

**DETERMINATION OF EFFECTS OF STRESS TO  
PASTORS' WIVES ON CHURCH MINISTRIES  
PERFORMANCE:  
A CASE OF BUNGOMA SOUTH DISTRICT**

**BY**

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**[The Opinions expressed in this thesis do not necessarily reflect the views of the South  
African Theological Seminary]**

# DECLARATIONS

## Declaration by the student

I hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my original work and has not previously in its entirety or in part been submitted to any academic institution for degree purposes.

Tryphosa Liyala Nandasaba

.....Date.....

## Declaration by Supervisor

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as University supervisor.

Signed -----

## **ABSTRACT**

Stress to an individual, can either be positive or negative depending on various things, such as conditions or environment under which individuals experience it and circumstances under which the experience occurs. In addition, people of all ages experience stress somewhat. Consequently, the objective of the study was to examine factors that precipitate stress in pastors' wives and determine whether stress to Pastors' wives do affect church ministry performance. Further, if stress to pastors' wives has any effect on church performance, the study sought to suggest solutions to mitigate stressful conditions so as to improve the performance of church ministries. Accordingly, the study investigated stress symptoms that are exhibited by Pastors' spouses; factors that cause them stress and the evidence of how stress to Pastors' wives affects performance of Church ministries.

To do this, the study interviewed 216 respondents – 72 and 144 being pastors' wives and ordinary members' wives respectively from congregations in which Pastors wives were interviewed. The study utilised a structured questionnaire with close-ended and open –ended items which were given to respondents; an interview was then scheduled for pastors' wives to provide in-depth information and observation method was also used to elicit information on stress in pastors' wives. The respondents were selected through a cluster sampling procedure where pastors' fellowship meetings and churches at market centres or primary schools were utilised as the basis of the clusters.

Whereas information collected was descriptive, by assigning numerical values using a Likert like scale, both descriptive and inferential statistics were employed to analyse and interpret the information obtained. Descriptive statistics employed include calculations of mean scores, frequency and percentages while inferential statistics employed include, the t-test for comparing mean scores, Levene's test of equality of variance,  $\alpha$  analyses and ANOVA for accepting or rejecting hypotheses.

The findings of the study reveal that although pastors' wives exhibit various stress related symptoms just like any ordinary woman, they nevertheless suffer higher levels of stress than ordinary members' spouses. Some of the factors that cause them stress include main factors namely financial and family matters. However, others which also

contribute to the development of stress to pastors' wives include loneliness; other peoples' expectations and demands; lack of privacy in homes; work overload and poor self image.

The study further concluded that stress to pastors' wives does not only affect them, but also their relationships with their spouses and the congregation; and, the church ministry itself. As a result, there ought to be ways to mitigate the disastrous effects of stress on Pastors' wives that in turn has negative effect on church ministry performance. Therefore, the study suggests possible solutions to, and recommends that, ministries, pastors, congregations as well as pastors' wives themselves could use them and work towards eliminating or decreasing the levels of stress being experienced by the various actors.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

Stress has always existed but at considerate levels. However, the modern way of life has made it much more rampant Swindoll (1990). Accordingly, stress has become a way of life; it is the norm rather than the exception. Today, life with its competition, conflicts, lack of rest and recreational activities has produced tension and anxieties to not only the social and emotional life, but also to spiritual life. Though stress is a widely discussed subject, but nonetheless, it is less comprehended, Selye (1976). The author argues that there are two stress reactions. The first, he calls distress, in which stress gives overload or psychological signs to indicate a weakness that makes the stressed person vulnerable; the second is eustress in which stressors are seen as opportunities that bring about growth enhancing reactions which give the strength to resist stress.

Why then another study on stress or even on its effects? Perhaps it is due to its dual but opposite functions. For instance, Winter (2000:25) argues that “stress can be either a cause or an effect”. As a cause, it is used to modify the form of something. On the other hand as an effect, it tells on the thing it is acting on. Likewise, Melgosa (2004:18) asserts that “stress is not necessarily bad, since at times; it helps the person reach his/her desired goals”. Therefore, lives are either shaped by stress or destroyed by it.

As a result, one needs to be careful as to realize from which direction stress comes in order to shape their lives positively and not for evil. Put in another way, since, anything occasioning change in a person's life causes stress somewhat; it is important that the reaction to it is not harmful. Coon (1980) asserts that it is not simply the existence of stress, but how a person reacts to it that is important in minimising its negative effects. Accordingly, the study was limited to stress as an effect rather than a cause or the negative effects rather than the positive ones.

In addition, effects of stress tell on individuals suffering from it as well as affecting their relations, particularly those close to the individual. Worse still, those persons close to the individual suffering stress can exasperated the stress. The worst is that its negative effects can impair performance and efficient functioning of an individual (Melgosa, 2004).

Therefore, stress in the context of this study refers to reactions of an individual to perceived threat or stressors; whereby, they experience tension, and other negative effects. The term covers a vast range of phenomena from mild irritation to severe problems that might cause a breakdown of health. This then means that almost any event or situation between the two extremes could be seen as being stressful. Thus, the more the frequency of the events and situations one undergoes, the more the stress one experiences as evidenced in the experiences King David went through as narrated in the first and second Samuel. David sums up the stress he went through in his cry to God in Psalm 35.

Hamburger and Lohr (1985) argue that no universally acceptable definition of the term "stress" has yet been formulated. As a result, various scholars have defined it in diverse ways. For instance, Meeks-Mitchell and Heist (1987:128) define stress as "a non-specific response of the body to any demand made upon it by a stressor". An individual can have a healthful response to stress (which they term as eustress) or unhealthful way of coping (which they term as distress). However, according to Hendrickson (2002) and (The Human Brain, 2005) stress can be defined as the 'wear and tear' the body goes through as it adjusts to the constant changing environment.

On his part, Davies (1988), views stress as made up of any pressure from the outside world that can cause individuals to feel an inward sense of strain. This view generally agrees with the Oxford English dictionary (1996) that defines stress as "mental, emotional and physical strain or tension". On the other hand, the New Dictionary of Christian Ethics and Pastoral Theology (1995), defines stress as the human reaction to change. Further, it asserts that the term is used to describe causes that are associated with change and results of pressure; and concludes that no one is exempted from it. Lastly, it notes that Christians are often subjected to extra pressure because of high expectations from society.

Finally, although the word stress *per se* is not used in the Bible, there are many other 'equivalent' terms that imply it. The Bible certainly records of 'stresses' experienced by the Lord Jesus Christ. The Bible records that Jesus at Gethsemane told his disciples, "My soul is crushed with grief to the point of death" (Matt. 26:38). Other examples are Elijah when pursued by Jezebel in 1 Kings 19:3-4; Jonah when sent to Nineveh; Jeremiah in his Lamentations; David in some of his Psalms (e.g. Ps. 35, 37 and 64); Martha when Mary decided to sit at the feet of Jesus instead of helping her with house chores (Lk. 10: 40-41); Hannah when taunted by her co-wife Peninah in 1 Samuel 1:7-8; the overworked Moses (Ex.18 ); Paul and his thorn in the flesh (2 Cor.12:8). The list is endless. Apart from these examples showing that people pass through stressful experiences, they also show that somehow people overcome stress.

Therefore, just like the examples of people mentioned in the Bible were faced with various unpleasant circumstances, it would not be unique for Pastors' wives to be faced with various unpleasant situations that would precipitate stress. If indeed, pastors' wives suffer stress, what are its effects on performance of church ministries? Does stress impair Pastors' wives from playing their rightful role in assisting their spouses in church ministry? Does stress on pastors' wives make them less productive in church ministries? Does their stress have any effects on the congregants?

Consequently, the study sought to examine the effects of stress to Pastors' wives on performance of church ministries, particularly in Bungoma South district, by investigating whether pastors' wives exhibit stress related symptoms, suffer higher stress levels and if they do, the factors precipitating stress and whether this has any effect on performance of church ministries. In addition, the study sought to give suggestions on possible ways of mitigating these stressful conditions so as to improve the performance of church ministries.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

Pastors' wives play a crucial role in supporting their spouses improve the performance of church ministries. For instance, Pastors' wives can provide crucial advice in the manner Pastors handle church matters – perhaps in a way no other member of the congregation can. The scriptures attest to this. For instance, it took Pontius Pirate's wife to warn him "Leave that innocent man alone, because I had a terrible nightmare about him last night"(Matt. 27:19); a piece of advice none of his associates and attendants could give. Esther is yet another example of a spouse who intervened in the way the King handled the "Jewish questions" as evidenced in the book of Esther chapters six and seven.

Further, Pastors' wives can lend support and sympathy when the pastor is 'worn and torn' by issues within the communion of the faithful. When God created Adam, He also created Eve, a "help meet" (Gen. 2:18) for him. Her role was not only to be a social and sexual companion, but also a helpful companion in carrying his lot in life – one with him. That is why, apart from being mothers and dutiful wives, Pastors' spouses too are inextricably connected to the success or failure of the Pastor's ministry. It is in this success that only a less stressed wife can contribute positively to bring about; otherwise, the Pastor and his ministry is bound to be affected.

Therefore, given that everyone goes through stress of some sort and considering the significant role Pastors' wives' play in church ministries; the study found it necessary to investigate whether stress to Pastors' wives affects the performance of church ministries. It also sought to investigate factors that cause pastors' wives stress and how negative effects could dampen their spirits if not eliminated all together and / or turned to their benefit so that they maximize their contribution to the performance of church ministries. Thus, participate positively in improving the outcome of their spouses' ministries.

Accordingly, the study sought to determine the extent to which stress to pastors' wives affects the performance of church ministries, especially in Bungoma South District. In particular it sought to investigate:

- a) Whether Pastors' wives exhibit stress related symptoms.
- b) Whether Pastors' wives suffer higher levels of stress than wives of ordinary members in the congregation.
- c) Factors that precipitate stress to Pastors wives.
- d) The effects of stress to Pastors' wives on performance of the church ministry.

In addition, the study sought to suggest solutions to mitigate effects of stress in pastors' wives on performance of church ministry in order to improve their performance.

### **1.3 Research questions**

Research questions are meant to assist the researcher to remain focussed in addressing the set objectives by sub-dividing an objective into smaller and finer components which assist in clarity (Kothari, 2003). Therefore, to effectively address the subject at hand, (i.e. effects of stress to pastors' wives on performance of church ministries), the study sought to answer the following questions: -

- (a) Do Pastors wives exhibit stress related symptoms more than spouses of ordinary members?
- (b) Are there significant differences between younger spouses and old ones in the exhibition of stress related symptoms?
- (c) What factors precipitate stress to pastors' wives?
- (d) Do Pastors wives suffer higher levels of stress than spouses of ordinary members in the congregation?
- (e) Does stress to Pastors' wives have any effect on their performance of the church ministry?
- (f) What effects does Stress to Pastors wives have on the performance of church ministry?
- (g) What solutions should be utilised to mitigate the effects of stress on the performance of church ministry?

## 1.4 Justification for the Study

The study on effects of stress to pastors' wives on performance of church ministries was motivated by various reasons. First, the researcher as a practicing Christian, has in many occasions, been confronted with weaknesses in the performance of church ministries, which incidentally in most cases have been blamed on Pastors' wives. Consequently, out of self interest, the researcher decided to provide empirical evidence.

Second, the Christians' hope in a heavenly home, much more than anything else, comforts them and is hoped that it makes them stress free. Third, there is the issue of culture which unfortunately resists the redemptive work made by Jesus Christ. As such, some Christians still live under cultural slavery and this rules their lives and those close to them. Fourth, moreover, in Bungoma South District, no such study has ever been carried out on whether stress to the pastors' wives has any effect on the performance of church ministries.

A more general reason is the realization that there is a heightened stress from modern life. Consequently, the questions that arise include, "are churches safe havens where stress free living can be obtained? Or is stress slowly creeping into the church thus affecting its members and consequently hampering the carrying out of the gospel mission? Is the world wrong in expecting a higher standard of ethical conduct from Christians than ordinary members?"

The study sought to provide information on what effects of stress to Pastors' wives has on the performance of church ministries. Considering that human beings world over inevitably suffers stress precipitated by various circumstances; congregations should be aware of some of the causes of stress. This is important because it will help congregations to avoid conditions that precipitate stress so that the ministry can operate as "one body" (Eph. 4:4). This is especially significant in view of the gospel commission. In any case, harmonious living minimizes the effects of stress and promotes unity of purpose.

Lastly, the study concerned itself with solutions that mitigate development of stress. This is because less stress can contribute immensely to the well being, functioning and dignity of individuals, in particular Pastors' wives, thus leading to improved performance of church ministries.

### **1.5 Aims and Objectives of the Study**

Given that the negative effects of stress can be destructive especially to pastors' wives who are key players in the improved performance of church ministries, it is therefore necessary to assess the effects of stress to pastors' wives on performance of church ministries. If indeed it is found that stress to Pastors' wives contributes to a poor performance of church Ministries, then suggestions can be given on how to minimize their effects for improvement of performance of church ministries.

Consequently, the aim of this study was to provide empirical evidence on whether or not stress to pastors' wives does affect performance of church ministries. In addition, the study sought to provide suggestions on how to mitigate the effects of stress in Pastors' wives in order to improve performance of church ministries. In particular, the specific objectives of the study were to:

- a) Assess whether Pastors wives exhibit stress related symptoms
- b) Examine whether age is a contributory factor in the exhibition of stress related symptoms
- c) Investigate factors that precipitate stress on pastors' wives.
- d) Assess whether pastors' wives suffer higher levels of stress than spouses of ordinary members in the congregation.
- e) Determine whether stress to Pastors' wives has any effect on the performance of the church ministry.
- f) Give suggestions on how to mitigate the effects of stress on the performance of church ministry. This was meant to improve the performance of church ministries.



## **1.6 Significance of the study.**

In assessing the effects of stress to pastors' wives on the performance of church ministries, findings of this study are expected to be beneficial to Pastors, the congregation and in particular Pastors' wives. Secondly, the study findings can be used to promote harmony within the church ministries by avoiding or eliminating factors that precipitate stress. Thirdly, the findings can be utilised to improve the performance of pastors in addition to improving performance of ministries. It is hoped that the findings of the study will provide strong evidence to compel church ministries to re-evaluate their work policies in order to directly and indirectly minimize the effects of stress so as to improve performance.

Fourthly, the findings of this study are intended to help pastors' spouses to deal with the stressors that affect them and in turn be more productive in the performance of their husbands' ministries. Further, the study suggested ways for healthful living in order to maintain sound mind, which will help Christians to perform effectively towards their various ministries. Everyone in the congregation too can benefit from the proposed ways.

Finally, the findings of the study are significant since they will add to the existing body of knowledge on stress generally, but specifically it will add the angle of effects of exogenous stress on the performance of a person closely related to the stressed individual. Understanding factors that precipitate stress to pastors' wives is an important step towards its reduction. With it, Christians will be able to execute Christ's command of proclaiming the gospel more effectively. More so, understanding the effects of stress on performance of a church ministry is fundamental.

## **1.7 Synopsis of Research design and Methodology**

To effectively address the aim and objectives of the study as well as answer the study questions; the researcher utilised the causal comparative design which enables the researcher to assess the degree of relationships between two or more variables. The purpose of this type of design is to determine the reasons or causes for the phenomenon under study.

This design was preferred since the cause and effect do not permit the researcher to manipulate one or more variables to determine their influence on another. Besides, the variables of interest cannot be manipulated but are empirically verifiable facts, Orodho (2003); Mugenda and Mugenda (1999); Kombo and Delno (2006) and Peter (2004).

To elicit information from the respondents, the study utilised three tools as data collection instruments (DCIs); namely a specially designed questionnaire, an interview schedule and observations by the researcher during administration of the questionnaire and interview. Observation was important particularly for respondents who required assistance of the researcher to complete the questionnaire. Respondents were selected through the use of a cluster sampling technique.

Lastly, analysis of responses were undertaken to produce the information. Although responses were descriptive, through assigning of numerals to responses, the study was able to perform quantitative statistical analysis. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to provide answers to the study questions.

### **1.8 Definition of key operational terms**

In this study, the following terms were given operational meaning, as follows:-

Challenges – Inevitable issues (e.g. shelter, lack of food and water) encountered by persons that need to be addressed to get solutions or answers.

Church ministry – A body of believers functioning as a church/congregation at a particular locality for the purpose of performing religious duties

Effects – Consequences suffered by the individual who has undergone through stressful circumstances.

Emotional life – Complex biological reactions underlying such feelings, actions and psychological changes that occur in fear, anger, excitement, and so on.

Physical life – That which appertains to the bodily realm of an individual's well being.

Performance – That which functions well in order to achieve results.

Precipitate – Hastening the effects of a stimulus.

Psychological life – That which appertains to the well being of an individual's psyche.

Spiritual life – That which appertains to the religious realm of an individual's well being.

Stress – Reactions of an individual to perceived threat, pressure or stressors that cause bodily changes.

Stressor – A condition, situation or event that exerts pressure to an individual to an extent that it produces an emotional, physical, spiritual or psychological change.

Symptom – Behaviours or habits that show signs evidence of, or a sign of existence of stress.

Vulnerability – The extent to which an individual's ability to cope with stress is at risk or danger of exposure to injury.

## 1.9 Glossary of acronyms and Abbreviations

DCI	Data Collection Instrument
ICM	International Christian Ministries
Ho1	Null hypothesis
KJV	King James version
NB.	All Bible quotations, unless indicated are quoted from the New Living Translation (NLT) version. Cited books from the Bible are abbreviates as here under:
Gen.	Genesis
Deut.	Deuteronomy
Josh.	Joshua
Sam.	Samuel
Ps.	Psalms
Prov.	Proverbs
Isa.	Isaiah
Jer.	Jeremiah
Zeph.	Zephaniah
Matt.	Mathew
Lk.	Luke
Jn.	John
Rom.	Romans
I Cor.	I Corinthians
II Cor.	II Corinthians
I Thes.	I Thessalonians
II Thes.	II Thessalonians
Col.	Colossians
Phil.	Philippians
Heb.	Hebrew
I Pet.	I Peter
II Pet.	II Peter

## **1.10 Hypotheses**

To investigate the effects of stress to pastors' wives on performance of church ministries, the following null hypotheses were tested:

- Ho1 There is no significant difference in exhibition of stress by Pastors' wives over those exhibited by ordinary members' spouses in the congregation.
- Ho2 Age does not significantly influence exhibition of stress related symptoms among respondents.
- Ho3 Age does not significantly influence development of stress among Pastors' wives.
- Ho4 There are no significant differences in the levels of stress suffered by Pastors' wives and ordinary members' spouses.
- Ho5 There are no significant differences in performance of a church ministry between one whose pastor's wife is stressed and one who is not.

## **1.11 Limitations**

The study drew its respondents from 39 out of 420 church ministries currently existing in Bungoma South district – a district in the Western province of Kenya. The study examined the effects of stress to pastor's wives on the performance of church ministries. Consequently, generalisation of the study findings may face the following limitations: -

1. Since the study involved Kenyan congregations, it is likely to apply to Kenya more than any other country. This is because the socio – cultural systems of different communities that reside in different countries or regions are known to affect response to stress
2. In Kenya, the findings are likely to apply to Western Province more than other provinces since not all Kenyan communities reside in the Province where the study was conducted.
3. Since the study employed sampling technique for purposes of manageability within the constraints of time, logistical and financial resources rather than interview all the affected population; in itself might constitute a limitation for

the generalisation of the findings. This is because there could be peculiarities within the population that did not participate in the study.

4. The scope of the study may limit generalisation of findings since not all factors that cause stress were investigated. For instance, the study only investigated how response to stress is affected by age of the respondent, but did not investigate factors such as cultural differences in response to stress.
5. Another factor that may limit the generalisation of the findings include choice of district and congregations of study in that they inherently may have had circumstances that affected response to stress uniquely than could have been found in other districts and localities.

### **1.12 Assumptions of the Study**

In carrying out this present study on effects of stress to pastors' wives on performance of church ministries, the following assumptions were made; that:-

1. Participants had adequate capacity and knowledge, and were willing to provide information required by the study.
2. People develop stress appraisal and adaptation mechanisms to cope with such experiences: some effective and others ineffective.
3. Effects of stress impact on an individual close to the person suffering stress.
4. Pastors have a moral responsibility to give priority to the care of their spouses than performing their work schedules.

### **1.13 Overview**

The remainder of the thesis is organised into chapters two, three, four and five. Chapter two briefly reviews related literature. This sets the current understanding of critical issues on stress, symptoms, causes and prevalence. It also, seeks to find out whether there is documented evidence that a close relation of a stressed individual, such as wife, can affect the other individual's work performance.

Chapter three, deals with the design and methodology employed by the study. It describes a particular procedure or set of procedures or rules that systematically guided the study. Specifically, the chapter describes the geographical location of the area of study and the study population. In addition, since it was not possible to include the entire population due to financial, time and logistical constraints, the study utilised techniques that allow findings from a representative sample to be generalised for the whole population. As a result, the chapter discusses the criteria used to determine the sample size, and sampling rules and procedures. Further, the chapter also provides an introduction to the DCIs (Data collection instruments), how they were developed and subjected to validity and reliability tests. Finally, the chapter explains the procedures used for data collection, scoring procedures and data analysis.

Chapter four presents and discusses the results of the study. It presents a detailed analysis of the data in terms of responses provided by respondents, summarizes the findings and discusses generalized findings of the study.

Finally, chapter five gives summaries, conclusions arrived at by the study and recommendations for further research.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

Stress is a broad but less understood subject Selye (1976). It comprises of aspects such as stressor and response or causes and effects on an individual's emotional, psychological, spiritual and physical life. This affects not only the individual, but also the community's social fabric, and the nation. Performance on the other hand looks at achievement of work results Sigh and Sigh (2009). Consequently, to understand how stress affects performance, one needs to look at the intersection between stress and performance and how its consequences can be inhibited.

Therefore, the present study concerned itself with how stress to pastors' wives affects the achievement of work results by their spouses as evidenced in the performance of church ministries. Further, the study looked at the relationship between age and exhibition of stress related symptoms; factors that precipitate stress and age influence; and, whether pastors' wives suffer higher stress levels than spouses of ordinary members in the congregation.

Stress can be identified through various symptoms and is caused by various factors. Its effects can either improve work performance or impair it (White, 1997). Consequently, depending on circumstances in which stressors present themselves and how one is prepared or responds to them, stress can be harnessed for good or it can wreck evil. Biblical teachings can be used for profit in dealing with stress when well applied. In fact they present a powerful solution in dealing with the effects of stress.

To assist in understanding the current critical issues on stress, the study undertook a review of related literature. However, since the subject is wide and varied, the study found it appropriate to review the following areas:



1. Stress symptoms.
2. Factors precipitating stress.
3. Effects of stress on work performance.
4. Solutions to minimise the consequences of stress.
5. Understanding stress from a Biblical perspective.
6. Conclusion.

## **2.1 Stress symptoms**

The English Oxford Dictionary (1996) defines the term symptom as “a sign of existence of something”. In this context, it means a sign of existence of stress. Accordingly, for one to be said to suffer stress, he/she should exhibit some behaviours or habits that show signs of stress.

Literature on stress symptoms is not only very wide, but also puts it in various ways. For instance, Lawson (1986) argues that the body and mind react to stress by producing: headaches, feelings of sinking from the inside and loss of concentration or sleep. Other symptoms include reduced tolerance, bad temper, and irritability. At other times the body can experience self-pity, tenseness, forgetfulness and inability to make decisions. On its part, the Bible provides symptoms such as despair, downcast, sorrow and worry. Others are dismay, discouragement, weary, distress, and sighing as some of the symptoms in which stress presents itself.

In his Christian understanding, Davies (1987:24) believes that even Christians are not exempt from any of the stresses that affect everyone else. He cites John (16:33) to substantiate his point. From his orthodox vantage, Davies argues that “symptoms of stress can be depressed mood, diminished interest in pleasure and most activities, fatigue or loss of energy”. In addition, feelings of worthlessness, diminished ability to think or indecision and recurrent thought of death can be experienced.

Perhaps the most exhaustive list on stress symptoms in which many other Scholars' suggestions could be fitted is the one given by Goliszek (1995:8-11). He divides stress symptoms into three categories, as follows:

**(a) Physical symptoms:** Under this category he lists: headaches, twitching eyelids and twitching nose. Others are facial or jaw pains, dry mouth or throat and difficulty in swallowing. Ulcers on the tongue, neck pain and dizziness could also be experienced as well as speech difficulties or slurring, or stuttering and backaches and muscle aches. Also, there could be weakness, constipation and indigestion. Nausea and/or vomiting, stomach pains would be felt sometimes accompanied with some diarrhoea. A person would gain or lose weight or appetite, have rashes or other skin problems and chest pain. Heartburn and heart palpitations could be felt.

The list also provides frequent urination, cold hands and/or feet and excessive sweating as extra signs. Others are sexual inadequacy, high blood pressure and chronic fatigue. The victim could also have increased allergies, frequent colds or flu and trembling and /or nervousness. They could also be prone to accidents, have excessive menstruation or menstrual distress and rapid or difficult breathing. Those with over normal stress exhibit a lot more symptoms. However, the mere presence of these symptoms should not be construed to imply stress. Indeed, these symptoms are common for other illnesses too.

**(b) Emotional symptoms:** Under this category, Goliszek (1995) lists irritability, moodiness and depression as the main emotional stress symptoms. Others include, unusual aggressiveness, loss of memory or over excitability and nervousness about little things, experiencing nightmares, impulsive behaviour and feelings of helplessness or frustration. Some people withdraw themselves from others, have neurotic behaviour and go through racing thoughts or disorientation or anger. While others are unable to make decisions, have anxiety and feelings of panic. Yet, other stress symptoms would present themselves in frequent episodes of crying, thoughts of suicide and feelings of loss of control. Lastly, there might be lack of sexual interest and periods of confusions.

**(c) Behavioural symptoms:** Under this category, Goliszek (1995) asserts that gnashing or grinding of the teeth, wrinkling of the forehead and high –pitched nervous laughter are signs of stress.

This also applies to foot or finger tapping, nail biting and hair pulling or twirling. Others include, increased smoking or increased alcohol consumption, compulsive eating or dieting and pacing the floor. At other times, the victim could experience chronic procrastination, loss of interest in physical appearance, sudden change in social habits and chronic tardiness. All these signs could be, or not be, indicators of stress.

Goliszek (1995) warns one not to ignore some stress related symptoms. He asserts that almost any kind of symptom can be a hidden signal of stress. He asserts that learning to recognize the small, insignificant signals may help one become more aware of his/her own sources of stress, prevent them from developing serious symptoms and make stress management a lot easier. But, becoming too much aware of stress symptoms could bog one down rather than help them deal with the situation healthfully. Certainly, there is stress in life but not everything in life is stressful. This therefore, calls for caution.

Some of the scholars whose suggestions could be fitted in Goliszek's listing include, Swindoll (1990); Lierop (1996); Prime, (2003); and, Kinai, (2006). However, other scholars divided stress symptoms into two categories. Such scholars include Hartley (2006) and Shepherd (2006). These categories are:

**i). Internal:** Under this category, they list symptoms such as anxiety, apathy and depression. Others are false guilt, feeling distant from God and indecisiveness. A Christian could also have lack of peace, be nervous about many things and have panic attacks. In addition, one could have memory loss, some sense of failure, sexual deflection, and sleep disturbance.

**ii). External:** Under this category, they assert, one could suffer from allergies, appetite disturbances and arthritis. Other problems observed could be asthmatic conditions, eating disorder and fatigue. Gastrointestinal distress, headaches or migraines and hypertension could be experienced. In addition, one could have muscle pain especially in the back, neck and shoulder.

Shepherd (2006) arguments addresses the intentions between external circumstances and inner turmoil and identifying the external things that one might be able to change and the internal attitudes that need to be addressed; she further suggests that stress symptoms could fall into **six** categories. First, the **physical signs**; which include, increased rate of heart beat, blood pressure, inability to digest food or indigestion and constant tiredness. One could also complain of aches in the shoulders, necks, jaws; narrowing of eyes and loss of appetite or indulgence in sugar, alcohol or nicotine.

The Second category consists of **emotional symptoms**. Such signs include irritability, anger and depression. Others are loss of confidence and excessive worrying. Third, are the **social symptoms**; which include withdrawal and frenetic behaviours. The Fourth category consists of **intellectual symptoms** such as lack of concentration, unclear thinking, poor decision-making and lack of judgment or reason.

In the fifth category Shepherd (2006) lists **spiritual symptoms** which include, inability to pray, loss of purpose or hope and doubting God's goodness. Other signs are blaming God for allowing things to turn out the way they have and withdrawal from fellowshiping with other Christians.

Lastly, the sixth category has to do with **teamwork**. For instance, when Christians find themselves absent because of sickness, their level of service reduces and sometimes becomes prone to accidents; according to Shepherd (2006), one should see such occurrences as signs of stress. She asserts that Christians can also exhibit stress signs through their absenteeism, or be present but unproductive through poor decision making while others would lose creativity or innovativeness and withdraw from discretionary effort.

This study would be incomplete without listing symptoms that the Bible gives that indicate the existence of stress. Indeed they are many. Nevertheless, those mentioned below will suffice to demonstrate the point. The bible, for instance, lists "hiding" as a sign of stress, for example, Adam out of a guilty conscience, hid from God (Gen. 3:8); anger, like when Cain felt very angry and dejected because of the frustrations that he felt after God had refused his sacrifice (Gen. 4:5); also in Proverbs (30:33). Rashness

or haste like that exhibited by Joseph when his brothers' presence put pressure on him and had to run out and cry (Gen. 43:30); also in Malachi (2:13-14), when God gives man no attention.

Others include, impatience as exhibited by Saul who because of it made a curse to fall on his own son Jonathan who ate honey without knowing what his father had done (1 Samuel 14:24,28), crying as found in Psalms (130:2), bad temper as found in Proverbs (14: 29), sighing as found in Jeremiah (45:3), or anguish caused by God's judgment on man (Zeph. 1:15), worry for lack of necessities (Mat. 6:25), weariness for being overburdened (Mat. 11:28), sadness for being required to do the impossible as in the rich man's case when Jesus asked him to sell all that he had and give to the poor, (Luke 18:23), sorrow as in Romans (9:2) and groaning brought about by physical pain (II Cor: 5:4).

Since there is no universally agreed system of categorising stress related symptoms, this study adopted Shepherd's (2006) categorisation of stress as a basis of investigating whether pastors' wives exhibit stress related symptoms. This was found appropriate because unlike Goliszek (1995), she includes some symptoms that affect the spiritual wellbeing of an individual. In addition, her system is more related because respondents were selected from a religious background.

## **2.2 Factors precipitating Stress**

Stressors are causes, sources or origins of stress. In other words, they act as agents that precipitate stress. The Oxford English Dictionary (2005) defines a stressor as "any stimulus producing mental or physical stress in an organism". However, it should be noted that the more the stressors one has, the higher the amount of stress he goes through. However, for a stressor to precipitate stress, certain predisposing factors have to obtain.

Collins (1977:37) notes that "the list of situations that cause stress is endless". But, he gives four general conclusions about the origins of stress that are quite valuable. The first is that suffering stress depends on an individual person. For instance, the

occurrence of a tornado or outbreak of a plague would affect everyone in that locality but there are other occurrences that will bother some people more while others would be less or even not bothered at all.

The second conclusion he makes is that circumstances have a major bearing on what eventually becomes stressful. In other words, an occurrence under different circumstances has different effects. For example, muddy water splashed on an individual while going out, is more stressful than when the same thing happens while the individual is on the way back home.

The third conclusion he gave is that some predictable events are less stressful than non predictable ones. This implies that when occurrences are predictable, they bother less those aware of them, yet, bother more or greatly those that are new to them. For instance, a cock crowing at dawn in a house would hardly bother the owners because they are accustomed to its crowing at such a time. They would still be deeply a sleep; while a visitor in the house, especially if he is a foreigner, would be much disturbed since he is not accustomed to it.

Lastly, what is most important is the ability to control the situation. When someone is able to control a situation, that situation becomes less stressful. For example, when two groups of people are subjected to same bothersome noise; and one group is given a way of switching off or reducing the noise while the other is denied, the group that has no control over the noise will feel more bothered by the noise than the group that has control over it. Therefore, it is important to realize that stressors vary from one person or circumstance to another.

According to Kinai (2006) a stressor is that which, physically, mentally, personally, socially, real or imaginary, makes the human body respond in a uniform manner known as the general adaptation syndrome which exists in three stages. First, is the alarm reaction in which the nervous system is activated resulting into release of stress hormones. This causes the heart to beat faster raising blood pressure, respiration rate and perspiration. This is also known as a state of emergency as the body prepares to fight or flee from the stressful situation.

Second is the resistance stage in which the adrenal glands continue to produce stress hormones to enable the body to continue fighting or resisting a stressor long after the effects of the fight and flight response have worn off.

The last stage is the exhaustion stage. The exhaustion stage develops, if the stressful situation is prolonged or if one stressful event is quickly followed by another before the body fully recovers from the first one. This could lead to physical and/ or mental exhaustion and eventual breakdown.

Meeks-Mitchell and Heist (1987) and (The Human Brain, 2005) concur with her views.

Various scholars have investigated stress and given varied lists of what they perceive as stressors. For instance, Winter (2002) and Davies (1988), list: (i) overwork, (ii) lack of work and ageing (iii) financial difficulties, (iv) feelings of guilt (v) commitments greater than ability (vi) trying to fulfil other people's expectations, (vii) relationship difficulties, and (viii) unreasonable demands from others as some of the causes of stress.

On the other hand, Swindoll (1990) lists the easy –come and easy –go lifestyle, shouting matches, instant dinners and strained relationship as some of the stressor. He asserts that too little sleep or too much television and, financial setbacks are some of the common causes of stress. These can cause stress just as much as fear of cancer, misunderstandings and materialism would. An individual could also be stressed by too much drinking or drug taking, death occurrences and other problems in the family unit.

Unlike the scholars that generalize stressors, Prime (2003: 221-228), is specific in giving those factors that bring stress particularly to pastors' wives. He asserts that:

Pastors' wives marry not only the clergy but also their work. They deal with calls on behalf of the clergy, experience financial pressures even from the members of the congregation who imagine that pastors' wives are paid by the churches. Yet, some of them have to go out and work because they have their own careers or businesses.

Prime (2003) further asserts that high expectations from people puts pressure on pastors' wives just as loneliness, isolation or frequent absence of spouses do. The situation is made worse by jealousy for those Pastors' wives see as having too great claims upon their spouses' time, especially if they are well to do women. Another stressor is the burden of confidentiality whereby some overcurious church members go to pastors to inquire on church business and other people's affairs.

Wessels (2007) argues that in South Africa, many congregations have a present role – prescription for their pastors' wives. The typical stressors which she identifies that put pressure on pastors' wives in South Africa are: no emotional outlet, suppression of identity and being neglected by their spouses due to the nature of their responsibilities, which is often misplaced. Yet, makes pastors be away from their wives. Another stressor is the fact that pastors' spouses are surrounded by so many Christians with whom the clergy spouses cannot communicate since they do not have the vaguest idea of what they go through. Neither can pastors' wives confide in them since their positions do not allow them to. This makes the pastors' spouses the loneliest people in the whole congregation. Lack of privacy is yet another stressor. The congregants always think the personage is their property and since it is from their offering the pastors' salaries are paid, they regard pastors' time as belonging to them.

Other factors precipitating stress given by Wessels (2007) include, an inhabited social life in which friendship with the congregations could pose problems, double standards prevailing in pastors' lives and unfortunate situations such as when a pastor comes back from unsuccessful meetings then he sometimes at home, could hit at his wife due to misplaced frustrations.

Financial problems are also another agent of stress which could be compounded by frustrations and poor health. The fact that pastors' wives lack pastoral, spiritual and emotional care brings much stress to them. Unfavourable congregational criticisms that come from misconceptions regarding the pastor's family also bring stress. More pressure could also come from lack of leisure time because the pastor is always too busy to take time off with his wife. Such a lifestyle could also make his wife to have sexual problems. Other stressors could come from conflicts between colleagues or



congregations and the pastor's wife trying to live in the shadow of a former minister's wife.

Since, there are a host of causes of stress; the study limited its investigation on the causes of stress to financial, family, workload, privacy and congregational expectations, loneliness, privacy in pastors' homes and careless comments. However, under these general causes, the study subdivided it further into more specific causes.

### **2.3 Effects of Stress on Work Performance**

It is possible to work a stress condition to ones advantage or even protect oneself from its negative effects subject to how one handles the stress situation. The choice is between being a slave to stressful situations in life or to transform these situations into ones benefit. Rogers (1991) in his examination on social and professional stress, asserts that the clergy creates dangers such as hostility, rejection, and isolation from their congregations as well as peers. Also, their professional roles sometimes cause difficulties in social relationships outside the congregation and professional groups; thus, affecting the performance of church ministries.

London and Wiseman (1995) argue that some Pastors' wives recondition themselves just to do what is right though they do not feel like it. This indicates that their performance in their husbands' ministries lacks enthusiasm which is hampered or restrained by the stress they are experiencing. On the other hand, white (1997) suggests that stress to a pastor's wife could easily affect her husband's performance in church ministry.

Kinai (2006) asserts that when stress gets out of control, then it begins to adversely affect a person's health, relationship and work performance. When a person's behaviour gets affected, then they become anxious or moody or tearful and then such a person affects workmates. Their irritability, impatience, or aggressive behaviour will definitely not be acceptable and this affects work performance.

Further, Kinai (2006) suggests that the effects of stress could also be physical. For instance, an individual could develop a number of stress related diseases such as the

heart condition, chronic fatigue and peptic ulcers; consequently affecting performance of their work. Sigh and Sigh (2009), argue that job positive and total positive stress are correlated. Besides, there are areas an individual is affected by stress. First, it is the emotional effect in which the stressed person is prone to tears, crying at the slightest provocation; and, temperamental suffering from irritability.

The second effect is on motivation, especially where a person finds difficulties in making decisions or having an erratic thought process (How does Stress affect work, 2009). Equally, such a person will feel overwhelmed by situations. The third and last effect is on the area of behaviour which affects his eating or drinking habits. Alternatively, such persons turn to drug and substance abuse or are prone to self harm. For instance, one would go through unnecessary fasting. The person would also feel tired too often. These effects do affect work performance. Stress would often leave someone feeling overwhelmed, fatigued, anxious or easily irritable. Others include feelings of apathy, lack of concentration and loss of interest or lack of enthusiasm in work.

The Bible too describes the effects of stress on work performance. For instance, the Psalmist (Ps. 38:4-8) sings of how King David's work performance was affected by a nagging guilt that overwhelmed him, filled him with grief and his health broken. He was also exhausted, completely crushed and his heart filled with anguish. Consequently, under such conditions, David could not perform effectively his duties. The upshot of this is that stress can affect an individual's work performance due to what it does to the person physically, emotionally and behaviourally.

#### **2.4 Solutions to mitigate the effects of stress**

Ogilvie (1984:29) emphasises the fact that "stress can be managed". He further argues that "God has endowed man with an inner ability to handle the external pressures of life and a stress management mechanism that gives them an immense capacity to cope with the pressures and problems of life". Therefore, no individual needs to be a helpless victim of stress producing situations, or circumstances.

Further, Ogilvie (1984), asserts that the secret to the effective use of God's given stress management system – cerebral function, limbic system, interaction and automatic adoption, is somehow mysteriously linked to our relationship to God; for without His spirit to infuse the tissues of man's brains with wisdom, knowledge and truth; man's own strength and coping ability are limited .

Sehnet (1985) gives five ways to manage stress. First, is the change of work and social environment, understanding our emotions and learning un-stress solutions? Next, is taking care of our bodies and providing on our spiritual needs. He warns that too many people ignore the flashing lights that the body gives such as headache, irritability and indigestion which could easily land one into a hospital bed.

Shlemon (1984:12) asserts that:

... because we live in a world that is not yet perfect we suffer on account of the imperfection of those around us. No human being has ever been able to love us totally, this being the cause of the feelings of rejection, loneliness and hurts that sometimes are so subtle that we fail to acknowledge.

These feelings are still capable of blocking emotional and spiritual growth. Unhealed hurts can sometimes lead to destructive behaviours. Although individuals are often unaware of the reason for constant tension in their lives, but they gradually develop habits to deal with it. (Herdrickson 2002) asserts that stress is manageable therefore every stressed person should do the needful to get out of negative stress.

Nyambura (2008), notes that just as there are many sources of stress, so there are many possibilities of its management. First, one needs to be aware of their stressors. One should determine what events distress them and how they respond to them. Then, one should recognize what to change or eliminate completely. This could possibly reduce the intensity of the stressors or shorten exposure to them. At the same time, one needs to try and reduce the intensity of their emotional reactions to stress by tempering excess emotions and putting the situation in perspective but not dwelling on the negative aspects.

Other suggestions include relaxation techniques to reduce muscle tension, heart rate and blood pressure. Stress could also be managed by exercises done three or four times a week, eating well-balanced and nutritious meals but avoiding nicotine, excessive caffeine and stimulants. Enough sleep and consistency in sleep schedule can also be useful. Finally, one should pursue realistic and meaningful goals, developing mutually supportive relationships and being moderate in reaction to stressors.

Wessels (2007) provides useful and pragmatic suggestions. He suggests the formation of “care - for-one – another” groups. Put in another way, pastors’ wives should have time to meet in supportive clusters of other pastors’ wives. However friendship and support groups can be useful if only if the clergy spouses can learn self-disclosing and risk taking behaviour. They must accept that they are human beings with needs. At the same time, the congregations should be made aware of the unique pressures and needs of pastors’ wives, hoping that this can induce the congregation to lessen their demands on them.

In addition, church ministries can also be encouraged to have pastoral counsellors who would visit pastors’ spouses in their homes and care for them. An acknowledgement that pastors’ spouses have unique strengths, weakness, interests and ministry desires may help in establishing healthy boundaries and expectations for both the congregations and the pastor’s wife.

Likewise, Pastors’ spouses are advised to discover their own gifts and identity and resist the pressure to meet other peoples’ expectations (Guide to Stress, 2009). They should take care of themselves spiritually, physically and emotionally; spend time regularly with God and other Pastors’ spouses and find friends inside or outside their congregations in whom they can confide. However, if Pastors’ spouses are unable to cope with the stress and develop disorders such as sexual, sleep and anxiety, they should seek professional help. Johnson and Johnson (2000) concur with that view.

Kumar, J. (2008) suggests the following as possible ways to fight stress: eating foods that reduce stress, for example, herbal trees like chamomile and peppermint; taking a

good night's sleep and unwind with muscle relaxation techniques. Others include, visualization and meditation techniques, which involve simple act of concentrating the mind on a single word or object; chiropractic techniques, which include, application of manual pressure to muscles, bones and joints, particularly the spine; and, Yoga exercise.

Further, Kumar, J. (2008) suggests that positive thinking; acupressure; aromatherapy – which is the use of essential oils that gives various plants scents to relax the body and mind; homeopathy – a system of medicines that uses highly diluted substances to boost the body's natural ability to cure itself and Taichi Chuan – a combination of exercise, Chinese medicine and oriental philosophy can also assist in the reduction of stress.

On the other hand, (Natural Remedies to reduce Stress, 2008) provides another long list of stress remedies. This include, pampering oneself, use of aromatherapy and mini-self massage, which involves rubbing ones shoulders, neck and palms with fingertips. Others are, use of tonic, a smile and rating ones problem. Also, avoiding clenching of the teeth or biting the tongue, use of a mantra – a simple word like serenity, tranquillity and bending or inhaling and exhaling fresh air are more stress management skills. Equally, one needs to be a fighter but not give up. In case of stress, writing something or counting to 10 could be useful.

Additional suggestions are avoiding use of Caffeine; learning to say no and admitting that one is stressed; staring out of the window for a few minutes; taking a walk; going to an animal orphanage and listening to music. Yet, more others could be, gardening, going for a game and calling or visiting a friend. One could further do simple exercise such as stretching arms out, and shaking hands vigorously for 10 seconds, taking a hot bath or just a hot face or arm wash and make plans for the weekend or night or date. Prayer and reading are also helpful.

Wong (2008) insists that Aromatherapy reduces stress tremendously. Oils of chamomile, sage, frankincense and lavender are recommended for relaxing and soothing. Others are oils from Marjoram, peppermint and rose. Rosemary, sandalwood and Tangerine also give essential oils that can reduce stress. Consequently, Wong

(2008) advises that stress could be defeated by first, identifying the causes of ones stress; for instance, stopping being manipulated by pressure of work which gives deadlines leaving one feeling overwhelmed and making a big connection with colleagues or friends to build relationships.

Further, Wong (2008) lists other stress remedies such as taking control of any situation with self-confidence and assertiveness, refusal to be dictated by fears, and boost on energy levels and increase of enthusiasm for life and relationships. One should also end the torture of feeling lonely and isolated, rebuilding self-esteem and regaining clarity and direction to a brighter future. Having good habits, easy exercises and participation in ones favourite sports or game can also reduce stress.

In a review of women and stress, Monda (2008) asserts that people are biologically 'unreal' to react differently to stress. So, everyone is their own best weapon in defending themselves against stress and its related consequences. One should listen and not ignore the signals their body sends. Once these signals are detected, the victim should realize the need to seek for remedies.

Further, Monda (2008) asserts that in certain instances, talking about a stressful situation to a friend might assist instead of trying to sort out the problem alone as it might be a fruitless task because in isolation one can easily lose perspective. Stressed individuals should indulge themselves into regular leisure activities. Likewise, the body has to be provided with sufficient nutrients because our bodies do not have a source of self-perpetuating fuel. However, one should avoid drinks such as coffee and tea that has a strong effect on moods and disrupts the body's smooth functioning.

Monda (2008) also advises that one could take a good quality supplement with the diet to help support the body and reduce the harmful impact of poor nutrition as one adjusts to eating properly. Body exercises are encouraged because they help in increasing the brains oxygen supply, relieves muscle tension, increases ones energy levels and helps one to grow her confidence.

Finally, Monda (2008) recommends that stress victims take plenty of rest as it is through rest that the body could regain its lost energy. Another remedy is laughter

which is a powerful antidote to stress. Therefore, one should purpose to have a good laugh. Seeing the lighter side of things helps in putting suffering in perspective and could fill one with hope and take ones mind off pain. Likewise, watching a funny movie or reading a comic strip or telling a joke would be helpful. Also, setting aside time each day to write down ones thoughts, hopes, fears and dreams could help ease the mind and keep one focused. This does not mean shrinking ones responsibilities but that one takes a conscious effort to separate what is important from what is not at the time. Lastly one should learn to delegate and to say no to responsibilities and requests that could be avoided.

## **2.5 Understanding Stress from a Biblical Perspective**

Although the Bible is many centuries old, it nevertheless has powerful information on how to manage stress. Understanding of stress from a Biblical perspective can be helpful and gives remarkable meaning especially when Biblical teachings are received steadily and applied holistically.

First, although the word stress *per se* is not used in the Bible, there are many other 'equivalent' terms that imply it. For instance, the word "distress" appears often in many English translations of the Bible. However, several other words also mean stress. The first of these words is affliction. Paul speaks of afflictions or troubles in second Corinthians (1:3-7). The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ comforts us "in all our troubles, so that we can comfort others. When others are in trouble, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us." Bearing stress and receiving comfort from God equips or enables one to be a comforter to others. Notice how much more help comes to an individual from those who have been through similar afflictions. They help one manage these stresses.

Paul also employs the word "suffering" to describe stress. He asserts that suffering – or stress – can build up rather than tear down ones personhood because of the individual's faith in Christ. "Suffering", he notes, "produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us" (Rom. 5:3-5) King James Bible version.

The human spirit does learn to tolerate more and more stress through self – discipline. The athlete’s stamina is increased by practice, by scrimmaging, and by becoming a veteran player. Soldiers, sailors, and marine or air force personnel are subjected to intensive survival, evasion, resistance, and escape training to prepare them for combat duty. Medical students, interns, and residents are subjected to long hours of duty and are called upon to serve people in desperate struggles for their lives. The committed pastor has gone through years of study and discipline in the basic meanings of the Bible, the history of the Christian Churches, the substance of Christian doctrines, ethics, and practice. The discipline helps when it is time to put the training to practice.

One can increase their capacity to withstand stress by facing rather than fleeing from those who have been through similar struggles. An individual can lighten his/her load of stress by refusing to act as if they are the first and only person to have something like this happen. One needs to appreciate that they are special and beloved in the mind and heart of God. Yet, that fact is not, thereby, an exception to the thousand mortal ills the flesh is heir to and the slings and arrows of fortune that affect the common lot as human beings. No, one is showing signs of honesty and humanity to admit that one is under stress. One is participating in God’s chosen destiny themselves when one seeks to master stress rather than be over-whelmed by it (Jn 16:1-4).

Other words for stress in the New Testament are burden and load. In (Gal. 6:2) Paul urges Christians to: “bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ”. The law of Christ is that “we love one another” (Mat. 22:39; Jn. 1:34) as he loved us. This law is fulfilled when believers form a spiritual covenant with one another to share their part of the weight of the common lot of human stress – losses through death, desertion, divorce, and alienation; catastrophes such as fire, flood, famine, and war; human fault and weaknesses in which they overtake, confront, and forgive one another. These are community stresses, affecting the communion of believers together and not just each of them separately.

Again, Paul (Gal. 6:5) admonishes that “each man (or person) will have to bear his (or her) own load”. These are stresses that each person carries for himself or herself.



Earning one's own bread is one of them. Taking care of one's own health is yet another. So is demonstrating one's competence to perform responsible and unique service in one's own right. This acceptance of legitimate personal stress might also mean that one cannot simply assume that they are to be waited on hand and foot by their marital partner. Paul put it in another way (II Thes. 3:10): "If anyone will not work, let him not eat".

Although work is not the centre of the gospel, the laid – back avoidance of its stresses is not to be rewarded. By the very nature of work that many are engaged in, they lose the value that comes from the exertion of the big muscles of human bodies. Most people live in even temperatures all year around and never sweat. The absence of the strain of toil, the sweat of the heat of the day, the stretching of muscle, tendon, and nerve produces a kind of stress of its own in that many do not carry those parts of the load that are uniquely theirs.

A final New Testament word for stress is one that is often translated as temptation. In other places it is translated as trial, or put to the test. Martin Luther translated this word into the German word 'anfechtung' which means "stress, anguish, testing, and trial". Thus, Christians could pray the Lord's Prayer: "Lead us not into stress, times of testing, trial, or tribulation, but deliver us from evil".

These times of testing can be developmental: leaving home for school, work, or military service or retirement from a job. They may be times of grief: the death of a loved one, divorce from a spouse, the loss of an extremely significant job, or a severe episode of mental illness. Such times of testing may be catastrophes that affect multitudes of others: a hurricane, a tornado, a riot, a war. To be delivered from such testing, to have survived it, to have come through it, is to live with awesome gratitude for having been delivered. Note, however, that catastrophic stresses which involve others create a community of sufferers. On the other hand, divorce, job loss, or severe mental illness tends to isolate a person from others. In a sense, then, these isolating stresses are harder to bear and certainly are not surrounded with the drama that inspires public sympathy (1 Sam 1:10).

Another word for stress in the Bible, especially the King James Version, is straitened. Jeremiah speaks of Judah and Jerusalem being in a “siege” and where their enemies, and they that seek their lives, shall utterly destroy them (Jer. 19:9). The Revised Standard Version translates the Hebrew word ‘*tsug*’ as “distress” and/or “affliction”. The apostle Paul picks up the thought and employs it to reproof the Corinthians that they are restricted, literally “short – breathered”, in their affection for him. On the other hand, when Jesus spoke of the impending end of his life on the cross, he employed the same thought. He said “how I am straitened (or constrained) until it is accomplished” (Luke 12:50).

A final interpretation of stress rests in the words for pain in the New Testament. The word translated into pain is ‘*ponos*’ and it has a double meaning. First, it means “hard labour or toil”. Zeus brought a utopian state of affairs on earth to an end and sent *ponos* into the life of man. Jehovah God, in expelling Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden, told the man that he would work “in the sweat of your face” and woman that she would have “pain in childbearing” (Gen. 3:19,16). In (Col. 4:13), the word *ponos* means “worked hard”. Is it any little wonder then that today, stress is inevitably associated with hard work? In an increasing number of reports on work holism or work addiction, the element of unremitting, uninterrupted stress is always described.

However, this word *ponos* is also translated as pain. Pain is spoken of as undergoing hardship and the New Jerusalem is spoken of in Revelation (21:3) as the time when there is “no more death, mourning, crying, or pain”. Here it seems that some aspects of hope in mankind hinge on the removal of stress, pain, and suffering. Hence, many tend to see much stress as bad, counter-productive, and to be “gotten through”.

On the other hand, some pain is looked upon as creative, as being gladly endured because of the joy of the outcome. Example of this is the rigor and stress of childbearing in which the mother is doing her most creative act. Similarly, Jesus is depicted in (Heb. 12:2) as the one “who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross....” This kind of stress is the Olympic stress of ancient Greek athletes who deliberately stressed themselves to win the trophies which lay ahead of them (I Cor. 9:24-25).

The word self-discipline is a quaint word in our vocabularies today. This is not suggesting that stress be managed by simply grinning and bearing it or by lifting oneself by their own bootstraps. To the contrary, it is to suggest that one absorbs more and more stress by using practice and discipline to learn new sets of habits. This can increase ones resistance to the alarms that stress creates. Consequently, one can become a *user* of stress rather than its victim through personal devotion and learning stress management skills. Again, one can learn to practice the arts of meditation, prayer, and health-conducive breathing, and to make useful diversionary behaviours a part of ones technique for using stress.

Stress is as old as the time Adam and Eve found themselves naked in the Garden of Eden (Gen 3:6) The New Living translation renders it as follows: “that moment, the eyes of the couple were opened and they suddenly felt ashamed of their nakedness”. This caused them to string fig leaves together around their hips so as to have themselves covered. This verse clearly tells us how stressed the couple might have been at the time, for they had to frantically deal with the situation. This teaches us the need to work through stress.

From the various definitions that the study looked at in chapter one, one might get the impression that all respond automatically to stress that comes in thousands of events in live. However, as Goliszek (1995) asserts, one gets into problems when they begin to acquire habits regardless of whether they are good or bad, positively or negatively reinforced. It is necessary that proper response to every stressor is done carefully.

It is important to note that there are various suggestions on how to manage stress; but, it would be very useful to remember that what works for one person may or may not work for another and as Paul notes in 1corinthians (6:12): “You may say, ‘I am allowed to do anything.’ But I reply, not anything is good for you...” Therefore, pastors’ wives in Bungoma South district should weigh carefully the stress solutions they pick on before using them.

Dobson (2003: Ch 5) recognizes the suffering all Christians go through and asserts, “How I live, has little to do with whether my husband is a pastor, rather my life reflects my growth or lack of it as a Christian.” What this implies is that Christian growth

cannot come without the word of God. The word, to a Christian, might be the only effective stress management method because it deals with the root cause of stress and its related issues. It alone will uproot that which is embedded in people's aching hearts, polluted minds and troubled souls. Medication is good but can easily turn us into hypochondriacs.

For Christians, it would be necessary to learn from others who are gone before us. The Bible records in I Corinthians (10:13) thus "But remember that the temptations that come into your life are not different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will keep the temptation from becoming so strong that you cannot stand up against it". Just as Paul in this gave caution and comfort to the Corinthians so does the same apply to Christians today. Many believers have gone through what Christians go through now and those who overcame are those who believed in what God says in His word (Rev.12:11).

Further, the Bible teaches that people need more than just bread for their lives (Matt. 4:4); they must feed on every word of God in order to live a victorious life. Paul in Ephesians (6:17) emphasises the fact that one of the weaponry a Christian should put on is the word of God which is the sword of the spirit. While the devil labours to deface the godly image in the hearts of Christians, they must turn to grace. The sword of the spirit will subdue and mortify evil desires and thoughts that want to be in the heart.

## **2.6 Conclusion**

Broadly speaking, current understanding of stress as seen from literature review undertaken, cause one to safely conclude that stress is universal and affects all human beings, including Pastors' wives. Consequently, Pastors' wives should not be assumed to be "Holy women" who are beyond the reach of the pangs of stress regardless of the many stressors they are exposed to. If it is so assumed, it might be dangerous because ministries would one-day pay heavily for the stress in those who are perceived by congregants as carriers of solutions to their problems.

Another conclusion that one inevitably comes to is that, stress is not necessarily negative. Some triumph over stress and come out more refined while others are

crashed by it. It would seem that one's response to stressors determines how the person comes out after suffering stress.

Equally, one cannot but come to the conclusion that, stress is as old as the time Adam and Eve found themselves naked in the Garden of Eden (Gen 3:6). Clearly, the couple must have been terribly stressed to find themselves naked and frantically had to deal with the situation.

Stress related symptoms can be exhibited **physically, emotional or behaviourally**. Symptoms are either **internal or external**. The internal category includes anxiety, apathy and depression. Others are false guilt, feeling distant from God and indecisiveness. A Christian could also have lack of peace, be nervous about many things and have panic attacks. In addition, one could have memory loss, some sense of failure, sexual dysfunction, and sleep disturbance.

On the other hand, under the external category are listed symptoms such as suffering from allergies, appetite disturbances and arthritis. Other problems observed could be asthmatic conditions, eating disorder and fatigue. Gastrointestinal distress, headaches or migraines and hypertension could be experienced too. In addition, one could have muscle pain especially in the back, neck and shoulder.

Stress also affects the spiritual life too. It can be exhibited through inability to pray, loss of purpose or hope and doubting God's goodness. Other signs are blaming God for allowing things to turn out the way they do and withdrawal from fellowshiping with other Christians. Also, the Christian is unable to be part of the **teamwork**.

Finally, stressors are a legion. For instance, Winter (2002) and Davies (1988), list the following as some of the causes of stress: (i) overwork, (ii) lack of work and ageing (iii) financial difficulties, (iv) feelings of guilt (v) commitment greater than our ability (vi) trying to fulfil other people's expectations, (vii) relationship difficulties, and (viii) unreasonable demands from others are other causes.

On the other hand, Swindoll (1990) lists the following stressors: (i) the easy –come and easy –go lifestyle, (ii) shouting matches (iii) instant dinners (iv) strained

relationship, (v) too little sleep or too much television and, (vi) financial setbacks. These can cause stress just as much as fear of cancer, misunderstandings and materialism would. An individual would also be stressed by too much drinking or drug taking, death occurrence in the family and other problems in the family unit.

For that matter, the study sought to investigate specific stressors that might be agents of high levels of stress to pastors' wives in Bungoma South district. The study not only attempts to rank stressors but also suggests what one needs to overcome stress.

However, what is most important is the fact that "stress can be managed" (Ogilvie, 1984). He further argues that "God has endowed man with an inner ability to handle the external pressures of life and a stress management mechanism that gives them an immense capacity to cope with the pressures and problems of life". Therefore, no individual needs to be a helpless victim of stress producing situations, or circumstances.

Just as there are many sources of stress, so there are many possibilities of managing it. These include, changing work and social environment, understanding our emotions and learning un-stress solutions. Next, is taking care of our bodies and providing for our spiritual needs. Then, recognizing what to change or eliminate completely.

Practical suggestions include relaxation, exercise, eating well-balanced and nutritious meals but avoiding nicotine, excessive caffeine and stimulants, having enough sleep and consistency in sleep schedule, pursuing realistic and meaningful goals, developing mutually supportive relationships and being moderate in reaction to stressors. The most important of all is to meditate on God's word and believe in God.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

The chapter deals with details of the study design, methods, means of collecting data and data analysis. In particular, it describes the geographical location of the area of study, research design, the study population, sampling procedures and the sample size. Further, it provides information on the development of the data collection instruments, scoring of questionnaire, and methods used to analyse data.

#### **3.1 Geographical location of the study area**

The study was carried out in Bungoma South district – a district carved out from the former or larger Bungoma district of western province, in the Republic of Kenya. Bungoma South district lies to the western part of the country and is located between 1° N. and 1° S. latitudes, and between 30° E. and 32° E. longitudes.

There are a number of reasons for selecting the district as the area of study. First and foremost, it is the home district of the researcher, which provides her with tremendous opportunity for acquiring detailed knowledge unique to the area of study. Two, the researcher as a practicing Christian, has in many occasions, been confronted with weaknesses in the performance of church ministries, which incidentally in most cases are blamed on Pastors' wives. The fact that there have been no studies carried out in Bungoma South district concerning the subject; that motivated the researcher to find out how stress to pastors wives affects the performance of church ministries.

In addition, is the issue of culture. The Bukusu living in Bungoma South are known for their rich cultural background. Consequently, one tends to ask: Can performance of the church ministries be explained in terms of the people's culture? Does culture play any role on stress and its effect on church ministry performance? Since the researcher, hails from the district, it added to the knowledge being examined by the study. Other reasons include a heightened general stress of modern life. Are churches a safe haven where stress free living can be obtained? Or, is stress slowly creeping

into the church thus affecting its members and consequently making it difficult for members to carry out the gospel mission? Is the world's expectation that a higher standard of ethical conduct from Christians than ordinary members an unduly expectation?

### **3.2 Research design.**

According to Kumar, R. (2005), a research design serves two main functions. The first relates to the identification and/or development of procedures and logistical arrangements required to undertake a study. The second emphasises the importance of quality in these procedures to ensure their validity, objectivity and accuracy. Consequently, through a research design, one conceptualises an operational plan to undertake the various procedures and tasks required to complete the study; and, ensures that these procedures are adequate to obtain valid, objective and accurate answers to the research questions. Kerlinger (1986) calls this function 'control of variance.'

Thus, the present study utilized the causal comparative design which enables the researcher to assess the degree of relationships between two or more variables. The purpose of this type of design is to determine the reasons or causes for the phenomenon under study. The causal comparative design was preferred because the cause and effect do not permit the researcher to manipulate one or more variables to determine their influence on another variable. Besides, the variables of interest cannot be manipulated but are empirically verifiable facts (Orodho, 2003; Mugenda and Mugenda, 1999; Kombo and Delno, 2006).

Even when the variables of interest cannot be manipulated, the causal comparative design allows a researcher to compare traits of groups (i.e. one where the variable is present and another where the variable is absent) without having to manipulate the independent variables. Moreover, the cause and effect relationships under investigation do not permit experimentation and that the event has already taken place. This approach is also known as *ex-post facto* design.

As a result, the causal comparative design became the glue to hold all elements of the research together. It constituted the conceptual framework within which the study was



conducted and the blueprint for the collection, measurement and analysis of data in a manner that aimed at combining relevance to the research purpose with the economy in procedure; and, the logical and systematic planning and directing of the study. The design resulted from translating a general scientific model into varied research procedures (Kombo and Delno, 2006; Kothari, 2003; Verma and Verma, 2004).

### **3.3 Study Population**

A survey of churches conducted in 2005 by Bungoma Unity of Churches showed that Bungoma South district had six hundred and thirty (630) churches – a third of which were of the Catholic Church. Consequently, the present study considered approximately four hundred and twenty (420) churches as the total population for the study since Catholic priests practice celibacy.

However, some main stream churches sometimes assign one pastor to administer a number of churches and also in certain instances some pastors are unmarried. It was estimated that approximately 20% of the churches are administered by pastors who are either assigned another church or unmarried. Consequently, the number of Pastors was estimated to be approximately 336. Of the estimated 336 married pastors, most (80%) have their wives living with them either within the church compounds or in rental houses at market centres or at their homes. The others have their wives far away from their congregations. Thus, the accessible population for the study was approximately 268 Pastors' wives.

Churches that were targeted fall under several denominations. Many of the churches fall under mainstream denominations such as the Anglican Church, Quakers or the Friends church, the Baptist, Salvation Army and the Seventh Day Adventist Churches. Yet, there are many other denominations in the study area that include, the Pentecostal Church of East Africa, Kenya Assemblies of God, Reformed Church, Anointed Christian Church, Pentecostal Christian Universal, Restoration Revival Fellowship, Redeemed Church, Deliverance Church, Chrisco. King Jesus Ministries Faith Church, Grace Community, Faith Gospel, Gospel Believers Fellowship, P.E.F.A (Pentecostal Evangelical Fellowship of Africa), Word of Life, Word of Faith, Victory Centres, Christ is a Live Ministry, River of Life Church, Kenya Evangelical Team and

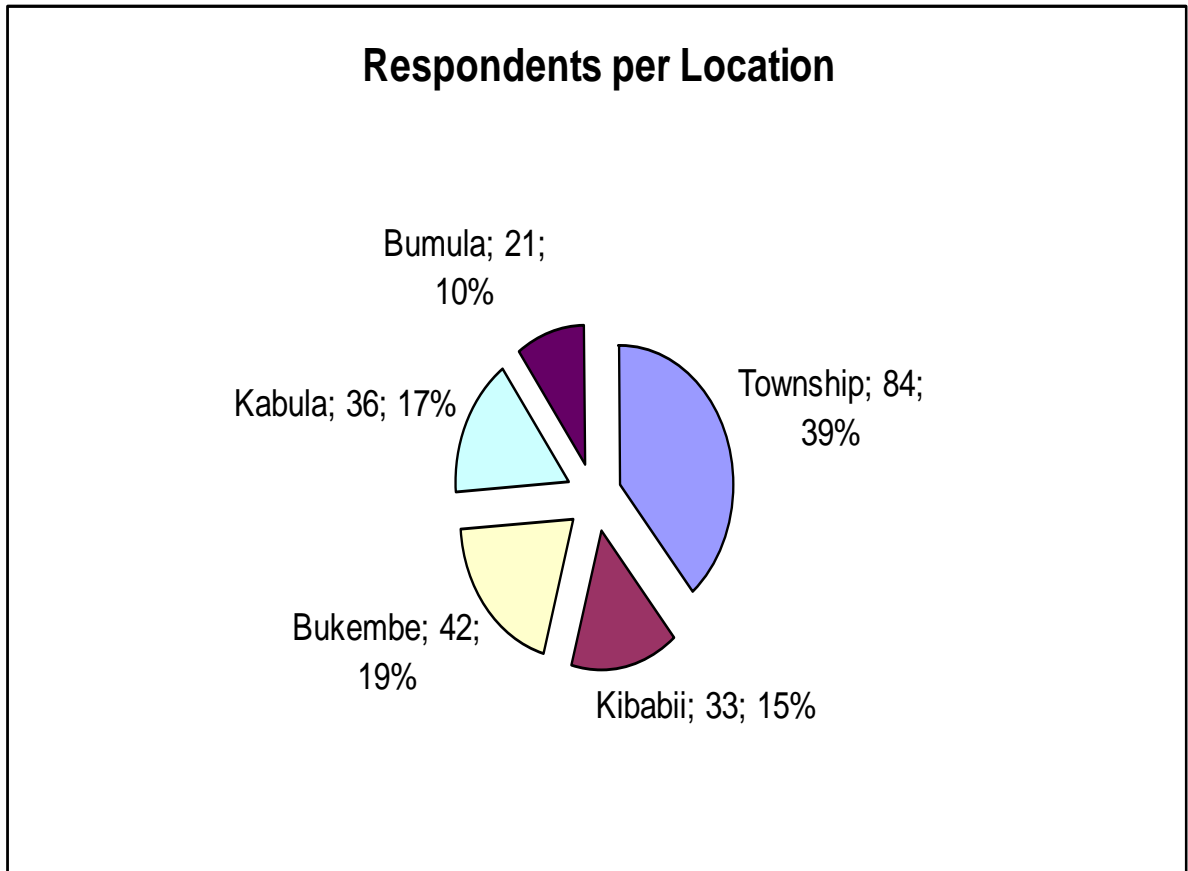
Crusade, Solid Rock, Soul Winners, Winners Chapel, Love of Christ Church, Maranatha, Maximum Miracle Church, Miracle Harvest, Triumphant Church, All National Spring Of Life, and Neno Evangelism.

As a result, the study did not sample on the basis of denominations. However, since the study's sampling procedure utilised the clusters sampling method; all churches in the cluster location were targeted and the study hoped that this will account for the multiplicity of church ministries.

### **3.4 Sample size.**

Due to logistical, financial and time constraints, the study sampled 216 respondents consisting of 72 Pastor's wives and 144 ordinary members' wives from the congregation in which a Pastors wife was interviewed. Respondents represented approximately 27% of the targeted Pastors wives. However, the number of pastors' wives represented more than 40% of the targeted population in the administrative locations which were studied. Figure 3.1 shows the number of respondents that participated per administrative location.

Fig: 3.1: Number and percentage of Respondents selected per Location



### 3.5 Sampling Procedure

The study employed a three-stage cluster random sampling procedure. The first stage involved sampling five administrative units known as **Locations** purposively. This procedure was preferred so as to allow locations with many success factors to be included in the study rather than leaving it to chance occurrence. Consequently, out of sixteen locations the study selected five locations as follows: township, Kibabii, Bukembe, Kabula and Bumula.

The second stage involved clustering of church ministries in the sampled locations on the basis of Pastors fellowship meetings or markets/primary schools. This is because Pastors' fellowship meetings attract diverse church ministries while markets/primary schools are prevalent meeting venues for church ministries. The second reason for

clustering church ministries was to have convenient localities in terms of logistics to carry out the study. After clustering church ministries, between two and four clusters per location were randomly sampled where the study was carried out. Lastly, all churches ministries using the cluster venues sampled for worship services were targeted.

Table 3.1 shows the location, clustering method employed, number of clusters in the location, selected clusters and number of churches selected.

**Table: 3.1: Clustering of Church Ministries**

<b>Location Name</b>	<b>Clustering Method</b>	<b>No. of Clusters</b>	<b>Selected Clusters</b>	<b>No. churches</b>
Township	Bungoma Pastors' Fellowship	1	1	28
Kibabii	Markets/Primary schools	7	3	11
Bukembe	Markets/Primary schools	10	4	15
Kabula	Markets/Primary schools	7	3	12
Bumula	Markets/Primary schools	7	3	6

The third stage involved randomly selecting two ordinary members' wives from a congregation where a Pastors wife was given a questionnaire and interviewed. The procedure used to select the ordinary members' wives was by asking the church leader to provide 10 names of ordinary married women in the congregation from where two were randomly selected. This procedure was preferred since ordinary members' wives are inordinately many and that a purely random sampling procedure would have not achieved a different result. As a result, 72 pastors' wives against 144 ordinary members' wives were given a questionnaire.

### **3.6 Data collection Instruments**

The study utilised three data collection instruments (DCIs). These were: (i) a specially designed questionnaire meant to elicit information on whether Pastors wives exhibited stress symptoms, suffered stress and how its consequences **affect work performance of the church ministry performance** (ii) In addition, an interview schedule was employed to elicit in-depth information from pastors' wives (iii) lastly; the information

was supplemented by use of observations in obtaining information that would otherwise not be elicited through the two instruments mentioned earlier.

The questionnaire was a 22 item long, consisting of three sections: Section A had four items that sought data on the locations, markets/towns studied, church ministry of the respondents, whether or not the respondent was a Pastor's wife and the age grouping of the respondents. Section B consisted of 13 like formatted items, based on a 5-grid response scale. The items sought data on whether the respondents exhibited stress related symptoms and whether they developed stress. Responses were ordered in such a way that respondents were to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statement made about the condition in which they were. Thus, this implied the presence or absence of the characters that were being measured to expose the symptoms and existence of stress. Finally, section C consisted of closed open ended items. They were closed in the sense that the questionnaire limited the number of choices, but were open in the sense that respondents ranked the issues that they perceived caused them a tremendous amount of stress.

This type of instrument (questionnaire) was chosen because of its distinct advantages, which include, the fact that it is free from interviewer biases, it is easy to administer to a large number of respondents (216), and it eliminates scorer unreliability; thus, increasing utility.

In addition, the study utilised a specially designed interview schedule to elicit in-depth information from pastors' wives only. Whatever other information that was not collected by these instruments was supplemented by the observations made during the administration of the questionnaire and interview schedule.

### **3.7 Data Collection Procedures**

The study employed the following data collection procedures to elicit information from respondents: -

1. To allow for the assessment of reliability of the instrument and adjustments to be made, piloting or pre-testing of the questionnaire preceded actual data collection. The purpose was to ensure that: (i) items were stated clearly and conveyed the

same meaning to all respondents, (ii) the instrument could be applied easily, (iii) the instrument could be administered within reasonable time, and (iv) sensitive and confusing items were identified and replaced.

2. Arising from the pre-testing exercise, the study fine tuned the questionnaire. Items that were confusing, biased and lacking clarity were reworked on and others omitted altogether.
3. The study utilised the services of enumerators in administering the questionnaire to respondents. This was intended to assist in cutting down on time to be taken on the study. As a result, the study carried out a one day training workshop for the enumerators on how to administer the instrument and ways of increasing rapport with respondents before embarking on field work. The training was also meant to increase the enumerators' understanding of the questionnaire by providing as much information as possible for uniform interpretation. The workshop was held on 14<sup>th</sup> of October, 2009 at Kanduyi.

During field work, the researcher worked with the enumerators in all selected locations to provide back stopping. In all, the study experienced a number of challenges, among them were:

- (a) Instance of some pastors insisting that their wives be interviewed in their presence.
- (b) Reluctance of some church ministries in allowing pastors' wives in their church to participate in the study.
- (c) Pastors' wives having little capacity to provide the information required by the study.
- (d) Some respondents demanded some kind of token before providing information required by the study or in the alternative be considered for a reward after completion of the study.

### 3.8 Scoring of research instrument

Although most of the data collected was qualitative, however, by assigning numerals to responses, the study was able to carry out various statistical techniques in order to determine the extent to which stress to Pastors wives affected the performance of church ministries.

Items were structured such that responses were kept in the same direction for each case. A Likert-type formatted response was used (i.e. from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'). Consequently, in scoring the questionnaire, a five point scale was applied to get a numeric score representation for each response given indicating the extent to which the respondent agrees or disagrees with the statement. The scale was designed to help the researcher analyse the information, make comparisons and draw conclusions based on the responses given. The items in the questionnaire were scored as follows: -

1. Item numbers: 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14, 15, and 17 were scored such that 'Strongly agree' was awarded five points, 'Agree' was awarded four points, 'Not sure' awarded three, 'Disagree' awarded two and 'Strongly disagree' awarded one point.
2. Item numbers: 6, 10, 12,16 and 18 were scored on the basis that 'Strongly agree' was awarded one point, 'Agree' was awarded two points, 'Not sure' awarded three, 'Disagree' awarded four and 'Strongly disagree' awarded five points.
3. Item numbers 19, 20 and 21 were scored such that the first ranking was awarded three points, second ranking two points and third ranking was awarded one point.

Thus, whereas data collected from the respondents was qualitative and descriptive; the scoring of the instrument and analysis enabled the information to be transformed to be quantitative. By coding, and ascribing a scale of numeric scores to responses indicating the extent to which a respondent agreed or disagreed with the statement,

the study was able to perform statistical techniques such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations.

### **3.9 Data Analysis Procedure**

The researcher analysed data using both descriptive and inferential statistics. According to Kerlinger (1986), descriptive statistics gives ways and means of interpreting data, condensing information by use of numerical and graphical techniques of presenting, organising and making conclusions. Consequently, for the present study, the researcher employed quantitative analysis techniques.

On the other hand, descriptive statistics were used to summarise responses by calculating total scores per item, analysing the mean values, and the standard deviations for each responding group. It also considered item grouping and score limit frequency distributions; and, graphical presentations of the data. To assign meaningful numerical values to responses, variables were measured at an interval scale.

In order to generalise research findings, the researcher utilised inferential statistics which is a set of mathematical procedures for generalising the statistical results obtained from a sample of the population from which the sample was drawn (Gall, Borg and Gall, (1996). This deals with the likelihood of getting similar results from the population as those obtained from the sample. Levene's test, the 't-test',  $\chi^2$  analyses, and the ANOVA test were used to determine whether there were significant differences between the means derived from groups being studied, at 95% level of confidence (also referred to as critical value). This led to either accepting or rejecting null hypotheses.



### **3:10 Conclusion.**

Basically the chapter gave the details of the study design. It outlined the geographical location of the study, pointed out the research design and its functions and how the study population was chosen. The details of the sample size and sampling procedure were careful explained, the data collection procedures indicated and scoring research instrument given. Finally the data analysis procedure that was used was laid out. By what was done in the chapter, the study achieved its objective.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS: PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### **4.0 Introduction**

The study sought to examine the effects of stress to pastors' wives on performance of church ministries. It aimed at answering the following research questions cited in chapter one, (P. 5):

- (a) Do Pastors wives exhibit stress related symptoms more than that exhibited by spouses of ordinary members?
- (b) Are there significant differences between younger spouses and old ones in the exhibition of stress related symptoms?
- (c) What factors precipitate stress to spouses?
- (d) Do Pastors wives suffer higher levels of stress than spouses of ordinary member in the congregation?
- (e) Does stress to Pastor's wives have any effect on the performance of the church ministry?
- (f) What effects does Stress to Pastors wives have on the performance of the church ministry?
- (g) What solutions should be utilised to mitigate against the effects of stress on the performance of the ministry?

To be able to answer these questions, the study sampled respondents from five out of sixteen locations in the study area. For each church ministry, a Pastor's wife and two ordinary members' spouses were selected to participate. Table 4.1 shows the category respondents from each cluster in the administrative Location and their percentage representation in the sample of the study.

**Table 4.1: Category of Respondents per Cluster in each Location**

Location	Cluster	Spouse		Total	
		Pastor's	Ordinary member's	Number	%
Township	Bungoma	28	56	84	38.9
Kibabii	Bukananachi	2	4	6	2.8
	Kibabii	4	8	12	5.6
	Mayanja	2	4	6	2.8
	Tuuti	3	6	9	4.2
Bukembe	Bukembe	3	6	9	4.2
	Luuya	3	6	9	4.2
	Nzoia	6	12	18	8.3
	Sangalo	2	4	6	2.8
Kabula	Kabula	9	18	27	12.5
	Malinda	3	6	9	4.2
Bumula	Bumula	3	6	9	4.2
	Siritanyi	4	8	12	5.6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 4.1** shows that majority (38.9%) of the respondents were selected from the Bungoma town cluster. This is because, Bungoma town being urban hosts majority of the residents from outside the district. Thus the diversity of residents also makes it possible for the introduction of diverse church ministries. Bungoma town cluster is followed at a distance by Kabula and Nzoia which constitutes 12.5% 8.3% of the sample population respectively.

To be able to find out whether there is age influence in the exhibition of stress related symptoms and eventually the development of stress itself, the study asked

respondents to indicate their age grouping. For ease of handling responses, the study categorised age into four categories as follows: (i) Below 35 years; (ii) 36 – 45 years; (iii) 46 – 55 years; and, (iv) Over 55 years. Table 4.2 shows the number of respondents and their percentage representation in the sample according to their age grouping per administrative Location.

**Table 4.2: Age of Respondents per Location**

Age/Years	Administrative Location					Total	
	Township	Kibabii	Bukembe	Kabula	Bumula	No.	%
Below 35	29	9	16	20	11	85	39.4
36 - 45	43	14	18	11	8	94	43.5
46 - 55	8	7	6	3	2	26	12.0
Over 55	4	3	2	2	0	11	5.1
Total	84	33	42	36	21	216	100.0

**Table 4.2** shows that most (82.9%) of the respondents interviewed were aged below 45 years. However, majority of those interviewed were aged between 36 and 45 years which category constituted 43.5% of the sample population. Those aged over 51 years constituted approximately 5.1% of the sample population.

The study did not sample for church ministries, since this was left to chance occurrence. Although, that was the case, in total, 39 church ministries participated in the study. Table 4.3 shows the number of church Ministries sampled per administrative location against respondents.

**Table 4.3: Church ministries Per Location**

Location	No. Church Ministries	% (*N=39)	Respondents	
			No.	%
Township	22	56.4	84	38.9
Kibabii	8	20.5	33	15.3
Bukembe	12	30.8	42	19.4
Kabula	11	28.2	36	16.7
Bumula	7	17.9	21	9.7

\* N = Total population of respondents.

Table 4.3 shows that Township administrative location had majority (56.4%) of the church ministries represented in the sample population. Bukembe and Kabula came a distant second (30.8%) and third (28.2%) respectively. The percentage of respondents similarly followed the same pattern, led by township and followed by Bukembe and Kabula in that order.

#### **4.1 Exhibition of stress Related symptoms**

Since, Swindoll (1990), asserts that stress is a way of life, the study sought to find out whether Pastors' wives exhibit more stress related symptoms than spouses of ordinary members by testing the hypothesis "**Ho1: There is no significant difference in exhibition of stress by Pastors' wives over those exhibited by ordinary members' spouses in the congregation**". To do this the study analysed responses to items 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 which asked respondents to indicate the extent to which they agreed with statements made about how they feel about a range of issues:

- (i) In most cases I experience one or all of the following: indigestion, constant tiredness, shoulder aches and loss of appetite.
- (ii) It is in very rare times that I feel one or all of the following: irritable, anger, depression, loss of confidence and experiencing excessive worrying.

- (iv) For the better part of my married life, I am withdrawn from people to the extent they, especially my husband, complain about my acquired behaviour.
- (v) More often than not, I find myself lacking concentration, or exhibiting unclear thinking patterns, or making poor decisions and lacking good judgment or reason for doing something.
- (vi) Unlike during our early times of marriage, nowadays I find it difficult to pray, or I feel like I have lost purpose and hope or I sometimes doubt God's goodness and blame Him for allowing things to turn out the way they have.

Using the Statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) programme, the study performed a t-test to find out whether the mean scores obtained by the two groups (i.e. pastors' wives and spouses of ordinary members in the congregation) were significantly different. The results of the test are indicated in table 4.4.

**Table 4.4: t-test for exhibition of Stress Related Symptoms**

	<i>SPOUSES</i>	
	<i>Pastor's</i>	<i>Ordinary Member's</i>
Mean	14.67	15.33
S.D (Standard Deviation)	3.90	3.88
Respondents	72	144
Df (Degrees of freedom)	141.55	
t-critical	1.96	
t-Stat (equal variances not assumed)	1.19	

- (i). Levene's test of equality of variances was significant ( $F = .102$ ) which implies that the variances were not equal and consequently, the study needed to use the t for unequal means to interpret the results.
- (ii) Calculated "t" was 1.19 compared to expected "t" of 1.96 at 95% confidence interval. Therefore, the difference in mean scores obtained by comparing the two groups was not significantly different. This implies that the exhibition of

stress by Pastors wives is not significantly different from that exhibited by spouses of ordinary members. Therefore, the study accepted the hypothesis.

Results obtained by the study show that Pastors' wives like every one else exhibit stress related symptoms and that the exhibition is not any different from the way other ordinary women do. This finding is supported by views expressed by Davies (1988) that even Christians are not exempt from any of the stresses that affect everyone else. In addition, the results confirm Swindoll's (1990) assertion that stress has become a way of life; it is the norm rather than the exception. Modern life with its competition, conflicts, lack of rest and recreation has produced tension and anxieties to, not only the social and emotional life, but to spiritual life also.

Although one tends to think that Pastors' wives could be exhibiting more stress related symptoms than ordinary members' spouses brought about by higher congregational expectations, the results of the t-test do not support that view. Probably, this is because every human being experiences stress somewhat.

#### **4.2: Age Influence on Exhibition of stress related symptoms**

Further, the study sought to find out whether age has any influence in the exhibition of stress related symptoms by testing the hypothesis "**Ho2: Age does not significantly influence exhibition of stress related symptoms among respondents**". To do this, the study analysed responses to items 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 by regrouping their scores on age group basis. Using the SPSS computer package, the study performed an ANOVA test. Table 4.5 indicates the results of ANOVA tests.

**Table 4.5(a): Age grouping of Spouses**

	<i>Below 35</i>	<i>36 – 45</i>	<i>46 – 55</i>	<i>Over 55</i>
Mean	15.51	15.20	14.70	12.27
S.D	4.03	3.69	3.82	3.9
Respondents	85	94	26	11

Table 4.5(a) shows that the mean scores for the respondents decreases from 15.51 to 12.27 as the age of respondents increases from below 35 years to over 55 years. Similarly, the Standard deviation of the mean scores between subjects decreases as the years increases.

Table 4.5(b) shows the influence of age on exhibition of stress related symptoms.

**Table 4.5(b): Influence of Age grouping on Stress**

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Intercept	21915.402	1	21915.402	1477.696	.000
Age	107.206	3	35.735	2.410	.068
Error	3144.127	212	14.831		
Total	52574.000	216			

Table 4.5(b) shows that the type III sum of squares for the intercept is more than that of the error which implies that age has a significant influence on exhibition of stress related symptoms. Since  $F_{ob} (4, 212, 05 = 2.410)$  is greater than  $F_{crit.} (4, 212, 05 = 1.645)$ , then we reject the hypothesis that “age does not significantly influence exhibition of stress related symptoms among respondents”. Consequently, rejecting the hypothesis implies that age has a significant influence in exhibition of stress related symptoms.



Now that the results of the study suggest that age seems to be a contributory factor in the exhibition of stress related symptoms; the study further sought to find out age at which significant differences occur in the exhibition of stress related symptoms. To do this, the study categorised respondents into two categories. Respondents whose age was below 35 years were regarded as “young” while those aged above 35 years were regarded as “old”. Table 4.6 shows the categorisation of respondents in terms of whether they were regarded as young or old, and whether they were Pastors wives or not as well as their total number and percentage representation in the sample for study.

**Table 4.6: Status of Spouse**

<b>Status</b>	<b>Spouse</b>		<b>Total</b>	
	Pastor's	Ordinary member's	No.	%
Young	24	61	85	39.4
Old	48	83	131	60.6
Total	72	144	216	100.0

From table 4.6, it is clear that 85 (39.4%) of the respondents were regarded as being “young” whereas 131 (60.6%) were regarded as “old”. Of the 72 Pastors’ wives, 24 were regarded as “young” as compared to 61 ordinary members’ spouses; whereas 48 Pastors’ wives were regarded as old as compared to 83 ordinary members’ spouses.

Thereafter, the study utilising the SPSS computer package, performed a t-test to find out if the two groups’ mean scores for exhibition of stress related symptoms had significant differences. The results of the t-test are indicated in table 4.7.

**Table 4.7: t-test for Age difference in exhibition of Stress Related Symptoms**

	<i>SPOUSES</i>	
	<i>Young</i>	<i>Old</i>
Mean Score	15.51	14.86
S.D	4.03	3.79
Respondents	85	131
Df	171.74	
t-critical	1.96	
t-Stat (equal variances not assumed)	1.18	

**Table 4.7** shows that there is no significant difference in the exhibition of stress related symptoms between spouses aged below 35 years and those aged over 35 years. In other words, if age is a contributory factor in the exhibition of stress related symptoms, and that there are no significant differences in the exhibition of stress related symptoms between spouses aged below 35 years and those aged over 35 years; implies that differences occur at a much older age than 35 years. Accordingly, aging pastors' wives need more support than young spouses. Further, counselling services are more desirable to the old couples as compared to young ones.

#### **4.2 Factors Precipitating Stress to Pastors' Spouses**

The study then sought to find out the factors that precipitate stress to spouses. To do this, the study limited the investigation into some of the factors that were thought to be the most prevalent causes of stress (i.e. financial matters, family matters, husband's workload, privacy in the home and congregational expectations). To do this, the study analysed item 21 that asked respondents to prioritise issues that bothered them most. The procedure adopted was to award three scores to an item listed as priority one, while that which was listed in the second place was awarded two scores and the third placed item was awarded one score. Table 4.8 shows the items and their frequency ratings.

**Table 4.8: Priority of Factors that precipitate Stress in Spouses**

Stress Precipitators	Prioritization			Total	
	First	Second	Third	Score	%
Financial Matters	106	39	21	417	37.6
Family Matters	58	91	19	375	33.8
Husbands' Workload	16	21	61	151	13.6
Privacy in the Home	4	19	32	82	7.4
Congregational Expectations	7	17	28	83	7.5
Total	191	187	161	1108	100.0

**Table 4.8** shows that majority of the respondents indicated that financial matters (37.6%) and family matters (33.8%) were the main factors that precipitated stress in their lives.

The study confirms the notion that many family crises mostly arise from financially related issues. For example, inability to pay bills, debts and schools fees for their children are some of the financial burdens that families have to reckon with. Others include, unmet family needs, financial demands from members of their congregations and un-met goals – all due to lack of finances. One of the participants was categorical when she wrote, “We have many financial problems, and we can never do for our families what lay families do for theirs.” Yet another cry went out like this, “The pressure of meeting financial demands of my family and nobody is ready to stand with me, and at the same time am to meet the church/ congregations’ demands breaks my heart...”. This goes a long way to show that lack of finances is a stressor that brings inner turmoil to pastors’ wives in Bungoma South district.

Ogilvie (1984:143) asserts that:

We live in a society where money and things it can buy are a standard for our success, a sign of our personal worth, a basis of competitive comparisons with others and a weapon of manipulative control. Our pre-occupation over money fills our thought with stress producing anxiety. The result of our stress is pumped into our blood stream whether we are struggling to pay our household bills or feel stress over not having adequate funds for vacations, fees for our children, basic needs and other needs.

Evidently then, Pastors' wives in Bungoma South district seem to be going through financial struggles which add to the pressure and stress on them.

However, whatever may be the causes of financial problems, the Bible has genuine advice: (i) "Owe no man anything, except to love one another..." (Rom. 13:8), by this Jesus meant to tell us that the most important possession one must have is love not money, (ii) In Paul warning Christians he said, "the love of money is the root of all evil" (I Tim. 6:10). What he was therefore saying was that covetousness can bring all sorts of evil, therefore Christians should learn to be contented. Those who place their happiness in wealth, and are eager and determined in its pursuit give Satan the opportunity to lead them in evil ways. Consequently, if all and sundry heeded Biblical teachings, they will not suffer but save themselves from the heartaches of financial stress. Individuals need to trust the Lord to handle financial needs effectively.

The next highly rated factor that precipitates stress in the lives of the spouses is family matters. First, the family is a complex institution. For instance, marriage according to the Bible is a union between two individuals – male and female that is in-dissolvable. The union binds the two to live "till death do us part". But such unions are known to be stressful as a result of various factors that affect relationships. For instance, communication, financial, relatives, sex and many other factors are responsible for much of the stress in families. However, most in the congregation expect pastors' marriages to be exempt of those problems.

Second, the family also includes the children born out of the union of the two individuals to the marriage covenant. The Bible admonishes parents to raise their

children in the fear of the Lord. In fact, the Bible declares that “train up a child in the way he may go and when he is old he will never leave it” (Prov. 22:6). Consequently, God places heavy parental responsibilities on individuals entering marriage. Therefore, couples are faced with many dilemmas on how to bring up a God fearing family.

Inevitably, a family has relatives. Some very close while others may be distant. As a result, in an African setting, relatives can be many and varied. The point is that relatives are of concern especially when they expect assistance from a couple. Relating, communicating and expectations from a spouse need to be realistic.

But, do Pastors wives agree with the overall views by respondents? Consequently, the study analysed item 21 of the questionnaire by considering responses from Pastors spouses only.

**Table 4.9** compares responses by Pastors spouses on which factors precipitate stress in their lives.

**Table 4.9: Rating of Factors that Cause Stress in Pastor’s Spouses**

Stress Precipitators	Prioritization			Total	
	First	Second	Third	Score	%
Financial Matters	42	19	7	171	40.1
Family Matters	26	32	8	150	35.2
Husbands Workload	2	7	25	45	10.6
Privacy in the Home	2	8	17	39	9.2
Congregational Expectations	2	5	5	21	4.6
Total	74	71	62	426	100.0

**Table 4.9** shows that just like the overall view, Pastors wives see financial matters as the factor that causes stress in their lives followed by family matters. Husband's workload was ranked third, with privacy in the home and congregational expectations coming in the fourth and fifth position respectively. However, financial matters, and family matters seem to be of more concern to Pastors wives than the other three factors under consideration.

Consequently, stress in pastor's spouses does not come merely from the occupation of their husbands but perhaps from a combination of the circumstances and working environment of their spouses. Likewise, handling of financial and family matters depends on the philosophy of each individual. It would be expected that with a Christian background, pastors would be better placed to handle those with understanding. But, the problem still persists. Thus, pastors need to be trained to change their attitudes on how to handle financial matters and family matters with understanding and based on biblical principles to avoid unnecessary misunderstandings.

#### **4.4 Stress levels suffered by Pastors' Spouses**

In addition, the study sought to answer the question as to whether Pastors wives suffer higher stress levels than spouses of ordinary member in the congregation. This was because, it was believed that since Pastors wives play a crucial role in the church ministry by their spouses, then perhaps the workload, congregational expectations and financial constraints would bear pressure to such an extent, that the stress levels experienced by them would be probably higher than that experienced by ordinary women in the congregation. In order to do this, the study sought to test the hypothesis "There are no significant differences in the levels of stress suffered by Pastors' wives and those suffered by ordinary members' spouses".

Therefore, the study performed a t-test to compare the mean scores obtained from responses to items 16 & 17 by the two groups of women. Results of the t test are tabulated in table 4.10.

**Table 4.10: t-test for exhibition of Stress Related Symptoms**

	<i>SPOUSES</i>	
	<i>Pastor's</i>	<i>Ordinary Member's</i>
Mean	5.83	4.80
S.D	2.29	1.86
Respondents	72	144
Df	214	
t-critical	1.96	
t-Stat (equal variances not assumed)	3.56	

- (i). The Levene's test of equality of variances was significant ( $F = .013$ ) which implies that the variances were equal and consequently, the study needed to use the t for equal means to interpret the results.
- (ii) Calculated "t" was 3.56 compared to expected "t" of 1.96 at 95% confidence interval. Therefore, the difference in mean scores obtained by comparing the two groups was significantly different. This implies that pastors' wives do suffer a higher level of stress than ordinary women in the congregation.

Although exhibition of stress related symptoms by pastors wives is not significantly any different, from those exhibited by ordinary members in the congregation; nevertheless, they undergo a higher level of stress. Consequently, the study further sought to find out the specific issues within the general categories of precipitators which were responsible for the development of high level of stress by Pastors' wives. To do this, the study utilising the interview schedule (See Appendix III, P 110), attempted to find out those specific issues that were responsible for precipitating stress in their lives. The general categories of precipitators investigated and their results were as follows:

#### **4.4.1 Financial Matters**

Within this general category, the study asked Pastors wives to indicate whether they experience financial problems in their families. The study found that 56 or 78% of Pastors' wives live in constant debts. For example, respondents stated that debts arose due to lack of finances resulting in their inability to pay utility bills and schools fees for their children. Other evidences of lack of finances mentioned by respondents included, unmet family needs, financial demands from congregations, shattered hopes and un-attainable goals.

Respondents stated that they are rarely involved in financial decisions and neither is there a family budget to operate on. Likewise, respondents complained of not being consulted on assistance to be given to relatives and members of the congregation. As a result, there are family crises revolving mainly on the way their spouses handle finances. One of the participants was categorical when she wrote, "We have many financial problems, and we can never do for our families what lay families do for their families."

Consequently, Pastors are seemingly unable to take their spouses for holiday or meet most of their families' financial demands. And if this is so then it affects the families negatively.

#### **4.4.2 Family Matters**

Within this general category, the study propped two issue; namely, the state of their marriages and the issue of relatives. The issues that elicited most reactions were whether, pastors' wives feel loved. Out of 72 respondents, 50 or 69% feel that their husbands have been "stolen"; 49 or 68% feel that their husbands are too busy; and 48 or 67% feel that they neither receive nor give love. Likewise, 55 or 76% feel uncomfortable with the way some women in the congregation relate to their husbands. As a result, most of the respondents have few women friends from the congregation.

In addition, the study found that most pastors' marriages are plagued with various problems. For instance, 37 or 52% of the spouses stated that their husbands make



mountains out of mole hills and 45 or 63% regret being Pastors' wives. In fact 37 or 51% said, if time were to be rewound they would not marry a pastor whereas 40 or 56% confessed suffering frigidity.

It is unfortunate that a vast majority of pastors' wives in Bungoma South district feel unloved and could suffer low self esteem, and rejection. Hepden (2002) asserts that feeling of rejection arise from "not being loved as we are". It is only in the atmosphere of love, acceptance and approval that one can grow a sense of security and well-being.

Further, Hepden (2002) asserts that rejection causes deep wounds in the inward self, which may be revealed by abnormal behaviour patterns and attitudes. For example, a loss of identity, withdrawal, defensive attitude or rebellion and because they receive no love, they cannot give it themselves. Likewise, the Bible (Pro.18:14), states that rejection can affect ones spirit. It can go further to negatively affect ones will, intellect and emotions, leave alone the body in which health, posture and looks could be affected as well.

When asked whether they are allowed to pursue their own agenda, 60 or 83% of the respondents replied in the negative. In addition, they stated that their spouses see them as objects and slaves to serve their objectives without question. Apparently, pastors' wives in Bungoma South district are intimidated rather than being loved by their husbands to extent that they keep silent about what they go through.

Another factor that Pastors and their spouses need to contend with is how to handle relatives. In an African or Kenyan perspective, one would easily qualify as a relative if he is a relation of great grand parents of both sides and runs through the lineage. Therefore, the cousin of a cousin's in-law qualifies to be a relative. Relations go beyond clans and tribes. In Bungoma South district as in the larger Bungoma, close or distant relatives are still seen as deserving appropriate attention. They have a right to visit at anytime and also demand for help.

African culture and especially that of the Bukusu, a sub tribe of the Luhya community; regards relatives in high esteem. One would rather do anything to please a relative than to be oneself. But, at these times of economic difficulties, it has become

increasingly difficult to please every relative who calls on one. To the contrary, Christianity demands that its adherents be truthful. Consequently, cultural requirements of being amenable to all situations cause conflicting reactions.

Pastors' wives who come from this community are aware of this cultural demand. However, those who come from other communities might be overwhelmed by the way relations are traced from a far and brought so close that the number of relatives becomes considerably high. Paul (I Tim. 5:8) admonishes that "... those who won't care for their own relatives, especially those living in the same household, have denied what we believe. Such are worse than unbelievers." This verse is sometimes misquoted by those who overstretch relations not realising that already Pastors' spouses have too much on their hands. Seemingly, pastors' wives can only get help on this from God through prayer.

The study found that 52 or 72% of the respondents feel uncomfortable with relatives since they contribute to the financial demands placed upon the pastor's family. Considering the position that respondents occupy, relatives place several demands such that some conflict with each other. As a result, most respondents (62 or 81%) pursue other people's goals or never do something for themselves while others strive to be role models. Accordingly, the study concluded that pastors' wives in Bungoma South district live in the shadow of others, because they do not do anything just for themselves, neither do they pursue their own goals but wear cosmetic faces behind which they hide their true feelings, emotions and reactions. Trying hard to please others is therefore, a factor that causes stress.

### 4.4.3 Overwork

In the category of overwork, the study sought to find out the workload that pastors' wives have to bear. The study found that 61% of the respondents have insufficient rest, 63% do not have sufficient sleep, and 73% find their responsibility too big and so must be on their toes. As a result, fatigue in the Pastor's wives comes from a lack of enough rest, insufficient sleep and overwork without sufficient time for relaxation and refreshment. From the interview, those who have careers suffer most from overwork because they have to combine church, house work and career.

One of the respondent aptly commented, "The work is too strenuous – family, job and ministry work is too demanding. I have no time to attend to myself; I get too tired for anything". This state of affairs might be some of the cause for their fatigue or persistent tiredness which in the long run precipitates stress.

In addition, the study found that 60% of the respondents are overwhelmed by work, whereas 68% are unable to organise both home and church. From these analyses, it is evident that commitments placed on pastors' wives in Bungoma South District are enormous. That is why they admitted that they are overwhelmed and they find themselves incapable of organizing work in time both at home and church. In other words they imply that they go through tremendous amount of stress.

In conclusion therefore, the study found that Pastor's wives in Bungoma South District are overworked because they have to work at home, ministry and sometimes in their careers. They find themselves working all the time. The pressure to work is put on them by their families, husbands, and church ministries and in some cases jobs. The demand on them by other people is such that they must overwork themselves anyway.

The pressure of work put on respondents could be summarized by their own words in which some of them said, "...the responsibilities are just too many for life". To overwork is to be subjected to an excessive burden or strain. Ogilvie (1984:117) defines it as "working too hard, too long under pressure". This causes fatigue, health problems and lack of creativity. The victim can no longer produce effectively and do not enjoy what

they are doing. They feel it and deject it. Such an attitude could definitely not be productive on church performance.

#### **4.4.4 Privacy in the home**

Respondents were asked to state whether they are disturbed by the number of visitors they receive in their homes and what its effect was. The study found that 62 or 86% of the respondents receive too many visitors to their homes to the effect that they lack privacy in their homes. The study further found that most pastors' wives were disturbed by too frequent visits to their houses/ homes by the congregants and other help seekers. This deprives them of privacy, thus, stressing especially the wives and children who are held hostage in their own home.

Gichanga (2002) quoted a pastor's wife who gave *Ten Commandments* to her husband. The forth, asked her husband "to ensure that his family had privacy". According to this pastor's wife, there was constant flow of human traffic in their home, ranging from invited guests, to casual callers and those who face crisis and must see their pastor whatever time the crisis struck. Some of these visitors are least interested in any other person but the pastor; so the wife and children feel left out or even unwelcome in their own home. Indeed such scenario definitely puts stress on a pastor's wife.

Pressure on pastors' wives due to too frequent visits to pastors' homes deprives pastors and their spouses' family time, and also interferes with the privacy of their homes. More so, when some extend their visit to too late into the night. As host one is obliged to keep the visitor comfortable till he leaves at his 'own pleasure'.

Visits in and out of themselves are not bad *per se*. But, when they are too frequent, they deprive the host of time and privacy. Unfortunately they put pressure on the woman of the house who according to the culture is expected to feed those who come to her house.

#### 4.4.5 Others Expectations

Another area that brings pressure to pastors' wives is what others (i.e. their spouses, congregation, and neighbours) expect them to say, do and be. The study found that 50 or 69% of the respondents feel pressured by the others. The pressure to work is put on them by their husbands, church officials and the expectations of the congregation. The demand on them by other people is such that they must work themselves away. The pressure of work put on respondents could be summarized in their own words in that, "the responsibilities are just too many for life". Pastors on their part, expect their wives to do everything they want done regardless of their wives' opinions or abilities. One of the respondents lamented, "the fact that my husband expects me to be an all round woman terribly traumatises me and I get frustrated".

The congregations too put pressure on Pastors' wives when they expect them to be 'Holy women', dress accordingly and be role models – the fact that the congregations expect the best from the pastors' spouses; in demeanour, speech, humility, hospitality and Christian standards. In short, she is expected to be a Christian per excellence.

In addition, pastors' wives are isolated by the demands of church ministries on their husbands, while female congregants sometimes carry themselves in a manner that dampens the spirits of some of pastors' wives. Further, the situation is compounded by lack of support groups, friends or confidants. In fact some of the respondents intimated that "being ministers of God, the congregation does not expect us to have problems so they shy away from us and it becomes difficult to pour out our hearts to any". Therefore, lack of support is probably a factor that contributes to stress suffered by Pastors' wives. Further, many of the Christians in the study area have been taught by culture that sharing feelings with 'strangers' is demeaning. As a result, this has affected the need for support-groups.

Heald (1992:33) asserts that "for many of us, laying aside our bent to live for other people's expectations and approval is a great burden lifter". However, for majority of Pastors' wives in Bungoma South district that may not be the case. It is indeed difficult to concentrate on running one's own race to the glory of God when the opinion of

others on the way one is performing is the yardstick. To be bound to the unpredictable feelings and wishes of people is a big weight put on Pastors' wives.

#### **4.4.6 Other Factors that came from the interview**

A few more factors that precipitate stress were also investigated during the interviewing of pastors' wives. From the answers that were given to the interview questions it was clear that apart from the already discussed factors that cause stress in pastors' wives in Bungoma South, others are loneliness, careless comments, complaints and also low self-esteem. Worry, anxiety and fear of the unknown.

##### **(a) Loneliness**

According to the free Wikimedia encyclopaedia, loneliness is an emotional state in which a person experiences a powerful feeling of emptiness and isolation. It is a feeling of being cut off, disconnected and alienated from other people. The lonely person may find it difficult or even impossible to have any form of meaningful human contact. They might feel socially inadequate, unskilled and be convinced that there is something wrong with themselves. Such people could also feel that no one understands their situation, thus become reluctant to attempt to find friendship. They feel anxious or desperate.

Sanders (1990) define social loneliness as the contacts individuals have or do not have in the community in which they live. This in turn generates a feeling of low-esteem. The victim labours under the conviction that they are of little significance to anyone and therefore no one desires their friendship. This attitude often leads to a largely self-imposed isolation.

The study found that 58% of the respondents hardly have friends whereas 78% have no confidants. This is a worrisome finding, that individuals could live amongst many people yet lack friends and confidants (Oden, 2006). The reasons that explain this situation are many and varied. These range from lack of finances, insecurity, and overwork to inter personal relationships and competencies. Coupled with the fact that

most respondents felt that their husbands are 'married' to the church because they were too busy with church matters; and that they hardly afford time for them; worsened the situation. To make matters worse a majority of those interviewed stated that they stick on their own most of their time. What is clear here is the fact that pastors' spouses go through emotional loneliness in which their husbands are absent most of the time and the people, for unexplained reasons, move away from them. One respondent stated that "because I cannot expose my marital or job disagreements, I stay indoors, feel bored and frustrated or decide to do some heavy job to occupy myself". No wonder, pastors' wives in Bungoma South district though surrounded by many congregants still feel lonely.

**(b) Careless Comments and Complaints.**

Careless comments are other factors that really destroy the self esteem of individuals especially women. Consequently the study, sought to find out what respondents had to say about comments that they receive from other parties. The study found that 60 or 83% of the respondents stated that their husbands complain and make nasty comments about them. They also receive complaints on how they are lazy, poor time managers and thoughtless. Some are told they lack total commitment to their husbands' ministries, cannot exercise faith, or are too slow in their work. To this end, two sentiments expressed by a number of respondents are worth noting. The first was expressed thus, "my husband complaints that I have forgotten to treat him like a king yet the Bible requires it." The second was expressed thus, "according to Bukusu culture a woman is just a child; consequently, my husband drums and dwells on how women have failed; he will never cheer you up." Such comments coming as they do from especially such a close person in one's life, is a factor that causes not only stress but also distress to pastors' wives. Indeed this can translate into negative effect on church performance.

It is worth noting what words can do. Words can either build or destroy. While encouraging words cheer up a person, harsh words destroy a whole person to the soul, spirit and body. The Luhya community of western Kenya have a saying that goes like this, "*it was better for one to beat you up than tell you cutting words*". However, unlike the Luhya, the wisest man admonishes: "Some people make cutting remarks

but words of the wise bring healing.” (Prov.12:18). These words are subconsciously engrained in the hearts of these women; thus, causing stress at the sight of their husbands or the thought of their ministries.

**(c) Self Esteem**

Further, 51 or 71% of the respondents stated that they feel that they are failures and worthless. Their low self esteem results in self pity, condemnation and a feeling of unworthiness which also contribute to stress in their lives. Apart from their self assessment which depicted them as failures and unworthy; their husbands’ attitudes towards them and how they treat them could bring about inferiority complex.

McDowell (1984:26) asserts that

“Apart from an inadequate self-image robbing us of the energy and power of attention to relate well to others, it makes a person who has lost self-esteem look to other people’s opinions, praise or criticisms as determining factors in how they feel or think about their lives. Such people are slaves to the opinions of others. They expect to be cheated, rejected and depreciated in life. They expect the worst and create what they fear. They become suspicious and distrustful as they struggle with the tension of trying to be acceptable while believing they are not”.

On the other hand, McKay and Fanny (1992:12) note that “Self–esteem is essential for psychological survival. Without some measure of self-worth, life can be enormously painful with many basic needs going unmet”. They further argue that it is one thing to dislike certain colours, noises or shapes and sensations, but when one rejects parts of themselves, they greatly damage the psychological structure that literally keeps them alive. Considering the image Pastors’ wives in Bungoma South district create for themselves, there is truism in what these scholars allege. Such perception can be detrimental to church ministry performance.

McDowell (1984) and, McKay and Fanny (1992) continue to assert that the results would be that victims avoid anything that might aggravate the pain of self-rejection. They take fewer social, academic or career risks. They make it difficult for themselves



to meet people, and to push hard for what they need. They limit their ability to open themselves to others, be the centre of attention and solve problems or ask for help. To avoid more judgment and self-rejection, they erect barriers of defence. They can blame, get angry or bury themselves in perfectionist work. Indeed such picture paints doom to the affected and their work performance which is further translated into church ministry performance.

**(d) Worry, Anxiety and Fear of the unknown.**

From the interview most of the pastors' wives indicated that they worry, are anxious and have fear of the unknown in which individuals develop fear of one thing or another – whether real or imagined. Some of these fears include, sickness in the family, incidences of un-holiness or sinning among the congregation and inadequacy to serve as expected. Others are quarrels in the family, overburden and inability to lead in church services. The result of which may lead to self rejection.

Furthermore, these fears are as a result of negative criticisms from the congregants, stagnancy of their husbands' churches and embarrassment. Also fear of division in the ministry, sitting next to the spouse during church services and making a stupid mistake before the congregants are more factors that cause fear. Other fears arose out of: loss of a spouse or being widowed, unfaithfulness of a spouse and handling many commitments at ago. Abrupt visits to their houses, criticisms from spouses and maladjustment of their children due to absence of the figure head are others.

Harris (1985:33) notes that “there are two emotional attitudes through which human life can be radically determined. They are love and fear. While love is the positive principle of life, fear is the death principle”. Unfortunately this is what most of pastors' wives in Bungoma South district live in. Lawson (1986:29) asserts that “the problem with worry and fear is that it invariably distorts the truth because the dominant feeling in fear is helplessness”. While Heald (1992:61) asserts that “though both anxiety and worry spring from natural and legitimate concerns that are a part of life in this world, legitimate concerns when wrongly handled can become dominating concerns in life and lead to fear, destroy our perspective on life and cause us to forget that God exists

and cares. This can move one to drift into an attitude of constant worry or concern over the future which they cannot control”.

Unfortunately, it would seem, pastors' wives in Bungoma South district find themselves in this situation. Heald (1992) further notes that an anxious person is distressed, disturbed and worried. At the same time, they are troubled, concerned and uneasy as well as being ill at ease, disquieted, restless and nervous. He concludes that to live a fearful and worried life hinders individuals from functioning well in everyway. This therefore, gives insight on the affected pastors' wives contribution to their spouses' ministry performances.

Wright (1999:65) asserts that “fear brings along its close companion worry”. He sees worry as an uneasy suffocating feeling that changes whatever one sees into mood pessimism. It stirs up one's mind and churns the stomach. He compares worry to fog which can cloud up a lot of reality, chilling ones outlook making everything look hazy; including ones perception of life. It is unfortunate that this fear and worry is what has ensnared most of pastors' wives in Bungoma South district and effect on could also affect their performance in their husbands' ministries.

Kinai (2006:12) states that;

“Fear imprisons one in their stressful situation using several means such as distortion of one's perception so that challenges appear much larger and more menacing than they really are. Fear also makes odds appear worse and the prognosis grimmer. It petrifies ones creativity and makes her unable to visualize away through it by freezing one's mind. Fear binds one to stressful situations.”

As a result of this fear, worry and anxiety, the study found that 56 or 78% stated that they never slow down and find their responsibilities too big. Consequently, they must be on their toes. One respondent commented that “the work is too strenuous – family, job and ministry work – are too demanding. I have no time to attend to myself leaving me too tired for anything”. This state of affairs might be some of the causes usurping their creative energies and causing fatigue or persistent tiredness which neither rest nor sleep would be used to eliminate. In addition, 49 or 68% of the respondents

claimed to be overworked with church matters; while 52 or 72% claimed to be unable to organise both their home and church. All these are indicators to negative impact on church ministry performance.

#### **4.5 Do stressed Pastors' wives affect church ministry performance?**

The central objective of the study sought to find out whether stress to Pastors' wives has any effect on the performance of the church ministry? In other words, is there any effect on the performance of a church ministry whose pastors' spouses are stressed? Already, it has been noted that Pastors' wives play a crucial role in the church ministries run by their spouses. If indeed that is the case, then are there any effects on the performance of the church ministry when their wives are stressed? Consequently, the study sought to test the hypothesis that **“Ho5: There are no significant differences in the performance of a church ministry between one whose Pastors' wife is stressed and one which is not”**. To do this, the study analysed item No. 18 to find out whether there is any effect. The procedure was to regroup pastors' wives into three categories: 1. those who were scored one or two; thus agreeing with the statement; 2. those who were scored three; thus were not sure whether they made any differences and 3. those who were scored four or five showing their disagreement with the statement. Table 4.11 shows the frequencies of the respondents in each category.

**Table 4.11: Categorization of Pastors' Spouses**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Makes no difference	35	48.6
Makes a difference	31	43.1
Not Sure	6	8.3
Total	72	100.0

**Table 4.11** shows that 35 or 48.6% of the respondents thought that they were of no consequence in the performance of church ministry, whereas 31 or 43.1% felt otherwise. But, 6 or 8.3% were not sure whether they had any effect or not.

The study then proceeded to determine whether there are any significant differences in performance of the church ministry between those who thought they made a difference and those who thought otherwise. As a result, the study performed a t-test to compare the mean scores of the two groups (i.e. one that thought it made some difference and the other that thought it did not). The results of the t-test are tabulated in table 4.12.

**Table 4.12: t-test for effects on performance of Church Ministry**

	<i>Pastors' Spouses</i>	
	<i>Difference</i>	<i>No Difference</i>
Mean	4.35	1.57
S.D	0.49	0.50
Respondents	31	35
Df	64	
t-critical	1.96	
t-Stat (equal variances not assumed)	22.81	

- (i) The Levene's test of equality of variances was insignificant ( $F = 0.243$ ) which implies that the variances were unequal and consequently, the study needed to use the t for unequal means to interpret the results.
- (ii) Calculated "t" was 22.81 compared to expected "t" of 1.96 at 95% confidence interval. Therefore, the difference in mean scores obtained by comparing the two groups was significantly different. This implies that stress to pastors' wives affects the performance of the church ministry.

The results obtained by the study, tends to confirm the belief that Pastors' spouses are critical in the performance of church ministries. Consequently, when stressed, the church ministry cannot perform to its best. Therefore, given that there are a number of sources of stress, it is important that those sources be examined in an effort to minimise them if not eradicate them for the better functioning of church ministries.

London and Wiseman (1995:11) note that "without pastors' wives' spank, tenacity and amazing vigour many pastors would quit". They also assert that every pastor needs a special lady by his side as his wife. In their view, pastors' wives make miraculous contributions to the well being of the church and the salvation of the world.

#### **4.6: Effects on performance of Church Ministry**

Since Pastors wives have some effects on the performance of the church ministries, the next logical question would be what are these effects? Therefore, the study sought to answer the question “what effects do stressed Pastors wives have on performance of church ministries?” This was so as to determine whether they are real important. And if they are then it would be worthwhile to deal with the root cause of the problem in order to improve the performance of church ministries. In order to find out what the effects were, the study analysed responses to item 20. Results of the analysis are tabulated in table 4.13.

**Table 4.13: Effects likely to be suffered by church Ministries**

<b>Effect</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>% (n=70)</b>
Poor Results	10	14.3
Poor Organization and time Management	8	11.4
Pastor will be ineffective	7	10.0
Pastor will lack concentration	6	8.6
Lack of meaningful prayer life	6	8.6
Discouragements	6	8.6
Declining Membership	4	5.7
Disunity	4	5.7
There will be no peace in the home	4	5.7
Pastor will suffer stress	3	4.3
Pastor will absentee himself from Work	2	2.9
Lack of communication	2	2.9
Poor decision making	2	2.9
Suffer poor credibility	2	2.9
Church will Stagnate & Lack church officers	2	2.9
Lack of love between the couples	1	1.4
Lack of devotion	1	1.4
Pastor might backslide	1	1.4
Domestic Affairs	1	1.4
Total	72	100.0

**Table 4.12** shows that the church ministry is likely to suffer multiple effects should a Pastor's wife be stressed. These effects can be divided into those that affect the

Pastor himself, those that affect his relationship with his spouse and the congregation; and those that affect the church ministry.

The study found that the likely effects of stress to pastors' wives on the performance of church ministry have a snowballing effect. First, they affect the Pastor himself, then; they affect his relationships with his family and the congregation and finally affect the church ministry. In the first instance, where a Pastor's wife suffers stress, the pastor himself will lack concentration which in turn will affect his decision making and affect his communication. In addition, the pastor is likely to lack meaningful prayer life, which will lead him to absentee himself from work. From here on many things are likely to happen unless the situation is arrested. The pastor will most likely suffer poor credibility and lack devotion or he could even suffer stress. Finally, the pastor will find no peace, both at home and in the church. This may drive him to abandon the faith altogether or become ineffective as a result of discouragement.

On the other hand, Pastors relationship with the congregation and his spouse will likely be affected in a number of ways. First, he is likely to show little love to his stressed wife and handle poorly domestic affairs. This will go a long way in damaging his already dented credibility. Finally, the church ministry is likely to suffer stagnation, declining membership, have half committed church officers and disunity.

#### **4.6 Mitigating the effects of Stress**

To improve performance of church ministries, the root causes of stress should be addressed and ways sought that will turn stress symptoms to meaningful life experiences that do not hamper effective services. As the old adage goes, "behind every successful man there is a woman"; in this one too, Church ministries will succeed if Pastors' wives will lead a stress free life so that they are able to support the church ministries. In the paragraphs herein, the study briefly discusses suggestions that can be employed to mitigate development and suffering of stress by Pastors wives.

Individual pastor's wife should look at some important factors to consider about her stress: How long will it last? When will her relief come? How much longer can she stand it? How much more can she take it? Where is her exhaustion point? If they can



decide on how long they plan to endure the stress they suffer, then they can endure it with more serenity and less friction within themselves and between them and their colleagues, family and friends. Nevertheless, there are ways in which they could deal with the factors that cause them stress and these the study suggested as follows:

#### **4.7.1 Financial Matters**

Ogilvie (1984:145) asserts that “if we put a great emphasis on the cerebral cortex, which is the centre of the stress producing system in our bodies, worry over money and possessions, we shall be kept inordinately agitated”. He advises that one should remain aware that “all we are and have belong to the Lord” (Psalm24:1; indeed worrying over money would not bring money, it only makes one agitated for no good reason. Knowing that God is the provider replaces the false idea that one owns anything. Likewise, one should also keep in mind that a radical commitment of “all we are and have” to God breaks the stress syndrome. However, one must remember their responsibility on how they use the gifts entrusted to them and stop surrendering the control centre of man’s thinking and ones attitudes to thoughts of money and possessions.

Pastors’ wives in Bungoma South district like all other Christians need to ask God for guidance on how to earn save and spend according to God’s plan and, should remember that an attitude of gratitude can be expressed in giving with freedom and joy, regardless of one’s needs. They could ask God to guide them into opportunities to share while He provides the additional resources so that they do not become desperate in life.

The Bible (II Cor. 9:8) promises that “God will generously provide for all our needs”. This has nothing to do with the dropping of manna from heaven like some Christians think; it is work and prayer. It is required of human being to work (1 Thes. 4:11). Pastors could do something for themselves; for example, do some family business.

Another finding of the study was that a vast majority of the respondents admitted living in debts, having unpaid bills and unmet needs. For those affected by this unpleasant situation need to sit down with their spouses and see how best to come out of debts.

Some suggestions for dealing with debts could be: having a written plan to show differences between needs, wants and desires; living essentially by dropping anything that is not essential and to think before involving themselves in further bills. They could also discontinue any credit buying, stop borrowing money, avoid indulgence and be contented; thus, adopting the admonition found in the Bible (Phil. 4:12) that "...I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need". They should accept God's provision and live on it with thanksgiving in contentment.

Another solution could come from pastors' who before entering ministries should foresee financial outcome and take care of possible problems before committing themselves to church ministry. Bishops or senior pastors who plant churches and post their juniors there without plan and with false hope that congregation would bring in money should desist from this. Proper financial assistance should be given to the new pastors before they are pushed to a congregation which in most cases as found in Bungoma South districts, is also financially incapacitated.

Lastly, the congregation should be encouraged to take care of their pastors' families. For instance, when they go visiting their pastors' family, they should avoid expecting meals and desist from asking for financial help from them, especially when they know their churches do not pay or pay poorly their pastors. Ideally, church ministries should be more organized in a manner that mother churches can take care of pastors' needs and pay them well without pegging the payment on tithes and offerings from their particular congregations.

#### **4.7.2 Family Matters**

Pastors' wives in Bungoma South district who get stressed up because they feel no one loves and cares for them, should speak out to their spouses and demand for quality time with them. They themselves should reach out to others instead of being bottled up. They ought to know that love is a fruit of the Holy Spirit as given in Galatians 5:22, when they give love they will receive it back. When they do not let others know their feelings and troubles, they cannot be shown care. Let them not be discouraged instead make friends inside and outside their congregations.

Pastors should be made aware of their spouses' feelings and advised to be intimate to their wives. They are commanded to love their wives like Christ loves the church (Eph. 5:25). When they concentrate their energies and attention to their ministries forgetting that their wives need them, they do a disservice to their families and this spills over into their ministries. Pastors need to give quality time to their spouses.

Finally, pastor's wives have one assurance that Christ loves them and cares for them whether the feelings of rejection or "being not loved" in them are real or imaginary. Let them focus on He who does not fail one (I Pet. 4:19; Heb. 13:5) Congregations and their husbands may fail them but Jesus will always be there for them.

Another way pastors' marriages could be strengthened is by church ministries to consider involving the spouses of those to be appointed before the appointment. One thing that was very clear in the findings made by the study was that most pastors' wives were left in the dark until their husbands were in the ministry. Their opinions or feelings were never sought or considered. This makes them feel they are forced into something they did not want in the first place. They therefore live in regret wishing they never married the person in the first instance.

Consequently, Pastors should try to stop pushing their wives too hard but allow them to pursue their own goals by helping them find time to do things for themselves and relax or have leisure. They should also be willing to lead their families fairly and stop seeming selfish. They could give time and ear to their spouses and be less pushy and demanding. They should try to be sensitive to the feelings of their wives and create a friendly atmosphere that would re-assure their wives of security, love and appreciation. Those who appreciate their traditions much should learn to be sensitive so that they do not unfairly treat their spouses.

For instance, those pastors who still see their wives as objects to be used and slaves to serve their objectives without question should come out of their traditional beliefs and live in conformity to Biblical teachings. Why should they preach "submission" of their wives when they cannot practice proper "love"? From the study's findings it is seemingly difficult for pastors' wives as some pointed out, to enjoy marriage when they

are seen as children or property by their husbands. They are left passive, intimidated, loveless and full of self – pity yet expected to support their husbands fully.

This study suggests that pastors' wives open up to their spouses and let them know their feelings, hurts and emotions. Let them talk over issues and resolve them. Likewise, they should say no to what they think is not right, seek to be free and happy but, know their biblical given limits. They could come out of where they have been placed – second place! They should practice the biddings of God's word about women; for the Biblical examples given might return to them confidence and inspire them to see themselves as valuable and gifted for God's work without necessarily being pushed by anyone but directed by God through his word and spirit.

Finally, Pastors' wives should also do all they can to overcome frigidity by trying to lessen stress, relax, and avoid being too tired for their spouses. However, in case things do not work out despite their efforts, to find in God their strength (Psa. 28:7); they could also seek for help either from a counsellor or someone who can give wise counsel. If their frigidity persists, they should seek medical help.

### **4.7.3 Workload**

Graham (2003:232) asserts that "as Christians it is our duty to keep ourselves as fit as possible spiritually and physically". A Christian cannot be best for God if they drive themselves to the point where they are practically dropping with fatigue and something within them is about to stop. The study found that, Pastors' spouses are not only overworked because of house work and career but also their husbands' ministries. This workload over-weighs them to the extent that they have no time to rest or relax. In fact their time for sleep is also eaten into by work exhausted. In Mathew 11: 28, Jesus calls all who are weary and carry heavy loads to go to him in order to receive rest. Therefore, remedy for pastors' spouses' fatigue which leaves them exhausted can be found in Jesus Christ and the fact that he too took time off to rest. This should challenge them and make them learn to take time off and rest. When one works, that work should bring glory to God's name (1Cor. 10:31). An exhausted person can be irritable and can breakdown quite easily. Pastors' wives must learn to rest and have

leisure time. They must remember that the immortal God spent an entire day resting (Genesis 2: 1-3). Apparently rest is a must because the body and mind need it.

Other suggestions which would help bring rest include, planning or making schedules on how to spend their time, learning to honestly say no to some things and thinking of taking time off work or a vacation away from the hustle of life. In general they should learn to broaden their world and respect the demands of the body to rest.

Coupled with too many responsibilities, Pastors' wives in Bungoma South district seem to put up with a heavy workload put on them by their spouses' ministries. Ogilvie(1984) defines overwork as working too long under too much pressure and its symptoms are fatigue, health problems and lack of creativity resulting into lack of effective production. The problem here is not how much the pastors' wives in Bungoma South district do, but the goals, attitudes and resources with which they do it. Taking on too much for wrong reasons causes burnout. Also, lack of clearly defined goals for life produces deep insecurity that fills them with fears and their imagination that one's worth is related to how much they do, drives them to overwork. Some people imagine that no one could do the job right except themselves. Such thinking should be checked if they do exist in the minds of the pastors' wives in Bungoma South district.

Seriously speaking there is need for pastors' wives in Bungoma South district to know that there is a limit on how far one can strain the body with work. Trying to do much might only worsen the situation being solved and risk a burnout. The example of Moses who overworked himself should be a lesson to all. His story as found in Exodus 18:13-18 should be counsel for everyone. Likewise, Jethro's advice to Moses is for all. Work can be delegated thus lifting the extra weight from one. People should rest from work and resist the urgency that drives them to taking on work that is bigger than they can manage. The pastors' wives could delegate some of the ministry work so that their workload is light enough for them to carry. If possible, they could also have house-helpers to assist in house chores in order to give themselves some time off.

Pastors' wives have a right to refuse some of the ministry assignments that would cause them to overwork. They need to break away from work by setting aside some time each day or week for the body to rest. They should also try to have enough sleep

by not scheduling too much work for themselves, such eats into their bedtime. They could plan their work well in a manner that will leave them happier, refreshed and productive for the next day.

The ministries also have a part to play in making pastors' wives have reduced workload; ministries should realize that pastors' spouses have families and some of them have their own career so they should not overload them with ministry work. Let ministries and pastors' wives ask God to give them wisdom on this matter.

#### **4.7.4 Privacy in the home**

Another finding of the study was that there is hardly any privacy in the Pastors' homes because of too frequent visits from the congregants, some at odd times. This can be quite stressful. It would therefore be advisable for the pastors to schedule counselling and consultation sessions at the pastoral offices instead of their homes. Those families that live in personages are the worst hit; it would be wise for such to find residence out of the church ground.

The congregants too should be a bit sensitive and fair to the pastors' families. They should realize that all people need privacy. Solomon (Eccle. 8:5) advises that "there is time and a way to do things rightly". Both pastors and their spouses should agree on what time they would receive congregants in their houses without appointments and try as much as possible to stick to the schedule. They should also learn to say no to too much intrusion; this would help them in keeping away stubborn intruders.

Apart from giving the pastors' families privacy, the congregations would do well to encourage pastors and their families to take time off. For example, go for vacation. Those that pastors' wives tell any of their secrets should show maturity and confidentiality in order to share with them their burdens and joy without hesitation.

#### 4.7.5 Congregational Expectations

The study found out that pastors' wives in Bungoma South district are pushed from all sides by many groups of people; Children, employer (for those in employment), neighbours, relatives, the congregations and, their spouses who expect them to do a lot of ministry work in addition to other responsibilities. It is like these pastors' spouses are loaded with different roles, responsibilities and expectations. The issue to determine is how one can deal with such a problem and yet remain a lovable Christian?

Probably, the best advice would be for the victims to remember that just because demands and expectations are put on them does not mean they must fulfil them if there be no affordances. For such to manage comfortably, they should prioritize the expectations and pray to God to give them a godly response to each. Sometimes it would be advisable for them to stop and realize that it is impossible to please all, they would only be hurting themselves if they lived in "other people's expectations".

Let those who feel pressurized, give God first priority and ask Him to give them their priority lists for other things as advised in James 5:13. From the researcher's understanding of the Bible, there is no biblical evidence to the fact that Christians are called upon to forget themselves and seek to live according to other people's expectations at the expense of their happiness and joy in the Lord. The love that Christians are commanded to give each other in (Matt. 18:20) is not meant to fulfil other people's demands and expectations but to be like Christ in his obedience. Trying to go by other people's expectations only gets one confused because people are different, they look at things differently and they have different needs. This diversity causes pressure that results to stress on one to whom the expectations are placed. Let the pastors' wives look up to God to give them wisdom so that they can know how to respond to people's expectations without hurting themselves as they even please others.

Pressure by congregational expectations could be lessened if ministries were to operate above board by telling the congregants the extent to which they would visit pastors' homes for counselling. In addition, church ministries should urge the female

congregants to be considerate and apply understanding so that they do not cause pastors' spouses to feel inferior or frustrated. They should love and appreciate them. Those among the women worshippers who are financially well to do should be willing to give necessary assistance to their pastors' spouses. Just as God looked down on the Israelites and felt deep concern for their welfare (Ex. 2:25), the female congregants who are supposed to be imitators of God like any other Christian, should show concern for their pastors' wives. Instead of the congregants looking for financial help from the already financially overstrained pastors' families, they could themselves be willing to pay their pastors fairly or help in finding a way to supplement the total remuneration. In this way, pastors' families will have their needs catered for and be less stressed.

It would be necessary for pastor's wives to know that God has not put them in charge in the way others want them to be but to serve. There is no need for them to be in sin of hypocrisy in pretext of pleasing others. The study found out that because they want to please others they wear faces. They have a face for each circumstance and occasion. They are never themselves. No wonder they pursue other people's goals and strive to be seen as models. In all these they waste a lot of energy and frustrate themselves. The pastors' wives in Bungoma South district would therefore, do themselves good by being realistic and considerate to themselves. The Bible bids Christians to love their neighbours as they love themselves (Matt. 22:29) but does not approve one being hypocritical in expressing their love to neighbours. Let pastors' wives be themselves and do God's will instead of doing man's will. Let them ask God to give them wisdom to deal with man. They should also discover their own gifts, identify, and learn to resist the pressure to meet other people's demands and expectations.

#### **4.7.6 Others**

Equally, the study gave possible solutions to other investigated factors that cause stress in pastors' wives in Bungoma South district .These include,



## **(a) Loneliness**

Sanders (1990:148) advise that “loneliness need not be just a painful experience. Once people acknowledge the rough edges of these feelings, they can learn to develop a creative use of loneliness which leads not to depression but to creativity. They can enjoy spending time with themselves and by themselves do things they enjoy. Nevertheless, intimacy with sympathetic and understanding friends can and does alleviate the pangs of loneliness.” In this one is advised to turn loneliness into opportunity, but also work on intimacy.

Since loneliness undercuts effectiveness it should be eliminated from pastors’ wives who are expected to be of great assistance to church ministries. Indeed God saw loneliness as “not good” (Gen. 2:18) implying that it is bad. For He said, “It is “not good” (emphasis supplied) for man (i.e. Adam) to be alone ...” In His wisdom, he made Eve and gave her to Adam to be a companion. This is an object lesson. Humans, but especially Christians, need to remember that they too should develop and enjoy relationships.

Jesus Christ had disciples to relate to; they talked with one another and had meals together – Jesus enjoyed being with them despite their weaknesses. More interestingly, from the Bible, one needs to note how God used to relate with Adam. The Bible records that God visited Adam “in the cool of the day” (Gen. 3:8). It is imperative, therefore, that those who are called by God’s name should also learn to relate to each other. Pastors’ wives in Bungoma South districts should learn to trust other women in the congregation or even from outside their congregations. When they stand away and wait for other women to go to them, they might remain in loneliness for a long time because other women might also be watching and waiting to see if Pastors’ wives could extend their hand of friendship. It would be wise to give people benefit of doubt until proved otherwise.

Pastors could also help in keeping loneliness away from their spouses by remembering that they are not married to church ministries but them. They should work out their time in such a way that will give them space and quality time with their wives. Ministries should think on how to take away some of the church matters from the

pastors. For example, counselling could be given to pastoral counsellors instead of being left to pastors who in some cases may not have adequate knowledge on the subject, and therefore, may find difficulties in handling certain situations.

### **(b) Careless Comments and Complaints**

From the findings of the study, some pastors' wives said their spouses criticize them unfairly and use cutting words which discourage and intimidate them. Cutting words, negative criticisms and taunts can be very disturbing and can have bad effect. Harsh words stir up anger (Pro.15:16) especial when they come from a person whom one lives within the same household. On the other hand, encouraging good words make the heart glad (Pro.12:25). When the heart is happy it translates life and health into the body.

Part of the explanation for persistence of careless comments is attributed to traditions and culture as one of the respondents pointed out that in Bukusu culture, women are regarded as children. However, the church is making a lot of effort to sensitize Christians on how to overcome the bondage of traditions. Nevertheless it is not unique that some pastors' wives receive cutting words from their spouses as evidenced from the findings of the study. Therefore, the study has suggested some possible solutions. First pastors' wives could talk over their feelings with their spouses, making it clear to them that unfair criticism and cutting words hurt them. If they are not listened to, then, they could seek help from a pastoral counsellor.

Secondly, pastors could be more considerate on checking their words or criticism before using them. This would reduce the hurt/stress their spouses experience when they unfairly criticises them or speak in a manner that makes them feel they are being belittled. From the Bible, we learn that kind words give very positive results and anyway it is only biblical that Christians use their tongues properly James 3:2." After all, the words of the godly lead to life"(Prov. 10:11) but not destruction. Conclusively, everyone enjoys a fitting reply not negative criticism. The reverse causes the spirit to break. A broken spirit drieth the bones (Prov.17:21) and this impairs the productivity of the victim.

### **(c) Self Esteem**

Mackay and Faming (1992:3) assert that “self-esteem can be changed from low to high” by what they call cognitive behavioural therapy. This is by changing ones worldview of life, through uncovering and analyzing the negative self –statements one habitually makes. It is evident from the findings of the study that there are a number of issues that cause majority of pastors’ wives in Bungoma South district to suffer low self esteem or inferiority complex. For instance, the way Pastors’ wives are treated by some of the congregants and their spouses may be a cause for feeling inferior.

Another cause is the fact that they never have all their needs met. In fact they live in lack. This lack erodes their self –esteem and throws them into inferiority complex and as a result become unproductive. Pastors’ wives in Bungoma South district should know that God has a good purpose for them. The Bible assures believers that God has made every individual different and significant to his cause and no one will ever be exactly like another. Paul writes that “For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us and in Jesus Christ so that we can do the good things he planned for us long ago” (Eph. 2:10). The term “masterpiece” employed here implies that each individual stands out. It places those that are His at a worthy place because they are wonderfully and fearfully made (Ps. 139:14).

Just because some in the congregation seem to have more, should not relegate those who seem to lack to an inferior position. God does not look at our possessions but at what each individual has in him. Therefore, pastors’ wives in Bungoma South district should understand that they fit perfectly well into God’s plan. They should be grateful God created them, as they are; original and special. He will never make someone exactly like them again. He needs them and cherishes them, they should therefore refuse to devalue themselves, loathe themselves or put themselves down. They should reject the feelings of self –criticism, failure, worthiness and low esteem.

### **(d) Worry, Anxiety and Fear of the unknown.**

Horris (1985:34) asserts that “there is only one way to be released from the power of fear and that is by not avoiding it but by refusing to evade its presence”.

Likewise, Lawson (1986:29) asserts that “the only way of facing our fears realistically is by faith”. Faith in God provides a powerful solution to the malady of fear because God is the only one who can do all things. Bringing our fears to him through prayer brings a remedy to our fears. This could be done by nourishing our relationship with God through bible reading, worship, fellowship and serving others.

Billy Graham (2003:227) asserts that “one should not fear or feel that it is wrong to seek the help of a psychiatrist or trained psychologist if it could help one to deal with deep-seated emotional problems”. However, he cautions that one should be careful not to get themselves to someone who could dissuade them from true faith in God.

These suggestions on how to deal with fear are quite valuable, however, it is not possible or easy to single out one solution to fear and worry. Nevertheless, the researcher is convinced that the best solution comes from the word of God (Hunt, 1997). It is from the word that one could be given the way to handle fears. For instance, Mathew 6:25-27 warns against worrying instead it encouraged one to trust in “our heavenly Father”.

Worry will definitely steal away the peace God expects His children to have. Therefore to restore peace and tranquillity of mind, one should accept and internalize God’s word. In Isaiah (26.3), God promises that “He will keep in perfect peace those who trust him and fix their thoughts in Him”. One cannot fix his thoughts on God unless their thoughts are filled with the word of God. Instead of pastors’ wives in Bungoma South district fixing their thoughts on those fearful ideas they exhibit, they should focus on God through his word which will teach them to be tolerant, patient, relaxed and calm.

To be at peace the mind must be disabused of all fears and be refocused away from personal problems. It should rather be directed on the Lord who can solve those problems. Just as Paul in 2 Cor. 4: 8-9 admonishes “We are pressed on every side by troubles, but we are not crushed and broken. We are perplexed, but we don’t give up and quit. We are hunted down, but God never abandons us. We get knocked down, but we get up again and keep going.” Unfortunately for the pastors’ wives in Bungoma South district, they anticipate trouble and it is not the trouble that worries them but the

anticipation. They should learn from these words of Paul that even if trouble came to them, they would still survive them because of our faithful God in whom they should trust.

In Luke 9:45, the fears of the unknown gripped the disciples of Jesus but this was because they did not understand. As for the pastors' wives in Bungoma South district, one would expect them to know the word and therefore be able to understand. Fears create a crippling emotion that can cause one to worry about nearly everything creating distrust for people. Fear can also cause one bewildered. The answer to our fears can be found in the Bible; 1 John 4:18 tells us that God's love expels all fears. Pastors' wives in Bungoma South district can live without fear of the known by trusting in God and knowing that God is with us and that God is our saviour and refuge. When we hide in our God fear leaves us.

#### **(e) Lack of support group**

Ogilvie (1984:199) asserts that we need a few trusted friends with whom we can talk about the stress we are feeling .If we bottle up what is troubling us, we will eventually blow off the lid or stew in the juices of own body stress chemicals . What this author is saying, is similar to a Luhya saying which states that whoever hides sickness or illness, wailings of those who mourn her will reveal that she had been sick .That means bottling up is quite dangerous. The Pastor's wives in Bungoma South district would be well advised not to bottle up their stressful circumstances as they have been doing but to share them out with others.

Ogilvie (1984) gives an example of support groups that have produced positive results. One of the groups even had a covenant commitment drafted. They called it ten things they would do to realize the Lord's healing. It would be interesting to look at the ten things. First, they were to recognize that stress is a major problem in one's life, next was to praise the Lord for the magnificent stress –coping mechanism He gave them and acknowledge the linkage between their thinking and attitudes and body-stress producing systems. The others were: to be thankful that their bodies could produce eustress to assist in meeting lives demands, challenges and opportunities. They sought to yield their thinking brain to the conditioning and control of the indwelling

Christ and to set aside a time each day for meditation so that Christ could guide their thoughts, attitudes and decisions as well as their actions, relationships and responsibilities. They were to quickly admit their inadequacy to manage stress, talk to trusted friends or confidants, and fellow stress-strugglers to release the build up of stress and receive from them encouragement and prayer. They agreed that they would meet consistently with their small group and seek to be as honest as they could be about how stress was affecting their lives and what their attitudes was doing to cause it. They pledged to pray daily for other members of their group claiming Christ's healing power for them. Finally they promised to be sensitive to the things they did and said that would cause stress to other people in their lives and would whenever possible work to bring change in the group of which they were a part in order to diffuse the stress. The study appreciates the commitment of the said group at the same time found it very sincere and honest. It therefore, recommends these ten things done by these ladies to the pastors' wives in Bungoma South district.

Indeed this study finds support groups very necessary for pastors' wives in Bungoma South district. It would be advisable for this target population to come out of their cocoon they live in among so many people and look for support groups within their colleagues inside their churches or out-side in other churches. It is natural that as people grow from childhood to adulthood they make friends. These friends can be very useful as is said by David in Psalms 18:24. They could give a shoulder to cry on or laugh with and pour heart's contents to them. Friends can pray with one or help one by seeing ones backs for her; they can act as a mirror. These friends can also lift a load off ones hands by giving the necessary assistance, be it manual or otherwise. Their helping hands can be of great relief. Apart from support group praying with one, they can also challenge the person so that she does not take ungodly action as she goes through stressful experiences.

Another support could come from counsellors or spiritual mentors or professionals who are skilled in problem solving techniques. These people can give valuable advice to those who need it when they share their experiences with them. Talking about how women get out of stress more easily than man, Durazi (2008) asserts that for women, talking about their feelings is often the best form of therapy as is listening to how others have coped successfully. The study agrees with him and advises pastors' wives

in Bungoma south district to share their secrets and hurts with others for this can bring tremendous relief. They could confide in a friend or a close relative, choose what is comfortable. This could bring self-realization and acceptance that will develop trust for others and foster self-confidence.

The scriptures (Jam. 5:16) requires confession of “our sins to one another and pray with one another”. Through confession a burden is lifted off ones heart and shoulder then she becomes lighter. Finally (1 Thes. 5:11) expects us to build each other and this cannot be done without sincere interaction. Therefore, keeping to oneself makes keep all the stress to herself. One should reach out to people and they too will reach out to her. Since prayers work wonders in strengthening the inner man and giving correct decisions, it would be important that before any decision or seeking help from support groups is made, the said pastors’ wives should take time and pray to God for guidance on how to get confidants and reliable support groups that come from God’s heart.

#### **(f) How to overcome stress from husband’s ministry**

From the findings of the study, the way pastors’ wives in Bungoma South district found themselves in the position they are, might have contributed to the frustrations and stress they receive from their husbands’ ministries. Nevertheless, they can overcome the stress. This could be done by working out the best way to cope with what they cannot change. They should reconcile themselves with the situation by possibly accepting their husbands’ decisions to become pastors. They could also talk to their spouses about their feelings and attitudes towards their church ministry. Talk to them about their disappointments and the pressure they feel so that the responsibility forced on them could be resolved healthfully. They could also identify areas that give them stress and learn to handle them in a manner that will lessen the stress.

They could work on their own attitudes because of Christ. Like Paul (II Tim. 2:10), they should be “willing to endure anything if it will bring salvation and eternal glory in Christ Jesus ....” If their husbands’ ministries do what Paul sacrificed for, then they too should be willing to endure anything for the same. Let them embrace this scripture and pray for the grace to endure. This way, they will be able to make peace with what they cannot change for God is able to make them accept it with grace.

As these women learn to accommodate their husbands' desires to serve in church ministries, their spouses too should be willing enough to know that their call is not necessarily their wives' call. They should give them an opportunity to pursue their own goals not necessarily ministry goals. Finally, this study hopes church ministries in Bungoma South district will learn something from this so that they can come up with a better way of appointing pastors. They should look for the best way of bringing in the pastors' wives so that they do not feel they are being imposed on responsibilities which in the first place, they were never consulted about or informed of beforehand. They should be prepared for it instead of being "ambushed."

Lastly, the study's advice to the Pastor's wives in Bungoma South district is that if the stress caused by their husbands' ministries persists, they would as well learn to cope with it. A song, in a hymn book used by the researcher's home church, has Jesus telling us how he left everything in glory. He come and suffered, lacked and died for us sinners; he then challenges us by asking each one of us what we ever forewent for his sake. Consequently, Pastor's wives in Bungoma South district accepting to lose their lives and privileges for Jesus and for the needs of people could turn the stressful situations they encounter into joy of service.

#### **4.8 Conclusion.**

The study has suggested various ways through which pastors' wives in Bungoma South district could handle and manage their stress. In Timothy 4:7-8, Paul advises us that though physical exercises are good for Christians, spiritual exercises are better. Like Paul the study has given biblical supported suggestions that could give solutions to the stressors experienced by the pastors' wives. The Bible tells us in Heb 4:12, "For the word of God is full of living power. It is sharper than the sharpest knife cutting deep into our innermost thoughts and desires. It exposes us for what we really are." The Word convinces powerfully and comforts greatly. The word is therefore, the best therapy that the pastors' wives in Bungoma South district have.

Apart from spiritual exercise and physical exercises, they have other various stress management techniques at their disposal as suggested by the study. Some of these could be; being able to make changes where possible, managing time, planning, and



managing finances. They could also differentiate submissiveness to servility, talk and take vacations. They could possibly take herbal therapy or aromatherapy or stress – reducing foods. They could avoid fears, stop feelings of failure and uselessness and restore their sex desire. Avoid the habit of feeling alone, isolated, and purpose to have enough night's sleep. They could listen to music; have time for relaxation and visit. When all these and other suggestions fail, they could seek professional counselling or medication. Shlemon (1984:13) asserts that inner healing is a process, no single prayer; spiritual exercise or meditation technique can possibly touch all the unhealed areas within us.

The process of this kind of healing in a person is a journey, which we travel throughout our Christian lives as we gradually become infused with the light of God's love. By this the author seems to suggest that he is not giving the impression that any sort of method was complete in itself as an answer to stress. However, he assures us that our Father is a Creator who touches each of us with unique and varied expressions of love. Therefore, healing can come to us through an infinite variety of channels, for example, the sacraments, reading of scriptures, devotional literature or summons, poetry and nature etc. In conclusion, it is up to each one of the pastors' wives in Bungoma South district to develop skills or techniques that suit her best to cope with stress. If they did so, they would be able to eliminate, reduce, or live with stress causing factors without being victims.

Paul tells Timothy in 1<sup>st</sup> Tim 3:11 the kind of wives pastors should have, "In the same way, their wives must be respected and must not speak evil of others. They must exercise self –control and be faithful in everything they do". There is no way pastors' wives in Bungoma South district are going to exercise self-control and be faithful in everything unless the stress they are subjected to is lessened or eliminated. What they go through is bad enough to cause them anger, regret, rejection and many other bad attributes that are negative and biblically unacceptable and worse still affect church ministries performance. Conclusively therefore, to eliminate stress in pastors' wives in Bungoma South District is to improve and enhance church ministries in the same district.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.0 Introduction**

The study on effects of stress to pastors' wives on performance of church ministries was basically an investigation on how stress to pastors' wives can affect their spouses and consequently hamper the performance of church ministries. This study is important because, its findings can help Pastors' wives, the Pastors, and the congregants to improve the performance of church ministries.

In addition, it is generally believed that Pastors' spouses play a significant role in church ministry performance. However, when they suffer stress caused by various factors, Pastors' wives bear the blunt of its consequences which affect their husbands as well. Furthermore, this impacts on church ministry performance. Consequently, to improve church ministry performance, it is necessary to support Pastors' wives not to slide so low as to end up suffering stress.

Just as Ogilvie (1984:28) asserts, "the physical reaction triggered by successions of stress alerts, puts us into a dangerous continuing state of high arousal and a physiological overdrive. The blood hormone levels remain abnormal, blood pressure stays high, consequently we become susceptible to a variety of health problems including blood pressure, stroke and heart attacks"; therefore, Pastors' wives risk their health being in danger should a state of high arousal persist. Something needs to be done to eliminate or minimise the stress they suffer. This chapter presents the conclusions reached by the study, recommendations and suggestions for further research.

## 5.1 Conclusions

Before the conclusions of the study are given, it is important that the hypotheses of the research are revised as shown below:

- a) Pastors' wives in Bungoma South district exhibit stress related symptoms more than the spouses of ordinary members.
- b) There are significant differences between the exhibition of stress symptoms in young spouses and older spouses of pastors in Bungoma South district.
- c) There are factors that precipitate stress in pastors' wives.
- d) Pastors' wives suffer high level of stress than the spouses of ordinary members.
- e) Stress on pastors' wives has some effect on the performance of church ministry.
- f) There are ways of mitigating stress in pastors' wives in Bungoma South district.

After the study testing these hypotheses, it came up with the following conclusions.

- A)** From the study's 4:1, the exhibition of stress related symptoms in pastors' spouses in Bungoma South was tested using items 5,6,7,8 and 9 in section A of the study instrument. The results showed that the said exhibited; loneliness, low self-esteem worries. More others are anxiety or fear for the unknown, exhaustion and lack of sleep. They also overwork themselves, lack rest and strive to please others. This therefore supports the hypotheses that said pastors' wives in Bungoma South district exhibit. Stress related symptoms.
- B)** Using the same items in section A of the research instrument and the SPSS Computer package, the study performed ANOVA test and the results revealed That there was no big difference in the exhibition of stress related symptoms between spouses below 35 years and those above 35 years. The slight difference however accounted in the next hypothesis. This therefore disqualifies the hypothesis of the study which stated that there is significant difference between young spouses and older spouses of pastors in Bungoma South district in the exhibition of stress related symptoms.
- C)** From investigation in the study's chapter 4, in 4:3 the researcher used item 21 of the instrument and worked out tables 4:8 and 4:9 to come up with the following as factors that precipitated stress to pastors' wives in Bungoma South district. The factors are mainly financial matters, family matters and spouses' workload.

Some more are lack of privacy, congregational expectations and lack of group work. Below are the factors in depth;

(i) **Lack of finances:** Pastors' wives experience many pressures and forces that put tremendous stress on them as a result of lack of finances. Lack of finances lead to; one being indebted most of the time due to accumulation of bills (such as utility bills and school fees), unmet goals and non provision of essential requirements to their families. Worse still, stress levels are increased, if they cannot provide as well as members of their flock. Some of the reasons for lack of finances include poor salary support by church organisations and demand for assistance by relatives and the congregations.

(ii) **Family problems:** Most family problems arise as a result of feelings of dejection and being unloved. These feelings come as a result of the impression created by their husbands which looks like they are 'married' to church work as they spend a great deal of time on church work at the expense of having quality time with their families. Worse still, when Pastors' spouses come to know that the congregants lack interest and motivation in what the Pastor aims at, the stress levels increase.

Unfortunately, the stress burden for Pastors wives is not helped by their marriage relationships since they too experience problems. Their spouses do not make it easier for them either, as they treat them as lesser beings. Relatives also add more pressure to the growing list of stressors, making it difficult for the already overburdened pastors' spouses to accommodate them. In fact they see relatives as a burden and a bother. As a result, the sum total effect of all these stressors put them in a capricious situation.

London and Wiseman (1995), alleges that Church ministries have conducted numerous seminars and trainings for Pastors' wives especially on their roles, what a pastor's wife means and entails in a Church ministry. In addition, they have been taught on qualities a Pastor's spouse should have, how to stand by their husbands ministry, their beauty secret and how to face challenges the ministries bring.

White (1997) and Parker (1990), agree on what a Pastor's wife is expected to do, and how she is to behave. For instance, they state that a pastor's wife is expected to be her husband's helper, to be a homemaker and manage family finances well. She is expected to be very active in church by planning women's work, encouraging and showing out the way to the women in her husband's congregation. Parker (1990) is even more emphatic. She discusses thirteen requirements and under each, she has the 'dos' every pastor's wife must accomplish. Most of them begin with a phrase "You must ..."

Such expectations outlined at seminars and trainings for pastors' wives are a bit inconsiderate. This is because trainers seem not to have recognized the fact that pastors' wives need help first. Considering the state in which they function, it would only add pain to the already stressed victims, if they are required to accomplish the 'dos' without first being given assistance. Instead, the victims should be helped to recognize that they are stressed, and that there is plenty of help to fight the stress. Only then, can they be told of what is expected of them without making it stressful.

(iii) **Feelings of loneliness:** Pastors' spouses do nothing for themselves but pursue other people's goals; they stay worried because of various things they imagine would befall them and are frustrated by constant indebtedness. In addition, they have no time to relax but feel overburdened and overwhelmed by family and church responsibilities. These leave them fatigued but still struggle to be better mothers and role model family makers. They find themselves in trouble trying to organize work at home and church, develop low-esteem because they see lay people in their congregations better off than themselves. They experience sexual dysfunctions because of too much work that daily leaves them exhausted. Rather than their husbands assisting them to overcome stress, they, because of being too busy and making negative comments, actually exacerbate the stress. No wonder they suffer frigidity. They also lose appetite, stay in isolation and live in regret.

(iv) **Lack of privacy:** Pastors' homes hardly have any privacy because of too frequent visits and at odd times from the congregants and relatives. Worse still, the visitors are mostly interested with the pastor at the exclusion of the wife and children. This can be quite stressful.

(v) **Careless comments and complaints:** The fact that Pastors' wives are overburdened by responsibilities which sometimes they lack capacity to carry, sometimes occasions complaints from their husbands who 'make mountains out of molehills'.

(vi) **Other peoples' expectations:** Congregations, relatives, neighbours and friends have certain expectations which put undue pressure on Pastors' spouses due to backbiting, showing jealousy, refusing to willingly do what pastors ask them to, and failing to give pastors full support. In addition, Pastors' wives hardly have time to rest and enjoy sleep, they lack friends and confidants, and show disinterest in the role that has been placed upon them, they feel the congregations expect too much from them and consequently develop resentment.

Furthermore, as a result of Pastors' spouses trying to please other people at the expense of their own goals, they become easily irritable, angry and pessimistic. These feelings lead to their experiencing rejection because they think no one loves or cares for them including their 'too busy' husbands. Consequently, they feel overwhelmed, lose their sex drive and stay in constant worry. Unrealistic expectations, perfectionism and lack of assertiveness weigh them down. Worse still, they lack support groups that can give them care, consequently, they suffer inferiority complex and unfortunately receive cutting words from their spouses. From the above evidence it is true that there are a number of factors that precipitate stress to pastors' wives in Bungoma South district.

**D)** The stress level differences was looked at in 4:4 using the Levene's test of equality of variance .It looked like there was no difference, but when further put to test using mean scores obtained, there was some difference in the stress level. This, therefore, showed that there is a high level of stress in the pastors' wives than in the wives of ordinary members of churches in Bungoma South.

The effects of stress on the church ministry realised from tables 4:1 and 4:2 from which it was found out that because of the importance of pastors' wives' role in church

ministry, their stress spills over in their spouses' ministry. Table 4:13 gives the following effects.

- Poor results in the ministry.
- Pastor becomes ineffective.
- Discouragement comes in the congregation.
- There is decline in numbers in the church.
- Pastor may suffer stress himself.

If pastor suffers stress then his relationship with the church members and also his wife is strained. His decision making is affected as well as his prayer life. In conclusion, pastors' wives stress has some effects on the church ministry in Bungoma South district.

**1E)** Since pastors' wives suffer more stress, this study recognizes the need to provide solutions to eliminate or reduce stressors in order for the spouses to properly and efficiently execute their roles in the church ministry and community at large. It is advisable that all stakeholders take appropriate steps to reduce or eliminate factors that cause more stress to Pastors' wives thus creating conducive environment and atmosphere for the Pastors' spouses to be instrumental in improving the performance of church ministries.

A number of solutions have been suggested. These include spiritual exercises for which one needs to follow through seven steps (Kinai, 2006). The first of those steps is seeking the Lord by inquiring what one ought to do about their situation, letting Jesus into ones heart and life so that He alone can calm their inner stormy emotions and show them how to manage their outer turbulent and stressful situations. In addition, one ought to trust Jesus completely and at all the times. Furthermore, one ought to resist "being conformed to this world" (I Cor.12:1) by refusing to let their words and actions fit with what the world expects of them except to "transform their mind with the word of God".

Accordingly, individuals ought then to position themselves for the battle by taking the step of faith that would please and be acceptable to God. Then, they ought to wait

upon the Lord to provide them with whatever they were praying for and lastly obey totally, when they hear God's voice.

Other suggestions such as physical exercises are helpful. Physical exercises include a work out for body parts, like jogging, cycling, or swimming. Using what nature has given is a good therapy. More others are herbal therapy, formation of support groups, seeking help from professional counsellors and medics. Corrective measures taken by pastors, Church ministries and congregations could also be of great help. Recognizing what can be changed by avoidance or elimination and reducing the intensity or shortening exposure to the stressor could be of great help to Pastors' wives who suffer stress.

## **5.2 Recommendations**

As much as there is need to give Pastors' wives solutions in order to work their way out of stress they suffer, there is much more to be done by everybody else. Stress pastors' wives go through does not come from a confined sphere, but, from all corners that only all those involved could help in either eliminating or reducing. Therefore, the study makes the following reconditions:

- (a) Pastors' wives ought to be exposed to ways of dealing with stress. Available solutions might not be readily known to most of them; consequently, church ministries need to do everything possible to expose and avail materials on stress and its remedies to them.
- (b) Pastors' wives ought to be encouraged to go for training and further studies in their relevant fields and also need exposure to biblical studies so that they do not remain semi-illiterate and ignorant. Times have changed and many congregants are well educated and knowledgeable. Pastors' wives could do well to catch up with the times. This would save them the frustration they go through handling people whom they perceive as being superior.
- (c) There is great need for Pastors to balance their time well between performing church and family responsibilities. They need to listen to what people say about



their families. In addition, there is need to supplement their meagre income from the church ministries with some family business.

- (d) On their part, Church ministries ought to be more organized administratively and financially. They could avoid pushing a pastor to a planted church that cannot be able to pay or cater for the needs of that pastor's family.
- (e) Likewise, Church Ministries need to organize forums to discuss stress in its entirety. Review factors that cause stress to pastors' wives and suggest ways and means of countering them in order to improve performance.
- (f) Congregations need to be taught to be sensitive to, and concerned about pastors' families. This concern can re-assure the pastor's family so that it can overcome stress. In addition, church ministries can utilise Pastoral counsellors instead of their own pastors to sensitize the congregation on this.
- (g) Governments might also play a role in restricting the mushrooming of churches, which gives room for creation of churches that cannot afford a salary for their pastors. Governments can monitor registrations through periodical returns.

### **5.3 Recommendations for further Research**

Given that it was not possible to cover all facets of the study on effects of stress to Pastors wives on church ministries performance, there is need for further work on this area. Consequently, for a proper and complete understanding of the subject, it is suggested that further investigations be made on the following:

1. A study, similarly designed to investigate same issues discussed in the present study but covering all districts in western province of Kenya ought to be undertaken. The purpose is to check whether or not the findings documented in this present study are still applicable when generalised to the entire province.
2. A study, similarly designed and covering the same area but which includes more factors such as the culture as a factor influencing the stress effects on Pastors' wives and church ministry performance ought to be carried out.

3. In order to understand what motivates husbands to make careless comments on their spouses, it is imperative that a study be conducted to determine the motivation and its effects on their spouses and church ministry performance.
4. Since Pastors' wives play a significant role in the performance of church ministries, there is need to examine why some Pastors and the congregation do not make any effort to provide them any assistance.
5. The extent to which conflict between a pastors wife's career and her position in the manse and in the church can be a factor causing stress.

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## **APPENDIX I**

### **Introductory Letter**

Dear Madam,

I am a student at ICM Kitale pursuing a master's degree in Theology (Pastoral Counselling) with South Africa Theological Seminary.

To enable me complete my degree work, I have chosen you to participate in a research, which will establish the extent to which pastors' wives in Bungoma South District suffer stress. This is hoped to be of benefit to church ministries, pastors, pastors' wives and congregations as it will provide information on how to lessen the stress.

Your responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Please note that you are not required to write down your name on the questionnaire. Kindly therefore, answer these questions carefully and truthfully.

Thanks for your kind consideration.

Tryphosa Liyala Nandasaba (Mrs.)



## APPENDIX II

### Study Questionnaire: Effects of stress on performance of Church Ministries.

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#### Instructions

Please provide, as truthfully as you can, responses to the questions below. The information will be used solely for study purposes and the researcher undertakes to treat your responses with utmost **confidentiality** as well as assuring you that your responses will not be disclosed to anyone in a way that makes your identity known.

For questions 5 -18 please place a tick (  ) against each of the statements made to indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement about how you react to a variety of situations in your married life experience. The questionnaire is to be filled by female church members only.

#### SECTION A

1. Please indicate where you stay:  
Location.....market / town.....
2. Indicate the church in which you fellowship  
.....
3. Indicate whether you are a Pastor's wife:  
Yes (  )                      No (  )
4. Indicate the age grouping you fall in:  
(a) 25-35 years (  ).  
(b) 36-45 years (  ).  
(c) 46-55 years (  ).  
(d) 56-above (  ).

#### SECTION B

5. In most cases I experience one or all of the following: indigestion, constant tiredness, shoulder aches and loss of appetite?  
a) Strongly agree (  )  
b) Agree (  )  
c) Not sure (  )

- d) Disagree ( )  
 e) Strongly disagree( )
6. It is in very rare times that I feel one or all of the following: irritable, anger, depression, loss of confidence and experience excessive worrying.
- a) Strongly agree ( )  
 b) Agree ( )  
 c) Not sure ( )  
 d) Disagree ( )  
 e) Strongly disagree( )
7. For the better part of my married life, I am withdrawn from people to the extent they, especially my husband, complain about my acquired behaviour.
- a) Strongly agree ( )  
 b) Agree ( )  
 c) Not sure ( )  
 d) Disagree ( )  
 e) Strongly disagree( )
8. More often than not, I find myself lacking concentration, or exhibiting unclear thinking patterns, or making poor decisions and lacking good judgment or reason for doing something.
- a) Strongly agree ( )  
 b) Agree ( )  
 c) Not sure ( )  
 d) Disagree ( )  
 e) Strongly disagree( )
9. Unlike during our early times of marriage, nowadays I find it difficult to pray, or I feel like I have lost purpose and hope or I sometimes doubt God's goodness and blame Him for allowing things to turn out the way they have.
- a) Strongly agree ( )  
 b) Agree ( )  
 c) Not sure ( )  
 d) Disagree ( )  
 e) Strongly disagree( )
10. I hardly find myself absent because of sickness or omit to do any of the church activities.
- a) Strongly agree ( )  
 b) Agree ( )  
 c) Not sure ( )  
 d) Disagree ( )

- e) Strongly disagree( )
11. I often differ with my husband over the way he handles financial matters.
- a) Strongly agree ( )
  - b) Agree ( )
  - c) Not sure ( )
  - d) Disagree ( )
  - e) Strongly disagree( )
12. Our family matters are strictly dealt with by my husband and I. I have never experienced any problems in resolving these matters.
- a) Strongly agree ( )
  - b) Agree ( )
  - c) Not sure ( )
  - d) Disagree ( )
  - e) Strongly disagree( )
13. My husband's work robs me and the children meaningful family time. In fact it has made me disinterested in what he does.
- a) Strongly agree ( )
  - b) Agree ( )
  - c) Not sure ( )
  - d) Disagree ( )
  - e) Strongly disagree( )
14. What annoys me most is the fact that our home is open to all members of the congregation to the extent that we hardly have any privacy.
- a) Strongly agree ( )
  - b) Agree ( )
  - c) Not sure ( )
  - d) Disagree ( )
  - e) Strongly disagree( )
15. The church congregation's expectations puts too much pressure on me.
- a) Strongly agree ( )
  - b) Agree ( )
  - c) Not sure ( )
  - d) Disagree ( )
  - e) Strongly disagree( )
16. The pressure that my husband's work puts on me is overwhelming.
- a) Strongly agree ( )
  - b) Agree ( )

- c) Not sure ( )
- d) Disagree ( )
- e) Strongly disagree( )

17. Church activities puts pressure on me more than any other thing does.

- a) Strongly agree ( )
- b) Agree ( )
- c) Not sure ( )
- d) Disagree ( )
- e) Strongly disagree( )

18. There is little or no difference in the performance of church activities whether am under pressure or not

- a) Strongly agree ( )
- b) Agree ( )
- c) Not sure ( )
- d) Disagree ( )
- e) Strongly disagree( )

**SECTION C**

19. List, in order of severity, signs that you experience more often out of the following: (i) Constant tiredness, (ii) irritable and anger, (iii) withdrawn from people, (iv) lack of concentration, (v) unable to pray, (vi) absent from church due to sickness.

- (a). .....
- (b) .....
- (c) .....

20. List, in order of importance, three effects that your husbands work is likely to suffer when you are weighed down by too many pressures.

- (a) .....
- (b) .....
- (c) .....

21. List, in order of importance, three issues that bother you most out of: (i) financial matters, (ii) family matters, (iii) your husband’s workload, (iv) privacy in your home, and (v) congregational expectations.

- 1. ....
- 2. ....
- 3. ....

22. Please write any other remarks

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## APPENDIX III

### Study Interview Schedule: Effects of stress on performance of Church Ministries.

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#### Instructions

Please provide, as truthfully as you can, responses to the questions below. The information will be used solely for study purposes and the researcher undertakes to treat your responses with utmost **confidentiality** as well as assuring you that your responses will not be disclosed to anyone in a way that makes your identity known.

1. Do you live in constant debts?
2. Name three items that you are likely to be having debts constantly?
3. Do you ever feel that the church has stolen your husband?
4. Do you feel that your husband is too busy?
5. Do you give and receive love and affection to your satisfaction?
6. Do you feel uncomfortable in the way some women in the church relate to your husband?
7. In most of your disagreements, do you sometimes feel that your husband makes a mountain out of a mole hill?
8. Do you ever regret being a Pastor's wife?
9. If time were to be rewound would you still marry a pastor?
10. Arising from your circumstance, do you at times experience sexual dysfunction such as frigidity?
11. In terms of career and self actualisation, does your spouse allow you to pursue your own agenda?
12. Do you generally feel comfortable with the number of relatives who visit you for purposes of seeking assistance?
13. As a result of the demands placed on you, whose goals do you pursue?

14. Do you have sufficient rest?
15. Do you have sufficient sleep?
16. Are you overwhelmed with work?
17. Are you able to organise your home and church work always in time?
18. Do you feel that you receive too many visitors frequently?
19. What is the problem of receiving too many visitors?
20. Do you feel pressured by “other peoples” expectations?
21. From which sources are you pressured?
22. Do you have many friends?
23. Do you have confidants?
24. Do you feel that your husband sometimes makes careless and nasty comments about you?
25. Do you in most cases feel that you are a failure and unworthy?

# BUNGOMA SOUTH DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS

BUNGOMA WEST DISTRICT

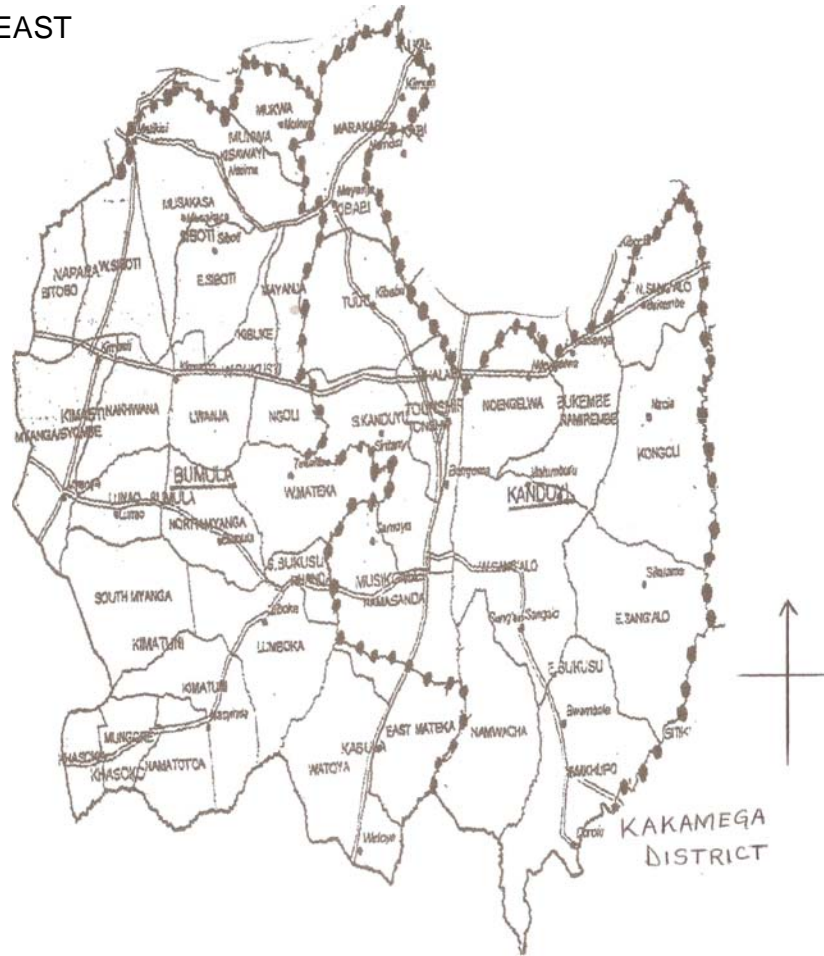
BUNGOMA NORTH DISTRICT

BUNGOMA EAST

TESO DISTRICT

BUSIA DISTRICT

MUMIAS DISTRICT



KAKAMEGA DISTRICT