

A Qualitative Study of Burnout Among Clergy Wives
in the African Pentecostal Church

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Department of Community Care and Counseling, Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

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Abstract

The purpose of this phenomenological study is to understand why pastors' wives within the African Pentecostal Church (APC) in the United States experience burnout in ministry. With the African Pentecostal Church being the fastest-growing denomination around the world and in the United States, it is important to give careful attention to the wives of clergy in this denomination. Analysis of the data includes the description or identification of themes, supported by anecdotes or other markers within the data. The design of this study is basic qualitative research, a common type of interpretive study. The collection of data for a basic qualitative design may include personal open-ended semi-structured interviews and observations and will be based on a theoretical framework identified by the researcher. This researcher believes that this study will help shed light on the stressors that wives of clergy face and how remaining silent, can lead to suffer burnout.

Keywords: African Pentecostal Church, Clergy wife, Pastor's wife, Clergy, Burnout, Conservational & Transformational coping methods

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Dedication

Unto the One who has brought me thus far in the journey of life, I dedicate this research to Him, the God of all creation, Jesus the Redeemer of my soul, and to the Holy Spirit who guides me every step of the way. I also dedicate this research to pastors' wives all over the world. As the church of Jesus Christ continues to grow around the globe, I believe this study will help shape the way pastors' wives and their families are viewed in ministry, and guide pastors, the church leadership, counselors, psychologists, and other stakeholders in the right direction as they seek to provide help to pastors' wives.

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I want to thank Dr. Keisha Pou-Buchanan, Associate Professor and Committee Chair at Liberty University, School of Behavioral Sciences. I acknowledge your interest in my research topic and your continued effort to serve in the field of counseling for the betterment of the body of Christ. Your insight and suggestions throughout this dissertation process have helped me to become a better researcher. Thank you for your relentless support from the beginning to the end.

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I acknowledge and appreciate my siblings, Pastor Edwin Longstreth and Pastor Hilary Lewis-Nicol, who were always praying and rooting for me and were incredibly supportive during the process. Thank you for encouraging me to remain resilient even in times when I felt overwhelmed. You are the best!

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List of Abbreviations

African Pentecostal Church (APC)

Research Design Questionnaire (RDQ)

Liberty University (LU)

Internal Review Board (IRB)

CHAPTER ONE: RESEARCH CONCERNS

Overview

The role of pastors' wives in the African Pentecostal Church (APC) involves substantial emotional demands. Empirical studies have analyzed clergy experiences of well-being, stress, and burnout within specific denominations (Avent et al., 2015; Berry et al., 2012; Chan & Chen, 2019; Francis et al., 2013; Visker et al., 2017). However, the experiences of clergy spouses are absent within such studies. Some of these experiences will be discussed in this study and examined to determine why clergy spouses in the African Pentecostal Church (APC) experience burnout in ministry as they serve alongside their husbands.

Background

For many years clergy wives have been and continue to experience burnout. There are so many stressors leading to clergy wives suffering from burnout. The work of ministry can become so demanding not just to the minister but to the wife as well.

The role of clergy wives in the African Pentecostal Church (APC) involves considerable emotional demands. Many studies have been conducted on clergy work-related psychological health, stress, emotional labor, role salience, and burnout (Dunbar et al., 2020; Jackson-Jordan, 2013; Jacobson et al., 2013; Muse et al., 2016; Visker et al., 2017). In addition, extensive research has studied clergy experience with burnout using scales designed to measure emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and low personal accomplishment (Francis et al., 2017, 2019). However, it was found that while an increasing number of clergies is experiencing burnout, clergy wives are an understudied and silenced population who have been suffering (Luedtke & Sneed, 2018).

The stress for clergy wives is unmistakable when looking at the history of expectations they feel from congregations, their husbands, and communities (Luedtke & Sneed, 2018). While rates of burnout and other issues are known for clergy (Berry et al., 2012; Crisp-Han et al., 2011; Crosskey et al., 2015; Doehring, 2013; Edwards et al., 2020), their spouses' mental well-being is seldom considered. Many denominations have misunderstood Paul's teaching in I Timothy 2: 11 – 15, which Gorven (2019) summarized as follows:

Women should be free to learn about God. They should do so with a quiet and submissive spirit. Women shouldn't teach or have authority over men where this is exercised in a manner that is contrary to God's design for men and women's relationships and roles, as seen in creation and the Fall. Finally, women who persevere in honoring the God ordained feminine role of bearing and nurturing children with godliness, will be working out their salvation as they partner with God to redeem the consequences of the Fall (p. 229).

The distinctions in the roles given to Adam and Eve in the study of creation and the Fall were not meant to misconstrue the place of gender within the church. A woman was not created by God as an inferior being destined to only serve her husband. A woman does not hold a second-class status in the church and her role is not limited because of her gender (Grady, 2022). When viewing the creation story, the ideal theological foundation for relationships between women and men is that of mutuality, equality, harmony between men and women and, therefore, no grounds for gender hierarchy or the patriarchy that has entrenched cultures (Gentry et al., 2022).

According to Watters et al. (2017), there has been significant overlap between work, family, and religion. The complexity and nuance of the relationships within these three domains of life are very vital. Women living today face many demands on how they spend their time and

energy when it comes to working, being a spouse and/or mother, and being involved with religious institutions (Watters et al., 2017).

Many congregations have a preset role prescription derived from a handed-down tradition that has long been outdated. For example, among Seventh-day Adventist pastors' wives, there are several defining elements associated with being a pastor's wife. These features include, providing emotional support for the pastor (her spouse), conforming to particular standards of appearance, being capable in specific ways such as music, hospitality, career, attending church events, being an example to others, keeping quiet, and doing things like or being like the former pastor's wife (Drumm et al., 2017).

In recent years, clergy wives started to pursue other careers, so they are not solely dependent on the church, which seldom provided little resources for them and their families. Armstrong (2013) opined that there is an increasing likelihood that pastors' wives would undertake some form of paid employment to supplement the long-term decline of clerical incomes, and the increasing tendency of their husbands to work irregular hours (p. 997).

Most pastors' wives are not prepared for what the position demands. This was not a role sought out by women, some simply fell in love with a man who was called into ministry. Initially they are excited they are excited about their new "roles," and they can see the potential in the Kingdom of God. They plan on serving God well; they want to sow into the Kingdom; they want to live the adventure; they want to make God proud. Faithfully they both go where the Lord is leading them. With varied research examining issues such as physical and emotional well-being, life and role stressors, coping behaviors, marital satisfaction, family functioning, unrealistic expectations of the congregations they serve, pastors' wives begin to experience burnout and feel

a sense of loneliness (Drumm et al., 2017, Mcfadden, 2011). The demands of family life sometimes become too much to bear alone.

Research validates that there are many pastors' wives who continuously experience burnout. The stressors experienced by pastors' wives are often chronic and can negatively affect mental and/or spiritual wellbeing (Drumm et al., 2017). Some gave up and divorced their spouses because they could not take it any longer. Others stay because they believe it is their calling, tough as it might be. Drumm et al. (2017) posited that though research has endeavored to measure and demonstrate the impact of stress on those living with the expectations of being a pastor's wife, a precise understanding of those expectations remains unspecified (p. 95). The lack of defining elements about what comprises the expectations of clergy spouses can have negative implications for their emotional health and life satisfaction – the question of role ambiguity (Drumm et al., 2017).

The pastor's wife is expected and encouraged to be everyone's friend but prohibited from being too close to any one family or individual as she can be accused of having favorites (Potts, 2021). Pastoral ministry in which the wife is a part, is not a well-defined job. Everyone has a different expectation of what the pastorate should do. This means there will always be someone dissatisfied with the performance of the minister and/or the spouse. The title of pastor's wife sometimes conveys an idea of perfection—a person who always obeys God, and does not struggle with problems such as discouragement, loneliness, resentment, anger, or jealousy. However, pastors' wives would not be comfortable with being called anything besides what they are -- ordinary people just as susceptible to facing emotional and spiritual problems as anyone else. However, they can be helped, and their problems even prevented with proper intervention (Potts, 2021).

Situation to Self

My motivation for conducting the study is personal. I am a pastor's wife. Pastors' wives have been an understudied population within the ministry as they work alongside their husbands. In their roles, many pastors' wives have experienced stress in ministry and family life. Little research has been done on why they experience burnout in ministry. Literature from within the counseling professions on this topic is also limited and there remains a need to understand the specific challenges that pastors' wives are faced with and the contributing factors that have led them to experience burnout.

Problem Statement

Through extensive research, the researcher concluded that there is minimal done to help pastors' wives overcome the stresses that come with the job (Guzman & Teh, 2016; Hoffert, 2019; Luedtke & Sneed, 2018). Even the churches where they serve have not supplied pastoral care or counseling to help them. The duties and demands of the pastor are often paramount in the minds of others in so much so that people often forget what a heavy load the pastor's wife is carrying. She is often swept into the shadows as the pastor is elevated as the only one who needs mentoring, training, and direction. Pastors' wives are very much in need of such mentoring as well. This study, therefore, seeks to assert that the church should develop programs to help pastors' wives deal with some of the stressors of ministry work and family life that can lead to burnout and its accompanying symptoms (Proeschold-Bell et al., 2011; Drumm et al., 2017).

Very little has been done to examine why clergy wives suffer burnout and what needs to be done to assist them in the process. Many studies have been conducted on clergy work-related psychological health, stress, emotional labor, role salience, and burnout (Dunbar et al., 2020; Guzman & Teh, 2016; Hendron et al., 2012; Lewis et al., 2007; Miles et al., 2011; Muse et al.,

2016; Visker et al., 2017). In addition, extensive research has been done on clergy burnout using scales designed to measure emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and low personal accomplishment (Francis et al., 2017; Francis et al., 2019; Frenk et al., 2013; Randall, 2013). However, it has been discovered that while an increasing number of clergies is experiencing burnout, the problem is that clergy wives also have been experiencing burnout and suffering in silence (Drumm et al., 2017; Guzman & Teh, 2016; Luedtke & Sneed, 2018; Potts, 2021).

Drumm et al. (2017) noted that when pastors' wives conform to their role expectations without question, they relinquish at least part of their own individuality for the survival and existence of their husband and his career. This, in turn makes the congregation and church leaders see pastors' wives as extensions of the pastor rather than the persons that God intended them to be (Drumm et al., 2017, p. 107). As a result, the pastor's wife becomes invisible as an individual and her value as a human being decreases. Drumm et al. (2017) further expressed the importance of living lives of authenticity, thereby achieving a sense of personal congruence for well-being, particularly in a work-related role. Therefore, the issue of authenticity for pastors' wives is of paramount importance.

Pastors' wives are often called upon "to sacrifice or submerge their own personal identities with a preformed, prescribed identity – that of being "the pastor's wife" (Drumm et al., 2017, p. 107). This researcher will seek to advocate for change on behalf of pastors' wives. The findings of this study may identify several role expectations that will be shared with other pastoral spouses. This will enable them to recognize these concepts and make decisions whether to hold on to or discard these expectations in their everyday lives.

The researcher will also promote a healthier and more realistic set of pastors' wives' expectations to congregants in their churches. Studies on pastoral role expectations reveal that

congregants often lack understanding of the pastoral role which leads to unrealistically high expectations (Proeschold-Bell et al., 2011). The researcher will actively advocate on behalf of the spouses in the church. A presentation will be conducted for church administrators to educate them about the stress and potential harm that can arise from social pressures to conform to these role expectations. This researcher intends to be a powerful force for healing of pastors' wives by acting and educating congregants, administrators, pastors about the dangers of these expectations.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to examine the reasons clergy wives suffer burnout in the African Pentecostal Church (APC) in Maryland. While an increasing number of clergies have experienced burnout, clergy wives are an understudied and silenced population who are suffering (Luedtke & Sneed, 2018). This researcher intends to strongly advocate for pastors' wives and be that voice to educate congregants, administrators, and pastors about the dangers of unrealistic expectations that have led to pastors' wives' burnout.

Burnout does not happen overnight or suddenly, and it is usually hard to fight when one is overcome by it. Therefore, it is essential that clergy wives recognize the early signs of burnout and find ways to prevent it. Pastors and their spouses must realize that nowhere in the Bible did Jesus promise a balanced and contented journey. They only need to take comfort in the fact that Jesus expects them to be faithful to their calling but not derive all their joy and satisfaction from their calling. The most important truth to embrace is that it is not their church, it is God's. They are the shepherd, and He is the owner. Only when pastors and their spouses trust God to do the ministry alongside them, will they lose the burden of responsibility. Effective ministry only takes place when God is active and present; when He is working, the pastor and his spouse can relax.

When the pastor or spouse makes it a priority to live and work in God's presence, He will refresh them daily (Dunbar et al., 2020, McFadden, 2011).

It is important for clergy wives to realize that there are preventive measures to avoid burnout. No amount of theorizing can help someone appreciate how destructive and debilitating the care of others can be. The wife of the pastor who once was the perfect hostess and was able to calm troubled waters by offering comforting words and a listening ear, can become irritable at the mere ring of the telephone and wants to be left alone. Due to feelings of insecurity, some pastors' wives will try to hide their identity as the spouse of a pastor from their social network (Chan & Wong, 2018).

What every church should know is that when a pastor's wife begins to feel lonely, she can easily become pessimistic. In a matter of time if care is not taken, she can get depressed. Pessimism typically plays a role in depression. It's easy to see how pessimism can lead to depression, but even optimistic people can become depressed. An optimist is excited about the future and believes problems can be solved. However, an optimistic person may end up with symptoms of depression because they worked to the point of exhaustion; this is burnout. When experiencing burnout, it is harder to get excited about life, to expect the best, to let things roll off your back, and to look on the bright side in general. Other symptoms of burnout include loss of pleasure in previously enjoyable activities, sleep problems, and feelings of anxiety. Because pessimism is a great buffer for stress, those suffering from burnout find it harder to pull out of their rut. Pessimism tends to be found most in people who are perfectionists, and whose work involves a lot of interaction with people. It is hard for them to say no, and they end up shouldering a lot of responsibility. They have no time to rest, and no space between

responsibilities. And this is what clergy spouses within various denominations experience (Chan & Wong, 2018; Guzman & Teh, 2016; Hoffert, 2019; Luedtke & Sneed, 2018).

Once a pastor's wife realizes that she is struggling with loneliness, depression, or emotional exhaustion that is the first step. She has realized this is a serious problem that won't just go away. She can talk with a trusted friend, and, when she is ready, ask someone to help her examine her life objectively. She should make personal commitments to get good rest, take breaks, exercise, and eat right. These commitments are difficult to keep, but they are basic in taking care of her body and being prepared to meet the challenges of life. Her life and ministry can be free from loneliness, depression, and resentment (Hricova, 2020; Potts, 2021).

Pastors' wives carry a heavy load of responsibility as they care for their families, their husbands, and people in the church, as well as participate in activities around the church and community. The expectations of the local church are exceedingly high for the pastor's wife and family. The church expects them to be involved on every level: music, Bible studies, women's and children's ministries, hospitality, outreach, etc. How does a pastor's wife live up to the elevated expectations of the church? (Chan & Wong, 2018; Guzman & Teh, 2016; Hoffert, 2019; Luedtke & Sneed, 2018).

Many pastors' wives feel somewhat left out by their mates and unappreciated by the church. They often feel overworked, unloved, and underpaid. Very few clergy wives engage in the decision-making of the church, yet they are expected to attend, host, and/or lead many activities. They are considered an integral part of the church when the pastor is hired but are not often paid, compensated, or allowed to vocalize their feelings and desires (Drumm et al., 2017). Pastors' wives feel unqualified and discouraged about their position. When they are faced with the expectations of the church, they may feel totally unprepared to fulfill the responsibilities

thrust upon them. Some wives simply decide they will stay home, away from the eyes of the church, or seek a job outside of the ministry to be themselves, out of the critical view of the members (Chan & Wong, 2018; Guzman & Teh, 2016; Hoffert, 2019; Luedtke & Sneed, 2018).

The results of this study can be used in churches, as well as individuals to better understand the plight of pastors' wives within the African Pentecostal Church. Based on the results of the study, churches or organizations can develop a program to support clergy wives across denomination. This researcher seeks to develop a program to help pastors' wives as they struggle with burnout in their ministry and family life. The program will provide them with a sense of duty and help them to reach their full potential in ministry.

In developing the program, the researcher will take into consideration certain things that would enable her to provide pastors' wives with the help they need. First, the researcher will provide self-care activities for pastors' wives of all ages. The researcher will seek to educate them how to handle the undue feelings of guilt. And this researcher will also teach them ways of dealing with the healing of unpleasant memories.

Significance of the Study

The current study will address the gap in the literature. There is the necessity to develop a greater awareness of the needs of pastors' wives with further support systems recommended to improve pastoral care for the entire family and pastors' wives within the African Pentecostal Church tradition in the United States. This research will study current and former clergy wives in African Pentecostal Churches in the United States.

Pastors' wives need to be heard; they have been suffering silently for too long. Many pastors' wives in the APC, simply yearn for an uncritical, listening ear; someone they can pour out their feelings to with no fear of condemnation or reprisal. They long for a safe place to vent

their frustrations while feeling loved and accepted. They long for grace-based members of Christ's body to reach out to them and make a difference in their personal lives so that they can go back into their local churches with renewed hope and joy (Drumm et al., 2017; Guzman & Teh, 2016; Luedtke & Sneed, 2018; Potts, 2021).

Giving pastors' wives renewed hope and joy as they serve alongside their husbands in ministry is important. Churches are filled with pastors' wives struggling with burnout and offering solutions to this age-long phenomenon, can bring relief to them as they struggle with burnout. There is a need for greater understanding of and response to the problem of clergy and their wives' burnout (Jackson-Jordan, 2013). It is necessary for churches to develop programs that can support pastors' wives to help them overcome their struggles. Some recommendations include the creation of wellness programs for clergy wives and grants to support clergy wives' sabbaticals. These programs will also provide pastors' wives with a sense of duty and help them reach their full potential in the ministry (Potts, 2021).

Research Questions

This study was a phenomenological qualitative study. Analysis of the data included the description or identification of themes, supported by anecdotes or other markers within the data:

RQ1. "How do pastors' wives describe burnout?"

RQ2. "What are the contributing factors that can lead to pastors' wives' burnout?"

Definitions

This section presents definitions of important terms used in the study.

1. *Clergy wife/pastor's wife*: is defined as the wife of a clergy man (Luedtke & Sneed, 2018).

2. *Burnout*: is generally defined “as emotional exhaustion, loss of meaning in work, and feelings of ineffectiveness” (Mayo Clinic, 2015). Three defining characteristics of burnout are, “feelings of energy depletion or exhaustion; increased mental distance from one’s job, or feelings of negativism or cynicism related to one's job; and reduced professional efficacy” (Winter, 2020, p. 253).
3. *African Pentecostal Church*: The African Pentecostal Church is marked by their emphasis on the doctrine of Pentecost, the doctrine of Holy Spirit baptism, the doctrine of speaking in tongues, and a charismatic way of life (Addo, 2021).
4. *Conservational and Transformational coping methods*: coping methods that are complementary and interdependent mechanisms and offer individuals the possibility of equilibrium (Brewster, 2014, p. 88).

Summary

The role of pastors’ wives in the African Pentecostal Church (APC) involves substantial emotional demands from the church, family, and sometimes their husbands. A background information into the lived experiences of pastors’ wives within the APC and why some of them have suffered burnout in their roles. This study will examine the experiences of stress and how it has led to burnout among pastors’ wives. Their experiences of stress have been overlooked in the church and sometimes by their husbands. Most pastors’ wives are not prepared for what the position demands, and as a result they find themselves burdened and stressed.

The researcher concluded that there is minimal done to help pastors’ wives overcome the stresses that come with the job. Very little has been done to examine why clergy wives suffer burnout and what needs to be done to assist them in the process. It is this researcher’s aim that

the church should develop programs to help pastors' wives deal with some of the stressors of ministry work and family life that can lead to burnout and its accompanying symptoms.

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine the reasons pastors' wives suffer burnout in the African Pentecostal Church (APC) in Maryland. Pastors' wives are an understudied and silenced population. This researcher intends to strongly advocate for pastors' wives and be that voice to educate congregants, administrators, and pastors about the dangers of unrealistic expectations that have led to pastors' wives' burnout. They will be educated to know and understand that there are preventive measures to avoid burnout.

The chapter reviewed the significance of the study and addressed the gap in the literature. There is the necessity to develop a greater awareness of the needs of pastors' wives with further support systems recommended to improve pastoral care for the entire family and pastors' wives within the African Pentecostal Church tradition in the United States. Churches are filled with pastors' wives struggling with burnout and offering solutions to this age-long phenomenon, can bring relief to them as they struggle with burnout. Two research questions will be examined: How do pastors' wives describe burnout? and What are the contributing factors that can lead to pastors' wives' burnout? Definitions of important terms used in the study are explained. A literature review follows this chapter.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

This review seeks to explore the available literature related to the experience of African Pentecostal pastors' wives and contributing factors to burnout. The aim of this study is to examine the reasons clergy wives suffer burnout in the African Pentecostal Church (APC).

Theoretical Framework for the Study

There has been relatively little research done on clergy wives and why they develop burnout in service. The findings resulted in a wider body of work in the care professions, including clergy and their different functions. Literature from within the counseling professions on this topic is limited and there remains a need to understand the specific challenges faced by clergy wives and the contributing factors that have led to their burnout.

Literature search has found few studies undertaken in the United States about clergy wives, and that reflects a greater concern: the silence of clergy wives within various denominations. Luedtke and Sneed (2018) investigated the lived experience of nine Wesleyan pastors' wives. While an increasing number of clergymen experience burnout, clergy wives are an understudied, silenced and suffering population (Luedtke & Sneed, 2018). Clergy wives have been ignored, and they are yearning for their needs to be recognized and met. Former and current pastors' spouses in the African Pentecostal Church hold this viewpoint (LeGrand et al., 2013).

Seeking to gain an understanding in context of the clergy wives' is central to improving pastoral care and supervision for them. There is a need for counselors and clinical mental health professionals to integrate clients' spirituality and religion into their treatment plans (Cheney, 2018). While this is not a theological study, to explore the lived experiences of clergy wives within

the African Pentecostal Church, it is necessary to have an in-depth understanding of the history and spiritual context that are central to the lives of these women.

The Makeup of Pentecostal Churches

The setting of African Pentecostal Churches within Maryland is historically and predominantly Black-led. The membership is mostly Caribbean and West African indigenes. Pentecostal Christians are estimated to be second only to Roman Catholics in numbers (Parker, 2014). Pentecostal churches have witnessed the fastest growing segment of Christian believers. As Pentecostal believers grew, the most common factor within the church was their emphasis on the presence of the Holy Spirit (Esqueda, 2013). Pentecostal leaders also possess the ability to express themselves with great fervor, as well as use of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Congregants looked upon them as speaking on God's behalf, where their word was sometimes viewed on the same footing with that of Scripture itself.

Within the Pentecostal church the "gift of the Holy Spirit" or "Anointing" is highly respected upon the one who is the leader or founder of the church. Most Pentecostals and Charismatics believe that those who are blessed in the gifts of the Holy Spirit are anointed to a level which singles them out as God's anointed one in a tangible way. The pastor's wife is usually not seen as such, which makes her feel less worthy in her role. This and many other challenges faced by the pastor's wife leads to a psychologically detrimental interpersonal conflict (Teklemariam, 2022).

When Pentecostals use the term "anointing" to describe someone's preaching or work, it is always in the sense that the individual is clearly blessed by God and that their speaking, prayer, or work is clearly powerful and efficacious. Yet, often it is used in somewhat of a mystical manner to describe the entire character, life and ministry of an individual who is

perceived as being especially used of God in a general as well as in a specific manner.

Unfortunately, in the African Pentecostal Church, it is the pastor who is seen in this regard and not the wife, even though she may be equally used by God, but unknown to the congregation.

Given the centrality of the family to Pentecostal ideals, it is worth noting the role of marriage in pastoral careers. Marriage is seen as a blessing, as such, it is important that pastors are themselves blessed with 'good' marriages if congregants are to believe these men have the power to effect blessings in their lives. At the same time, pastors' effectiveness as role models rests in part on their relatability. Pastors share their own experiences of marital tensions regarding parenting, financial abilities, or household duties. By doing so, they express empathy for men, while also offering guidance on how to overcome such difficulties.

Clergy wives, on the other hand, in Pentecostal churches play crucial roles in supporting their pastor husbands, serving as 'test' audiences for their services, organizing women-only conferences, and advising women congregants (Fesenmyer, 2018). However, there are few studies on the roles and stresses experienced by clergy wives in the African Pentecostal Church in the United States. There is a dearth of evidence highlighting the absent voices of numerous lived experiences of clergy wives within the Pentecostal church. From the literature, the roles of clergy wives can be dependent on many factors. However, it is clear there is very little known about the emotional demands and stresses experienced by clergy wives, and the importance of their role, especially within a Pentecostal context.

History of Pentecostal Growth

Pastors' wives in Caribbean and West African culture are significant in their husbands' ministry, although not being recognized as leaders (Ash, 2011). Geschiere (2016) noted that Pentecostal communities frequently display considerable cohesion based on shared beliefs,

commitments, and cultural identities to acquire a better understanding of women whose religious experiences fall within the Pentecostal realm. There is the chance for social support and spiritual strength in such a setting, which are frequently cited as reasons for joining the denomination. While some women may feel repressed in a patriarchal Church, others feel empowered during Spirit-led services, where women are allowed, if not encouraged, to be both visible and audible. Geschiere (2016) contends that, as a social worker, it is vital to understand not only our clients' cultural backgrounds, but also their spiritual beliefs. Transferring this concept to the counseling setting allows professionals to recognize the importance of religious beliefs in influencing the lifestyle of women and pastors' wives, and writers advocating for greater diversity awareness, such as Charura and Lago (2015) and McKenzie-Mavinga (2016), support this position.

The Pentecostal arena in the United Kingdom has conducted various research to better understand the role and stresses that Pentecostal ministers face, as well as the impact of the minister's personality on their experiences as clergy. Surprisingly, while there have been substantial studies of clergy within Pentecostal groups, no equivalent research has been conducted on the clergy wife. Kay (2019) mentions four major Pentecostal denominations: Assemblies of God, Elim, Apostolic Church, and Church of God. If these are the primary four Pentecostal Churches, as Kay (2019) suggests, then there must be numerous minor Churches under the Pentecostal banner. This paucity of study on clergy wives underlines the silence of many clergy wives' experiences.

Many established Church traditions, especially Pentecostal contexts, expect clergy/pastor's wives to participate actively in their husbands' ministry (Andor, 2013). It is a visual profession, with the clergy ministry being compared to that of public figures (Togarasei et al., 2018). The pastorate maintains a high level of visibility, which results in increased demands, similar to those

experienced by celebrities and professionals in the public eye (Togarasei et al., 2018). The clergy couple's position and prestige, as well as the reverence in which particular congregations hold them, can make them appear and feel like celebrities. In a way that is rarely seen or experienced in other professions, particularly caring professions, the pastor, his wife, and family are frequently in the spotlight and suffer the intrusive gaze of the public as well as vocal comments from the church and the local community. Writers such as Ash (2011) coined the term "goldfish bowl existence" to describe the public scrutiny and exposure of clergy and clergy family life.

The Cost of Caring for the Caregiver

The clergy is always at the forefront helping church members with their emotional and spiritual growth (Chan & Wong, 2018). Clergy work can become very stressful, not just in the Pentecostal denominations, but also in all other non-charismatic denominations. Pastors can become very busy as they attend to the needs of their congregations which can result in physical and emotional exhaustion. When pastors are drained and unable to cope with the stresses that come with their profession, it not only affects them, but it also takes on the wife and the children (Chan & Chen, 2019). This brings the question to play, "Who cares for the clergy and his family in times of stress and emotional exhaustion?"

Clergy wives face distinct challenges as the wife of a man with a high profile and demanding job (Luedtke & Sneed, 2018). As a result, because of the nature of their position, role, and background, clergy wives cannot be neglected or excluded by counselors. However, it's unclear whether clergy wives in general, and Pentecostal clergy wives, comprise a diverse group, and whether it's required for the counseling profession to comprehend the character of this group of women to engage with them in a therapeutic or supervisory setting.

Clergy wives desire for their needs and experiences to be understood. According to Luedtke and Sneed (2018), “their lived experience comprises positive and negative components and brings mental, emotional, spiritual, and physical awareness to onlookers” (p. 69). Their contributions have led to the understanding of the struggles and rewards women face daily. Those in the helping professions and working in the ministry arena are encouraged to pay close attention to clergy wives, who may be suffering silently. Clinicians and others in the counseling role are better equipped to provide much-needed help to the clergy and his family and their roles within the church and their community.

When talking about the pastor's wife's position in her husband's ministry, the word "helpmeet" comes up frequently. While this phrase may appear outdated and out of touch with today's culture, it is truly a wonderful word that God gave to describe the bond between a lady and her husband. The ministry to her spouse is the one ministry that a pastor's wife should have. She must support and encourage her husband in order for him to succeed. There is no better assurance a wife can provide to her husband than knowing that she is rooting for him and believes in him (Beeke, 2011). He needs to feel that someone is on his side because the pressures of ministry can be overpowering at times. That is why she must be his cheerleader and protector.

Women must realize that marriage is about a relationship, and that relationships develop and expand with time. There will be occasions when the pastor and his wife disagree on important subjects. However, it is during these moments that they must learn to protect and care for their marriage and each other. They must also learn to communicate with one another, to become closest friends, to support one another, and to create mutual trust. Their home should be a relaxing and peaceful environment for them both. They must learn how to safeguard and guard their residence (Armstrong, 2013).

Related Literature

Burnout

Burnout can occur when one feels overwhelmed and unable to meet constant demands. Various occupational categories have been studied for burnout. Freudenberger brought the notion of burnout to prominence in the United States in the mid-1970s, according to Francis et al. (2013) and Randall (2013). As the prolonged stress continues, one begins to lose the interest or motivation that led one to take on a certain role in the first place. It reduces one's productivity and depletes one's energy, leaving you feeling increasingly hopeless, powerless, cynical, and resentful (Demerouti, 2015). Burnout usually leads to unhappiness which can eventually threaten one's job, relationships, and health (mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual) which often occurs among individuals in the helping professions. Burnout is also a widespread problem in many careers, including clergy (Frederick et al., 2018). It is more than the occasional overload at work. There are many definitions of burnout specifically within the psychology fields, some of which have been applied within church settings.

According to the Mayo Clinic (2015), burnout can be defined as "emotional exhaustion, loss of meaning in work, and feelings of ineffectiveness." They also listed the various factors that lead to burnout, which include lack of control, values conflict, insufficient reward, work overload, work-life imbalance, or extremes of activity and unfairness. Dunbar et al. (2020) noted that "burnout leads to negative effects, for both the organization for which the individual experiencing burnout works and the individual. Burnout is also positively associated with lower levels of job satisfaction and intent to turnover" (p. 174).

Burnout usually has its roots in stress, the earlier one recognizes the symptoms and addresses them, the better chance they have of avoiding burnout. The signs of burnout tend to be

more mental than physical. According to the study, burnout can include feelings of hopelessness, powerlessness, emotional exhaustion, detachment, isolation, irritability, frustration, being trapped, failure, despair, cynicism, and apathy, to name a few (Jacobson et al., 2013) looked at the link between depression and clergy compassion fatigue and burnout, as well as the possibility of compassion satisfaction.

According to Hendron et al. (2012), burnout can be linked to pessimism, work stress, and job dissatisfaction. The study discovered that clergy members are vulnerable to compassion fatigue because of being exposed to stressful situations and hearing painful experiences. Despite the risk of burnout and compassion fatigue, clergy were content with their profession, according to the study (Faucett et al., 2013). The study's research topics included determining the danger of clergy burnout and compassion fatigue, as well as the potential for compassion satisfaction.

According to Scheff and Monson (2019), burnout is usually experienced by individuals who are high achievers. Signs of burnout for people in high-demand jobs include, chronic fatigue, lack of concentration, anxiety, insomnia, negativity suddenly becomes disillusioned, exhausted, and disinterested in work. Work performance suffers; the individual with burnout may seem withdrawn. People feel like there is no recovery from the condition, leave careers at which they have been very successful, or behave in ways that cause them to get fired. The physiological, psychological, and spiritual response to burnout leads to life-changing decisions (Jackson-Jordan, 2013).

There are many definitions, for the purpose of this research burnout is defined as the period or season when a pastor loses the motivation, hope, energy, joy, and focus required to fulfill his duties as a pastor and can have debilitating effects on the work itself (Joseph et al., 2011). There can be harmful outcomes because of prolonged burnout among ministers. Research on

occupational burnout stresses the need for clergy educators, health clinicians, and counselors to provide support for those serving in ministry (Visker et al., 2017).

Burnout usually has its roots in stress, the earlier one recognizes the symptoms and addresses them, the better chance they have of avoiding burnout. The signs of burnout tend to be more mental than physical. According to Goodman and Berlinerblau (2018), burnout can include feelings of hopelessness, powerlessness, emotional exhaustion, detachment, isolation, irritability, frustration, being trapped, failure, despair, cynicism, and apathy, to name a few. When someone is experiencing burnout, they feel somewhat empty, devoid of motivation, and beyond caring. Things look bleak, problems seem insurmountable, and it is difficult to muster up the energy to care or let alone try to do something about it. But once this is recognized as the signs and symptoms of impending burnout, one can take steps to prevent it.

One of the most prominent definitions of burnout as described by Maslach et al. (1996), “a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment that can occur among individuals who work with people in some capacity” (p. 4). These three dimensions were operationalized in the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) and were not based on existing theory but grew out of the early interview process with persons in the helping profession (Maslach, 1993). Emotional exhaustion (EE) is seen as the depletion of one’s emotional resources and the inability of individuals to “give of themselves at a psychological level” (Maslach et al., 1996, p. 4).

Clergy Burnout

Burnout is common in all types of professions as previously stated. While some careers have higher rates of burnout, others experience greater burnout. According to Navarro Moya et al. (2020), service professionals, who spend their work lives attending to the needs of others,

especially if their work puts them in frequent contact with the trauma of human experience, are at greater risk of experiencing burnout. Clergy and their wives should be included within this group of professionals.

Pastoral ministry can be as stressful and the reasons as numerous and unique as there are pastors. According to Wells (2013), there are some areas in ministry that have led pastors to suffer from burnout. These areas include the disparity between (somewhat idealistic) expectations and hard reality; lack of clearly defined boundaries – tasks are never done; workaholism (bed-in-the church syndrome - when pastors spend almost all day in the church) (Wells, 2013). All of these factors impact not only the pastor but his entire family, as he is focused on the church, his wife and children suffer.

Scott and Lovell (2015) noted the biggest hurdles rural pastors must overcome include loneliness, isolation, burnout, an imbalance between personal and professional life, and an absence of self-care activities. The absence of self-care among pastors may be a result of their perceiving self-care as a luxury. These rural pastors attempt to make their lives better by reaching inside themselves rather than trying to connect with others. Pastors experience loneliness because the pastor is less likely to have a close friend than any other person in the community.

Some pastors are tempted to move or quit because of the congregants they shepherd; but others keep pressing on and holding on to what they believe is their calling. Authors have examined the underlying causes of clergy burnout and suggested that burnout is an interaction of three factors – a narcissistic personality style on the part of clergy craving admiration and appreciation, the demands of parish life, and the developmental needs of the clergy's own family (Barnard & Curry, 2012; Francis et al., 2013; Randall, 2013). They add that clergy burnout is a

concern of all religious denominations. Meeting the constant demands of visitation, pastoral counseling, administration, preaching, teaching, facilitating church growth, as well as being expected to be an expert in crisis intervention, leaves many clergy feeling inadequate, exhausted, frustrated, and frequently questioning their call to ministry. Often burnout is approached too simplistically with seminars on better time management, advice on relaxing more, or the need for hobbies. While these suggestions may be helpful, they fail to deal with the underlying issues which produce burnout for them and their spouses.

Theories of Stress

There are different theories that assess the reasons for burnout. For the inhabitants of Africa, religion has a significant influence. Religion has made a significant contribution to the social, economic, and educational development of Sub-Saharan African countries since the introduction of Christianity by European and American missionaries (Fatokun, 2018). Pentecostal and Charismatic churches have grown faster than Orthodox churches in the previous five decades. Pentecostal and Charismatic churches grew swiftly throughout practically all of Sub-Saharan Africa as a result of a heavy emphasis on the Holy Spirit's work. Pentecostal and Charismatic churches have made significant contributions to communities in Sub-Saharan African countries, particularly Ghana (McCauley et al., 2012). However, limited research has been done on the work and family lives of Pentecostal clergy (lived experiences and work-related stress) based on available literature. The current study looked on the lived experiences and roles of Pentecostal clergy in their communities, as well as how work-related stress affects their personal life.

In Africa, there is a scarcity of literature about clergy's lived experiences and work-life balance. Nonetheless, there has been research on how stress and subsequent burnout affected other human service professionals such as bankers, teachers, police officers, and college students' lives

and families (Agyapong & Aowusu-Ansah, 2012; Gyamfi, 2014; Kissi-Abrokwah et al., 2015; Nkulenu, 2015). Burnout was caused by prolonged work-related stress, which was detrimental to personal and family life, as well as employee job performance and turnover. Extensive, inflexible work hours, over-involvement in work, and workplace stress, according to the study, may lead to family discomfort and retreat from family responsibilities. Work and family life have a significant impact on each other; consequently, a healthy balance must be maintained. According to this study female employees experienced greater work-family conflict than male employees because women place a higher value on family roles and responsibilities than work (Nkulenu, 2015).

The Pastor's Marriage

The marriage of the pastor and his wife can be a teaching example to members of his congregation about love and having a good and strong marriage that will be an asset to their ministry. Does that mean that the pastor's marriage will be ideal or perfect? No! But because they are living in a "fishbowl" their marriage and their family life is usually on display for everyone to watch. If the pastor is to have a successful ministry, it is vital that the churches they lead and the congregations they shepherd understand the connection between a happy marriage and a successful ministry and the stresses that can have a devastating effect on their marriage. Churches need to be aware that if their church is going to remain healthy and stay vibrant, then they need to be sensitized to the fact that the health of the pastor's marriage and the well-being of the church are key components of a successful church.

Psychologist, Diane Langberg, believes that marriage and ministry should fit together:

Many couples believe and live as if marriage and ministry do not fit together. They view these two areas as being in irresolvable conflict and feels that one must be subordinate.

Frequently, this translates into a severe neglect of the family, because "serving the Lord"

is more important. Those having this attitude define service to God as “those spiritual things that take place outside the home” (Langberg, p. 7).

The problem here is that many couples do not see how ministry and marriage are interconnected. Many pastors do not see the connection of the ministry to their marriage. The pastor’s wife is not just the helpmeet to her husband (Beeke, 2013). If the pastor neglects his ministry in the home, it cannot only be detrimental to the spouse but also to the children.

Pastors and their spouses should be able to show the interconnectedness of their marriage and ministry so that it can serve as an example to singles in the church who are looking to get into marriage someday. This will enable marriage to be a desirable standard for all young people (Comiskey, 2022). The institution was created by God for procreation, dominion, and companionship. It is the minister's obligation to reawaken the consciousness that marriage is still a God-created institution open to all who desire to be married.

A pastor’s marriage should also provide healthy relationship growth and stability for developing children. The presence of both parents in the home are important in the development of the children's moral code and the parents in turn become role models for their growing children (Comiskey, 2022). This can make for a successful ministry and marriage. These facts are learned when couples, pastors’ and their spouses included, go through premarital counseling before marriage.

Premarital Counseling

Premarital counseling is key as couples venture into marriage and a pastor can also benefit from it before he gets married. Marriage is a foundational institution in society. Even though premarital education programs exist to assist couples in having a happy and long-lasting marriage, just a small fraction of couples planning to marry use them (Centers for Disease

Control and Prevention, 2018). Premarital counseling is a type of education and skills are offered by mental health experts and members of the clergy to help couples have a long and happy marriage (Cushing, 2016; Nugent, 2013). Clergy members do more than half of all premarital counseling. Government officials, on the other hand, are concerned that the clergy, as model suppliers of marital skills, may suffer the same loss that they try to avoid while counseling others. As a result, the premarital counseling industry and denominational institutions are concerned about the lack of acknowledged interest in the impact of premarital counseling on the longevity of senior pastor marriages, as well as the consequent rise in clergy divorce (Anderson, 2011).

Christian clergy have begun to look for ways to make premarital counseling more appealing to clergy members, and some states have made marital relationship education a requirement before marriage (Aulhouse, 2013; Kennedy & Ruggles, 2014; Kepler, 2015; Miller, 2013; Seal, Doherty, & Harris, 2016; Vennum & Johnson, 2014; Wilmoth & Blaney, 2014). The field of premarital counseling has recognized the need to reduce the trend in marital decline and seeks to help increase marital longevity because of a 50% increase in divorce among Christian marriages (Aulhouse, 2013; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2018; Kepler, 2015; Morse, 2011; The Barna Group, 2008). The irony, as noted by researchers from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2018) and Kepler (2015), is that the cleric divorce rate, which is just above 50%, is roughly equivalent to the amount of premarital counseling provided annually by the clergy community. The overall influence of premarital counseling on the permanence of Christian pastor marriages has been impacted by the decline of clerics marrying, little to no premarital counseling training in seminary, and the lack of a specific premarital education model for counseling clergy (Aulhouse, 2013; Chen, Hughes, & Austin, 2017; Deollos et al., 2015).

Despite this, little to no study has been done on clergy marriage and divorce statistics, or clergy assessments of the effects of premarital counseling on their marital durability.

Due to the rise in cleric divorce rates, previous research has shown the importance of premarital education and long-term marriages for clergy and their spouses (Aulhouse, 2013; Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2018; Kepler, 2015; Marshall, 2018), and there is a clear and immediate need for current research on Christian clergy marital interventions. Such interventions will prove beneficial for clergy spouses who are the basis of the researcher's study as they take on roles in ministry that they may have not been well-suited for. Before examining the roles of clergy wives, the researcher looks into the role of wives to husbands in leadership positions. Are the roles of these wives similar or different from those of clergy wives?

Wives' Roles to Influential Husbands

As this study looks into clergy spouses and their roles, it is important to look at roles of wives to husbands in leadership positions, in general. Some wives are known to live a life of sacrifice when their husbands take on certain leadership positions. Cushman (2011), in her account of the wives of Justices, noted the words of Carol, when she stated that "being the wife or, since 1981, husband of a Justice has always entailed some sacrifice and certain constraints" (p. 265). In the early decades of the Supreme Court, the Justices boarded together during the Court's Term while their wives and children remained in their hometowns. These separations left the Justices often struggling to balance work duties with taking care of their families (Cushman, 2011).

After a while the Supreme Court's Term began to be lengthened and Justices started to bring their families to Washington. Cushman (2011) postulated that the Justices' wives, like pastors' wives "were tossed into the social whirl and expected to perform. This meant receiving

and returning daytime social calls and attending and hosting formal dinners in the evening—all while navigating the elaborate rules of protocol that governed polite society” (p. 267).

Kulik and Kitaichik (2014) posited that with the essential differences between the husband and wife, women’s cognitive and emotional experiences focus on intimacy and care, and that women tend to define themselves within the context of relationships. In contrast, men tend to define themselves in terms of autonomy, and their identity is more connected with their work. The authors went on to explain that consequently, “men develop a pragmatic orientation and invest efforts in attaining the skills needed to survive and succeed in the workplace, whereas women gain expertise in cultivating and maintaining family relationships within the private sphere of the home” (Kulik & Kitaichik, 2014, p. 824-825).

Income has also always been considered an important resource that affects marital dynamics. In 2008, for example, the average gross monthly wages earned by male employees in Israel was almost 40% higher than the wages earned by women (Kulik & Kitaichik, 2014). Men in leadership positions who are higher wage earners are usually shaped by gender role ideology. The burden of household chores and childcare still falls squarely on the woman’s shoulders while men’s share of household labor is lower than that of women, and this division of household tasks has remained stable over the years, whether or not the woman works for pay (Kulik & Kitaichik, 2014). Culture can contribute to differences in the core social roles of men and women and as such, it is important to investigate certain stresses and coping skills of wives/mothers.

Stress and Coping of Wives/Mothers

Research on stress has shown that race, gender, and class significantly affect coping (Hall, 2018). According to Hall (2018), a growing number of literature suggests a strong

connection between health disparities among African American women and adverse stress experiences. The author further went on to elucidate that “epidemiological researchers have found that African American women experience greater morbidity and mortality at younger ages from stress and stress-related diseases than their European American counterparts” (Hall, 2018, p. 481).

The stress process model described by Hall (2018) is concerned with the conditions, the coping and social support, that mediate the effect of stressful circumstances and is particularly useful in understanding how Black women experience stress. Significant life events and enduring life strains make some people more susceptible to depression than others, and as a result, wives/mothers are likely to suffer emotionally when they are confronted with numerous and/ or ongoing problematic life circumstances that overwhelm the ability to cope (Hall, 2018). Wives and/or mothers who are home taking care of the family, whose husbands might be working in other states or out of the country are also faced with stressors and usually seek for coping skills during such times. Yi et al. (2014) examined the health-related quality of life and influencing social and cognitive factors in a sample of left-behind wives in rural areas of China.

Women whose husbands have migrated in search of work are referred to as left-behind wives, wives left behind, or left-behind women. These women are left behind by their migrant husbands for the sake of business or other employment opportunities in places outside of their registered households for over 6 months at a time or more than 6 months over a year (Yi et al., 2014). The quality of life and relevant psychological and social influencing factors of these left-behind wives were studied, and findings were discovered.

As postulated by Yi et al. (2014), in China, “as husbands have migrated away from home in search of job opportunities, the left-behind wives must take on the responsibilities of intensive

labor, such as growing farm crops, running family chores, and taking care of seniors at home. These responsibilities, along with raising children and a sparse sex life, are causing left-behind rural wives more psychological stress and affecting their mental health” (p. 2).

As a result of these factors, Yi et al. (2014) hypothesized that left-behind wives would have worse health-related quality of life, less social support, and less active coping styles, more depressed, more stressed, and use more passive coping styles. Another hypothesis given by Yi et al. (2014) regarding these left-behind wives is that they would have “worse physical health-related quality of life, which may be related to education, number of children, monthly income, sense of security of marriage, employment, physical health status, depression, stress, social support, and coping styles” (p. 2). A third hypothesis relating to these left-behind wives is that they “would have worse mental health-related quality of life, which may be related to education, number of children, monthly income, sense of marriage security, employment, physical health status, depression, stress, social support, and coping styles” (Yi et al., 2014, p. 2).

Having examined stress and coping among wives/mothers of both African American and Chinese descent, it is important that mental health counseling and intervention systems should be improved to help women cope with stress effectively by adopting an active coping style and building a social support system. This helps to improve their quality of life. It is a need that is extremely vital for clergy wives as the researcher examines their roles and other expectations mentioned in this study.

Roles of Clergy Wives

As the emotional demands increase, it is also important to consider the assumed roles of pastors’ wives. The clergy husband usually has prescribed roles and job specifications unlike the clergy wife who does not. Beeke (2013) stated that the wife of a pastor has a high calling. Her

calling as his wife engages her in special responsibilities and special honor. The pastor's wife is a woman worthy of honor. She can be likened to the woman described in Proverbs 31: 30, "a woman that feareth the Lord" (King James Version, 2007). She is a godly woman.

Empirical research and meta-studies addressing the roles of clergy spouses, such as those conducted by Drumm et al. (2017) reveal that wives see the job as multi-layered. It entails spiritually, emotionally, physically, and cognitively supporting her priest husband, and it can be difficult, taxing, self-sacrificing, and emotionally draining (Andor, 2013). Andor (2013) mentions the stress, loneliness, and isolation that may accompany the role of pastors' wives but does not go into further detail or feature personal testimonies from women in this context.

The study conducted by Guzman and Teh (2016) on Filipino clergy wives, described the husband/father as the head of the church and home, and the wife takes on multiple roles as her husband's support, house manager, and breadwinner as well. These participants did not have housekeepers at home, as is the practice in most Filipino families. Clergy wives had to compete with their husband's time because of ministry he may not be available or at home even during family emergencies, such as when the children were sick. Some of the working clergy wives had to sacrifice their time at work, and this usually brought about tension in their marital relationships.

Hill et al. (2013) identified the types of stressors that researchers, writers, and journalists document as accompanying pastor spouses. Some of these stressors include but not limited to the following: "boundary-related stress, role expectation/confusion, lack of time/time pressures, loneliness, lack of privacy/fishbowl effect, financial strain, lack of social support, and employment and educational challenges" (Drumm et al., 2017, p. 95). The presence and effects of these stressors related to the clergy wife's role reveal the lack of a consistent description of the components defining the role itself. Some defining elements of the clergy wives' roles include, but not limited

to, “(a) providing emotional support for the pastor (her spouse); (b) conforming to particular standards of appearance; (c) being capable in specific ways such as music, hospitality, career; (d) attending church events; (e) being an example to others; (f) keeping quiet; and (g) doing things like or being like the former pastor’s spouse” (Drumm et al., 2017).

The stressors experienced by clergy wives are often chronic and can negatively affect their physical, mental, spiritual, and overall wellbeing. Drumm et al. (2017) posit that “lack of defining elements of what comprises role expectations leads not only to a mixed approach in measurement in related research, but on a more personal level for this population, reveals an issue that may have negative implications for clergy spouses’ emotional health and life satisfaction—the question of role ambiguity” (p. 95).

The Bible, however, does not distinguish the role of the pastor's wife from the function of other women in the assembly. But reading through the Bible, one can clearly ask the question, “What does the Bible say about the nature of her work as the pastor’s wife?” The Bible only implicitly addresses this issue. According to the notion of the two-person career, clergy wives are believed to take on more roles than wives whose husbands work in other caring or helpful professions, such as medical professionals, paramedics, teachers, or social workers. In some denominations, the woman is seen as an augmenting agent in her husband's ministry, and her success or failure is attributed to her (Litchfield, 2016). Many churches have traditionally required clergy wives to be believers, decent wives and mothers, and flexible, according to Litchfield (2016). Supporting Ash (2011) suggests that roles are often gender-driven and include a variety of mediums within the Church, such as being involved in children's activities, leading women's groups, counseling, assisting with parenting, visiting shut-ins, overseeing worship teams,

managing the Church's cleaning, overseeing the internal decorations such as flowers, and performing clerical tasks (Litchfield, 2016).

The ministerial responsibilities of a pastor's wife in the congregation are the same as those of any other woman in the congregation. Even when considered in the context of the local church, Paul's advice to the aged women is to grow in godly character and cultivate a suitable relationship with her husband and children. She is to be encouraged to instruct the younger women in the assembly when it comes to teaching. However, the young pastor should regard his wife as a student of the elder women in the church before she qualifies as a teacher of adult women, according to this exhortation from Paul.

The stability of the pastor's home is a necessary requirement for his ongoing ministry, and the pastor's wife is obviously a major contributor to that stability. The profound implications of the fact that her efforts in the home directly influence his capacities to lead the flock of God should be carefully considered. In her role as wife, her daily labors serve to maintain her husband's qualification to shepherd God's flock by helping him remain faithful as the shepherd of his home. According to Andor (2013), the pastor's wife's function is considered vital in the Seventh-day Adventist tradition. Wives are seen as an augmenting agent to their husband's ministry in Ghana, and this is one of the few depictions from a black perspective. Andor's (2013) proposal, which concerns the pastor's wife in certain Church traditions, reaffirms the necessity of learning about the Pentecostal tradition's history and what it means to women in the tradition. Traditions and unwritten norms are sometimes seen as binding as scripture in Church settings with a mostly black congregation, and if, as Andor (2013) proposes, the pastor's wife is an enhancing agent, what impact might this have on women in the church?

Every pastoral couple wants to hear the accolade that the pastor's wife is a good pastor's wife. But there are ample false criteria upon which such a judgment is popularly based. Too often such status is conferred on the mere determination that she is a good listener, or a faithful friend to other women, an effective speaker, or a skilled musician, a stunning administrative organizer, or simply a woman who is really, busy serving God (Armstrong, 2013; Beeke, 2013).

On the authority of God's Word, a pastor's wife can be a good pastor's wife only insofar as she is a faithful helper to her husband, a diligent keeper of her home, a godly mother to her children, and a solid force in keeping her husband qualified for ministry by edifying his home. Though she teaches with the tongues of men and of angels, though she proves to be earth's very best friend, though she wins scores of souls to Christ, though she organizes one or more potluck dinners, if she is not a success as the God-given helper to her husband and mother to her children, she is not a good pastor's wife (Beeke, 2013). Francis et al. (2013) investigated the personality of the clergyperson and the impact it might have on the clergy role experience. Andor (2013) explores this topic in the context of clergy wives, claiming that the pastor's wife's personality can play a big influence in adjusting, embracing, or disconnecting from the job (p. 28). Having discussed the roles of clergy wives, it is important to examine clergy wives' expectations and assumptions and all other factors, to understand what their roles are as they work alongside their husbands in ministry, and the stresses of family life and ministry they are exposed to.

Clergy Wife Expectations and Assumptions

The role of a clergy wife is generally understood but not necessarily clearly defined. It is unclear what a new bride expects from a life married to a clergyman. The demands made upon her depend upon a variety of factors, including her denomination, geographic location, and the size of her community as well as her personal background and temperament. Clergy wives come from

various denominations and religious traditions, and they all face the demands that come with their position. Based on some of these traditions, it has always been clear that the role of women and children is not the same as the father or male in society. The mother is typically the opposite; passive, and submissive. She is expected to listen and implement what she is told without any questions despite bearing most of the burden in the family. She is invisible and inferior. This belief is carried over even when she becomes a pastor's wife. "The pastor's wife is frequently regarded neither clergy nor laity, and as such has no rights within the current church system," according to Rogers (2020). (p. 3). Aulhouse, 2013; Hester, 2018; Luedtke & Sneed, 2018) have discovered that pastors' wives experience high levels of stress. The uncertainty of the role of a pastor's wife, for example, is a source of stress. Another cause of stress is how the congregation perceives and expects the pastor's spouse and children (Hester, 2018). Pastors' spouses also indicate emotions of loneliness and anger has increased (Hester, 2018).

Hoffert (2019) opined that "the triple burden of carrying out their domestic duties as wives, mothers, and housekeepers, promoting efforts to encourage the search for personal salvation, and performing community service comes as a way of fulfilling the expectations imposed on them by their husbands' congregations" (p. 246). Because pastors' wives often tried to carry out these duties without adequate financial resources, some ministers' wives took on a fourth burden—that of co-breadwinner, which called upon them to teach school, take on sewing, sell produce, or keep a boarding house (Hoffert, 2019). When circumstances dictated and the opportunities arose, clergy wives found it necessary to enter the world of commercial capitalism so that they could take care of not only their families' needs but also the needs of their office and sometimes those in the congregation. Pastors' wives may not have anticipated the need to fulfill such roles. Some may not have embraced it so well.

What role should the pastors' wives play in the church? There are job descriptions and expectations that many congregations have come to expect when they view the position of a pastor's wife (Armstrong, 2013; Guzman & Teh, 2016; Chan & Wong, 2018). When churches advertise for the position of a pastor, they do not include the position of a pastor's wife. They anticipate that the pastor is hired, they are getting a complete package that includes a wife that will work alongside her husband in the church, mostly without pay (Beeke, 2013). A pastor's wife should be no different from any other Christian woman in the church.

Pastors may be prepared for their role in the church, but some pastors' wives may not be as prepared. Some feel unqualified and discouraged about their position especially from the responsibilities thrust upon them. Most pastors' wives believe that God will meet their needs and help them overcome any struggle in ministry. When such expectations did not become evident as quickly as they thought, they may begin to feel alienated, not only from God, but also from their husbands, and from those in their congregation they believed loved and cared about them (Luedtke & Sneed, 2018).

If her ministry responsibilities are permitted to overtax her ministry to her family, she may begin to tear down her home rather than to build it up. And she may even sense that this is happening. Such realizations will inevitably lead to deep discouragement and disillusionment, particularly when there seems to be nothing, she can do about it. Ironically, the chief culprit in all this is often the man who shares her bed every night, her husband. He has permitted others to dictate her responsibilities and has thus fumbled his responsibility as her loving head. Furthermore, the responsibilities of the pastor's wife within the assembly are to reflect the specific function for which God has uniquely gifted her. Like every other woman in the assembly, the pastor's wife is

to diligently pour out her life in service to God as the Spirit has equipped her to serve in that body of believers.

Demands and Stresses of Clergy Wives

With the abundance of literature surrounding the well-being of pastors, relatively little attention has been given to their supporting spouses who often carry the weight of stressed husbands, children, household duties, church activities, and sometimes their own occupations. Increasing numbers of clergy are experiencing burnout and interpersonal conflict that are psychologically detrimental to them. The frequent transmission of stress from the clergyman to the wife has been largely unrecognized and understudied (Drumm et al., 2017; Guzman & Teh, 2016; Luedtke & Sneed, 2018; Potts, 2021). Clergy wives within the African Pentecostal Church setting have encountered unique experiences that force them to cope with being the wife of a man whose job is very demanding, and whose job at times does not have fixed schedules (Potts, 2021). Stress faced by clergy in the course of their profession, according to authors like Andor (2013), has a direct effect on the family, including wives. The clergy has been identified as a group of professionals who work in caring professions (Adams, Hough, Proeschild-Bell, Yao, & Kolkin, 2017). Secondary trauma, compassion fatigue, stress, and burnout are all possible outcomes for those who are exposed to human suffering and high expectations (Skovholt & Trotter-Mathison, 2014).

The demands, stresses, and challenges experienced by clergy wives may not coincide with their husbands' experience. They can be highly affected by expectations placed upon them by their husbands, the congregations, and sometimes, themselves. Luedtke and Sneed (2018) state that "the stress for ministers' wives is certainly undeniable when looking further back at the history of expectations they have felt from congregations and communities, yet updated research

is needed to gain an understanding of the breadth and depth of experiences coming from this underrepresented population” (p. 64).

Balancing ministry and family were found to be one of the many stressors faced by clergy family members, especially the wives. Clergy wives also feel like they are living in an aquarium because all areas of their lives are being observed (Guzman & Teh, 2016). Another stressor for clergy wives is the lack of social support because they usually do not have other relationships outside the family system to seek help. Although some clergy wives can find few trusted members to relate with, there are no coping resources because of confidentiality issues and the fear of having favorites in the church, which can elicit ill feelings from other church members. Clergy spouses may embrace their position and duty with delight and zeal, seeing it as an opportunity to serve God through serving others, as previously mentioned. Wives, on the other hand, may be at danger of "tertiary traumatization," which Hendron et al. (2014) defined as "thinking on the situation as a partnership and working hand-in-hand with her husband" (p. 6). This hypothesis, which has been identified as secondary trauma exposure by wives who support their clergy husbands, appears to be novel and deserves to be explored further in the context of counseling. Along with tertiary trauma, wives may be subjected to secondary trauma, compassion fatigue, and burnout as a result of performing roles that put them in direct contact with others who are experiencing emotional difficulties within their church and community.

Another stressor for clergy wives' is the lack of privacy in their own homes. Armstrong (2013) clearly illustrated this when she stated: "This desire for privacy was a key articulation of *Such as We Are*; as the editor, Gladys Keable, commented: 'the theme of this book for the parson's wife is her own desire to "become a private person"'. For some wives, the 'private person' was an ideal inspired by heightened expectations of marriage and romantic love, and private domesticity

was the necessary environment in which to nurture authentic selfhood (p. 999).” As a result, God has a specific purpose for the unique ministry capacities with which he has equipped each pastor’s wife with. She should thus serve in accordance with God’s gifting as a member of the body in which he has placed her, not in accordance with human expectations of responsibilities inherent in her supposed position.

In terms of social support, findings from research (Drumm et al., 2017) found that women felt obligated to recall their role within the Church, which may be especially important in Pentecostal traditions. Wives are expected to be cordial, but not overly so, and to avoid favoritism. This viewpoint necessitates consideration of the intersection at which many women from ethnic minorities find themselves in some faith settings: being a woman, a woman of faith, and a woman of ethnicity.

The crux of the issue is it should be clearly seen as to what God has gifted her to do. Spiritual gifts are freely and graciously given by God. She should be empowered and encouraged by her husband and the church to do that (Beeke, 2013; Murphy-Geiss, 2011). What God has given her to do may not be what the previous pastor’s wife was gifted by God to do. All believers do not have the same gifts, just as all pastors’ wives do not have the same gifts – “Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit (I Cor. 12:4). And if not, resistance may be forthcoming from some in the assembly. Pastors should remember that God has providentially assigned their wives to minister to this body, and he may well have gifted her to minister differently than the previous pastor’s wife. A gift is not earned or merited so a believer, or in this case, the pastor’s wife, should not feel personal pride or self-satisfaction due to her gift. She is not the previous pastor’s wife. She is not your home-church’s pastor’s wife. She is your wife. And she is who she is by the grace and ordination of God.

Many good women are pressured to perform duties they are ill-equipped to handle and are loaded down with expectations they could not possibly fulfill. A sweet spirit and a servant's heart enable many of these same pastor's wives to shoulder tremendous pressures with stoic resolve. But when she suffers under unbiblical expectations, the inevitable result is a deep-seated frustration and fatigue leading to diminished effectiveness in her function as wife and mother (McFadden, 2011; Potts, 2020, 2021). Such a condition, in turn, diminishes her husband's capacities to pastor, thus harming the very church she is struggling so hard to serve. This all-too-common phenomenon is particularly troubling when she is performing functions (out of deference to traditional expectations) which other women in the assembly are better equipped to perform.

Coping Strategies of Pastors' Wives

Ministry is a stressful vocation. The researcher has first-hand experience. Clergy stress is a growing phenomenon in all religious denominations in the United States and all over the world, which is affecting not only the minister but his entire family. Doehring (2013) noted that "clergy are often first responders to crises experienced by people and families in their congregations and communities" (p. 623). With these pastoral emergencies coupled with pastors' heavy workloads, weekly tasks of preparing sermons, planning, and leading worship, and providing administrative, organizational, and educational leadership, leads to burnout. The stress of ministry impacts physical, spiritual, and emotional health of both the pastor and his wife. Pastors and their families are therefore encouraged to engage in self-care and other coping strategies (Armstrong, 2013; Aulhouse, 2013; McFadden, 2011; Miles & Proeschold, 2013).

Pastors' wives play an important role in providing support to their husbands and are impacted by the heavy responsibilities placed on them by ministry leaders. They are supposed to

live an exemplary life of service to God and others in front of the congregation and the community at large (Nyabwari & Kagema, 2014). Pastors' wives provide both support and understanding to their husbands and are inextricably linked to the ministry's success or failure (Gauger & Christie, 2013). Certain things are required of them because of their marriage to the pastors for them to be successful in ministry. Furthermore, their husbands' employment demands time, physical, mental, and emotional energy. As a result, the wives are undoubtedly affected, resulting in stress as they navigate numerous duties as wives, moms, professionals in their careers, and an additional job as a pastor's assistant (Gauger & Christie, 2013). Chan and Wong (2018) have stated that clergy wives experienced little emotional support from the church community in coping with stress from their role expectations. The church community should always be informed of issues pastors' wives are faced with and be more understanding and considerate toward their clergy families.

The role of coping techniques in modulating the link between stressors, suffering, and burnout is still unknown. Mindfulness, self-differentiation, and Christian spiritual practices can all help deal with or prevent burnout (Frederick et al., 2018). Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), a cognitive and behavioral therapy, has also been indicated as beneficial for all types of burnout (Montero-Marin et al., 2014).

In their study, Popov et al. (2013) who developed The Coping Strategy Indicator, which measures three coping strategies: “problem solving, seeking social support, and avoidance” (p. 357). Popov et al. (2013) described these three coping strategies:

Problem solving includes active efforts of an individual to solve the problematic situation, modify the stressful situation, or minimize its effects. Seeking support is defined as efforts to gain help and understanding of other people, as well as by seeking

additional information related to the problem situation. Avoidance is a strategy that includes behavior of avoiding problematic situations either at the cognitive or behavioral level, or both (357).

Guzman and Teh (2016) observed the following stressful situations within Filipino clergy families, “difficulty of the clergy in balancing time between ministry and family, dealing with financial constraints, dealing with congregational expectations, the feeling of living in an aquarium, and the lack of external social support for the clergy wives” (p. 466). These stressful situations are not any different from those being experienced by clergy wives of Pentecostal ministers. These Filipino clergy wives also expressed difficulty finding free time for family bonding. Their husbands’ on-call schedule usually posed a problem not only in making time for the family but also regarding sharing household responsibilities with them (Guzman & Teh, 2016).

Filipino clergy wives, Pentecostal clergy wives, and countless others all attribute their strength and courage to prayer, spirituality, and support from family and some church members as their main coping resources (Guzman & Teh, 2016). Most of the family members, not just the wives, turn to prayer and their faith in God to cope with the stress and difficulties that they experience. Families, overall, rely on the authenticity of God’s word in the reading of scriptures and offering prayers, when faced with difficult situations. Prayer serves as a means of communicating their experience with God, their frustrations, fear, joy, despair, anger, gratitude, and much more.

Pastors' wives play a critical role in providing supports to their husbands and is impacted by the heavy responsibilities that are undoubtedly placed on them by ministry leaders. They are supposed to live an exemplary life of service to God and others to the congregation and the

community at large. Pastors' wives provide both support and understanding to their husbands, and they are inextricably linked to the ministry's success or failure (Nandasaba, 2011). Certain things are required of them because of their marriage to pastors for them to be successful in ministry. Furthermore, their husbands' employment consumes time, physical, mental, and emotional energy. As a result, the spouses are undoubtedly affected, resulting in stress as they navigate numerous duties as wives, moms, professionals in their careers, and an additional job as a pastor's assistant (Gauger & Christie, 2013).

Support of family members is key for clergy wives who can feel isolated. Filipino families are close-knit and having the support of one another works out very well. Clergy wives can be very private and seldom have friends to confide in when going through challenges. Therefore, the family unit plays an important role for them when a situation threatens the family system. The individual personalities and coping skills of each family member are tapped as a coping resource for the family unit, and the individual resources are drawn upon to deal with that stressful situation (Guzman & Teh, 2016). Clergy wives experienced little emotional support from the church community in coping with stress from their role expectations.

Self-care strategies are an accepted and expected practice within the helping professions, especially in counseling. According to Chan and Wong (2018), the psychological well-being of clergy and their spouses deserves attention for the sake of their health and the future growth of the church body. Brewster (2014) noted that “whenever a person's sense of significance is threatened by stressful encounters, it is necessary for that person to bring into action coping processes that involve new searches for significance” (p. 87).

Brewster (2014) postulated that “efforts to preserve or protect significance in the face of stressful encounters are known as ‘conservational’ coping methods, and people tend to turn to

these as their first option in times of trouble, as for example, when a clergyperson reinterprets criticisms from members of his or her congregation as opportunities to draw near to the sufferings of Jesus” (p. 87). The author further went on to state that “‘conservational’ and ‘transformational’ forms of coping are complementary and interdependent mechanisms which offer individuals the possibility of equilibrium” (Brewster, 2014, p. 88).

Pastors’ wives in China experienced stress from three areas, finance stress, loneliness, and role expectations (Chan & Wong, 2018). Some of the coping strategies they employed included family, social and intra-personal support (Chan & Wong, 2018). Those who had to cope with financial stress, for example, tried to be very cautious with spending money. They might engage in taking on tasks for themselves instead of paying a contractor. Social support helps mitigate occupational stress syndromes (Galek, 2011).

Symptoms of Burnout for Clergy Spouses

As stated earlier, burnout is a widespread problem in many careers, but it is particularly common in positions of ministry leadership. Burnout is a state of mental exhaustion from long term stress. The most common symptoms of burnout especially in ministry are depression, loneliness, chronic fatigue, loss of future vision or enthusiasm for the job, resentment, the feeling of being trapped on a treadmill, to name a few (Armstrong, 2013; Chan & Wong, 2018).

As we have seen, there are many reasons why burnout is prevalent in ministry and in the lives of pastors’ wives. Pastoral ministry is not a well-defined job. Everyone has a different expectation of what the pastorate should do. This means there will always be someone dissatisfied with the performance of the minister and/or the spouse.

The title of pastor’s wife sometimes conveys an idea of perfection—a person who always obeys God, and does not struggle with problems such as discouragement, loneliness, resentment,

anger, or jealousy. However, pastors' wives would not be comfortable with being called anything besides what they are -- ordinary people just as susceptible to facing emotional and spiritual problems as anyone else. As ordinary people, they can also be helped, and their problems prevented with appropriate intervention (McFadden, 2011; Potts, 2020, 2021).

When a pastor's wife begins to feel lonely, she can easily become pessimistic. In a matter of time if care is not taken, she can get depressed. Pessimism almost always plays a role in depression. It's easy to see how pessimism can lead to depression, but even optimistic people can become depressed. An optimist is excited about the future and believes problems can be solved. However, an optimistic person may end up with symptoms of depression because she has worked to the point of exhaustion. This is burnout. When experiencing burnout, it is harder to get excited about life, harder to expect the best, harder to let things roll off your back, and harder to look on the bright side in general. Other symptoms of burnout include loss of pleasure in previously enjoyable activities, sleep problems, and feelings of anxiety (Jackson-Jordan, 2013; Jacobson et al., 2013; Joseph et al., 2011). Because pessimism is a great buffer for stress, those suffering from burnout find it harder to pull out of their rut than they normally would. Pessimism tends to be found most in people who are perfectionists, and whose work involves a lot of interaction with people. It is hard for them to say no, and they end up shouldering a lot of responsibility. They have no time to rest, and no space between responsibilities.

Once a pastor's wife realizes that she is struggling with loneliness, depression, or emotional exhaustion, she should be encouraged that she has already taken the first step. She has realized this is a serious problem that won't just go away. She can talk with a trusted friend, and, when she is ready, ask someone to help her examine her life objectively. She should make personal commitments to get good rest, take breaks, exercise, and eat right. These commitments

are difficult to keep, but they are basic in taking care of her body and being prepared to meet the challenges of life. Her life and ministry can be free from loneliness, depression, and resentment. Beyond these symptoms of burnout noted above that can be experienced by pastors' wives, there are sociological issues that cause burnout which will also be discussed below.

Sociological issues

Focus has shifted from the pastor and his church to the pastor's wife and her home. Sociological studies and surveys have indicated the difficult and paradoxical situation in which she finds herself. Most pastors' wives are torn between their home and their church, between being the kind of person they know they are and trying to fulfill the vague expectations of many church members (Chan & Chen, 2019; Chan & Wong, 2018). This is a particular problem of conservative churches which maintain a more rigid image of the pastor's wife and her responsibilities (Armstrong, 2015; Guzman & Teh, 2016)

If she is a normal, well-adjusted woman she is usually able to work her way through the pressures of being a pastor's wife. If she is emotionally insecure, she will either be frustrated trying to conform to unreasonable expectations, or she will rebel against her limitations. How happy she is in her home will depend largely on the love and appreciation of her husband (Armstrong, 2013; Beeke, 2013).

There are also wider cultural expectations as well as subcultural expectations of the pastors' wife that should be examined here. The expectations of a pastor's wife in the African and African American contexts, especially in the Pentecostal and/or Baptist denominations are typically the same (Hoffert, 2019). In every society, the pastor serves God's people as leader, preacher, teacher, counselor, overseer, and chief intercessor. He must perform spiritual surgery and apply healing balm to the souls of his people daily. And in all of this, the under shepherd

carries the unrelenting burden of his accountability to the Lord of the universe for the spiritual watch care of a flock for whom the Good Shepherd laid down his own life (Crosskey et al., 2015). And for most pastors, God also graciously provides a human helper--a woman--to walk at her husband's side as his covenant helper in this grand mission to exercise stewardship of God's flock (Beeke, 2013).

According to Beeke (2013), the pastor's wife is a rare species with a very peculiar calling. She is one flesh with the pastor. And if he is worthy of the title, this means she is one flesh with a difficult man. If she is worthy of her calling, it also means she has laid down the "normal life" on the altar and slit its throat in sacrifice to God.

As in almost all cultures, the pastor's wife often keeps her husband's long hours, shoulders his pressures, feels his disappointments, and suffers his defeats--often as profoundly and as deeply as he does. She is thrust into the role of chief analyst of both his sermons and his administrative innovations. She is called upon to catch grammatical errors and to sniff out inconsistencies in his letters to the church, to befriend that woman in the assembly others prefer to avoid and to brainstorm solutions to problems no one else can solve (Guzman & Teh, 2016).

In smaller churches an entrenched list of ministry expectations awaits the new pastor's wife upon her arrival. This unwritten job description is generally assumed (Armstrong, 2013). It is seldom, if ever, rationally defended. This description will vary from church to church, but it tends to reduce itself to the basic notion that she is to serve as the assistant pastor to the women.

No one, of course, will articulate this expectation, for when it is stated so baldly it rings hollow in our biblically trained ears. In fact, few if any will have ever thought upon the matter. Yet many parishioners will default to the base-line expectation that the pastor's wife should shepherd the women of the assembly (Beeke, 2013).

Accordingly, her unwritten job description mirrors that of her husband's. She is expected to serve as director of women's ministries; that is, she guides and provides visionary leadership to the ewes of the flock, serving as ex-officio member of all women's committees. She is expected to function in some capacity as a teacher--she will feed God's Word to the ewes or to the lambs of the flock, and preferably to both. She soothes the weary, protects the vulnerable, bind up the wounded, seeks the lost and rescues the wandering. In a word, she is expected to serve as the shepherdess of the church. Or, to contemporize the metaphor, she functions as the first lady or vice president of the assembly (Beeke, 2013; Drumm et al., 2017).

A pastor's wife is required to attend all women's meetings, to conduct worship services, to lead organizations, to teach church school, to bake for bazaars, and to fill any position of church leadership where no one else happens to be available. At the same time, she is often expected to be an exemplary housewife by keeping a spotless home, providing the parsonage for entertainment and meetings, having unusually obedient children, and assisting her husband in any phase of work (Hoffert, 2019).

Frequently she is regarded as the property of the congregation – an unpaid worker who can be called upon in emergencies to do jobs no one else will perform. In extreme situations, unless she is careful, she can become a doormat to people of the church anxiously seeking to conform to their expectations for fear that non-conformity would hurt her husband's reputation. Too frequently also, the pastor, anxious to please his people, will pressure his wife to fulfill roles and to do jobs which violate her own personality (Armstrong, 2015; Drumm et al., 2017).

Many pastors' wives' rebel at such expectations, while others find themselves torn between expectation and reality. Most wives have not received a call to the ministry as their

husbands have. They were called by God to be wives and the “help meet” for their husbands (Beeke, 2013).

As discussed above sensations of burnout have a great deal to do with societal issues (the church society, for example) and the way that society defines the self-concept of individuals. When people do not feel as societal values dictate, they often begin to sense disappointment in themselves, their lifestyles, and what they are receiving from people around them in the form of approval, praise, or friendship. These are some of the factors that pastors’ wives are faced with in ministry (Chan & Chen, 2019). Pastors’ wives are not only burdened by sociological issues, but they are also faced with psychological stressors that can affect them personally in the ministries in which they serve.

Psychological Stressors

The pastor's wife's responsibilities often include emotional support for her pastor-husband, conforming to certain congregational expectations of appearance and/or participation (often influenced by the previous pastor's wife), setting an example both personally and within her family and marriage, and remaining silent to avoid making waves. According to Cattich (2012) and Leming (2016), the status of clergy wife comes with a slew of problems and bad consequences. Isolation, emotional pain, worry, and anxiety are all common experiences for women married to pastors, which can have a negative impact on their spirituality and quality of life.

Research revealed that women married to ministers can improve their spirituality and prosper while they deal with the rigors of their role. The main outcome is a spiritual formation model (SFM), which creates an ideal atmosphere for spiritual growth and improves the quality of life for pastors' wives. Individual spiritual practices, cross-affinity spiritual formation small groups, and continuing investigation of women's embodied roles as pastor's wives are all part of

the planned SFM (Elliot, 2018). Women married to pastors who participated in this SFM have a stronger spirituality, a social support system, improved psycho-emotional well-being, and increased resistance to strep throat. Pastors' wives, ministers' wives, and clergy wives are all terms used to describe these women in their roles (Rico-Uribe et al., 2017).

The study looked at a number of Christian faith traditions, which is relevant given that identical issues and consequences were observed in a wide range of Protestant faiths.

Due to the gender expectations and cultural standards still in place in the United States and most American churches, the experiences of a woman married to a male pastor and a man married to a female pastor are vastly different. As a result, her requirements are one-of-a-kind, necessitating a gender-specific approach (Rico-Uribe et al., 2017).

The Oxford Dictionary defines stress as “a state of affair involving demand on physical or mental energy.” It also described stress as a condition or circumstance, not always adverse, which can disturb the normal physiological and psychological functioning of an individual. In medical parlance, ‘stress’ is defined as a perturbation of the body’s homeostasis (Chovatiya & Medzhitov, 2014). This demand on mind-body occurs when it tries to cope with incessant changes in life. A ‘stress’ condition seems ‘relative’ in nature. Extreme stress conditions, psychologists say, are detrimental to human health, but in moderation stress is normal and, in most cases, proves useful.

Most clergy wives don't have enough emotionally attached relationships to be themselves in. Anxiety, despair, and stress symptoms have been related to physical sickness when persons are unable to engage in personal authenticity or be themselves (Armstrong, 2013). Congregants, for example, invite the wife to birthday parties or showers without realizing that, while the event is a social outlet for the church member, it is really a work function for the wife, as she is still perceived as and must retain the status of a church representative.

This is explained by research as a distinction between social networks and social support: social support is provided by the quality and depth of relational connection, not by the number and frequency of encounters. A social support is essential because it acts as a buffer against all sorts of loneliness and improves physical and emotional well-being (Galek, 2011). Loneliness is harmful to spouses on several levels, affecting mental health, depression, cardiovascular health, high cholesterol, immunological health, chronic disease, diabetes, obesity, poor sleep, alcoholism, Alzheimer's disease, suicidal ideation, and overall mortality. Because clergy wives have a harder time forming deep, intimate, and mutually gratifying relationships, establishing social support is more difficult (Galek, 2011; Luedtke & Sneed, 2018). Loneliness is a serious issue that can be difficult to overcome (Ashley, 2020). Most causes of psychological stress are perennially related to emotional and psychological disorders. Stressful situations, whether long-term or short-term, can set forth a series of emotional symptoms. These symptoms include feelings of personality disintegration, phobia, anxiety attacks, unfocussed attention, or distractions, exaggerated emotional responses and psychological discomposure. Psychological discomposure can in turn lead to depression, confusion, burnout, and vehicular accidents (Adams et al., 2017; Chan & Chen, 2019; Chan & Wong, 2018).

Stress responses can be grouped into physical, emotional, and behavioral symptoms. Physiological stress reactions often receive the greatest attention because they generally pose the most immediate threat to survival. However, the emotional and behavioral reactions can have an even greater impact on the quality of life and precipitate physical reactions (Berry et al., 2012; Demerouti, 2015). The physical, emotional, and behavioral symptoms of stress can be treated symptomatically, resulting in temporary relief or remission. Symptomatic treatment alone is

inadequate because it does not address the factors that elicit stress. When the sources of stress are identified, more effective management becomes possible.

Impact of Family Systems

Addressing church conflict and the quality of church life cannot be fully understood if the impact of family systems is not taken into consideration. Applying the family systems theory to congregational life can enormously clarify its operative systems as well as its emotional system. With the impact of family systems, the roots of personal issues may hinder the pastors' ability to function effectively as leaders within their congregations and may in fact cause them deep difficulties. The pastors' own families of origin, a major but often hidden component depict how they function in their congregations as well as in their families. When anxiety arises, unresolved familial issues and old family patterns return, often unresolved.

Family relocation, financial pressure, time management between the family as a whole and ministry, and compassion fatigue are among issues faced by women married to pastors. Even one of these stressors is enough to throw a family into disarray, and clergy families sometimes encounter multiple stressors at once, jeopardizing the family's health. Clergy families are subjected to a variety of stresses, one of which is relocation. Moving may impair family functioning, be a considerable cause of stress, and have a negative impact on overall life satisfaction, not to mention contribute to financial strain (Staley, 2018). These moves may cause the family to feel dislocated, which is a sort of loneliness. Because of the regularity of pastorate changes, relocation and dislocation stressors are a major concern: clergy families relocate, on average, every 4-5 years across numerous faith traditions (Hankins, 2021). Clergy relocation comes with its own set of stressors, particularly if a parsonage is involved (though their use is on the decline), if the size of the town or city is a radical change/adjustment for the family, if they will be separated from

extended family, and due to the loss of control over the place where the family must worship and the congregants with whom they must socialize.

Regardless of denominational policy or whether the pastor initiated the move, relocation and dislocation can lead to feelings of powerlessness. (Jones, 2021) Relocation disrupts family patterns, severs support structures, and may result in the wife's loss of employment, resulting in personal unhappiness and financial loss (Stanley, 2022). According to research, the clergy spouse is more negatively affected by relocation and experiences significantly poorer levels of well-being as a result of relocations, sometimes manifesting as depression, melancholy, loneliness, and alienation from the community (Miller, 2021). Because deep and pleasant family relationships "have been demonstrated to contribute significantly to overall quality of life," if the woman is separated from her extended family, she may lose the good influence of a significant coping mechanism.

Clergy wives must deal with a lot of grief and loss. She and her family experience pain because of their transfer, and the new church expects them to be pleased with their new circumstances, which often pushes grief to go unprocessed (Jones, 2021). Because many families are hesitant to seek counseling or other help, unprocessed grief can last for years (Jones, 2021) To make things more difficult, the wives are frequently the ones who are responsible for settling the family into their new house and town (Miller, 2021). Due to conflicts from the prior religion, the new church may be a welcome change in some cases. Those hurts, on the other hand, may go unprocessed as well: 59 percent of wives are still dealing with the effects of previous ministry disagreements. Most pastors' wives share the agony of earlier congregational hurts, as well as previous relocations. Some people have been hesitant to invest in new connections because of their suffering.

Mirroring self-objects are those which respond to and confirm the self's innate sense of vitality, greatness, and perfection. The experience of the congregation's responsiveness would be an example of a mirroring self-object function. Self-objects are necessary throughout life to help maintain self-cohesion. When development is arrested, however, the self will seek objects that will help to protect and maintain whatever level of self-functioning has been achieved.

When the need for infantile self-objects is chronic or revived by a crisis during adulthood, they are spoken of as archaic self-objects. Children who grow up hungry for appreciation become adults desperate for admiration. They become needy and dependent, perhaps even demanding personalities (Eberly-Lewis et al., 2018). For clergy, congregations can become self-objects in that they can mirror the greatness of the pastor. As a result, one of their wives' most agonizing and pressing concerns is this issue (Potts, 2021). The pattern has persisted from 1960 to 2022. Husbands often work long hours to meet the demands of the church, leaving the wives' needs unmet. Clergy wives struggle to connect with their husbands due to many pastoral commitments and clergy working nights and weekends. When a couple fails to set aside time to converse on a regular basis, closeness begins to wane (Anugrah, 2017). It is important to note that typical discussion time does not involve talking about ministry business or plans. Many pastors' wives are their only confidantes, which puts a lot of strain on their marriage. The lack of boundaries clergy families face is one of the time management challenges.

When compared to non-pastoral couples, pastoral couples report "much more loneliness and worse marital adjustment." As both emotional and physical intimacy fade, pastoral couples' social isolation typically sneaks into their married partnership. (Survey of American Pastors, 2017) When a family has young children, the possibility of marital isolation is extremely high, and this can be especially unpleasant for the wife (Anugrah, 2017). If closeness is lost, recapturing it gets

increasingly difficult, as the children grow older. Pastoral couples, particularly wives, report less support resources, and all of the above-mentioned stressors (intrusiveness of ministry, mobility, time constraints, lack of social support) have a negative influence on family functioning across various dimensions, with wives suffering the most.

When the following factors are present: high pastoral expectations/demands from the congregation; minimal family training in clinical, mental health, and spiritual practices; and exposure to the pain experienced by congregants, the pastorate can create the perfect compassion fatigue storm for families (Miller, 2021). Wives are frequently exposed to both congregant and pastor-husband pain, and an excessive amount of pain can lead to compassion fatigue. 88

Clergy wives may be affected by compassion fatigue, which manifests itself as emotional, spiritual, mental, and physical exhaustion. Those who are suffering from compassion fatigue become less and less able to show compassion, care for others, and enjoy joy (Potts, 2021).

Summary

This review has explored and critiqued available literature related to burnout in general and clergy and clergy wives' burnout specifically, and the context of the African Pentecostal Church. This review demonstrated the necessity for further research on the lived experiences of clergy wives and the impact of spoken and presumed expectations. This study will focus on the lived experiences of clergy and their wives within the context of the African Pentecostal Church in the United States. This study seeks to bring the lived experiences of clergy wives to the forefront for those in ministry and within helping professions.

Previous research examined the role of clergy wives, the demands, and stressors they face in their role, and coping strategies for them and their spouses. The psychological wellbeing of clergy and their spouses deserves the attention of clinicians and helping professionals for the

sake of their health and the church. Understanding the stress faced by clergy families, especially the clergy wives, would help to prepare new clergy families in their ministerial roles, as well as guide the design of pastoral support for them. The role of women of faith and other cultural backgrounds is significant combined with the emotional demands made on women within the Pentecostal denomination.

As with every research study, this researcher is left with lingering questions that will be best addressed through further research. These results offer insights into the thoughts of these clergy wives in terms of their often-internalized sense of what is expected of them as pastors' wives. An important step would be for researchers to share the expectations of these clergy spouses of the African Pentecostal Church with other denominations or theological traditions.

Further research will also be needed to determine the number of African Pentecostal pastors' wives who did not suffer burnout in ministry and were emotionally satisfied in their roles not just as clergy wives, but as mothers, wives, professionals, etc. Also, a question that comes to this researcher's mind is, "Are clergy wives who are called in ministry the ones who are more likely to suffer burnout?" This question will be examined as the researcher seeks to clarify this.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

Overview

Qualitative research is multimethod in focus, involving an interpretative, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. Qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials – case study, personal experience, introspective, life story, interview, observational, historical, interactional, and visual texts – that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals' lives (Aspers & Corte, 2019, p. 142).

A qualitative phenomenological study was conducted to examine the reasons clergy wives suffer burnout in the African Pentecostal Church (APC) in Maryland. While an increasing number of clergies have burnout, clergy wives are an understudied and silenced population who have been suffering (Luedtke & Sneed, 2018). Clergy wives have remained unheard for a long time and are desperate for their needs to be understood and addressed (Beeke, 2013; Chan & Wong, 2018; Luedtke & Sneed, 2018).

Design

This study was a phenomenological qualitative study. Analysis of the data included the description and identification of themes, supported by anecdotes or other markers within the data. Themes surrounding protective factors such as faith, calling, and support and stressors (performance expectations, loss of identity, loneliness will be identified.)

Clergy experiences of well-being, stress, and experiences of phenomena such as burnout and grief have been explored in empirical studies undertaken within specific denominations (Francis et al., 2013; Mooney, 2015; Visker et al., 2017). However, the experiences of clergy

spouses are absent within such studies. This study used a qualitative method and phenomenological approach to examine the lived experiences of pastors' wives within the African Pentecostal Church. Krukowski & White (2017) postulated that "qualitative methods examine the "qualities" or characteristics of empirical evidence" (p. 22). Including the lived experiences of pastors' wives can bring mental, emotional, spiritual, and physical awareness to future pastors' wives, churches, and help professionals.

Research Questions

RQ 1: How do African Pentecostal pastors' wives describe burnout?

Burnout among African Pentecostal pastors' wives needs to be understood to meet the objectives of this study. Data collected during this study will provide necessary information that help determine how these pastors' wives view burnout.

RQ 2: What are the contributing factors that lead to African Pentecostal pastors' wives' burnout?

Stress from role expectations within ministry and family life contribute to burnout and these experiences will be studied.

Setting

The interview was conducted in a small church office that provided a confidential environment that was determined by the researcher. The researcher selected this location because it has a predominantly all-white congregation and is not Pentecostal in nature. It is important that this church office space be away from other people and be as confidential as possible so that the clergy wives felt comfortable sharing topics that may be sensitive. The participants were going to a completely different church that they were unlikely to know any member of the church. However, if the participant is uncomfortable, the interview can be conducted via video

conference. The video conferencing platform that was used for the interview was Zoom. The Zoom platform was used because the researcher needed to understand and explore the participants' opinions, their behavior, and give opportunity for open ended questions that made for a more comprehensive data.

Participants

Participants for this study were African Pentecostal clergy wives. A criterion-based sampling strategy was used for this research in which the criterion was that all participants are of the African Pentecostal denomination. The participating clergy wives met the criteria: 1) A female who was or is married to an ordained minister in the African Pentecostal church; 2) Served for at least five years in the Pentecostal denomination as a pastor's wife. Once the participants completed the initial screening, which was mailed out to them and met the research conditions, a consent form was mailed to them, which they signed at the time of interview. Participants emailed their answers to the screening questions to express their interest in my study. Hard copies of the consent forms were available at the time of interview. There were also electronic consent forms for participants who were virtual and whose interviews were conducted via video conference. This sample sought to provide data and information regarding their lived experiences as clergy wives and the emotional demands placed on them and other stressors they encountered, which ultimately led to them suffering burnout.

Procedures

Before the virtual interview was administered to the participants, Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was already completed. Pseudonyms were given to all the participants in order protect their identity. Pastors' wives who were involved in the interview were given completely different names right before the interview started. Each participant was informed

about the purpose of the study and their role in the study. The researcher ensured that all the participants were able to freely give consent and revoke consent at any time during the study.

While this is not a theological study, to explore the lived experiences of clergy wives within the African Pentecostal Church, it was necessary to have an in-depth understanding of the history and spiritual context that are central to the lives of these women. A qualitative phenomenological study was conducted to examine the reasons clergy wives suffer burnout in the African Pentecostal Church (APC) in Maryland, and as a result, three evidences were collected during the procedure for the study.

1. Survey. Results from both questionnaires were collected from the participants after completion. Each survey took approximately 15 minutes for completion. The survey participants were pastors' wives from African Pentecostal Churches within Maryland. Both had a total of 50 questions. The questionnaires were validated by expert panel in the field who currently serve as faculty members and educational researchers with a background in philosophy and Christian education.
2. Pastors' Wives' Interview: The researcher provided details of the research and requested a verbal response to consent before the interview commenced. Ten pastors' wives were interviewed for about 30-40 minutes each. The interview took place in a secured location where there was no other individual inside the office the interview took place. Zoom video call platform was used for the interview.
3. Observation: Data collected through virtual observation field notes. Virtual video/telephone calls or face-to-face interview were conducted with all the pastors' wives. Notes on body language and responses were observed and written during the video call. This researcher also observed the environment in which the research took

place. Other data included length of time to answer each question, language the pastors' wives used during the interview, and frequency of eye contact. It was essential to observe both verbal and non-verbal feedback.

To address the two research questions, this study interviewed a minimum of ten African Pentecostal clergy wives. The data collection procedure took the form of an original face-to-face or telephone interview, and/or video conferencing interviews. The researcher communicated that answering questions was completely voluntary and the participants could stop the interview at any time. Printed notations of each participant's responses were recorded. Audio recordings were made of the face-to-face, and virtual interviews. The researcher contacted pastors' wives of thirty-five African Pentecostal churches in Maryland, USA and ask for their participation through recruitment email. The recruitment email was sent to the churches, and this researcher hoped to receive at least twenty responses of participating pastors' wives.

The participants were recruited under IRB protocols. The protocols included the recruitment form, the background form, and the consent form. All these forms were sent to all the participants. The recruitment form was sent to each individual pastor's wife requesting their participation. Once they agreed to participate, a background form was sent to everyone to capture their age, country of citizenship, their denominational affiliation, and the number of years they have served as a pastor's wife. The background form helped ensure each participant met the criteria for the study. No personal or identifying information was included in the form. After the background form was received, a consent form which contained additional information about the research was also sent to everyone. Each participant was instructed to save a copy of the consent form to their computer, type their name, date the form, and return a copy of the signed form to the researcher. The background form had no personal information on it, and the informed

consent was attached to the beginning of the questionnaire. The signed consent form is a requirement as part of the IRB protocol. The audio content of each interview was recorded and stored for further data analysis. To guarantee privacy and confidentiality, each participant was notified that the record for this study would be kept private. Published report did not include any information that will make it possible to identify any subject. Research records were stored securely, and only the researcher had access to the records. Data collected from each participant may be shared for use in future research studies or with other researchers. If the data collected from each participant is shared, any information that could identify any participant will be removed before it is shared.

Videoconferences allowed for meaningful observation as observation during an interview without seeing the participant's behavior may limit the possibility of gaining meaningful insight during their response. COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in travel restrictions and social distancing regulations; therefore, the option of videoconferencing was the safest practice to use for the interviews. The researcher needed to understand and explore the participants' opinions, their behavior, and allow opportunity for open ended questions for a more in-depth data collection.

The Researcher's Role

The researcher's role as the primary data collection instrument necessitates the identification of personal values and experience relevant to the study. The researcher currently is a pastor's wife and has a background in the African Pentecostal Church. Therefore, she is cognizant of the history, culture, personal background, and values that shape the interpretation during the research process.

The researcher is typically involved in a sustained and intensive experience with participants. Sandvik and McCormack (2018) postulated that “being reflexive is essential to a person-centered approach in qualitative research interviews. It relates to the researcher’s ability to facilitate an engagement that promotes authenticity, self-determination, and reciprocity” (p. 1). As part of the researcher’s commitment to understand the issue within the study, it is important for the researcher to understand the experience of each participant. Without the researcher putting herself in the situation, it might be difficult to understand the participants’ worldview on the issues at hand. It is also important to gain access to the authentic experience and story, because sometimes we tell what we think others want to hear, and sometimes we hope they will understand more than the words (Sandvik & McCormack, 2018, p. 2). The role of this researcher was to research and study why pastors’ wives experience stress in ministry and family life as they work alongside their husbands. It is therefore important to understand that it is an urgent need to provide pastors’ wives with the help they need to cope with ministry work.

Data Collection

Based on the research questions and the unique nature of this study, it was necessary to design a questionnaire that can answer the unique questions that are associated with this research topic. A demographic questionnaire was also administered. The questionnaire was used to understand the experiences of the pastors’ wives and their coping strategies within their ministries. Research Design Questionnaire 1 is a nine-question survey, and the purpose of this survey was to gather information about what they perceive to be their experiences in ministry and at home. The second instrument, Research Design Questionnaire2 is a forty-one-question survey with the purpose of helping the participants to think about their experiences and to explain how and/or if they had been prepared for the role of a pastor’s wife. The structured

interview allowed the researcher to channel the formulated questions towards the research topic and research questions. During the entire qualitative data gathering process, the researcher focused on learning the perception of each participant by keeping the questionnaire and interview process simple and straightforward.

Collection Methods

A total of ten African Pentecostal pastors' wives participated in the data gathering procedure. The interview phase started immediately after IRB approval. The researcher sent an electronic mail requesting participation. Once the participants accepted the invitation to participate, the researcher subsequently sent another email detailing the purpose of the project, the benefit, the consent form, and confidentiality report. Due to the collection method of the study, the interview phase took 5 days, two participants per day with each interview lasting between 45 minutes to an hour. The interview was also conducted virtually for the participants who wanted to observe COVID-19 precautions. The data collection steps included setting the boundaries for the study, collecting information through semi-structured observations and interviews, documents, and audio materials, as well as establishing the protocol for recording information (Creswell, 2014, p. 194).

Instrumentation

To ensure proper instrumentation, the intended instrument which was used during this process was examined by the dissertation panel. By examining the instrument, it ensured reliability and perfection during the information gathering process. The instruments used in collecting data fell under two categories, Research Design Questionnaire1 and Research Design Questionnaire2. Research Design Questionnaire I allowed the researcher to gain insight into the research problem, participants' perception, and ultimately answered the research questions

intended for the study. The questions around this instrument were centered around experiences of pastors' wives within the ministry they serve, their family life, their role expectations, and stressors they face as pastors' wives both in the ministry and at home.

Research Design Questionnaire² was designed to ascertain if the researcher's observations over the years would be backed up by what these pastors' wives have experienced in ministry. These questions were designed to help the participants think about their experiences and to explain how and whether they had been prepared for the role of a pastor's wife. These participants brought many years of experience to the table.

Data was obtained primarily from semi-structured individual interviews. The semi-structured interviews provided the qualitative data for the study and consisted of a series of open-ended questions. For these clergy wives, the interview questions explored their personal background, their experience as a pastor's wife, their relationship with their spouse and children, and their family life in general, as well as their relationships with members of their church. Based on their responses, the researcher was able to ask other probing questions.

Interviews

The first phase of data collection started immediately after IRB approval. Recruitment emails were sent to potential pastors' wives who would like to participate in the study. After the participants agreed to participate in the study, a background form and a consent form were emailed to everyone with a thorough explanation of the study. After giving informed consent, an email with the questionnaires was sent to each participant. Once the questionnaire was completed, the result of those who responded via email was stored in a brand-new flash drive and kept in a safe for security purposes.

For those participants who did a face-to face meeting or videoconference due to COVID-19 pandemic travel restrictions, the interview process was recorded for future review, after the researcher had received written, informed consent. Once consent was given, videoconferencing interviews were scheduled for the pastors' wives. Due to safety restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic, virtual videoconferencing or face-to-face interviews were necessary for the data collection and observation of each participant.

Ten pastors' wives participated in the data gathering procedure. After the participants accepted the invitation to participate, the researcher sent another email detailing the purpose of the study, the benefit, the consent form, and confidentiality report. During this period, reminders were sent to participants, encouraging them to complete the questionnaires as soon as they could. The semi-structured interviews consisted of 9 open-ended questions.

Research Design Questionnaire 1

- 1) Tell me about your experience as a clergy wife.
- 2) Based on your experience, what are the expectations of a pastor's wife? From your spouse? Church leaders? Church members? Others?
- 3) Have you experienced loneliness as a clergy wife? Describe your experience.
- 4) How do you cope with role expectations from those around you?
- 5) How do you feel about serving in the church?
- 6) Has there ever been a time you were faced with stress as a pastor's wife?
- 7) Describe a situation when you felt stressed as a clergy's wife?
- 8) Have you ever had financial difficulties as a pastor's wife?
- 9) How do you cope with stressors both within the ministry and at home?

In addition to the screening questions, the researcher administered a demographic questionnaire. A sample of the demographic questionnaire below included participant information such as age, ethnicity, marital status, number of years in marriage/ministry, education, and employment. Both instruments were administered before the interview.

1. How old are you? _____ years
2. What is your ethnic background? _____
3. What is your marital status? _____.
4. How many years have you been in marriage/ministry? _____.
5. What is your current employment status? _____.
6. What is your highest education level? _____.

Research Design Questionnaire 2

1. How long have you and your husband been in ministry?
2. How long have you been married to your husband?
3. Was your husband a pastor when you got married?
4. When did you begin your life in ministry?
5. Were you personally called to ministry by God?
6. Did you know your husband was going to be a pastor when you agreed to marry him?
7. Did you attend college?
8. What was your major?
9. Did you attend seminary school?
10. Did you take any classes to prepare you to become a pastor's wife?
11. If so, were those classes helpful to you once you got into ministry?
12. Is there anything you wished you were taught before you started ministry?

13. How well were you prepared for life in ministry?
14. What does the life of a pastor's wife mean to you?
15. Is your life as a pastor's wife like any other pastor's wife you know in ministry?
16. Are any of your parents in pastoral ministry?
17. Which books did you read to prepare you for the role of a pastor's wife? If so, were those books helpful to you in any way?
18. How helpful were those books in giving you an understanding of the roles of a pastor's wife?
19. As a new pastor's wife, did you have a mentor to guide you through as to some of the expectations of pastors' wives?
20. Did you have friends or acquaintances in the church?
21. Did you establish friendships with other pastors' wives outside of the church?
22. How long has your husband been a pastor of your church?
23. How long has he been a pastor in the African Pentecostal Church?
24. How does the congregation relate to your husband as the pastor?
25. How does the congregation relate to you as the pastor's wife?
26. How involved have you been or are you in the church?
27. Did you ever have to fill other positions in the church?
 - a. Was it expected of you to fill those positions? Did you volunteer to fill any of those positions?
28. Have you been involved in any ministry within the church?
29. What are your spiritual gifts?
30. Were you allowed to work in the areas you believe you were gifted for?

31. Have you ever had to work in a ministry that you lacked interest in?
32. In your role as pastor's wife, were you given the opportunity to minister to other women?
33. Do you believe you have been a role model to younger women in the church?
 - a. If you answer 'Yes' to question 34, please answer questions 35, 36, and 37. If your answer is 'No' skip to questions 38 – 41.
34. Have you worked outside the home while serving in ministry?
35. Can you give reasons why you worked or work outside the home?
36. If you work outside the home, do you still function in other ministries within the church?
37. Has anyone in the church questioned why you work outside the home?
38. Has being in ministry made your marriage stronger or weaker? Please rate your answer on a scale of 1 – 10, with 1 being the lowest and 10 the highest.
39. Do you believe that you and your husband are partners in ministry?
40. Did your husband communicate to the congregation what your role would be in the church?
41. Has your husband been emotionally and spiritually supportive?

Based on the extensive review of the related literature and the ABC-X Model of Family Stress, this study sought to obtain answers from the open-ended questions in RDQ1 (Zukovic et al., 2012). Questions one through nineteen are knowledge questions (Barman & Khanikor, 2019) that served as a valid and reliable assessment tool for assessing the knowledge of pastors' wives as it relates to stressors, they have faced both in ministry and family life. These questions were intended to be relatively straightforward.

Questions twenty to forty-one were follow-up questions to their worldview of the church, in which she serves or had served and her relationship with members of the congregation. The

testing of validity of a structured questionnaire is very important in this research study as it will give confidence to other pastors' wives who may read this research work (Barman & Khanikor, 2019). Knowledge obtained will have the potential to improve the quality of life of pastors' wives not only in the African Pentecostal Church but also in other denominations. These questionnaires also served as a means of establishing rapport with the participants.

Data Analysis

To allow for verbatim transcription, the participants' interviews were audiotaped. Data obtained from the participants were analyzed using content and thematic analysis. For virtual interviews, the content analysis involved the breakdown of interview transcripts into small chunks of textual data, or open codes. The Zoom platform was used, and this application has a transcription feature that transcribed the interview. Similar open codes were combined to avoid redundancy. Open codes that represent similar perspectives or thoughts were combined into a thematic category. Audio recordings of interviews were transcribed, with transcripts formatted in a consistent manner. All transcripts were exported into NVivo, a qualitative analysis software. The researcher reviewed the transcriptions for completeness and accuracy. The researcher imported interview transcripts which allowed comparison between what each participant said and what the existing literature says about the study. Each transcript was also coded in NVivo by selecting every text chunk that represented an idea or thought of each participant.

Applying interpretative phenomenology, the researcher was able to understand the lived experiences of the clergy wives and identify themes such as protective factors and stressors they may have encountered. Analysis will be conducted across all participants. The participants' demographic characteristics as well as answers to the open-ended questions were analyzed to get a full description of their experiences.

Analysis Methods

After each participant completed the questionnaires, the results provided both numerical and textual data for content analysis. The researcher grouped the participants' responses under each research question. Creswell (2014) recommended that data analysis in qualitative research will proceed together with other parts of developing the qualitative study, namely, the data collection and the write-up findings (p. 195). Because of the density and the richness of text data, the researcher was not able to use all the information for the study. Thus, in the analysis of data, the researcher needed to winnow the data (Guest et al., 2012). The researcher analyzed each group of data, themes related to the research questions, and the coding.

Coding is the process of organizing the data by bracketing chunk (or text image segments) and writing a word representing a category in the margins (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). All the data collected went through coding and was divided into different categories. The researcher setup three categories for each research question. The coding list was created prior to the virtual interview on Zoom videoconferencing. This qualitative data coding proceeded on two levels: the first step was the general procedure in analyzing the data under different categories and the second was the analysis steps within each research question. Creswell (2014) suggested that analyzing data involves transcribing interviews, optically scanning materials, typing up field notes, cataloging all the visual material, sorting and arranging the data into different types depending on the source of information (p. 195).

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is the degree of confidence in the data, methods, and findings of the qualitative study (Amankwaa, 2016). Korstjens and Moser (2018) established the following criteria for assessing trustworthiness in qualitative research:

Credibility

Credibility is the “confidence in the ‘truth’ of the finding” obtained from the participants (Amankwaa, 2016, p. 121). To ensure credibility, the integrity and meaning of the data will be maintained throughout the process of data collection, analysis, interpretation, and dissemination. The researcher gathered the findings accurately to present reality from the participants’ perspectives. Credibility establishes whether the research findings represent plausible information drawn from the participants’ original data and is a correct interpretation of the participants’ original views (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). The researcher believes that it is important to separate the data from the theory to allow the possibility of discovering new patterns or theories from the participants. This means that all information received from all the participants will be as accurate and credible as possible. Some techniques that were used for establishing credibility included but not limited to “persistent observation, prolonged engagement, and member-checking,” a crucial technique for establishing credibility (Amankwaa, 2016, p. 122).

Member checking is also necessary to ensure credibility of the data that will be transcribed by the researcher. Korstjens and Moser (2018) opined that member checking involves “feeding back data, analytical categories, interpretations, and conclusions to members of those groups from whom the data were originally obtained. It strengthens the data, especially because researcher and respondents look at the data with different eyes” (p. 121).

Dependability and Confirmability

Dependability refers to the degree of “showing that the findings are consistent and could be repeated” (Amankwaa, 2016, p. 121). To ensure dependability, the researcher ensured proper

documentation of all procedures during the study. Anyone who intends to use the data from this study in the future can depend on the data collected during the study.

Confirmability is “a degree of neutrality or the extent to which the findings of a study are shaped by the respondents and not researcher bias, motivation, or interest” (Amankwaa, 2016, p. 121). To ensure confirmability, the researcher organized and presented all information in a methodical fashion, such that other researchers can replicate the study successfully later. This means that, if another researcher decides to do a study on the topic of burnout of African Pentecostal pastors’ wives, the result will be like what will be derived in this study. To establish confirmability, an audit trail can also be used. This audit trail is “a transparent description of the research steps taken from the start of a research project to the development and reporting of findings” (Amankwaa, 2016, p. 122).

Transferability

Transferability “shows that the findings have applicability in other contexts” (Amankwaa, 2016, p. 121). The results of this study will be applicable to other pastors’ wives within the same settings. While the results of this study are limited to a few African Pentecostal churches in Maryland, the findings will be applicable to larger African Pentecostal settings. To achieve this, a strategy that can be employed to facilitate transferability is “thick description” (Amankwaa, 2016, p. 122). This technique involves describing a phenomenon in sufficient detail to evaluate the extent to which the conclusions drawn are transferable to other times, settings, situations, and people (Amankwaa, 2016).

Ethical Considerations

It is the responsibility of this researcher to maintain ethical integrity, which includes academic integrity, honesty, Institutional Review Board (IRB) guidelines, privacy rights,

protection from harm, and participant informed consent (Leedy & Ormrod, 2019). To maintain a highly ethical practice during this study, this researcher has disclosed the purpose of the study, the purpose of the questionnaire, and how the researcher intends to use the data collected from the participants in a professional and ethical manner. The researcher sought to secure the approval of pastors' wives in African Pentecostal churches in Maryland, USA during the information gathering period.

This researcher kept an open line of communication with the participants throughout the entire duration of the study to ensure transparency and to avoid any situation where participants felt left out, as they completed the questionnaire. Participants were continuously informed of their right to deny and/or withdraw at any time during the study process. A comprehensive description of the research purpose, the use of the result, and the outcome of the research when completed were provided. When data collection was completed, the researcher deidentified the data using pseudonyms/codes. The deidentified data was then kept in a safe and password-secured computer that is only accessible to the researcher. Data will be destroyed after a period of three years.

Summary

The lived experiences of African Pentecostal pastors' wives were investigated using a qualitative methodology and phenomenological approach. Participant selection for this study employed a criterion-based sampling strategy. The researcher also told her story, her lived experience as a pastor's wife. The researcher hopes to show how clergy wives have remained unheard for a long time and are desperate for their needs to be understood and addressed. While this is not a theological study, to explore the lived experiences of clergy wives within the African Pentecostal Church, all results are based solely within this denomination and for only a few

participants with the APC. The findings from this study may apply to pastors' wives of other conservative evangelical traditions/denominations as well.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Overview

The study of burnout of clergy wives within the African Pentecostal Church and the questions surrounding why clergy wives suffer burnout in ministry provided insight into the dynamics of ministry work within the APC. Initial goals were to understand the roles of clergy wives in the ministry and why they end up suffering from burnout as they work alongside their husbands. Since the research problem recognized that minimal assistance is given to help pastors' wives overcome the stresses that come with the job, it begs the question as to whether much thought has been given within the leadership of the APC to help these pastors' wives in their various roles.

The two research questions examined are, how do pastors' wives in the African Pentecostal Church describe burnout and What are the contributing factors that can lead to pastors' wives' burnout? Two major themes were revealed in this study: "Protective Factors," and "Stressors." In answer to these questions, this research uncovered that the pastors' wives experienced burnout because of the various stressors they were faced with in ministry. Some of the stressors faced by these pastor wives included, role strain, lack of boundaries, conflict, financial strain, and isolation.

These stressors have led to the burnout of clergy wives in the APC thereby causing emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and low personal accomplishment (Francis et al., 2017, 2019; Frenk et al., 2013; Randall, 2013). These clergy wives have been suffering in silence and have been conforming to their role expectations without question, and as a result, they relinquish at least part of their own individuality for the survival and existence of their husband and his career.

Participants

As part of the commitment to understand burnout of clergy wives in the APC, ten clergy wives from the African Pentecostal Church in Maryland were interviewed. A criterion-based sampling strategy was used for this research in which the criterion was that all participants were of the African Pentecostal denomination. The participating clergy wives met the criteria: 1) A female who was or is married to an ordained minister in the African Pentecostal church; 2) Served for at least five years in the Pentecostal denomination as a pastor's wife.

At the beginning of the study, pastors' wives of the African Pentecostal Church in Maryland were contacted and asked for their participation through a recruitment email. The recruitment email was sent to about thirty-five pastors' wives. The researcher received permission from ten of the participating pastors' wives, which was the number needed to conduct the study. The participants were recruited under several IRB protocols. The protocols included the recruitment form, the background form, and the consent form. All forms were sent to all the participants. The recruitment form was sent to each individual requesting their participation. Once subjects agreed to participate, a background form was sent to capture their age, country of citizenship, denominational affiliation, and the number of years that they attended their church. The background form helped to ensure each participant met the criteria for the study. No personal or identifying information was included in the form.

After the background form, a consent form which contained additional information about the research was sent. Participants were instructed to save a copy of the consent form to their computer, type their name, date the form, and return a copy of signed form to the researcher. The background form had no personal information on it, and the informed consent was attached to the questionnaire. Eight of the pastors' wives did a virtual meeting and two had a face-to-face

interview. Only the participants who took part in the videoconference signed their consent form, dated the form, and returned a copy to the researcher after they agreed to participate in the study. The signed consent form was required as part of the IRB protocol because the audio content of each interview was recorded and stored for data analysis.

To guarantee privacy and confidentiality, each participant was notified that the record for this study will be kept private. The published report did not include any identifying information. Research records were stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records. Data collected from each participant may be shared for use in future research studies or with other researchers. If the participants data is shared, any identifying information will be removed before it is shared. All of the participants were 18 years and older. All of the participants were married to a clergy husband. Six of the participants are current pastors' wives and four are former pastors' wives. The clergy husbands are ministers in the African Pentecostal Church, and all of the pastors' wives served alongside their husbands at their local church.

Several interview questions guided this research to understand and examine why pastors' wives suffer burnout in the African Pentecostal Church. The study used researcher-designed questions aligned with the purpose and the questions were presented to the participants to learn the reasons they suffer burnout in ministry. Participants reported that various factors they experience as they serve alongside their husbands in ministry, such as loneliness, unpleasant conduct from church members, lack of friends, high expectations from others, and lack of mentors have led to burnout. While the Pentecostal churches had leaders and board members, they have done very little in helping to see that the pastors' wives' needs were understood and addressed. The participants' years in marriage ranged from eight to thirty-two years.

Table 1.

Demographic Information of Pastors' Wives

<i>Participant</i>	<i>Age Range</i>	<i>Years in ministry</i>	<i>Size of church</i>	<i>Husband's position</i>	<i>Employment</i>	<i>Children at home</i>	<i>Years in marriage</i>
1	30-45	5	300	Senior	Full-time	5	8
2	50-55	10	80	Senior	Full-time	1	19
3	50-55	16	1050	Senior	None	3	21
4	50-59	21	260	Senior	Full-time	3	22
5	50-55	21	100	Senior	Full-time	2	24
6	50-55	24	400	Senior	Full-time	4	25
7	50-59	25	190	Senior	Full-time	0	29
8	50-59	31	1150	Senior	Full-time	0	30
9	50-59	35	500	Senior	Full-time	3	32
10	50-59	35	400	Senior	Full-time	2	32

Data Analysis and Findings

Ten pastors' wives from the African Pentecostal Church in Maryland were interviewed. Six of the pastors' wives are currently pastors' wives and four were former pastors' wives. To allow for verbatim transcription, the participants' interviews were audiotaped. Eight of the interviews were done virtually and two were done face-to-face. Data obtained from the participants were analyzed using content and thematic analysis. For virtual interviews, the content analysis involved the breakdown of interview transcripts into small chunks of textual data, or open codes. The Zoom platform was used, and this application has a transcription feature that transcribed the interviews. Open codes that represented similar perspectives or thoughts were combined into a thematic category. Audio recordings of interviews were transcribed, with transcripts formatted in a consistent manner. All transcripts were exported into NVivo, a qualitative analysis software. The researcher reviewed the transcriptions for completeness and

accuracy. The researcher imported interview transcripts which allowed comparison between what each participant said and what the existing literature says about the study. Each transcript was also coded in NVivo by selecting every text chunk that represented an idea or thought of each participant.

Applying interpretative phenomenology, the researcher was able to understand the lived experiences of the clergy wives and identify themes such as protective factors and stressors they have encountered. Analysis was conducted across all participants. The participants' demographic characteristics as well as answers to the open-ended questions were analyzed to get a full description of their experiences.

Through observation, the researcher was able to understand how these pastors' wives felt about the stressors they were faced with. Some of the common stressors described by the pastors' wives were, role strain, lack of boundaries, conflict, financial strain, and isolation. In her interview, Pastor Sally noted, "you should be seen but not heard." She felt that as a pastor's wife she did not have a voice. The only difference observed was that there was only one participant who did not report financial strain in ministry. The observation process also allowed the researcher to understand the social context that could not be understood if other research methods were used for the study. The responses of the pastors' wives provided answers to the research questions. As qualitative interview was used for this study, it allowed the researcher to gather data relevant to the experiences of the pastors' wives within the APC in Maryland.

Individual responses to the question, "Have you experienced loneliness as a pastor's wife?" were given. Each of the pastors' wives had at one point in ministry experienced loneliness, a contributing factor that led to burnout. Pastor Sally, in her response, stated, "A lot of times, especially when your husband refuses to look at your need to be together but is

confined to a phone.” Pastor Hannah said, “Yes. About a year into marriage, my husband gets a phone call in the middle of the night that the member needs him for emotional support.” Pastor Yvonne noted, “Yes. The church expects you to be invisible. They don't see that you have feelings too.” Pastor Sally went on to say, “Yes. There was a time I wasn't feeling so well, but I didn't tell them this, as I did not want to show my weaknesses out there.”

Results

The two research questions for this study were: “How do African Pentecostal pastors’ wives describe burnout?” And “What are the contributing factors that lead to African Pentecostal pastors’ wives’ burnout?” The participant answered the interview questions, which were based on the research questions, and revealed two major themes: “Protective Factors,” which connected to research questions six, fourteen, and twenty. The second theme that emerged was “Stressors,” which connected to research questions, two, three, four, and nine. In addition, the reliance on God and their faith was common in both themes, very specifically, and with subthemes in Theme One as “Religious Practices” and in Theme Two more generally. The participants relied on God as a coping mechanism to help them through hardships in ministry. They trusted that God will provide their physical, emotional, financial, mental, and emotional needs, as long as they were faithful to their calling and doing what the Lord had called them to do.

Ten pastors’ wives of the APC in Maryland were interviewed to gather their perceptions on how they viewed burnout whilst serving in their various ministries. Burnout was as a result of the various stressors they were faced with in ministry. All the pastors’ wives had experienced various types of stressors within their homes and ministries that are all causes of burnout. These pastors’ wives were overburdened with the many roles and responsibilities they are faced with.

The data from the research highlighted various issues among the pastors' wives. These pastors' wives experienced a variety of stressors as a result of their husband's ministry role. Due to the extensive time commitment of church responsibilities and their husbands over involvement in the church, the pastors' wives had to assume so many roles alone. Some of these roles involved child-rearing, functioning in other offices and departments within the church, household management responsibilities, etc. Feeling inadequate to meet some or all of these demands, the pastors' wives felt emotionally exhausted.

There were occasions where duties that may have been assigned to other church members could not be done because of a no-show and the pastor's wife is the only one left to take on those duties. Also, there are times when she has to function in the role of her husband in his absence. The pastors' wives in the APC in Maryland who were interviewed described that they were expected to fill in various roles that were originally assigned to other people without complaining. They noted that they are constantly being watched and observed by the congregation. In her interview, Pastor Becky remarked, *"You are open to criticism and are under surveillance. People are checking out what you do. You are not who you used to be before."*

Theme 1: Protective Factors

While investigating the experiences of burnout among clergy spouses in the African Pentecostal Church, it is essential to investigate the protective factors that might assist in avoiding or lessening the severity of the impacts of burnout. Protective factors may be described as individual, societal, or environmental elements that help develop resilience, decrease stress, and boost well-being (Chakrabarti & Markless, 2022). Protective factors can also be broken down into three categories, social support, self-care, and religious practices. Some protective

characteristics that emerged from the qualitative data from interviews with clergy spouses are examined.

The participants ranked social support as one of the most significant preventive elements that may be considered. The presence of a supportive network consisting of family, friends, and other churchgoers was cited by several clergy spouses as helping them cope with the responsibilities that come with their job. For instance, one of the participants said, "There is a group of ladies from the church that I facilitate, and they get together once a week to pray for each other and talk about the challenges we face. It has been a savior for me in many ways." Another person also said, "My spouse and I have a wonderful connection, and we discuss any topics. The fact that he is my closest buddy has been the deciding factor in everything." The importance of taking care of oneself was another protective factor from the research.

A good number of clergy spouses understood the need to prioritize their health in order to prevent emotional exhaustion. This included participating in pursuits that provided them happiness and a sense of calm, such as reading, working out, and spending time with the people they cared about. One participant said, "I make it a point to give myself some alone time every day, even if it is just for half an hour to do something relaxing like read a book or go for a stroll. It aids in maintaining my equilibrium." The importance of religious and spiritual practices as major protective factors was also shown. Several of the spouses of clergy members found that their religion gave them the fortitude and solace they needed during times of difficulty.

One of the participants said, "Faith is what enables me to face each day with optimism. Every day, I pray and study my Bible, enabling me to concentrate on what really matters." One other group member stated, "I feel that God has called me to this job, and that provides me with a

feeling of purpose and significance." A last protective element was the presence of defined limits and expectations within the relationship.

Some spouses of clergy members had remarked that it was easier to handle their job and stay away from burnout when they established limits on their time and obligations. As an example, one of the participants commented, "I have developed the ability to refuse when it is necessary. I used to put a lot of pressure on myself to do everything, but now I know it is alright to put my health first." Another person said, "Both I and my spouse have particular expectations about what I can and cannot accomplish. It makes me feel like I have more control, which is helpful."

All of the participants relied on God as a coping mechanism to help them through hardships in ministry. They trusted that God will provide their physical, emotional, financial, mental, and emotional needs, as long as they were faithful to their calling and doing what the Lord had called them to do, even though they were suffering in silence.

Pastor Sally noted that as the pastor's wife, "*you should be seen but not heard.*" Pastors' wives were expected to remain silent even if they were unhappy with what was going on around them. However, their protective factors consisted of their faith in God and love for Christ, and a commitment to their calling (both to their marriage and ministry.)

"Great experience since there is joy in serving the Lord. I enjoy doing it, but there are times when you want to be like every other person due to so many expectations" (Pastor Hannah).

"I have had bad and good experiences, but all sides drew me closer to God" (Pastor Kate).

“I draw strength from God. When it gets so much, I get some time off from the church and walk away. I matter too. My mental health matters. People talk every time. At home, there is not much stress” (Pastor Yvonne).

“Learned to trust God and to pray always. The stressors within the ministry and home were many and quite exhaustive” (Pastor Sarah).

Table 2.

Theme: Protective Factors- Explanation

Protective Factors	Explanation
Social Support	An encouraging community that includes one's family, friends, and other congregants at their church
Self-Care	Engaging in activities that offer joy and a feeling of peace.
Religious Practices	Faith enables optimism and provides purpose

Table 3.

Theme: Protective Factors- Research Questions

Theme:		
Research Question	Questions	Theme
RQ1. How do African Pentecostal pastors' wives describe burnout?	Has there ever been a time you were faced with stress as a pastor's wife?	<i>Protective factors:</i>
	What does the life of a pastor's wife mean to you?	Social Support
	Did you have friends or acquaintances in the church?	Self-Care Religious Practices

These protective factors are important in the lives of these pastors' wives. The presence of a supportive network consisting of family, friends, and other churchgoers was cited by several clergy spouses as helping them cope with the responsibilities that come with their job. The clergy spouses understood the need to prioritize their health in order to prevent emotional exhaustion. One participant said, "I make it a point to give myself some alone time every day, even if it is just for half an hour to do something relaxing like read a book or go for a stroll. It aids in maintaining my equilibrium." The pastors' wives found that their religion gave them the fortitude and solace they needed during times of difficulty.

Identifying the pressures that cause clergy wives in the African Pentecostal Church to burnout is as vital as identifying protective factors. The qualitative data from clergy wives' interviews revealed specific stresses (Hutchinson, 2019). Participant stresses included congregational expectations. Clergy spouses felt obligated to be excellent wives, mothers, and models of piety and grace for the church community. "I have to be everything to everyone," said one participant. I should be a loving wife, mother, and spiritual leader. "Overwhelming." "They want me to attend every church function, always to have a smile, and never to grumble," said another participant. African Pentecostal clergy wives are vulnerable to stress. These pressures may cause burnout and other issues. Knowing this population's stresses may assist in designing tailored burnout therapies and support techniques.

Theme 2: Stressors

Role Strain. Clergy wives have roles that might be stressful. They must care for their spouse, family, and church. Conflicting needs and priorities may make these positions stressful (Nkonge, 2020). A clergy wife may struggle to balance family and congregational commitments. Burnout may result from guilt or failure. Clergy wives may sometimes face unreasonable

expectations from their spouses and congregations. A husband may expect their wife to offer emotional support at all times, regardless of the time of day or other obligations. The clergy wife may feel pressured to be a spiritual and moral role model for the church. These demands might cause burnout.

"If I had another chance, I wouldn't want to be a pastor's wife; it limits me from many things."

"On a particular Sunday, I was very weak, but my husband said I had to go. If I were a member, I would have relaxed, but as a leader, I have to be there. It's not easy to raise my four kids and still be in church early and rushing to get there since you don't want to be late."

Lack of Boundaries. Clergy wives may feel pressured to be available to the congregation and their husbands 24/7, blurring work and home life. Being "on call" 24/7 might lead to burnout. For instance, church members who need emotional assistance may contact or text a clergy wife at any time. This makes it hard for her to relax and unwind (Jones & Plisco, 2021). The absence of work-life boundaries may also challenge clergy wives' spiritual and emotional health. Without limits, clergy wives may struggle to care for themselves, which can lead to burnout.

Conflict. Clergy wives may worry about congregational or marital conflict. Leadership, theology, and interpersonal concerns may cause conflict. Conflict management may lead to burnout (Nkonge, 2020). A clergy wife may get embroiled in a congregational dispute over an issue. She may feel pressured to arbitrate or take sides, causing tension and strain. Conflict with her husband, especially over religious work, may be complex. This might strain their relationship

and affect their work. *“In the ministry, you are limited to certain things. For instance, you can't do anything even if people point the finger at you” (Pastor Sarah).*

Financial Strain. A significant number of clergy wives do not get monetary remuneration for their labor since they do their duties in a volunteer capacity (Hutchinson, 2019). This might put the family in a difficult financial position, adding tension to their daily lives. For instance, if the husband of a clergy wife is the only earner in the family, the inability of the wife to get monetary remuneration for her labor may cause the family to experience significant financial difficulty. This may be a very trying situation for the family, especially if they are already dealing with financial issues or the clergy spouse has a modest wage. *“Sometimes, the church would not pay the mortgage for the church, and it would fall on us, and my husband and I would have to foot the bills” (Pastor Kate).*

Isolation. Due to the demands of their responsibilities and duties, clergy wives may feel alone. This might be worse if they serve in a new community or have few chances to socialize outside of work. A clergy wife may feel lonely and isolated due to her duty as the spouse of the clergyperson, which may lead to burnout (Jones & Plisco, 2021). Moreover, clergy wives may have little opportunity to create non-clergy connections. This is especially difficult if they have moved, or religious work is their only social outlet. Clergy wives may burn out if they do not have outside friends. Resilience may help manage stress. Stress and hardship are handled through resilience.

Clergy wives may prevent burnout by cultivating resilience. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), mindfulness, and social support build resilience. CBT changes negative thoughts and behavior. Clergy spouses may improve their coping skills by working with a therapist to identify and address negative thinking patterns. The cognitive restructuring may help a clergy

wife who feels terrible about putting herself first. Mindfulness may also boost resilience.

Mindfulness is being present and accepting thoughts and emotions without judgment.

Mindfulness may help clergy wives manage stress and prevent burnout. Meditation, yoga, and breathing are other mindfulness practices.

Resilience requires social support. People may feel better supported by connecting with other clergy wives or acquaintances who understand their circumstances. Family, friends, and churchgoers provide social support (Brandon, 2022). Clergy-wife support groups can be instrumental. Systemic causes that stress clergy wives must be addressed along with resiliency. This may entail resolving inappropriate congregational expectations for clergy wives or creating procedures to compensate for the work they do. Systemic concerns may help clergy wives avoid burnout by reducing pressures they may be faced with.

"Be at his level. He had higher expectations."

"High expectations, Be supportive of your husband and ministry as a whole."

Table 4.

Theme: Stressors- Explanation

Stressors	Description
Role Strain	Competing demands and priorities arise when caring for family, church, and marriage.
Lack of Boundaries	Being "on call" 24 hours a day and blending business and personal life is problematic.
Conflict	Leadership, theology, and interpersonal issues that contribute to failure or guilt
Financial Strain	Absence of financial compensation for work
Isolation	Due to responsibilities and a dearth of outside companionship, the individual feels alone.

Table 5.

Theme: Stressors- Research Questions

Theme:		
Research Question	Questions	Theme
RQ2. What are the contributing factors that can lead to pastors' wives' burnout?	Based on your experience, what are the expectations of a pastor's wife? From church leaders, members?	<i>Stressors:</i>
	Have you experienced loneliness as a clergy wife? Describe your experience.	Role Strain
	How do you cope with stressors both within the ministry and at home?	Lack of Boundaries
	How do you cope with role expectations from those around you?	Conflict
		Financial Strain
		Isolation

Table 6.

Themes/Subthemes Resulting from Data Analysis

Participant	Theme Protective factors			Stressors				
	Social Support	Self-Care	Religious Practices	Role Strain	Lack of boundaries	Conflict	Financial Strain	Isolation
P1	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
P2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
P3	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
P4		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes
P5		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
P6	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
P7	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
P8	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
P9	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
P10	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Summary

In this chapter, the research aimed to furnish the data and reports that best describe the reasons why pastors' wives in the African Pentecostal Church in Maryland experience burnout using a qualitative method of research design. The qualitative design enabled the researcher to collect data through interviews and observation from various participants. The steps for creating this qualitative study involved careful examination of those who were interviewed, examined

various patterns within the study and the data collected. All these processes allowed the researcher to narrow down the results to generate themes that answered the research questions.

Through observation, the researcher was able to understand how these pastors' wives felt about the stressors they were faced with. Some of the common stressors described by the pastors' wives were, role strain, lack of boundaries, conflict, financial strain, and isolation. The only difference observed was that there was only one participant who did not report financial strain in ministry. The observation process also allowed the researcher to understand the social context that could not be understood if other research methods were used for the study. The responses of the pastors' wives provided answers to the research questions. As qualitative interview was used for this study, it allowed the researcher to gather data relevant to the experiences of the pastors' wives within the APC in Maryland. Based on the data collected and reports, it revealed that the pastors' wives' protective factors assisted them in avoiding or lessening the severity of the impacts of burnout they experienced. Now that the findings are presented in this chapter, the following chapter will provide interpretation, ideas, and conclusions.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

Overview

This study aimed to investigate and comprehend clergy wives' burnout in the African Pentecostal Church in the United States, and in Maryland, in particular. This burnout has resulted in them not fully living their lives and as a result affecting their daily living. The purpose of this study was to examine the reasons clergy wives suffer burnout in the African Pentecostal Church (APC) in Maryland. This research aimed to give qualitative data and analysis to determine the effects of burnout on these women's everyday lives and well-being. The study concentrated on the elements that lead to burnout, such as the daily routine and lifestyle of clergy wives and the emotional and professional impacts of burnout.

The purpose of this study was to examine the reasons clergy wives suffer burnout in the African Pentecostal Church (APC) in Maryland. While an increasing number of clergies have experienced burnout, clergy wives are an understudied and silenced population who are suffering (Luedtke & Sneed, 2018). This researcher intends to strongly advocate for pastors' wives and be that voice to educate congregants, administrators, and pastors about the dangers of unrealistic expectations that have led to pastors' wives' burnout.

This research provided the data gathered from clergy wives through qualitative analysis. It has fully unearthed the suffering of the clergy wives and has broken the silence that results in their burnout in ministry. According to the findings of this research, it is evident that giving careful attention to the clergy wives is crucial in this denomination. This section will discuss the summary of the findings, the implications, the delimitations and limitations of the research, recommendations for future research, and the summary of this research.

Research Questions

The research questions that guided this study were as follows:

RQ1. How do pastors' wives in the African Pentecostal Church describe burnout?

RQ2. What are the contributing factors that can lead to African Pentecostal pastors' wives' burnout?

Burnout among African Pentecostal pastors' wives was understood as the pastors' wives shared their various experiences in ministry. Data collected during this study provided necessary information that helped determine how these pastors' wives view burnout. It was determined by this research that stress from role expectations within ministry and family life and other contributing factors led to burnout of these pastors' wives.

Summary of Findings

This research has fully examined the reasons for burnout of clergy wives in the African Pentecostal Church in Maryland. It has brought to light the suffering clergy wives have to undergo. This is an understudied concept and clergy wives have been a silenced population within the African Pentecostal Church. The research has strongly advocated for pastors' wives and has voiced to educate the administrators, congregants, and pastors about the dangers of unrealistic expectations that have resulted in burnout of pastors' wives. As illustrated by this research, recognizing the early burnout signs by the clergy wives, and finding preventive ways is essential since it is usually hard to fight, for burnout does not occur overnight. In addition, the pastors and their spouses need to take refuge in Christ since He expects them to be faithful to their calling and neither should they be deprived of the joy and satisfaction that comes with their calling.

This research may help clergy wives understand that there are no preventive measures to avoid burnout, and no theorizing can help someone appreciate how debilitating and destructive the

care for others can be. The findings from this research may prevent pastors' wives from hiding their identity as pastors' wives from their social media platforms because of the insecurity they feel. In addition, may curb burnout, prevent the clergy wives from being irritable, and instead be the perfect hostess who can offer a listening ear and comforting words to calm down troubled waters. The wives of the clergy should be properly taken care of by the denomination, and the feeling of loneliness should be eradicated in her so that she does not become pessimistic, which is a great role player in depression (Nkonge, 2020).

This research indicates burnout symptoms, including a lack of excitement about life, lack of better expectations, loss of pleasure in previously enjoyable activities, sleep problems, and anxiety. This research also found out that clergy wives can become pessimistic which is a great buffer for stress. The shouldering of many responsibilities by the clergy wives should allow them more rest time and space between responsibilities, so as to avoid burnout (Oliver, 2022).

This research also offers solutions to clergy wives who show visible signs of burnout. A pastor's wife can talk to a trusted friend when she realizes that she is struggling with loneliness, depression, or emotional exhaustion. Although these commitments are hard to keep, they are basic in taking care of herself and being prepared to meet life's challenges. These commitments will ensure that the clergy wives' lives and ministry are free from depression, resentment, and loneliness. In addition, this research also indicates that the local church has extreme expectations for the pastors' wives as the church expects them to be involved in every level, including bible studies, children's and women's ministries, outreach, and hospitality. On the other hand, they also carry a heavy responsibility as they care for their families, people in the church, and their husbands and participate in activities around the community and the church.

Clergy wives experience some challenges in this denomination, as illustrated by this research. Many of the pastors' wives feel left out by their mates and unappreciated by the church. Sometimes they feel unloved, overworked, and underpaid, and very few engage in the church's decision-making, yet they are expected to host, attend, and lead many activities. When the pastor is hired, their wives are considered integral to the church but are not often paid or allowed to voice their opinions or feelings. The clergy wives may feel unworthy to fulfill the responsibilities handed to them since they feel discouraged and unqualified about their position.

The findings from this research advocate for a better understanding of the predicament of the pastors' wives within the African Pentecostal Church. Based on the findings, the denomination must create programs to help the clergy wives as they wrestle with burnout in family and ministry life. In addition, this research aimed to renew the clergy wives' joy and hope as they work alongside their husbands. Many people struggle with burnout, and this research has come out with solutions to this age-long phenomenon to relieve them as they wrestle with it.

Discussion

In this section, data showed that the African Pentecostal pastors' wives have encountered unique experiences that made them to feel isolated, lonely, and overburdened with their roles, which led them to experience burnout while serving in ministry alongside their husbands. The phenomenological study points to the vital need for pastors' wives to have their experience understood. Their lived experiences comprised of positive and negative components which have brought emotional, mental, spiritual, and physical awareness to those involved.

Based on the qualitative analysis, it was concluded that the clergy wives in the African Pentecostal Church in Maryland suffer from burnout because of the stresses that come with their roles. They also felt neglected and were expected to handle many tasks within the church. In this

research, two research questions were formulated, including how the African Pentecostal pastors' wives describe burnout and the contributing factors that resulted in burnout among them. The data collected from this research provided the necessary information that determines the burnout view by the pastors' wives.

The pastors' wives in this denomination described burnout as a real phenomenon, which they have all experienced. They described some of the situations that made them lonely. Some of these situations include isolation - the husbands being confined to their phones and refusing to value the need to be together with their wives, and phone calls from church members in the middle of the night to their husbands to offer emotional support to their troubled families. In addition, they have received unruly remarks from church members, and since they are pastors' wives, they cannot do anything about it. Also, the church expects the clergy wife to be invisible, and people are oblivious of the fact that they have feelings too. Also, the clergy wives do not have anyone to confide in since all they have are their husbands and immediate families.

The clergy wives are also not expected to show weakness despite being humans. In addition, the pastors' wives are always so lonely when their pastor husbands desire to be by themselves, especially in cases when they are preparing for meetings or in instances where they would travel for weeks or more for evangelism. They also need alone time to pray and prepare for ministerial events resulting in the wives being alone most of the time. Also, as the clergy wives try to lead people in the way of Christ, not everyone is appreciative of her efforts, as some tend to be unhappy as she tries to model and teach Godly behavior. Moreover, when pastors and their wives first commence ministry, many pastors would be on spiritual retreats for weeks to pray for the ministry's growth, resulting in loneliness and finance shortages. In the research, some clergy wives pointed out that their husbands would leave them alone with their young ones to attend to late-

night stress calls from church members and leave the family for long periods to attend to their needs.

Some of the descriptions given on burnout include failure to be present by the people who were supposed to carry out functions at church programs, and the clergy wives had to fill in the gap by doing things they were not supposed to do. Also, they need help finding people they can confide in. In addition, the interviewed clergy wives pointed out that being in that position is stressful since they have to attend their church services regardless of how they were feeling. They have to get to church very early despite having several children to take care of, and they have to rush to church to avoid being late. Moreover, in some situations when the church would not pay for the mortgage, the clergy family had to pay for the church mortgage with their own money. Sometimes, the clergy wives overwork and are exhausted since they work in the church and in their career fields, and some are even forced to work both at nights and during the day to make sure the home front does not lack resources, making their position as clergy wives so much stressful.

According to the research, some contributing factors to pastor's wives' burnout are inadequate time from their husbands which often led to loneliness. Most of the interviewed clergy wives pointed out that they experienced loneliness, which resulted in a lack of emotional comfort that gradually led to burnout. Second, clergy wives must deal with role strain. Clergy wives are restricted to the things they can do because they are always under the microscope by members and people in general, making them feel like quitting. In addition, clergy wives have no friends to talk to about what they are going through, leaving them to deal with stress on their own. Moreover, they suffer from congregational and marital conflict, and as a result, they feel limited to the extent that some of them wish that if they had another chance, they would not want that position. Lastly,

the lack of boundaries can result in them becoming withdrawn, which is also a main cause of burnout.

Empirical Literature

Empirical research demonstrates the occupational role of clergy husbands adds further stress to their wives and influences their quality of life. The following areas were discovered in the literature regarding the issues that add further stress to clergy wives, role strain, lack of boundaries, conflict, financial strain, and isolation. In this research, it has been discovered that burnout among African Pentecostal pastors' wives is common. Sometimes at the expense of their well-being, clergy members are charged with giving emotional and spiritual support to their congregations. Unfortunately, their spouses' experiences, especially those of clergy wives, have been largely neglected in the literature. The research specifically investigated protective variables and stressors that lead to burnout in this demographic. This research has shed insight into the distinctive experiences of clergy spouses in the African Pentecostal Church and suggested viable techniques for avoiding and treating burnout in this community.

Theoretical Literature

Burnout can occur when one feels overwhelmed and unable to meet constant demands. Literature on burnout uncovered that it usually leads to unhappiness which can eventually threaten one's job, relationships, and health (mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual) which often occurs among individuals in the helping professions. Burnout is also a widespread problem in many careers, including clergy (Frederick et al., 2018). It is more than the occasional overload at work.

The relevance of identifying the prevalence of burnout among clergy spouses, a problem that has been largely disregarded in prior studies, is brought to light by the findings of this study. Pastors' wives' distinct experiences and felt responsibilities stemmed from expectations and

stressors of their clergy husbands' job. The stress that comes with their job as pastors' wives is undeniable and as such the researcher tried to gain an understanding of the breadth and depth of the experiences coming from this underrepresented community. The research brought to light the mental and physical stress that come with being a clergy wife and the detrimental effects that burnout has on the overall quality of life of the pastors' wives.

Research Conclusion

This research mainly aimed at studying, discussing, and evaluating the causes and results of burnout among clergy wives in the African Pentecostal Church. Most clergy wives have been suffering in silence, and their situations tend to worsen since they are mostly ignored and understudied in this denomination. Some were not called into ministry; they only found themselves as the pastor's wife by coincidence since their husband joined the clergy after marriage. However, some who knew what they were getting themselves into by being the clergy wife still suffered burnout despite their knowledge about this position. In addition, much pressure is placed upon the clergy wives as they are limited in what they do, and many things are expected from them (Hutchinson, 2019). The clergy wives are expected to serve full-time along with their husbands and are also expected to be serving in almost all the ministries in the church.

The African Pentecostal Church needs to acknowledge the position of the clergy's wife in the church. Instead of silencing the clergy wives in the church and limiting their free will, the church needs to acknowledge them and let them participate in the church's decision-making. Just as the clergy receives a salary in the denomination, the clergy's wife should also be salaried since they also minister much like the clergy. They sacrifice a lot to minister alongside their husbands, and in turn, they also get tired since it is cumbersome, considering that they still have a family and a husband to take care of and the church members look up to her. In addition, this position is so

demanding to the clergy wives since they need to be present and active in the ministry, and they need not show the act of weakness in the church. Some of the clergy wives who are careerwomen need to work both day and night to fulfill their church and home duties (Jones & Plisco, 2021).

The clergy needs time to spend with their wives since they get lonely and end up experiencing burnout. As much as the clergy needs to minister to their members, who may be in great numbers, they also need to dedicate enough time to their lonely wives left at home. Sometimes the clergy may receive stress calls from their members in the middle of the night, and they leave their lonely wives to attend to them. In addition, the clergy wives spend a long time alone since their husbands may leave for ministry for long weeks, and in some cases, the clergy needs alone time to prepare and pray. Henceforth, the clergy wives spend little time with their mates and are mostly lonely. Spending quality time with the clergy with their women will reduce burnout cases among the clergy wives.

High expectations of the clergy's wives by the church and its members can result from burnout. The high expectations may result in stress among the clergy wives, and since most of them do not have friends and people to talk to, it may lead to burnout. The clergy wives are not expected to show weakness and must attend church even if they have health issues. In addition, society expects the children of the clergy to be exactly like their fathers, and it is the role of the clergy wives to make that happen since their husbands are not around most of the time. Moreover, the clergy wives are also expected to fill in the gaps in the ministry and end up doing things they were not supposed to. These expectations create much pressure on the clergy wives, resulting in stress.

The clergy needs to communicate to the congregation about the role of their wives in the church to avoid high expectations from the congregation and them being tired during ministry.

This will reduce the feeling of quitting since the clergy wives will only focus on their roles in church alone, giving them enough time for both ministry and their families. Lowering expectations by the church members will reduce their disappointments, and the action of pointing fingers at the clergy wives will cease resulting in no burnout. In addition, the clergy should also offer spiritual and emotional support to their wives at all times. In most cases, the clergy wives are always lonely and lack someone to talk to, and offering this kind of support to them will reduce the feeling of loneliness.

In most cases, the clergy's wives are given positions to serve in the church as they minister to their spouses. However, sometimes they are given positions they need to be gifted at, resulting in exhaustion and burnout. Serving in ministries where one is not gifted will result in many struggles to be perfect, which is stressful for the clergy wives. In addition, the clergy wives are forced to do things they were not supposed to do, like being required to fill other positions in the church involuntarily. Moreover, as much as the clergy wives tend to overwork and fill in the gaps in church, some members do not relate to them well. Appreciating the clergy wives' efforts in the ministry and offering support will reduce burnout among them.

Clergy wives lack mentors to guide them through some expectations of being a pastor's wife. The availability of such mentors will enable them to be guided on what to expect and how to deal with situations that will result in burnout among them. Also, the clergy wives need to read books to prepare themselves for the role of the pastor's wife. The books may offer great inspiration, mentorship, and solutions to navigate their roles in ministry. In addition, before starting a ministry, the clergy wives should be taught about the journey they have chosen to follow, like the obstacles they will face during their line of work and especially how to handle stress and deal with lonely days in ministry.

For the clergy wives to be free from burnout, they need to eradicate its symptoms as soon as they appear. They must deal with stressors at home and in the ministry. They need to involve themselves in activities that are likely to keep them adjusted, like, going shopping, talking to close family members and friends. In addition, turning to God through prayer if they lack control can also help in the reduction of stress. The clergy wives' mental health matters, and it is important to deal with stress before things get out of hand. Also, talking things out at home and in ministry is a way of curbing stressors among the clergy wives. The clergy wives are important personnel in the ministry and should be assisted and taken care of to prevent them from experiencing burnout.

Implications

Theoretical Implications

The relevance of identifying the prevalence of burnout among clergy spouses, a problem that has been largely disregarded in prior studies, is brought to light by the findings of this study. In addition, it brings to light the mental and physical stress that comes with being a clergy wife and the detrimental effect that burnout has on their overall quality of life. The obstacles that clergy spouses confront are examined in this study, as is the need for further research in this field. These findings give significant insights. It also draws attention to the need to resolve the underlying assumptions of leadership in the African Pentecostal Church, which contribute to the exhaustion experienced by clergy spouses.

Empirical Implications

The research presents empirical proof of burnout among clergy spouses and the numerous variables that contribute to it. The data imply that stress, emotional exhaustion, and lack of resources lead to burnout. The research also reveals that clergy wives endure loneliness due to their husbands' absence and the desire to be there for their families. The research offers empirical

evidence of the necessity to help clergy spouses with material and financial resources and train them to learn how to handle stress.

Practical Implications

The research has practical consequences for numerous stakeholders, such as counselors, preachers, policymakers, administrators, teachers, and parents. It is crucial to assist clergy spouses with resources and counseling to manage stress and avoid burnout. It is equally vital to acknowledge clergy wives' critical contributions in supporting their husbands and the ministry. Churches must evaluate their expectations of clergy spouses and allow them to participate in decision-making. It is necessary to address the underlying ideas of leadership in the African Pentecostal Church that contribute to burnout among clergy spouses. This research suggests that clergy wives be acknowledged, encouraged, and enabled to lead and minister alongside their husbands.

Research Delimitations

Several factors led to the decision to focus on the experiences of clergy wives in the African Pentecostal Church. The African Pentecostal Church is a distinct denomination that has not been extensively explored in academic literature. In addition, the cultural and religious traditions of the church may result in burnout experiences that are distinct from those of other denominations. In addition, the research on burnout among clergy wives is scarce, and this study seeks to address this lacuna by examining the experiences of this community. 18-year-olds or older were required to participate for their input to be meaningful.

To investigate the experiences of clergy wives in the African Pentecostal Church, a qualitative methodology was chosen since it permits researchers to acquire an in-depth insight of the participants' lived experiences. Interviews using a semi-structured format were utilized to

collect data, allowing participants to share in-depth and significant thoughts on the topic.

Thematic analysis was selected as the method for understanding the data because it allows the researcher to find and analyze themes within the data.

Research Limitations

Based on the findings and boundaries of this research study, it would be beneficial to include clergy wives of other African Pentecostal churches in various states in future studies. Sample size of this research is also a limitation. Addressing these can ensure the study's validity and reliability. This study's tiny sample size restricts generalizability. Future studies should increase sample size and randomize participant selection to overcome this issue. This would improve the study's external validity, enabling more accurate generalizations. The study's data is unreliable. Interviews, surveys, and observations may collect data from many viewpoints to ensure accuracy and reliability.

The relatively small sample size, the lack of representativeness within the sample, and the possibility of bias on the part of the researcher are the primary limitations of this study. Due to the limited number of participants in this study, it is possible that the findings cannot be extrapolated to other populations. Additionally, it is possible that the participants in this study are not representative of the general population of clergy spouses in the African Pentecostal Church in Maryland. As a result, it is possible that this study will not be able to provide an accurate picture of the experiences that are shared by all clergy spouses in this community. In conclusion, it is possible that the researcher's own previous experiences and biases played a role in shaping the results of this study.

Recommendations

From the research, it was clear that the pastors' wives were relieved to tell their stories and be heard to relieve them of pent-up anger and frustration. They indicated that participating in the interviews helped them to understand who they are as they were given the opportunity to express their feelings they had held for a long time. However, the pastors' wives noted that they had been silent because of not wanting to add to the stress of their clergy husbands' busy lives or jeopardize their positions in the church. Unfortunately, their decisions to remain silent have had far-reaching consequences for them in their roles. Their silent disposition eventually affected their husbands and the ministry.

The research suggests that counselors and ministers should not disregard clergy spouses' history, role, and position due to the nature of their jobs. Offering clergy spouses seminars on stress management and burnout prevention is also necessary. Churches should reevaluate their expectations of clergy spouses and allow them to participate in decision-making. The research suggests that the African Pentecostal Church equip clergy spouses with material and financial tools to help them manage stress and avoid burnout. The research concludes by recommending clergy wives be acknowledged, encouraged, and given the authority to lead and minister alongside their husbands.

African Pentecostal churches need to take some responsibility for the wellbeing of the pastors' wives. Some recommendations include encourage their pastors' wives; unrealistic expectations should not be placed on her; respect her time with her family; be willing to support and help ease the load of the pastor and his wife; and also pray for the pastor's wife and her family as they are the backbone of the ministry and in the frontline of all affairs within the ministry. In addition to these recommendations African Pentecostal church leaders and pastors

should further educate their members regarding the impact that their behavior (either good or bad) can have on clergy families.

It is recommended that pastors' wives begin to communicate and be open to share their concerns in ministry. Establishing reliable support structures for pastors' wives will assist in helping them break their mode of silence over issues affecting them in ministry. In the interviews, the participants discussed the need to find reliable mentors. Good friends, supportive relationships, family, and peers can sustain the pastors' wives as they continued in their roles.

Pastoral families need help. Churches, district leaders, denominational heads should consider the expense of offering counseling to pastoral families. Having appropriate support structures in place is very crucial for pastors' wives. Pastoral couples could also give insight into what is needed to help their well-being and their overall success in ministry, especially the pastors' wives who suffer in silence. To help ease this suffering in silence of pastors' wives, clinical professionals, pastoral/spiritual counselors, chaplains, psychologists, and other professional practitioners whose role is to care for pastors' wives, should help establish such structures.

To help ease the financial stress off the pastor and his wife, members of the trustee board, and/or deacons appointed to handle the finances of the church should be the ones designed to ensure that all bills of the ministry are paid. The pastor and his wife should not be the ones to handle the church's financial needs since that can cause financial and personal strain on them. Churches should be able to come up with ways to mitigate the financial issues that churches tend to face.

Future Research

Future research on this topic that could be worthwhile is extensive in the context of Christian ministry. Research on the challenges faced by female clergy due to their gender can also be an appropriate investigation. Further research could investigate how male spouses of female clergy deal with their role as the spouses of a clergy wives. Also, research on how the involvement of Christian clergy on marriages is affected could be examined.

Based on the findings and boundaries of this research study, it would be beneficial to include clergy wives of other African Pentecostal churches from various states in future studies. Research has shown that there are many African Pentecostal Churches within the United States. Eight of the participants were of dual citizenship and two were of Nigerian descent. Future research can be more extensive to include other clergy wives of different ethnic backgrounds. It will be quite interesting to investigate the experiences of burnout by clergy wives in African countries as their populations' cultural and social sensitivity are rather different from those of Western society. Also, future research can be done on burnout experienced by clergy husbands.

Researchers must also examine the population's cultural and social sensitivity. By doing so, they may guarantee that their study respects participants' rights and beliefs. Additional research can also be conducted by other stakeholders, not only by church leaders and pastors. More information can be gathered about pastors' wives to help stakeholders understand the dynamics of the roles of pastors' wives and their families in ministry, and the reasons they are prone to burnout.

Future research could also include cross-denominations or other individual denominations to access any similarities or cultural variables from across a wider denomination.

The scope is limitless when it comes to researching the effect ministry has on the spouses, children, and families in general, who are affiliated with the work of ministry.

Lastly, researchers must respect participant anonymity. This involves securing data for study exclusively. Confidentiality breaches may hurt participants and compromise research.

Summary

African Pentecostal Churches are one of the fastest-growing denominations around the world. The study's main aim is to understand why the African Pentecostal Church pastors' wives experience burnout. Data analysis includes describing or identifying themes supported by anecdotes or other markers within the data. The study is designed as qualitative research. Data is collected through personal open-ended interviews and observations. Most clergy wives are not prepared for the demands of holding this position. In many professions, including the clergy, burnout is a persistent issue. Sometimes at the expense of their well-being, clergy members are charged with giving emotional and spiritual support to their congregations. Unfortunately, their spouses' experiences, especially those of clergy wives, have been largely neglected in the literature. In the church community, clergy wives are often expected to perform many tasks, such as giving emotional support to their husbands and managing the family while addressing their spiritual needs. This qualitative study investigates clergy wife burnout in the African Pentecostal Church. The research specifically investigates protective variables and stressors that lead to burnout in this demographic. This research aimed to shed insight into the distinctive experiences of clergy spouses in the African Pentecostal Church and suggest viable techniques for avoiding and treating burnout in this community.

The research shows that attention should be given to the wives to assist them in going through these challenges easily. The research also aimed at preventing the actions of the pastors'

wives from hiding their identities. In addition, the study helps them to curb burnout and prevent them from becoming irritable. Clergy wives should be well taken care of. Burnout can result from the many responsibilities they have to carry, which may require them to have more space and time between these responsibilities.

The research further examines how clergy wives at times must deal with the stress of having to take up the responsibility of caring for their children alone with their husbands being away weeks at a time for the work of the ministry. The research also encourages counselors not to exclude or neglect clergy wives because of their background, role, position, and nature of their job. It also points out clergy wives do have their own desires and experiences they want to have, and therefore, they should be understood without judgment. The study also pointed out that clergy wives experience burnout due to becoming emotionally drained and fatigued as they perform their ministry duties. Further, assumptions made that they should take up various leadership positions because their husbands are pastors should be discouraged. This is because sometimes they are given positions they are expected to be gifted at, and because they may have minimal experience in such areas, it results in exhaustion and burnout.

The researcher concluded that there is minimal done to help pastors' wives overcome the stresses that come with the job. Very little has been done to examine why clergy wives suffer burnout and what needs to be done to assist them in the process. It is this researcher's aim that the church should develop programs to help pastors' wives deal with some of the stressors of ministry work and family life that can lead to burnout and its accompanying symptoms.

Pastors' wives are an understudied and silenced population. This researcher intends to strongly advocate for pastors' wives and be that voice to educate congregants, administrators, and pastors about the dangers of unrealistic expectations that have led to pastors' wives' burnout.

They will be educated to know and understand that there are preventive measures to avoid burnout. There is the necessity to develop a greater awareness of the needs of pastors' wives with further support systems recommended to improve pastoral care for the entire family and pastors' wives within the African Pentecostal Church tradition in the United States. Churches are filled with pastors' wives struggling with burnout and offering solutions to this age-long phenomenon, can bring relief to them as they struggle with burnout.

Some other changes that the researcher has advocated for church leaders, pastors, pastors' wives, and churches include having seminars and retreats for pastors' wives where they can share their experiences and testimonies. The church can also organize one-on-one lunches and couples' get-together for the pastor and his wife. Conferences for personal enrichment and prayer sessions could be organized where pastors' wives could exercise their spiritual gifts. In such conferences, exchange of ministry materials and inspirational newsletters would be distributed.

Pastors' wives should form a care system themselves where they could seek help and counseling from their counterparts. A care group should also be formed in the church. It is important to initiate a pastoral care program for the pastor's wife in the church. Pastors' wives should be encouraged to inform their congregation of any issues they might be facing. Pastors' wives should socialize in a nonjudgmental atmosphere to allow interaction with other people which could rid them of loneliness, isolation, and stress. Another helpful program would be the organizing of mentoring conferences where older pastors' wives could educate, equip, and mentor younger pastors' wives.

When these changes are implemented in churches and by all denominational leaders within the African Pentecostal church, pastors' wives would live very productive lives as they serve alongside their husbands. They would feel fulfilled in their vocation. This in turn will lead

to a happy family life, not only for themselves but for their entire families. Pastors' wives in the African Pentecostal church certainly need a framework established for them in which they could have a voice and not be silenced and be given the value and honor that they deserve as wives, mothers, women of worth, and above all, esteemed pastors' wives.

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APPENDIX A

Dear [Recipient]:

RECRUITMENT EMAIL TO CLERGY WIVES

As a student at Liberty University (School of Behavioral Services) I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a doctoral degree. As part of my research requirement, I am required to recruit eligible participants to join my study. The objective of this study is to examine the reasons pastors' wives suffer burnout in the African Pentecostal Church (APC) in Maryland.

Your opinion matters in this study because of your denominational background and your position within the Pentecostal church. I am writing to invite you to participate in my study. I am looking to interview current or former pastors' wives of African Pentecostal churches in Maryland. Each participant must be at least 18 years old or older and has been married to an African Pentecostal minister for at least five years. Participants, if willing, will be asked to participate in a recorded, video-conferencing interview. The total estimated time for the interview will be about 30-40 minutes. Names and other identifying information will be requested as part of this study, but participant identities will not be disclosed.

If you would like to participate, please contact me by email at [REDACTED] to answer screening questions and, if you are eligible, schedule a time for an interview.

If you decide to participate, a consent document will be sent to your email. The consent document contains additional information about my research. If you choose to participate, you will need to type your name and the date on the consent document and return it to me by email before or at the time of the interview.

Once survey is completed, you will see a thank you message at the end of Survey.

Sincerely,

Patricia Aladekoba
Principal Investigator at Liberty University

[REDACTED]

APPENDIX B
CONSENT FORM

Title of the Project: A Qualitative Study of Burnout among Clergy Wives in the African Pentecostal Church

Principal Investigator: Patricia Aladekoba, Doctoral Candidate,
Liberty University, Lynchburg, Virginia, USA

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must be at least 18 years old, and have been a pastor's wife within an African Pentecostal Church in Maryland for at least five years. Taking part in this research project is voluntary. Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research project.

What is the study about and why is it being done?

The purpose of this study is to examine the reasons pastors' wives suffer burnout in the African Pentecostal Church (APC) in Maryland.

What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following things:

Participate in a recorded, video-conferencing interview. The total estimated time for the interview will be about 30-40 minutes.

How could you or others benefit from this study?

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.

Benefits to society: This research holds a significant importance in the African Pentecostal Church because it will benefit African Pentecostal Churches' pastoral education and African Pentecostal Church leaders.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?

There is no risk in participating in this study.

How will personal information be protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Published reports will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

- Participant responses will be kept confidential through the use of pseudonym. Interviews will be conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.
- All collected data will be stored on a password-locked computer and may be used in future presentations. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.
- The interviews will be recorded and transcribed, maintained during the study period, after which will be destroyed at the end of the study. Only I the researcher will have access to the recordings for transcribing purposes.

How will you be compensated for being part of the study?

Participants will not be compensated for participating in this study.

What are the costs to you to be part of the study?

To participate in the research, you will not have to pay for any cost.

Does the researcher have any conflicts of interest?

To limit potential or perceived conflicts [the study will be anonymous, so the researcher will not know who participated] or [a research assistant will ensure that all data is stripped of identifiers before the researcher receives it.

Is study participation voluntary?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please inform the researcher that you wish to discontinue your participation. Your responses will not be recorded or included in the study.

Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?

The researcher conducting this study is Patricia Aladekoba. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact me at [+1 410-206-1969 or paladekoba@yahoo.com]. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Keisha Pou at kpou@liberty.edu.

Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact me at [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Keisha Pou, at [REDACTED].

Your Consent

By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

The researcher has my permission to audio-record and video-record me as part of my participation in this study.

Printed Subject Name

Signature & Date

APPENDIX C
SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE
(CLERGY WIVES)

TOPIC: A Qualitative Study of Burnout Among Clergy Wives
in the African Pentecostal Church

Patricia Aladekoba

Liberty University
School of Behavioral Sciences

Questions about Personal and Pastoral Background

1. Are you 18 years or older? Yes ____/ No ____
2. Are you married to a clergy member? Yes ____/ No ____
3. Is your clergy husband a minister in the African Pentecostal Church? Yes ____/ No ____
4. How many years have you been in marriage/ministry? _____ Years
5. What is your country of citizenship?
6. Do you serve alongside your clergy husband at your local church? Yes ____/ No ____

APPENDIX D

DEMOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

(CLERGY WIVES)

TOPIC: A Qualitative Study of Burnout Among Clergy Wives
in the African Pentecostal Church

Patricia Aladekoba

Liberty University
School of Behavioral Sciences

1. How old are you? _____ years
2. What is your ethnic background? _____
3. What is your marital status?_____.
4. How many years have you been in marriage/ministry? _____.
5. What is your current employment status? _____.
6. What is your highest education level? _____.

APPENDIX E***RESEARCH DESIGN QUESTIONNAIRE 1***

- 1) Tell me about your experience as a clergy wife.
- 2) Based on your experience, what are the expectations of a pastor's wife? From your spouse? Church leaders? Church members? Others?
- 3) Have you experienced loneliness as a clergy wife? Describe your experience.
- 4) How do you cope with role expectations from those around you?
- 5) How do you feel about serving in the church?
- 6) Has there ever been a time you were faced with stress as a pastor's wife?
- 7) Describe a situation when you felt stressed as a clergy's wife?
- 8) Have you ever had financial difficulties as a pastor's wife?
- 9) How do you cope with stressors both within the ministry and at home?

APPENDIX F***RESEARCH DESIGN QUESTIONNAIRE2***

- 1) How long have you and your husband been in ministry?
- 2) How long have you been married to your husband?
- 3) Was your husband a pastor when you got married?
- 4) When did you begin your life in ministry?
- 5) Were you personally called to ministry by God?
- 6) Did you know your husband was going to be a pastor when you agreed to marry him?
- 7) Did you attend college?
- 8) What was your major?
- 9) Did you attend seminary school?
- 10) Did you take any classes to prepare you to become a pastor's wife?
- 11) If so, were those classes helpful to you once you got into ministry?
- 12) Is there anything you wished you were taught before you started ministry?
- 13) How well were you prepared for life in ministry?
- 14) What does the life of a pastor's wife mean to you?
- 15) Is your life as a pastor's wife like any other pastor's wife you know in ministry?
- 16) Are any of your parents in pastoral ministry?
- 17) Which books did you read to prepare you for the role of a pastor's wife? If so, were those books helpful to you in any way?
- 18) How helpful were those books in giving you an understanding of the roles of a pastor's wife?

- 19) As a new pastor's wife, did you have a mentor to guide you through as to some of the expectations of pastors' wives?
- 20) Did you have friends or acquaintances in the church?
- 21) Did you establish friendships with other pastors' wives outside of the church?
- 22) How long has your husband been a pastor of your church?
- 23) How long has he been a pastor in the African Pentecostal Church?
- 24) How does the congregation relate to your husband as the pastor?
- 25) How does the congregation relate to you as the pastor's wife?
- 26) How involved have you been or are you in the church?
- 27) Did you ever have to fill other positions in the church?
 - Was it expected of you to fill those positions? Did you volunteer to fill any of those positions?
- 28) Have you been involved in any ministry within the church?
- 29) What are your spiritual gifts?
- 30) Were you allowed to work in the areas you believe you were gifted for?
- 31) Have you ever had to work in a ministry that you lacked interest in?
- 32) In your role as pastor's wife, were you given the opportunity to minister to other women?
- 33) Do you believe you have been a role model to younger women in the church?

If you answer 'Yes' to question 34, please answer questions 35, 36, and 37. If your answer is 'No' skip to questions 38 – 41.
- 34) Have you worked outside the home while serving in ministry?
- 35) Can you give reasons why you worked or work outside the home?
- 36) If you work outside the home, do you still function in other ministries within the church?

- 37) Has anyone in the church questioned why you work outside the home?
- 38) Has being in ministry made your marriage stronger or weaker? Please rate your answer on a scale of 1 – 10, with 1 being the lowest and 10 the highest.
- 39) Do you believe that you and your husband are partners in ministry?
- 40) Did your husband communicate to the congregation what your role would be in the church?
- 41) Has your husband been emotionally and spiritually supportive?

APPENDIX G**IRB APPROVAL LETTER**

November 15, 2022

Patricia Aladekoba
Keisha Pou

Re: IRB Exemption - IRB-FY21-22-1084 A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF BURNOUT AMONG CLERGY WIVES IN THE AFRICAN PENTECOSTAL CHURCH

Dear Patricia Aladekoba, Keisha Pou,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under the following exemption category, which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:104(d):

Category 2. (iii). Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met:

The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination required by §46.111(a)(7).

Your stamped consent form(s) and final versions of your study documents can be found under the Attachments tab within the Submission Details section of your study on Cayuse IRB. Your stamped consent form(s) should be copied and used to gain the consent of your research participants. If you plan to provide your consent information electronically, the contents of the attached consent document(s) should be made available without alteration.

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and any modifications to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty University IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by completing a modification submission through your Cayuse IRB account.

If you have any questions about this exemption or need assistance in determining whether possible modifications to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at irb@liberty.edu.

Sincerely,
G. Michele Baker, MA, CIP
Administrative Chair of Institutional Research
Research Ethics Office

APPENDIX H**TRANSCRIPTS OF PARTICIPANTS' INTERVIEW RESPONSES**

1. Wonderful. Swallow your pride for your husband's and personal integrity.
2. Interestingly, have worked in ministry in high school and college days (Ups and downs); not an easy one, but I found what worked for me.
3. Good and not so good
4. Great experience since there is joy in serving the Lord. I enjoy doing it, but there are times when you want to be like every other person due to so many expectations.
5. I met my husband as a clergy in Lagos, Nigeria, and became a missionary in Rwanda, then in the USA.
6. I have had bad and good experiences, but all sides drew me closer to God.
7. You are open to criticism and are under surveillance. People are checking out what you do. You are not who you used to be before.
8. Wonderful. I have enjoyed it and it's very rewarding
9. It was great at the beginning of the ministry. It is rewarding to work but comes with a lot of challenges. Also, demands are excessive
10. It was good

1. Be a mother to everybody, be cool and calm.
 2. I don't have to do the same amount of church work as he does. I attend to children's needs.
 3. Always be there for him no matter what.
 4. Supporting him in his work, holding duties for him when he's not around.
 5. You are your husband's partner.
 6. Ability to support my husband in the ministry and be a model Christian woman that the church will emulate.
 7. Be at his level. He had higher expectations.
 8. Support husband's mission in the ministry
 9. To support him in the ministry, step in when he is unavailable, and care for the people.
 10. He wanted me to agree with whatever the church members wanted
-
1. Be seen and not heard. I should keep quiet even when they talk rubbish.
 2. To give support to my husband as he does his functions (be his backbone and co-neighbor)
 3. Be the silent pastor's wife. Go with the flow.
 4. They want me to be at their meetings to direct them and give my point of view on what they are trying to do.
 5. You are your husband's partner.
 6. Be supportive.
 7. High expectations, Be supportive of your husband and ministry.
 8. Support the pastor and work alongside the leaders in helping the ministry move forward.
 9. The go-to person when husband is unavailable, always be there
 10. I got along well with church leaders

1. Keep quiet even if they talk rudely. "Look at what she is wearing, talking, behaving, etc.
2. Mother, confident mentor
3. Expect you to be invisible and keep quiet.
4. Comfort, the counsel, cook.
5. You are your husband's partner.
6. Be supportive.
7. Not prone to mistakes. Everything should be good.
8. Support the pastor as a church leader, be a spiritual mother, and a caring pastor's wife
9. should be able to preach, teach, and know the bible as well as the husband, care for their spiritual and physical needs.
10. They wanted me to do things their way, not the way God wanted.

1. A lot of times, especially when your husband refuses to look at your needs to be together but is confined to a phone.
2. Yes. About a year into marriage, the husband gets a phone call in the middle of the night that the member needs him for emotional support. At the beginning of my ministry in 2014, I was shattered, pressured, and blown with high expectations from church members. People tell you rude things, and you can't do anything because you are the pastor's wife.
3. Yes. The church expects you to be invisible. They don't see that you have feelings too. Also, you need someone to confide in. It's only me, my husband, and my family.
4. Yes. There was a time I wasn't feeling so well, but I didn't tell them this as I did not want to show my weaknesses out there.
5. No. It was a rollercoaster.

6. Yes, sometimes. Since we lead people into the right way of Christ, some will not be happy, while others will be happy.
 7. Yes. When he was preparing for meetings, he wanted to be by himself. At that time, he was an evangelist going to different places and could go for a week. He wants his alone time for preparation and prayer.
 8. Yes. When they started the ministry, thousands would go away for weeks on spiritual retreats to pray for the ministry's growth. The money took a lot of work to come by.
 9. Yes, my husband was going for long periods. Husband leaving home in the middle of the night to attend to members' needs. My husband attended to stress calls late at night, leaving me with young children.
 10. Yes, there were times of loneliness when my husband was busy even in the middle of the night, like at 02:00 a.m., when he had to be on the phone with a church member, and we were supposed to be sleeping.
1. Be me
 2. I tell myself; I love God and that I'm a superwoman. I'm learning to say no. I had to learn that people are different, some will love you, and some will hate you, but what matters is that God loves you.
 3. My beginning experience was tough, but now I know I had to shield/protect myself.
 4. I don't cope all the time. I plan my time very well and have a calendar.
 5. I must jump with both feet and keep running.
 6. Through the grace of God, I pray for Him to give me the strength and wisdom to do what I do.
 7. Kept quiet.

8. By being honest
 9. Just tried to do my best. Got to a point where I stopped stressing myself by trying to be a superwoman.
 10. Well, as I said, he wanted me to agree with whatever they want for us not to have issues and not to be having a problem, and I had to, in some situations. I had to explain things to him that it doesn't work that way because we cannot always let them have their way.
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1. It depends on God's grace that gives me the patience to serve in the church.
 2. I look forward to it. I have given myself to Christ because it keeps me going when I hear people's testimony and see their lives change.
 3. I was angry once and told the church about it. I wanted to quit many times, but God has been my strength.
 4. It's a great honor since I was created for their purpose
 5. I liked it since I did it with all my heart before things started going south.
 6. Very grateful. When I face a challenge, God helps me overcome it.
 7. When I was still there, it felt good. When I came out, I now see it as a tug of war.
 8. I love serving in the church and love people.
 9. I loved and enjoyed serving in the church. I grew up in the church
 10. Serving in the house, being a pastor's wife, and leading women felt great. Even though initially it was tough, I prayed to God for help.

1. When you have a program, people you expected to do something need to show up. You end up doing things that you are not supposed to.
2. Coming to handle the issue from people you expect more from. It's hard to find people you can confide in.
3. There was a time when we had a worker's convention, and the church was hosting it for 3 months and had a meeting of what we were supposed to do. When the day came, I received a call, and the person did not come and had to do it. The stress was much, and the people you depended on did not show up.
4. On a particular Sunday, I was very weak, but my husband said I had to go. If I were a member, I would have relaxed, but as a leader, I have to be there. It's not easy to raise my four kids and still be in church early, rushing since you don't want to be late.
5. Sometimes, the church would not pay the mortgage for the church, and it would fall on us, and we had to pay with our own money.
6. When we started ministering in the church, it wasn't easy. My husband's mother requested that we open another church, work overnight, come back Sunday morning, and go back to the church. I was overworking and got exhausted and stressed.
7. As the pastor's wife, you are expected to be there for everybody. But as a mother, you should also have time for your children. Sometimes they watch your children and want them to be like the pastor.
8. When my husband is stressed about issues in the ministry, I take on that stress. Also, when they were searching for a building for the church.
9. I felt stressed when the children were young and had to take care of them alone.

10. Well, I didn't have that much, as I said. But there was a time I was sick and still had to get my son ready for school and take him there, which was hard.
1. Home (Go out and do shopping, window shopping, walk around, talk to someone close), ministry (walk out of the church and sit in a car or office to get some air, walk away)
 2. I have one friend I can talk to and my husband. At home (My supportive husband where we pray and talk about it), I also pray alone. If I have no control, I let God fix it.
 3. I draw strength from God. When it gets so much, I get some time off from the church and walk away. I matter too. My mental health matters. People talk every time. At home, there is not much stress.
 4. Plan my time properly so I can sleep and wake up early to pray. Push forward for the ministry.
 5. I had me-time, prayer with God, read a book, go on a vacation.
 6. Find some time to rest. I ask God to lead us.
 7. Get help from God since you don't have people to talk to.
 8. Learned to talk things out. My husband encouraged me to talk about stressors within the ministry and at home. The husband is a very strong individual.
 9. Learned to trust God and to pray always. The stressors within the ministry and home were many and quite exhaustive.
 10. I had an outside ministry that was for women. In our local church, I wasn't getting much support from the women or even my husband. I also had to do everything within the house and in the church.

1. In the ministry, you are limited to certain things. For instance, you can't do anything even if people point the finger at you.
2. Nothing really, but maybe it is a journey, and I will need support.
3. A lot. Be strong; they will throw stones at you but cover yourself with God.
4. Yes, how to conquer the unexpected - like people within the ministry; you see them walk away and many other disappointments.
5. Yes. How to handle African congregation.
6. No
7. No
8. I wish I knew how to handle the stress and not try to please everyone.
9. How to deal with lonely days that you can face in ministry
10. At Rema, we were prepared for the work by using life applications to teach and get us ready for what we were going into.