation in Gwasssi Sub-station will only take shape through the family and societal harmony. Charles Nyamiti (2003) insight on Jesus as "Ancestor-sacred kin relationship" should pose a great challenge to the way shepherds are to minister to their flock, especially women in Suba Sub County, given that the political, social, economic and cultural difficulties which African mothers face, are as a result of problems and great changes that are affecting the contemporary society.

5.4 Contemporary Challenges facing African Mothers in Gwasssi Sub-Station

The study established that the majority of African mothers in Gwasssi Sub-Station are low income earners which have led to financial difficulties. The mothers eventually experience economic hardships when it comes to family affairs. Some informants who have been elders in the church i.e. at Magunga SDA Church observed that financial problems have led many women to indulge in prostitutions. Some have gone to seek employment in major towns like Nairobi and neighboring countries such as Tanzania and Uganda; so as to sustain their families leading to the increased death from infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS, thus high rate of orphans and poverty.

From the data collected, 50% of women have cited economic constraints as being the major challenge facing them regardless of their groups (single or married). Financial problems have never been an issue in the church. The church has failed in its obligation as it has envisaged in the bible that the biblical story is a story of a God who cares, a God who loves the world, so much that He got involved in the affairs of His people. The narratives in the Scripture portray not only a God who proclaims a heavenly kingdom to come,

but He is intensely interested and involved in the well-being of people as they live their lives on earth.

5.4.1 Social Challenges

The study noted that just as married mothers in polygamous union are facing serious social challenges, the monogamous unions have enriched their families. Such conditions have led to separation. The researcher observed that both spouses longed for a re-union, because most informants had even denied their spouses, their conjugal rights. Some credit however, goes to those who have attempted to bring these kinds of family back, but sorry to the church Pastors and leaders who have never taken it to be a ministerial goal.

Among the three selected churches in the district, the church records showed that there was an outcry on the number of women who are separating with their spouses, some of them are remarried just within the station. Leaders have ignored their plight, consequently, the widows claimed that they have been segregated and treated as lesser beings in the church where they seek refuge. Segregation within the churches and society as discussed by P.Wachege (2003) emphasized that, widows are treated with suspicion and the married mothers too have a negative feeling toward them, as they view them as prostitutes “hunting for peoples` husbands”. The study also revealed that even during church services, some preachers add insult into their wounded hearts. Most often, they tell the couples to sit closer to their spouses, thus making them to remember their painful past.

5.4.2 Cultural Challenges

Most of the women who interviewed in polygamous unions revealed that, cultural challenges have affected their lives, which have resulted into the death of many women as many have been confronted by some oppressive traditional practices. Some informants have said that property inheritance and HIV/AIDS scourge had made many of them to leave their families unexpectedly. In Suba community, the status of women in comparison to that of men has always been

a secondary consideration. This made it clear that men dominate women over family matters; men forget their historical financial difficulties in their early marriage lives. Once they happen to get little wealth they look for other ladies to marry, unfortunately without going for an HIV test in the contemporary world. In June, 2013 statistics revealed that, Suba Sub County was leading in HIV/AIDS in Nyanza. This has led other provinces in 2013 AIDS statistics in Kenya. The effort to please the husband to remain in monogamous union has become slim because, pastors who preach salvation have fallen into the trap. This has been noted in the Station and Field through HIV/AIDS tests, where some of the pastors have tested positive to HIV/AIDS and their spouses' negative.

On the fate of single mothers, the respondents mentioned that some of the young married mothers who lost their spouses have faced a serious cultural torment, which has made some who were not financially stable to run away. It was noted with dismay that even the Sub County Commissioner had joined the society in oppressing women culturally. For example, on 23 May, 2014 the Commissioner signed for Government Vehicle to move out of the County, to bring a single widow back without considering who was to provide for her basic human needs such as; sexuality, food and shelter. In January 2014 a lady who thought cultural practices could bring peace to her life was beaten to death by her cohabiter and the story was still fresh in peoples' minds. The issue of property inheritance had become an impediment in women's future life especially the widows. This had brought a lot of commotion in between them and their close families. It was observed that some men had a lot of trust in their sisters, brothers and parents than their wives. This had caused financial constraint on the life of widows. The study revealed that this kind of attitude had made some women to go back to their parent's homes or cities to look for an alternative source of livelihood.

5.4.3 Emotional Challenges

Among the women interviewed, 53% of them accepted that those who had lost their husbands suffered emotionally. Even the married and divorced women got stressed in life. Out of the population of widows who were interviewed, 80% had not forgotten the happier days they had lived with their husbands and in the new situation they had no one to share their feelings with. This is why the widowed women who are aged 45 and above found it more challenging to find love after their husband's death.

The findings have revealed that, lapse of memory is a major challenge in the lives of most widows especially the single mothers, many struggles with the feelings of being guilty over the past decisions made and what the future holds for them. Such conditions have made widows confused and even questioned where they should go. This made them vulnerable to pretenders who claimed they were ready to help them, but they had ulterior motives. The findings from Magunga and God Bura church showed that, some men had decided to inherit even the HIV infected mothers who had lost their loved ones. This practice led to an increase in the number of orphans as a result of HIV/AIDS infections.

5.4.4 Extra Marital Affairs in Gwassi Sub Station

The study revealed that, most of married and single mothers had little trust among themselves because many church members doubted the movement of their spouses. Forty five percent (45%) of the women that were interviewed exclaimed that they had very minimal trust in their spouses. This belief was further supported by rise in polygamous unions which had been observed in most local churches. When men grew old they abandoned some of their wives and requested for rebaptism. A notable example, in 1960 at Magunga SDA church, was the late Mzee Wanzare who abandoned his other wives. The same scenario was repeated in 2008, when Mzee Omburo Marire abandoned his wives and was re-baptized. In the 1970s, Ogunyo Wanzare divorced his second wife; and was eventually elected a church elder.

The research found that most of the married and single mothers in the church are using HIV/AIDS drugs; some of their Pastors are not exempted. The findings revealed that when a man becomes a Christian, he is allowed to participate fully in the church and receive the sacrament of matrimony officiated in the church with one of the wives. However, the problem would be those women who have been abandoned as they could hardly get married to other men, making them to wonder and ask what Christ had come for. If they sought sexual satisfaction from other men they again break one of the commandments which were given to the people of God (Deuteronomy 5:1-22). Thus, “the Bible is above criticism or that it serves as an absolute judge in faulty and practice.” However, the Pastors also emphasized that they are talking of Jesus of the black traditions, not theological concept but a liberating in their fight for dignity and worth that is Jesus of the oppressed; they advised them not to repeat any wrong one had done, basing their teaching in John 8:1-10.

The discussion with focused group revealed that, children born out of wedlock are not only considered intruders by close relatives, but are also culturally mistreated and even referred to as illegitimate children, sometimes labeled and told to go to their fathers whom they are totally ignorant about. Such families are also being mistreated in the church. A Pastor from one district observed that such families require love, sympathy and support of the church, but he was sorry that the church has not realized the repercussions of extra-marital affairs in their society. Pastor Ngore from Lwanda Sub-district also observed that because of the high rate of immorality, the Suba people could hardly tell the truth.

The study revealed that, extra marital affairs have led to breakage in many families in the station. One informant narrated a story which makes her ashamed of her future life,

I am very sorry at the situation I have been experiencing throughout my life time; the relationship of my parents

makes people doubt my life style, I am called “a woman’s daughter” because of reasons I cannot be able to explain, I regret on what caused the separation, I intend to have an organized church marriage, but the family of my fiancée is not ready to accept a girl from a separated family. I have not been happy with the way my mother dresses, and even places she is found at which makes my age mates hate me. Some call me “daughter of the prostitute

These revelations should make the church not the separated, divorced and other categories of women who had been yearning for liberation. As such, ladies who are longing for their families could be ready to live in the light of no fault and virtue of hope. The SDA families should share in communion with the church in their experiences of the early pilgrimage toward the full revelation and manifestation of the kingdom of God.

Information from the informant indicated that pastoral interventions in support of families needed as a matter of urgency. Every effort should be made in the SDA Church membership to strengthen and develop pastoral care to families in difficult situations. The members’ deep commitment to all will offer disinterested help, which can make many to come closer to a model of family which the creator had intended from the beginning (Genesis 2:18-24), which our savior Jesus Christ had renewed with his redeeming grace. In view of our savior call on the cross it will be necessary that all the SDA Church members become aware of their need for intervention and responsibilities, as they face new problems that would arise through mutual service and active sharing amongst themselves, to remind the SDA church families to remember the path of their master.

The researcher observed that, extra marital affair among the SDA church members is high. Most of the informants, especially the pastors, gave a similar account on their observation that Suba/Gwasssi Sub-station members are not open when it comes to matters of sexual issue. The pastors have been disappointed in ministering to their members who have remained “closed up”. They have also noted with regret that, it has even encroached the youths. A

number of youths have been found HIV/AIDS positive and they have strongly refused to allow them get married, only advising them to stop their relationships. It has also been observed that some widows who have made an attempt to seek the pastors' advice on remarriage, unfortunately they end up making their own decisions.

The SDA church has insisted on monogamy and her stand that polygamy is incompatible with ecclesia doctrines, "...but for the sake of the love of our Lords commission, wives who are forced to separate/divorce should be advice on how to live as daughters of the Lord" (John 4:21-24). They should not be stopped from receiving sacrament and if possible their marital status should be reconsidered so that if there are those who happened to have slid into sexual immorality through human weaknesses, they could be reminded of the love of their savior Jesus Christ (Mathew 18:15-19). The SDA Church should note that the doctrines or constitution were made by human beings, but need to get deep insight that women concern is both scriptural and a living reality in the concreteness of their existence. The chief concern of women is not the information included in the neither bible nor preachers message, but rather how the preachers arranged that information into a story and related it to their daily lives. Jesus warned the Pharisees on the application of tradition that they should never teach human rules as though they were God's laws (Mark 7:7-8) in v 8 He said "You put aside God's command and obey human teaching".

5.5 Conclusion

The chapter dealt with summary of the findings in relation to study objectives, the SDA Church pastoral challenges relating to the life of African Mothers and biblical teachings on Church doctrines. The family image of the church in Suba Sub-county has been poorly reflected in the life of the SDA church members .Some informants said that their presence is only needed when it comes to church contributions, especially during special occasion e.g. week of

prayer, but when it comes to visitation their pastors rarely visit them. That has made them, to seek for spiritual comfort in other denominations.

The SDA church as a “family of God” is called upon to take part actively and responsibly in the mission of their faith. The study should help the church to be aware that family sharing in church’s mission should follow a community pattern. The SDA church as a family should build up the kingdom of God in history through the everyday realities that concern and distinguish its state of life. Church love should copy the love between husband and wife and between members of families,’ love which is lived out in all its extraordinary richness of value and demands. Oneness and fruitfulness of the SDA church participation in the prophetic, priestly and kingly mission is a key tenet which Jesus and his church find its full expression and realization. Pope John Paul II (1982) record that, the second Vatican council recalls this fact when he writes families will share their spiritual riches generously with other families. This is in congruent with what the study recommends for the SDA church to get in-depth knowledge about.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter analyzes the research findings in the context of the issues discussed in chapter two to five. It concludes the study by making summary, conclusions and recommendations to various stakeholders within the SDA church and other Christians. It focuses on the SDA Church pastoral ministry with regard to caring and counseling. The study is believed to give hope to “hurt” women in Suba Sub-County and allows for the views to be reflected on the bigger picture of the SDA church in the world.

6.2 Summary

From the findings, it is clear that the SDA Church has not addressed issues concerning all categories of African mothers in their congregations. From this perspective Adventism does not care about these issues, but they are often regarded as secondary or dealt with in a dogmatic way. The leaders spend a lot of time, money and energy telling the world that Jesus is “coming soon” (Henso, 1999), yet, they are often silent when it comes to socio-ethical and socio-political issues affecting her members. Human experiences, perspectives and people’s personal faith have in a way been trivialized and marginalized (Plantak, 1997). While Adventism will always help the poor and sick, often their focus is on winning so-called souls for Christ (Kubo, 1998).

The SDA Church runs very strong welfare and medical programs; she also sponsors the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Program. This is a fulfillment of Jesus’ mandate to feed the hungry and help the sick. Yet, as Knight (2000) indicates, “These humanitarian projects are not divorced from evangelism in its narrower sense”. He says that these activities act as “entering wedges” in order to create space for Adventist evangelism. “These

programs had no overt spiritual aim or content, but were (are) regarded as opportunities to ‘break down barriers’ and to provide public health education and community service”. The institution that the SDA Church is prone to emphasize ‘evangelism’ and minimize the daily needs of people in problems has not been properly handled. Issues dealing with women who are facing abuse are regarded as important, but unfortunately it is only of secondary importance. The proclamation of the Gospel becomes divorced from the questions that men and women are posing with regard to daily issues.

On evangelicals and Adventists Bosh (1997) observed that SDA Church are not devoid of compassion and humanitarian concerns, but they “...often reveal great sacrificial involvement with the existential needs of victims in the society ...” He adds that these types of “services” are viewed as aids to evangelism where schools, hospitals, orphanages and the like are primarily seen as instruments affording pupils, patients and orphans the opportunity to hear the gospel. By attending to the human body in the hospital or the mind in the mission school, they are preparing him or her for the gospel. The success of mission schools and hospitals is often judged according to the number of converts they produce.

The church has spent a lot of time and energy developing theologies on issues like the Sabbath, the Second Coming of Jesus, and the Sanctuary. Adventist has done a lot of research on the use of alcohol, tobacco and other pietistically oriented issues, and developed definite policies. This is why even in Third World countries; Adventism has done very little research on issues like family life problems, personal hang-ups, relationship failures and traumatic life events. In addition, the church is addressing some issues of human rights and violence or abuse within relationships. It is however, often done in a functional-pragmatic way without giving serious thought to their underlying causes. Their theology and mission has not reflected positively on such issues.

When Jan Paulsen, the General Conference president addressed the gathering on the agenda to the 2002 Annual Council, he was asked if he is now promoting something that, “...looks and smells’ like a social gospel; one which is no longer focused on the straight preaching of the Word.” The straight preaching of the Word refers to the proclamation of the confessions of the SDA Church. As Couden (1989) said, “...however, maybe this embarrasses us because as God’s so-called “remnant church” we feel that we should live above these human foibles. It could be time that too many of our generations “...have spent too many hours worrying about losing our way and not enough time learning how to address our everyday concerns in a responsible manner”.

When one becomes a SDA Church member, all day-to-day and relationship problems do not disappear; on the contrary, he too often loses his job, or is rejected by family and friends and struggles with anger, alcohol, smoking and many other problems, which also cause guilt because he is confronted with the church’s doctrinal teachings. The changes in his life bring about added stress. To become a Christian is not the end, but often the beginning of a struggle against many socio-ethical issues. There is need to assist families in difficult situations for example when a child is molested or abducted; a son or daughter turns to drug abuse, or runs away from home; a father is retrenched; a mother is diagnosed with cancer; a husband or a wife has an extra-marital affair; a father or a mother is hijacked, mugged or murdered a son or daughter is demonized.

These are not any situations that are planned by the victims; because they do happen even to the most dedicated Christians. Unfortunately when this happens, the shame and pain; the hopelessness and despair involved are so great that they devastate those caught up in them. Consequently, the victims of such tragedies have to “go it alone”. For those caught up in often get very little help. The church does not give them hope; instead expect them to “tough it out and wait for the second coming of the Lord”. It is my contention that the SDA Church needs to recognize that people today are living in a pluralistic world,

and pluralistic societies, where the needs of people and cultures differ. We can no longer approach people with a stereo-typed ministry where we take a North American style of ministry and superimpose it on South Africa, for example. Jon Paulien the SDA president said that, "...we need to meet people where they are ..., Secular people respond to relational approaches that meet them at points of felt need." Miroslav Pujic (1945) suggested that there is a need to make a change in the approach to ministry from a confrontational and propositional one to a relational and contextual one. There is need for "a new trajectory", where God's story clashes with a human story to make a difference. Paul showed an exemplary example when he circumcised Timothy (Act 16:1-5).

6.2.1 Sexual relationships and Revocation from Church Membership

Under the SDA church rules, any member of the church who engages in unlawful sexual relationship within or outside the church is excommunicated from the church and stopped from taking sacraments. The church does not further allow taking such a person through a fresh baptism with the new partner so that they can both be seen as a new flock. Instead, their memberships are considered superficial, and only add to the numbers and contributions to the church. Adventist scholars support re-baptism for any member who has fallen away in apostasy and have lived in such a manner that the faith and principles of the church have been publicly violated. From their views, "a true neighbor" is every soul that is wounded and bruised (Welfare Ministry, p 43). Adventists' do not view themselves as simply a member of another denomination, but regard themselves as a prophetic people and as God's remnant true church. They see themselves as fulfilling prophecy with a definite mission to "preach the unique message of the three angels message of Revelation 14; and to present God's last appeal to a "dying world" before Christ returns to 'harvest' the earth" Rev.21. The Adventists' have a strong prophetic calling to proclaim the "gospel" of Jesus Christ, teaching the world to keep the commandments of God; the Sabbath, and look forward to

the last day when Jesus will usher in a new world where there will be no more pain and suffering.

The SDA Church is optimistic about the Holy City, the New Jerusalem; which will be coming down out of heaven from God ...He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.” (Rev 21:2 & 4). A “confessional” framework with the emphasis on “proclamation” and an apocalyptic eschatology, based upon a rationalistic approach, has far-reaching implications for the church and pastoral care. The more conservative-oriented Adventist supports a “high view” of Scripture; most often the SDA Church leaders should also supports a “low anthropology”, regarding confessional truths about the care for African mothers.

6.2.2 Wife Inheritance

In Luo tradition, wife inheritance does not entail a new marriage; rather, it is a temporary adjustment in a continuing marriage in which a brother or relative in-law substitutes for the deceased legal husband (Paul Mboya, 1938). The church pastors and elders are fully knowledgeable about this in Gwasssi Substation. Because, it was sad to observe that, a woman who had been a church member was denied the body of her husband while the pastor and elders kept quiet. The person (father in-law) who had taken the body of the deceased failed to be compassionate to the widow’s orphans. The secular law finally brought relief to the widow after the divine law completely failed to acknowledge her plight through Homa-Bay court.

6.2.3 Challenges facing African Mothers

From the widows interviewed, 56% of them acknowledge that, the church had failed to be a listening ecclesia but a silent one; instead of encouraging widows, the leaders have joined the other church members in condemning them and breaking their hopes. Ellen G. White posited that “Christ was a joy to the rich for he could teach them how to sacrifice earthly possessions to help

those who are suffering,” (Ministry of healing p 54). It is sad to note that the SDA church is not concerned with the women’s financial needs; instead they expect them to give to the church generous donations for the upkeep of the pastors and other leaders. The church leaders have forgotten their flock; in most cases, when parents die the deceased children are taken care of by the extended families. Their value only ends in adding numbers and actively contributing in economic functions of the church, especially in tithes. Most African mothers have backslidden or joined other churches where they feel that their welfare is taken seriously. Others have perished through terminal diseases long after the death of their spouses and therefore added to the long list of orphans in the district. The married African mothers whose spouses have neglected their responsibilities have been found to be among the most affected ones, their husbands who pretend to be Christians have turned out to be “hunting women”, and the Pastors are not exempted. The church on the other hand has not felt that such mothers’ psychological problems affect the faith of others in their congregations.

6.3 Conclusion

The SDA pastoral ministry is not so much focused on proclamation as they are on the incarnation of God to African mothers. It does not reflect the teachings on God in the lives of those who become one with human beings, when he touched their lives. The Bible states that Jesus ministered to the needs of people, healing their brokenness, bringing hope to their despair, relief to their hunger and freedom from their imprisonment. The SDA pastoral ministry is less concerned with the welfare of its own congregations, especially, the women in despair. However, as people encounter the God who has healed their brokenness and gives them peace in time of trouble, they personally follow Him and become more like Him. Many believed that the humanity of Jesus is revealed by the fact that he is for other persons, as He ministered to a broken humanity.

The institutional church's view of a servant of God is contrary to Jesus Christ's teaching. His teaching is that believers serve Him by being the servants of others. Jesus Christ 'out-socialized' the socialists of his time. He said that in His kingdom the greatest one should be the servant of all (Matthew 23:11). The real test of a saint is not one's willingness to preach the gospel, but one's willingness to do something like washing the disciples' feet—that is, being willing to do those things that seem unimportant in human estimation but count as everything to God.

There are many women who are suffering in Suba Sub-County, but the church is silent and is only interested in the numerical and financial values of these women. The church has kept on encouraging them not to drop from being members while they do not enforce Jesus Christ's teachings about a New Testament saint; that is, not one who merely proclaims the gospel, but one who becomes broken bread and poured-out-wine in the hands of Jesus Christ for the sake of others. True happiness is recorded in Mathew 5:1-11 where Jesus talked about the beatitude. In this regard, John Patton (2005) makes a very profound statement when he says that: A Christian cannot do ministry without at least implicitly addressing the question of the nature and character of the Christ whom he or she represents. At this point in history, what has been most clearly apprehended and affirmed about Christ as a result of the ministry of pastoral counseling is his humanness in relationships, a relationship that binds and challenges in order to offer freedom.

6.4 Recommendations

The research revealed that women are the most affected lot in the SDA Church. There is need to apply wisdom when addressing their plight to enable them remain in the house of the Lord. They should be indiscriminately assisted to strive to live in Christian manner.

6.4.1 Emerging Recommendations

Drawing from the study we make the following recommendations:

- 1) That the SDA Church needs to develop an elaborate guide, both pre-marital and post-marital counseling programs which could assist African mothers in building stable families.
- 2) That the SDA Church leadership needs not to be theoretical but should include women in most leadership positions.
- 3) That the SDA Church should revise her constitution/doctrines to be in line with the Gospels' message about a true "neighbor," so that the value and dignity of human can be realized.
- 4) That the SDA Church should note that there are various categories of African mothers which require diverse forms of pastoral care depending on their groups.
- 5) That the SDA Church should rise and teach sex education based on Biblical principles as Saxon (2011) had observed that immorality was rampant in S.D.A Church. D.W Waruta (2000) also observed, prostitution and teenage pregnancies continue to be high among the Christians demonstrating the general failure of new Christian sexual morality.
- 6) That the family image of the Church should be reflected in the life of the SDA Church members as Jesus did to Samaritan women in Tyre and Sidon (John 4:21, Mathew 15:21-30).

NOTES

Mrs Okuku Mwabe, O.I, 18/1/2014, p24

Mzee Songora Marire,O.I,15/12/2014, p17,27

Single widow “x” at Koga Church, O.I,10/1/2014,p44

Daughter of Separated Spouses, O.I,2/2/2014, p51

Table 1: On socio-economic conditions of African Mothers, p22

Table 2: Showing women who have migrated to other Churches, p 26

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APPENDICES
APPENDIX I
LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

Ochieng Justine Aila

P O Box 12

Suba.

14th October2013

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: THE IMPACT OF SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH'S
PASTORAL MINISTRY ON WOMEN'S LIFE: A CASE STUDY OF
SUBA SUB-COUNTY, HOMA BAY COUNTY IN KENYA

I am a Master of Arts student at the University of Nairobi and in my final year of study. As part of the requirement for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in Arts in Religious Studies, I'm undertaking a research project on above topic. In this regard, I am kindly requesting for your support in terms of time, and by responding to the attached questionnaire. Your accuracy and candid response will be critical in ensuring an objective research. It will not be necessary to write your name on this questionnaire and for your comfort, all information received will be treated in strict confidence. In addition, the findings of the study will solely be used for academic research purposes and to enhance knowledge in the field pastoral ministry. Thank you for your valuable time on this.

Yours faithfully,

Ochieng Justine

APPENDIX II

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PASTORS AND CHURCH ELDERS

INSTRUCTIONS

Kindly tick (√) the appropriate response to questions; your responses are meant to get information on how African Mothers are handled in your church inline with Jesus gospel message of Liberation.’

1. Name [optional]
2. Years of service: 1-5 6-10 Over 10 years
3. Gender, Female Male
4. Marital status, Married Single other (specify
5. Age: Below 35years 36years - 45years over 46years
6. Current position in the church: Church Elder Evangelist Any other
7. Educational level: Primary Secondary University Any other.
Do you agree that African mothers face socio-economic problems in the society; Yes No
Explain your response.....
8. The following are categories of African Mothers in the church, Tick (√) the one you are familiar with. Married Widow Divorce
Single by choice Separated women
9. Have you been involved in supporting African mothers? Yes No
10. The following are the causes of single mothers today, tick (√) the major cause of single mothers,
Divorce Death Early pregnancy
11. The following are challenges African Mothers are experiencing as listed below. Which one do consider as the main challenge which require immediate attention?
Financial Parenting Culture Any other

12. What is your position about the following issues related to African Mothers in the church?

- (a) Taking pastoral responsibilities, Good Not the best.
- (b) Work and support to their families. Okay Not good
- (c) Participation in church leadership Good Not fair
(best)

13. Does the church show any kind of discrimination against the African mothers?

Yes No

Explain your response?

.....

15. Has the church failed the society's expectation on pastoral work on women's life?

Yes No

Comment on your response.....

APPENDIX III

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CHURCH MEMBERS

INSTRUCTIONS

Kindly tick (✓) the appropriate responses to questions; the responses are to be used to assess how SDA church administers Pastoral work to women.

1. Name [optional]
 2. For how long have you been in SDA church?
1-5 6-10 11- 35 years over 36 years
 3. Gender Male Female
 4. Educational level: Primary Secondary University
Any other (specify).....
 5. The following are categories of African Mothers found in the church which group is the majority in your church.
Widows Married Divorced/separated
Any others [specify].....
 6. Is there any pastoral program to African Mothers in your church? Yes
No
 7. The following are the challenges African Mothers experience. Which one requires immediate attention?
Financial Culture Parenting All of them
 8. In your own opinion, do you think the church has shown any kind of discrimination against women in the church?
Yes No
- (b) Comment on your response.....

APPENDIX IV

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SINGLE MOTHERS

INSTRUCTIONS

Kindly tick (✓) the appropriate responses to the questions below; the responses are to be used to examine how SDA church is Ministering to African Mothers.

1. Name [optional]
2. For how long have you been in the SDA church?
1-5 6-10 11-20 over 21 years
3. Educational level. Primary Secondary University Any other
4. Which category of single motherhood are you?
Widow Divorced Separated
Any other
.....
5. For how long have you been single?
1-5years 6-10years 11-years and above
6. Is your church involvement in Pastoral care aimed at single mother's families in any way? Yes No
(b) Explain your response.....
(c) How many times in your life, you have been offered the above care?
Less than 1 time 2 times More than 3 times More than 4 times
7. What do you consider as being the major cause of the African Single Mothers today? Early Pregnancy Domestic conflicts
any other.....
8. What are the main challenges facing Single mothers which require immediate attention? Cultural issues Financial Constraints
Parenting
Any other.....
9. In your opinion, has the church shown any kind of discrimination against the single mothers?

Yes No

(b) Explain your response

10. The following are the possible ways of uplifting Single mothers in the church. Which one requires immediate attention? Counseling
Financial support Social support Any
other.....

APPENDIX V

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MARRIED AFRICAN MOTHERS

INSTRUCTIONS

Kindly tick (√) the appropriate responses for the questions below; the responses will be used to examine the SDA church Pastoral Ministry on African Mothers.

Name [optional]

1. For how long have you been in the SDA church?
1-5 6-10 11-20 over 20 years
2. Educational level. Primary Secondary University Any others
3. Which category of motherhood are you?
Widow Divorced Separated
Any other
4. For how long have you been in marriage life?
1-5years 6-10years 11-and above years
5. What are the major challenges African mothers face today?
Financial Culture Parenting
Any other.....
6. Is your church involved in supporting the women ministry in any way?
Yes No
Comment on your response.....
7. Have you been involved in Pastoral care? Which is aimed at supporting the African Mothers? Yes No
[b] Explain your response.....
8. Which African mothers' problem requires immediate attention? Financial Cultural Parenting
Any other.....

9. In your own option, does the church discriminate against the African Mothers?

Yes No

Explain your response.....

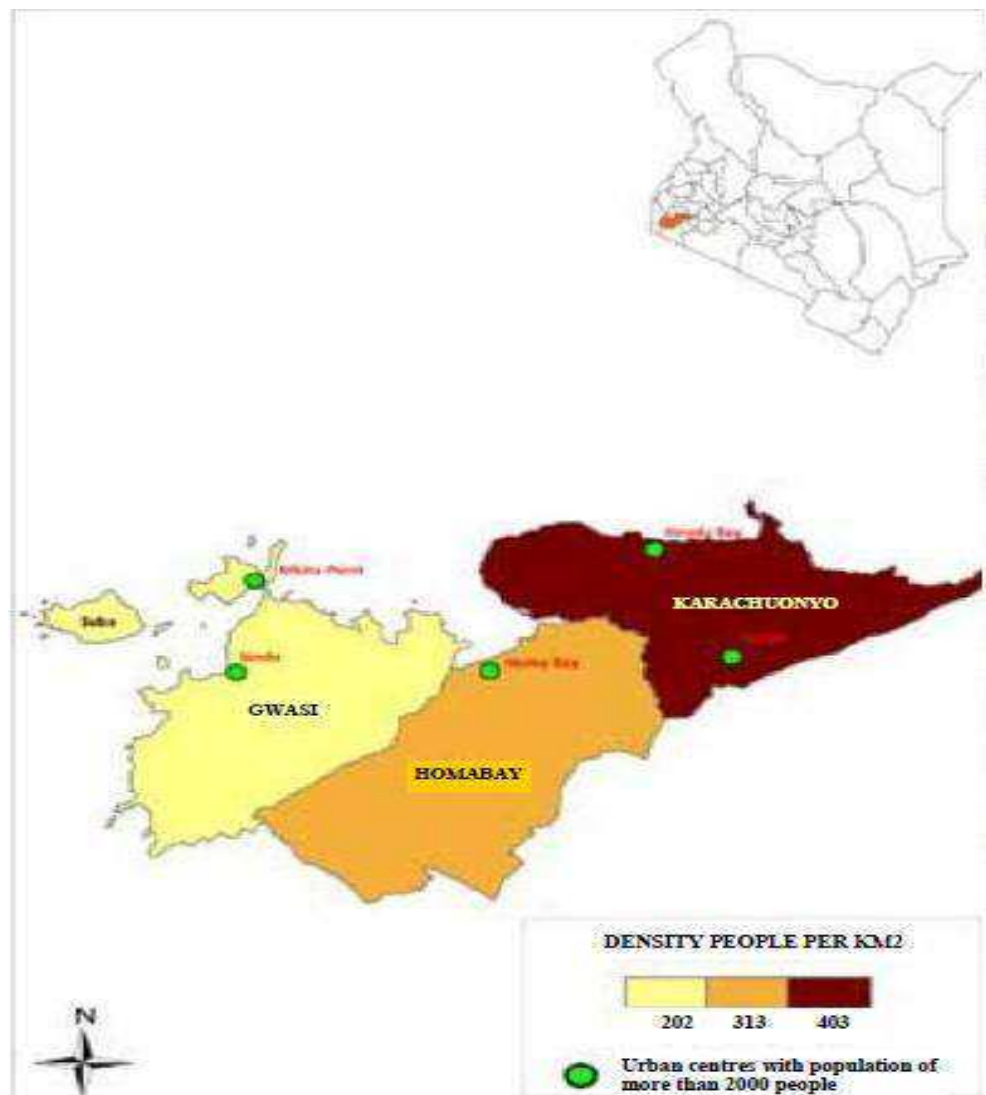
10. The following are the possible ways of uplifting African mothers in the church. Which one should be given immediate attention?

Counseling Financial support

Any other.....

APPENDIX VI

MAP SHOWING LOCATION OF SUBA SUB-COUNTY IN HOMA-BAY COUNTY



APPENDIX VII

LIST OF KEY INFORMANTS GOD BURA DISTRICT

Name	Age	Marital Status	Date
Position Held			
Agnes Atieno Group leader	72	Married	16/2/2014
Duka Okola (Mrs) Church member	40	Single	20/02/2014
Nesca Agoyo Church member	33	Widow	12/01/2014
Odero Onango Elder	51	Married	08/02/2014
Okeyo Miraga Church member	44	Widow	13/01/104
Otiwa Juliana Elder	49	Married	08/02/2014
Sangora A. Pastor	55	Married	08/2/2014
Tembe O. Elder	52	Married	19/02/2014
Tom Mel Elder	44	Married	19/02/2014

MAGUNGA DISTRICT

Name	Age	Marital Status	Date
Position Held			
Beldiner akinyi Group leader	61	Widow	Magunga
Daniel Arot Pastor	30	Married	20/02/2014
Damaris Atieno Church member	62	Widow	14/12/2013
Grace Obuka Church member	29	Widow	18/01/2014
Otiwa Elphas Elder	48	Separated	24/12/2013
Opiyo Mboi Elder	54	married	15/2/2014
Odongo Mboi Elder	54	married	15/02/2014
Oyoo Milicent Elder	50	Widow	16/01/2014
Silas Martin Elder	52	Married	20/02/2014

LWANDA

Name	Age	Marital Status	Date
Position Held			
Abonyo John Evangelist	36	Married	01/12/2013

Kennedy Ranyi Elder	44	Married	28/02/2014
Ngore A. Church member	52	Married	02/02/2014
Otieno Ken Pastor	52	Widow	12/01/2014
Philip Legeza Church member	42	Widow	03/01/2014
Kesha Yongo Church member	55	Widow	27/02/2014
Willington O. Church member		Widow	03/01/2014
Odero (Mrs) Church member		Separated	27/02/2014

KISEGI DISTRICT

Name	Age	Marital Status	Date
Position Held			
Charles Ranyuongi Evangelist	55	Married	03/01/2014
Grace Kijebi Church member	32	Widow	20/02/2014
Okelo Jackii Elder	55	Married	20/01/2014
Owino Raphael Church member	32	Married	12/02/2014

APPENDIX VIII

LIST OF KEY INFORMANTS OUTSIDE GWASSI SUB-STATION

Name	Age	Marital Status	Date
Position			
Agwanda Kennedy Pastor/conference level	49	Married	15/11/2013
Adhiambo Jane Evangelist	56	Widow	10/10/2013
Eunice Kennedy Church member	33	Married	10/10/2013
Owino Hellen Pastor (Conference)	48	Married	5/11/2013
Owino Mzeee Pastor	88	Married	5/11/2013
Oyungu Jack Evangelist	50	Married	12/10/2013
Onyango Morice Pastor	50	Married	4/2/2013
Ngwato William Evangelist	50	Married	12/12/2015
Jenifa Agido Elder	44	Married	20/2/2013

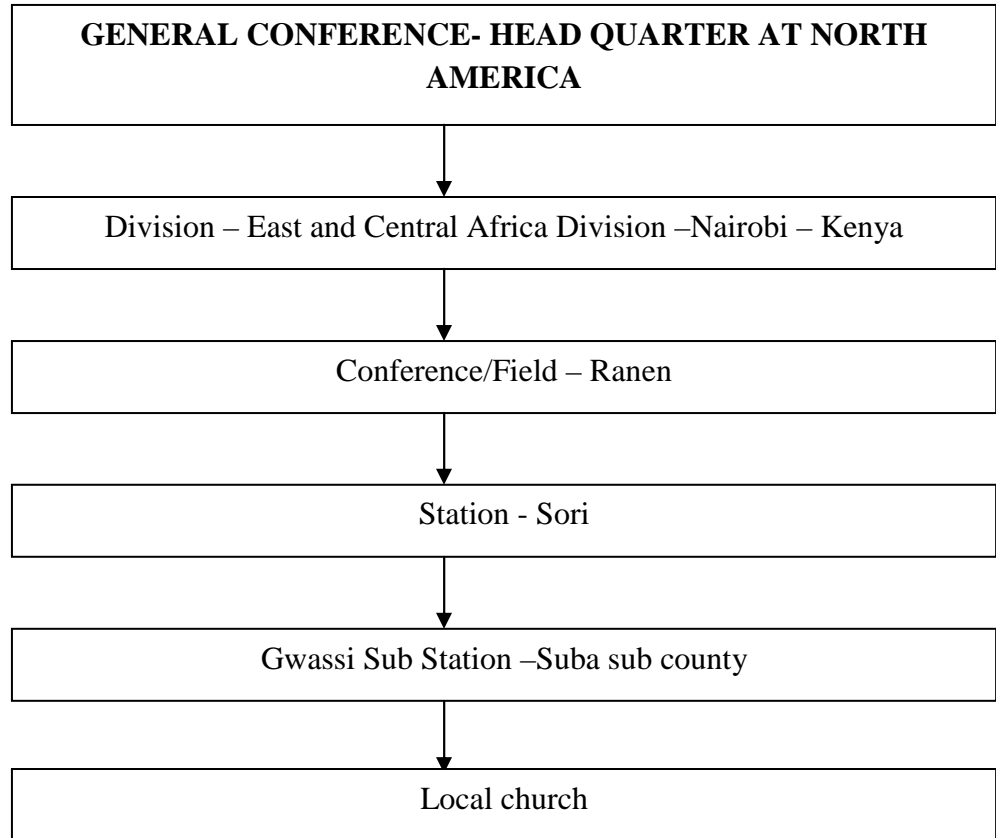
APPENDIX IX

KEY INFORMATION ON SUBA/LUO CULTURE

Name	Age	Marital status	Date	Position in Church
Aloo Ganda Ccouncil Elder	94	Married	10/9/2013	Suba
Amayo Ken Health Officer	46	Married	25/2/2014	Public
Francis Mbewa	44	Married	2/11/2014	Clan
Gadwa Samson Maragoli)	52	Married	15/1/2014	Elder (
Marrie Songora Elder/Farmer	80	Married	15/12/2013	
Mel Okanga Suba council	88	Married	16/12/2013	Member of
Mola Wilson	76	Married	20/12/2013	Clan elder
Okanga Thomas	72	Married	12/12/2013	Ker Suba
Obiero Nahason	82	Married	1/11/2013	Clan elder
Nyambuto Francis Farmer	72	Married	17/1/2014	Peasant
Samson Kwamboka famer	74	Married	17/1/2014	Peasant

APPENDIX X:

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE



N/B

All the office bearers at every level are elected by members apart from the district leaders who are posted by a conference leader.