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**RE-DEFINING THE CALLING – NARRATIVES OF WOMEN
EXCLUDED FROM THE ORDAINED MINISTRY IN THE
SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH IN SOUTH AFRICA**

BY

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DECLARATION

I, WILLIE TAFADZWA CHINYAMURINDI, student number 201414950, hereby declare that this dissertation is my own work and it has not been submitted and will not be presented at any other of institution for a similar or any other degree award.

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DEDICATION OF RESEARCH

I dedicate this work to my late Grandmother, Ernette Jangare, for instilling faith and belief in me through her life and teaching.



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I wish to give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, for His steadfast love endures forever.

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ABSTRACT

This work gives focus to understanding the notion of a calling amongst women excluded from the ordained ministry in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa. Historically, there is an observation that women attend religious services in larger numbers than their male counterparts. Despite this, it is notable that in terms of leadership, very few women occupy this preserve. Further, the experiences of those in positions of leadership (especially women) remain an under-researched area. This study used a qualitative approach, with an explanatory research design. Analyses were conducted by NVivo qualitative research software amongst 15 women who had completed theological training within the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa. Narrative analysis was used as a means of analysing the collected data. The data analysis generated four main narratives and resultant sub-narrative(s): 1) calling as influencing decision to enter the pastoral ministry; 2) the pastoral ministry framed as a sustained challenge to women pastors; 3) the existence of a perceived theological disjuncture; and finally 4) passive yet overt resolution tactics. Implications for individual and organisational functioning are made based on these findings.

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CHAPTER 1

OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH

“When women as a group are over-looked by history, they as a group are disqualified from having significant influence on the Christian church. We live with consequences of this disqualification. Because we do not know our history, we may believe that only men really matter. However, as Christians become more and more aware of the legacy of women in the church, our stance on the role of women in the church will change”. (Norheim, 2009, p. 17).

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The research brings to the focus the issue of a calling, a concept argued to be fluid and contextual. Within the Christian faith, the notion of a calling is viewed as always meaning different things as per the epochs of the church from the early church, middle ages, the Reformation period and the modern context. The study sought to investigate the notion of a calling, not just how it relates to meaningfulness and a sense of purpose for the individual but as a construct related to practising as a pastor within the ordained ministry. The backdrop of all this comprises those who are excluded from participating in the ordained ministry due to their gender. Ordination within this study is defined as the act of “formally sanctioning an individual for the purpose of fulfilling the church’s global mission” as prescribed in Matthew 24:14; 28:19-20) (North America Division, 2013, p. 10).

Historically, there is an observation that though women attend religious services in large numbers than their male counterparts, they are absent in positions of leadership. Importantly, the research sought to understand how such excluded individuals re-define this idea of a calling individually away from their exclusion by an institution such as the church. The idea here of re-defining of the calling (albeit the exclusion from the church) is seen to be critical as the calling should be seen as broader than any institution and places focus on the greater individual good and utility purpose.

The case point of the research is the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) church. The SDA church is one of the fastest growing Protestant churches in the world. Since its

inception in 1863, the church has witnessed remarkable growth. Despite the growth in membership, the SDA church appears to be facing some challenges, identified in the literature as possibly having a bearing on the theological foundations of the church. Amongst the issues and challenges affecting the church, none has been so emotive than the subject of women ordination. This issue is the central crux of this research.

The main research question guiding the study was:

How do women excluded from the ordained ministry in the SDA church in South Africa re-define their calling as part of their career development?

The primary aim of the study was to investigate how women excluded from the ordained ministry in the SDA church in South Africa re-define their calling as part of their career development. In achieving this, the following objectives were set:

- To investigate how women excluded from the ordained ministry in the SDA church in South Africa re-define their ministry.
- To examine the challenges women excluded from the ordained ministry in the SDA church in South Africa encounter as part of their lived experience.
- To come up with recommendations to assist women excluded from the ordained ministry and their career development.

1.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study contributes to theory building as it offers an understanding of the lived experiences of women excluded within the ordained ministry and how they re-define their calling from this experience. Contextually, the study becomes the first within a South African context, using a sample of SDA women albeit previous studies not confined to this denomination group and exploring the notion of a career calling (e.g. de Beer & Müller, 2009; Wagner-Ferreira, 2011).

Also, the study contributes to knowledge by being the first of few studies in the discipline to use narrative analysis to give voice to the women participants. Thus, the value of this research lies in its unique focus on an isolated group to the ordained ministry (in women) within the SDA church and how this sample group deals with this segregation as part of their individual career calling. The topic under study has

received little or no empirical attention. In general, understanding how women in the ordained ministry navigated through the challenges as argued by Doubell and Struwig (2014) can assist in developing interventions that assist not only understanding their career advancement but also their calling (Dik & Duffy, 2009; Duffy, Dik & Steger, 2011).

1.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research used an interpretivist philosophy hinging on the qualitative approach. The aim here was to adopt a philosophy and research approach that seeks to understand better the lived experiences that affect women who have been excluded from the ordained ministry. As argued by, for example, Creswell (2009; 2014), a qualitative research approach allows for an opportunity to gain an in-depth understanding and knowledge concerning the lived experiences of individuals. Further, an argument is made (Chinyamurindi, 2012, 2016a, b, c) that the qualitative research approach allows for the opportunity to understand the sense-making process better (as opposed to the quantitative paradigm) around phenomena.

Linked to this, Fourie (2013:1) has argued that themes studies within the branch of theology called systematic theology are "complex" and represent caricatures of an individual's "knowledge" and "experience." This research makes an argument that the experience of being excluded from the ordained ministry is a complex experience and this can be expounded further by the challenge of wanting to re-define the calling outside the institution. The qualitative approach represents a best attempt to understand all these issues.

1.4 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

According to the Helsinki Declaration of 1972 and the Singapore Declaration, it is essential to get permission from an ethics committee when human or animal subjects are part of any research of an empirical nature (Maree, 2010). Ethics are an important consideration in research, predominantly in research concerning humans and animals (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014, p. 65). The researcher adhered to ethical clearance at two levels. First, the researcher applied to the University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) for institutional permission before the research was conducted.

Ethical clearance was approved and granted with an ethical clearance number: RAS101SCHI01. The ethical clearance certificate is in Annexure 1.

Secondly, using the women participants, the research still requested for permission to take part in the research study. Participants to the research gave written consent. The researcher also considered the following ethics during the study: a) informed consent; b) voluntary participation, c) confidentiality, and d) anonymity. The aim here was to protect participants from any form of physical or psychological harm. The participants were debriefed about the purpose of the study, and those willing voluntarily participated in the research study.

Willing participants were then asked to sign an informed consent form and were advised of their rights to withdraw at any time if they wished to do so. The researcher preserved anonymity and as no personal details of the participants were recorded, participants were given pseudonyms at the beginning of interviews and interview recordings were only accessible to the researcher. All participants were treated with respect and dignity; the researcher did not mislead participants or manipulate any data recorded.

1.5 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The data analysis generated four main narratives and resultant sub-narrative(s): 1) calling as influencing decision to enter the pastoral ministry; 2) the pastoral ministry framed as a sustained challenge to women pastors; 3) the existence of a perceived theological disjuncture; and 4) passive yet overt resolution tactics. These narratives and resultant sub-narrative(s) form the basis for the next chapter.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The chapter details the theoretical and empirical literature. This forms a useful basis for the methodology and discussion chapters that will follow.

The call to ministry or ordination is argued by Gautier, Perl and Fichter (2012) as an issue that can divide the church. To this end, the “role of women in the church can serve as an ideological litmus test between progressives and traditionalists” (Gautier et al., 2012, p.103). This is a view that is widely shared by a number of scholars (Greeley, 2004; Loudon & Francos, 2003; Harvey, 2018). Given the interdisciplinary nature of this research, two general theories are considered as relevant: a) the Career Construction Theory; and b) Max-Neef’s theory of human scale development. These theories are discussed in brief next.

The Career Construction Theory (CCT) (Savickas, 2005) asserts career development to be an ongoing adaptation to the changing environments. The CCT postulates that careers develop over time as individuals adapt to career and role transitions over a given lifespan (Di Fabio & Maree, 2013). Within this, career adaptability is seen to be a vital element of the career construction process (Savickas, 2005). Thus, career flexibility is a psychosocial construct that denotes a person’s readiness and resource for coping with career transitions (McIlveen & Midgley, 2015). The CCT focuses on the individual’s resources for dealing with changes and occupational traumas (Xie, Xia, Xin & Zhou, 2016). Career engagement and satisfaction are influenced by a person’s career adaptability (Perera & McIlveen, 2014). Career counselling sessions should, therefore, be used to increase career flexibility and manage vocational and personal traumas (Maree, 2015). The study, therefore, provides practical implications on how career counsellors, those in the pastoral ministry and church administrators can assist women who may be excluded from the ordained ministry to re-define their career calling. Savickas (2005) asserts that career construction through the power of narratives can give a holistic understanding of why and how individuals construct their careers and how they adapt to transitory and ever-changing environments (Curso & Rehfuess, 2011). Within the

SDA church, one such change which has become somewhat confusing concerns the subject of women ordination. This warrants further empirical investigation.

The second theory adopted in this study is Manfred Max-Neef's theory of human scale development that places focus on a "reconceptualization" or "re-clarification" from the traditional human needs theories (Shen, 2016). The emphasis of the theory is on four main steps that an individual goes through a) being, b) having, c) doing, and d) interacting (Clarke, 1993). In all this, Max-Neef makes a distinction between individual needs and satisfiers (Max-Neef, 1999). For instance, being in ministry as per the distinction by Max-Neef could be seen as a satisfier to the need of an individual's needs for service to other and pursuit of a calling.

Thus, human-scale development as per the four main steps assists the individual through their lived experience to be self-reliant and a co-constructor of reality for individual progression (Max-Neef, Elizalde & Hopenhayn, 1989a). Manfred Max-Neef's theory of human scale development can have relevance in the life of women in ministry. For instance, the theory identifies things such as violators, pseudo-satisfiers, inhibiting satisfiers, singular satisfiers and synergistic satisfiers (Max-Neef, Elizalde & Hopenhayn, 1989b). All these issues can serve as constraints or enablers to women in ministry and have a direct impact on an individual's identity (Clarke, 1993). The idea for the individual is really on sense-making (Chinyamurindi, 2016a,b,c) and seeking for those issues that are authentic to their personhood (Clarke, 1993). This is then the aspect of human scale development, focusing on three pillars: understanding fundamental human needs, increasing self-reliance and a balanced interdependence between an individual with their environment (Guillen-Royo, 2015). This places cadence on this theory and its implication on human scale development not as an event but as a process of one's career development.

2.2 WOMEN AND THE AFRICAN CHURCH

This section presents literature concerning the women and the African church. As argued by John (2013), within the confines of theology the term African may be one that is contested. A working frame as suggested by Uchendu (2008, p. 3) is utilised referring to an African as a "person who is indigenous to and inhabits on the African continent." Thus, utilising also Morrell and Ouzgane (2005), the inference is on any

form of behaviour and action specific to the African continent through actors who reside and function within the same continent. Further, this way of thinking concerns the “interpretation”, “upholding” and “approaching” truth from the African lens considering experiences and identities specific to the African context (Louw, 2010, p. 42-43; Kistner, 2008, p. 92-93).

Another glaring point in discussing women and the African church debate is not to ignore two other important contexts. First, the context of women as presented within the bible. For instance, Nicolaides (2018) noted that the status of women as portrayed in the Bible New Testament is one that is lower than that of men due to the patriarchal nature of the society women lived in. The second context is viewing women within the context of a western church. This has led Resane (2018) to caution on the interpretation of Biblical text (citing the importance of exegesis and hermeneutics) given the western influence on the African church. This view is supported by other scholars (e.g. Bowers, 2002; Gathogo & Kinyua, 2010; Nthamburi & Waruta, 1997). Some (e.g. Siwila, 2017a) critique the Western model of using missionaries to introduce the gospel to Africa to be even filled with cases of contradiction in how White and Black sample groups were treated. Some (e.g. Elphick & Davenport, 1998) cite praises coming from DT Jabavu: *“every [South African] Black man who is a leader of any importance is a product of missionary work.”*

A plethora of literature appears to exist detailing how women are treated within the confines of the African church. Chitando, Nyamnjoh and Parsitau (2017) noted the negative media attention that the Pentecostal church is receiving concerning the abuse of women from male pastors. These women appear to be at their most vulnerable as they are seeking healing and counselling from their pastors. Within the same vein, Eriksen (2014) noted a form of ambivalence in how from the pulpit there is use of positive and negative examples of women.

Some (e.g. Kaunda, 2014) apportion responsibility to the state to work closely with the church in assisting to promote the “rights”, “humanity” and “dignity of women”. This is a view also supported by Chitando (2007) taking the angle that liberating masculinities must promote gender justice. Landman (2006) pointed out that en route to gender justice, it is important to use language that is befitting to this cause. Mraji and Rashe (2018) advocated that the mission of Jesus Christ to set the oppressed

free in Luke 4:18 should be the constant guiding mantra especially in the development of women within the church. Kenge (2017), referring to the role of the church towards the plight of women refugees, narrowed this role to be promoting a “*theology of love and human dignity*” while assisting where possible in fulfilling an economic need.

2.3 SCRIPTURE AND THE ORDINATION DEBATE

This section presents the contending views around aspects of women ordination

2.3.1 The challenge of interpretation

A challenge often exists around the interpretation of scripture, the observation here could be that this is a subjective reality often framed to be objective. For instance, Matsveru and Meylahn (2018) shed focus on the questioning of Old Testament passages and examples and their relevance to the present age. Chitando (2004) extended this further by arguing the need to be introspective when reading Bible passages. His example appears to be of Proverbs 31. A perfunctory reading could be to attribute the passage as just referring to the characteristics of a good wife. However, Chitando (2004) argued the passage is laden with undertones of women empowerment and a response the challenge of patriarchy and gender problems.

Given that the challenge could be due to interpretation, some solutions can be suggested. One such solution as suggested by Browning is a form of reading of scripture that is contextual and in need of understanding the history and context in scripture including the relevance in the present (Browning, 1991). This view has seen support from scholars like Rogerson (2004) who warn leaders within the church of the practice of reading passages from the Bible without understanding the context of culture. This has led to the need to understand the role of the cultural gap between the epochs in the Christian church (Pietersen, 2014).

Another example can be cited from the work of Kang (2005) who illustrated the necessity for caution when interpreting texts. For instance, Kang (2005) presented the idea of gender justice as an inherent part of the Christian faith, in God always siding with the oppressed and marginalised. Landman (2007, p. 200), paying tribute to the life of Mary Oduyoye, cited some of the principles heralded to be the agenda of African

theologians. Notably, the issue of constant usage of anti-women Bible passages is flagged as one. The other and linked to this point include:

- the refinement of cultural hermeneutics, that is, the rereading of Biblical and historical texts with a focus on their cultural biases;
- the enhancement of theological education and ministerial formation amongst women;
- the retrieving of women's stories on their involvement in church and society;
- the instigation of cross-gender discussions;
- the accommodation of African women's theologies at the heart of women's theologies globally; and finally
- vigorous efforts, academically and practically, to enhance women's health and power in the face of the HIV/Aids pandemic.

Scholars like Masenya and Bookholane (2011, p. 94) cautioned the challenge of biblical interpretation and argued for "ethical reading" of the Bible. Others position that there is no one way of interpreting Biblical text and add that those in positions of authority need to exercise responsibility when attempting to do so (Efthimiadis-Keith, 2012).

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2.3.2 The subjectivity factor

Another challenge that appears to emerge when Biblical texts are read concern the subjectivity factor from the lens of the spiritual leader. Mojola (2014) presented this as common especially within the African church where texts are read for "resonance" rather than "dissonance" (p. 16). Matsveru and Meylahn (2018) put it differently that the African interpretation appears to be focused more on what agrees with the audience than that which is controversial. The concern though is that theologians and spiritual leaders need to be addressing the real questions that people are concerned with (Kunhiyop, 2011) not those they resonate with (Mojola, 2014). A view that is also supported by other scholars in reference to African theology and religious studies (Chitando, 2010; Chitando, Taringa & Mapuranga, 2014). Another scholar (e.g. Rosado, 2012, p. 12) made the point that "scripture is greatly influenced by [our] socio-cultural experiences" and this presents the element of subjectivity.

2.4 CAREER CALLING

Work has become central to modern-day working lives, resulting in some classifying it as a calling (Duffy, Dik & Steger, 2011:242). Individuals in such a context derive a sense of purpose of meaningfulness from their work (Dik & Duffy, 2009:424). However, in developing countries such as South Africa, the experience of work, including career issues, is noted to be complex (Chinyamurindi, 2012:2) particularly amongst previously disadvantaged groups (Chinyamurindi, 2016a:4). Calls exist for empirical work exploring the career development processes of groups that do not receive much empirical focus within the extant literature. There is also a need to bridge between theory and practice (Morris, 2013:282). Of particular importance is the development of calling in complex working environments.

2.4.1 God calling women

There is literature attesting to women being called by God within the African church. Landman (2006) pointed to the establishment of the St John's Apostolic Church of Prophecy by Christinah Nku. Thomas (1997) noted the challenge that Nku faced in starting an African independent church in the form of opposition from the White protestant church. Her efforts, though being viewed as deviant and away from mainstream protestant tradition, are still noted. Subsequently, opposition to the work of Christinah Nku is attributed to the challenge of women entering to lead in a field that is male dominated (Moripe, 1994; West, 1975).

Oduyoye (1988, p. 35) lauded by Landman (2007, p.1) as "Africa's first and foremost woman theologian" argued that the ministry women is closely linked to that of Christ in the "mothering" role. Oduyoye (1992, p. 9) would also argue that:

"Women are persons-in-communion, not persons who "complete" the other ... We may need to reorient our thinking so that we see communion as a relationship devoid of hierarchical relations and power-seeking. When we have learned more about our humanity perhaps we will also be able to understand what God is telling us about divinity."

Nicolaides (2018) gives examples of how women in the Biblical narrative can be considered to be disciples. The case point here being Mary Magdalene (Matthew 28:9-10), though occupying a passive role but largely influential in her proclaiming the

good news of the risen Messiah. De Boer (2004) reduced this limited but impactful role of women to be that of the discipleship occupied by men. Thus, using the example of Mary Magdalene in her proclaiming the risen Christ she was performing a discipleship role (Schüssler, 1992).

Concerning a calling, Nel and Scholtz (2015) argued it to be fluid with meaning being not only contextual but also disciplined influenced. Within the Christian faith, the notion of a calling is viewed as always meaning different things as per the epochs of the church from the early church, middle ages, the Reformation period and the modern context (Gerkin, 1991; Placher, 2005). For instance, in the early church due to fear of persecution and arrest (Freeman, 2009), the main issue around a calling amongst Christians was around deciding whether it was worthwhile to be a Christian with matters such as to practise faith publicly or not (Placher, 2005). In the New Testament epoch, the term calling has linkages with the ideals of discipleship and community (Nel & Scholtz, 2015). Thus, emphasizing as argued by Fowler (1987:28) on the Greek word "*klesis*" which translated means a "calling, invitation or a summons."

The concept of a calling has also been associated with the assumption of a leadership role or a title. For instance, Nel and Scholtz (2015) noted this as common within the Reformed tradition when installing or ordaining a person in becoming a pastor or a bishop. Conyers (2004) argued that the Apostle Paul in his writings (e.g. Romans 1:1) as a "*kletos apostolos*" or someone who has been called to be an apostle (p. 17). In other parts of his writing, Paul urges believers to remain in the "*klesis*", a portrayal of a calling as an occupation (Holl, 1958:127). Others (e.g. Hays, 2011) view a calling as a condition regarding belief not so much a position of office. The thinking here (guided by 1 Corinthians 7) is that a believer's calling is linked to the original position of faith in life when they accepted Jesus Christ as a Saviour. However, as illustrated and argued earlier, the meaning of a calling is fluid with meaning dependent not just on denomination but also context and the theological standpoint of the one defining (Nel & Scholtz, 2015).

2.4.2 Factors affecting women's calling and experience of ministry

This section identifies the factors that influence the calling of women and their role in the gospel ministry.

In presenting the literature on the factors affecting women's career calling and experience of ministry, some considerations can be given to the changing views happening within the church (Anderson, 2010). This change is noted also due to changes happening within the wider society leading to the questioning of old traditions and values. This is a behaviour noted within the career theory with specific emphasis on the career construction theory. The idea here is to understand how an individual's career not only develops but also adapts in response to role and societal transitions (Savickas, 2005; Di Fabio & Maree, 2013).

Further, within the CCT, value is placed on the role of career adaptability through an individual's readiness and resources for coping with varying career transitions (Savickas, 2005; McIlveen & Midgley, 2015; Xie, Xia, Xin & Zhou, 2016). Thus, how engaged and satisfied an individual is influences their career adaptability (Perera & McIlveen, 2014). This positions the career construction theory as beneficial in understanding career development experiences of women engaged in ministry as it places focus on the individual and their response to varying changes especially those in their environment (Maree, 2015; Savickas, 2005; Curso & Reh fuss, 2011).

Oduyoye (1995, p. 159) pointed to the role of "cultural sexism" and its effect on marginalising women's calling and experience in the ministry. One such cultural expression appears to be the patriarchal social system. A system argued by Kisitu and Siwila (2016) to be stepped in hierarchy and cross-cutting from the religious to secular world. Botha (2000) added that the role of women within this system was seen to be that of conceiving and taking care of children. In essence, Pillay (2012) advised cultural sensitivity as an important skills-set within the modern church.

Linked to the cultural system is the economic development of a context. Siwila (2017b) traced the development of women with the confines and the Copperbelt Mines in Zambia. Due to aspects of the quest for economic development, women in such contexts appear to occupy a peripheral. This role often resulted in them being marginalised and their bodies objectified. In essence, this lack of economic development not only perpetuates this peripheral role but appears to silence the voice of women in aspects of development (Sietisho & Siwila, 2017). These views appear to support the contributions of Cook, Heppner and O'Brien (2002) in the ecological approach to women's career development. The ecological model of women's career

development recognises that human behaviour is a result of ongoing dynamic interaction between an individual and the environment. The model knows that each through their gender and a race, this decisively shapes an individual's career. Cook *et al.* (2002) ascertained that the career development of women is more complex than that of men, due to some internal and external barriers exclusive to women.

Others (e.g. Fox, 2003) have attributed the career development of those in ministry to be linked to the context in which they learn about spirituality, the church. Borrowing from organisational studies, the church as an organisation is guided by values that are crucial to ethical behaviour (García-Álvarez & López-Sintas, 2001). Such values within these organisations are meant to enshrine a deep sense of spirituality and religious identity (Kellermanns, 2013; Paterson, Specht, & Duchon, 2013; Sorenson, 2013). Thus, the role of such an organisation is not only in value formation but also preservation through enactment of positive behaviours, decision-making and performance (Hillary & Hui, 2009). Thus, within the confines of the church, the individual gets the opportunity to learn about spirituality and also gets some form of guidance. This is the case point of the work of Aziz, Nel and Davis (2017) detailing the influence of the youth ministry within the church as offering a unique learning ground that helps to hone skills in becoming a pastor.

Within the SDA Church, there is acknowledgement of the role women can play in fulfilling the mission of the church. Arrais (2015) noted in general a range of challenges that women in ministry face. These include: a) a pressing workload; b) threats to health; and c) a continued quest to remain focused on fulfilling the mission and mandate of the church.

The career development of women (not necessarily those in ministry) can also be understood from the theory of Gottfredson (1981). This theory hinges on the ideas of circumscription, compromise and then self-creation helping to explain “the development process leading to the formation of occupation aspirations” (Aschenbrenner, 2006, p. 11). In this theory, Gottfredson (1981) that at the beginning of an individual's career through the enactment of career decisions. This phase is characterised by four main developmental processes. Notably, cognitive growth, self-creation, circumscription and compromise. The experience of enactment of choice provides opportunity to attract or repel certain activities (Gottfredson, 1981). This

offers a basis for the social learning of careers as argued by Gottfredson (1981), placing focus on the role of parents and significant others. During the circumscription phase, the child is offered opportunity to eliminate those vocational ideas not fitting any ideals of the learned career. Finally, in the compromise phase, limitations are factored and used to determine a path that is desirable or not desirable. As a summary, Rosario (2014) lauds Gottfredson's (1981) theory as assisting understanding how women create their careers, considering the role of gender and social classification in shaping career choices and career development.

Often the experience of ministry of women has to do with challenging artefacts such as clothing and how this is compared to their male counterparts. Page (2014) explored this within the confines of the Church of England. Subsequently, findings to the study by Page (2014) pointed to the importance of dress as function and "key test in women's integration into the organization" and as operating as a constraint and exclusion mechanism to ministry. Despite these challenges, women in ministry within the Church of England were found to viewing their calling as rooted more in God with the church just being viewed as an employer (Greene & Robbins, 2015).

In other churches, e.g. Church of England, the issue of the ordination of women has been one that has led to great debates and a division within the church (Webster, 1994). Even within the present day, no parish is bound to accept women priests with women not even allowed to become a bishop (Page, 2014). Whereas organisations have the glass ceiling, Bagilhole (2006) views this behaviour from the Church of England as a lead roof. This has resulted in women priests to negotiate through additional layers of complexity in their careers especially given that religion is deemed sacred and not needing secular interference (Butt, Threlfall-Holmes & Saunders, 2004).

In developing countries, there has been an observation generally of structural constraints that affect the career development processes of women (Pheko, 2014) due to a set of factors within and outside the organisational setting extending to society (Chinyamurindi 2016b). Needed is research that not only explores the factors that influence the career development of women (Pheko, 2014) but also (when exclusion exists like in the church) how these women adjust to such changes (Perera & McIlveen, 2014). Further, Dube (2016) noted the scant attention given to African women and

understanding their challenges not just within a context of macro issues but their contribution in ministry.

Table 2.1 presents a summary of the factors that influence the career development and experience of those in ministry especially women based on a review of the literature.



Table 21: Summary of factors that influence individuals and women in ministry

Factor & Explanation	Source(s)
Sex discrimination & unequal treatment between males and females.	(Greene & Robbins, 2015; Page, 2011).
Changing perspectives from a closed to an open society.	(Anderson, 2010).
Transitions due to the demands of the job. The individual then responds to this.	(Nicholson & West, 1988; Kidd, 2006; Webster & Beehr, 2013).
Individual response to the history and organisational artefacts within the church such as power & leadership.	(Scott, 2001; Selznick, 1957; Percy, 2006, 2012; Torry, 2005; Zucker, 1977).
Individual beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviours (including culture).	(Mayrhofer et al., 2007; Sullivan & Crocitto, 2007).
Internal organisational socialisation.	(Brooklyn, Derr & Briscoe, 2007)
Individual career agency. Career agency is viewed as “a process of work-related social engagement, informed by past	(Tams & Arthur, 2010).

experiences and future possibilities, through which an individual invests in his or her career.” (Tams & Arthur, 2010, p. 630).	
The fear of failure amongst clergy.	(Wildhagen et al., 2005; Price, 2001).
Answering the call of God through prayer.	(Lees, 2001).
Serving society and others.	(Peyton & Gatrell, 2013).
The role of the local church through empowerment, guidance for life, learning and development, safety and support, and servant-leadership.	(Stewart, 2007).
Constraints in the environment especially affecting women of colour within the ministry.	(Kang, De Celles, Tilcsik & Jun, 2016; Rosette, Koval, Ma & Livingston, 2016).
Patriarchy and gender under-representation in positions of leadership.	(McKenzie, 2011; Smith, 2013; Wyatt & Silvester, 2015).

Source: Author's Own Synthesis

2.5 GAPS IN THE LITERATURE

Some notable gaps are noted in the literature.

2.5.1 The necessity of discussing gender within African theology

There is an observation that religious organisations can provide rich fodder in understanding how organisations are gendered (Stewart-Thomas, 2010). Bock (1967) made the observation that religion has traditionally been a preserve of males.

Within an African context, John (2013) applauded the work of a group of scholars called the Circle - Prof. E. Chitando, Prof. G. West and Dr. van Klinken and their focus in “facilitating the incorporation of gender issues into African theological discourses” (p. 2). The contribution of such scholars is attributed to be critical in putting to test the role of religious and cultural influences in how women are not only perceived but also related to (Oduyoye, 2002).

Equally, the gendered aspect concerning masculinity is argued by Chitando and Chirongoma (2012) as a subject area that is under-explored within the confines of religion. Such aspects of gender are not only socially constructed but also need to be understood as a psychological construction (Ratele, 2008). Given all this, there is a need to reflect further on the subject of gender within the confines of Africa religion in fashioning solutions to the plethora of challenges on this issue specific to African problems (Chitando, 2013). West (2016) frames this as the “African liberation ideological frame” (p. 216).

In other churches, e.g. Church of England, the issue of the ordination of women has been one that has led to great debates and a division within the church (Webster, 1994). Even within the present day, no parish is bound to accept women priests with women not even allowed to become a bishop (Page, 2014). Whereas organisations have the glass ceiling, Bagilhole (2006) views this behaviour from the Church of England as a lead roof. This has resulted in women priests to negotiate through additional layers of complexity in their careers especially given that religion is deemed sacred and not needing secular interference (Butt, Threlfall-Holmes & Saunders, 2004).

2.5.2 Giving African women a theologian's voice

Chitando (2009) has pushed for a focus on understanding issues concerning African women theologians as part of the narrative that is promoting gender justice, gender equality and the liberation of women. This is something also supported by some as the liberation theology agenda (Phiri & Nadar, 2010). Such theologies are defined as issues around the “social order” and its relationship to the concept of “humanness” in relation to the poor, marginalised and exploited (Gutierrez, 1999:24-26). Further, there is need to explore how God can be declared in view of such a world.

2.5.3 The need for evidence-based findings

A challenge often exists between theory and practice, resulting in the need for more evidence-based research. For instance, Mraji and Rashe (2018) investigated the issue of women empowerment and the role and function of the church to this. Notably, the scholars make the recommendation that practice should focus on:

- clergy training on domestic violence issues;
- seminars and workshops;
- support groups for victims of domestic violence;
- fundraising projects; and finally
- the role of referrals in addressing the issue of domestic violence (Mraji & Rashe, 2018, p. 1).

The work Mraji and Rashe (2018) gives value to how research can assist in coming up with interventions that inform not only how congregants operate but also the church. Caution here should be in generalising that since the subject of focus are marginalised women, any form of oppressive experience could be solved by the same solutions. There appears to be no blanket judgement needed. This heightens calls for studies that not only generate solutions to real-life problems but as argued by Tackney et al. (2017) that assist in the development of collective capacity on issues specific individual inquiries.

In developing countries, there has been an observation generally of structural constraints that affect the career development processes of women (Pheko, 2014) due to a set of factors within and outside the organisational setting extending to society

(Chinyamurindi 2016b). Needed is research that both explores the factors that influence the career development of women (Pheko, 2014) and (when exclusion exists like in the church) how these women adjust to such changes (Perera & McIlveen, 2014). Further, Dube (2016) noted the scant attention given to African women and understanding their challenges not just within a context of macro issues but their contribution in ministry. Linked to this, Fourie (2013:1) argued that themes studies within the branch of theology called systematic theology are "complex" and represent caricatures of an individual's "knowledge" and "experience." This research makes an argument that the experience of being excluded from the ordained ministry is a complex experience and this can expounded further by the challenge of wanting to re-define the calling outside the institution.

2.6 THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

The SDA church in South Africa is viewed as one of the mainstream protestant churches with local relevance despite low membership numbers (Papu, 2012). The SDA church espouses the need for continued evangelism in places where it has this relevance. Mokwena (2012) applauded the SDA church's focus on promoting the health message not just to its members but also those who being reached out to. Masarira (2012, p. 1) attributed the "question on the role of women in the church" as one of the "hot-button issues in Adventism today."

2.6.1 Ordination views within the Seventh-day Adventist Church

This section briefly presents some salient points on the issue of ordination within the SDA church:

- The North America Division (NAD) of the SDA church makes the recommendation submitted by the NAD Theology of Ordination Study Committee that: "NAD support the authorisation of each division to consider, through prayer and under the direction of the Holy Spirit, its most appropriate approach to the ordination of women to gospel ministry." (North America Division, 2013).
- Delegates at the 2015 General Conference Session in San Antonio turned down a motion that would have permitted the church and its 13 divisions

worldwide to decide for whether to ordain women into the gospel ministry by territory (Adventist Review, 2015).

- Next to subjectivity is careful consideration of cultural application when interpreting passages, for instance: Must women keep silent in church as argued in 1 Corthianthians 14:34? – The answer given by the SDA church's North America Division (2013, p. 10) – “*The Adventist Church considers Paul's statement a cultural application made for local circumstances.*”
- The SDA church through its scholars appears divided on the matter of ordination. One side favours ordination as evident in published work (e.g. Benton, 1990; Pearson, 1990; Halovak, 1995; Patterson, 2012) and on the side published work exists against ordination (e.g. Koranteng-Pipim, 2001; de Lima, 2003 Muir, 2013).

The issue of ordination within the SDA church is polarised. This research has sought not to break the deadlock concerning this issue. The focal point is on framing how those excluded (subjects of this debate) frame their calling in the midst of this debate. This has formed the basis of this research. The next sections present the issues around research design and methodology.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The philosophy as well as the methodology which underpins this study is evaluated in this chapter. As already mentioned in previous chapters, the main purpose of this study was to investigate how women excluded from the ordained ministry in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa re-define their calling as part of their career development. An exploration of the notion of a calling amongst the women excluded from the ordained ministry will assist in coming up with interventions to assist their career development.

The world is a multidimensional sphere which comprises a diversity of story-tellers who perceive the social world differently (Clarke, 2016). Social life, therefore, cannot be fully understood by espousing natural science methods as they are too restricted (Levitt, et al., 2018). Thus, this research project adopted research methodologies that are regarded as appropriate to deal with the heterogeneity and complexities of the social world (Vogl, et al, 2018). An interpretivist approach was adopted for this study. The research approach allowed the researcher to gain an understanding of the lived experiences of the participants from their own perspective (Levitt, et al., 2018).

A total of 15 women who have completed their theology qualifications and are members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church participated in this qualitative study to form the basis for narrative inquiry and analysis. This approach and means of analysis allowed for emerging sense-making (Chinyamurindi, 2017) and thus providing a) a better understanding of the lived experience; b) understanding of changes over time (Calman, et al., 2013; Vogl, et al., 2018), c) an exploration of career and/or life expectations of the participants (Chinyamurindi, 2016a, b; Hendricks, 2014); and d) assisting in understanding the transition process the women have gone through (Clements & Kamau, 2017). Textual data cannot be quantified when trying to understand a phenomenon from the perspective of the participants as the main objective will be lost (Gramer, 2017).

The data was collected using individual interviews (Steyn & McEwan, 2013), a technique utilised in previous narrative research (Chinyamurindi, 2012; 2016a, b, c; 2017). The study was delimited to 15 women who have completed their theology qualifications and are members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. These women are not practising as pastors.

The structure of this chapter is as follows: concerns with epistemological and ontological are presented. A narration of the journey towards a qualitative methodology is addressed. Thereafter, a discussion is provided for utilising narrative inquiry as part of this research.

3.1.1 Epistemological and ontological concerns

The research philosophy concerns how a link is made between theoretical ideas and how knowledge is constructed as a reality in this (Lee & Lings, 2008, p. 24). Thus, the research philosophy forms a basis and declaration en route to the knowledge creation process (Vogl, et al., 2018) and framing of reality (Calman, et al., 2013). On the other hand, ontology refers to the study or science of being (Blaikie, 2010) and providing an explanation of social phenomena (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011, p. 5).

3.1.1.1 *Ontological perspective*

From an ontological perspective, narrative inquiry is “continually working with, and from, a transactional or relational space” (Clandinin, Engaging in narrative inquiry, 2013, p. 6). Different perspectives on ontology play a role in how nature of existence is approached by people, this is primarily determined by people’s perceptions on whether the existence of reality is separate to, or awareness of that reality is important to people’s conscious (Creswell, 2013). In rationalising this notion, Crotty (1998) stated that “the world is there regardless of whether human beings are conscious of it” (p. 10). To qualify this statement, Crotty questioned what kind of world would exist if humans did not have a cognisant engagement with the world. Drawn from this perception, the world and its components independently exist of consciousness of humans. On the other hand, the existence of people is determined by the meaning people attribute to their being or existence (Denzin & Lincoln, 2013).

Several ontological perspectives are the under the continuum of reality which exist outside the mind of a human (realism) and reality being determined by human consciousness of their existence in the world (relativism). Maxwell (2012) opined that realism is combination of ontological and epistemological view. He argued that, independent of our human constructions as well as beliefs, there is a real world that exists and our own constructions, generated from a vantage point to create the knowledge of this world.

Most of social research strives to explore how human constructions and experience of the world create the people themselves (Smit, 2017). This orientation forms the foundation for an interpretivist perspective of what establishes socially-oriented knowledge (Gramer, 2017). An interpretivist approach was adopted for this study, supported by a relativist perspective on social realities which are found in human consciousness. This perspective allowed this current study to embrace multiple views of the study participants, with the purpose of “reporting these multiple realities” (Creswell, 2013, p. 20).

3.1.1.2 *Epistemological perspective*

An interpretivist study is an “investigation that relies heavily on observers defining and redefining the meaning of what they see and hear” (Stake, 2010, p. 36). Thus, people strive, from an interpretivist approach, to comprehend the world that they live in (Creswell, 2013). Creswell highlighted that experiences of people are turned into diverse and multiple subjective meanings. Consequently, research conducted using this perspective sets to explore views which are complex from and with others, which is referred to as highly person-context specific (Vogl, et al., 2018). The primary aim of this study is to investigate how women excluded from the ordained ministry in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa re-define their calling as part of their career development. This objective is exploratory in nature and fits within the interpretivist framing of reality.

The interpretivist nature of this research perceives people as subjective, meaning constructors through interaction between oneself and others (Morgan, 2013). Research contexts are not entered by the researchers as objective observers, but “observations are socially situated in the worlds of, and between, the observer and the observed” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2013, p. 29). Researchers, consequently, are involved

in subjective interaction within the research context, thus they are unable to detach themselves from the research procedure.

Based on the interpretivist philosophy, the qualitative approach was also utilised for this study. The purpose here was to adopt a philosophy and research approach that sought to understand better the lived experiences that affect women who have been excluded from the ordained ministry. As argued by, for example, Creswell (2009; 2014), qualitative research allows for an opportunity to gain an in-depth understanding and knowledge concerning the lived experiences of individuals.

Further, an argument is made that the qualitative research approach allows for the opportunity to understand the sense-making process better (as opposed to the quantitative paradigm) around phenomena (Chinyamurindi, 2012, 2016a, b, c, 2017). Linked to this, Fourie (2013:1) argued that themes within the branch of theology called systematic theology are "complex" and represent caricatures of an individual's "knowledge" and "experience." This research makes an argument that the experience of being excluded from the ordained ministry is a complex experience and this can be expounded further by the challenge of wanting to re-define the calling outside the institution. The qualitative approach represents a best attempt to understand all these issues.

3.2 RATIONALE FOR ANALYTICAL TECHNIQUE SELECTION: NARRATIVE INQUIRY

The main research question guiding the study is:

How do women excluded from the ordained ministry in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa re-define their calling as part of their career development?

Connelly and Clandinin (2006) explained that "to use narrative inquiry methodology is to adopt a particular view of experience as phenomena under study" (p. 477). Narrative inquiry is described by Clarke (2016) as a methodology that perceives experiences narratively. Using a narrative inquiry allowed participants to share their understanding of themselves and their perception of how they fit into the labour market. A narrative inquiry "begins in experience as expressed in lived and told stories" (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007, p. 5 cited in Clarke, 2016). Furthermore, narrative

inquiry is an effective method when exploring subjective experiences through its natural way of exploring the world (Clarke, 2016).

Stories directly replicate who we are and, indicate “ways we enlist each other’s help in building our lives and communities” (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006). King (2003) cited that “the truth about stories is that that’s all we are” (p. 153). The statement is consistent with narrative inquiry methodology which explores lived experiences. As humans we construct our own identities through narratives (Gramer. 2017). The truth about who we are is found in the stories we narrate about ourselves, stories told by other people about us, acted out stories and stories told by our actions. Thus, stories are imperative in gaining an understanding, in any context, of any nuances that exist in human relationships (Clarke, 2016).

A quality narrative inquiry is determined by the number of commitments that one dedicates to the process, particularly “an extensive commitment to writing as a way to inquire” (Clandinin & Caine, 2013, p. 178). A narrative inquiry allows for stories to describe a phenomenon through studying lived experiences. Clandinin (2013) argued that “narrative inquiry is an approach to the study of human lives conceived as a way of honouring lived experiences as a source of important knowledge and understanding” (p. 17).

A narrative inquiry study establishes four key progressions, namely living, telling, retelling and reliving (Clandinin, Engaging in narrative inquiry, 2013). Initially, individuals “live out stories and tell stories of their living” (Clandinin, 2013, p. 34). Narrative inquirers, as we come along, we engage in conversations with participants and “live into the lived and told stories” (Spires, 2017, p. 49). Narrative inquirers do not simply, together with the participants, retell the stories as recorded, but work within the narrated stories co-creating, alongside the participants, meaning by re-telling the narratives through a relational process (Clarke, 2016; Vogl, et al., 2018). This process is described as reliving of the story by the narrative inquirer. The relational process between the researcher and participants has the potential to live into the society of students and graduates who will read the stories.

It is an ordinary occurrence, on the surface, people live and tell stories of their lives (Mamabolo, 2014). Narrative inquiry however is a complex process which involves storytelling coupled with narrated occurrences (Gramer, 2017).

Narrative inquiry was regarded as the most suited methodology to address the research question as the main purpose of the study was to understand the experiences of students as they make the transition from university into the labour market. Furthermore, through narratives, participants were able to share how they perceived themselves as students as well as curriculum makers. In addition, the narratives also indicated the perspectives of the participants on how they fit within the labour market (Clandinin, 2013).

The focus by a narrative inquirer is on experience which is grounded in continuity, situation and interaction as understood by Dewey (cited in Clarke, 2016). Dewey (1938) articulated that “the principle of continuity of experience means that every experience both takes up something from those which have gone and modifies in some way the quality of those which come after” (p. 35). Interaction was described as an interaction between personal and social. The understanding of interaction, however, cannot be separated from the experience of the situation. Dewey (1985) pronounced that “an experience is always what it is because of a transaction taking place between an individual and what, at the time, constitutes his environment” (p. 43).

3.3 CHOICE AND DESCRIPTION OF PARTICIPANTS

Participants to the research were 15 women who have studied for the pastoral ministry within and who are practising Seventh-day Adventists. These women were located within South Africa and the recognised local conferences of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. These include a) the Cape Conference; b) KwaZulu Natal-Free State Conference; c) Trans-Orange Conference; and d) the Northern Cape Conference.

Two sampling methods exist generally, and these are probability and non-probability sampling (Creswell, 2009). In probability sampling, also known as random sampling, every subject in the population has an equal chance of being selected (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). It eliminates bias, and the research results can be generalised to the entire population (Creswell, 2014). In non-probability sampling, the

researcher selects participants based on specific purposes associated with answering the research questions (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). Non-probability sampling provides in-depth knowledge from a smaller number of carefully selected participants (Patton, 2002). There are various methods of non-probability sampling, namely convenience, quota, snowball and purposive sampling. This study utilised the snowball sampling approach to interview the women participants. This involves relying on referrals from one participant to the other who may fit the criteria of the research. To begin this process, the researcher was aware of four participants who were a potential lead to other participants that could participate in this research. Such a practice (as adopted in snowball sampling) is common within research practice (Patton, 2002). It would appear that participants can be aware of each other due to the similarity in the experience that they have undergone (Tongco, 2007).

There was no existing sampling frame that indicated the total number of women who have studied to be pastors in South Africa. A telephonic inquiry to Helderberg College, a Seventh-day Adventist institution where pastors are trained, revealed that in the last ten years, a total of 50 to 60 women have graduated with theology degrees. In most cases, all these women end up working in other aspects of service to the church and community than serving as local pastors. For this study and based on the sampling strategy justified, a total of 15 women were used as a sampling frame for this study. Table 3.1 presents this list of participants.

Table 3.1: Participants to the study

Pseudonym	Years since completing qualification	Current role & responsibility
Sue	5 Years	Working within church school.
Jane	10 Years	Still supports the church but engages in self-employment.
Mary	4 Years	Bible worker

Kate	5 Years	Bible worker
Jill	8 Years	Working within church school.
Laura	9 Years	Working within church as support worker.
Mercy	5 Years	Still supports the church but engaged in self-employment.
Basey	10 Years	Working within church school.
Vern	8 Years	Still supports the church but engaged in self-employment.
Moira	5 Years	Working within church as support worker.

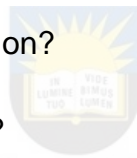


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3.4 INTERVIEW PROTOCOL AND RESEARCH TIME FRAME

The researcher collected data by conducting in-depth interviews with the participants. The use of interviews is seen to help capture also the “lived experiences and knowledge of the people involved” in the research (Gatenby & Humphries, 2000. p. 89). All interviews were recorded using an audio recorder with the consent of the participants. Recording interviews protected the researcher against bias and helped provide a real record of what was said during the interviews (McCormark, 2000). The researcher made sure that the tape recorders were kept in a safe place to preserve participants’ anonymity. In assisting the data gathering process and as used in previous studies with women pastors (Wagner-Ferreira, 2011), a basic structure of questioning used in practical theology was utilised (Osmer, 2008, p. 4):

- What is going on?
- Why is this going on?
- What ought to be going on?
- How might we respond?



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Semi-structured interviews were conducted with participants by keeping to the research questions and listening to their responses carefully. Through the conversations the researcher was able to gain a better understanding of the experiences of the women. The lived experiences of the participants vicariously unfolded during the interviews giving an opportunity to the researcher to gain an insight into their lived experiences (Levitt, et al., 2018). The interviews made it possible for the researcher to enter and understand the participants’ perspective (Vogl, et al., 2018). The purpose of the individual interviews was to gain a profound understanding of lived experiences of participants from their own perspective (Smit, 2017).

The most appropriate interviewing format that was chosen for this study is semi-structured. Semi-structured questioning provided a profound perspective of human reality meaning through the narratives of the participants. Kvale and Brinkman (2009) argued that a semi-structured interview format comes “very close to an everyday conversation, but as a professional interview it has a purpose and involves a specific approach and technique. It is conducted according to an interview guide that focuses

on certain themes and that may include suggested questions” (p. 27). In support of the above, questions were prepared for all the phases in an aim to explore and address the experiences of the participants.

The researcher approached the interviews with openness to the unexpected (Gramer, 2017). Such an approach encourages self-qualities which involved “being curious, sensitive to what is said – as well as to what is not said – and critical of own presuppositions and hypothesis during the interview” (p. 31). As the researcher, while interviewing, I operated on various metacognitive levels: interviewer and observer of other and self-reflection. This allowed room for perspectives to be expressed whilst ensuring the boundaries between profession identity and intersecting professional was maintained (Lincoln & Guba, 2013). The following served as the interview guide to the research and the probes utilised:

1. Tell me about yourself. (Probes: background information-education level and employment history; marital status; children; country of origin).
2. May you tell me about the circumstances that led you to consider the pastoral ministry?
3. What experiences and challenges did you face during your journey leading to this?
4. How do you understand the notion of a calling?
5. Tell me of your current status – being out of the ministry – how do you feel?
6. In your view, is the church accommodative of women as pastors? (Did they play a role in the way you adjusted to the new environment?).
7. How do you interpret the various passages of texts used to justify why women cannot be pastors?
8. Do you think women’s career development processes are different from those of men? (*Please tell me a story that explains why it is different*).
9. Is your career developing as you anticipated? (what factors are influencing the success of your career?, what aspects are within your control and which are beyond your control?).
10. How do you think the church and other organisations should assist with some of the challenges that you are facing?

The transcribed interviews were exported into QSR International's NVivo 9, a data analysis and management software package for the purpose of data analysis – useful when dealing with a lot of text, graphic, audio, and video data (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013; Reuben & Bobat, 2014). Chinyamurindi (2016c) argued that software such as NVivo only serves the purpose of organising data. The next section details how the transcribed data was analysed.

3.5. DATA ANALYSIS

A variety of ways can be used to gather and analyse/re-present narratives. Throughout the study both data collection and analysis took place simultaneously due to the fluidity of the categories. The data analysis procedure that was adopted for this research was also utilised in previous narrative studies that focused on understanding human experience (Chinyamurindi, 2016a, b, Harry, et al., 2017).

Narrative research seeks to gain knowledge through the stories lived and interpreted by the participant's own words (Toolis & Hammack, 2015). Brown (2012) asserted that this is a robust method for investigating issues of the vulnerable and social justice. Narrative analysis emphasises the importance of meaning-making, using an inductive and interpretive approach to coding (Toolis & Hammack, 2015). Data was analysed using three levels of meaning-making adopted from previous research (e.g. Chinyamurindi, 2012: 2016a, b, c; McCormack, 2000). Firstly, a vignette of each interview was written, and after that each vignette was developed into a longer narrative about each participant (Chinyamurindi, 2012, 2016a, b, c). The researcher listened to each of the interview recordings to develop a good understanding of the participants' experiences and to transcribe the interviews verbatim. Secondly, narrative themes were identified from participants' experiences, and issues identified from each interview were compared across participants. Level two was achieved by coding the data, classifying responses to derive themes and identify connecting issues across participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Nachmias & Nachmias, 1996). Finally, quotes and stories were used to give an analysis of the themes gathered. In the final level, the researcher provides an elaboration of the themes with the aid of the quotations and experiences told by the participants (McCormack, 2000)

In order to re-construct the narratives, a three-levels of meaning making strategy was followed. First, each of the interview contents were summarised briefly and, thereafter a longer account of each of the participants was written down. The purpose of this was for the researcher to develop a deeper understanding of the experiences of the participants with regards to employability and transition. This was achieved by revising the interviews as well as listening to the aural recordings. As was advised by McCormack (2000, p. 221), all the narratives were scanned for story “markers”, which include, as outlined by Labov (1982), orientation, abstract, what happened, evaluation and coda. The main aim of this stage was to understand the emotions and details as described and explained by the storytellers. By doing so it allowed the researcher to answer the key question of each interview: “What kind of story is this?” (Thornhill, Clare & May, 2004, p. 188). The structural analysis that was utilised for this research is explained and evaluated in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Summative explanation of Labov’s structural analysis

Element	Explanation
Abstract	How does the participant story begin?
Orientation	Who/what does it involve, and when/where?
Complicating action	Then what happened?
Resolution	What finally happened?
Evaluation	So what?
Coda	What does it all mean?

The structural analysis allowed for the identification of crucial events or critical moments of the narratives (Levitt, et al., 2018). The structure also assisted with identification of substantial transcript parts that may warrant further inquiry. This structure was also utilised in previous studies (e.g. Chinyamurindi, 2012; 2016a, b;

Gramer, 2017). Not only did the structure allow for key events identification, but also the plot behind each of the stories (Chinyamurindi, 2012), as well as difficulties in personal life as a means of sense making (Maree & Beck, 2004). As it was obvious that the data to be collected through narrative interviews would be of large amounts, this structural analysis helped in sorting the data.

The researcher acknowledges the use of structural analysis has raised concerns (e.g. Gale, 2007). Given, however, the large amounts of data that was collected and time constraints, identification of key episodes in the narratives was made easier by applying Labov's structural analysis. The outlined frames help in understanding the individual narratives (Labov, 1982). The frames allow for the identification of themes that form the core of the research findings. Considering the nature of the data collected, structural analysis was beneficial in analysing the data.

The individual stories were not confined to a one-time frame but involved understanding the experiences of the individuals in the past, present and future. Mishler (1986) argued that through this structure an understanding of the difference between "the order to the told (chronological order) and the order of the telling (the ordering of events as represented in narrative" (p. 95) is developed. Structural analysis elements such as resolution allowed for an understanding of experiences as narrated by the participants in relation to time. Labov's structural analysis model was utilised to summarise the individual stories. An understanding of the stories was compiled based on the model.

In the second level of meaning-making, narratives that were communicated by the participants were identified and their experiences with employability. Preliminary themes were outlined from each of the interviews before cross-case comparison. As was purported by Chinyamurindi (2012), the responses were coded into meaningful categories. The objective was to discover how widespread the experiences of employability issues among the stories of the participants were. Data analysis final level involved analysing the content from the gathered stories and themes (McCormack, 2000). This was achieved by theme identification and using direct quotes from the interviews, using consistencies in the stories of the participants (Levitt, et al., 2018).

The transcribed interviews were then exported into QSR International's NVivo 9, a data analysis and management software package for the purpose of data analysis useful when dealing with a lot of text, graphic, audio, and video data (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013; Reuben & Bobat, 2014). Chinyamurindi (2016c) argued that software such as NVivo only serves the purpose of organising data. The next section details how the transcribed data was analysed.

3.5.1 Strategies to ensure data quality

Given the qualitative nature of the study and under guidance (e.g. Chinyamurindi, 2012, 2016a, b, c), some steps were taken to ensure data quality. First, the protection of the participants was paramount. Pseudonyms were used to hide the identities of participants and thus ensure anonymity. Second, all interview data was audio recorded with permission to ensure the capturing of the participants' stories (Chinyamurindi, 2012). Third, field notes were taken including a reflexive diary as a way of capturing the experiences not just of the participants but those of the researcher while in the field. Fourth, all data that was audio-recorded was transcribed within 24 hours of the interview being conducted. Finally, as recommended by Cresswell (2009), interview transcriptions were sent to the women participants as a way of them validating the transcriptions as an accurate portrayal of what they said.

3.5.2 Ethical consideration

According to the Helsinki Declaration of 1972 and the Singapore Declaration, it is essential to get permission from an ethics committee when human or animal subjects are part of any research of an empirical nature (Maree, 2010). Ethics are an important consideration in research, predominantly with research concerning humans and animals (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014, p. 65).

The researcher adhered to ethical clearance at two levels. First, the researcher applied to the University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) for institutional permission before the research was conducted. The ethical clearance number granted was: **RAS101SCH101**. Secondly, using the women participants, the research also requested for permission to take part in the research study. Participants to the research gave consent. The researcher also considered the following ethics during the study: a) informed consent; b) voluntary participation, c) confidentiality; and d)

anonymity. The aim here was to protect participants from any form of physical or psychological harm.

The participants were debriefed about the purpose of the study, and asked who would be willing to voluntarily participate in the research study. Willing participants were then be asked to sign an informed consent form and were advised of their right to withdraw at any time if they wished to do so. The research also preserved anonymity and as no personal details of the participants were recorded, participants were given pseudonyms at the beginning of interviews and interview recordings were only accessible to the researcher and respective supervisor. All participants were treated with respect and dignity; the researcher did not mislead participants or manipulate any data recorded.

3.6. CONCLUSION

This chapter outlined the research methodology that was utilised for this research project. It also outlined the epistemological and ontological reasons for utilising the interpretivist paradigm and qualitative research, as well as why it was deemed the best for this study. Furthermore, the justification of narrative inquiry was made. The findings of the research project are outlined in the following chapter.

Together in Excellence

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The chapter details the research findings of the study based on the analysis conducted (as detailed) in Chapter 3. Four main narratives are presented in this chapter with accompanying sub-narratives based on the analysed accounts of the women pastors. The chapter begins by a recap of the objectives and research question proposed for this study. Thereafter, a description is presented of the research participants. This is followed by a presentation of the four narratives found and the sub-narratives. Brief stories and illustrating quotes are used to support these narratives and sub-narratives.

4.2 RECAP OF OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH QUESTION

By recap, these are the objectives and research question that guided this research:

4.2.1 Recap of objectives

- To investigate how women excluded from the ordained ministry in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa re-define their ministry.
- To examine the challenges women excluded from the ordained ministry in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa encounter as part of their lived experience.
- To come up with recommendations to assist women excluded from the ordained ministry and their career development.

4.2.2 Recap of research question

This study addressed the following questions: How do women excluded from the ordained ministry in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa re-define their calling as part of their career development? People are storytellers who ascribe different meanings to social experiences (Levitt et al., 2018; Levitt, et al., 2017). Hence, in order to understand the experiences of participating women in this research, a qualitative exploratory research approach was utilised. This approach allowed the

participants to share their experiences in their own words (Levitt, et al., 2018) without any predefined limitations or constraints.

4.3 RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

The research incorporated interviews as a research technique amongst a sample of ten women who had graduated with a Theology degree from SDA Church Institutions either in South Africa or any denominational church world-wide. All the interviews commenced with the same question, i.e. *“Tell me about yourself”*. This allowed the participants to be at ease. The interviews were conducted either telephonically or within a context at the choosing of the participants. The interviews lasted for an average of 50 minutes to an hour. For fear of possible identification all participants requested for anonymity.

Participants to the research were women who had studied for the pastoral ministry within and who are practising Seventh-day Adventists. These women were located within South Africa and the recognised local conferences of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. These include a) the Cape Conference; b) KwaZulu Natal-Free State Conference; c) Trans-Orange Conference; and d) the Northern Cape Conference. The biographical characteristics of the participants are outlined in Table 4.

Table 4.1: Participants to the Study

Pseudonym	Years since completing qualification	Current role & responsibility
Sue	5 Years	Working within church school.
Jane	10 Years	Still supports the church but engages in self-employment.
Mary	4 Years	Bible worker
Kate	5 Years	Bible worker

Jill	8 Years	Working within church school.
Laura	9 Years	Working within church as support worker.
Mercy	5 Years	Still supports the church but engaged in self-employment.
Basey	10 Years	Working within church school.
Vern	8 Years	Still supports the church but engaged in self-employment.
Moir	5 Years	Working within church as support worker.

This research utilised an interpretivist approach with the aid of QSR NVivo 9 – data management and analysis software to assist with data analysis. As in previous studies (e.g. Chinyamurindi, 2016a, b, 2017; Gramer, 2017; Harry *et al.*, 2017), this research adopted a structural narrative analysis as was suggested by Labov (1982). This model, which is mostly used for analysing narratives of personal experiences, was adopted for this research. The model was used to understand *how* the narratives were being told. The research also used a thematic analysis to illuminate *what* was being narrated (Gramer, 2017). The research used both structural and thematic analysis to understand individual experiences and to come up with themes of those experiences.

The transcripts based on the perceptions and experiences of the participants in Table 4.1 were read several times by the researcher for familiarity with the narratives and remove any commentaries that subverted the core narratives of the participants. The transcripts were emailed back to the participants for comments and confirmation

of the main narratives from their interviews. The data was then analysed using two components from Labov's structural analysis. Firstly, the 'complicated factors' were analysed, which looked at the actions and events that had happened and affected participants' lives and careers. The aim was to understand *how* the events had happened and *how* the events had affected the participants. Secondly, 'evaluation' was analysed to understand *how* the participants made sense of all the events that had happened. This allowed the researcher to understand the meaning that the participants were trying to convey in their narratives. This was done by looking at the openly communicated opinions in the narratives. Evaluation allowed the researcher to understand the rationale behind the narratives. After the narratives had been analysed independently they were cross checked for commonalities and differences to create themes from the narratives. The individual interviews were compared to each other to understand what themes emanated from the interviews. Table 4.2 was constructed to illustrate the codes that emanated from the narratives for the development of themes which is shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: From Codes to Narratives

Narrative	Sub-narrative(s)	Codes
Calling as influencing decision to enter pastoral ministry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Career in theology as a spiritual contract with God. 	Loyalty to God Service Mission Pledge Agreement Pledge
The pastoral ministry framed as a sustained challenge to women pastors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The challenge of recognition. - The challenge of parity. 	Not being taken seriously Role dependent

		<p>Unequal treatment</p> <p>Lack of support</p> <p>Gender divide</p> <p>Congregational hostility</p>
A perceived theological disjuncture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The disjuncture of theological interpretation. - The disjuncture of uniformity between the church in the north and the church in the south. 	<p>Lack of scriptural loyalty</p> <p>Differences between the church in the world</p>
Passive yet overt resolution tactics.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reluctance to challenge the status quo. - Conformity but resentment. - Seeking of alternative sources of income where theological training is utilised. 	<p>Submission</p> <p>Alternative income streams</p> <p>The necessity to continually utilise skills set away from being a pastor.</p> <p>Lack of challenge to the current situation</p>

4.4 STRATEGIES TO ENSURE DATA QUALITY AND REPORTING

To avoid researcher fatigue, the data was collected over a period of six months. Literature suggestions were followed to ensure data quality (Levitt *et al.*, 2017; 2018), and included using direct quotes from the participants' stories. The quotes represent the true accounts of the participants as no change or meaning was attributed to these quotes. Moreover, data was collected until the achievement of data saturation (Rubin

and Rubin, 2012). Credibility was further enhanced by using data analysis methods that had been used in previous similar studies (Chinyamurindi, 2016a, Gramer, 2017, Lehn, 2016). Trust between the principal researcher and participants shown in Table 4.1 was easily built as the investigator was a well-known member of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church. This made it easier for the researcher as he had prior knowledge of the working of the church and also affirmed a sense of trust. To ensure honesty from participants when contributing data, the study only included participants who had indicated their willingness to participate in the study. During the interviews, iterative questioning and probing were used as tactics to better understand raised issues.

The data analysis generated four main narratives and resultant sub-narrative(s): 1) calling as influencing decision to enter the pastoral ministry; 2) the pastoral ministry framed as a sustained challenge to women pastors; 3) the existence of a perceived theological disjuncture; and 4) passive yet overt resolution tactics. These narratives and resultant sub-narrative(s) form the basis for the next section in this chapter.

4.5 CALLING AS INFLUENCING THE DECISION TO ENTER THE PASTORAL MINISTRY

The first narrative finding to the research was the existence of a perceived career calling to enter the pastoral ministry. This perceived career calling manifested mostly in the women narrating a personal devotion and experience to God. In most cases, in the early Christian formation phase, the local church assisted in the development of this perceived calling. Participants narrated also a personal devotion to God and the cause of the church as assisting in the development of this calling. Church and spiritual artefacts were also framed as influencing the development of an individual's calling. In further explaining this narrative finding, a sub-narrative was found as this calling to enter theology as a profession to be a spiritual contract with God. This is illustrated next.

4.5.1 Calling as a spiritual contract with God

Participants narrated the existence of a spiritual contract entered between themselves and God. This contract appeared to form a core basis of why the interviewed participants viewed their career in theology as a calling. Ultimately, the

cause to support the church came naturally as part of this spiritual contract. The thinking here was that the beneficiary of this spiritual contract should be church, with God being the leader of the church.

One participant put it succinctly:

“I have an agreement with God. This agreement led me to actually think of entering into a career in theology. From a young age, God spoke to me in a way that I understood, I guess this is the benefit of the relationship and agreement I share with him.” (Moir).

Further to the idea of a spiritual agreement as part of a calling. One participant framed this agreement as operating with a set of boundaries:

“No relationship agreement exists without confines. To a certain extent as woman in theology, I may have kept silent a bit because of the cause of God. I really think my focus should really on this relationship agreement I have with God and in essence it restrains from breaking rank.” (Laura).

The spiritual agreement formed core to the existence of a calling. One participant narrated a story to support this:

“Growing up in the church we cited a verse – for the love of Christ constraineth me – this verse me supports the cause I stand and believe in. This is a cause that is framed within a relationship or even a partnership. I learnt this all through my life and for as long as the partnership exist I am happy.” (Mary).

The “*partnership*” narrated by Mary was framed by Sue in the form of a popular hymn that is sung within the Seventh-Day Adventist Church:

“we sing that hymn – naphina no-Yesu – anywhere with Jesus and for me that is not only revealing but telling of my relationship with God but also the career decisions I have made. (Vern).

In essence, the idea of a calling as a spiritual contract with God formed a key motivator to the decisions the women participants made and their navigation through varying life challenges. Illustrating quotes of the participants with regards to this

identified sub-narrative of a career calling as a spiritual contract with God is shown in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Career in theology as a spiritual contract with God illustrating quotes

Main narrative	Sub-narrative	Illustrating quotes
Calling as influencing decision to enter pastoral ministry.	Career in theology as a spiritual contract with God.	<p>“a core basis of my career entry into theology as path of study is informed by God and who God is to me.” Jane</p> <p>“God never leads us to a space where His grace cannot sustain. God is the anchor of the ship of my life and deciding to enter the pastoral ministry despite opposition from all quarters. This relationship has and continues to sustain me.” Basey</p> <p>“To be called by God means to adhere to the rules and pattern of God even when other do not understand.” Kate</p>

		<p>“Growing up in the church I never understood what it means to be a child of God. When I became involved in the activities of the church I started to understand better. I met a God I never met.” Jill</p> <p>“Like Jonah I was running away yet God drew me back to him and hence I chose to serve God even after I ran away.” Mercy</p>
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Related to the first finding and sub-narrative of a career in theology as a spiritual contract with God, the second finding based on the analysed data revealed the pastoral ministry as framed by the women pastors to be a sustained challenge. The challenges experienced expressed as sub-narratives included: a) *the challenge of recognition*; b) *the challenge of acceptance*; and c) *the challenge of parity*. All this is presented next.

4.6 THE PASTORAL MINISTRY FRAMED AS A SUSTAINED CHALLENGE TO WOMEN PASTORS

The second narrative finding to the research was the framing of the pastoral ministry as a sustained challenge to the women pastors. A point of reference to these challenges relates to the perceived way women pastors are treated especially by the church as an institution to include: congregants and fellow pastors (who are male). The sad reality of this experience of challenge for the women pastors had to do with their enduring nature. This could be the lack of resolution to the challenge of women

ordination not only on the church in South Africa but the global church. Added to this, the sustained nature of the challenges and the lack of resolution resonated with the wider challenges that relate to the acceptance of women within society. These challenges are presented next as sub-narratives

4.6.1 The challenge of recognition

The first perceived challenge had to do with the challenge of recognition. The participating women to the research all framed themselves as professionals who have gone through the necessary training but narrated the lack of recognition of this training publicly due to their gender. One participant put it this way:

“We go to school and sit through a range of theology and non-theology classes. This includes classes in systematic theology, practical theology and biblical languages like Greek and Hebrew. All this training is not only challenging but helps in making me theologian of note. You would expect after completion of our studies we get the recognition we deserve but this is not so. The issue of contention is not so much around what we know but who we are, women who studied theology.” (Mary).

Another participant made a point of reference to the lack of recognition of women pastors to be due to the wider socio-cultural milieu:

“The lack of recognition of women pastors reflects to what is happening in society. The church merely reflects the state of affairs of society. Women are not taken seriously. Then there is the challenge of patriarchy which at best limits the advancement of women. I am not really surprised that we as women pastors not only in the Adventist Church but also churches like the Methodist church have not received the recognition we deserve. This emanates from a society of problem and how women are viewed.” (Jill).

The lack of recognition appeared to be limiting to the career advancement of the women participants. One participant expressed this and described it briefly as “daylight robbery” to the cause of mission of the church using the imagery of the battlefield:

“We usually sing a song – I am on the battle field for my Lord. I think due to the lack of recognition of women pastors by the church as a whole, some form of daylight

robbery is happening. You send you best and well-trained soldiers on the battle front by affirming and acknowledging their varying talents. Failure to do so limits what you want to achieve in advancing the mission of the church.” (Mercy).

Another participant framed the challenge of a lack of recognition by espousing a utopian reality of how they wanted to be treated. Jill in her framing also revealed undertones of gender insensitivity and how it limits her career advancement:

“I always cringe when given the opportunity to share the word in a congregation setting. First, there is the challenge of address – do we call her pastor or sister? Second – the mental block created by me being a woman sharing the scriptures, you can see the tension that this creates. Finally, I could be sharing on John 3:16 – God’s love for us and someone is really on 1 Corinthians 14:34 – women must be silent in church. It comes down to acknowledgement.” (Vern).

Table 4.4 presents further quotes on the challenge of recognition faced by women pastors and how this is limiting their calling to the pastoral ministry.

Table 4.4: The challenge of recognition – Illustrating quotes

<p>The pastoral ministry framed as a sustained challenge to women pastors.</p>	<p>The challenge of recognition.</p>	<p>“You often hear disparaging remarks being made to women especially those who can even preach more powerfully than men. There is lack of acknowledgement to talent due issue that are really periphery.” Jane</p> <p>“Any professional who has been trained in a discipline deserves acknowledgement even a</p>
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		<p>title recognition. This is not so with us – we will never be called pastor but rather sister. Not so with our male counterparts.” Basey</p> <p>“Give us the recognition we deserve.” Kate</p> <p>“I am not only a theologian but also a pastor. Call me pastor and ignore my gender but acknowledge my training.” Moir</p>
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The first perceived challenge identified in this study had to do with the challenge of recognition. The participating women to the research framed themselves as professionals who have gone through the necessary training but narrated the lack of recognition and acceptance of this training. The next challenge and a sub-narrative to the main challenge of sustained challenges within the pastoral ministry had to do with the challenge of parity. This sub-narrative challenge is presented next.

4.6.2 The challenge of parity

The participating women pastors narrated a challenge of parity referring to perceptions of equality in comparison to their male colleagues. One participant expressed this view:

“There is definitely a difference in how male pastors are treated in comparison to female pastors. I remember one time visiting with some of my colleagues as

students pastors at a local church. All my male colleagues were given acknowledgement and called pastors – I was just sister Jane accompanying the male pastors despite being a student pastor as well.” (Jane).

Jane’s experience reveals an unequal treatment that is given to women pastors in comparison to their male counterparts. Linked to this was the experience of Moira:

“Even amongst some male senior pastors. The treatment is treatment is different. Our male colleagues are seen as more stout to deal with complex issues. For instance, you will never see a female preaching at a funeral. We are relegated to the perceived softer issues like providing counselling. Our male colleagues definitely are treated better.” (Moira).

Kate framed the preferential treatment issues to gender albeit a lack of knowledge about how pastors (male and female) are trained:

“Our congregants are not aware of how similar a male and female pastor are. We both received the same theological training. In some cases, the female pastors even helped their male colleagues with their homework while at school. We are reading the same bible – male and female.” (Kate).

Basey appears to also extend the lack of parity to issues of remuneration:

“By relegating women pastors to Bible workers this affects issues of remuneration. In essence, you are paid less than a pastor despite studying the same qualification. This is the case with us females who are paid less than our male colleagues.” (Basey).

Table 4.5 presents further quotes on the challenge of parity faced by women pastors and how this is limiting their calling to the pastoral ministry.

Table 4.5: The challenge of parity – Illustrating quotes

<p>The pastoral ministry framed as a sustained challenge to women pastors.</p>	<p>The challenge of parity.</p>	<p>“The church is definitely an unequal terrain yet we still manage to survive.” Mary</p> <p>“I often get sympathy calls from some of my male pastor colleagues. They understand the challenges we face as they are really the point of reference and treated better.” Jill</p> <p>“Unequal systems and structures characterise our organisation.” Mercy</p>
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4.7 A PERCEIVED THEOLOGICAL DISJUNCTURE

The third narrative finding to the research revealed participant concerns around a theological disjuncture. The disjuncture espoused by participants in this study and presented as sub-narratives were around a) the disjuncture of theological interpretation; and b) the disjuncture of operation in relation to the church in the north and the church in the south. This third finding is presented next and how it relates to the issue of a calling amongst women pastors.

4.7.1 A theological disjuncture

The participating women pastors narrated a theological disjuncture of Biblical interpretation to exist. One participant expressed this view:

“Something is wrong when the issues of the ordination of women is presented especially within our church. Everything is contextual and when we read the bible may we not abandon this context. One verse that is used to silence us is 1 Timothy 2:12 – [I do not permit a women to teach or to exercise authority over a man, rather she is remain quiet]. This verse is taken within a certain context – becomes problematic when this is omitted – some people just don’t get it. ” (Mary).

Another participant supporting Mary, illustrated the theological disjuncture of Biblical interpretation by taking the issue to the Genesis account of creation:

“The issue of women ordination is controversial in the Adventist church. I remember engaged in debate with one senior pastor on this matter. I referred the pastor to the creation account by looking at Genesis 1:27 – [So God created man [humankind] in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them]. My contention with this passage around how the issues of equality feature between the male and female specify. This senior pastor’s response – yes they are equal but males occupy a headship role than their women counterparts. To me this does not come out like that in the passage. ” (Jill).

Mercy also narrated some contradictions by referring to how the Bible treated women:

“So we cannot be ordained as pastors but within the Bible you can pick up the storied lives of a number of women leaders whom I believe could be elevated in present day to be spiritual and administrative leaders in the church. These include: prophets – Paul writes about Phillip’s daughters; deacons like Phoebe; gospel workers like Prisca and community activists like Dorcas.” (Mercy).

Another participant narrating the theological disjuncture drew a comparison between the current state of affairs in the church and the ministry of Christ. The participant appeared to be concerned that a chasm exists between what Jesus did and what is happening in the church:

“The ministry of Jesus is of interest to me. If you follow through, no one was ordained to be part of the gospel ministry. Jesus called individuals to follow him male and female. Yes the main feature of this call were twelve apostles, but also some women also followed Jesus. Think of the account in the book of Luke where we are told of Mary Magdalene, Susanna and Joanna. There must be reason why in a patriarchal society as Jesus lived these women are mentioned. In the current dispensation, the church appears not to acknowledge this involvement and role of women as was during the time of Jesus. It’s really not part of the main-text and a deliberate omission from those who do not want to affirm the role of women in the pastoral ministry.” (Moir).

The example set by Jesus and what is happening in the church. One participant now engaged in self-employment but still supporting the church made reference to the book of Galatians by using the imagery of the chains being broken:

“Chains must be broken especially those that those man-made theological chains. Paul’s writings are often abused in their interpretation. In as much as reference can be made to passages that say women must be silent in a place of worship how about those that affirm equality between male and female. For instance, in Galatians 3:28, the bible states [In Christ there is now Jew or Greek, slave or citizen, male or female. All are one in Christ Jesus]. We must have some form of scriptural loyalty and not selectively use texts that suit our personal preference.” (Vern).

4.7.1 An operational disjuncture

In addition to the theological disjuncture of Biblical interpretation, another sub-narrative related to the existence of an operational disjuncture in relation to the church in the north and the church in the south. What participants appeared to be describing here through comparison are the overt and covert manifestations of how the church in Africa and the church in the rest of the world (to include Europe and the United States) approach the issue of women ordination and their calling in serving as pastors.

One participant described the operational disjuncture around the implementation of what is supposed to be church policy and how it relates to the women ordination within the global church:

“The world church at one its general conferences made policy not to allow any church within its operation to ordain women to pastoral ministry. Given that this is a world church mandate you would expect everyone to conform. We here in Africa, to the best of my knowledge are not ordaining but I hear that some of our churches in the United States and Europe have gone ahead and ordained. For me this shows a divided home. Yes I would like to be ordained as well but for the sake of unity I hold back. Just to see that issues are different from the other side of the world makes me be concerned.” (Sue).

4.8 CONCLUSION

The next section presents a discussion of the results.



CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

5.1 RECAP OF THE OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

The primary aim of the study was to investigate how women excluded from the ordained ministry in the SDA church in South Africa re-define their calling as part of their career development. In achieving this, the following objectives were set:

- To investigate how women excluded from the ordained ministry in the SDA church in South Africa re-define their ministry.
- To examine the challenges women excluded from the ordained ministry in the SDA church in South Africa encounter as part of their lived experience.
- To come up with recommendations to assist women excluded from the ordained ministry and their career development.

5.2 RECAP OF THE RESEARCH QUESTION

The main research question that guided this study was:

How do women excluded from the ordained ministry in the SDA church in South Africa re-define their calling as part of their career development?

5.3 DISCUSSION OF MAIN FINDINGS

The need for the women participants to serve in ministry and using Manfred Max-Neef's theory illustrates a human need for divine and spiritual expression (Shen, 2016). However, this expression appears to be framed as a journey through different stages (Clarke, 1993). The women participants fit the criteria of a) being, b) having, and c) interacting. The thread that appears to drive the women participants is that of a utility of human and divine service. The women participants though being co-constructors of their career identity and individual progression (Max-Neef et al., 1989a) appeared limited by barriers found within their society and the church. Using the language proposed by Max-Neef et al. (1989b), violators appear to be those factors that impeded career development such as a lack of scriptural loyalty and the perceived mistreatment by congregants. Further to this and more broadly, appear to be the challenge around the emancipation of the women especially within the church system.

Regrettably, despite a lack of challenge of the status quo by the women participants, there appears to be no balanced interdependence between their individual and environmental factors (Guillen-Royo, 2015). In essence, just an acceptance of the status quo.

The findings of the study support the view that the topic of women ordination across various Christian denominations continues to be an issue that can divide the church (Gautier et al., 2012). For instance, based on the findings of the research, the women participants could point out the differences and potential divisions that exist within the SDA church by geographical region concerning the issue of women ordination. Such differences and divisions created by issue of women ordination have the potential to impact the greater mission of the church (Greeley, 2004; Loudon & Francos, 2003; Harvey, 2018). Further, the issue has the potential to affect aspects such as women empowerment albeit problems of patriarchy and gender superiority (Chitando, 2004).

The findings of the study though descriptive appear to be also exploratory and telling of the challenges that women in ministry within the SDA church face. For instance, the findings showing that the pastoral ministry is framed as a sustained challenge affecting the women pastors. This finding, including the resolution tactics used to address these challenges, gives resonance to the value of the qualitative research approach in allowing for an opportunity to gain an in-depth investigation to complexity in social research (Creswell, 2009; 2014).

Further, as argued within the extant literature, the qualitative research approach and use of narratives assisted in understanding sense-making processes (Chinyamurindi, 2012, 2016a, b, c). In the context of this study, this not only consisted of the individual factors relating to career calling and career development but also the interaction of these with the environment. As argued, a qualitative research approach allowed for an opportunity to gain an in-depth understanding and knowledge concerning the lived experiences of individuals. Further, an argument is made that the qualitative research approach also offered the opportunity to understand the sense-making processes better (as opposed to the quantitative paradigm).

Related to the issue of challenges, it can be considered that the way the women participants responded to their challenges is illustrative of individual resourcing in dealing with career challenges (Xie et al., 2016). Through this study, women participants narrated a combination of passive yet overt ways of responding to their challenges. In essence, these ways of dealing with career challenges also illustrate the power of narratives in providing a holistic understanding of why and how individuals construct their careers (Savickas, 2005). This also includes how such individuals adapt to the transitory and ever-changing environments in which they live (Curso & Rehfuess, 2011).

Concerning the notion of a calling, the literature appears to attribute two interpretations of a calling. The first appears to be a calling as a call to a position of public leadership with full acknowledgement (c.f. Conyers, 2004; Holl, 1958). The second notion of a calling appears to be more of a psychological and spiritual affiliation without necessarily an assumption of an office (Hays, 2011). These two views of a calling appear to show how fluid the concept is (Nel & Scholtz, 2015). This study found the women participants seeking more for the former, a way of full public acknowledgement. This could be due to the nature African societies place value on merit and status.

Linked to this need for full public acknowledgement could be a desire for women to break past a) *societal hierarchies* (Kisitu & Siwila, 2016); b) *cultural sexism* (Oduyoye, 1995) and breaking past societal framing of what a woman should and should not do (Botha, 2000). Despite not getting this acknowledgement through ordination, the attitude of the women participants to this study in continuing to support the mission of the SDA church supports the work of Arrais (2015). In this view, central to the expression of career calling and individual pursuit of career development is fulfilling the wider mission of the church albeit constraints emanating from the church and ecosystem within which it operates.

5.4 CONTRIBUTION

The study offers some useful contributions that are in line with research within the career development and carer calling literature stream as argued within the extant literature (e.g. Dik & Duffy, 2009; Doubell & Struwig, 2014; Duffy et al., 2011).

Uniquely, the positioning of this study within the discipline of theology not only serves as a useful basis of illustration to the value of interdisciplinarity but also the fluid nature of concepts like those under study. This is somewhat praiseworthy given the argument made by Fourie (2013:1) that themes within the branch of systematic theology are somewhat “complex” in the way they affect not just the individual but also societal behaviour.

First, the study addresses an issue that has continued to be a bone of contention within the Christian faith and also within other religious groups. It is envisaged through the findings of the study that some form of heightened understanding has been achieved towards the challenges and resolution tactics of women in ministry. Importantly, it is hoped this study offers a basis for further inquiry into these and other issues. This warrants a theoretical contribution of this study in view of calls for a nuanced understanding of the issues women in ministry face especially within the SDA church (Norheim, 2009) and other denominations (e.g. de Beer & Müller, 2009; Wagner-Ferreira, 2011).

Second, the study seeks to make some practical contributions concerning the issues of a calling and career development, especially amongst women in the SDA church based on the findings presented in the previous chapter:

a) The need for continued scriptural interrogation on this matter. The issue of women ordination may still require the church to continue to interrogate the issue scripturally. However, the issue as espoused by the women participants appears to be a reading of scripture that is not only consistent but considerate of context. Something argued by Resane (2018) as critical considering the importance of exegesis and hermeneutics.

b) The need for the SDA church to continue to offer an environment conducive to scriptural interrogation around issues such as women ordination. This may appear similar to the first point but the argument here is for a wider church influence in assisting members to understand reading scripture contextually.

c) **Despite the lack of consensus on the issue of women ordination, there is need for continued support to be given to the women in ministry despite them not being ordained.** Participants to the study narrated a range of challenges that appear to affect their psycho-social well-being due to their marginalisation. This borrows from theorising that shows issues related to career calling and career development including individual response and the psycho-social ramifications (McIlveen & Midgley, 2015). Some form of psychological and spiritual counselling is needed to assist such individuals. This is a view supported generally within the extant literature showing the necessity of counselling especially towards individuals who have and are undergoing vocational and personal challenges (Maree, 2015).

d) **There is need to address and create an awareness around the nomenclature concerning the women ordination debate.** Participants to the study narrated perceived differences to exist between the church in the global north and the church in the global south. In some Western countries, the SDA church affiliates have gone ahead and started ordaining (or making steps towards ordaining women). In the majority of African countries where the SDA church is represented this has not happened. The departure here should be to have some form of critical cross-cultural dialogue around issues that form part of the SDA church way of life. This fits within calls of providing an African voice to issues of spirituality and religion (Louw, 2010; Kistner, 2008). Related to the issue of the nomenclature, Landman (2006) pointed out that en route to gender justice, it is important to use language that befits this cause. A starting point as argued within this research could be to unpack further the language around issues within the debates presented in this research.

For instance, an understanding of what ordination is in view of the ministry of a pastor can be a starting point. There is need to declutter and shed light on the significance and meaning around practices such as ordination. Using a definition as put forward within the literature in the SDA church – ordination involves the act of “formally sanctioning an individual for the purpose of fulfilling the church’s global mission” as prescribed in Matthew 24:14; 28:19-20) (North America Division, 2013, p. 10). Given this, some issues need to be unpacked: a) *who decides this ordination – the formal church or God?* and b) in view of the global mission, why is this ordination important?

5.5 LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH AREAS

This study has some notable shortcomings. First, the sample is narrowed only to women within the SDA church who have gone through theological training even though not ordained within the ministry. It is notable that the sample is not only narrow but not representative to the entire population of women within the SDA church. In essence, the findings of this study, though assisting in understanding the sense-making processes around women in ministry within the SDA church, cannot be generalised to other women within the SDA church or other faith groups.

A second shortcoming of this research was the lack of attempt to resolve scripturally the theological debate around women ordination. In fairness, this declaration was made from the onset that the study does not seek to solve the morass around the women ordination debate not only within the SDA church but other Christian or other religious groups. Despite all this, the women ordination issue appears to be the issue of contention that needs further inquiry. This research only narrowed focus to the effect of this debate as part of a lived experience through studying the calling and career development issues of women in ministry.

Future research can be proposed based on the findings of this study. First, the experiences of other women in other churches or even religions can offer a basis for comparison. Using the findings from this study, some research questions can be explored further:

- a) How does the notion of calling manifest in other church groups and religions?
- b) What are the challenges faced concerning a calling and career development in other church groups and religions?
- c) How do segments of text either aid or inhibit the experience of a calling and career development in other church groups and religions?
- d) How do pastors and religious leaders work around challenges they face as part of their calling and career development in other church groups and religions?

The presented questions can offer a basis not just for understanding the issues of a calling and career development but can include some form of comparative understanding. Second, this research took a gendered angle by giving voice to women in ministry, future research could also explore the response from the recipients of the ministry. This may be other male pastors and congregants especially given literature showing that a barrier women in ministry face concerns their response to male hegemony (Moripe, 1994; West, 1975). The angle of focus here as argued in the recursive nature of careers (Chinyamurindi, 2012) is to understand how the recipients of the ministry of service offered by the pastor aid or inhibit their calling and career development.

5.6 CONCLUSION

This study provided valuable understanding into the notion of a calling and career development within the SDA church using a sample of women participants in South Africa. At best, the study heightens focus on the importance of aspects of a calling and career development within the confines of the faith and religious discipline. Though this is a notable expansion to the body of knowledge given that these aspects have mostly been studied within the Industrial and Organisational Psychology discipline, much needs to be done empirically to understand such concepts within the theology discipline. The glaring points though as found in this research appear to be the interacting nature of a series of factors in shaping the notion of a career calling and career development, especially amongst women in ministry. These factors include the socio-cultural milieu consisting of not only actors (e.g. congregants and society in general) but also artefacts such as scripture from the Bible or other books of faith and religion (including how these are interpreted). A second glaring and related point towards the notion of a calling and career development as revealed in this study, concerns the issues of intersectionality and marginality. Women in ministry appear to occupy multiple identities, an aspect of intersectionality at play here. However, marginality also appears to emerge through the very same system within which these multiple identities exist. This is not only an irony but something that deserves further empirical inquiry.

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