

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**Experiences of husbands of female pastors- navigating gender roles and
communication dynamics in marital relationships**

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BA

**EXPERIENCES OF HUSBANDS OF FEMALE PASTORS/PRIESTS:
NAVIGATING GENDER ROLES AND COMMUNICATION DYNAMICS
IN MARITAL RELATIONSHIPS**

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the requirements for the award of the degree of**

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NOVEMBER, 2023

DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, **Yao Mawuenyega Kpeli** declare that this dissertation, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works, which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

SIGNATURE:

DATE:

SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of a Dissertation as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: MS. ABENA ABOKOMA ASEMANYI

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DATE:

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my family and mentors for their continuous guidance, love, and support always.



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ABSTRACT

This study explored the experiences of husbands of female pastors/priests, focusing on navigating gender roles and communication dynamics in marital relationships. Motivated by the growing number of women entering into pastoral ministry and the limited research on their spouses' experience, the study aimed to address a significant gap in literature. Using social role theory and communication adaptation theory, the research examined these husbands' communication patterns and gender role negotiation. Employing a phenomenological approach, data were gathered from five husbands using purposive sampling and semi-structured interviews, and they were thematically analysed. The findings revealed that communication in these marriages is characterised by openness, transparency, connection, intimacy, and partnership. Such dynamics enhance emotional bonding and marital contentment, with husbands using these communication methods to support and strengthen their relationships with their pastor wives. Additionally, husbands provide support in their wives' pastoral journeys by contributing financially, attending church activities, and sharing household tasks, emphasising the need for reciprocal assistance in achieving a harmonious marriage. The study highlighted that husbands ensure equal opportunities for self-expression, fostering mutual respect and understanding. They adapt to new situations and make compromises to maintain marital satisfaction. According to the research, husbands of female pastors develop coping mechanisms, such as effective communication, support networks, and counselling, to navigate the complexities arising from their wives' pastoral roles and unique challenges. The study concluded that communication dynamics in marriages are centred on partnership, intimacy, and transparency, strengthening the bond between spouses and promoting conflict resolution. Husbands of female pastors play a significant role in supporting their wives' pastoral duties, contributing to church activities, and managing household tasks, highlighting the importance of effective communication and mutual respect. The findings have practical implications for churches, counsellors, and support networks in developing programs and policies that enhance the well-being of pastoral couples and encourage more inclusive and supportive marital dynamics in ministry contexts

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview

This chapter commences with a background to the study, a statement of the problem, research objectives, and research questions. This chapter also discusses the significance of the study, delimitation of the study, provides definitions of terms, and describes how the study was organized in general. The chapter concludes with a summary.

1.1 Background

According to Hybels and Weaver (2014), communication is any process in which people share information, ideas, and feelings that includes not only the spoken and written word but also body language, personal mannerisms, and style. Also, Brown (2019), defined communication as the act or process of interacting with another person by using words, sounds, signs, or behaviours to express or exchange information. It brings people together, brings them closer together, and bridges the gap between individuals and groups through the exchange of information and understanding (Brown, 2019). Communication is an essential component of human activity. A structure of peaceful coexistence and mutual understanding maintains the influence of spousal communication on marital stability. Communication is essential in all aspects of human life, particularly in marriage. Esere (2008) posited that communication is essential to feel loved and cared for in a strong, healthy relationship and to have effective communication; there is the need to develop listening and expression skills. When there is no communication, several problems arise, with many of these problems being solved through effective communication (Adegboyega, 2021). Either way, marriage might be compared to heaven on earth or

a living nightmare. Everything is up to personal interpretation. The success of marriage can be likened to preparing a meal. To have it successful, you need many essential components (Dienstag, 2016). These components include qualities like friendship, understanding, trust, love, time, honesty, loyalty, sincerity, and, most importantly, good communication (Iproject, 2024). Adegboyega, (2021) stated that spousal communication is communication between spouses during their marriage. Hence, Montgomery (2015) posited that the interpersonal, transactional, and symbolic process by which marriage partners achieve and maintain an understanding of each other could be viewed as quality communication in marriage. Partner communication is one factor that may play an important role in linking the division of labour to relationship satisfaction. Individuals with partners who have strong communication skills report higher levels of relationship satisfaction (Zamir et al., 2017). In addition, when a couple does not communicate with each other, other family members, the local community, and the wider world should be deeply concerned (Iproject, 2024).

In marriage, the husband's role was to go out into the world: to work as the breadwinner, to be the achiever, and to risk pain and death while the wife spent the majority of her time caring for the house and her children (Hawke, 2007). Globally, changing economic conditions have made it necessary for men and women to cross gender-based occupational lines (Forkuor, Buari, & Aheto, 2020). In a society where men predominate, this trend has challenged conventional gender roles and expectations. Selemim (2022) posits that stereotypes about attitudes, qualities, and behaviours that are ascribed to men and women according to their gender are known as gender roles. Crosby (2022) adds that our sexuality, personalities, self-images, and behaviours can all be significantly influenced by the gender roles that society

assigns to us. The way emotions are expressed, think about sex, and behave in relationships, are all governed by gender roles (Crosby, 2022).

In Ghana, there has been a rise in the proportion of women pastors in recent years (Amedahe & Amuzu, 2020). Notable amongst them are Pastor Rosemond Nana Wiredua Anaba, Rev (Mrs) Vivian Sena Agyinasare, Pastor Selina Boachie Marfo, Rev Charlotte Oduro, and many more. Presently, society accepts for the wife of the household to pursue employment outside of the domestic sphere (Hawke, 2007). In Ghana, women are increasingly entering previously male-dominated occupations such as taxi driving, commercial driver's assistance, carpentry, shoemaking, welding, and spraying (Forkuor et al., 2019). There is a noted shift in society, characterized often by women's entry, especially in careers that may traditionally be the domain of men (Chinyamurindi, & Rashe, 2021). One of such is, females entering into the pastoral ministry. While some congregations have welcomed the addition of female pastors, other congregations have resisted this shift (Amedahe & Amuzu, 2020). Previous studies have emphasised the difficulties that women pastors in Ghana experience, such as sexism and cultural barriers (Amedahe & Amuzu, 2020; Omenyo, 2014).

Again, female pastors have become more prevalent in many Christian denominations over the past few decades, with a growing number of women pursuing ordination and serving in leadership roles within their churches (Balswick & Balswick, 2014; Emerson & Hartman, 2006). Several church surveys and research confirm that particularly in Pentecostal, Charismatic, and certain mainline churches, the number of female pastors is consistently rising (Amedahe & Amuzu, 2020; Asamoah-Gyadu, 2010). While this represents a significant shift in traditional gender roles within the church, it also raises questions about how the husbands of female

pastors navigate their roles and identities within the context of their marriages and communities. The status of women in general remains a debatable topic in religious studies. This is demonstrated by several scholarly papers written on the role of women in various aspects of religion (Mupangwa & Chirongoma, 2020). Pastors are vital members of the church. Male and female pastors both serve the church in various capacities. Female pastors are becoming more common, and many people believe that they have a place in the ministry. There is evidence, however, that female pastors have existed for a long time and that many female pastors are working in the world today. The history of female pastors dates back to the early Christian church when women played an important role in spreading the gospel (Zurlo, 2023).

The first female pastors were ordained in the Church of Denmark in 1948, followed by Sweden in 1960, Norway in 1961, Iceland in 1974, and Finland in 1988². The Assemblies of God was founded in 1914 and ordained its first woman pastors in the same year.

Today, many female pastors are working around the world. However, it is important to note that there is no single definition of a female pastor, and the term can refer to a wide range of individuals with diverse backgrounds and experiences (*10 Awesome Women Pastors From History - CBE International*, 2022). Pastoring is a profession where ministers are expected to nurture their congregations' physiological, spiritual, and emotional well-being as role models and pastoral counsellors (Hill & McWey, 2004). Pastors frequently perform normal stress-related duties in their own families, as well as the added pressure of supporting people in crisis (death; illness; societal crises such as terrorism, school violence, and natural disasters), leading to long hours of work time (McBride, 2021). Husbands of female pastors often have to face activities or tasks that are contradictory to their classic

gender role daily (Brahmana 2018). Gender roles are the various responsibilities that men and women are expected to perform according to their gender (Blackstone, 2003). Certainly, this type of high-demand occupation affects the spouses and marriages of the ministers (Hill and McWey 2004). The majority of societies have strong gender norms and expectations, which have an impact on almost every element of life starting from infancy (Saewyc, 2017). The Pastoral ministry is an arena in which males have dominated historically and religious vocations that have included women have been subordinate to those usually reserved for men, patterns similar to those in other fields (Lehman, 1993). It seems customary for the male pastor to be accompanied by his wife at conventions, church gatherings, and so on. She diligently supports the husband's ministry and stands by his side. On the other hand, when the script is inverted, looking at the case of the husband of a female pastor, she may be usually going to church by herself, with him joining her on rare occasions. Whereas women adjust more easily to the role of the pastor's wife, men can find it difficult to provide the kind of support that their wives require as they lead the church ministry (Andor, 2013). Historically, the work and family domains have been gendered, with men traditionally occupying the work role and women traditionally occupying the family role (Kossek & Lambert, 2004).

Although there has been some research on the experiences of women pastors and their spouses such as Yang's (2013) study which examined the experiences of female pastors and the difficulties they encounter in their ministry and Johnson & Roehlkepartain's (1999) study that explored the encounters of clerical families, specifically emphasising the partners of female pastors, relatively little attention has been paid to the experiences of husbands of female pastors. Given the cultural and social expectations surrounding masculinity and gender roles in many Christian

communities, it is likely that husbands of female pastors face unique challenges and opportunities that have not yet been fully explored.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Communication is a vital component of any meaningful relationship, including marriage (Esere et al., 2011). Communication is the panacea for a failing marital relationship (Olagunju & Eweniyi, 2002). A marriage that lacks effective communication is likely to fail. According to Esere et al., (2011), success in marriage is dependent on many factors, including trust, love, time, friendship, understanding, honesty, loyalty, sincerity, and, most importantly, effective communication. With so many marriages ending tragically in divorce (Adegoke & Esere, 2008), the most important for couples is to work on their communication. Besides communication, there are numerous reasons why marriages can fail today, one of which is the shift in gender roles (Schrader, 2023). The issues of gender have always been linked to women's struggles for equal rights with men in society, causing gender issues in men to be somewhat overlooked (Lindsey, 2015). In traditional marriages, both husbands and wives accept the notion that the husband is dominant, they have expectations for how each partner should act, and they find their respective roles to be natural, if not preferred (Schrader, 2023).

Because of rigid and sexist gender role socialization, men frequently experience gender role conflict (O'Neil, 2008). Extensive research by Spagnolo et al., (2020); O'Neil, (2012) has linked men's gender role conflict to a variety of behavioural issues, such as sexism, violence, homophobia, depression, substance abuse, and relationship problems. Studies, primarily conducted in the United States, have comprised quantitative measures of gender role conflict since the 1980s (O'Neil 2012). Gender role conflict and stress have been associated with depression

(Spagnolo et al., 2020; O'Neil, 2012), alcohol abuse, relationship or marital dissatisfaction, and sexual violence against women Amato (2012); Cohn & Zeichner, (2006) by diverse groups of men. Pastors' husbands also experience these issues, as they encounter activities or tasks that challenge their traditional gender roles. A pastor's role includes many duties and responsibilities both within the church and at home (McBride, 2021). A pastor's husband must support his wife as a companion to someone who serves God (Brahmana, 2018). Husbands of female pastors are expected to show concern for the congregations, church environment, and surrounding community. Furthermore, these husbands are expected to support their wives' service based on their skill or talent. They are expected to equip themselves spiritually, remind their wives to devote their best service to the congregation, and avoid interfering with or becoming a hindrance to their wives' service (Brahmana, 2018).

Conflicting gender stereotypes often force spouses of female pastors to resign their employment in order to support their wives' ministries. These ministries require frequent travel and the ability to relocate at short notice. This uncertainty compels numerous husbands to either fully integrate into their wives' occupation or embark on entrepreneurial ventures. This asymmetrical dynamic, in which the wife maintains a demanding schedule and the husband is expected to always provide assistance, can result in internal disputes within the marriage. Men frequently need to suppress their ego in order to fulfil responsibilities such as childcare, household chores, and other forms of support. O'Neil (2008) argues that conflicting gender roles can result in gender role conflict among men, which can have adverse effects. In addition, Carlson, Miller, and Rudd (2020) emphasise that the allocation of household chores has a substantial influence on the level of pleasure within a partnership. This study

seeks to address the existing knowledge gap by examining the impact of distinct gender role conflicts and dynamics on the marital satisfaction of spouses married to female pastors. Again, although the association appears to be strongest for employed women, research indicates that sharing housework is best for couples' overall relationship quality (Carlson et al. 2020).

Adegboyega (2021) examined the impact of spousal communication on the resolution of marital conflicts among married adults in Ilorin Metropolis, Kwara State, Nigeria. This study employed stratified sampling to choose 210 participants, and data was predominantly gathered through the use of questionnaires. The results suggested that successful communication between spouses has a good effect on resolving conflicts within a marriage. The need of efficient communication and mutual respect in addressing marital conflicts has been demonstrated, as perceptual errors can occur when spouses do not communicate well. The study also discovered that there were no notable disparities in the impact of spousal communication style on resolving marital conflicts, regardless of gender, age, or educational background. Married couples were advised to prioritise the non-verbal parts of their relationships.

In a similar vein, Esere et al. (2011) examined the impact of spousal communication on the stability of marriages in Nigeria. Their study specifically explored the barriers and remedies to achieving successful communication among married adults in Kogi State. The study, employing a quantitative methodology, identified several barriers to efficient communication, such as frequent tardiness, employing a confrontational tone during interactions, and invoking past memories. Proposed remedies encompassed taking into account the spouse's participation, placing trust in the spouse, and esteeming the spouse's viewpoint throughout deliberations. The study advised couples to actively seek a deep understanding of

each other, both prior to and during marriage, by attentively recognising and interpreting each other's verbal and nonverbal signals, as well as dedicating time to familiarise themselves with one another.

Appiah Kubi (2018) examined the gendered behaviours displayed by individuals belonging to the Moments of Glory Prayer Army (MOGPA), a Pentecostal church located in Ghana. The study employed gender performativity theory and an anthropological design, involving participant observations, interviews, and focus group discussions. The study showed that members of MOGPA exhibited gendered behaviours during meetings, which included praying, performing exorcisms, giving testimonies, and making oblations. These acts frequently conformed to conventional gender norms, however there were occasions that defied these conventions. The findings suggested that cultural norms have deeply embedded certain gendered behaviours in individuals, causing these behaviours to become their lived experience. Individuals adhered to these roles in order to escape retribution, driven by the dread of social ostracism. The study emphasised that gender is enacted and developed via daily activities and relationships, rather than being innately linked to one's identity. Retaliatory activities were taken in response to inconsistent gender performance, illustrating the psychological and physical effects of breaking from gender standards. The research findings indicated that the gendered performances observed at MOGPA meetings contribute to the reinforcement of gender norms and behaviours in both the church and society.

Leavitt et al. (2021) conducted a qualitative study to investigate the impact of religious beliefs and practices on gender roles within highly religious families. The study specifically examined how husbands' and wives' religious beliefs and practices shape their understanding and personal experiences of gender roles in marriage and

family life. The study discovered that highly religious spouses may become more receptive to exploring a wider spectrum of gender interpretations in line with their religious beliefs as they become more cognizant of the various perspectives on gender, gender roles, and gender attitudes within highly religious households.

In addition, using a qualitative approach and a phenomenological design, Ceaser (2020), explored how thirteen (13) African American women described their lived experiences of seeking pastoral positions in Mississippi-based Baptist churches. The study explored what it is like to be an African American woman serving in a pastoral position and what lived experiences and challenges African American women face when seeking pastoral positions in Mississippi-based Baptist churches, the study used a self-determination theory as the theoretical framework and gave women the chance to describe and contextualize their lived experiences. The study utilised a three-tiered face-to-face interview method with the participants. The data collected from semi-structured interviews was analysed using Van Kaam's method, which identified five distinct themes: hurdles and recognition, pastoral leadership, personal calling and desire, and Baptist denominational thought.. The findings demonstrated that patriarchy was the fundamental reason why African American women were not encouraged to become pastors in the Baptist church. The study concluded by making recommendations on how this research might be used for diverse ethnicities and denominations.

Potts (2021) examined the difficulties encountered by husbands of female pastors, with a specific emphasis on the consequences of non-conventional gender norms and expectations. The study emphasises the necessity for additional research on this seldom-examined facet of pastoral dynamics, underscoring the requirement for

customised assistance and resources to cultivate sound marital relationships within the pastoral community.

In their study, Brahmana et al., (2018) examined the issue of gender role conflict among husbands of pastors in the Batak Karo Protestant Church. They used a qualitative technique and a phenomenological design to conduct their research. Three male volunteers were included, who met certain sampling criteria. The study found that patriarchal culture, masculine ideology, and gender role transition are factors that contribute to gender role conflict among husbands of pastors. The study recommended that further research should focus on the examining lived experiences of pastors' spouses, families, or church leaders to gain further insights.

Research on the experiences of husbands of female pastors in managing these complications is lacking, despite the increasing number of women taking on leadership roles in the pastoral ministry (Potts, 2021; Brahmana et al., 2018). Society's expectations around marriage have long been influenced by traditional gender roles, where husbands are typically expected to be the major providers and wives to do household chores (Schrader, 2020). However, as more women become pastors, these conventional beliefs are being questioned, and this is creating new dynamics in marriages. When it comes to their marriages and religious groups, husbands of female pastors might have to deal with conflicting expectations and role modifications. They could struggle with social pressure to uphold gender norms while aiding their spouses in their pastoral responsibilities (McBride, 2021). According to Brahmana et al. (2018), the communication dynamics in these couples may be further complicated by the demands of pastoral ministry, which include lengthy work hours and considerable mobility. Furthermore, the majority of the material that has been written about gender dynamics and marital communication

has ignored the particular difficulties that husbands of female pastors face in favour of focusing on the experiences of women pastors and their wives (Potts, 2021).

The remark above emphasises a study deficiency in understanding the experiences of husbands of female pastors, specifically within the Ghanaian setting. Although previous studies recognise the difficulties encountered by these husbands, there is a significant lack of phenomenological studies that specifically examine this group in Africa, particularly in Ghana. Researchers have not extensively studied the correlation between gender roles and communication dynamics in the marriages of female pastors in this particular setting. This study seeks to address the existing knowledge gap by investigating the personal experiences of the husbands of female pastors in Ghana. Thereby to providing insight into the specific difficulties, they face and the approaches they adopt to fulfil their responsibilities and sustain marital contentment.

1.3 Research Objectives

The objectives of the study are to:

1. Investigate communication dynamics in marriages where the wife serves as a pastor.
2. Explore how husbands of female pastors navigate gender roles and communication strategies within their marriages and religious communities.
3. Identify mechanisms used by husbands of female pastors to maintain marital satisfaction.

1.4 Research Questions

The study is guided by the following questions.

1. What are the communication dynamics in marriages where the wife serves as a pastor?

1. How do husbands of female pastors negotiate their gender roles and communication strategies within their marriages and religious communities?
2. What coping mechanisms do husbands of female pastors employ to sustain marital satisfaction?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study sought to examine the experiences of husbands of female pastors in selected churches in Accra about gender role conflicts. It is expected that the outcome of this study will add to the body of knowledge in the areas of gender studies as well as Christian leadership. By examining the perspectives of husbands of female pastors, this research will fill this gap in the literature.

The results of this research might help churches promote gender equity in leadership roles and better assist the families of female pastors. It is further believed that the findings of this research will set the platform for more future studies by other researchers in new or additional areas of gender.

Again, the findings of this research help appreciate the development of communication patterns in marriages and the findings recommend measures to improve upon the communication between female pastors and their husbands to curb the high rate of divorce among couples who are experiencing gender role conflicts. Finally, the research outcome is anticipated to have broader policy suggestions for churches. This could inform the review of the established policies of churches in Ghana in the areas of communication among the clergy and their spouses. This strengthened communication could help empower female pastors and encourage their husbands to support their wives in their ministry.

1.6 Scope of the study

This study is conducted among husbands of female pastors in selected churches in the Greater Accra region of Ghana, which is central and easy for the researcher to access. It is the purpose of this study to explore how husbands of female pastors navigate their roles and identities within the context of their marriages, communities, and in the Church, of Accra, Ghana and investigate the communication patterns between these husbands and their clergy wives. This study is done in the context of selected husbands of female pastors of the selected churches in Accra, Ghana. The findings of this study can only be generalized within the context of the selected churches and their branches nationwide. Again, the study is conducted within Greater Accra, which is one of the sixteen regions based on easy access. This study will investigate the lived experiences of the husbands of female pastors in Ghana. A qualitative study approach called phenomenology aims to comprehend the essence of the human experience. (Van Manen, 2014). It entails a meticulous procedure for data gathering and analysis to elucidate the significance of participants' experiences. (Van Manen, 2014). The study will give a thorough and nuanced knowledge of the experiences of husbands of female pastors in Ghana by employing this method. This study is also based on a phenomenological method that required a few sample size which focused on five (5) husbands of female pastors in the selected churches in Accra within the Greater Accra region of Ghana.

1.7 Organization of the Study

There are five chapters in this study, the background of the study, the objectives, the research questions, the significance of the study, the scope of the study, and the organization of the study are all included in the first chapter, which serves as an introduction.

The literature review and the theoretical frameworks supporting the investigation are the main topics of the second chapter.

The third chapter emphasizes the methods and steps used in data collection and analysis. It is a physical representation of the research approach and design, sample and sampling method, data gathering tool, data analysis process and data analysis methodology.

The observations, interviews and analysis of the data gathered are the focus of chapter four and are explained.

1.8 Summary

This chapter includes a summary of the study as well as background data, a problem description, research objectives, and research questions. It examines the challenges female pastor's husbands experience and emphasizes the importance of clear communication in marriages. The chapter discusses how marriage dynamics are impacted by society's evolving perceptions toward gender roles. Additionally, it highlights the historical basis and evolution of female pastors in many Christian denominations. The chapter concludes with a summary of the major points made, emphasizing the need for more research on the experiences of men married to female pastors as well as the unique challenges they face in terms of gender roles and communication in their marriages.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter aims to look into the communication patterns and lived experiences of female pastors' husbands. The impact of communication between these husbands and their wives on their spouses' ministries is examined in this chapter by researchers who have studied the topic. The impact of gender dynamics, religion, and spirituality on their spouses' ministries is examined in this chapter. The chapter also examines the theoretical framework that applies to this research. The review's objectives are to present a summary of the literature that has already been written on the subject and to identify the major themes that have developed from earlier research.

2.1 Overview of communication

According to Foluke, (2018), many scholars have tried to give a definitive meaning to communication. Nevertheless, in the view of the Association of Perioperative Practice, communication originated from the Latin word “communis”. Kapur, (2020), also asserts that the term communication is derived from the word “common”, which means to share, exchange, transmit, talk, gesture, write, put in use and relate. Communication establishes the relationships between individuals and encourages the functions of planning, organizing, directing, controlling, coordinating and leading (Kapur, 2020). The intricate and crucial process of communication has an impact on every aspect of human life. It involves speaking to one another and exchanging ideas, sentiments, and knowledge with other people or organizations (Nordquist, 2019). Umarova (2023) believes that communication is the exchange of information arising from the need for cooperation between people. According to

Hybels and Weaver (2001), communication is any process in which individuals share thoughts, feelings, and information and includes not only spoken and written expression but also nonverbal cues like body language and etiquette. Esere (2008) contends that every aspect of human life, but especially the marriage connection, depends heavily on communication. For a relationship to be robust and healthy, communication is essential, hence, Olagunju & Eweniyi, (2002) argue that it is the panacea for a failing marriage. Being able to talk openly and honestly with the people in your life allows you to share, learn, respond, and forge lasting bonds. (Cherry, 2023). Jolin (2007) posits that, without a doubt, communication is the key to a happy marriage, and in the society in which we live today, where divorce is so common, no marriage can survive without it. Heritty (2023), highlights four main communication styles, the passive communicator, speaking or writing words constitutes verbal communication, while everything else that communicates does so nonverbally. Some people believe that everything we do to communicate with others that is not language falls under the category of nonverbal communication. It is the exchange of messages or signals between two people using nonverbal cues including eye contact, facial expressions, gestures, posture, and the space between them. Your verbal and nonverbal messages must complement one another if you wish to communicate effectively (DeFleur and Dennis 2002).

According to Ojomo (2004), communication is the act of exchanging concepts, sentiments, ideas, and messages. Furthermore, according to Rothwell (2004), communication is a transactional activity in which two or more people exchange messages and share meaning. DeFleur and Dennis (2005) posit that the act of sending and receiving messages between people that are meant to evoke a specific form of meaning via the use of language and nonverbal clues is known as interpersonal

communication. To control their emotions, negotiate their relationship, comprehend their spouse's point of view, convey empathy, and cope constructively with marital difficulties and illogical inclinations, a couple must learn to communicate successfully (Esere, 2007). Again, Merskin (2020) corroborates this assertion by stating that Interpersonal communication involves interaction between two or more people, usually with a direct connection and with some sort of relationship being assumed

Lack of efficient communication in a marriage eventually causes discord and conflict in a marriage. Any successful connection, including a marriage, requires communication (Esere, 2002, 2006). It is the cure for a diseased and unhygienic marriage (Olagunju & Eweniyi, 2002). As so many marriages, unfortunately, end in divorce (Idowu & Esere, 2007), it is, therefore, imperative to concentrate on husbands' and wives' communication. When there is no communication, several issues arise, many of which can be resolved by efficient communication.

2.2 Types of communication

DeFleur and Dennis (2002) assert that exchanging information is a crucial aspect of human life and that people do so both verbally and nonverbally. Therefore, what is verbal and nonverbal communication?

2.2.1 Verbal and nonverbal communication

According to Wood (2020), verbal communication is the use of language to convey ideas, feelings, and thoughts through speech or writing. Arnold and Boggs (2007) contend that verbal communication occurs when messages are delivered orally; they stressed that without spoken and written language, humanity's ability to share experiences, thoughts, and feelings is severely constrained. Hence, Idowu and Esere (2007) assert that effective communication skills are essential for building and

maintaining relationships. Effective communication inside a marriage enables partners to maintain and relish their style of life and interaction (Sotonade, 2003). Devito (2002) argues that communication encompasses both the content of a conversation and the feelings and emotions that are expressed. In marriage, it is crucial to effectively use nonverbal communication in addition to verbal communication. Nonverbal communication is the process of conveying messages without the use of words using facial expressions, body language, gestures, and other non-linguistic ways, according to Samovar, Porter, and McDaniel (2017). Guerrero, Anderson, and Afifi (2017) corroborate this as they define nonverbal communication as the sharing of information through nonverbal cues like body language, facial expressions, and vocal cues that support or complement verbal communication. In addition, Arnold and Boggs (2007) contend that nonverbal communication, which includes messages sent by body language, facial expressions, spatial and acoustic cues, and touch, occurs without the need for words. It can also be defined as the capacity to express feelings of compassion and care through gestures when interacting. Doohan (2021) refers to the verbal and nonverbal communication between spouses as marital communication.

2.2.2 Interpersonal Communication

According to DeVito (2016), Interpersonal communication is the process by which people exchange information, feelings, and meaning through verbal and non-verbal messages: it is face-to-face communication. Wood (2015) contends that Interpersonal communication is the process of creating and sharing meaning between people who are in a relationship. It involves the exchange of messages, verbal and nonverbal, through face-to-face interaction, electronic media, or other forms of mediated communication. Cody (2011), who defined Interpersonal communication

as an interaction between two or more individuals, through verbal and nonverbal messages, to establish shared meaning and achieve understanding, corroborates this. Berger and Luckmann (2011) argue that Interpersonal communication is the process whereby one individual (the sender) consciously and deliberately conveys meaning to another (the receiver) using symbols. For O'Hair and Wiemann (2012), "Interpersonal communication is the exchange of symbols used to achieve interpersonal goals and develop personal relationships between individuals."

2.3 Phenomenology

According to Husserl (1970), phenomenology is "the science of essence of consciousness" and it focuses on defining intentionality and the significance of lived experience from the perspective of an individual. The idea that the significance of lived experiences can only be understood through one-on-one interactions between the researcher and the study subjects was a key premise of the Husserlian approach to science (Swanson & Wojnar, 2004). To create a picture of reality that is more sophisticated than prior understandings, these interactions must involve attentive listening, interaction, and observation. Similarly, Phenomenology, according to Shudak, (2018) is the study of or enquiry into how a person's conscious experience with things provides deeper and more truthful understandings of those things and ultimately of the self and of the world. A phenomenological study describes the common meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or a phenomenon. Phenomenologists focus on describing what all participants have in common, as they experience a phenomenon (Van Manen, 1990). This corroborates Connelly, (2010) assertion that a phenomenologist researcher looks at the characteristics or essence of an experience through conversations, observations, or stories with people who are going through the experience that interests the

researcher. The attempt to describe and comprehend experiences like care, healing, and wholeness as experienced by those who have lived through them forms the basis of phenomenology. (Swanson & Wojnar, 2007). Munhall, (2007) added that Phenomenologists are interested in the event itself, not merely how the subject reacted to it.

According to Padilla-Diaz (2015), Phenomenology is derived from the Greek word “apparition or manifestation”. It is a philosophical movement originating in the 20th century, the primary objective of which is the direct investigation and description of phenomena as consciously experienced, without theories about their causal explanation and as free as possible from unexamined preconceptions and presuppositions. (Britannica, 2021). Thus, phenomenological theory is an approach to personality theory that places questions of individuals’ current experiences of themselves and their world at the centre of analyses of personality functioning and change (Kelly, 2020). It attempts to create conditions for the objective study of topics usually regarded as subjective consciousness and the content of conscious experiences such as judgements, perceptions, and emotions.

Although phenomenology seeks to be scientific; but does not attempt to study consciousness from the perspective of clinical psychology or neurology. Instead, it seeks through systematic reflection to determine the essential properties and structures of experience as suggested by (Menon et al., 2014). According to Creswell (2013) cited in Padilla-Diaz (2015), phenomenological paradigms are required if humans experiences a purposive sampling. Hence, the philosophical basis of qualitative investigation stems from phenomenology (as a philosophy). According to them, they see the main philosophical paradigms as positivist, critical theory, constructivism and post-modernism.

Several assumptions behind phenomenology help explain its foundations:

Phenomenologists reject the concept of objective research. They prefer grouping assumptions through a process called phenomenological epoch (description).

They believe that analysing daily human behaviour can provide one with a greater understanding of nature. They assert that persons should be explored. This is because persons can be understood through the unique ways, they reflect the society they live in.

Phenomenologists prefer to gather conscious experience, rather than traditional data. They consider phenomenology as oriented toward discovery, and therefore they research using methods that are far less restrictive than in other sciences (Orbe, 2009). As posited by Wojnar & Swanson, (2007), there are two basic phenomenological methods: interpretative and descriptive. Husserl created descriptive phenomenology, while Heidegger, one of his students, refined and expanded on Husserl's work to create interpretive phenomenology (also known as hermeneutic).

Descriptive phenomenology, as developed by Husserl (1970), focuses on describing and analyzing the essential structures of conscious experience. Husserl aimed to uncover the pure, uninterrupted phenomena as they appear in consciousness, by bracketing or suspending any assumptions or preconceptions about the nature of the phenomena. This method involves a systematic process of epoch (bracketing) and reduction, where the researcher sets aside any assumptions or biases to explore the phenomena with fresh eyes. By engaging in a process of "phenomenological reduction," researchers aim to arrive at a description of the phenomena in their essential, universal aspects, free from personal interpretations or theoretical frameworks.

Husserl's descriptive phenomenology emphasizes the importance of the intentionality of consciousness, which refers to the directedness of consciousness towards objects or experiences. The researcher seeks to understand the structure, essence, and meaning of the phenomenon under investigation through a careful analysis of conscious experience. Descriptive phenomenology is concerned with uncovering the fundamental structures of experience, such as intentionality, temporal awareness, embodiment, and inter-subjectivity (Wojnar & Swanson, 2007).

Interpretive phenomenology, also known as hermeneutic phenomenology, builds upon Husserl's work and was further developed by Heidegger and other philosophers. While descriptive phenomenology focuses on the essential structures of consciousness, interpretive phenomenology aims to uncover the meaning and significance of lived experiences within their socio-cultural context. Unlike Husserl, instead of bracketing, he focuses on the interpretation and meaning of being (Giorgi, 2012). It recognizes that human beings exist in a world of meanings and interpretations, and our historical and cultural background shapes our understanding of phenomena. Interpretive phenomenology emphasizes the importance of interpretation and understanding. Researchers engage in a process of interpretation, where they delve into the lifeworld of the individuals or groups under study, exploring the subjective meanings, values, and lived experiences that shape their understanding of the phenomenon. This method acknowledges the influence of language, culture, history, and social context in shaping our understanding of the world. Interpretive phenomenology emphasizes the hermeneutic circle, which refers to the iterative process of moving between the whole and the parts, the pre-understandings and the new insights, to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon. Hermeneutics is about interpretation and focuses on historical and

social contexts that surround actions when interpreting a text (Gadamer, 2008). Researchers aim to uncover the multiple layers of meaning and the experience within its socio-cultural context. According to Chen (2017), phenomenology offers a particularly interesting view of cognition for social researchers. It sees consciousness as developed through experience, not the work of a disembodied mind. It takes all consciousness as intentional in other words when trying to make sense of something, it is always with a purpose in mind. As described by Finlay (2013), phenomenology aims for fresh, complex, rich descriptions of phenomena as concretely lived. Phenomenologists therefore look to describe rather than explain.

2.4 The Concept of Gender

According to Hameed and Shukri (2014), John Money initially introduced the term 'Gender' in the 1940s in the context of legitimizing sex change. Its incorporation into the social sciences gained momentum from the late 1960s onward, marking the period when gender became a central theme in discussions of social life (Turner, 2006: 228). In the past, as asserted by Hameed and Shukri (2014), the term 'Sex' was exclusively employed to denote both the physical attributes of males and females and the distinct social roles assumed by men and women. However, it became evident that the term 'Sex' fell short of capturing the multifaceted ways in which human beings express themselves, behave within culture, and navigate their social environment. As a result, the concept of 'Gender' emerged to encompass a more comprehensive understanding of the complex interplay between biological and social factors in shaping human experiences. In essence, the terms "male" and "female" came under scrutiny by those seeking to explore how cultural norms or traditions evolve and are constructed. Matsani (2022) asserts that the concept of Gender, denoting culturally defined roles and responsibilities for men and women,

exhibits variability across diverse cultures and over time. Gender encompasses socially constructed attributes of women, men, girls, and boys, comprising norms, behaviours, and roles associated with being a woman, man, girl, or boy, as well as the dynamics of their relationships with each other. The research conducted by Hameed and Shukri (2014) reinforced that Gender provides a more expansive framework than the constrained concept of "sex." It enables us to comprehend and navigate how cultural norms are established and transformed. Gender introduces distinctions between males and females, framing our perception of individuals within the binary of man or woman. It is crucial to recognize, as highlighted in the study, that social roles are not immutable; they are subject to change. This underscores the dynamic nature of gender and the capacity for shifts in societal expectations and roles over time. Anyalengbey (2016) articulates that gender encompasses the socially and culturally defined roles that men and women assume within societies. Additionally, gender represents the socially constructed distinctions between men and women. These elucidations highlight the notion that gender is not an inherent or biological categorization but rather a learned identity, subject to variation across different communities.

2.5 Traditional Gender Roles and Communication

Studies indicate that conventional gender norms might lead to communication difficulties in marriages where the wife assumes the position of a pastor. Johnson (2017) argues that adherence to conventional gender norms might result in tensions over the wife's position as a spiritual leader both in the family and the religious community. These conflicts might appear in communication patterns that are marked by tension, misunderstandings, and battles for control.

Studies conducted by Smith et al. (2019) suggest that certain spouses may encounter difficulties when their wives assume leadership positions within the church, resulting in emotions of emasculation or insecurity. This can lead to the development of resistance or passive-aggressive behaviour, which can interrupt the flow of efficient communication within the marital relationship. Moreover, the wife's pastoral obligations may necessitate substantial time and emotional commitment, resulting in clashes regarding family duties and priorities.

Notwithstanding these difficulties, certain couples effectively navigate novel communication patterns that question conventional gender roles. Brown and Williams (2020) conducted research indicating that couples where the wife assumes the role of a pastor frequently employ open communication and negotiation to reframe their responsibilities and expectations within the marital relationship. This negotiation process may include reassessing conventional gender conventions and adopting more equitable types of collaboration.

Moreover, research conducted by Jones and Lee (2018) emphasises the significance of mutual respect and support in promoting successful communication within these marital relationships. Couples who give priority to empathy, active listening, and shared decision-making are more adept at managing the intricacies of simultaneously fulfilling pastoral and marital responsibilities. Societal norms significantly influence power dynamics and decision-making processes in couples when the wife assumes the position of a pastor. These expectations are shaped by cultural norms, religious doctrines, and institutional frameworks, which can either uphold conventional gender roles or question them (Jones & Lee, 2018).

Throughout history, the hierarchical systems present in religious organisations have played a role in creating unequal power dynamics in marriages,

as men have held dominance over women in both spiritual and household matters. Even in marriages where the wife holds the role of a pastor, cultural norms might reinforce these power imbalances, resulting in difficulties in attaining fair decision-making (Davis & Smith, 2016).

The research conducted by Davis and Smith (2016) emphasises the enduring presence of patriarchal beliefs in certain religious communities. These beliefs can diminish the power and impact of female pastors within both the church and the home. This power imbalance can also manifest in marital relations, as males exercise dominance over significant choices and relegate the wife's pastoral role to a subservient position.

Societal norms about gender roles and leadership can also foster opposition to the empowerment of women, both within religious and marital settings. Garcia and Martinez (2018) found that cultural and religious norms frequently prescribe that men should hold positions of authority and leadership, while women are anticipated to be subservient and supportive.

Notwithstanding these difficulties, research indicates that certain couples are capable of defying conventional norms and establishing more balanced power dynamics in their marriages. Thompson and Johnson (2019) conducted studies that emphasise the ability of couples who actively oppose traditional gender conventions and adopt collaborative leadership models to bounce back from challenges. These couples frequently get resilience from their religious convictions and dedication to promoting equality and fairness in society, perceiving their marriage union as an embodiment of their fundamental principles. Through the act of challenging conventional gender roles and promoting gender equality in both the church and the

household, these couples exemplify the profound capacity of love, mutual respect, and unity to bring about significant change (Thompson & Johnson, 2019).

2.6 Christianity in Ghana

According to Sundkler and Steed (2004), Christianity made its entry into Ghana through Western traders who engaged in trade with the Fantes along the coast. The forts and trading posts established by Western traders served as gathering places for church services, where many attendees were baptized. In the early days, groups such as the Bible Band and the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge also played significant roles in spreading the gospel. Early missionaries like Thomas Thompson, Philip Quaque, J. R. Dunwell, F. P. Swurie, and G. Wrigley contributed to the introduction of Christianity in Ghana, with Methodist missionaries focusing on coastal areas and Basel missionaries reaching out to the Twi and Ga people. Christian villages, including Akropong, Abokobi, and Aburi, also emerged during this period (Sundkler & Steed, 2004).

The landscape of Christianity in Ghana has witnessed transformations, notably with the emergence of Pentecostalism. Kajawo (2012) emphasizes that characteristics such as the freedom to heal the sick, engage in dance during church services, and cast out demons are distinctive features of Pentecostalism. Influential figures in the Pentecostal movement in Ghana include Peter Anim of the Christ Apostolic Church and James Mckeown of the Church of Pentecost (Wyllie, 1974). Women's participation in Christian worship in Ghana has undergone significant changes in recent years, especially among the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements. These movements have exhibited greater receptiveness towards female leadership in contrast to conventional denominations (Ampofo & Atobrah, 2023). Women in pastoral and evangelistic roles have gained increased visibility, taking up

leadership positions within churches and actively engaging in missionary activities. Their responsibilities encompass delivering sermons, instructing, providing pastoral support, and participating in community outreach initiatives. According to Oduyoye (2001), the presence of female pastors in Christian worship in Ghana is indicative of wider societal shifts and the growing acknowledgment of gender parity within the church. It represents a transition from conventional gender roles to a more comprehensive approach to leadership in religious communities. Female pastors frequently offer distinct viewpoints in their ministry, placing particular emphasis on matters such as women's rights, the well-being of families, and the advancement of the community (Oduyoye, 2001). This transition has also influenced church policies and practices, promoting the creation of more inclusive worship venues where individuals of both genders can assume leadership positions. Female pastors in Ghana are playing a significant role in transforming the cultural landscape of Christianity, fostering a more balanced and vibrant manifestation of religious belief (Acheampong, 2021).

2.7 Gender Roles, Religious and Cultural Context in Marriage with a Female Pastor

There is a vast range of readings of the Bible, with some focusing on patriarchal systems and others advocating for egalitarianism. These perceptions have a significant impact on the communication patterns and role expectations that exist inside marriages. For example, couples who follow complementarian beliefs may maintain conventional gender roles, where the husband assumes the role of the spiritual leader of the household and the woman supports him (Wright, 2015).

On the other hand, couples who follow egalitarian beliefs may prioritise equal submission and joint decision-making, regardless of gender (Corbett & Fikkert,

2019). These varying interpretations can result in a wide range of communication patterns, including both hierarchical and collaborative methods.

Religious affiliation also influences the expectations of gender roles within marriages with a female pastor. For instance, in religious groups that support the idea of women being ordained, such as the United Methodist Church or the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, spouses can approach their responsibilities with more adaptability and inclusiveness (Oduro, 2018).

On the other hand, in stricter traditions that limit women's leadership positions, couples may face more stress and disagreement as they try to balance their religious convictions with societal norms (Yamane & Polzer, 2017). The disparities in religious affiliation give rise to discrepancies in communication styles and power dynamics within marital relationships.

Religious doctrines frequently dictate specific gender roles in marriage, wherein men are typically allocated positions of authority and leadership (Ysseldyk et al., 2019). In marriages when the wife assumes the role of a pastor, the conventional gender roles may be questioned or re-evaluated, contingent upon the couple's understanding and application of religious doctrines.

Thompson and Miller (2016) conducted a study that revealed how couples in egalitarian marriages tend to reinterpret biblical scriptures that have traditionally been used to support male dominance, instead focusing on the importance of mutual submission and cooperation. Conversely, couples that hold complementarian beliefs may strengthen conventional gender norms by regarding the husband's authority as divinely established.

Religious doctrines also influence the way decisions are made in relationships, which has consequences for power dynamics and overall marital

contentment. In environments that adhere to complementarianism, decision-making is often concentrated in the hands of the husband, who is regarded as the spiritual leader and main decision-maker (Albrecht & DeMaris, 2017).

In contrast, in egalitarian marriages, decisions are typically reached through collaborative efforts, with both partners making equal contributions to the decision-making process (Ysseldyk et al., 2019). The extent of religious teachings' impact on decision-making differs based on the religious affiliation and interpretation of scripture held by the spouse.

2.8 Challenges and Conflict Resolutions in Marriage

A frequent cause of conflict in marriages is the presence of role conflict and ambiguity. The simultaneous tasks of being a wife and a pastor can cause boundaries to become unclear and tensions to arise as couples navigate their responsibilities (Ferris & Walker, 2018). Conflicts can occur when the requirements of pastoral ministry intrude on family time or when expectations about household responsibilities clash with pastoral duties.

Conflicts might also emerge due to opposition or doubt among the religious community over women assuming leadership positions. A study conducted by Thompson and Harris (2020) revealed that certain members of a congregation may encounter difficulties in embracing a female pastor, resulting in tensions and conflicts for both the pastor and her spouse. The presence of external pressure can intensify pre-existing marital disputes and put a strain on the couple's relationship.

Gender role expectations, both inside the marital relationship and the wider religious community, can lead to disagreements on decision-making, power, and guidance. Conventional understandings of religious texts may strengthen traditional gender roles, resulting in disagreements between the wife's position as a spiritual

guide and the husband's position as the leader of the household (Miller & Thompson, 2019).

Married couples with a female pastor utilise diverse communication tactics to handle disagreements and negotiate the distinct problems they encounter. These tactics are designed to foster comprehension, reciprocal esteem, and cooperative resolution of problems. A good communication technique involves engaging in open discourse and practising active listening. Couples who actively participate in sincere and considerate conversations are more proficient in recognising and resolving underlying problems (Johnson & Smith, 2017). Active listening entails the deliberate and focused act of actively hearing and comprehending the perspectives of others, without passing judgment or interrupting, to cultivate empathy and build mutual understanding.

Establishing explicit expectations and defining precise limits can decrease role ambiguity and pre-empt confrontations. It is advantageous for couples to engage in conversations about their roles, duties, and priorities, both in their marriage and in their pastoral ministry (Brown & Garcia, 2019). Implementing clear boundaries for work hours, family time, and pastoral responsibilities can effectively reduce disputes arising from excessive workloads and conflicting priorities.

When disagreements continue or worsen, it can be advantageous to seek professional assistance. Couples counselling or pastoral counselling offers a secure environment for couples to address their difficulties, enhance their communication abilities, and cultivate efficient conflict-resolution techniques (Martinez & Lopez, 2020). A proficient therapist or counsellor can provide specialised guidance and assistance that is specifically suited to address the distinct issues encountered by couples in pastoral marriages.

2.9 Support Networks and Community Influence in marriages with female pastors

Marital happiness is enhanced by emotional support received from social networks, which offers empathy, validation, and encouragement during periods of stress or conflict (Hancock & Stone, 2018). Relatives, such as parents and siblings, provide a feeling of inclusion and approval, whilst friends offer camaraderie and empathy.

Church members also contribute significantly to providing emotional support, as they possess shared values and beliefs with the couple (Yamamoto & Lambert, 2019). Members of the congregation have the opportunity to provide prayers, words of support, and practical help to assist the pair in managing the challenges of pastoral service and preserving their married relationship.

Providing practical help with tasks like domestic chores, childcare, or pastoral obligations can reduce stress and improve marital happiness (Brock & Coleman, 2020). During periods of high activity or emergencies, family members and friends can provide practical assistance, enabling the couple to concentrate on their relationship and duties in their religious work.

Church members can also provide instrumental support by offering their time and resources to assist the pastor and her family (Hastings & Jones, 2017). This collaborative endeavour promotes a feeling of communal connection and mutual obligation, enhancing the ties between the couple and their religious group.

Providing couples with informational support, such as counsel, direction, and access to resources, assists them in making well-informed decisions and effectively managing issues (Braithwaite et al., 2019). Relatives and acquaintances who have worked in pastoral ministry can supply valuable knowledge and viewpoints, while

fellow churchgoers might offer counsel on spiritual problems and the management of the church.

Access to informational support boosts the couple's self-assurance in handling disagreements, making decisions, and carrying out their pastoral responsibilities (Thompson & Robinson, 2018). By leveraging the knowledge and insight of their social support networks, couples can enhance their communication and problem-solving abilities, resulting in increased marital contentment.

Positive perceptions of female pastors in the religious community enhance marital satisfaction by validating the wife's vocation and proficiency in pastoral ministry (McCarthy & Wilson, 2020). The congregants who demonstrate reverence and endorse the pastor's guidance enable the couple to confront difficulties with assurance and fortitude.

Church members that acknowledge and support the pastor's abilities and skills serve as a means of validation and motivation for the marriage, promoting a feeling of inclusion and approval (Wang & Chen, 2019). This affirmation enhances the couple's connection and solidifies their dedication to one another and their mission.

On the other hand, if people have negative views and attitudes towards female pastors, it can result in them being stigmatised and rejected by the religious community. This can then have a detrimental impact on the contentment and well-being of the pair (Foster & Black, 2019). Members of the congregation who oppose women in leadership roles may raise doubts about the pastor's power and capability, leading to discord and strife within the church.

The religious community's stigmatisation might worsen pre-existing marital issues and put a strain on the couple's relationship (Kim & Park, 2018). The couple's confidence and sense of calling may be undermined by feelings of loneliness,

rejection, and inadequacy, ultimately resulting in burnout and disillusionment with pastoral ministry.

2.10 Mechanisms employed by Husbands of Female Pastors in navigating gender roles and marital dynamics

A coping mechanism employed by husbands of female pastors involves obtaining emotional support from their spouses and social support networks (Foster & Morris, 2020). Spouses have the opportunity to share their emotions and worries with their wives, which promotes transparent dialogue and reciprocal assistance in the marital relationship.

In addition, men in pastoral ministry may seek emotional support from relatives, acquaintances, or fellow congregants who comprehend the challenges associated with their role (Jones & Thompson, 2021). Husbands can enhance their ability to deal with stressful situations by sharing their experiences and receiving empathy from others, which helps them feel understood and acknowledged.

According to Thompson and Roberts (2019), certain husbands effectively deal with the difficulties of having a wife in pastoral ministry by actively participating in church activities and providing support for their spouses' ministry endeavours. Spouses can contribute to pastoral responsibilities, such as leading worship, instructing classes, or offering pastoral care. This involvement enhances their bond with the church community and cultivates a feeling of purpose and satisfaction.

Participating actively in pastoral ministry also fosters shared experiences and mutual understanding between spouses, enhancing their marital connection (Bennett & Smith, 2018). Through collaborative engagement in ministry, husbands and wives

cultivate a heightened recognition of one another's responsibilities and contributions, so augmenting overall marital contentment.

When faced with excessive pressures, spouses may opt for professional assistance by engaging in counselling or therapy (McCarthy & Brown, 2021). Counsellors or therapists with expertise in the field offer a secure environment for husbands to examine their emotions, cultivate effective ways of dealing with challenges, and enhance their marital bond.

Counselling enhances communication between spouses, enabling them to overcome problems and challenges more efficiently (Kim & Wilson, 2020). Husbands can improve their general well-being and pleasure in their marriage by addressing fundamental problems and acquiring effective coping strategies.

Utilising effective coping methods, such as seeking emotional support and actively participating in pastoral ministry, fosters favourable communication patterns within the marital relationship (Thompson & Garcia, 2020). Spouses who experience support and comprehension from their wives are more inclined to participate in transparent and sincere communication, resulting in enhanced marital contentment.

In addition, husbands who actively engage in pastoral ministry alongside their spouses cultivate shared experiences and objectives, thus enhancing their communication and bond (Brock & Martinez, 2019). Through collaborative efforts aimed at a shared objective, couples in pastoral marriages foster a sense of cohesion and cooperation, so augmenting their overall marital welfare.

Spouses in pastoral marriages employ successful strategies to handle disagreements and difficulties, resulting in higher levels of marital contentment (Wang & Jones, 2021). Men who actively seek emotional support and engage in transparent

communication with their wives are more capable of addressing differences and constructively resolving problems.

Moreover, couples that place importance on mutual respect and comprehension in their communication patterns are more inclined to encounter marital contentment (Bennett & Wilson, 2019). By affirming and respecting each other's viewpoints and attentively acknowledging their worries, husbands and wives cultivate reliance and closeness in their marital relationship, fortifying their connection.

2.11 Resilience and Adaptation in Marriages with a Female Pastor

Couples can effectively navigate changing gender roles by engaging in discussions and reaching agreements regarding their expectations and responsibilities within the context of their marriage (Garcia & Martinez, 2021). Male spouses of female pastors may assume additional domestic obligations or childcare duties to assist their wives' pastoral vocation, therefore defying conventional gender roles and fostering marital equality.

In addition, couples have the option to re-evaluate and adjust their decision-making processes and power dynamics to fit the wife's leadership position in the church (Thompson & Brown, 2020). Effective communication and mutual respect are crucial for couples to handle these transitions and establish a feeling of cooperation and collaboration.

Certain couples in pastoral marriages adopt egalitarian ideas and principles, considering their partnership as an exemplar of mutual respect and collaborative leadership (Smith & Johnson, 2019). Instead of following traditional gender norms, these couples prioritise fairness and collaboration in their marriage, adjusting jointly to the challenges of pastoral ministry.

Egalitarian spouses deliberately defy conventional expectations and norms around gender and leadership, promoting gender equality both inside the church and the household (Jones & Davis, 2020). By adopting egalitarianism, couples cultivate the ability to withstand and adjust to shifting gender norms and expectations, thus enhancing their resilience and adaptability.

Efficient communication plays a crucial role in enhancing resilience and marital contentment among couples dealing with difficulties associated with gender and spiritual leadership positions (Brown & Thompson, 2021). Partners that actively participate in transparent and sincere communication possess superior abilities to effectively handle disagreements, adapt to changes, and fulfil each other's requirements.

Moreover, couples who place importance on engaging in active listening, demonstrating empathy, and providing validation in their communication patterns tend to experience higher levels of marital contentment (Martinez & Wilson, 2021). By cultivating a nurturing and empathetic atmosphere, couples reinforce their connection and bolster their ability to withstand challenges.

Social support networks, such as family, friends, and church members, are essential in fostering resilience and marital contentment among couples in pastoral marriages (Wang & Garcia, 2022). Supportive relationships offer emotional, instrumental, and informational assistance, which helps to protect against stressors and improve coping skills. Couples who receive assistance from their social networks experience validation, comprehension, and empowerment to effectively face difficulties together (Thompson & Martinez, 2020). Through the development of robust social support networks, couples enhance their ability to adapt and fortify their marriage connection in the face of the challenges associated with pastoral ministry.

According to Davis and Jones (2019), partners in pastoral relationships have more resilience and marital satisfaction when they have shared values and beliefs as a foundation. Partners who possess a mutual religious belief and a shared purpose in serving the community are more adept at navigating difficulties and obstacles, deriving resilience from their joint dedication to God and one another.

Furthermore, couples that place high importance on spiritual development and establishing a strong bond in their partnership tend to have higher levels of pleasure in their marriage (Garcia & Wilson, 2021). Through cultivating their spiritual connection, couples enhance their ability to withstand and adjust to challenges, discovering fortitude and solace in their mutual belief.

2.12 Marriage and Gender Equality

The varying cultural and societal interpretations of the biological differences between men and women contribute to distinct patterns of socialization for each gender. According to Maisin (2015), this socialization process results in the allocation of different roles and opportunities to men and women. These assigned roles, as highlighted by Maisiri (2015), serve to either constrain or govern the behaviours of individuals based on their gender within specific societies. Additionally, Maisiri (2015) emphasizes the influential role of customs, religion, and culture in the socialization process, asserting that these factors significantly influence people's perceptions and behaviours related to marital status. Marriage holds significant cultural importance in many African societies, where it is considered a fundamental ritual. It is a societal expectation that every capable member partakes in this institution, as emphasized by Maisiri (2015). Marriage, according to Maisiri, serves as a symbol of social prominence and plays a crucial role in shaping an individual's identity within the community. Additionally, societal norms dictate

specific duties and roles for both men and women within the context of marriage. In many African societies, there exists a prevailing reality of male headship and female submission, deeply rooted in religious and canonical traditions (Maisiri, 2015). Mukonvora, as cited in Maisiri (2015), further underscores the subordinate status assigned to females in African traditional societies. Traditionally, societal expectations dictate that men are the primary providers for the family, while women are responsible for household tasks and childcare within the marital union (Ogletree, 2015). The prevailing idea is that men bear the financial responsibility for the family. It is important to recognize that cultural and biblical viewpoints play a significant role in reinforcing the concept of male headship and female submission in the family dynamic. Carmichael (2016) emphasizes the household as a critical arena for addressing women's struggle for equality. One biblical reference often cited to justify women's submission in the household is Ephesians 5:22-24, referred to as the household code by Maisiri (2015). This passage states, "Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands as you do to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Saviour. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything" (NIV). The mentioned scripture draws a parallel between the marital bond of a husband and wife and the relationship between Christ and the church. Maisiri (2015) highlights this comparison, explaining that, akin to the church's submission and reliance on Christ, the wife is encouraged to exhibit submission and dependence on her husband in all aspects of life (p. 39).

2.13 The status of women in Christianity

In many African societies, women are traditionally assigned the role of household managers, bearing the sole responsibility for all domestic activities. According to Kasomo (2010), the typical role expected of women in an African society encompasses being a mother, a wife, and a nurturer. Despite possessing skills and talents, women within patriarchal societies find their roles confined primarily to domestic tasks, shaped by cultural and gender traditions (Adasi et al., 2013). Essentially, women in African societies are recognized as the primary managers of domestic affairs, while leadership roles within the community remain predominantly in the hands of men.

This raises questions about the status of women within the Christian religion. Are women ordained to preach the gospel? Can women ascend to leadership positions within the church, or are they constrained to the role of home managers? Examining how women were perceived in the early Christian faith becomes crucial as it influences enduring attitudes and practices within Christianity. Notably, in the early days of Christianity, women were acknowledged as hosts of Christian gatherings, often owning houses that served as meeting venues for Christians. Pihlava (2016) contends that gatherings in homes were a common practice in the early stages of the Christian faith. In the early days of Christianity, women held ordained positions as priests and bishops, actively participating in the teaching and preaching of the gospel of Christ. Notable scholars, including King (2018), argue that figures like Mary Magdalene, often known as a repentant woman with a questionable past, played a significant role as a devoted gospel teacher and leader among the early disciples of Jesus.

Despite their unwavering faith, women faced persecution similar to men. King (2018) provides the example of Perpetua, an affluent woman put to death in Carthage for her Christian beliefs. While women held distinctive and formal roles in the early Christian churches, there were significant threats to their positions. According to Remedios (2016), the equality granted to women in the early Christian era has vanished. Citing Crabtree (1970), Kasomo (2010) argues that the contemporary church tends to view women as individuals centred on aesthetics and children, lacking the talents for ordained ministry or policymaking.

Despite women forming the majority of Christian congregations, they are often marginalised in the active affairs of the church (Kasomo, 2013). Grier (2015) notes that faith-based organizations like the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints generally do not permit women to hold leadership positions or be ordained. This suggests that gender roles within religious institutions limit women to being patrons or customers rather than active participants.

Furthermore, the influence of Christianity is on the rise in Ghana, contributing significantly to the country's socioeconomic development. Various Christian organizations, such as the Salvation Army, the Methodist Church, and the Roman Catholic Church, play crucial roles in sectors like health and education in Ghana's economy. This suggests that religion poses a barrier to the advancement of women's empowerment and the realization of gender equality. Ordination serves as a crucial prerequisite for women's active involvement in the church. Notably, churches like the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, the Global Evangelical Church, the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, and various charismatic churches in Ghana have ordained (commissioned) women as officers (Pastors), who actively engage in preaching the gospel of Christ since their inception. Kasomo (2010) contends that

the ordination of women clergy is essential for attaining gender parity within the Church. He claims that although ordination may not be necessary for women's involvement, its significance resides in the fact that the lack of ordination consistently limits their access to other church positions. In addition, Kasomo (2010) notes that even within churches that allow the ordination of women, they often face barriers when it comes to being considered for leadership roles. In today's Church, gender-based restrictions prevent women from occupying certain clerical positions solely due to their sex (Adasi et al., 2013). Men predominantly lead the sanctioned group of leaders responsible for interpreting religious doctrines (UN Women, 2017). Despite these challenges, Schori (2015) asserts that women in religious leadership are crucial, as having women as pastoral leaders would affirm their creation in the image of God. Schori (2015) also emphasizes the inclusive nature of women's leadership as a significant reason for its importance, acknowledging its rarity. Gale (2005) supports this perspective, stating that the global attention given to women's issues has prompted scholars to examine African gender constructions within and outside of religion. This study specifically aims to delineate the African gender construction within charismatic churches in Ghana.

Fiedler (2011) highlights the evolving landscape of women's leadership in religion, emphasizing the increasing emergence of women as leaders across various faith traditions. Women are assuming leadership roles not only as denominational and organizational leaders but also as prominent theologians, scripture scholars, and prolific writers in spirituality and key figures in social justice, peace activism, and ecological advocacy. They are also actively engaged in fostering positive interfaith relations and contributing significantly to religious media. Contrastingly, scholars like Kasomo (2010) and Remedios (2016) argue that women's limited roles in the

church are primarily attributed to their gender, pointing to the Bible as a significant tool that perpetuates gender-based limitations. They contend that the scriptures, seen as products of a patriarchal society, have historically oppressed women (Casimir, Chukwuelobe, & Ugwu, 2014).

Explicit passages in the Bible, particularly those written by Paul, are often cited to marginalize women and reinforce feelings of inferiority. For instance, 1 Corinthians 11:7-9 suggests that women should cover their heads as they are perceived as the glory of man and not directly created by God. Another example is 1 Corinthians 14:34, which dictates that women should remain silent in churches, emphasizing their submission. Casimir et al. (2014) further argue that other scriptures such as Ephesians 5:21 and Colossians 3:18, often used in wedding ceremonies, contribute to the societal pre-eminence of men and the inferior status of women. They contend that the portrayal of women in the Bible is biased, as it is presented solely through male perspectives. Additionally, they question the infallibility of biblical interpretations, emphasizing that human interpretation, prone to errors, should not be regarded as sacrosanct.

2.14 Theoretical framework

2.14.1 Social Role Theory

Social Role Theory, as described by Eagly & Wood (2012), highlights the influence of societal roles, norms, and expectations on individual behaviour. This study examines how individuals fulfill their responsibilities within a social framework and how these roles influence their relationships and experiences. According to Eagly et al. (2000), Social Role Theory is based on the belief that the social roles given to men and women in society substantially cause gender variations in behaviour. Its main tenets are:

Division of Labour: Often allocating males to agentic roles (assertive, task-focused) and women to community roles (nurturing, relationship-focused), society distributes duties—e.g., provider, carer, leader—based on gender.

Role Internalisation: People internalise the roles anticipated of them and act accordingly, so reinforcing conventional gender standards.

Behaviour and Expectations: Gendered expectations influence how men and women act in many settings, including marriage, employment, and religion.

Social Structures influence individual roles: Over time, institutions such as the church, family, and culture sustain and strengthen these positions.

Understanding the lived experiences of husbands of female pastors in Ghana depends on Social Role Theory, as proposed by Eagly and Wood (1987). This idea suggests that individual behaviour and role performance are greatly shaped by society's expectations and division of labour. Particularly when conventional dynamics are questioned, Social Role Theory in the framework of this research helps to explain how gender roles are created, internalised, and negotiated within married relationships.

Traditionally, Ghanaian society and many religious environments expect males to take leadership both at home and inside the church. In relationships when the wife is a pastor, however, husbands are sometimes expected to fit to supporting positions. This reorganisation of the division of labour where women assume public spiritual leadership and men oversee more domestic or background duties exemplifies how gender roles are being reinvented. Social Role Theory offers the framework to see this change as more than personal adjustment; rather, it is a socially placed reaction to changing role frameworks.

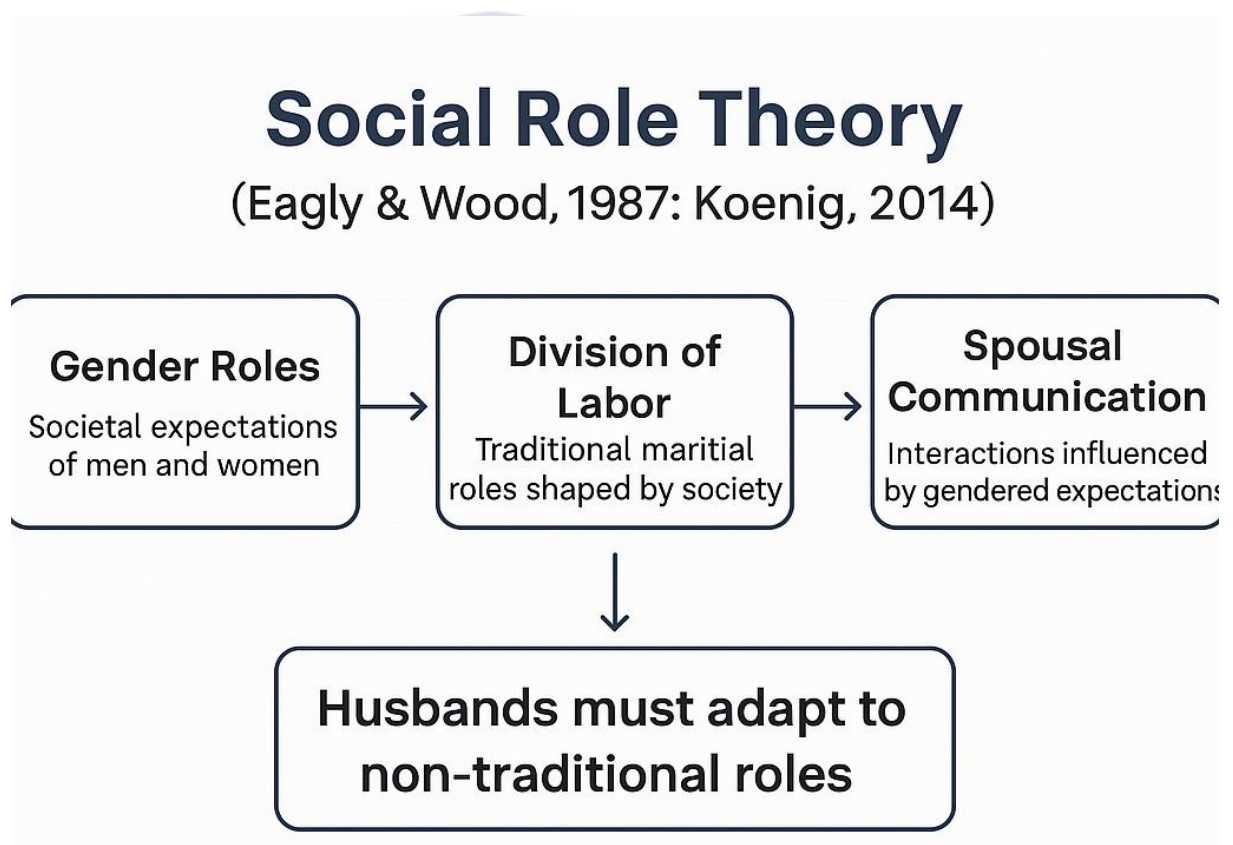
The results also show the theory's emphasis on role internalisation. Having internalised standards that link manhood with leadership, several men first found it difficult to harmonise their masculine identity with their wives' pastoral authority. The study investigates how these men either fought, accepted, or renegotiated their responsibilities in reaction to their wives' ministry and cultural views.

Moreover, the theory provides an understanding of the conflict between social expectations and real experience. "My wife is a pastor, and I support her leadership." The reality often clashes with the traditional script that "a man should lead the household." Particularly as men try to be supportive in their wives' pastoral path while negotiating outside criticism and internal uncertainty, this disparity between expectation and reality causes role conflict and stress. . This aligns with the emphasis made by Wolf and Fresé (2018) on the importance of spouse support in professional positions.

At last, institutional factors, especially the church, are strong enforcers or challengers of gender roles. Social Role Theory lets us critically examine how religious organisations simultaneously support conventional masculine values and, ironically, become the settings where these values are being quietly changed in practice. The idea acknowledges the possibility of role conflict arising when expectations from different roles come into conflict. This can be experienced by husbands of female pastors as they navigate their duties as supportive partners, assisting in pastoral obligations, and fulfilling other societal expectations. This is consistent with the conclusions of Stets and Serpe (2013) about the management of several social roles.

In addition, Social Role Theory emphasizes the influence of socialization on the process of internalizing roles and norms. This is especially pertinent when

examining the process of men's socialization within religious communities and how cultural standards around gender and marriage influence their conduct. This is reinforced by Worthy et al.'s (2020) portrayal of how cultural expectations determine gender roles and behaviours. Moreover, the idea emphasizes the importance of community in influencing and maintaining social positions. The church community significantly influences husbands' interactions with others, their establishment of roles, and their establishment of expectations. This aligns with Tadros' (2022) study on the increasing trend of gender equality in leadership positions within religious organizations. To illustrate the social role theory, the researcher developed the diagram below.



2.15 The Communication Adaptation Theory

Burgoon et al., (2010) present the Communication Adaptation Theory, which explains how individuals modify their communication behaviors to match those of

their partners in interpersonal or organizational contexts. This approach highlights the alteration of both spoken and unspoken signals to build a connection and decrease ambiguity during social exchanges. This theory provides useful insights on negotiating the complex dynamics of marriages when wives serve as pastors, making it particularly applicable in such situations. The Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT), formulated by Giles, Coupland, and Coupland (1991), offers a theoretical framework for comprehending how people modify their communication styles to improve mutual comprehension and cultivate healthy relationships. This hypothesis is relevant in multiple domains:

Convergence: Changing one's communication to become more like the other person's style to obtain approval or promote understanding.

Divergence: Emphasising the distinctions in communication techniques to preserve identity or distance.

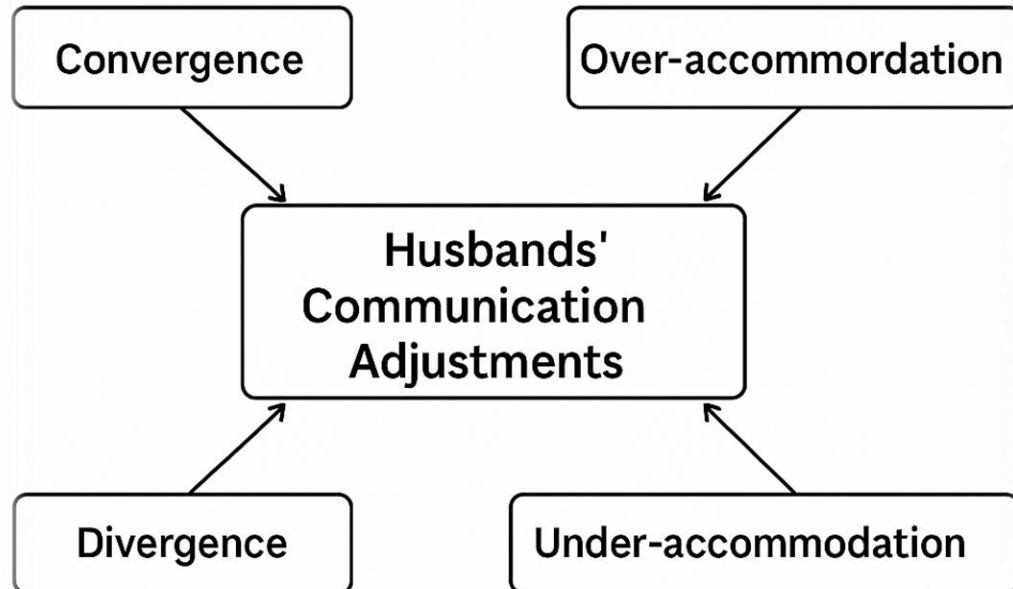
Over-accommodation: Excessive or incorrect changes that may seem patronising or unnatural.

Under-accommodation: Not changing communication regardless of relationship or contextual needs.

Motives for Accommodation: Motivations could include seeking approbation, connection development, social identity management, or coping with perceived status disparities.

The diagram below shows the main elements of Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT), which the researcher developed to help explain how it relates to the communication patterns between husbands and their pastor-wives.

Communication Accommodation Theory in Pastoral Marriages



Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) illuminates how husbands adjust their communication styles in marriages where the wife serves as a pastor.

Relevance of theories to the study

The relevance of Social Role Theory and Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) to this study is substantial in meeting the research objectives. The application of Social position Theory is valuable for examining the communication dynamics inside couples where the wife assumes the position of a pastor (Objective 1). The text discusses the impact of both traditional and non-traditional gender roles on communication patterns. Specifically, it focuses on the introduction of new dimensions to marital relations as wives take up pastoral tasks (Eagly & Wood, 2012). In order to investigate how husbands of female pastors manage gender roles and communication strategies in their marriages and religious communities (Objective 2), Social Role Theory provides insights into the approaches husbands

employ to reconcile societal expectations of masculinity with their supportive roles. This theory highlights their adjustments in terms of household responsibilities and involvement in church activities (Eagly, 1987). Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) is essential for comprehending how both partners adapt their communication patterns to navigate social interactions in these relationships (Objective 1). The study conducted by Giles, Coupland, and Coupland (1991) suggests that wives may adopt authoritative communication methods commonly associated with pastoral leadership, while husbands may adapt by becoming more supportive and collaborative. In addition, CAT offers a structure for investigating the particular communication tactics that husbands use to navigate gender roles and uphold a harmonious relationship (Objective 2), and it clarifies how adaptive communication acts as a coping mechanism to sustain marital contentment (Objective 3). Husbands who meet their wives' communication requirements contribute to a supportive marital environment, which is crucial for addressing the issues associated with their wives' pastoral tasks (Giles, Coupland, & Coupland, 1991). Thus, both theories provide useful insights into the intricate relationship between gender roles and communication dynamics in these distinct marital contexts. Researchers like Eagly (1987) and Giles, Coupland, & Coupland (1991) have established the foundation for comprehending the impact of societal roles on communication adaptation. Stets and Serpe (2013), Wolf and Fresé (2018), and Gottman and Silver (1999) have extended these theories, demonstrating their relevance in different situations, such as marriages involving female pastors. These theories are most suitable for the study because they provide a comprehensive method to analysing the complex interplay of roles, expectations, and communication tactics in these marriages.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter's objective is to describe the research approach that was chosen and applied for this study. The sampling technique and size are discussed, along with a description of the research design that was used. The same applies to the tools and methods used for data collection. Along with discussing the ethical considerations noted throughout the study, more details are provided about the approach and methodology used for data analysis.

3.1 Research Approach

A qualitative, exploratory approach was employed to accomplish the study's goals. According to Burns and Grove (2009), the goal of qualitative research is to build a foundation of knowledge by concentrating on the significance and comprehension of a phenomenon. A qualitative design, according to Burns and Grove (2009), aims to present a representation of a situation, as it would naturally occur. According to Creswell (2014), the Qualitative research approach entails gathering and analysing non-numerical data to comprehend social phenomena. The experiences, meanings, and views of particular people or groups are explored, described, and interpreted. According to Merriam (2009), the process of choosing the methodologies to be applied in data collection, analysis, and interpretation to comprehend the complexity of the human experience and social phenomena is known as the qualitative research approach. Marshall and Rossman (2011), argue that a variety of methodologies for gathering, analysing, and interpreting data is included in a qualitative research approach. It involves a fluid, emergent, and comprehensive approach to comprehending social phenomena, emphasizing the

setting and personal meanings of each person. Patton (2015) also describes the Qualitative research approach as a strategy that focuses on understanding social phenomena through the perspectives, experiences, and interpretations of participants. This aims to provide rich, in-depth, and nuanced insights into the research topic. The qualitative research approach encompasses an array of interconnected practices that aim to explore, understand, and interpret social phenomena. This involves a holistic, context-bound, and reflexive approach to knowledge generation, emphasizing the various instances of human experiences (Denzin & Lincoln, 2017). Thanh and Anh (2015) claim that the qualitative approach to data collection and analysis aids in eliciting the interviewee's perspectives on the world based on their experiences. Additionally, qualitative research aids in revealing the singularity of a circumstance in a certain setting and the interactions that take place there (Patton, 2015). Consequently, the qualitative approach supports the study's fundamental theory for why the phenomenon was what it was. This enables one to comprehend the motivations and significance behind people's behaviour in a specific context (Creswell, 2014). This study utilised a qualitative technique based on the constructivist paradigm. The constructivist paradigm emphasises that reality is socially produced and influenced by situational constraints. It also highlights the importance of the researcher's close interaction with the study subjects (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). Constructivism facilitates a comprehensive comprehension of how humans generate and perceive their social environment. This paradigm is especially well-suited for phenomenological research, as it specifically centres on comprehending individuals' lived experiences from their own viewpoints. Babbie and Mouton (2008) endorse the application of constructivism in phenomenological research due to its ability to accurately capture the subjective experiences and

interpretations that participants assign to their interactions and surroundings. Therefore, this method allows for a thorough examination of the intricate dynamics inside marriages where the wife assumes the role of a pastor. This study used the qualitative research approach, as the researcher was able to learn about the respondents' actual experiences as husbands of female pastors. Again, the qualitative approach was optimal since it lets one investigate complicated, personal experiences not easily measured. Given that the study aimed to understand how husbands view and negotiate gender roles and communication within their marriages, it needed a strategy that gives depth, meaning, and individual viewpoints top priority. This method allowed the researcher to get thorough insights not captured by statistical or organised techniques.

3.2 Research Design

A research design serves as a guide for carrying out a study. Research design, according to Creswell et al. (2003), is the researcher's overall strategy for addressing the research question or, if applicable, testing the research hypothesis. Burns and Grove (2011) posit that a research design is a strategy that specifies where, when, and how data will be gathered and examined. When seen in the context of Creswell's (2003) explanation, a phenomenological investigation seems especially relevant for this study.

3.2.1 Phenomenological study

The exploratory nature of the study is one of the main justifications for performing a qualitative investigation (Hassan, 2023). This indicates that little has been published about the subject or the group being investigated, and the researcher is attempting to grasp the situation by listening to participants' opinions. Qualitative research provides multi-layered and rich details and descriptions of individual

experiences (Kazdin, 2003). According to Marshall and Rossman (2011), the growth of the phenomenon under study can be described as being, becoming, understanding, and knowing. Understanding the phenomenon is achieved through the study of those who have gone through the experience and who can share their feelings, thoughts, perceptions, and the significance the experience had for them (Kazdin, 2003). In doing so, the research can be built on an understanding based on the perspectives of the participants (Creswell, 2003). According to Heidegger (2010), phenomenology is the study of being in the world. It tries to elucidate the underlying principles governing human life as well as our regular, practical interactions with the outside world. It places a focus on the hermeneutic interpretation of existence. Phenomenology, according to Merleau-Ponty (2012), is the study of the lived body and its embodied perception of the outside world. It focuses on the entwining of the subject, and object in perception, and studies the pre-reflective, embodied involvement with the world. Szanto (2014) asserts that the study of the structures of consciousness and the phenomena that manifest in acts of consciousness is known as phenomenology. It seeks to explain and comprehend the fundamental aspects of human experience as they are explicitly expressed in subjective consciousness. According to Delve (2022), Phenomenological research is a qualitative research approach that seeks to understand and describe a phenomenon's universal essence. This approach investigates people's everyday experiences while suspending the researchers' preconceived notions about the phenomenon. In other words, phenomenological research investigates lived experiences to gain a better understanding of how people interpret those experiences (Stanier, 2022). According to Portney and Walkins (2000), the qualitative phenomenological inquiry approach proved to be the most appropriate for this study because it allowed the researcher to

thoroughly examine the viewpoints of the participants. This will therefore help develop a better understanding of the complexity of the perspective and experience of the husbands of female pastors. The researcher chose Accra because Accra serves as a hub for cultural and religious diversity in Ghana, and this makes it an ideal environment to explore how gender roles are negotiated within the context of churches that have females as head pastors. In addition, in recent times, there has been a notable surge in the number of churches in Accra. Examining the experiences of female pastors' husbands in this setting can offer insightful information on how gender dynamics are changing in Ghanaian society. Moreover, the husbands of female pastors of the churches for this study availed themselves for the interviews. Accra is a representation of the intersection of modern influences and old cultural standards. In this context, researching the husbands of female pastors can provide insight into how people manage and negotiate these intersecting factors. Phenomenology has evolved beyond its origins in philosophy and has gradually expanded as a research methodology. As a research methodology, phenomenology involves a meticulous and systematic examination of lived experiences, aiming to understand the essence and meaning of those experiences (Schaller, 2005). This is to understand these experiences as those who are having them understand them. Phenomenology does not aim to develop a theory that might help us to control or explain the world; rather, it aims to bring deeper insight to help us be in greater contact with the world (Usher & Jackson, 2017). With lived experience as its starting point and focus, phenomenology serves as a tool to investigate any number of subjects, in any further fields (Mapp, 2008). Phenomenology is an especially useful methodology when a researcher is studying a new topic or seeking to provide a “fresh perspective” on a topic that has previously been studied using other methods (Cohen

et al., 2000). Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) draws on Husserl, Heidegger, and the range of phenomenological approaches (Eatuogh & Smith, 2011). IPA is committed to seeing things as they present themselves in their terms, rather than as defined by prior scientific hypotheses or abstract conceptualization (Smith & Osborn, Husserl, 1970). According to Eatuogh and Smith (2011), IPA is also influenced by symbolic interactionism, which argues that individuals ascribe meaning to events or experiences in the context of, or because of, social interactions, and these meanings are only obtained through a process of interpretation.

When applied to research, phenomenological concentrates on comprehending and characterising the lived experiences of individuals within a particular event. It aims to investigate, from the participant's point of view, the substance and significance of those encounters. Phenomenology is essential for exploring the subjective experiences of husbands in the distinctive environment of Ghanaian churches, as it pertains to the research topic "Lived Experiences of Husbands of Female Pastors: Navigating Gender Roles and communication in Marriage". Phenomenological research encompasses various fundamental notions.

Bracketing entails the examination of a phenomenon without bias, by momentarily disregarding prior beliefs and prejudices. Bracketing, as used in this study, refers to the act of recognising and setting aside any preconceived ideas or assumptions regarding the roles and experiences of males who are married to female pastors in charismatic congregations (Giorgi, 2009).

Interviews and open-ended inquiries, as defined by Kvale and Brinkmann (2009), are frequently employed in phenomenological research to facilitate participants' unrestricted expression of their lived experiences. Researchers may inquire men regarding their perspectives on marriage dynamics, cultural norms, and

their responsibilities within the household and religious community. Phenomenological data analysis entails the examination of patterns, themes, and essences that arise from the narratives of participants. The goal is to extract the fundamental nature of the phenomenon being studied (Creswell & Poth, 2017). This study aims to discover common themes, such as the influence of cultural expectations on husbands, their spiritual encounters, and the difficulties they encounter in their specialised positions. Detailed and comprehensive descriptions are essential in phenomenological research since they effectively convey the wide range and intricate nature of participants' experiences (Creswell, 2013). The researcher's objective is to offer a comprehensive comprehension of the lived experiences of husbands in Ghanaian churches by employing vivid depictions. Utilising phenomenology in this research topic enables a thorough investigation of the subjective encounters of spouses within the particular setting of churches in Ghana, elucidating their responsibilities, difficulties, and the significance they ascribe to their daily realities. Again, Phenomenology was selected since it emphasises investigating how individuals interpret their daily experiences. This design fits the goal of the study to reveal the significance husbands of female pastors assign to their positions, communication patterns, and difficulties in both religious and marital settings. Its appropriate design for revealing the core of their lived reality allowed the researcher to bracket personal preconceptions and focus on the participants' own voices.

3.3 Sampling Technique

Sampling is the practice of choosing a small number of individuals (a sample) from a larger population (the sampling population) to serve as the foundation for estimating or predicting the prevalence of an unidentified fact, circumstance, or

result about the larger population (Kumar 2014). According to Bryman (2012), sampling techniques are the methodological steps taken to choose people or units to be included in a research study. He adds that making choices about the sample's composition, representativeness, and generalizability requires decision-making. Patton (2015) also describes, the sampling technique as the process of choosing a smaller sample of people, cases, or components from a larger population. Silverman (2016) adds that a sampling technique includes choosing cases, people, or other study-relevant components from a wider population. For the validity and generalizability of study findings, it comprises choices regarding the sample's size, composition, and representativeness. To guarantee that the sample is appropriate, representative, and relevant to the study aims, intentional and methodical techniques are used. Purposive sampling was therefore used in this study. Purposive sampling, according to Merriam (2009), is a sampling strategy where participants or cases are purposefully chosen based on particular criteria or qualities that are in line with the research goals. It permits researchers to concentrate on people or circumstances that can offer useful and pertinent details to answer the study questions. Palinkas (2015) adds that Purposive sampling is a technique where participants or cases are chosen based on particular traits, qualities, or criteria that are pertinent to the research goals. It enables researchers to deliberately find and include people or groups that can provide distinctive viewpoints and experiences. According to Patton (2015), purposeful sampling is a non-probability sampling strategy in which researchers consciously choose participants or instances that have particular traits or satisfy particular requirements relevant to the study subject. This is corroborated by Nikolopoulou (2022), who refers to purposive sampling as a group of non-probability sampling techniques in which units are selected because they have

characteristics that you need in your sample. In other words, units are selected “on purpose” in purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is the method typically used to select the samples in phenomenological research (Moser & Korstjens, 2017). This is also referred to as judgmental sampling; this sampling method relies on the researcher’s judgment when identifying and selecting the individuals, cases, or events that can provide the best information to achieve the study’s objectives (Nikolopoulou, 2022). Hence, members of the target population who met certain practical requirements, such as simple accessibility, geographic proximity, availability at a given time, or willingness to participate, were included in the study. Purposive sampling entails choosing participants or cases based on particular criteria or qualities that are in line with the research purpose and objectives. The people or organisations that can supply the most pertinent and useful information for answering the study questions are specifically chosen by researchers (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Additionally, according to Padilla-Diaz (2006), purposive sampling includes the inclusion of particular criteria that participants have to meet at the time of selection. As a result, the researcher used homogeneous purposive sampling to ensure that the chosen husbands shared similar experiences with the phenomenon.

3.3.1 Homogeneous Purposive Sampling

This study used homogeneous purposive sampling to carefully choose participants who share certain and important traits, being husbands of female pastors in the Ghanaian Christian environment. Palinkas et al. (2015) claim that homogenous purposive sampling guarantees that all participants have directly encountered the phenomenon under study; therefore, perfect for researchers wishing to thoroughly investigate a certain subgroup. The method was suitable since the study's main objective was not to generalise results across all men or marriages but rather to get

deep, thorough, and context-specific insights into a particular and shared experience. Homogeneity among the participants improved the relevance and depth of the data gathered and enabled significant thematic analysis (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). The rationale behind this decision was twofold:

The study sought to grasp a particular and specialised phenomenon, the experiences of men whose spouses hold pastoral leadership roles.

Choosing people who fit this rigorous description helped the results to be very relevant to the goals of the study and to properly show the relational and communicative dynamics inside these marriages. Moreover, homogeneous purposive sampling increased the validity of the phenomenological approach, which relies on seizing the core of common human experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Participants were therefore selected using the following guidelines: Being married to a woman who has served as head pastor of a church for more than one year and having at least one child. The study therefore selected five husbands of female pastors from five selected churches in the Greater Accra Region.

3.4 Sample Size

Selecting the proper sample size is essential for any research effort to guarantee the objectivity and dependability of the study's findings (Kumar et al., 2020). According to Gentles et al. (2015), a sample is a specific group of people who are chosen. Again, the sample size is defined by Hair et al., (2019) as the number of participants or cases in a study. The researcher at various points must make a series of choices during the qualitative research process (Emmel, 2013). Sampling is the process of selecting a few (a sample) from a bigger group (the sampling population) to become the basis for estimating or predicting the prevalence of an unknown piece of information, situation or outcome regarding the bigger group (Kumar 2011).

According to Kothari (2004), a sample size is a subject of a population that has been selected to reflect or represent characteristics of the population. Sample size in qualitative research is the number of participants or cases that are included in a study. In other words, a sample is a subgroup of the population you are interested in hence, the number of students, families or electors from whom you obtain the required information is called the sample size (Kumar, 2011). The sample size is chosen depending on statistical factors, including the required level of confidence, the size of the effect, and the ability of the study to identify important results. According to Creswell (2014), sample size refers to the number of subjects or cases that are included in a qualitative or mixed-methods study. It is established by the principle of information power, which takes into account the research questions, the richness and diversity of the data, and the required level of depth and complexity of the analysis Merriam (2009) and this is based on the concepts of data saturation, where data gathering is continued until no new data or themes appear. Additionally, Dworkin (2012) proposed data saturation as the optimum factor in determining the size of a qualitative sample. A qualitative study should have at least six participants, according to Moorse (2000). Creswell (2013) supports this assertion by stating that, for a phenomenological study, between three to twenty-five participants are sufficient when the sample is homogeneous. Hence, the researcher interviewed 5 husbands of female pastors of the Gospel of Christ Church, Home of Royals church, Integrity Christian Worship Centre and the Global Evangelical Church in Accra on their lived experiences. The selection of the Gospel of Christ Church, Home of Royals Church, Integrity Christian Worship Centre, and the Global Evangelical Church in Accra as the sample for this study is primarily justified by their diverse denominational backgrounds. This ensures a comprehensive understanding of the

various experiences encountered by husbands of female pastors. They provide valuable insights into commonly observed behaviours concerning gender roles and pastoral leadership. The urban environment of Accra is noteworthy due to its distinctive background for examining the impact of modernism and urbanisation on traditional gender norms. Furthermore, these churches were selected based on the criterion of having female pastors, thereby guaranteeing that the gathered data is directly pertinent to the research goals. By incorporating multiple churches, a wider array of experiences and techniques may be considered, hence enhancing the overall conclusions. Finally, the husbands of the female pastors of these churches' accessibility enabled thorough, direct interviews, which are crucial for recording subtle, first-hand impressions.

3.5 Data Collection Methods

Data collection, according to Creswell (2014), is the methodical process of acquiring information or data for research objectives. To gather, record, and document the pertinent data required to respond to research questions or test hypotheses, entails the use of a variety of procedures and techniques. The act of gathering information or data for research purposes is known as data collection. To provide insights and assist analysis, it entails a methodical compilation of pertinent data using a variety of techniques, including surveys, interviews, observations, or document analysis (Bryman, 2016). According to Bernard (2017), data collection is the methodical process of acquiring empirical evidence or data to answer specific study questions or goals. It entails choosing and utilizing the proper techniques, equipment, or tools to gather information from specific people, organizations, or sources of interest. Marshall and Rossman (2016), also contend that data collection is the process of acquiring information or data to comprehend a specific phenomenon

or respond to research questions. It includes choosing and utilizing the most appropriate techniques, equipment, or devices to gather information from certain people, organizations, or sources of interest. Silverman (2017) adds that data collection is the methodical, deliberate gathering of information or data for research objectives. To give empirical evidence or insights to address research questions or objectives, it entails choosing the right procedures, equipment, or techniques to collect data from people or sources. Across methodological stances, research interviews constitute a core qualitative research technique (Gill & Baillie, 2018). Through interviews, the researcher can gain a thorough understanding of the participant's viewpoints, experiences, beliefs, and motivations. Hence, interviews were used as a data collection tool for this study. Individual interviews were favoured over focus group discussions due to their capacity for in-depth and personalised examination of each participant's experiences, hence reducing the impact of group dynamics and social desirability bias (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Moreover, conducting individual interviews creates a secluded environment that fosters the willingness of participants to disclose sensitive and profoundly personal details, so guaranteeing secrecy and establishing trust (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). This approach also enables comprehensive data gathering, providing the opportunity to investigate and explain responses, thereby capturing the core of the lived experience more efficiently (Van Manen, 2016). The significance of conducting individual interviews in phenomenological investigations is emphasised by these aspects, since they allow for a detailed comprehension of personal experiences.

3.5.1 Interviews

An interview is a purposeful and interactive conversation between the researcher and the participant(s), to gather rich and in-depth information on the participants' experiences, perspectives, and meanings related to the research topic," according to (Kvale, 1996). It is therefore a planned, intentional, and structured dialogue between the researcher and the participant(s) according to Rubin and Rubin (2012) to elicit specific information, experiences, or insights related to the research objectives."

Furthermore, Fontana and Frey (2005), define an interview as a planned and participatory meeting between the researcher and the participant(s) that aims to elicit first-person experiences, narratives, or opinions on the subject of study. To investigate the perspectives and experiences of the participants, entails posing questions and having conversations with them. Patton's (2015) definition of an interview as "a purposeful and interactive conversation between the researcher and the participant(s), conducted to gather data and understand the perspectives, beliefs, experiences, or behaviours of the participants about the research objectives" is consistent with this. Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) assert that an interview is a focused and dialogue-based interaction between the researcher and the participant(s), in which the researcher asks questions to elicit information, meanings, or experiences connected to the study. A jointly developed approach strives to produce data and insights. The interview is the most suitable data-gathering method for phenomenological research. Again, existing research on the phenomenological interview Marshall and Rossman, 2010; Kayle & Brinkman, (2009) suggests that it should be an open-ended or semi-structured interview. This enables the researcher to deeply examine the phenomenon while also giving the participants room to

describe their experiences in depth and get as close to reality as possible. The participant's in-depth explanations or interpretations in the profound phenomenological interview should be as accurate a representation of experience as feasible. The description of the meanings of occurrences is the primary emphasis of phenomenological interviews (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). According to Alshenqeeti (2014), interviews are shared, enabling comprehensive and clear responses. Interviews give new and comprehensive information from the participants, and they are appropriate for a phenomenological study (Padilla-Diaz, 2015). This made interview the preferred method for a study of this nature since it sought to explore precisely; the experiences of the husbands of female pastors according to (Boateng, 2016). Semi-structured interviews were used in gathering data for this research. Compared to structured interviews, which are typically utilised in quantitative research, semi-structured interviews tend to be more flexible and lack structure (Edwards & Holland, 2013). Additionally, according to Braun and Clarke (2013), "During a qualitative interview, participants respond to a series of (ideally) open-ended questions from the researcher using their own words". In this study, the interview questions were framed in such a way as to guarantee that the respondents covered all pertinent material and provided adequate responses. Face-to-face interviews were chosen because, in contrast to other methods, they enabled respondents and interviewers to establish a quick rapport. Even though organising and transcribing an interview takes a lot of time, it yields a wealth of information about people's experiences and perspectives (Braun & Clarke, 2013). As a result, the researcher employed this approach of data collection to compile more extensive information on the lived experiences of husbands of female pastors in four (4) selected churches in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. This also makes it feasible

to learn people's perspectives on a phenomenon because it guarantees that all study questions are addressed (Van Teijlingen, 2014). The researcher is free to ask whatever questions they feel necessary, and interviewees are given autonomy in how they respond. To better understand the phenomenon, interviews are conducted using an interview guide or topic guide to ensure quality replies to the phenomenon being studied (Blandford, 2013). The guide serves as a checklist for the interview and helps identify topics that need to be covered. The structure of the interview guide for this study was based on the topics found in the relevant literature. This made it possible to determine whether the responses were valid. The interview guide is divided into sections; with section one addressing the respondents' socio-demographic information. The next sections were made up of the following themes; the background and relationship with the female pastor, the Social and Cultural Context, Communication in Marriage, Personal Experiences and Emotional Impact, Role Dynamics and Support Systems, and Reflection and growth.

The study objectives are covered by a pre-list of questions for a semi-structured interview, according to Edwards and Holland (2013). The researcher is free to ask the questions and interviewees are given leeway in their responses. Unlike structured interviews, it asks for rigorous "Yes" or "No" responses (Berg, 2007). To better understand the phenomenon, the researcher asked follow-up questions based on the respondents' responses. However, it is not open and informal as done in unstructured interviews but usually comes with a checklist to guide the interview process (Alshenqueeti, 2014). Thus, to ensure good responses to the phenomenon under study, interviews are done with the aid of an interview guide or topic guide (Blandford, 2013). The guide assists in spotting areas to be covered and serves as a checklist for the entire interview process.

3.5.2 Semi- Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were used in the study to collect data. The study utilised structured interviews to collect data by Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) standards. These were done in-person, one-on-one, and in-depth interviews with each participant while following the interview guide supplied in the Appendix. Each participant's interview was scheduled at a time and place that was convenient for him, and it was recorded and then transcribed. The aforementioned tool included seven (7) structured interview items. The overall time spent with each participant was longer, although the average length of the recorded interviews was fifty-six (56) minutes. An interview has an advantage over other data collection techniques in that it involves direct communication and interaction between the researcher and the respondent (Monday, 2020). The researcher preferred face-to-face interviews for this study even though the interviewees were allowed the opportunity to agree or disagree. The face-to-face offers a chance to establish a connection and resolve any doubts or ambiguities immediately, so improving the accuracy and dependability of the collected data (Cingi et al., 2023). Again, although there are several drawbacks to this approach, including costs and potential researcher bias, the approach also has certain advantages such as Face-to-face contacts provide prompt explanation of uncertainties and in-depth exploration of intriguing issues, guaranteeing the acquisition of extensive and detailed data (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Face-to-face interviews are adaptable and can give the researcher fresh, in-depth information that they would not have expected or foreseen. Follow-up questions can be asked right afterwards to clarify any unclear inquiries. A further benefit is that the researcher can get to know the interviewee personally for future use. Once more, nonverbal communication can be seen and acknowledged during a

face-to-face interview (O'Leary, 2014). The goal was to learn in-depth details regarding the experiences of female pastors' husbands with regard to how they navigate their gender roles and communication dynamics in marital relationships. In-depth interviews' key benefit is that they offer much more detailed information in a more casual and comfortable setting. The main drawbacks are that they are subject to bias and that it takes a lot of time to gather, transcribe, and analyse data (Showkat & Parveen, 2017). English was the language used to conduct the semi-structured interview.

3.6 Data Collection Procedure

The supervisor helped to review the interview guide and modified it, based on pilot testing or expert feedback as a form of pre-interview preparation. The researcher had already familiarised himself with the husbands of these female pastors and their specific contexts to enhance understanding during interviews. The researcher scheduled interviews with the selected participants at a mutually convenient time and place. All interviews took place in the Greater Accra Region. This made it easier to arrange an interview with the respondents. Informed consent forms were prepared and provided to the participants before the interviews within two months, the selected respondents were interviewed one-on-one to collect the data for this study. The semi-structured interview guide was used to conduct the interview. Every interview was recorded using the researcher's Samsung A51 mobile phone, and all ethical guidelines were observed. The main methods or procedures for gathering data for this study's empirical phenomenological approach included face-to-face semi-structured interviews that centred on discussions on gender roles, experiences of husbands of female pastors, and interactions between these husbands and their wives. To foster confidence and openness during the encounter, the

researcher made an effort to establish the required rapport with each participant. Detailed notes were taken during the interviews, including non-verbal cues and participant reactions.

3.7 Data analysis

Identification of shared meanings and essences, horizontalization of data, and textual and structural analysis are characteristics of phenomenological data analysis (Moustakas, 1994). Data analysis refers to the description of what participants express, whereas structural analysis refers to the interpretation of what participants express (Sargeant, 2012). Data analysis is the methodical and iterative process of arranging, coding, and categorizing the gathered data to uncover concepts, features, and relationships, according to (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). Producing theoretical justifications or grounded hypotheses, entails contrasting, comparing, and synthesizing the facts. Data analysis, according to Creswell (2014), is the act of methodically classifying, labelling, and analysing the gathered data to find patterns, themes, and linkages. Hence, data analysis entails transformation of unprocessed data into insightful understandings that respond to the study questions or objectives. Data analysis, according to Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014), is the act of thoroughly and methodically going over the acquired data to find patterns, look into variations, pinpoint themes, and come up with insightful interpretations. To get insights and provide answers to research questions, requires organizing, condensing, synthesizing, and analysing the data. Another definition by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014) says that data analysis is the act of thoroughly and methodically going over the acquired data to find patterns, look into variations, pinpoint themes, and come up with insightful interpretations. From Patton's (2015) perspective, data analysis is the act of thoroughly and methodically going over the gathered data to

find trends, connections, and insights. To answer the research questions or objectives, it entails arranging, condensing, classifying, and analysing the data. To get insights and provide answers to research questions, requires organizing, condensing, synthesizing, and analysing the data. Examining and interpreting the gathered data to create a comprehensive and insightful description of the phenomenon being studied is the process of data analysis. To find patterns, themes, and theoretical insights, the data must be coded, compared, and contrasted (Charmaz 2014). To glean relevant insights from the data, researchers in qualitative data analysis employ a variety of techniques, including coding, thematic analysis, and discourse analysis (Saldaa, 2016). Hence, to analyse the data collected, the researcher used thematic analysis.

3.8 Thematic Analysis

A way of analysing qualitative data is through thematic analysis. Thematic analysis. According to Braun & Clarke (2006), thematic analysis is a technique for finding, analysing, and summarizing patterns (themes) within qualitative data. It entails a methodical search for significant patterns throughout the data, the organization of the data into themes, and the provision of a rich and detailed narrative of the phenomenon being studied. However, in this process, the patterns and themes in the data are examined, and the social and cultural environment in which the data were gathered is taken into account. Guest et al., (2012) also agree with the assertion by Braun & Clarke (2006) by stating that thematic analysis is a technique for evaluating qualitative data that entails the discovery, coding, and investigation of patterns or themes in the data. The primary concepts, insights, and viewpoints that come from the data are what it attempts to capture. In the same vein, thematic analysis is a method for looking at and evaluating qualitative data to find patterns,

categories, and themes, (Caulfield, 2023). It entails methodically arranging and examining the data to comprehend the research topic or phenomenon completely. To support the aforementioned claims, Nowell, Norris, White, & Moules, 2017 state that Thematic analysis is a method for studying qualitative data that entails finding, organizing, and interpreting patterns or themes within the data. It also enables researchers to investigate participant meanings, experiences, and perceptions about the study issue. Hence, the researcher carefully analysed the data to find recurring themes, subjects, concepts, and patterns of meaning. There are several ways to go about thematic analysis, however, the most popular method involves these six steps: Familiarisation, Coding, producing themes, examining themes, naming and defining topics, and writing up (Caulfield, 2022). Therefore, the researcher used thematic analysis, following the steps above to analyse the data. The recorded interviews were transcribed and organization of the interview notes. A common method in qualitative data analysis is coding, which comprises assigning labels or tags to data segments to identify patterns or themes (Charmaz, 2014). Themes were inferred from the data acquired during the focus group discussions and the audio recordings of the interviews. Later, the data was coded into several themes. Additionally, an investigation of the perceptions of these husbands' gender roles and life experiences was conducted. The data was reviewed multiple times to identify key themes and patterns related to the experiences of husbands of female pastors and communication in marriage. Interviewees were asked if they had any personal experiences with gender inequality, and these experiences were then analysed to determine the similarities and differences. The preliminary findings and themes were shared with the participants to ensure accuracy and validate their experiences. Member-checking sessions where participants can review and confirm the interpretations of their

responses were conducted. The researcher incorporated participant feedback and made necessary revisions to the analysis if required.

I started by reading the interview transcript and listening to the audio several times. This gave me access to the participants' perspectives and made it possible for me to record in the transcript any important pauses, intonations, or emotional expressions made during the interview. I reviewed the transcript several times and then compiled a one-page summary of the main points of the interview, which I gave to the participants to peruse. For further readings and subsequent data analysis to take the participants' corrections or clarifications into account, I made note of any modifications the participants made to the page of the highlights in the pertinent section of the interview transcript. I then went back to the now-annotated transcript, read it several times, and made my first notes. These typically fell into one of three categories: descriptive comments about the interview's content; linguistic comments about the participant's language; or conceptual comments, which frequently took the form of queries and started to take the analysis to a more abstract level.

Again, major themes and subthemes were identified using thematic analysis. This included knowing the data, coding important answers, organising codes into relevant categories, and ultimately creating themes that reflected the core of the participants' experiences.

The researcher applied thematic analysis suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006) after transcribing the semi-structured interviews. The researcher read the transcripts several times to first become acquainted with the data. By underlining important statements and relevant, meaningful units connected to the study goals, the first codes were produced. Then grouped into more general groups depending on resemblance and significance. Overarching themes and subthemes emerged via a

process of comparing and contrasting patterns to properly represent the actual experiences of the individuals. The theme generation process included the following steps,

Step 1: Familiarisation with the data (reading and re-reading transcripts).

Step 2: Initial coding of significant phrases and ideas.

Step 3: Grouping codes into broader categories.

Step 4: Reviewing and refining categories to form main themes and subthemes.

Step 5: Naming and defining the themes.

In light of the above steps, the following themes were developed, Supportive Spousal dialogue, Non-verbal communication, Intimacy and information sharing, Openness and transparency, Authority dynamics

Playing supportive spousal roles, Husbands' acceptance of wives' pastoral role, adapting to non-traditional gender roles, Community-based challenges, Specific communication challenges, Private Conflict resolution, Employing effective communication strategies, Emotional connection and intimacy, Balancing responsibilities and intimacy, Equal opportunities for self-expression, Support systems, and Guidance and counselling.

3.9 Ethical considerations

The study considered all potential ethical concerns. Participants' values and privacy were treated with respect. Before performing the study, the church's superior elders provided their informed consent. This is consistent with Bowling's (2002) assertion that every researcher must guarantee that those being interviewed are fully aware of the study's objectives, confidentiality is upheld and guaranteed, and the material gathered is treated anonymously. According to Akaranga and Ongoing'a (2013), ethics is also described as a social norm, ethos, or way of life. Ethics

transcends the boundaries of the law (Akaranga & Makau, 2016). This is because just because something is legal does not necessarily mean it is good or moral. Fouks and Mantzorou (2011) assert that ethical concern is essential to research. This is so that respondents' reputations are protected and published material is accurate and does not harm anyone's reputation. This increases credibility and verifies research (Iphofen, 2011). This is so that ethics may foster relationships rather than only serve as a formality (Koulouriotis, 2011). The researcher made sure that moral standards were followed. There was also evidence of the idea of goodness. The researcher assured the participant's comprehension of the study's relevance and goal. Since the researcher never revealed any sensitive information about a participant, the anonymity of the responses was also taken into account. Participants' real names were kept secret. Additionally, confidentiality was upheld. This is due to careful management of the personal information collected from responders. Data was protected well. Additionally, because all respondents' consent was requested voluntarily and without the use of compulsion or influence, it was offered to all respondents the option to participate in the study. The permission also informs participants that they are free to stop participating in the study at any moment if they find it uncomfortable. Every participant received the same treatment.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the findings of the study. The analysis draws on the objectives of the study, the relevant literature, and the theoretical frameworks that underpin the study. Qualitative data was analysed using thematic analysis. The presentation in this chapter covers the lived experiences of husbands of female pastors, the issues they have in terms of communicating with their wives, how they navigate through their roles as husbands of these pastors, and the societal perceptions of being husbands of female pastors.

The presentation consists of a description and interpretation of the data about the research objectives and questions. This allows for an easy and better understanding of the data. Data collected from the field are presented and analysed in this section. To ensure ethical conduct and protect the participants' identity, the researcher used specific pseudonyms to represent the participants. To ensure the participant's anonymity, the researcher used pseudonyms for all the participants of the study. Below are the research questions that guided the data collection.

1. What are the communication dynamics in marriages where the wives serve as pastors?
2. How do husbands of female pastors negotiate their gender roles and communication strategies within their marriages and religious communities?
3. What mechanisms do husbands of female pastors employ to sustain marital satisfaction?

4.1 RQ1. What are the communication dynamics in marriages where the wives serve as pastors?

This research question unravels communication dynamics in marriages where the wives serve as pastors. Communication dynamics, according to Ajaegbu, Ajike, and Lekan (2015), is the process of creating, exchanging, and interpreting messages within interpersonal relationships. Tedla (2022) posits that Dynamic communication is all about achieving the desired goal through your message in a way that goes beyond simply making your point. A communication process can become dynamic by including both context awareness and self-awareness. Although self-awareness aids in a better understanding of your feelings, situational awareness will provide you with the courage to modify your communication style to actively engage the audience (Tedla, 2022). Evans (2022) outlines six types of communication in marriage. These are partnership, conflict resolution, connection, personal revelation, basic information, and intimate communication. According to Evans (2022), these various kinds of communication are explained as follows: Intimate communication is when couples express their love and affection to one another exclusively. Partnership is when couples share needs. Conflict resolution is when couples are always able to settle their differences amicably. Connection is the physical and emotional activities such as eye contact, physical affection, and words said to each other that continually establish a connection between couples. Personal revelation is when couples can share their feelings with one another. Evans (2022) posits that in a marriage, communication is the principal factor. Communication is the most important thing a husband and wife can do together because it cuts through all barriers. With sincere and open conversation, every marital stressor (i.e. kids, finances, sex, etc.) can be addressed (Evans, 2022).

Ajaegbu, et al (2015) are of the view that since communication is the creation, exchange, and interpretation of meaningful messages; it can decide whether marriages succeed or fail. Sharing information through communication is a dynamic activity rather than a static one. Hence, communication is expressed verbally or nonverbally. Non-verbal communication includes things like gestures, body language, and facial expressions. Verbal communication deals with speech (Ajaegbu et al., 2015).

4.1.1 Supportive Spousal Dialogue

This theme includes the ways that pastoral spouses work together, make choices together, and assist one another in fulfilling their vocations, both inside the marriage and outside of it. According to Travis (2020), in spousal dialogue, neither person reigns supreme nor always gets what they want. Instead, both people listen to each other and work together to reach a shared goal. People treat each other with care and share power in a marriage. Ajaegbu et al. (2015) define supportive spousal dialogue as the sending, receiving, and understanding of messages that help people work together, cooperate, and make decisions together in relationships. Gottman and Silver (2015) suggest that the stability of a marriage is particularly jeopardised when a man faces difficulties in embracing the influence of his wife. Hence, mutual support and shared obligations are key components of relationship communication in pastoral marriages. The theories of Social Role and Communication Accommodation offer useful insights into the mechanics of communication within these partnerships. Social Role Theory suggests that societal norms have an impact on individual roles and behaviours (Eagly & Wood, 2012). Within the realm of pastoral marriages, conventional gender roles are frequently questioned, as spouses assume leadership responsibilities within the church. This requires a reassessment of the roles inside the

marriage, leading husbands to embrace more supportive and collaborative behaviours. Various responses from the participants of this study demonstrate the role of supportive spousal dialogue within the marriages of husbands whose wives are pastors. These husbands ensure that they do not impose their emotions on their spouses but rather offer a helping hand to their wives' ministries by way of offering suggestions, support, and encouragement through partnership communication. In both personal and ministry problems, their sense of oneness and bond are strengthened by this cooperative attitude. The participants in this study provided diverse comments that highlight the significance of supportive spousal dialogue in marriages when the wives are pastors. For instance, participant one (1) said,

"There are times she asks for my feedback on statements she makes on the pulpit... I do not think she would have done better in her ministry if I were not in the picture or without my involvement."(P1)

The above quote emphasises the practice of active listening and providing feedback, which are key elements of supportive spousal dialogue. In this type of communication, both partners actively participate in meaningful dialogues regarding significant aspects of their lives.

Similarly, participant one (1) also stated that,

"Like I said, most of the time, if I have something in mind, I quickly tell her. I do not assume that she is a pastor, so she knows everything. If you assume that way, she will end up doing the wrong thing, and when it goes into the congregation and it backfires, it will come back to hit me. So, I should discuss issues with her rather than

leave them hanging. There are times she wants to react to a situation; I stop her and ask her to wait and see how the situation will unfold". (P1)

The text illustrates the husband's proactive involvement in conversations with his wife, providing guidance and assisting her in navigating potential difficulties.

From the above quotes, there is a clear indication that husbands in marriages where the wives are pastors ensure that no matter the situation, they do not impose their whims and caprices on their wives but rather, communicate with their wives as equal partners in the marriage. There is also an indication that these husbands ensure their communication goes a long way to support the growth of their wives' pastoral ministry.

The communication efforts of these husbands are in line with the ideas of Social Role Theory and Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT), as they navigate their gender roles and communication dynamics to create a supportive and collaborative marital environment.

4.1.2 Non-verbal Communication

This theme explored how husbands and wives in marriages where the wife is a pastor can enhance their spoken communication by utilising nonverbal cues, including gestures, body language, and facial expressions, to convey messages and emotions within their marriages. Nonverbal communication, often known as manual language, refers to the transmission and reception of messages without the use of spoken or written words (Nordquist, 2024). This may entail employing particular facial expressions or hand gestures to convey a specific idea, or it may involve the utilisation of eye contact, body language, physical closeness, and other nonverbal signals to effectively communicate a message (Kendra, 2023). Nonverbal

communication is a fundamental aspect in establishing and sustaining robust, emotionally close relationships (Sussman, 2024). The responses of these husbands emphasise how they use nonverbal cues, including body language, gestures, and facial expressions, to comprehend their wives' emotions and worries. Their capacity to communicate clearly and sympathetically with one another is improved by their knowledge of nonverbal cues. For instance, participant two (2) said,

“The last time we were in the midst of people, I guess I was talking too much, and she had to blink an eye at me as a sign to say I should keep mute, what I have said is enough. So, these are some of the things, and it helps a lot”. (P2)

The above quote emphasises the use of nonverbal clues in influencing behaviour in social contexts, facilitating mutual comprehension without the necessity of vocal communication.

Participant three (3) also noted

For example, when I look at how depressed she is, I just say let us go and buy some food. Should I pay? I pay and she makes demands like, look, I want Aloe Vera, I want baby oil. I say what baby oil? When you communicate by buying these things, you see that, she is fulfilled. She thinks this person; no matter how unconcerned he is, is still concerned and bridges the communication gap. (P3)

The excerpt above demonstrates how being attentive and satisfying particular requests can help overcome communication barriers and demonstrate care, thereby enhancing the marriage relationship.

Similarly, participant five (5) shared that,

“I have seen that. If I do not eat her food, she won’t be happy. So, anytime I see a challenge, and she brings her food, I try to eat. So that it will bring her mind to resolutions that I think when I put them on the table, she will understand. I think that has been one of the tools. Because she will tell you, I cannot cook for you, and you eat”. (P5)

The above comment illustrates how basic activities, such as consuming food that a spouse has provided, can serve as potent nonverbal indications of gratitude and encouragement, ultimately aiding in resolving disagreements and promoting mutual comprehension.

From the above quotes, it can be established that husbands of female pastors use non-verbal cues such as eating their wives’ food even when there are disagreements between them and buying them gifts to reduce tensions in the marriage. They also understand and respond positively to non-verbal cues that their wives use to sustain their marriages. The significance of Social Role Theory and Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) in this setting is noteworthy. Social Role Theory suggests that societal norms have an impact on individual roles and behaviours (Eagly & Wood, 2012). Nonverbal communication plays a crucial role in navigating the intricacies of non-traditional gender roles among pastoral marriages. The husbands' utilisation of

nonverbal signals to bolster their wives corresponds to the revised responsibilities within their marital relationships.

The concept of Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) explores how individuals adapt their communication patterns to effectively navigate social interactions (Giles, Coupland, & Coupland, 1991). The husbands' nonverbal behaviours, such as engaging in cooking, consuming pre-made meals, and purchasing gifts, serve as adaptive tactics to cater to their wives' emotional requirements. These behaviours demonstrate how nonverbal communication can improve empathy and comprehension, hence fostering marital contentment.

4.1.3 Intimacy and Information Sharing

The theme of Intimacy and Information Sharing explores the dynamics of marital relationships where the wife holds the role of a pastor. It focuses on how these couples retain a strong emotional bond and efficiently handle their shared duties. It includes different types of closeness, such as physical, emotional, intellectual, experiential, and spiritual closeness, as well as the practical exchange of information necessary for properly managing the family. Loggins (2022) defines intimacy in a relationship as the state of feeling emotionally and physically attached. This connection can be established through various channels, including physical, emotional, intellectual, experiential, and spiritual aspects. Maintaining intimacy in marriage is crucial for the long-term happiness and endurance of the relationship, even in the face of the various obligations that both husbands and wives have. The respondents' comments demonstrate how they prioritise different types of intimacy inside their relationships as husbands. Notwithstanding the busy schedules of these husbands, these acts of connection fortify their marriage and

maintain their tie robust. Furthermore, according to Carmichael (2024), exchanging knowledge can be a way to strengthen emotional closeness in a marriage by ensuring that both partners are well-informed and synchronised in their daily activities. On this note, to express emotional intimacy participants three (3) said,

Emotional needs cannot be exempted. They are very important. Moreover, when there is anger and emotions, sex, does not come in. However, one of the things that communication does is when all these conflicts happen and the two of you start talking about issues, you see, there are a few stories you tell each other, a few reminders you bring home. It brings the flow. It rekindles the love. For example, if my wife is depressed, I say, let us go out and buy some food. I pay and we eat together". (P3)

This comment exemplifies how engaging in mutual activities and fostering transparent communication can reignite emotional bonds and reduce psychological tension.

To express physical intimacy participant five (5) said:

"Occasionally, while engaging in a 14-day period of fasting, we nevertheless fulfil our sexual desires whenever one of us requests it. Regarding our communication, I do not encounter any problems in that aspect." (P5)

This underscores the significance of even fleeting instances of communication in preserving emotional closeness.

To express supportive intimacy, participant one (1) said

"She is heading a large congregation now and most of the time, she has to discuss some of her decisions with me or consult with me.

There are times she asks for my feedback on statements she makes on the pulpit. I think all of these have brought us together even more than previously. I do not think she would have done better in her ministry if I were not in the picture or without my involvement". (P1)

To express spiritual intimacy, participant two (2) said

"You see, even sometimes, when we are about to pray, she will say, you are the head of the marriage, so you pray. This is not the church, this is home. So, there are certain tasks that she has been giving to me. In addition, when we get to the church, there are certain things, even if I know how to do them by myself; I need to ask her opinion. She is the leader and the pastor heading the church. She always assists me in learning at home, reading my Bible, and always encourages me". (P2)

Based on the above excerpts, it is evident that men whose wives are pastors engage in different types of intimacy and communicate significant information with their partners. These activities greatly contribute to the support and longevity of their marriages and the ministries of the spouses. The Social Role Theory (Eagly, 1987) and Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) (Giles, Coupland, & Coupland, 1991) offer a conceptual framework for understanding the complexities of intimacy and information exchange within these partnerships. Social Role Theory explains how societal standards influences individuals' behaviour in interpersonal relationships. In this specific context, husbands go through a process of adapting to new responsibilities that involve assisting their spouses in their pastoral tasks, while still maintaining a sense of intimacy and emotional bond. Their adaptation is evident by their proactive pursuit of various

forms of intimacy, which reinforces their support for their partners' obligations and defies traditional gender stereotypes.

Participant three's emphasis on re-establishing emotional connections after conflicts aligns with Social Role Theory, demonstrating how these husbands handle emotional intimacy to uphold their roles as providers of support. The commitment of participant five (5) to maintaining physical intimacy despite their hectic schedules demonstrates the practical adaptation of roles to sustain the marital bond.

The Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) offers a deeper understanding of how individuals adapt their communication patterns to manage social interactions inside married relationships. The active participation in intellectual and spiritual discussions, as highlighted by Participant one (1) and Participant two (2), illustrates how husbands provide support to their spouses' pastoral duties by actively engaging in important conversations and spiritual pursuits. This accommodation promotes the establishment of a pleasant and supportive atmosphere for married couples, which is essential for maintaining intimacy.

4.1.4 Openness and Transparency

Kielek-Rataj et al., (2020) refer to openness in a relationship as the capacity to openly express one's emotions, thoughts, desires, and anxieties. Being open and honest with each other is key to transparency in a relationship. It means telling your partner things about yourself by being open and honest about your thoughts and feelings (O'Connor, n.d.). The necessity of candid and open communication between spouses, regardless of their roles, is emphasised by the theme of openness and transparency in communication within marriages where the wife is a pastor.

Husbands and wives can openly communicate their thoughts, worries, and feelings because of open communication, which promotes understanding and helps to avoid misunderstandings. Whatever their positions, partners must have an honest conversation to effectively communicate. The husbands stressed the value of having honest conversations with their spouses about any topic, including raising concerns and, if needed, asking for clarification. Clear communication reduces miscommunication and promotes comprehension. Participant one (1) said:

“Like I said, most of the time, if I have something in mind, I quickly tell her. I do not assume that she is a pastor, so she knows everything. If you assume that way, she will end up doing the wrong thing and when it goes into the congregation and it backfires, it will come back to hit me. Therefore, I should discuss issues with her rather than leave them hanging. There are times she wants to react to a situation; I stop her and ask her to wait and see how the situation will unfold. This has helped us a lot, especially in our communication” (P1).

This statement demonstrates the effectiveness of proactive communication and honestly addressing potential difficulties in preventing misconceptions and promoting improved mutual understanding. PThis reaction emphasises the significance of preserving transparent channels of communication, especially in the midst of conflicts, to ensure that both individuals may articulate their emotions and receive acknowledgement. Participant number five (5) supported this statement by affirming:

"The truth is that thankfully, my wife does not allow her role as a pastor to influence our communication.

She even tries to tell me the plans she has for the church and sometimes asks for my opinion." (P5)

From the extracts above, it is evident that both husbands and wives in marriages where wives serve as pastors ensure that there is openness and transparency in their marriages.

Again, marriages where the wives serve as pastor, provides an opportunity to examine the effects of Social Role Theory and Communication Accommodation Theory on the level of openness and transparency in communication. Social Role Theory emphasises the impact of cultural norms on individuals' roles in relationships. In such relationships, husbands may be required to adjust to non-traditional roles, providing assistance to their wives' pastoral responsibilities while ensuring open and honest communication. The proactive approach of participant one serves as a prime example of adaptation, promoting comprehension and averting misinterpretations. The Communication Accommodation Theory highlights how individuals adapt their communication patterns to fit their partners, fostering mutual comprehension and harmonious relationships. The focus placed by participant three on engaging in open discourse during conflicts, together with the reciprocal effort made by participant five to adapt their communication styles, aligns with this theory. This serves to strengthen transparency and provide support for each other's positions.

4.1.5 Authority Dynamics on Communication

According to Primavera (2020), gender roles can influence communication in marriages. Handling communication dynamics that may change because of the wife's pastoral authority is part of navigating authority dynamics in relationships when the wife is a pastor. Husbands of these female pastors frequently found themselves in predicaments where they had to tread lightly in their roles within

the marriage, particularly considering their wives' positions of authority within the church. On this, participant 3 said,

"When she's angry, you can see that she's angry... Sometimes she instantly understands. Sometimes, she must go and sleep over it... This brought some tension, but I made her sleep over it, and we talked about it." (P3)

Again, some of these husbands explain how their wife's domineering demeanour, especially during episodes of rage, causes issues in the home. However, by giving her some space and having a calm conversation about it later, he shows how to handle these authority relations and prevent confrontations that can result from disparities in authority.

"Whenever I try to give harmless answers to these questions, it becomes a problem... Whenever she does it nicely, she does something else which wipes away the entire apology." (P4)

The quotation above emphasises a husband's difficulty adjusting to his wife's domineering demeanour and implies that his attempts to politely voice his ideas may occasionally encounter obstacles or misinterpretations. Such interactions necessitate careful negotiation of power responsibilities because they might cause difficulties or conflicts within the marriage. This theme explores how the roles played by each partner affect the way they interact with each other in a marriage where the wife is a pastor. The expectations, obligations, and perceptions associated with the wife's position can significantly influence communication dynamics in couples. Husbands recognize the need to be cautious about their interactions with their wives so as not to negatively affect their roles as pastors or spiritual heads of a

church. Participant 1 stated that this is important, as it is likely to affect his wife negatively as far as their roles as pastors are concerned. On this, participant 1 said:

"If she is going to preach..., I must be careful about what to say and when to say it, so it does not affect her". (P1)

4.2 RQ2 How do husbands of female pastors negotiate their gender roles and communication within their marriages and religious communities?

Selemin (2022) defines gender roles as societal norms that dictate the expected behaviours of individuals based on their gender. Nevertheless, these roles display diversity throughout many nations, races, and cultures, and have seen changes throughout history. Stets and Serpe (2013) define identity as encompassing shared interpretations that categorise individuals into particular societal positions, social collectives, and unique personal attributes. Communication and involvement are crucial in developing and managing one's identities as individuals form their composite identity through socio-cultural influences, personal experiences, and interactions with other social groups. The growing trend towards gender parity in leadership positions within religious institutions, such as the job of a pastor, has resulted in a significant increase in the number of women taking up these leadership responsibilities (Tadros, 2022). According to Eagly's (1987) Social Role Theory, marriages where the wife serves as a pastor are influenced by societal standards, which have a considerable impact on the behaviours and roles of those within these relationships. In such marriages, husbands may need to adjust to non-traditional gender roles by assisting their wives in pastoral duties, while simultaneously managing societal expectations on gender norms. This adaptation demonstrates their reaction to changing societal conventions and their positions within their relationships.

This discussion examines the complexities of gender roles among husbands of female pastors in terms of their connections within marriage and religious organisations. The study examines many facets of communication within these couples, such as the impact of the pastor's role on communication dynamics, specific communication obstacles that may occur, techniques for resolving problems through communication, and established communication procedures or rituals. The discussion highlights the importance of effective communication in promoting understanding, offering support, and developing unity in relationships where the wife is in a pastoral role. From the data gathered, the following themes were generated to answer the research question: playing supportive spousal roles, husbands acceptance of their wives' pastoral role, adapting to non-traditional gender roles, spiritual growth and support, challenges related to husband's roles towards their families, the influence of pastor's role on communication, specific communication challenges, and conflict resolution through communication,

4.2.1 Playing Supportive Spousal Roles

Husbands universally concurred that they fulfilled various supportive roles in their spouses' path towards becoming pastors, such as offering financial assistance, accompanying them to church events and seminary, and aiding them with domestic responsibilities. This supports the claim made by Wolf and Fresé (2018) that receiving support from one's spouse is essential for achieving success in various pursuits, such as commercial and professional goals. Husbands enhanced their marital link by actively participating in these activities, providing both moral support and shared experiences.

According to the social role theory, persons' behaviours and obligations are shaped by the expectations linked to their social positions. Within this particular

setting, husbands modified their conventional responsibilities to facilitate and encourage their spouses' aspirations in pastoral work, showcasing adaptability and dedication. The concept of adaptability is further elucidated by the communication accommodation theory, which posits that individuals modify their communication styles and behaviours to promote more efficient interactions and foster stronger relationships. Husbands who took on supportive roles effectively adjusted to their wives' requirements, creating a collaborative and nurturing atmosphere. Participant one (1) said,

I helped her to prepare for her interview as pastors must be interviewed before they are admitted into the seminary to be trained... I also supported her in prayers and even escorted her to lectures.

This demonstrates a proactive attitude in providing both emotional and practical support, exhibiting an adaptive behaviour that is consistent with the principles of the Communication Accommodation Theory. The husband's behaviour demonstrates a deliberate attempt to synchronise his support with his wife's needs, so improving their communication and connection.

Participant 4 added:

There were times I had to escort her in the night to church activities and make sure she went to lectures at the seminary... Even when I did not want to go to church, I had to go because of her.

This exemplifies how husbands adjusted their individual routines and preferences to facilitate their wives' pastoral ambitions, so reinforcing the tenets of

Social Role Theory. Husbands exhibited their readiness to assume supporting roles, therefore shouldering obligations and fostering a favourable climate for their spouses' pastoral vocation.

These narratives demonstrate that certain husbands of female pastors not only supported their wives in answering the call to ministry, but also played a vital role in their accomplishments by adjusting their behaviours and communication methods. The adaptation was crucial in cultivating a nurturing environment, demonstrating the interconnectedness of Social Role Theory and Communication Accommodation Theory in comprehending the dynamics of spousal support in pastoral ministry.

4.2.2 Husbands' Acceptance of their wives' pastoral role

When wives take on pastoral tasks, their husbands typically experience an initial phase of unease or doubt, which is then followed by a progressive process of comprehension and approval. The analysis of this dynamic can be approached using Social Role Theory, which provides insights into the process of renegotiating established gender roles within a marriage. Some respondents initially expressed discomfort or scepticism regarding their wives' decision to become pastors. For example, Respondent 4 mentioned feeling uncomfortable with his wife taking up the pastoral position due to perceived inconsistencies in her behaviour. However, despite these reservations, the respondents eventually moved towards understanding and acceptance as they witnessed their wives' dedication and passion for ministry. This aligns with a study by Van Dyke Platt and Moss (2009), which posits that, although husbands of female pastors exemplified some struggles, they also took pride in their wives' achievements and positions in the church. Participant Five (5) exemplified this adaptive behaviour by saying:

“I saw the calling on her, and so I asked her to learn under a senior pastor... So, I was happy and not scared”. (P5)

Throughout their responses, the husbands emphasised the importance of supporting their spouses' God-given talents and callings. They recognised the value of mutual support and partnership in navigating the challenges and joys of pastoral ministry. This emphasis underscores a fundamental aspect of understanding and acceptance, recognising and affirming the unique gifts and contributions of each spouse, and actively working together to fulfil their shared mission in service to God. Participant 5 added:

“More so, I intend to make sure her God-given talent is used ultimately”. (P5).

During the pastoral ministry journeys of their wives, the respondents' perceptions changed over time. Some respondents observed improvements in their wives' behaviours, spiritual development, and dedication to ministry. These changes led to a greater acceptance of their wives' roles as pastors. This evolution indicated a deeper understanding of the positive impact of ministry on their wives' lives and the importance of supporting them in their calling. Participant five (5) shared:

It is good to work in God's vineyard, and God has given us different talents, so I continue to seek more wisdom to help her in her ministry, so that it does not look like I am not in support of her role (P5).

The findings above indicate that some husbands of female pastors responded positively to their wives' call to ministry, and this shows that most husbands are not perturbed to find their wives taking up roles that have men dominating. This growth

demonstrated a more profound comprehension of the beneficial influence of ministry on their wives' lives and the significance of providing them with support in their vocation.

4.2.3 Adapting to non-traditional gender roles

Husbands willingly assume and undertake a range of responsibilities that have traditionally been linked to the feminine gender role, including tasks related to managing the household and offering emotional assistance. This adaptability is consistent with Social Role Theory, which posits that gender roles are malleable and may be altered according to the requirements and conditions of the family.

Participant One (1) emphasised this change:

"I can do a lot of things, so I do not wait for her to return before food is prepared" (P1)

Participant Four (4) also described the way his responsibilities have changed over time.

"Traditional gender roles have not changed that much. There have been some changes after her being ordained as a pastor. There were things that she used to do for me, but currently, I end up doing them myself. For instance, washing my clothes and cooking for myself are things I currently do by myself. Even though there are times she asks someone to come and do the laundry. But for my underwear, I wash them myself" (P4)

These instances demonstrate how husbands have adjusted their roles, assuming responsibilities that may typically be associated with femininity, therefore negotiating and redefining gender roles within their marriages.

Notwithstanding these adjustments, husbands nevertheless encounter difficulties in understanding and adhering to cultural conventions and conventional gender roles, particularly in the context of comprehending religious texts. This tension can lead to conflicts on the execution of roles within the marital relationship. Participant Two (2) articulated the following challenge:

"Due to her role as a pastor and her extensive knowledge of scriptures, any action I take must be under the teachings of the scripture." (P2)

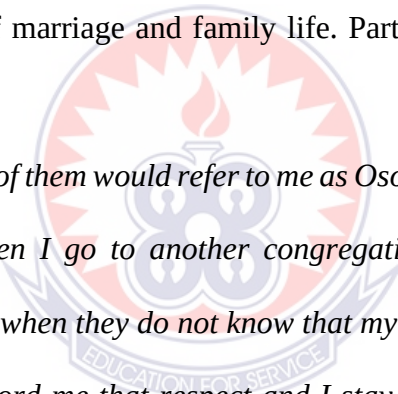
This extract highlights the negotiating process that husbands go through as they strive to strike a balance between showing respect for their wives' pastoral authority and adhering to their perception of traditional gender norms.

In addition, due to their spouses' pastoral leadership, husbands who were interviewed found it challenging to navigate cultural norms and traditional gender roles. There were disagreements on how to interpret religious scriptures and what role a husband should play in a marriage according to the scriptures. Participant two (2) shared their thoughts on this matter. The increasing acceptance of non-traditional gender roles among husbands of female pastors demonstrates a noteworthy adjustment in both conduct and interaction within the marital relationship. By applying the frameworks of Social Role Theory, we observe how these couples engage in the process of negotiating and redefining their respective roles, thereby cultivating a partnership that is characterised by fairness and support. This procedure not only facilitates the wives' pastoral duties but also enhances the marital connection by fostering shared obligations and mutual respect.

4.2.4 Community-based challenges in husbands' roles

About the above theme, some participants recounted instances where they or their wives faced teasing and derogatory remarks from others within their church or community. This could include being called derogatory names, which may carry negative connotations or stereotypes about them and the role of women in pastoral leadership.

In addition, some respondents highlighted the pressure they felt to conform to traditional gender roles within the church and the wider community. This pressure manifested in expectations for husbands to take on specific supportive roles or behaviours, or in societal norms that dictate how men and women should behave within the context of marriage and family life. Participants one (1), three (3), and five (5) said:



“So, most of them would refer to me as Osofo Maame. One thing is that when I go to another congregation without my wife. Especially when they do not know that my wife is a pastor, they do not accord me that respect and I stay at the back quietly”.

(P1)

“I do not think I should just come to church, come, and sit down”. (P3)

The extracts above indicate that most husbands are likely to face some societal challenges as they decide to support their wives in their pastoral roles. These challenges could be calling them by names that denigrate them or suggest some form of gender stereotyping. Regardless of all these, these husbands continue to stand by their spouses.

4.2.6 Specific Communication Challenges

According to McCormick (2022), communication challenges can happen at any time in a marriage and lead to many problems that couples do not want. Some of these challenges could be listening to respond, easy distractions, silent treatment, and lack of understanding (McCormick, 2022). Effective communication is crucial in marriage, but it can be more challenging when one partner is a pastor. Participants recounted their encounters with obstacles in communication within their marital relationships.

Participant 4 said,

"She talks a lot and asks certain strange questions...whenever she does it nicely, she does something else which wipes away the entire apology." (P4)

The above quote captures the dissatisfaction that can develop when communication styles do not mesh well, which can result in miscommunications and marital disputes. According to academic research, there are several reasons why couples experience communication difficulties in their relationships, such as divergent communication styles, outside pressures, and role expectations. Canary and Dainton (2003) state that discrepancies in communication preferences and practices might cause communication problems for couples. Participant four (4) said:

"She may have her own, and I have mine. I often keep quiet over certain things; otherwise, I may end up having exchanges with her, which I am not comfortable with, and so I speak little or walk out sometimes." (P4)

Communication problems can sometimes be made worse by outside factors like job or social expectations. These results are consistent with the respondents'

experiences, which show that communication problems in the context of marriage can be caused by both internal and external influences.

It is evident from the above extracts that certain attitudes of female pastors toward their husbands pose communication challenges to their marriages. However, most husbands negotiate these challenges diplomatically to ensure that they do not escalate or pose threats to the sustainability of their marriages.

4.2.7 Private Conflict Resolution

The way partners communicate thoughts, ideas, and feelings is a crucial aspect of their interactions with each other. Private communication between spouses has the power to improve the type of connection they will have (Schrader, 2023). However, marriages and other relationships will inevitably encounter difficulty. Participants discussed how they handle disagreements and work through them through private dialogue. With the statement, "Most of the time, when there are disagreements and we enter our bedroom, the moment we sleep together, we make up," Participant 1 highlights the significance of making amends after arguments. This quotation emphasises the importance of physical closeness to settling disputes and reinforcing emotional ties in a marriage. Gottman (1994) asserts that happy and long-lasting marriages are more common among couples who use constructive conflict resolution strategies including compromise and active listening. These findings are consistent with the respondents' experiences, which show that communication is an essential tool for settling disputes and preserving peace in married relationships. The statement by participant two (2) and four (4) support the above.

"Most of the time, I try to reason with her in a mature way to avoid conflicts. If I don't, it can lead to verbal exchanges, and we may not speak to each other for some time." (P2)

"Communication is key in resolving conflicts. We sit down, discuss the issues, and find solutions together. It helps us understand each other better." (P4)

The above findings indicate that some husbands privately resolve conflicts between them and their wives.

4.3 RQ3 What mechanisms do husbands of female pastors employ to sustain marital satisfaction?

The themes that emerged from the interview responses about the mechanisms husbands of female pastors employ to sustain marital satisfaction are dynamics of communication, emotional connection, balancing responsibilities, equal opportunities for self-expression, support networks, and guidance and counselling. Social Role Theory suggests that cultural norms have an impact on behaviours and the roles individuals assume in relationships. When the wife is a pastor in a marriage, husbands frequently need to adapt their communication skills to meet their wives' leadership positions. This adaption demonstrates their endorsement and recognition of their wives' pastoral responsibilities. These husbands provide insightful information about the niceties of marriage in the context of their wife's roles as pastors and marriage. To give a thorough grasp of the coping mechanisms, this analysis attempts to go deeper into these issues. These are backed up by pertinent quotes from these husbands from the interview.

4.3.1 Employing Effective Communication Strategies

Effective communication is essential in any relationship, but it becomes even more important when married to a female pastor, as it is in this special setting. Proactive communication is crucial, as Participant one (1) emphasises, saying

"It is better to discuss issues with her than to leave them hanging." If you assume that way, she will end up doing the wrong thing". (P1)

This underscores how crucial it is to have honest communication to avoid miscommunication and guarantee agreement on decisions made in the marriage to sustain marital satisfaction. Participant three (3) goes on to expound on the significance of communication in resolving problems and ensuring marital satisfaction, emphasising that,

"When the two of you begin discussing issues after a conflict arises, it facilitates communication." It rekindles the relationship." (P3)

In this case, communication becomes necessary not just to resolve disagreements but also to foster closeness and emotional reconnection inside the marriage.

Nonetheless, communication difficulties can also arise, as Participant 5's experience demonstrates, when marital problems were discussed in sermons, with unfavourable results. This emphasises the necessity of communication limits and tact, particularly when discussing private issues that could influence a marriage. Effective communication, according to Gottman and Silver (1999), entails empathy, constructive emotional expression, and active listening. In line with the conclusions drawn from the interviews, they place a strong emphasis on the function that

communication plays in establishing emotional connection and handling conflict. On this, Participant 1 said:

There are times when one should be a listener and the other talks otherwise, there could be confusion. So, when issues pop up, I take time to listen to her before I think through my reaction. I also expect her to listen to me when I talk. Hence, listening to each other is one of the tools I use (P1).

4.3.2 Emotional Connection and Intimacy

The duties of pastoral ministry can sometimes interfere with emotional intimacy and connection, which are crucial elements of a happy marriage. Based on Social Role Theory, the changing roles in these couples require deliberate actions to preserve emotional closeness. According to Participant one (1), who highlights the connection between communication and emotional connection, stated that

"the more you keep issues to yourselves... the more you develop hatred towards the other." (P1)

This emphasises how important communication is to preserve emotional intimacy and avert the development of resentment in a partnership.

Participant three (3) goes into further detail on how effective communication meets emotional needs and improves the relationship between spouses, saying,

"When you communicate... you see, the person is fulfilled... it rekindles."

This emphasises how important communication is for maintaining emotional closeness and connection between spouses as well as for resolving disputes and maintaining marital satisfaction.

Participant three (3) also said:

“Emotional needs cannot be left out. They are important. Moreover, when there is anger and emotions, sex does not come in. However, one of the things that communication does is when all these conflicts happen and the two of you start talking about issues, you see, there are a few stories you tell each other, a few reminders you bring home. It brings the flow and establishes a strong emotional reconnection”
(P3).

Participant 5's experience also indicates that it might be difficult to retain intimacy while fulfilling pastoral duties, especially when fasting is involved. However, they manage to meet each other's needs despite these difficulties, demonstrating the tenacity of their marriage. To create a sense of closeness and connection, Reis, and Gable (2000) define emotional intimacy as exchanging ideas, feelings, and experiences with a partner. 4.3.3 Balancing responsibilities and intimacy

For the spouses of female pastors, striking a balance between pastoral duties and family obligations can be extremely difficult. Despite her pastoral responsibilities, Participant one (1) emphasises the value of his wife's availability for emotional needs, saying,

"My wife avails herself to see to my emotional needs... then there could be issues". (P1)

This emphasises how important it is for spouses to put their marriages first even with the responsibilities of ministry.

Participant two (2) talks about the subtle indications that are utilised to moderate relationships during public gatherings.

"When conflicts arise, we make sure to communicate openly and honestly. This allows us to address the issues head-on and find mutually acceptable solutions." (P2)

These cues show that spouses are cooperative and have a mutual understanding when it comes to managing their roles.

Participant four (4) talks about how his wife's pastoral role forced changes in home duties, showing flexibility and adaptability in handling the division of labour in marriage.

The relevance of role negotiation and flexibility in juggling work and family obligations is emphasised in scholarly literature. Blair-Loy (2003) asserts that it is essential for marital pleasure that partners frequently negotiate and revise their roles and duties to adjust to changing circumstances. This is consistent with the insights gleaned from the interviews on the necessity of cooperation and flexibility in striking a balance between pastoral obligations and marital needs. On this note, Participant 1 said:

"My wife avails herself to see to my emotional needs... If she says she is a pastor and prevents me from making love to her, then there could be issues. But, sometimes, I try to understand and empathise with her" (P1)

Participant 4 added:

"Growing up in a home where I was older than my sisters made me learn how to do house chores. When we got married initially, I left the house chores for her. Now, I wake up to prepare my breakfast and other foods. What women can do; men can also do as far as domestic work is concerned." (P4)

4.3.4 Equal Opportunities for Self-Expression

Kim and Ko (2010) define self-expression as the act of conveying one's thoughts and emotions through the use of words, decisions, or deeds. Hence, equal opportunities for self-expression in marriage could be explained as the situation where both spouses are allowed to express their opinions without any restrictions. Fostering mutual respect and understanding in a marriage requires providing equal possibilities for self-expression. Participant one (1) highlights the value of mutual respect and listening to one another, saying,

"There are times when one should be a listener and the other talks otherwise, there could be confusion". (P1)

This emphasises how important it is for partners to make room in their married lives for one another's opinions to be heard.

Participant two (2) talks about how both spouses actively engage in different facets of their ministry and marriage, suggesting a common sense of cooperation and partnership.

"We have created a culture of open dialogue where both my wife and I feel comfortable expressing our thoughts and feelings without fear. This ensures that neither of us feel marginalised or silenced in our communication with each other". (P2)

Scholars highlight the significance of reciprocity and mutual respect in married partnerships. Mutual respect, according to Fowers (2001), entails appreciating one another's viewpoints, beliefs, and contributions, all of which are critical to preserving marital contentment. This is consistent with what was learned from the interviews about how important it is for spouses to have equal opportunities for self-expression.

Statements by Participants four (4) and five (5) support this:

“I do not shut her down, but she can talk or let me say, she is a talker. She trivializes many issues, which is not relevant to the topic of discussion. I am careful in answering her most of the time because her interpretation of what I say is always not the case”. (P4).

We do not insult each other. I am a jovial person and I realised that she does not like to be teased. Hence, in the little communication that we do, I make sure we make use of it to increase the bond between us. Especially, when I am around and she is cooking, I try to be with her and strike some one or two conversations (P5).

4.3.5 Support Systems

It is imperative to have sufficient support networks to effectively handle the distinct difficulties encountered by husbands of female pastors. Participant 1 takes a proactive stance in attending to practical issues in the marriage by mentioning that they rely on farming as financial support outside of the church.

Participant 2 highlights resourcefulness and adaptation in overcoming financial issues as she talks about depending on a variety of abilities and occasionally larger contracts for financial support. Participant 3 demonstrates a commitment to personal and relational improvement within the marriage partnership by emphasising psychological knowledge and mutual investments as support systems. Participant four (4) highlights the value of self-care and social connections in stress management and well-being maintenance by mentioning personal hobbies and sporadic conversations with friends for support.

“I like to go for a walk when I am stressed” (P4)

Participant 5 highlights the need for increased institutional support for pastoral families considering the church's budgetary restrictions, which have resulted in little external support. By offering emotional, practical, and informational support, social support mitigates the negative effects of stressors on mental health, according to Cohen and Wills (1985). The supply of useful assistance by friends, co-workers, and members of extended family is referred to as social support (Bjørlykhaug et al., 2021). This is consistent with the insights gathered from the interviews on the assistance networks provided in managing the difficulties experienced by the spouses of female pastors. On this, Participant three (3) said:

“We have a lot of support. As I said before, we have many properties. My father left. She too same, so these are more to invest the money in”. (P3).

4.3.6 Guidance and Counselling

According to Saini, Malik, and Lohan (2022), marriage counselling comprises an extensive array of technical interventions to mitigate marital discord. In general, the objectives and focus of marriage counselling are the resolution of the spouses' most pressing concerns, the provision of emotional support, and the improvement of their self-esteem and outlook on life (Saini et al., 2022). Navigating the complexity of marriage relationships can be made easier by seeking advice and counselling, especially in the setting of pastoral care. Participant one (1) highlights a preference for internal conflict resolution by mentioning a reluctance to seek outside assistance for marital troubles.

Participant two (2) takes a proactive stance in resolving relational issues within the marriage by emphasising self-counselling and relying on spiritual direction.

“At times, I pray to God and anticipate his intervention”. (P2)

Participant 3 emphasises a commitment to ongoing education and self-improvement within the marriage connection by mentioning attending psychology seminars and making investments in personal and relational growth. Participant 4 shows suspicion about going to counselling, expressing a preference for spiritual guidance and self-reliance when dealing with marital problems. Participant 5 talks about going to counselling to deal with relationship difficulties. He emphasises that he is willing to seek outside assistance, when necessary, even though he has some hesitations. On this, Participants 3 and 5 said:

“For counselling, the two of us have been studying psychology for some time. The issues of some people are not spiritual but the inability to reason well so, we go for Psychology Seminars, and we have certificates” (P3).

“There was once we had to go for counselling from one of our senior pastors due to some slight arrogance that she was exhibiting at the time” (P5).

4.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter explored the study using Social Role Theory and Communication Adaptation Theory as frameworks. The facts gathered regarding the three study inquiries were comprehensively delineated, elucidated, and scrutinised.

The first research question (RQ1) examined communication dynamics in marriages where wives serve as pastors. Five (5) primary themes were identified: the impact of gender roles on communication, openness and transparency, exchange of essential information, connection and intimacy, non-verbal communication, and

partnership communication. These themes highlight the influence of social roles on communication patterns in married relationships, demonstrating the principles of Social Role Theory.

Research question two (RQ2) identified seven themes: Play Supportive spousal roles, Husbands' Acceptance of their wives' pastoral role, Adapting to non-traditional gender roles, Community-based challenges in husband's roles, Influence of Pastors' role on communication, Specific Communication Challenges, and Conflict Resolution through Communication. These themes demonstrate how couples modify their communication tactics to negotiate the changing dynamics of gender roles in the context of pastoral ministry, under the principles of Communication Adaptation Theory.

Research question three (RQ3) identified six themes: Employing Effective Communication Strategies, Emotional Connection and Intimacy, Balancing responsibilities and intimacy, Equal Opportunities for Self-Expression, Support Systems Guidance and Counselling. These themes emphasise the significance of communication in promoting marital contentment and dealing with difficulties that result from the overlap of marital roles and pastoral obligations, in line with the concepts of Social Role Theory.

The study makes it clear how Social Role Theory and Communication Adaptation Theory offer a thorough framework for comprehending the complex dynamics of communication in marriages where spouses serve as pastors. These ideas provide insight into how individuals adjust their communication behaviours and roles to negotiate the intricacies of gender, marital, and pastoral responsibilities, ultimately leading to the creation of effective communication methods and marital contentment.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the study and draws conclusions based on the major findings of the study. Also, the chapter provides recommendations for both academia and industry based on the research findings that emerged from the data gathered. Finally, the limitations encountered by this study are presented as well as recommendations for further research are highlighted in this chapter.

5.1 Summary

Managing gender roles and communication styles in marriages is a complex process that is influenced by several factors, such as individual roles in the relationship, personal values, and societal expectations. These interactions take on a unique dimension, especially in marriages where wives serve as pastors who are heads of churches. A pastoral ministry entails authority and obligations that clash with established gender roles. Gaining an understanding of how husbands navigate these gender norms and interact with their wives as they perform pastoral responsibilities might help one better understand the complexities of marriage in religious groups. This synopsis delves into the real-life experiences of husbands married to female pastors, emphasising how these men have adjusted to changing gender norms and communicate in ways that keep their marriages harmonious and satisfactory. As a result, this study set out to explore the navigation of gender roles and communication dynamics in marital relationships by way of the lived experiences of husbands of female pastors.

With a focus on five husbands, whose wives are female pastors and heads of churches in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. The study examined the gender roles

played by these husbands, and the communication strategies they utilise while fulfilling their gender roles alongside ensuring marital satisfaction.

To realize the objectives of the study, three research questions were asked;

1. What are the communication dynamics in marriages where the wives serve as pastors?
2. How do husbands of female pastors negotiate their gender roles and communication strategies within their marriages and religious communities?
3. What mechanisms do husbands of female pastors employ to sustain marital satisfaction?

In addition to this, an extensive literature review served as the foundation on which the findings of this study were analysed. The reviewed literature was categorised into concepts like communication, types of communication strategies in marriages, phenomenology, the concept of gender, gender roles in marital relationships, women and Christianity, and women empowerment. The reviews assisted the researcher in understanding existing literature in the topic area and identifying research gaps. This information helped the researcher shape the scope of this study to ensure its relevance to the literature. The investigation also found that the social role and the communication adaptation theories helped the researcher explain the collected data. This idea helped the researcher in comprehending the collected data.

The research approach employed for this study was qualitative (Creswell, 2014) and the research design was phenomenology (Delve, 2022; Creswell, 2014). The phenomenology design enabled the researcher the opportunity to explore the lived experiences of these husbands whose wives are pastors. To study the gender roles and the communication strategies they utilise. This also allowed the researcher

to get a deeper understanding of the reasons behind the choice of the communication strategies they utilise. The five husbands of female pastors were purposively sampled (Patton, 2015). The data collection method was an interview. I employed semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions by engaging five (5) participants (5 husbands of female pastors who head pastors of churches in the Greater Accra region of Ghana) to engage their perspectives on the phenomenon being studied. To do a thick rich description of the data, thematic analysis was employed (Braun & Clark, 2006).

From the data gathered from the interviews, twenty-four themes emerged to answer the three research questions. The themes that emerged to respond to the first research question were;

Supportive Spousal Dialogue, Non-verbal Communication, Intimacy and information sharing, Openness and Transparency, the influence of gender roles on communication, and Authority Dynamics on communication. To respond to research question two, the following themes were realized: Play Supportive spousal roles, Husbands' Acceptance of their wives' pastoral role, Adapting to non-traditional gender roles, Community-based challenges in husband's roles, Influence of Pastors' role on communication, Specific Communication Challenges, and Conflict Resolution through Communication. The final themes to respond to research question three were Employing Effective Communication Strategies, Emotional Connection and Intimacy, Balancing responsibilities and intimacy, Equal Opportunities for Self-Expression, Support Systems Guidance and Counselling.

5.2 Main Findings and Conclusions

After a thorough analysis of the data gathered, the main findings from the data brought several conclusions. As has already indicated above, the research sought to answer three research questions.

1. In answering research question one, which was to ascertain the communication dynamics in marriages where the wife serves as a pastor, it was established that communication dynamics in these marriages were primarily, partnership communication, which strengthens the bond between spouses by highlighting the significance of shared responsibility and mutual support in both personal and ministry affairs. Second was putting connection and intimacy first despite pastoral responsibilities strengthens emotional bonding and marital contentment. Thirdly, sincere communication was encouraged by openness and transparency, which helped the couples resolve conflicts and work through obstacles. Ajaegbu, Ajike, Lekan, and Ajaegbu (2015) highlight the significant impact of communication on the outcome of marriages, which is consistent with the overall theme of successful communication dynamics identified in marriages where the wife has the role of a pastor.
2. The second research question sought to understand how husbands of female pastors negotiate their gender roles and communication strategies within their marriages and religious communities. The data revealed that husbands provide support to their wives in their pastoral journeys by contributing financially, attending church activities with them, and sharing household tasks. Wolf and Fresé (2018) assert that this form of help enhances the connection between spouses and promotes harmony, highlighting the need for reciprocal assistance in achieving a successful marriage. Communication dynamics change, with

certain individuals perceiving a greater level of closeness by engaging in shared decision-making, which is consistent with the findings of Holman and Pritchard (2013) who posit that efficient communication is acknowledged as crucial for handling the complexities of married life and pastoral responsibilities. In addition, perceptions of the wife's pastoral role differ among individuals, with some expressing admiration and others struggling with contradictions. However, Van Dyke Platt and Moss (2009) argue that comprehension and acceptance of this role tend to increase as time goes on. When negotiating traditional gender roles, husbands take on various obligations that align with both traditional norms and adjustments for marital harmony, as shown by prior research conducted by Gottman and Silver (2015). Tactics such as reconciliation rituals are used to address communication issues caused by external demands and differing communication styles. These tactics align with the findings of Canary and Dainton (2003), Caughlin, and Vangelisti (2000). Again, findings from this study revealed the complex relationship between gender roles, communication tactics, and marital dynamics in marriages when the wife is a pastor.

3. The final research question sought to establish what coping mechanisms husbands of female pastors employ to sustain marital satisfaction. The study explored the strategies employed by husbands of female pastors to sustain marital contentment within the framework of their distinctive marital and religious circumstances. Effective communication is an essential element that helps resolve conflicts and establish emotional connections, as posited by Gottman and Silver (2015). Nevertheless, opposing viewpoints may question this belief, as several academics contend that an abundance of communication

or an undue focus on verbal articulation could result in misinterpretations or heightened conflict (Peterson & Green, 2018). Managing the demands of both pastoral responsibilities and family obligations can be difficult, emphasising the need for adaptability and compromise, as suggested by Blair-Loy (2005). However, critics contend that engaging in such negotiation could unintentionally strengthen conventional gender stereotypes or sustain imbalanced power dynamics within the marital relationship (Ferguson & Wood, 2020). The study again established that ensuring equitable opportunities for individuals to express themselves is considered crucial for promoting mutual respect and comprehension, based on the findings of Fowers, Lyons, Montel, and Shaked, (2001). Nevertheless, experts such as Smith (2019) argue that an overwhelming focus on individual self-expression may fail to recognise the significance of group decision-making or compromise in married partnerships. Support networks and coping mechanisms are considered crucial for effectively navigating difficulties, aligning with the ideas of social support elucidated by Cohen and Wills (1985). Nevertheless, researchers like Jones et al. (2021) contend that depending on external support networks could hinder the formation of internal coping strategies or self-reliance inside the marital relationship. The data revealed that engaging in advice and counselling is considered advantageous for effectively navigating complex relationships, in line with the extensive body of research on relationship therapy (Hawkins et al., 2022). Nevertheless, according to Miller & Johnson, (2017), therapy methods may not consistently tackle fundamental structural difficulties or power disparities within marital relationships. Overall, the study offers interesting insights on how husbands of female pastors develop mechanisms to

sustain their marriages. However, it is important to recognise that there are different viewpoints and ongoing discussions among scholars about the effectiveness and consequences of other various mechanisms.

5.3 Study Limitations

The first limitation of this study is that the study focused on specific aspects of husbands' experiences in marriages where their wives are pastors. It overlooked other relevant factors that could influence communication and gender roles. Furthermore, a significant limitation of this study was its dependence on self-report data and the possibility of social desirability bias. Participants may have supplied responses that they saw as socially acceptable or according to societal norms, rather than accurately reflecting their views and behaviours. This may result in a lack of depiction of any difficulties or disagreements within the dynamics of the marriage, especially when it comes to the discussion and agreement on traditional gender roles. Moreover, the study focused on a particular cultural or religious environment, and this restricted the significance of its conclusions to more extensive groups.

5.4 Recommendations

1. The study recommends that there should be the promotion of gender-inclusive leadership in religious groups and organisations advocating for both men and women to be involved in decision-making and pastoral responsibilities. This can encourage more equality and inclusiveness inside religious institutions by helping to challenge gender stereotypes.
2. Again, the study recommends allocating resources to conduct additional research that explores the convergence of gender, religion, and marital relationships. This would offer significant knowledge of the difficulties that couples encounter when trying to navigate traditional gender norms within religious settings. Hence, can

lead to the creation of interventions and support programmes that are based on solid evidence.

3. Moreover, support clubs should be established especially for the husbands of female pastors so that they may talk to one another about their experiences, give each other advice, and offer emotional support. This can foster a sense of community and lessen feelings of loneliness.
4. Finally, hinged on the above recommendation, Husbands should be urged to attend counselling sessions aimed at improving communication skills and addressing the difficulties faced by pastor's wives. This can provide them with useful resources and methods to improve their bond.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Research

The researcher recommends that future researchers can follow up on this study by conducting a longitudinal study to explore how gender roles are navigated within marital relationships over time, especially, in the context of shifting societal norms and communication dynamics. This can offer a useful understanding of the factors that influence the dynamics of marriage and the roles of genders across various phases of life.

Also, future research can do a comparative study that can aid in identifying discrepancies in gender norms, marital dynamics, and support systems across different religious and cultural contexts, so enhancing our holistic comprehension of the interplay between gender, religion, and marriage. This would help analyse the process of negotiating traditional gender norms within marriages across various religious denominations, cultural circumstances, and geographic regions.

Finally, other researchers can also create and execute intervention studies to assess the efficacy of specific interventions and support programmes that aim to

promote fair gender roles and positive marital relationships within religious settings. Moreover, the intervention studies can assess the effects of interventions, such as gender sensitization training, marriage enrichment seminars, and pastoral counselling, on the attitudes, behaviours, and outcomes of couples' relationships.



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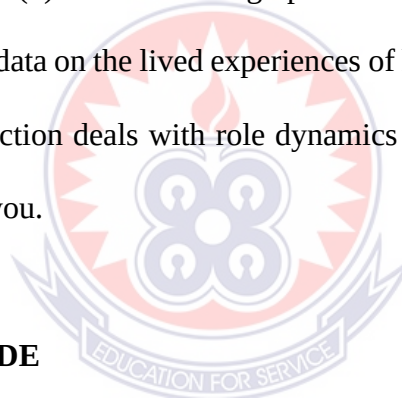
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APPENDIX A

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA STUDIES INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR HUSBANDS OF FEMALE PASTORS

This interview guide has been developed for collecting data for a study that seeks to explore lived experiences of husbands of female pastors in selected churches in the Greater Accra Region. This is in partial fulfilment for a Master of Philosophy in Development Communication, at the University of Education, Winneba. Data collected through this interview guide are for research purposes only. Your anonymity and confidentiality are fully assured. The interview guide has seven (7) sections. Section one (1) deals with biographical data, the second, third, fourth and fifth sections solicit data on the lived experiences of husbands of female pastors. The sixth and seventh section deals with role dynamics and support systems, reflection and growth. Thank you.



INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. Introduction and Participant Information

- a. Begin by introducing yourself and your role in the study.
- b. Explain the purpose of the study and the significance of their participation.
- c. Obtain informed consent and assure participants of their anonymity and confidentiality.
- d. Collect demographic information (age, occupation, marital status, etc.).

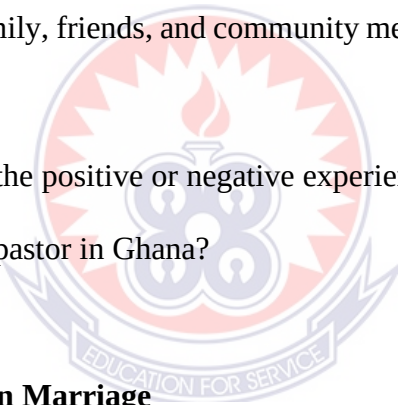
2. Background and Relationship with the Female Pastor

- a. Did your wife's call to ministry come before or after marriage?
- b. How did you react when your wife first expressed her desire to become a pastor?

- c. What role did you play in supporting her decision to pursue pastoral ministry?
- d. Can you briefly describe your relationship with your wife after she became a pastor?
- e. How has your perception of your wife's role as a pastor evolved over time?

3. Social and Cultural Context

- a. In your opinion, how does Ghanaian society view women in pastoral leadership positions?
- b. Have you encountered any societal or cultural challenges related to your wife's role as a pastor? If yes, can you describe them?
- c. How have your family, friends, and community members responded to your wife's pastoral role?
- d. What are some of the positive or negative experiences you have encountered as a husband of a female pastor in Ghana?



4. Communication in Marriage

- a. How would you describe the communication dynamics between you and your wife within your marriage?
- b. How does your wife's role as a pastor influence the way you communicate with each other?
- c. What are some specific communication challenges you have faced as a husband of a female pastor?
- d. How do you and your wife navigate conflicts and differences in opinion through communication?

- e. Have you and your wife developed any specific communication strategies or rituals that help strengthen your relationship and support her pastoral work?

5. Personal Experiences and Emotional Impact

- a. Can you share any personal experiences or situations where effective communication played a crucial role in your relationship as a husband of a female pastor?
- b. How does communication contribute to your emotional connection and intimacy within your marriage given that your wife is a pastor?
- c. Have there been any instances where miscommunication or lack of communication caused tension or difficulties? How did you address those situations?
- d. How do you manage the balance between your wife's pastoral responsibilities and your own needs for communication and emotional support?

6. Role Dynamics and Support Systems

- a. How do you navigate the traditional gender roles and expectations within your marriage, given your wife's pastoral position?
- b. How do you ensure that both you and your wife have equal opportunities for self-expression within your marriage?
- c. What kind of support systems do you have, both within and outside the church, to help you cope with the unique challenges of being a husband of a female pastor?
- d. Has it ever become necessary to seek any form of guidance or counseling to help manage the dynamics of your role as a husband of a female pastor, specifically regarding communication in your marriage?

7. Reflection and Growth

- a. How has being married to a female pastor influenced your own personal growth and understanding of gender roles and communication within marriage?
- b. What are some valuable lessons you have learned through this experience, particularly in terms of effective communication in marriage?
- c. How do you envision the future of your role as a husband of a female pastor in the Ghanaian context, considering the importance of communication within your relationship?
- d. Is there anything else you would like to share regarding your experiences as a husband of a female pastor and the role of communication in your marriage?

