PAUL'S PERSPECTIVE ON WIDOWHOOD (1 CORINTHIANS 7:39-40): A CASE STUDY OF THE CHALLENGES OF WIDOWHOOD IN THE SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH IN KISII COUNTY, KENYA.

By

Geoffrey Orina Ombati

This dissertation is submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Award of Master of Theology New Testament from St. Paul University.

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Supervisor: DR. LYDIA MWANIKI

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Declaration

This dissertation is a product of my own work and is not a result of anything done in collaboration. It has not been previously presented to any other institution. I agree that this dissertation may be available for referencing and photocopying, at the discretion of the University.

STUDENT'S SIGNATURE_____ DATE_____

I/We confirm that the work reported in this dissertation was carried out by the student under my/our supervision.

SIGNATUREOF THE SUPERVISOR_____ DATE _____

DR. LYDIA MWANIKI

Abstract

The S.D.A Church accepts the Bible as the only creed that the Holy Scriptures is infallible revelation of God's will. Widow remarriage continues to be a thorn in the flesh, The main issue is whether widows should be married or remain unmarried and the experiences widows go through in trying to live out Paul's teachings in 1Corinthians 7:39-40. The purpose of this study was to bring into focus Paul's perspective of widowhood and the challenges widows face in the S.D.A Church in trying to live out Paul's teachings. Further the focus is on the role played by S.D.A Church in dealing with these challenges in Kisii County. The objectives of the study were: To do an exegesis of 1Corinthians 7:39-40 expounding the challenges of widowhood in the time of Paul; to identify the challenges that the widows are facing in S.D.A Church in their endeavour to embrace Paul's advice to widows whether to remarry or not to remarry; to investigate the role the S.D.A Church plays in supporting widows and alleviating the challenges of widowhood in Kisii County. This case study used the empirical survey design .The research was conducted in S.D.A Churches in Kisii County. The target population was 325 churches divided into four stations. 8 churches were selected from each station totalling to 32 churches. 150 church members were selected from each church totalling to 1200 church members from the targeted churches. Random sampling was used in selecting these churches as well as the various participating church members. A questionnaire comprised of 8 closed ended questions items on the likert scale were used to collect data. To ensure validity of the instrument, a pilot study test was conducted at Kisii Central and Jogoo S.D.A Churches, the results of the pilot test facilitated the review of the survey questions. Data analysis was done through frequencies and percentage counts.

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my great lecturers of St. Paul's University in the Department Of Theology, New Testament.

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Research is not an easy task it takes real commitment and devotion. I thank our almighty God for His mercy endured forever. He granted me the good health, peace of mind and His travelling mercies He accorded me while l was moving up and down in collecting and analyzing data. However, it might not be possible to mention all the contributors who made this research a success. To mention but a few, to my able, dedicated and committed supervisor Dr. Lydia Mwaniki Lecturer in the faculty of theology, New Testament in St. Paul's University. Who trained and supervised me through her great knowledge to complete this dissertation. My gratitude goes to the faculty of theology in St. Paul's university for their commendable work. My gratitude and appreciation goes to Dr. David Ongarora Ogoti from University of Maseno and associate elder in Kisii Central Church, Elder David Nyambega from Nyamira conference Elder Henry Ogendo from Nyanchwa Adventist College who sacrificed their time in reading and making very important remarks that helped to shape this dissertation. The elders and members of Daraja mbili District S.D.A Church for their motivation that made me to join higher education in St. Paul University. To the Church members from Kisii Central District S.D.A Church who came together and gave me their moral support. I say God bless you.

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Abbreviations

SKC	South Kenya Conference
S DA	Seventh - day Adventist
RSV	Revised Standard Version
NIV	New International Version
NKJV	New King James Version
ASV	American Standard Version
KJV	King James Version
MKJV	Modern King James Version
SCM	Seventh- day Church Manual
SBC	Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary
WEB	World English Bible
YLT	Young Literal Translation
LGB	Lutheran German Bible
BBE	Bible Basic English
PR	Pastor
NT	New Testament

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Widows encounter several challenges in most communities around the globe. For instance, in most Western countries like USA, UK, Canada and New Zealand, widows are associated with more poverty and higher mortality rates than other groups in the society (Lopata 1973:162). In an extensive study of widows in Chicago, USA, according to Lopata (1973), for the widow to be socially integrated into support systems, she needs four systems in her favour. The first factor is the society with its composition and culture. The Second, the community within which the widow lives can help her overcome much of sadness. This includes a favourable neighbourhood and working environment. Third, the widow's recovery from her problems depends on the support she gets from the family of her late husband whose attitude towards widowhood is an important factor. Lastly, the personal resources available to the widow will assist her. These include people and groups she is associated with such as her parents,siblings,childrenandfriends. (htt://htc.anu.edu.au/pdf/Ntoz14.pdf) accessed on 3, December 2012.

The increasing number of widows globally has become an acknowledged social problem. In spite of giant strides in medicine and science, death of married partners arises from illness or diseases, accidents, wars, among others, has not been eradicated. Research shows that widows make up about half the adults female population in Africa (George 2012:187).

As Gunga (2009:165) argues, that Luo widows are even more confused since even the church leaders are embracing cultural rituals more than what the Bible teaches. According to Potash (1986:169), Luo widows are not permitted to formally remarry or take other sexual partners in addition to the *surrogate husband.* Kirwa (1979) indicates that just as in the lower castes of

Haryana of India, Luo widows are encouraged to get *surrogate* husband within the family of the deceased husband through *ter* (culturally-sanctioned re-marriage) This situation has been often controversially referred as "*widow inheritance''* (Chowdhury 1994:171). This is indeed a leviratic union, which can easily be compared and slightly be contrasted with the Kisii leviratic union.

The Seventh Day Adventist Church, hereafter S.D.A., is governed by twenty eight fundamental beliefs, one of which holds that the Bible is the only Creed and that the Holy Scriptures are an infallible revelation of God's will upon humanity The Secretariat General Conference of S.D.A 2010:7). Although the church upholds and accepts the authority of scriptures in controlling Christian life, the question of remarriage of widows continues to be a thorn in the flesh. The main bone of contention is whether widows should be remarried or remains unmarried. Further, the experiences widows go through in trying to live in accordance with Biblical teachings leaves a lot to be desired. In 1Corinthians 7:39-40, Paul wrote:

> A wife is bound to her husband as long as he lives. If the husband dies, she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord. But in my judgment she is happier if she remains as she is. And I think that I have the Spirit of God (RSV)

Paul's teaching here seems to contravene the Ekegusii culture and the current S.D.A practice on widowhood, which emphasizes that when a husband dies Jesus Christ becomes the husband of the widow and therefore, the widow is not given freedom to choose to remarry or remain unmarried. For instance, when a husband dies, a widow is prepared psychologically to live without a husband whether she has children or not. Besides that, during the burial procession and after, the Church simply prays for the widow and reminds her that Jesus has taken over as her husband. However, there are human desires like economic, socialization, emotional, spiritual support among many others, that need real attention, satisfaction and

companionship. This is the reason why this research is focused on challenges facing widows as they try to embrace Paul's teaching on widowhood, and the role of the S.D.A Church in dealing with these challenges in Kisii County.

According to Nyang'era (1999), after the death of a husband, a widow of child-bearing age is required by community elders to enter into levirate union in which case she is presented three men out of whom she should choose one as a husband. According to Akama (2006) in Kisii culture, a woman, in this case the widow is viewed as communal property which can be manipulated, oppressed and transferred in any way without regard to her right to make choices and decisions pertaining to her destiny.

To make the situation even more problematic, Nyang'era (1999) observes that a widow is not allowed go shaking hands with anybody when she is mourning her husband. Additionally, she is also required to wear her clothes inside out throughout the mourning period. In other words, she is nearly held hostage in her husband's home. On the contrary, Apostle Paul in the New Testament, unambiguously advises in 1Corinthians 7:39-40 that a woman whose husband dies is free to choose to remarry or remain unmarried.

Whereas Ekegusii culture requires that the widow can be treated according to the will and wish of the society. Paul's teaching in the New Testament in 1Corinthians 7:39-40 advises that a wife is bound to her husband only to the extent that he is alive. Upon the death of the husband, she is free to be remarried to whoever she wishes as long as the union is conducted in accordance with Christian practices. In Paul's view, however, she is happier if she remains unmarried. Therefore, Paul gives widows freedom of choice to be remarried or remain unmarried instead of being subjected to trials and temptations.

As already noted, the S.D.A. church upholds the authority of Scripture as the inspired Word of God. Following 2Timothy 3:16, All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for

teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, (RSV) *(*The Secretariat General Conference of S.D.A Church 2010:7-8). Despite of all these Paul's teaching gives widows freedom to remarry or remain unmarried. As such, the church does not seem to have a clear policy on whether the widow can remarry or not. The widow is therefore left alone to struggle between culture and Paul's teaching. Given this dilemma, this research seeks to explore the challenges that widows in S.D.A. Church in Kisii County face in trying to appropriate Paul's teaching in their lives, that is, whether to marry or remain unmarried. This research further investigates the role of the S.D.A. Church in addressing these challenges.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In 1Corinthians 7:39-40, Paul suggests that widows can remarry or remain unmarried. The focus of this study is on the difficulties or challenges which widows encounter in the S.D. A. church in Kisii County as they try to put into practice Paul's advice on the question of remarriage or remain unmarried after the death of a spouse. Therefore, the main research question is: What challenges do widows in the S.D.A. Church in Kisii County face in their attempt to implement Paul's teaching regarding remarriage or remaining unmarried?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to bring into focus Paul's perspective of widowhood as proposed in 1Corinthians 7:39-40 and the challenges widows face in the S.D.A Church in Kisii County in trying to live out Paul's teaching. Further, the study focuses on the role of the S. D. A. Church in dealing with these challenges in Kisii County.

1.4 Research Objectives

The objectives of this research are:

i. To explain Paul's teaching regarding the marital status of widows by doing an exegesis of 1Corinthians 7:39-40.

ii. To identify the challenges that the widows face in S.D.A. Church in Kisii County in their endeavour to embrace Paul's advice to widows whether to remarry or not to remarry.

iii. To investigate the role played by the S.D.A Church in addressing the challenges of widows in Kisii County.

1.5 Research Questions

The main research question as indicated in the research problem is what challenges do widows in S.D.A. Church face in their effort to a adhere to Paul's teaching to remarry or remaining unmarried? In order to address this main question, the study will focus on the following specific questions:

i. What is Paul's teaching regarding the marital status of widows in 1Corinthians 7:39-40?

ii. What challenges do widows face in the S.D.A. Church in Kisii County in their attempt to embrace Paul's teaching on widowhood?

iii. What role does the S.D.A. Church in Kisii County play to address the challenges of widows in Kisii County?

1.6 Research Hypotheses

i. The S.D.A. Church has not played a significant role in addressing the challenges of widows in Kisii County.

ii. The S.D.A. Christians have not fully embraced Paul's teaching especially with regard to remarriage of widows.

1.7 Justification of the Study

Despite the fact that the S.D.A Church has worked on relieving the challenges facing widows especially in Kisii County, there is still need for more work to be done towards settling most of these challenges. Thus, the research is important in helping to sensitize the S.D.A. Church members in dealing with these challenges facing widows as part of the stake holders in the society.

1.8 Delimitations of the Study

The study deals with the challenges widows face in the S.D.A Church in Kisii County.

1.8.1 Location of the study

The study was conducted among members of the S.D.A. Church in Kisii County of Western Kenya.

1.8.2 Field of Study

The study specifically focuses on New Testament Theology and in particular, Paul's teaching on widowhood (1Corinthians 7:39-40). Of interest are the challenges widows' faces in Kisii County in their attempt to put into practice Paul's teachings on widowhood.

1. 9 Limitations of the Study

Given the controversial nature of this study which focuses on fundamental biblical teaching, it is possible that some church leaders and members may not provide reliable information.

Here the members were explained the aim of the research and how the study could help the Church to deal with the challenges widows are facing in the S.D.A Church. Further the questionnaire was confidential since all the respondents were not allowed to write their names on the questionnaire.

1.10 Explanation of Important Terms/Concepts as Used in the Research

Agnate – Related to or descended from the father or his lineage.

Bride Wealth – Payment in the form of money, property, or other valuable asset made by or on behalf of a prospective husband to the bride's family.

Caste – A form of social stratification characterized by endogamy, hereditary transmission of a style of life which often includes an occupation, ritual status in hierarchy and customary social interaction and exclusion based on cultural notions of purity and population.

Continuum – A continuous non-spatial whole, or extent, or succession in which no part or portion is distinguishable from adjacent parts.

Culture – The quality in a person or society that arises from a concern for what is regarded as excellent in arts, letters, manners, scholarly pursuits.

Surrogate – someone who takes the place of another person

Ethnic – Of relating to or characteristic of a sizable group of people sharing a common and distinctive racial, national, religious, linguistic or cultural heritage.

Levirate marriage – A type of marriage in which the brother of a deceased man is obliged to marry his brother's widow, and the widow is obliged to marry her deceased husband's brother.

Pyre – A heap of combustibles of burning a corpse as a funeral rite.

Suttee – The act of a Hindu widow willingly cremating herself on the funeral pyre of her dead husband.

Widow – A woman who has lost her husband by death and has not married again.

Widower – A man whose wife is dead especially one who has not remarried.

Widowhood – The time of a woman's life when she is a widow

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This section focuses on socio-cultural aspects pertaining to widowhood among the AbaGusii in comparison with other parts of the world. In particular, light will be shed on the treatment of widows and the experiences they undergo in their widowhood. Further, the chapter attempts to examine what Paul teaches on the marital status on widows 1Corinthians 7:39-40; the challenges facing the widows in the S.D.A church and the role of the Church in addressing this various challenges. This can be further illustrated in the following sub topics. Paul had a lot of concern with the widows and this made him to give the following teachings:

2.2 Paul's Historical Background

Here, the discussion focuses on the general cultural situation in which Paul wrote his letters, and more so in 1Corinthians. The specific concern in this section is a critical review of the cultural background of Paul's 1st letter to the Corinthians as highlighted by Mwaniki (2013:4-7). According to Mwaniki (2013:4), Paul was born in Tarsus which, according to Marrow (1986:8) was designated the capital city of the Roman province of Cilia in 67 B.C. Bornkamm1995:3 cited in (Mwaniki 2013:4 and Roetzel 1997:11-16, cited in Mwaniki 2013:4) agree that Paul was born in the Diaspora (Jews living outside Jerusalem). However, notwithstanding this scholarly agreement, there are still debates as to where Paul was brought up.

Some scholars like Bornkamm (1971:3), following Acts 22:3, 23:34, argue that Paul's parents may have moved to Jerusalem in his youth where Paul received his education; others have disputed this Lucan view and have claimed that Tarsus, rather than Jerusalem, might have been the place of Paul's upbringing and education where he underwent Hellenistic

influence, and where his missionary view was shaped (Roetzel 1997:11-16). According to Roetzel (2011:3-4) Paul had two names, a Hebrew one (Saul) and a Greek one (Paul). Yet scholars like Ludemann (2002:134) cited in Mwaniki 2013:4 indicate that Paul was a Roman citizen. As scholars indicate, it was a custom for Jews living in the Diaspora to have two names, a Hebrew one, and a Greek one or Roman one.

From this brief background according to Mwaniki, Paul was a highly *hybridized* man. And it is from this that one may conclude that he was a man of three worlds: a Jew, perhaps a Roman Citizen (even if only through his membership of a *politeuma*), and he was familiar with Greek language and culture, having been born and brought up in the Diaspora, a strongly Hellenized environment. This cannot be denied as it shaped Paul's thought and his worldview, as reflected in his letters and especially his view of women (Mwaniki 2013:6)

2.2.1 Paul as the Jew

Paul was a Jew (Galatians 1:13-14, 3:4-6 11:22) from the tribe of Ben jamin in Tarsus of Cilicia, a prosperous and cultured city and a center of Hellenistic culture. Paul was probably his Roman name, Saul being his Hebrew name. What was Paul's place in Judaism?; we have good reasons to believe that his exposure was broad indeed. The information about his pre-Christian career in Acts connects him with both Jerusalem and the Diaspora. According to the sole surveying witness to Paul's education Acts 22:3, Paul was educated at the feet of the honoured rabbi Gamaliel. Though trained in Palestine, he maintained a living connection with tarsus, his home town. Paul wrote his letters in Greek and used the Greek Bible .Paul is depicted as able to speak both Greek and Aramaic. These indications of double linguistic and geographical spread are closely paralled by what we know of the Jewish historical Josephus, who, although born in Jerusalem, later lived in the Diaspora composed his writings in both Greek and Aramaic.

2.2.2 Paul as the Roman Citizen

Paul was familiar with the larger world of Greco- Roman culture. This is given striking testimony in 1Corinthians 15:33, where he alludes to the Greek poet Menander. We should take Paul's Roman Citizenship no less seriously than his Jewish identity when reading his letters. To have been born a Roman citizen was an exceptional distinction. Paul concludes his counsel regarding marriage and human sexuality with a word concerning divorce, widowhood and remarriage. Reaffirming his earlier embrace of the lord's teaching as the ideal, Paul says that as long as the husband lives, the wife is bound to him.

His position on that is already clear, but what happens if the husband dies? An issue he has not addressed here. Paul's concession, "she is free to marry whomever she wishes but only in the lord (Champa, 2010:891)

2.3 Corinthians 7:39-40

This section is an exegesis of Verses 39 and 40 which focuses on Paul's teachings on widowhood which are cited below:

V.39 A wife is bound to her husband as long as he lives. If the husband dies, she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord.

V.40 But in my judgment she is happier if she remains as she is. And I think that I have the Spirit of God**.** (RSV)

2.3.1 Bound as long as her husband lives

From the original language of Greek δέδεται τῷ νδρί; (to tie or bind a prim. Verb meaning) she may not separate herself from him and marry another. μόνον 'Εν κυρίΩ only in the Lord, not apart from Christ as the specifically determining element of the new union; only in a

Christian way, that is only to a Christian. The opening sentence, asserting the marriage union to be dissoluble only by death, is to guard against any married woman applying these words to herself, they having reference only to widows.

(Deo)-the perfect tense emphasizes the continuing state or condition that results from entering into the marriage covenant. This says that the partners are bound by law for the entire span of time (χρόνον) as long as (a prim. Word) their partners are alive. This clearly implies that the bond of marriage can only be broken by the death of the marriage partners. Nothing is said here of the possibility of divorce and remarriage for believers whose spouse is still living, and no exception clause is given in these Verses.

2.3.2 If her husband is dead she is at liberty to marry

The original word for dead in Greek is (κοιμηθῇ) meaning to put to sleep or fall asleep. She is at liberty in Greek it is ἐλευθέρα meaning free, not a slave or not under restraint to marry whom she wills hence second marriages are lawful, though condemned by many of the ancients. The liberty of a widow is greater than that of a virgin, because a virgin is under the power, and at the dispose of her parents; but a widow is at her own dispose; and death having dissolved her former obligation, she is at entire liberty to marry, or not marry, and to marry whom she pleases, that is not forbidden by the laws of God. Here the Apostle Paul addresses the issue of remarriage for a Christian widow, since she is no longer bound to her former marriage relationship but is free to remarry. But she must marry another believer only in the Lord. This teaches against the idea of a believer deliberately entering into a mixed marriage.

2.3.3 In my opinion she is happier if she remains as she is

(Μακαριωτ***)*** more ***blessed,*** not merely more spared from troubles), but, in accordance with the higher reference which **μακάρ**. Invariably has in the N.T, enjoying the blessed relation,

which arises out of withdrawal from worldly cares and self-surrender to Christ. As to greater blessedness ***in heaven***, which some have dragged in here in the interests of celibacy

The word happier is (Μακαριωτ) *Makarios*, the inner peace that is experienced by a believer despite the outward circumstances. In view of the impending circumstances, Paul advocated remaining single. However, in 1Timothy 5:11 Paul implies that younger Christian widows should remarry if they are unable to control their passions. In (1Corinthians 7:8-9) Paul leaves the choice up to the individual believer as to whether or not to get remarried or remain unmarried after considering his God ordained circumstances. In these Verses 1Corinthians 7:39-40 Paul is teaching about the permanence of the Christian Marriage relationship. so that I therefore may expect you to regard my opinion, not as a mere individual judgment, but as arrived at under the influence of the Holy Spirit which is imparted (έχειν) to me also, and hence as worthy to be received and followed.(www.spiritandtruth.org Accessed on 25 march 2014)

2.3.4 Bound by law

In 1Corinthians 7:39-40, Paul is expounding on the freedom of choice of the widows concerning getting remarried or remaining unmarried. Further he is explaining the law concerning marriage. When Paul is saying, "A wife is bound by law as long as her husband lives,'' the question we need to ask ourselves is that, from where did he get that idea? Of course he is not speaking of the civil or criminal law of the Greeks. (This letter is to the Corinthians after all), because in Greek and Roman civilization at that time, there was no such law. Especially in the cosmopolitan areas of the Roman Empire, divorce was a common occurrence. (Chritinesbiblestudy.wordpress.com accessed on 26, march 2014.) Accessed on 28, April 2014

Therefore, a wife is bound by is the law of God which God is revealed in Torah. So what is this law of marriage? As we discover, there is a law of marriage in 1Corinthians 7:39. A wife is bound by the law of marriage, while a widow is not. Here, the Apostle emphasizes in 1Corinthians 7:1-7 that to be free of the law of rendering affection, one has to remain unmarried. It is here in 1Corinthians 7:1-7 where Paul reveals that one of its components is that the husband and wife are bound to render to each other the affection that is due to the other. The Apostle Paul continues to say that when someone marries, this is what they are signing up for "*I vow to render to you the affection that is due to you as my spouse.''*

Another aspect of the law of marriage, that we see in (1Corinthians 7:10-11), is that once you marry, the wife is not to leave her husband, and the husband is not to divorce his wife. The first century Jews had trouble with this aspect of Torah Law of marriage, and questioned Jesus about it (Mathew 19:3-12). Jesus reaffirmed that marriage was meant to be a permanent state, till death do you part, that is why the command do not divorce is from the lord. (Chritinesbiblestudy.wordpress.com accessed on 26, march 2014.)

According to the Apostle Paul's teaching in 1Corinthians 7:39-40 marriage is a relationship which can be terminated only upon the death of one spouse. He continues to say that second marriage is perfectly permissible. Paul goes on to say in 1Timothy5:14 that younger widows are urged to marry. This means the law of levirate marriage does not hold among Christians in the New Testament. On the other hand, Paul would rather see a widow who is above sixty remain unmarried. In Paul's view, remarriage is likely to introduce challenges instead of happiness. Death should not be another point at which the widow is subjected to misery on earth. Instead, it should be a chance for rededication of our service to God as the apostle had suggested in the preceding verses. We know that he is speaking only of the crisis in which he thought men were living (Brown 1968:216). According to Brown (1968:216), Paul classified

himself with the widowed rather than the unmarried. Perhaps, Paul was a widower. From his arguments, he is speaking as a widower. He says that in many ways, a second marriage is the highest compliment that the one who survives can pay the one who has gone before for it means that without a spouse, life is a daunting task. This means that the married state was so happy that it can fearlessly be entered into again. From being an act of disrespect, it can be a mark of honour to the dead. Paul lays down one condition: remarriage must be in the Lord in Greek (μόνον ἐν Κυρί) means only in the Lord, not apart from Christ as the specifically determining element of the new union; only in a Christian way, only to a Christian, let her be married (William 1977:71). Duty to God must supersede all other considerations, and no plan must be adopted in which God is not glorified (2Corinthians 6:14-16). Paul further argues that Christians should not marry unbelievers and provides the following reasons.

i) Association with an unbeliever, be he heathen or nominal Christian, would greatly undermine or incapacitate one's commitment towards carrying out in full the instruction to remain "separate'' and a "peculiar people" who do not and not confirm to the desires of perishing in this world (Roman 12:2 1Peter 2:9).

ii) There may not be real companionship with someone whose philosophy of life, particularly in the most important things of life, is so diametrically opposed to one's religion.

iii) Living with one whose daily life showed a lack of respect for, and appreciation of, the Gospel of Jesus might lead to the woman losing her piety and moving away from her simple faith in the message and standards of God for His people. Knowing that marriage between believers and unbelievers is one of the most successful ways of ruining the happiness and successfulness of individuals, Satan does his utmost to persuade people to turn away from safe advice and to follow the promptings of an unsanctified heart, thereby creating situations that may mean lifelong misery and ultimately eternal loss (Nichol 1980:718).

From the original language of Greek δέδεται τῷ νδρί which means to tie or bind, Here Paul puts emphasize that the marriage union is to be dissoluble only by death. This means (χρόνον) as long as the husband is alive the wife is bound by the marriage covenant. But when dead ((κοιμηθΩ) or the husband is put to sleep or fall asleep she is at liberty or free, not a slave or not under restraint, to marry whom she wills. According to Paul this gives the widows the freedom to choose to get remarried or to remain unmarried.

2.4. The Challenges facing widows

Widows have often been faced with traumatic experiences in our communities at the instance of losing their husbands which is occasioned by death; the inhuman treatment meted on the widows varies from one culture to the other, most of the treatments are geared towards dehumanizing their victims which is always a painful and psychological experience that can affect the individual life. (Maxwellsci.com) accessed on 28, August,2014 . This section will try to highlight the challenges widows go through in different parts of the world as a result of losing their husbands.

2.4.1 Treatment of Widows in Other Parts of the World

In this part of the study, an attempt was made to bring out the challenges widows face in some selected cultures around the globe**.**

Widows are essentially married women with or without children who lost their husbands as a result of death. In a similar vein, widowhood refers to the loss of husband, companion, breadwinner, and supporter. The increasing number of widows globally has become an acknowledged social problem. In spite of giant strides in medicine and science, death of married partners arises from illness or diseases, accidents, wars, among others, has not been eradicated. Research shows that widows make up about half the adults female population in

Africa (George 2012:187). Widowhood all over the world is characterized by grief, bereavement, rituals, forced remarriages, harassment, rejection, loneliness, poverty and relatively high mortality. (htt://htc.anu.edu.au/pdf/Ntoz14.pdf) accessed on 3, December 2012. George (2012) confirms that the death of the husband is not only a time of emotional grief, but also a time that severe torture and humiliation would be meted out to them by their in-laws. It is a time for scores to be settled with the deceased's extended family.

Under normal circumstances, a widow is to be pitied, and helped out of the psychological valley into which the unexpected has plunged her. However, this is never the case, especially in the African communities. In most African societies, she is stigmatized as the killer of her husband; she is oppressed, suppressed, afflicted, openly insulted and consequently made to succumb to widowhood rites on account of customs and traditions. In most cases, the in-laws use the mourning period as an avenue to give vent to their anger and ensure that the widow's solitary life is made more miserable. They strip her virtually of her self esteem and all the toil she had acquired with her spouse. Consequently, the death of husband dramatically alters a woman's status and leaves her at the mercy of her husband's relatives who are customarily empowered to take decisions concerning her and the properties left behind by the deceased not minding her welfare and that of her children, if any (George 2012:188).

Widows encounter several challenges in most communities around the globe. For instance, in most Western countries like USA, UK, Canada and New Zealand, widows are associated with more poverty and higher mortality rates than other groups in the society (Lopata 1973:162). In an extensive study of widows in Chicago, USA, according to Lopata (1973), for the widow to be socially integrated into support systems, she needs four systems in her favour. The first factor is the society with its composition and culture. Secondly, the community within which the widow lives can help her overcome much of sadness. This

includes a favourable neighbourhood and working environment. Thirdly, the widow's recovery from her problems depends on the support she gets from the family of her late husband whose attitude towards widowhood is an important factor. Lastly, the personal resources available to the widow will assist her. These include people and groups she is associated with such as her parents, siblings, children and friends.

On the other hand, widows in several African societies are often considered bad people who have killed their husbands. As a result, many widows are forced to migrate to towns to find alternative means of live hood and can no longer fit into the village life as in the case of the Zambian widows in Lusaka (http://htc.anu.edu.au/pdfs/NtoZi4.pdf accessed on 7 December 2012).

As a matter of fact, disorientation is felt by almost all widows everywhere across the globe. Widowhood tends to impact far more traumatically upon women than men, since men are allowed to marry immediately and to whom they wish, altering forever the way they are seen by the external society and affecting their self-image. Loneliness, reduced income, loss of status, fear of the future, and depression are the common experiences, whether the women bereaved are mothers encumbered with young children, middle aged women or the elderly, and whether they are from the first or the third world. (Owen1996:14).

Owen (1996) further argues that there is much anecdotal and cross-cultural evidence that widows without a man to protect them are more open to sexual attack than other women and that this vulnerability extends to their daughters. In addition to that, Owen continues to say that worsening economic conditions in some countries affects how women are treated on the death of their husbands. Owen also contends that sexual services may be expected in return for any assistance a man renders a woman on her own; hence widows are reluctant, with good reason, to report sexual attack. Almost the same situation can be seen in India. According to

Reddy (2004:161), it is irrefutable fact that widowhood in India is not just transition from one marital status to another after the death of the husband but it is more hazardous, painful and humiliating to women than a widower because of the discrimination, ritual sanctions of the society against the widows. Reddy (2004) keeps on adding that widows in India not only suffer with social and economic sanctions but also face many psychological consequences, loneliness and in many cases, deprivation that causes emotional disturbances and imbalance. This also applies to Kisii widows who suffer from not only economic sanctions but also loneliness and psychological embarrassments. The purpose of this study is to determine whether the teachings of the Bible and the Church have improved the social standing of women.

In India for instance according to Reddy (2004:161), it is an irrefutable fact that widowhood is not just transition from one marital status to another after the death of the husband; it is a more hazardous, painful and humiliating experience to women than a widower because of the discrimination and ritual sanctions of the society against the widows. Reddy (2004) adds that widows in India not only suffer social and economic sanctions but also face many psychological consequences, loneliness and in many cases deprivation, thereby causing emotional disturbances. This appears to be the case among the AbaGusii widows who suffer from not only economic sanctions but also loneliness and embarrassment.

2.5 Widowhood among the Abagusii

Kisii County, formally known as Kisii district, is located to the south east of lake Victoria and is bordered by many districts: Narok to the south, Migori to the west, Homa Bay to the north west, Kisumu city to the north, Bomet to the south east and Nyamira to the east to name but a few (Waithaka 2005:5). Waithaka further reports that the County covers 2204 Km square with a population of 1,152,282 (Male – 48 %, Female – 52%). Most of the people engage in

substance farming, supplementing with cash crops as acreage allows. The main food crops grown on farms between 1 and 4 acres, are maize, beans, bananas, sorghum and millet while two of the most common cash crops include tea and coffee (Waithaka 2000:5).

According to Akama (2006:215), Kisii culture as a nuclear family, that is, wife, husband and the immediate children, is legitimized and receives communal recognition, only after the giving of the bride wealth by relations of the husband's family. In this culture, a woman is almost regarded as a property of the community after the relationship has been sealed by paying the bride wealth. This means that she does not have the right to decision making whether the husband is alive or dead. Quite often, it is the community, through the elders, that decides what should be done to the widow and how to propagate the family of the late. As Akama (2006:216) observes, Kisii marriage is an intricate and systematic process that commences after a young man or the bridegroom has received consent from his father and paternal uncles that he has met all the obligatory requirements to establish his own family. This means that young men are only allowed to marry after reaching their early twenties and above and they should also have undergone all the initiation rites that confer upon them the status of adulthood. Akama (2006) further emphasizes that after the bridegroom has received parental consent to marry, the marriage arrangement goes through various distinct stages. This confirms that the customary wedding is one of the most significant and sacred ceremonies. The ceremony can only be conducted after all the outstanding animals have been sent to the bride's father (Akama 2006:215).

Mayer (1950) confirms that according to Omogusii customary law, which is still the effective rule for the majority, only men can inherit property from parents. Sons inherit only the cattle, land, and other assets that belong to their own house, *enyomba*. Mayer further notes:

> All the resources that are owned by the father, such as personal cattle or business establishments, should be divided equally between houses, irrespective of the number of sons in each. Although national law recognizes the equal inheritance rights of daughters, customary law has seldom been challenged. (Mayer 1950).

Kapuma (2011) also notes that a widow may be inherited by her in-laws so that they can control the property and children. He reports that a widow is not given the freedom to decide whether to get remarried to whomsoever she wants and that a new husband is imposed on her from the in-law's side. In particular, three men are proposed for the widow to choose from, which means that the widow is not allowed to choose to remarry outside the husband's family. This is in accordance with the levirate union. Kapuma explains further that "where there is no inheritance, the in-laws makes sure that all the property is taken away from her and left with nothing – she has to raise children on her own without support'' (Kapuma: 2011:16). This practice appears unjust as it perpetuates gender discrimination since the widow is deprived of the right to choose whether to remarry or not. If she decides to get remarried, according to the biblical teaching, she should be allowed to choose whomsoever she chooses irrespective of the man's affiliation or origin. Further, if she decides that she should remain unmarried, the community and the in-laws ought to respect her decision to remain unmarried. According to Kapuma (2011), in cases where the church has played a role in stopping widowhood rituals, the Omogusii Christian widow still appears handicapped in terms of finance and property inheritance. Therefore, this study seeks to explore the efforts of the Church to address the challenges of widows especially in their effort to decide whether to remarry or to remain unmarried among the AbaGusii.

In Kapuma's view, the widow entirely depends on the support and assistance of the in-laws. Once the widow has been deprived of the property that rightfully belonged to her, she is left with children without support. During the period of mourning her husband, the widow is required to dress in black to show that she is mourning. Failure to do so is construed to be

disrespect towards her late husband which can attract discipline from the community. According to Kapuma (2011), the mourning period may last as long as a year.

According to Nyang'era (1999:73), the widow is not allowed to shake hands while mourning. Nyang'era concurs with Kapuma, noting that a woman belongs to the community which recognises her as a commodity.

2.6 Widowhood and the church Leadership

Widowhood in Luo Land seems to be more challenging in terms of widow inheritance and remarriage, furthermore the bordering of Kisii and Luo communities give enough comparison concerning the challenges widows are facing.

As Gunga (2009:165) argues, that Luo widows are even more confused since even the church leaders are embracing cultural rituals more than what the Bible teaches. According to Potash (1986:169), Luo widows are not permitted to formally remarry or take other sexual partners in addition to the *surrogate husband*.

2.7 The role of the S.D.A Church in addressing the widows' challenges.

2.7.1 Introduction

This part shows the role the church plays in supporting widows. As the scriptures says (1Peter3:7) "Likewise you husbands, live considerately with your wives, bestowing honor on the woman as the weaker sex, since you are joint heirs of the grace of life, in order that your prayers may not be hindered'' (RSV). Church leaders have tremendous potential for educating and empowering the Church members to treat women in general and widows specifically, with respect.

2.7.2 Addressing misuse of the Bible and theology

According to Bongani (2000:15) the Bible is often quoted incorrectly and out of context, or misinterpreted, in order to provide comfort to widows. Most Christians are guilty of misusing or misinterpreting Biblical texts, even Church leaders. The church tries to engage more with the issue of death, widows and widowers, in order to give church members better theological framework to deal with these issues. What is said and done to widows are in many cases more culturally induced than biblically. This is countered in theological forums.

2.7.3 The Church Shows solidarity with widows

Bongani (2000) continues to say that it is the church's responsibility to liberate widows from the unjust experiences they go through in the community. The church is a critically important agent in achieving a society in which women's equality and dignity is recognised. If the dignity and importance of women in general is not recognised, the plight of widows cannot be addressed. The church therefore tries to identify and side with women, not only in order to better the situation of widows, but because it is its Christian duty to be in solidarity with those that are in pain.

2.7.4 The Church gives widows room to tell their testimonies.

The church is called to listen to the testimonies being told by widows, of their experiences of abuse and pain, of the struggles widows go through and how these can be tabled to bring positive change. (Amba: 2001)

2.7.5 The Church Provide practical pastoral care

Through some practical pastoral care models, the church may achieve wholeness, healing and liberation to widows and become an instrument of justice to widows and those who are

marginalised. The church has provided mechanisms or special facilities that helps and assists widows to heal and liberate themselves from unfortunate and negative widowhood experiences. The church provides the counselling and emotional support that widows need. Not only immediately after the death of a husband, but also in the long term. (Bongani 2000:15)

2.8 Widows in the Bible

God's concern for widows and orphans is a consistent theme throughout the Bible. This concern was enshrined in the Covenant Law which God gave to the nation of Israel: "Do not take advantage of a widow or an orphan. If you do and they cry out to me, I will certainly hear their cry" (Exodus 22:22-23). The Israelites were also instructed to make regular provisions for widows and orphans through tithes and offerings (Deuteronomy 14:28, 29; 26:12). The Psalms extol God's defence of widows and orphans: "A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling" (Psalms 68:5, 11:17-18, 146:7-9). Likewise, the prophets admonished God's people to demonstrate their righteousness through the care of widows and orphans, and warned them of God's impending judgement if they did not do so (Isaiah 10:1-3; Jeremiah 7:5-7, 22:2-5; Zachariah 7:9-11; Malachi 3:5). Also the New Testament emphasizes that the essence of "pure religion'' as caring for widows and orphans (James 1:27)1Timothy 5:4, 5. But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to be godly to their own house, and give back to their forebears what is due to them; for that is good and pleasing before God. A true widow trusts in God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day.

In 1Timothy 5:9-16, Paul advises that we should not let a widow under sixty years old be taken into the number, unless she has been the wife of one man and well reported for good works; if she has brought up children, has lodged strangers, washed the feet of saints, relieved

the afflicted and diligently followed every good work. However, Paul is cautious about younger widows for when they have begun to grow wanton against Christ, they desire to marry, having condemnation because they have cast off their first faith. And besides this, they become idle, wandering from house to house, thus becoming gossips and busybodies, saying things which they ought not to. Therefore, it is advisable that the younger widows marry, bear children, manage the house and, therefore, give no opportunity to the adversary to speak reproachfully, for some have already turned aside after Satan. If any believing man or woman has widows, let them relieve them, and do not let the church be burdened, that it may relieve those who are really widows (www.equalitydepot.com, accessed on 18 December 2012).

Hall (1983:1) laments that a widow faces trials and circumstances that other people have not had to deal with. She often needs as much as anything else a good model. The scriptures have several examples of widows who are worthy of special attention.

2.8.1 Naomi and Ruth: Broken but Blessed

Two examples of godly widows are found in the book of Ruth: Naomi and Ruth. Naomi left Bethlehem with her husband died, her sons married Moabite women, and then her sons died. She most certainly had problems. She faced hunger, grief, and loneliness, yet she knew what to do she wanted to return to her people. When she started to leave, one of her daughter in-law, Ruth, pleaded with Naomi to allow her to go to Bethlehem too. Ruth saw qualities in her suffering mother-in-law that made her want to be involved in her life. What a ministry a godly widow might have in her own family. When she responds correctly to trial, the glory of Jesus attracts others to Him through that kind of widow. How many widows have this kind of influence with those who know best? It goes without saying that Ruth was a widow too. Her husband had died, she faced an uncertain future as she was separated from her home and her

religion, and she had no way to make a living. This young widow was facing pressure yet in it, she saw God's hand. Her character is note worthy. She did not become bitter as a result of her problems. Instead, she made a difficult decision under pressure when she decided to a accompany Naomi. She was also a willing servant. She asked to be sent to work in the fields to glean; this helped Naomi helped Naomi resolve her own bitterness. She shared with Naomi the grain she had worked hard to get. Perhaps, most impressive is that Ruth allowed God to work out her remarriage to Boaz. She trusted His wisdom to have that choice, hence as a result of this Naomi becomes a nurse to the grandfather of King David. Because she responded well to her circumstances, gave wise counsel to her daughter in-law and evoked Ruth's love and admirations, she became part of God's instrument of redemption for His people. Naomi and Ruth are examples of what God may do with widows who trust Him (Hall 1983:38-40).

The widow of Zarephath was desolate but dependable (1kings 17:8-24; Luke 4:25-26) It is true, as Hall (1983:40) puts it, that God is the same yesterday, today and forever. Therefore, when we study the lives of widows in the Bible, we can find that much assurance about God's care for widows. Such a story is found in 1 Kings 17 and also alluded to by Jesus in Luke 4:25-26. God told Elijah to go to Zarephath, for he had commanded a widow there to take care of him. It is encouraging to know that when a person is available to God, that God will take note and use them to meet the needs of another person. This widow could have been self centred and feeling sorry for herself but instead she was an instrument of God to minister to the prophet of God. Hall (1983:38) indicates that she was leaving on a very little: "And she said, as the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake but a handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruise: and behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat and die" (1 Kings 17:12) Many widows can be identified with

this problem. But this did not make her inacceptable for God to use. Many widows may feel that since they have too little to share, they can't do much for God. Here we see God choosing to use this widow who was very poor. She is described as the bread winner of the family. Her son was her responsibility. Many widows fit into this category. God knows about this and is ready to perform miracles to meet their needs (Hall 1983:43).

2.8.2 The Example of Anna as a Widow

One example of godly widows is found in Luke 2:36-38, which speaks of Anna. Anna is mentioned only briefly in this passage, but enough is told about her for a widow to see that she is an excellent example of what God has in mind for widows. And there was a prophetess, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with a husband seven years after her marriage, and then as a widow to the age of eighty four. And she never left the temple, serving night and day with fasting and prayers. And at that very moment she came up and began giving thanks to God and continued to speak to Him to all those who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem (Luke 2:36-38)

In this passage are listed seven specific things that are said about Anna, the widow (Hall 1983:30-35).

2.8.3 Anna as a Prophetess

This means that Anna received and communicated with God's people about revelation from him. This is a high honor for any child of God, to be given that special grace. The basic quality involved in this matter of Anna's prophetic gift is her sensitivity. Because she has endured more suffering than some, she has had the opportunity to develop the intimate knowledge of God and His ways. Rather than become unduly sensitive about her own needs

and distress, she has special privilege of meeting God in her pain. A godly widow will want the spiritual sensitivity of Anna (Hall 1983:31).

2.8.4 As a Widow she lived In the Temple

As a widow, Anna was free from any obligation besides worship of the Lord. What a privilege! She chooses to devote her life to the place of worship. She was a minister to every Jew who entered that holy place. She did not look at her widowhood as a liability, but as an asset which enabled her to turn undivided worship to God. A godly widow will emulate Anna's desire for constant worship (Hall 1983:32).

2.8.5 As a Widow she Served God Day and Night

As a matter of fact, Anna served as a living example as a widow who had a purpose in life. She was a servant of the living God. Since He was always at work, she was as well; her diligence was as a result of her purposeful life. Many widows feel that their purpose in life comes to an end when they lose their husbands or when their children leave home. The Bible uses Anna as a ground to encourage her fellow widows. "Anna knew better, she knew that she had a unique freedom to be involved in her lord's redemptive plan. She was diligent, not bored, because she understood the importance of her work. What an example Anna is of a purposeful widow!'' (Hall 1983:32-34).

2.8.6 As a Widow she Gave Thanks

According to Hall (1983), when Anna saw Jesus, she immediately began to thank God for the honor of having seen the messiah. Once she saw Him, she would not have traded that pleasure for any of the things she might have had: a husband, children, and security. Also, she saw Jesus because of where she was. Other women missed the Christ but not Anna. She gave

thanks to the Lord. A godly widow is not bitter, but thankful, because in all her trouble, she sees the Lord.

2.8.7 As a Widow she was a Missionary

Ann was a good disciple of the Lord's disciple. She spoke of Jesus to everyone who would listen. All who came to the Temple for days and weeks after her experience she had about Christ who had come to His people. What a testimony she had! She had actually seen the promised one. A godly widow shares what she knows about Jesus. Many will hear her who would not hear a preacher, but her "eyes witness is an irrefutable account" (Hall 1983:36-38).

2.9 Theoretical Framework

Researchers have come up with the theory which tries to explain ways in which people adapt to bereavement, which includes loss of spouse. Since a widow undergoes very uncomfortable experiences like depression, loneliness, grief, disorganization and reorganization in order to adapt successfully to loss, there is need to train them to cope with such experiences (Lopata 1999:438). It is for this reason that Stroebe and Henk Schut (1999:439) developed a theory which explains the ways in which people adapt to bereavement, and this theory was developed originally with widowhood in mind. The theory is known as *"Dual Process model of bereavement''* (DPM) of copying with bereavement. The theory is relevant to the current study since, according Stroebe and Henk (1999); it explains how widows can adapt to bereavement following the loss of a spouse. It describes two types of copying behaviour or experiences: *loss-oriented copying* and *restoration-oriented copying*. Loss-oriented copying comprises of grief work which means avoid making changes to one who is bereaved (Lopata 1999:438).

Lopata (1999) suggests that a widow refuses to accept the reality that her husband has passed away and this makes it difficult for her to adapt to the situation. This type of copying is helpful to prepare widows to accept and adjust to the situation in which they are. For instance, if one has been preparing dinner for two people, now immediately after the passing away of the spouse, she has to prepare dinner for one person.

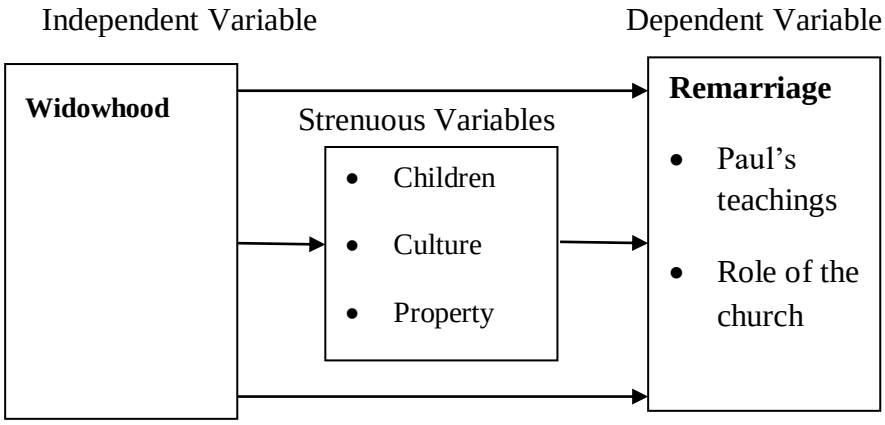
On the other hand, *Restoration-oriented copying* means now the widow or the person bereaved accepts the situation the way it is and attends the life changes by adjusting accordingly. This kind of copying is vital to widowhood because it helps one to accept and change from one situation to another, this means that the widow now has to think of new life and new relationships and new bonding. This one in a way prepares someone to the new life which reduces depression, stress and loneliness. Further, it helps bereaved people to forget about their grief and involves them in those things and activities that will not remind them of the past (Lopata 1999:437).

Accordingly, this theory is apt in the analysis of issues relating to the challenges widows face after the death of their husbands among Christians who profess the Seventh Day Adventist faith among the AbaGusii of western Kenya.

2.10 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is a theoretical structure of statements, principles and rules that holds together the ideas comprising abroad concept. (www.businssdictionary.com) accessed on April 24, 2014 .This area deals with the interaction of variables. Variables are factors that keep on changing in a research. Independent variables are factors that cause changes to a dependent or variable or variables. Dependent variables are factors manipulated by the independent variables (they are measured by investigation). In a conceptual framework the

independent and dependent factors relate or interact with each other in a research to bring out the expected out come.



Source: Researcher Table .1

This research focuses on widowhood which is an independent variable. This affects the choice of either to remarry or remain unmarried (dependent variable). However, several factors interplay before the widows make a decision to remarry or remain unmarried (Extraneous variables). These factors include: Children, Culture and Property on one hand, and the Bible teachings (Paul's Teachings) and the role of the SDA church on the other hand.

2.11 Conclusion

According to Hall (1983:25), widows face challenges that are quite unique. One of these is the need for entertainment in daily life. Whereas at one time she was able to commit her time and energies to her husband and children and draw much pleasure from their triumphs and growth, she now tends to spend much time alone, with no real purpose. This is not God's desire for His children. The widow has a particular role and ministry in her church, but she will not content in her state of widowhood. It is true, as Collins (1988:16) puts it that since widows are facing several challenges counselling provides encouragement and guidance for

those who have lost their husbands, hence they have been left lonely and disappointed. Counselling stimulates personality growth and development; it helps widows to cope more effectively with the challenges of widowhood. One of the thorns in the flesh of the SDA church is the task of dealing with the challenges of widows and also supporting them.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter and its sub sections contain information relating to the research approaches that were employed in the collection and analysis of data. This subsection outlines the main elements of the design which contains sampling techniques, methods of data collection, analysis, presentation and interpretation. It also explains the validity and reliability of the research process. Also contained in this section are sub sections on ethical issues and limitations.

3.2 Research Design

This research is a case study of the challenges facing widows as they try to live out Biblical teaching on whether to get remarried or remain unmarried.

A case study is a method of study in depth rather than breath. The case study places more emphasis on the full analysis of a limited number of events or conditions and their interrelations. Thus the case study is essentially an intensive investigation of the particular unit under consideration.

The object of the case study method is to locate the factors that account for the behaviour patterns of the given as an integrated totality (Kothari 2003:140). Hence the case study design is appropriate for this study because it provides in-depth understanding of the condition of the widows.

3.2.1. Data Collection

The main instrument for data collection for this study was the questionnaire. Members were given the questionnaires and it was administered by the researcher himself as they filled them confidentially by giving their own opinions and feelings pertaining to the research on challenges widows face and the role of the S.D.A Church in addressing these challenges. Other instruments used are listed in subsections 3.2.2 to 3.2.4.

3.2.2 Primary Data

Here, three methods were used to give the primary data: oral interviews, participant observation and informal discussions (Focus Group discussion) in the church and outside the Church, which are outlined in subsections 3.2.3 to 3.2.5.

3.2.3 Oral Interviews

This was the primary method of data collection. This seemed to be more interactive than questionnaire method. The researcher was able to meet widows in and outside the church through the participation of widows' workshops and seminars as one of the facilitators and in this process he was able to interact with the widows and get their views and experiences.

3.2.4 Participant Observation

Through the participation and involvement of the widows in church programmes like preaching services, the researcher learnt lessons from widows' sermons and presentations.

3.2.5 Focus Group Discussion

Through this method, candid and in-depth data was collected from the widows from selected churches.

3.3 Secondary Data

The researcher was also able to access the published materials such as journals, articles and all relevant books in the library.

3.3.1 Study Population

The population of the Seventh Day Adventist Church in Kisii County is 12,000; the Church has four Stations. Where 8 Churches were involved from every station. This was the study population from which data was drawn and about which conclusions were made.

3.3.2 Study Sample

Kisii County has three twenty five (325) churches which are grouped together into four stations. Random sampling was used to select eight (8) churches from each station; this totalled (32) Churches. Random sampling was again used to select one hundred and fifty (150) church members from each of the thirty two (32) churches. This in turn provided a sample size of one thousand two hundred (1200) Church members.

3.4 Data analysis Interpretation and Presentation

The study involved quantitative and qualitative analysis of data which was interpreted and presented in the form of computed percentages, graphs and pie charts.

3.5 Validity and Reliability

Before the final survey, a pilot test was conducted at Kisii Central and Jogoo S.D.A churches to ensure that the research instruments were valid and reliable. The results of the pilot test facilitated the review of the survey questions.

3.6 Ethical Issues

To maintain the confidentiality of the respondents, their names are not reflected in the questionnaires. Public and private individual consent was obtained from the respondents and the church prior to the research process. For example, a research permit was obtained from the Kisii County Governor's office. Further, all sources of information have been acknowledged throughout all the stages of this research.

3.7 Limitations of Study

Given the nature of this study, which focused on fundamental biblical teaching, some church leaders and members may not have provided accurate information towards the research questions, however the researcher emphasized that all the respondents were not allowed to write their names on the questionnaire since the filling of the questionnaire was confidential. Further the researcher conducted a seminar on the importance and the purpose of this research more especially to the S.D.A Christian widows.

Another limitation was the scarcity of literature dealing with widows in the context of Ekegusii culture and the Seventh Day Adventist Church in this subject matter. Here the researcher used the available literatures and more so he made use of the library by reviewing all literature pertaining to widowhood and he conducted oral interviews among the S.D.A Church members.

3.8 Conclusion

This research was conducted using both library and empirical survey. The area that was covered is Kisii County, where by 1200 Church members were selected from 32 Churches of the four Church Stations. Simple random sampling method was employed. For the library research most books related to widowhood were reviewed, closed ended questions were

administered to 1200 members of the four Church stations and for the empirical survey, the data collected was tabulated in pie charts and graphs and analyzed to give the findings.

CHAPTER: 4 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with presentation and analysis of data gathered from the study of Paul's Perspective on Widowhood (1 Corinthians 7:39-40): A Case Study of the Challenges of Widowhood in the Seventh Day Adventist Church in Kisii County Kenya. The analysis is based on data gathered from respondents through the self administered questionnaire. A total of 1200 copies of the questionnaires consisting of closed ended items using the Likert scale were distributed to the selected respondents; eight (8) churches from each station; this totalled to (32) Churches. One thousand One hundred (1100) copies of the questionnaire were returned.

4.2 What the Bible teaches Regarding the Marital Status of Widows

The study sought to establish Paul's theological aspects in dealing with widows. The study further sought to establish the basis upon which widows would remarry and what laws granted them the leeway to remarry. It also sought to investigate the conditions for remarriage or staying as they are. The following were the findings in Paul's writings with focus on 1 Corinthians 7:39-40.

According to Paul's teachings the partners are bound by law for the entire span of time (chronos) that their partners are alive. This clearly implies that the bond of marriage is so strong that it can only be broken by the death of the marriage partners.

Paul continues to say that the liberty of a widow is greater than that of a virgin, because a virgin, is under the power and at the dispose of her partner (Bacchiocchi 1991:25); but a widow is at her own dispose; and death having dissolved her former obligation she is at entire

liberty to marry, or not marry, and to marry whomever she pleases, and indeed according to Paul that is not forbidden by the laws of God.

The Apostle Paul addresses the issue of remarriage for a Christian widow, since she is no longer bound by law to her former marriage relationship but is free to remarry. However, on one hand because of the impending circumstances Paul advocated for widows to remain single. On the other hand in 1Timothy 5:11 Paul says; But refuse to enrol younger widows; for when they grow wanton against Christ they desire to marry, (RSV). Here Paul implies that young Christian widows should remarry if they are unable to control their passions.

In 1Corinthians 7:8-9, Paul puts it;

> To the unmarried and the widows I say that it is well for them to remain single as I do. But if they cannot exercise self-control, they should marry. For it is better to marry than to be aflame with passion (RSV).

Here Paul leaves the choice up to the individual believer as to whether or not to get remarried or remain unmarried after considering their God ordained circumstances. It is here the researcher discovered that the widows should be given their freedom of choice to remarry or remain unmarried. Therefore, in 1Corinthians 7:39-40 here Paul is teaching about the permanence of the Christian marriage relationship, and the freedom of choice of the widows concerning getting remarried or remaining unmarried.

> A wife is bound to her husband as long as he lives. If the husband dies, she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord. But in my judgment she is happier if she remains as she is. And I think that I have the Spirit of God (RSV).

Through Paul's teachings the researcher discovered that there is a law of marriage in 1Corinthians 7:39 which states that "a wife is bound by the law of marriage while the husband is alive." It therefore follows that a widow is not bound by that law of marriage because she has lost a husband. Here the Apostle emphasizes in 1Corinthians that to be free of the law of rendering affection, one has to remain unmarried. It is here in 1Corinthians 7:1-

7 where Paul reveals that one of its components is that the husband and wife are bound to render to each other the affection that is due the other. (www.spiritandtruth.org accessed on 25march 2014)

The final way to look at this passage of Paul's teaching is to understand the statement "in the Lord" to not refer to marrying a Christian. Instead it is argued that "in the Lord" means according to the laws of God. There are many scriptures where the phrase "in the Lord" in used in such a way. Ephesians 6:1, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right." Colossians 3:18, "Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord." These are two clear passages where Paul used the phrase "in the Lord" to refer to obeying God's will and not to being a Christian. Paul is not telling children to only obey their parents if their parents are Christians. He is telling children to obey their parents because that is God's will. The same for wives, in Colossians 3**.** Paul is not telling wives to only submit to Christian husbands. He is telling wives to submit because this is the will of God.

Therefore Paul is telling the Corinthians that when a spouse dies, they are free to marry whomever they choose, according to the laws that God has given. In particular, they are free to marry according to the laws that Paul has just stated in chapter 7. Paul has just spent a whole chapter dealing with God's legislation in marriage. Paul is reminding his readers that these commands are still in effect, even if your spouse dies.

(http://westpalmbeachchurchofchrist.com/diff_quest/only_in_the_lord.html) accessed on 28, may,2014.

In a nutshell a wife is bound to her husband while a widow is not, after the death of her husband a widow is not bound to her late husband. She is free to remain unmarried or to remarry to someone she likes because she is at her own dispose death having dissolved her

former marital obligations. According to Paul in (1 Timothy 5:14) if the widow is younger she should not be enrolled in the widows' list but when they grow "wanton against Christ they desire to get remarried, it is better to marry than to be aflame with passion." A widow should not be dictated by the in-laws or the community or by the culture since a widow has the freedom to choose to be married or to remain unmarried. This addresses widows who are Christians. They should be left to follow the teachings of the Bible. There are not other instructions which ought to hinder widows from remarriage since their husbands have died and the widows are bound by no law then.

4.3 Challenges Widows Face in the S.D.A Church

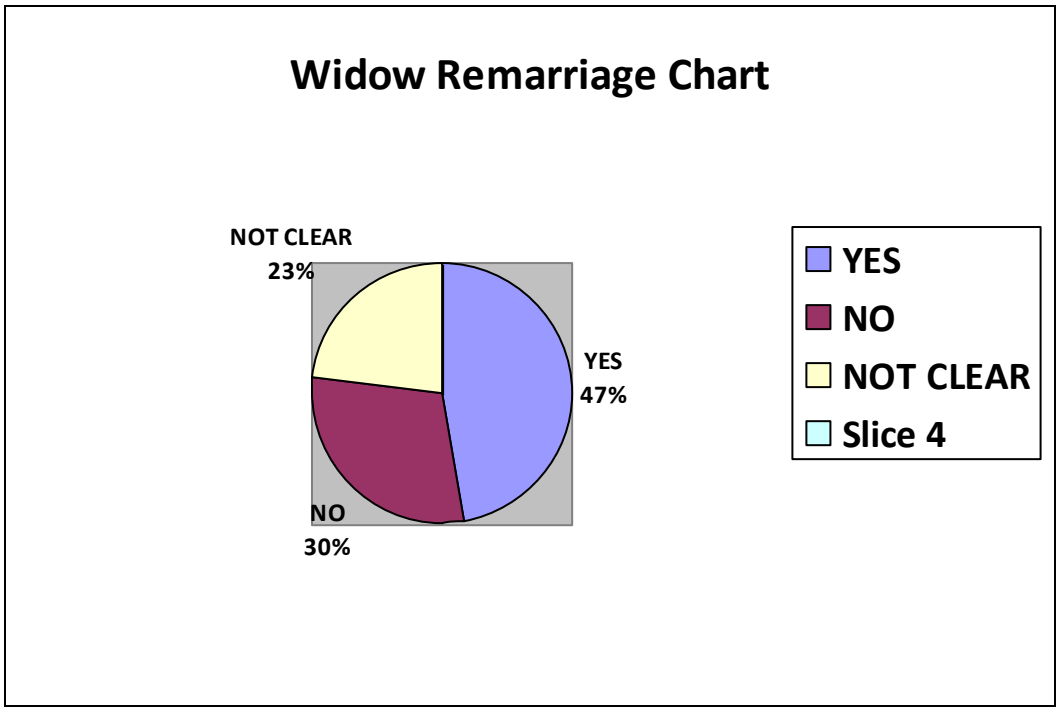
In this section the study sought to establish outstanding challenges that widows experience in the event of their spouse passing away and they would want to embrace the advice of Paul regarding their remarriage or remaining unmarried. In the questionnaire and interviews were included items that sought to understand the very challenges the widows' experience from themselves and what the members perceive as challenges that face the widows. Paul's teachings are based on the original plan for man at creation where each individual was held responsible for his or her deeds (Genesis 3:1-8; 2:17, 18). The dominance of man over woman which practice has been handed over from generation to generation should not be held as an excuse to cause people to think that a woman was a lesser creation (Bacchiocchi 1991: 151). The researcher agrees also with (Bacchiocchi, 1987) that the woman was created in the image of God as man develops her own individual relationship with God. That freedom and free will inherent in man is the same as in woman

4.3.1 Should the widow be remarried?

Here, the researcher learnt that out of the total number of respondents, 520 (47.3%) said Yes, that is, the church allows widow remarriage, whereas 330 (30%) said (No), that is, the church does not allow widow remarriage. On the other hand, 253 (22.7%) indicated that the policy is not clear. However, according to the comparisons in the chart below, the church allows widow remarriage. This is in relation to 572 (47.3%) who said Yes as opposed to those who said No 330 (30.0%).

In practice and in reality it was proved that most people are for widow remarriage this was revealed from the responses as they were obtained from the field through the sampled population. The researcher also concurs with the Old Testament teachings as well as what the research proved, that is the widow should be remarried as illustrated in the following chart.

Chart :1



Source: Researcher

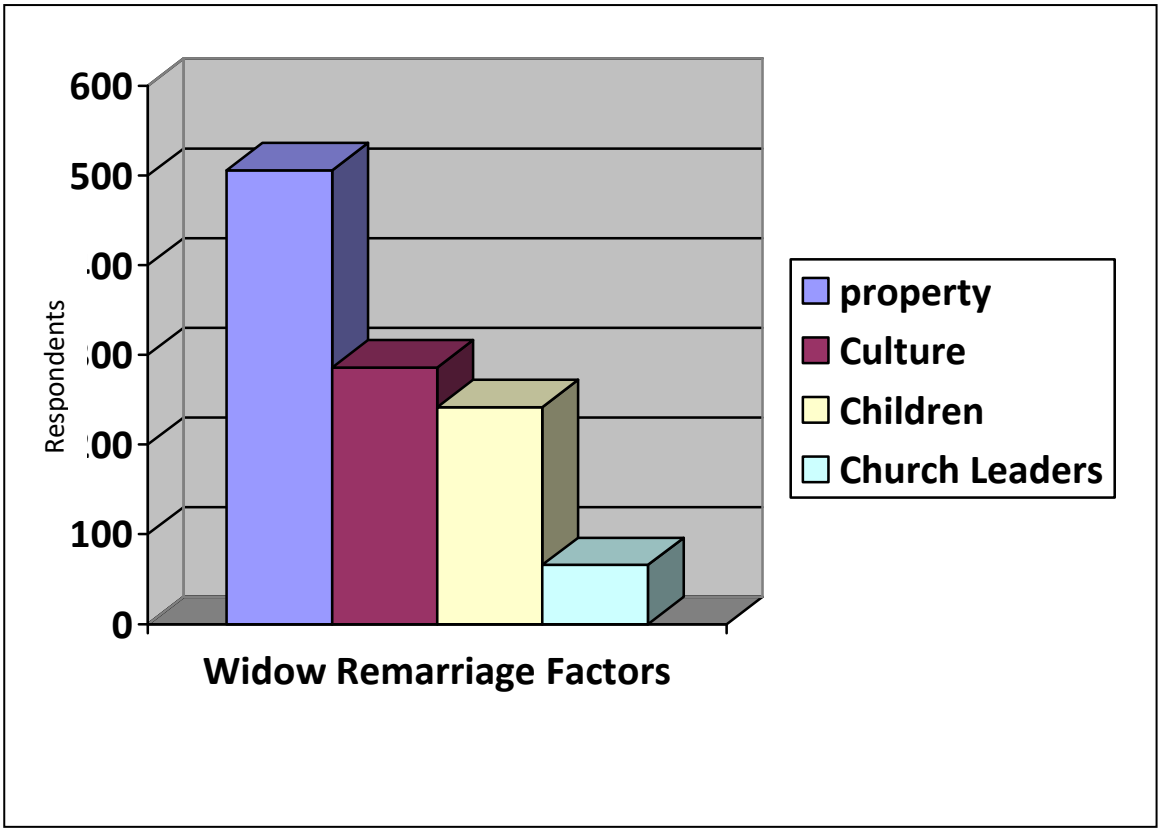
Most of the respondents in the interview process said, is not ideal to get remarried because;

First, they donot wish to spend their deceased ‘s husband’s property else where apart from spending it to his children and the family. Second, they do not desire to move the children of the deceased from their original home to the new home.

4.4.2 What factors are considered in determining widow remarriage?

As can be seen in the graph below, out of the total number of respondents, 561 (46.4%) said property determines widow remarriage in the sense that if the late husband left his property behind this will compel the widow to remain unmarried to enable her take care of her late husband’s property. If the husband had no property then it makes it easier for the widow to get remarried. 280 (25.5%) said that culture determines remarriage, 239 (21.8%) said remarriage depends on children, if the widow has children it is difficult to get remarried with the children of another husband since the relatives of the husband will want the widow to take care of children in remembrance of the deceased. And if the widow has no children, it becomes easier and acceptable for the widow to get remarried. 70(6.4%) said that the decision depends on church leaders.

Graph:1 Widow Remarriage Factors



Source : Researcher

Alice (1999) says that many widows have decided not to remarry due to the threat of losing their property**.** In some cases, the will of the dead husband imposes a condition that if his widow remarries, his property will go to the children or other family members. In other cases, the widow fears that the control of the economic land and property will go to the new husband if she remarries. Again Alice (1999) on the side of children puts it that in deciding whether or not to remarry, children comes first, some children resist remarriage because; first they are afraid of losing their mother , secondly they feel they are betraying the memory of the deceased father by accepting their mother's new husband and thirdly they are still grieving. Children should be allowed to express their feelings. Since they are likely to ask

questions such as, “Where will we live? What do I call him? What would my real dad think about him?’’ Most children will bring up the memory of the dead father.

On the other hand, Owen (1996:119) says that if widows are free to remarry, the contemplation of remarriage is often fraught with conflicts. Widows worry that remarriage may be upsetting for their children because the new husband may mistreat the children of the former marriage; that remarriage is an insult to the memory of the deceased. Owen (1996) goes on to argue that the decision to remarry often results in bitter conflicts between the parents of the widow and those of the dead husband, and between potential step-children and step-siblings. Grieving widows may feel that it is impossible to love another man to the extent to which they loved their husbands. They fear appearing disloyal. If the first marriage was not happy, there is all the more reason to fear a second marriage. Widows who have suffered unhappiness or abuses in marriage have little incentive to risk further unhappiness. Nor do they wish to endure a second widowhood.

Owen (1996) emphatically continues to say that Betty Potash lists factors other than the desire to re-establish marital or consort relationships which influence African widows’ decisions concerning remarriage. Among these are a desire for sex, sex and companionship and the sanction against non marital sexuality. Other factors are the age of the widow and number and age of her children.

Through interviews, one church member observed, “If we remarry, people will not know where to bury us.” She went on to tell the researcher about a woman whose husband died and she remained a widow for fifteen years before she remarried a man from another clan. She died after twelve years of marriage to the new husband. When she died, the new husband wanted to bury her in his home area but the dead husband’s clan also insisted that they had to

bury her in their home. A long battle legal ensued. Finally, the first husband's clan buried her. (Respondent C Oral interview 1/06/2013).

From the graph above, the research concludes that it will be more reasonable for the widow to remain as a widow since the circumstances surrounding remarriage seem to be more difficulty and more challenging than insisting on remarriage. Although Paul gives the freedom to the widow to remain either unmarried or get remarried in both cases the widow may face a number of challenges. For instance if she remains unmarried she may suffer the challenge of economic, social and emotional support among others. On the other hand the remarried widow may also suffer the problems of relocation to a new home, where to place the children the wealth of the late husband and the social stigma of the community.

To the question: Should widows be allowed to re-marry? Most respondents agreed to that widow should be allowed to remarry. Some, however, held that in doing so, the status of the children should be carefully considered. This in many instances posed a challenge to the widows. Also the consent of the in-laws was seen as a formidable challenge that curtails the freedom of the widows from considering remarriage.

Another item included was one that sought to know the factors to consider in determining widows' remarriage. Most respondents 506(46.4%) indicated that property of the late husband determines widows remarriage. This also poses a challenge to widows considering remarriage. Children's consent also becomes a challenge as the children may feel that they would lose their mother while the mother may think of upsetting the children in the event of mistreatment from the new father and husband. Culture also causes challenges to the widow in that if she deserts the former home for a new one, it is regarded as an insult to the memory of the deceased. At personal consideration some widows feel that it is impossible to love another man to the extent to which they loved their husbands. Some widows see that it would

be difficult to ascertain their burial places. Economic support was also stated as a challenge in meeting the demands of life in relocating to a new home.

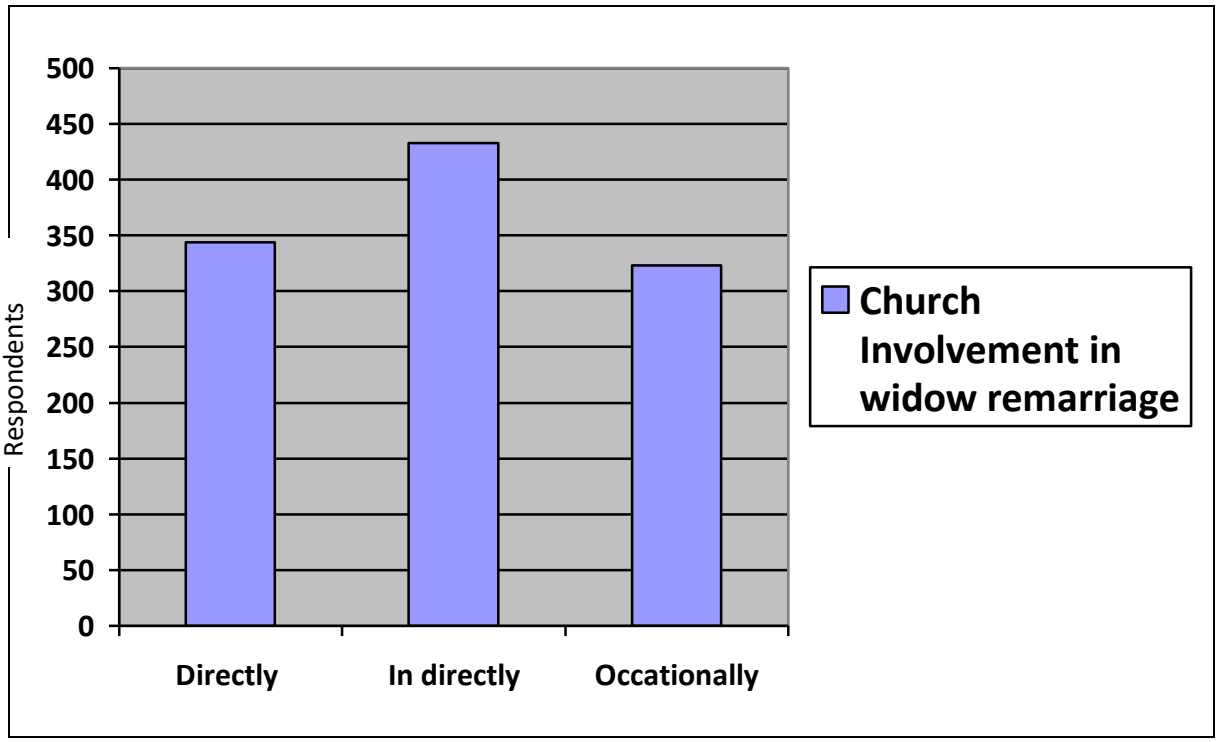
4.4 The role of the S.D.A Church in addressing the challenges of widows in the Church

The S.D.A Church addresses the challenges of widows in the Church by initiating the widow remarriage policy which, however, according to the research done seems not to be effective at all. That is why the Church has a special role on sensitizing and educating the Church members on this issue of widow remarriage.

4.4.1 Does your Church play any role in initiating widow remarriage

170 (15.5%) agrees that the church initiates widow remarriage while 259 (23.6%)said the church initiates indirectly hence the negligible respondents 149 (13.6%) said the church occationally initiates widow remarriage. It is here where by the researcher learnt that the S.D.A church plays a partial role to initiate widow remarriage, though it encourages widows to remain unmarried and believes that Jesus will take the role of the late husband. The interviews also reveal that, as human beings, widows also have the desire for sexual satisfaction, of which they are not given the opportunity to exercise their freedom since the in-laws from both sides would not want to see the case where dowry is paid twice. It raises many questions as to whom the widow belongs; to the late or current husband. Because of this, most widows are forced to look for other means like prostitution which eventually leads to sexually transmitted diseases and even HIV and AIDS which may lead to death. If widows could be given counselling and the freedom to choose to remarry or to remain unmarried, this could be a solution to the sexual challenges (Respondent C, Oral interview, 10/6/2013.)

Graph:2 Church Role in initiating Widow Remarriage

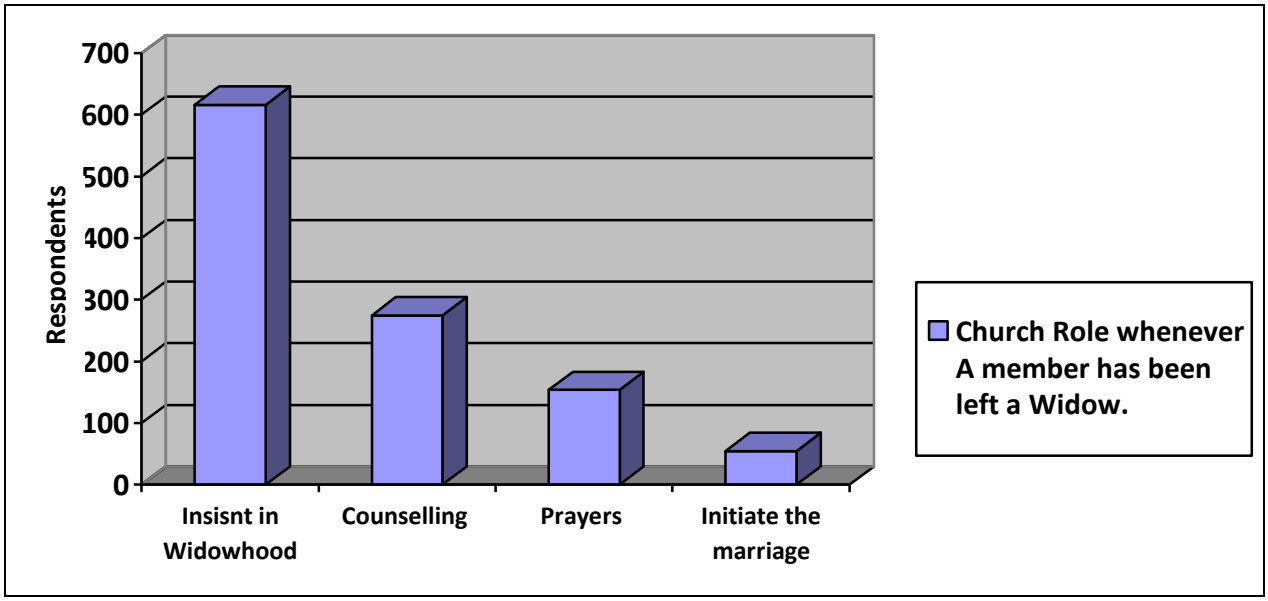


Source: Reseacher

4.4.2 What role does the Church play whenever a member has been left a widow

From the graph below, out of the total respondents 616 (56%) said that widows should insist in widowhood and the 275(25 %) said that the church gives counselling, whereas 154 (14%) said the church prays for the widows and that is all. However, the most negligible number of the respondents 55 (5%) said that the church initiates widow remarriage

Graph 3: Role the church plays whenever a member has been left a widow

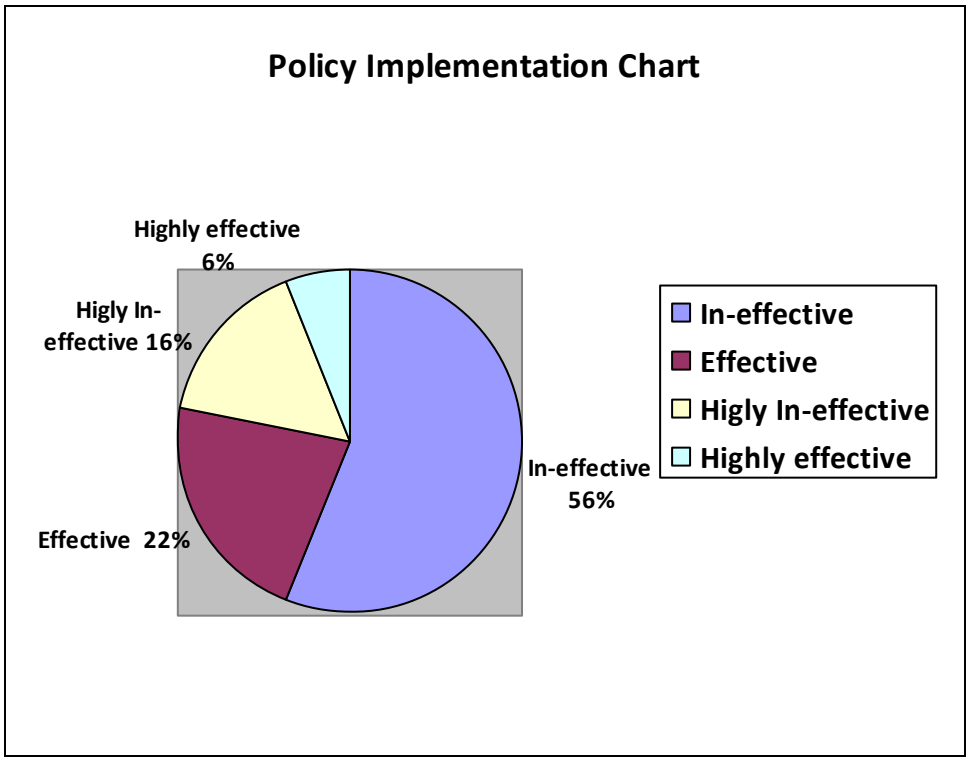


It is from this report that the researcher learnt that the S.D.A Church indirectly discourages widow remarriage since the majority of the respondents 616 (56%) said that the widow should insist on widowhood instead of being set free to remarry or not to remarry. On the other hand through oral interviews it emerged that, in spite of feeling lonely and wanting a close relationship, widows may feel compelled to disavow interest in remarriage for many reasons. Some have a need to remain "loyal" to the memory of her dead husband. Others fear losing a husband again. Yet others want to remarry but have difficulties in finding a suitable partner. Still others fear of reactions from the society (Respondent F, oral interview 5/06/2013).

4.5.3 How effective is the emplementation of the church policy concerning widows?

The chart below indicates that out of the total number of respondents, 616 (56%) said that the policy is in effective whereas 242 (22%) believe the policy is effective, 176 (16%) said the policy is highly in effective while 66 (6%) said it is highly effective. Therefore, from this research the researcher learnt that the policy is there but it is not properly implemented. This is explicitly explained in the chart below.

Chart: 2



Source:Researcher

According to the chart above, the church has not implemented the policy that is there. That is why widows are facing several challenges in the S.D.A. Church. This brings into perspective why Stroebe and Henk Schut (1999:439) developed a conceptual theory which explains the ways in which widows adapt to bereavement, and this theory was developed originally with widowhood in mind. The theory is known as *"Dual Process model of bereavement''* (DPM) of copying with bereavement. The theory is relevant to the current study since, according Stroebe and Henk (1999), it explains how widows can adapt to bereavement following the loss of a spouse. It describes two types of copying behaviour or experiences: *loss-oriented copying* and *restoration-oriented copying*. Loss-oriented copying comprises of grief work which means avoid making changes to one who is bereaved (Lopata 1999:438). However, the S.D.A policy that is there focuses more on women generally than on widows in particular. According to the S.D.A. Church manual (policy 2010):

''Women's ministries uphold, encourages, and challenges women in their daily walk as disciples of Jesus Christ and as members of his church. Its objectives are to foster spiritual growth and renewal; affirm that women are of immeasurable worth by virtue of their creation and redemption, equip them for service ,and offer women's perspectives on Church issues; minister to the broad spectrum of women's needs''.

It is in this respect that it appears that the policy is more biased to women than it is to widows.

Although it was observed that most widows 610(55.5%) should insist on remaining widows. Most respondents also noted that the church should be at the forefront in providing guidance and counselling and that there was need for intensive prayer programs for widows to surmount the pressures of widowhood. Lack of companionship was seen as a major setback but on interviews it was revealed that the church fellowship programmes and other avenues should be employed to replace the demands.

A number of respondents 616 (55.5%) stated that there were no effective church policies regarding widowhood and remarriage. This weakness would make the church not responsive to the plights of widows hence letting the prevalent cultural practices to continue. Most of these cultural practices are not in harmony with the Biblical teachings.

4.6 Conclusion

From the analysis, the researcher concluded that the S.D.A Church has got the widow policy but little has been done on it that is why the church has not been able to alleviate these challenges facing widows. The S.D.A Church encourages freedom of choice but the church leadership has failed to implement it due to the interference of culture. So they counsel the widows to remain with Christ as their husband. The church seems to be inclined to culture more than the teachings of the Apostle Paul.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This Chapter gives a summary of the findings, conclusion and recommendations drawn from the findings in connection with the study carried on Paul's perspective on widowhood (1Corinthians 7:39-40): A case study of the challenges of widowhood in the seventh-day Adventist Church in Kisii County Kenya. The study objectives were; to understand Paul's teaching regarding the marital status of widows by doing an exegesis of 1Corinthians 7:39-40, to identify the challenges that the widows face in S.D.A. Church in Kisii County in their endeavour to embrace Paul's advice to widows whether to remarry or not to remarry and to investigate the role the S.D.A. Church in Kisii County plays in addressing the challenges of widows.

5.2 Summary of Research Findings

The study findings from the analyzed data are presented below under the following sub-headings derived from the objectives of the study on Paul's perspective on widowhood (1Corinthians 7:39-40): A case study of the challenges of widowhood in the seventh-day Adventist Church in Kisii County, Kenya.

5.2.1 Paul's teaching Regarding the Marital Status of Widows

Through Paul's teachings the researcher discovered that there is a law of marriage in 1Corinthians 7:39 which states that "a wife is bound by the law of marriage while the husband is alive." It therefore follows that a widow is not bound by that law of marriage because she has lost a husband. Here the Apostle emphasizes in 1Corinthians that to be free

of the law of rendering affection, one has to remain unmarried. It is here in 1Corinthians 7:1-7 where Paul reveals that one of its components is that the husband and wife are bound to render to each other the affection that is due the other. (www.spiritandtruth.org accessed on 25march 2014)

In a nutshell a wife is bound to her husband while a widow is not, after the death of her husband a widow is not bound to her late husband. She is free to remain unmarried or to remarry to someone she likes because she is at her own dispose death having dissolved her former marital obligations. According to Paul in (1 Timothy 5:14) if the widow is younger she should not be enrolled in the widows' list but when they grow "wanton against Christ they desire to get remarried, it is better to marry than to be aflame with passion." A widow should not be dictated by the in-laws or the community or by the culture since a widow has the freedom to choose to be married or to remain unmarried. This addresses widows who are Christians. They should be left to follow the teachings of the Bible. There are not other instructions which ought to hinder widows from remarriage since their husbands have died and the widows are bound by no law.

5.2.2 Challenges faced by widows in the S.D.A Church as they endeavour to embrace Paul's advice

To the question: Should widows be allowed to re-marry? Most respondents agreed to that that widows should be allowed to remarry. Some, however, held that in doing so, the status of the children should be carefully considered. This in many instances posed a challenge to the widows. Also the consent of the in-laws was seen as a formidable challenge that curtails the freedom of the widows from considering remarriage.

5.2.3 The Role of the SDA Church in Addressing the Challenges of widows

The church has the opportunity to guide and counsel the widows through informed personnel and experts. This has been done but not yet to the maximum level.

5.3 Conclusion

The widow is not bound by the law of marriage because she has lost a husband, and therefore, the widow is free to make her own choice whether to get remarried or remain unmarried. However the issue of whether the widow has children or not poses a challenge to widows because if the widow has children it will be a bit difficult to get remarried with the children of the late husband, but if the widow does not have children it becomes easier. This shows the influence of culture than the teaching of Paul. However, since the church has an opportunity to guide and counsel and counsels the widows through the personnel and experts it has an uphill task to maximize the opportunity.

Because the church has failed to alleviate these challenges of widow in the S.D.A Church Stroebe and Henk Schut (1999:439) developed a conceptual theory which explains the ways in which people adapt to bereavement, and this theory was developed originally with widowhood in mind. The theory is known as *"Dual Process model of bereavement''* (DPM) of copying with bereavement. The theory is relevant to the current study since, according Stroebe and Henk (1999), it explains how widows can adapt to bereavement following the loss of a spouse. It describes two types of copying behaviour or experiences: *loss-oriented copying* and *restoration-oriented copying*. Loss-oriented copying comprises of grief work which means avoid making changes to one who is bereaved (Lopata 1999:438). Stroebe and Henk Schut (1999:439 seems to give a solution to the challenges facing widows more especially bereavement in the S.D.S Church.

5.4 Recommendations

According to Paul's teachings a widow is supposed to be given the freedom of choice to get remarried or remain unmarried, instead of being subjected into traditions and cultures which does not compile with the Bible.

The remarriage of a widow should not depend on children, for instance if the widow has remained with the children of the late husband it should not be a reason as to why she should not be given the freedom to choose to remarry or remain unmarried. Because when children will be over eighteen years they will make their own choices whether to remain with their mother in the new home or to go back to their late father's home.

Whereas S.D.A. church has special programs for groups such as Youths, Women Ministries, Adventist men and family life, among others, there are no special programs specifically for widows. The Church has to come up with guidance and counselling programs as well as self-reliance programmes that will involve widows' participation and equip them with the mechanisms for dealing with widowhood challenges.

Widows should be represented in the high authority of the S.D.A Church Councils like General conference meetings since this will help the S.D.A Church to have a clear picture of widows in the Church, because this will help the Church to come up with programmes that will involve the participation and involvement of widows.

The Church should come up with widowhood Church policy which is more elaborate and clear to the Church members.

In the Old Testament, God had a plan to meet the needs of the widows. He put them on the same level as the Levitical priesthood in this manner (Deuteronomy 14:28-29). In the New Testament, the early church organized itself to meet the needs of the widows. As the church

was growing, thousands were being added to the church. Acts 6:1, records that the church had a plan of daily ministry to the needs of the Grecian and Hebrew widows.

Such basic needs as food, shelter, school fees for the orphaned children and health care should be a matter of concern for the Church where a widow is involved. As already observed, the church should initiate income generating projects which will help the widows to be self reliant and to be able to learn their own affairs. This is because most of the widows are house wives who entirely relied on their husbands as their sole bread winners and the moment their husbands died, that was the end of their hope.

Most widows feel like their life is over when they lose their husbands. According to Collins (1988:16), this is the time when widows really need pastoral counselling because it is a specialized part of pastoral care that involves helping individual families or groups as they cope with the pressures and crisis of life. Collins (1988) continues to argue that this method uses a variety of healing methods to help widows to deal with problems in ways that are consistent with biblical teachings. For widows to be effective and fully used in the church, they need to be taught on spiritual gifts. This is in regard to the teaching of Paul in 1Corinthians 12 and Romans 12 Ephesians 4. All Christians are given spiritual gifts that will enable them to serve the lord effective fully. The church should encourage widows to be examples to the younger women in the church by the way they live. This is what Paul was talking about in Titus 2:3. When he says, "*Bid the older women likewise to be reverent in behaviour, not to be slanderers or slaves to drink; they are to teach what is good,'' (RSV)*

Many widows could fulfil the exhortation given by Paul in Titus 2:3-4. Churches should encourage widows to be intercessors. This ministry was pinpointed by Paul as a definite ministry for widows. "Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusted in God, and continued in supplications and prayers night and day'' (1Timoth 5:5). This is the most

needful ministry in a church. It is easier to get them to pray. Widows should have their own representative in church who is a widow and who shares the same experience as that of the other widows so that she may be able to meet their needs (Hall 1983:83).

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Questionnaire

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CHURCH MEMBERS

I am Pastor Geoffrey Ombati a student in the school of theology (New Testament) at ST. Paul's University. I am carrying out a study to investigate the challenges that widows are facing in trying to live out Paul's teaching(1Corinthians 7:39-40) on widowhood and the role the Seventh-day Adventist Church (S.D.A Church) plays in assisting and supporting widows in Kisii County.

The findings of this study will not only assist the Seventh-day Adventist Church to play its role properly, but also it will give the Seventh-day Adventist Church ministers a pastoral approach and on how to assist and support the widows in Seventh-day Adventist Church. The findings of this study will be treated with utmost confidentiality and purely for the purpose of academics.

SECTION 1: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA (INFORMATION)

Please fill in the blank spaces and tick one response box corresponding to each category that is most applicable to you.

1. Name of your Church.....
2. Sex .....

   Male ( ) Female ( )
3. Marital Status: Single ( ) Married ( ) Widow ( ) Widower ( )

4. How long have you been in S.D.A Church?

Less one year ( ) 2-5 years ( ) 5-10 years ( ) 11-20 years ( ) 20-30 year ( ) over 30 years ( )

5. Level of academic:

Primary ( ) O-Level ( ) Diploma ( ) Degree ( ) Masters ( ) PhD ( )

SECTION 2

The following concern your view on what experiences the widows are going through as they try to live out Paul's teaching (1Corinthians 7:39-40). Kindly tick the number that best describes your feelings.

1. Does the Seventh-day Adventist Church (S.D.A) have policy that gui des on widowhood?

(i.) I am not aware ( )

(ii.) No ( )

(iii.) Yes but un clear ( )

(vi) Yes ( )

2. If Yes in 1. A above, how effective is its implementation

(I). highly effective ( )

(ii.) Effective ( )

(iii.) Ineffective ( )

(iv). Highly ineffective ( )

3. Should a widow be remarried after the death of the husband?

(I). Yes ( )

(ii) No ( )

(iii). It will depend on whether she has children ( )

(iv) It will depend on her in-laws ( )

4. In your Church do you have widow remarriage?

(I). Yes ( )

ii). No. ( )

iii) .It is not clear whether we have it or not ( )

5. If Yes in NO. 4 above, what determines the remarriage?

(I) if the widow has no children of the late husband ( )

(ii) The decision of the in laws ( )

(iii)If the late husband had no property ( )

iv)The decision of the widow ( )

6. If No in NO.4 above, why?

.....

.....

.....

7. Does your Church play any role in initiating widow remarriage?

i). Yes ( )

ii) No ( )

iii) .Indirectly ( )

iv) Occasionally ( )

8. What role does the Church play whenever a member has been left as a widow?

(i). Prays for the widow and that is all ( )

(ii). Initiates for the remarriage ( )

(iii). Requests the widow to persevere in widowhood since Jesus is the husband ( )

(iv). Gives Counselling to a widow to decide whether to get remarried or not ( )