

UNIVERSITY OF OSLO  
FACULTY OF THEOLOGY  
BLINDERN

**LORD, SIT WITH ME A LITTLE LONGER: A STUDY OF  
WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP AND GENDER EMPOWERMENT  
IN THE CHARISMATIC RENEWAL GROUPS OF THE  
MAINLINE CHURCHES IN GHANA**

This thesis is submitted to the University of Oslo, Norway, in partial fulfilment of  
the requirements for the award for the Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Theology

By

Anita Aba Ansah

**June 2022**



© Anita Aba Ansah, 2023

*Series of dissertations submitted to the  
Faculty of Theology, University of Oslo  
Acta Theologica no. 88*

ISSN 1502-010X

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be  
reproduced or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without permission.

Cover: UiO.

Print production: Graphics Center, University of Oslo.

**Dedication**

This thesis is dedicated to my mother, Grace Enowa Adokwah (1951-2015).



## **Acknowledgements**

I am grateful to the Norwegian State Educational Loan Fund (Lånekassen) for making it possible for me to receive the necessary funding for this Ph.D. programme. I also am thankful to the board of the Faculty of Theology, who admitted me into the programme, having found my proposal worthy. Many thanks to the Faculty of Theology, University of Oslo for the opportunity.

My sincere appreciation goes to my supervisors Birgitte Lerheim and Nina Hoel for their dedication all these years to culminate in the success of this academic journey. I am especially grateful to Birgitte Lerheim for her honesty, her encouragement and her input in various ways that only helped create a greater outcome. She would always say, Aba, 'I believe in this,' which was an immense motivation for me indeed. Her relentless ability to inform theoretically by giving council is appreciated very much. I am also grateful to Nina Hoel for her council and directions especially with her ability to push one to give off even more. As well as her attention to every detail and her utmost commitment.

This Ph.D. project would have not come into fruition without the participants of the study. I wish to thank the men and women of the three mainline churches in Ghana, who were kind enough to participate. Their homes, work places and churches were visited at different times due to their decision to trust me as a researcher. For that, I am thankful. I am most grateful to the various gatekeepers of these congregations for welcoming me into their midst during fieldwork.

I wish to thank the Dean of the Faculty of Theology Prof. Aud Valborg Tønnessen for her vote of confidence in me, during my Master's degree graduation, which encouraged me to submit my proposal for this Ph.D. programme. I grateful to Prof. Kjetil Hafstad for his encouragement and his words of wisdom through many trying times. To the former Ph.D. leader, Prof. Diana Edelmand and the current Ph.D. leader Prof. Marius Timmann Mjaaland, your guidance is immensely appreciated. I owe a debt of gratitude to the Religion Values and Society Research School, which offered immense training and contribution to various aspects of this thesis.

Finally, I want to thank a few special individuals whose friendships and mentorship have made a difference. To David Stiles-Ocran for your friendship. To Amina Selimovic and Ellen Reinertsen and all the other Ph.D. colleagues, whose names are not mentioned here, thank you all for sharing the highs and lows of this journey with me. I am grateful for my family who

showed encouragement and who sent prayers my way. These include my siblings and other extended family. I am eternally grateful to you all.

## **List of abbreviations**

ABSPG	Anglican Bible Study and Prayer Group
AIC	African Instituted Church/ African Independent Church
ATR	African Traditional Religion
CCR	Catholic Charismatic Renewal
CRG	Charismatic Renewal Group
GSS	Ghana Statistical Service
LSS	Life in the Spirit Seminar
MLC	Mainline Church
MPF	Methodist Prayer Fellowship
MPRM	Methodist Prayer and Renewal Movement
MPRP	Methodist Prayer and Renewal Programme





Table of Contents

<b>LORD, SIT WITH ME A LITTLE LONGER: A STUDY OF WOMEN’S LEADERSHIP AND GENDER EMPOWERMENT IN THE CHARISMATIC RENEWAL GROUPS OF THE MAINLINE CHURCHES IN GHANA.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Dedication .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Acknowledgements.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>List of abbreviations.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Abstract .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>CHAPTER ONE.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>PART I .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION OF THESIS.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>1.1 Introduction .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>1.2 Definition of terminologies.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>1.3 Gender empowerment in the Ghanaian sphere .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>1.4 Feminist theology and the interdisciplinary nature of this study .....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>1.4.1 Intersections and affinities with practical theology.....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>1.5 Conclusion .....</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>PART II.....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>1.6 The trajectory of events in the development of the charismatic renewal groups of the mainline churches in Ghana.....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>1.7 Placing the study in context .....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>CHAPTER TWO.....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>SERVANT LEADERSHIP AND AFRICAN FEMINIST THEOLOGY.....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>2.1 Introduction .....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>2.2 Servant leadership .....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>2.2.1 Introduction .....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>2.2.2 Servant leadership theory .....</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>2.2.3 The relevance of servant leadership to this study.....</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>2.2.4 The link between servant leadership and other leadership typologies as a contrast .....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>2.3 African feminist theology .....</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>2.3.1 Introduction .....</b>	<b>58</b>

2.3.2 Oduyoye on the oppression of African women by the language of traditional and modern structures.....	59
2.3.3 Oduyoye on the androgyny of God .....	61
2.3.5 Kanyoro on cultural hermeneutics and Bible translation .....	63
2.3.6 Phiri and her-stories .....	64
2.3.7 Nadar and her-stories.....	65
2.3 The relevance of African feminist theology .....	67
2.4 The relationship between servant leadership theory and African feminist theology .....	68
2.5 The relationship between leadership and gender in light of women’s leadership in African Pentecostalism.....	69
2.8 Conclusion .....	75
<b>CHAPTER THREE .....</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>METHODS AND RESEARCH POSITIONING .....</b>	<b>76</b>
3.1 Introduction .....	76
3.2 Research methods .....	76
3.2.1 A Reflection of coherence between the research question and the methods.....	77
3.2.2 Participant observation.....	78
3.2.3 Semi-structured interviews .....	81
3.3 Research procedures .....	81
3.3.1 Interview guide .....	81
3.3.2 Research setting .....	82
3.3.3 Participants .....	83
3.3.4 Sampling techniques.....	84
3.3.5 Interview process .....	86
3.4 Analysis.....	86
3.5 Research ethics and ethical challenges .....	89
3.6 Researcher positionality.....	92
3.7 Conclusion .....	98
<b>CHAPTER FOUR.....</b>	<b>99</b>
<b>PENTECOSTALIZATION AND PENTECOSTAL/ CHARISMATIC PRACTICES: DATA PRESENTATION FROM PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION .....</b>	<b>99</b>
4.1 Introduction .....	99
4.1.1 At home and in the field .....	99

4.1.2 Field entry: first leg .....	99
4.1.3 Field entry: second leg.....	102
4.2 Catholic Charismatic Renewal: preliminary meeting with the parish priest .....	102
4.2.1 Catholic Charismatic Renewal and its mother parish .....	103
4.2.2 CCR meeting participation: your teachings give me comfort.....	104
4.2.3 CCR meeting participation: new Pentecost for new evangelization.....	105
4.2.4 CCR meeting participation: women in the background.....	106
4.2.5 CCR meeting participation: zonal meeting.....	107
4.3 Anglican Bible Study and Prayer Group: preliminary meeting with the parish priest of the Anglican congregation .....	108
4.3.1 ABSPG and its mother congregation.....	109
4.3.2 ABSPG meeting participation: how to claim God’s promises .....	110
4.3.3 ABSPG meeting participation: a man is the head .....	111
4.4 Methodist Prayer and Renewal Programme: preliminary meeting with the priest of the Methodist congregation .....	112
4.4.2 MPRP and its mother congregation.....	113
4.4.3 MPRP meeting participation: spiritual warfare.....	114
4.4.4 MPRP meeting participant: fighting for what is yours.....	116
4.5 Conclusion .....	117
<b>CHAPTER FIVE.....</b>	<b>119</b>
<b>WOMEN’S LEADERSHIP, EMPOWERMENT, PARTICIPATION, AND GENDER DYNAMICS: DATA PRESENTATION FROM SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS .....</b>	<b>119</b>
5.1 Introduction .....	119
5.2. Formal leadership in the renewal groups of the mainline churches.....	119
5.3. Informal leadership and playing a role .....	126
5.4 Gender empowerment in the charismatic renewal groups stemming from participation and leadership.....	129
5.5 Other forms of participation and activities/engagements.....	133
5.6 Ghanaian family structure and gender dynamics: its ramifications .....	135
5.7 Conclusion .....	142
<b>CHAPTER SIX.....</b>	<b>143</b>
<b>WOMEN’S LEADERSHIP ROLES: FINDINGS, ANALYSES, AND DISCUSSIONS</b>	<b>143</b>
6.1 Introduction .....	143

6.2 The language deployed on access to women’s leadership positions and servant leadership .....	143
6.2.1. Love and acceptance for all by servant leaders .....	143
6.2.2 Followers as servant leaders .....	150
6.2.3 Women who are men in the spirit as servant leaders.....	155
6.2.4 Prophesying women sanctioned for servant leadership.....	159
6.2.5 God as no respecter of persons and servant leadership.....	161
6.2.6 The Holy Spirit as no respecter of persons and servant leadership.....	163
6.2.7 The Bible says so and servant leadership .....	166
6.3 The use of the Bible .....	168
6.3.1 The Ethiopian eunuch .....	168
6.3.2 Baptism and the abrogation of gender .....	169
6.3.3 The torn curtain of the Jewish temple after the crucifixion .....	171
6.4 Conclusion .....	173
<b>EMPOWERMENT, GENDER AND PENTECOSTALISM: FINDINGS, ANALYSIS, DISCUSSION .....</b>	<b>174</b>
7.1 Introduction .....	174
7.2 Empowerment and women’s participation in the CRGs .....	174
7.2.1 Transcendent help and empowerment .....	174
7.2.2 Prayer, bonding and empowerment.....	178
7.2.3 Zeal and gender dynamics .....	183
7.3 Gender and African feminist theology.....	187
7.3.1 Male spousal authority and permission.....	187
7.3.2 Asymmetrical gender roles and the female limitation .....	190
7.3.3 The absent women .....	192
7.3.4 Education, literacy and culture .....	195
7.4 Pentecostalism, participation and activities .....	198
7.4.1 Intercession and miracle .....	198
7.4.2 A state of self-doubt as a condition .....	202
7.4.3 Dreams impinging on reality and deliverance/exorcism.....	205
7.5 Conclusion .....	208
<b>CHAPTER EIGHT .....</b>	<b>209</b>
<b>CONCLUDING REMARKS.....</b>	<b>209</b>
8.1 Introduction: what the study is about.....	209

<b>8.2 Influences and tendencies of women’s leadership: main findings .....</b>	<b>209</b>
<b>8.2.1 The Catholic Charismatic Renewal Group .....</b>	<b>209</b>
<b>8.2.2 The Methodist Prayer and Renewal Programme .....</b>	<b>210</b>
<b>8.2.3 Anglican Bible Study and Prayer Group .....</b>	<b>211</b>
<b>8.3 History, patriarchy, and literacy: discussions.....</b>	<b>212</b>
<b>8.3.1 Historical trajectory .....</b>	<b>212</b>
<b>8.3.2 Patriarchal understandings of gender and gender relations .....</b>	<b>215</b>
<b>8.3.3 Local languages, illiteracy and education.....</b>	<b>218</b>
<b>8.4 Women’s experiences of leadership and empowerment .....</b>	<b>219</b>
<b>8.4.1 Using religious texts to argue for women’s religious leadership .....</b>	<b>220</b>
<b>8.4.2 Women leaders are held to a different set of expectations .....</b>	<b>221</b>
<b>8.4.3 Experiences of empowerment due to membership, bonds of friendship, and spiritual practice .....</b>	<b>223</b>
<b>8.4.4 Women’s leadership and empowerment .....</b>	<b>225</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>227</b>
<b>Appendix .....</b>	<b>237</b>
<b>Interview guide for participants .....</b>	<b>237</b>
<b>Informed consent form .....</b>	<b>239</b>



## **Abstract**

Charismatic renewal groups (CRGs) have become central features of mainline churches in Ghana. They fall under the category of the Pentecostal/ charismatic movement, while existing within their specific mainline churches (MLCs). The aim of this study is to examine the influences and tendencies of women's leadership roles in a selection of three charismatic renewal groups of the mainline churches in Ghana. The thesis also aims to examine women's experiences of leadership roles and the extent to which it contributes to women's empowerment. The Roman Catholic, Anglican and Methodist churches are the three mainline churches examined in this study and their charismatic renewal groups are the primary focus. Methodologically, the study employs the approaches of participant observation and semi-structured interviews, as well as comparative and thematic analysis. Servant leadership theory and African feminist theology are used as critical lenses to analyse and discuss data and findings. The thesis finds that segments of the charismatic renewal groups have a strong presence of women in leadership. Nonetheless, some of these women consider themselves "women who are men in the spirit," and hold experiences that are reflective of sentiments like "not being enough" and being in "a state of self-doubt" when in positions of leadership. The thesis also finds that women's experiences of leadership have empowering potential related to their ability to cope and survive. Additionally, women in segments of the charismatic renewal groups are treading a differentiated ministerial track: ministering solely to other women. Through the prism of a dominant patriarchal Ghanaian culture and the adoption of Christian patriarchal normativity, women's identities are forged in ways that often limit their activities in the charismatic renewal groups. At the same time, Christianity—as seen through the utilization of Biblical texts by many participants is perceived to be liberational and empowering for women in some respects.





# CHAPTER ONE

## PART I

### INTRODUCTION OF THESIS

#### 1.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study is to explore the influences and tendencies of women's leadership roles in a selection of three charismatic renewal groups of the mainline churches in Ghana. The thesis also aims to examine women's experiences of leadership roles and the extent to which it contributes to women's empowerment. The thesis employs participant observation and semi-structured interviews as its main empirical methods to gain valuable insights and in-depth knowledge into the workings of women's leadership in a selection of the charismatic renewal groups of the mainline churches. The primary group of interest in this work are the women within the charismatic renewal groups (CRGs). Nonetheless, I have also examined the views and experiences of some male members of these circles due to their relationship to the women and their roles in the CRGs.

When a woman is spoken of in Ghana, it is often impossible to separate her from her family and her responsibilities towards her family.<sup>1</sup> Women's positions in society always influence the family and vice versa due to their roles as primary caregivers or mothers as the case may be.<sup>2</sup> Women's experiences are of particular interest to this thesis as they inevitably are informed by the demands of society (wherein ideals and norms of womanhood exist) and the demands of family. Often, such demands result in a complex mix of feelings and struggles, which are shared by women in different circumstances of life.<sup>3</sup> Starting from the position that the ethos of the MLCs and that of the charismatic/ Pentecostal churches are drastically different, this is with regards to Christian beliefs and practices.<sup>4</sup> The thesis thus, investigates and contrasts the MLCs and the CRGs.<sup>5</sup>

The thesis concentrates on examining the nature of leadership within these circles. It also examines the specific roles within the congregations and the male and female positions/ gender

---

<sup>1</sup> Nora Judith Amu, *The Role of Women in Ghana's Economy* (Accra: Friedrich Ebert Foundation, 2005), 8-9.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>3</sup> Jacquelyn Grant, *White Women's Christ and Black Women's Jesus : Feminist Christology and Womanist Response*, vol. no. 64, American Academy of Religion Academy Series (Atlanta, Ga: Scholars Press, 1989), 9.

<sup>4</sup> Joel B. Kailing, "A New Solution to the African Christian Problem," *Missiology: An International Review* 22, no. 4 (1994): 490. <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/009182969402200406>. Accessed 2 November 2017.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

dynamics that exists. Pentecostalism is an important field in this study due to it being an overarching "banner." Even though the CRGs to be studied are found within the MLCs, these same CRGs are categorized under Pentecostalism.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, the CRGs are part of Pentecostal Christianity.<sup>7</sup> The practices of the CRGs are often in breach of the liturgy of its corresponding MLCs.<sup>8</sup> Rather, the CRGs' liturgy follows the pattern of a Pentecostal or charismatic liturgy, fused with MLC elements in some cases.

It must be mentioned that Protestantism worldwide emerged from Roman Catholicism.<sup>9</sup> In the Ghanaian context, the former saw the emergence of classical Pentecostalism, which in turn saw the neo-Pentecostal movement develop.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, a section of Roman Catholicism and the three-fold early Protestantism realised elements of Pentecostalism/ charismatic renewal within their congregations, which earned the nomenclature "CRGs." Pentecostalism has numerous centres of origin the world over.<sup>11</sup>

The study is situated in Greater Accra Ghana, hence the importance of the Roman Catholic Church as well as the early protestant churches. This designation is related to Ghana in a very special way due to the missionary activities that began there during the pre-colonial era. These churches took root because of the locations in which their early missionaries settled and proselytized. This meant that, for many generations in Ghana, especially before the phase when Pentecostalism took root as independent competing entities, church affiliation took tribal lines.<sup>12</sup> This is because specific church missions were attached to specific locations and tribes

---

<sup>6</sup>J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics : Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana*, vol. Vol. 27 (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 30.

<sup>7</sup> Birgit Meyer, "The Power of Money: Politics, Occult Forces, and Pentecostalism in Ghana," *African Studies Review* 41, no. 3 (1998): 26. [https://www.jstor.org/stable/525352?sid=primo&origin=crossref&seq=1#metadata\\_info\\_tab\\_contents](https://www.jstor.org/stable/525352?sid=primo&origin=crossref&seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents). Accessed 10 May 2016.

<sup>8</sup> Cephas Omenyo, "The Charismatic Renewal Movement in Ghana," *Pneuma* 16, no. 1 (1994): 176-77. [https://brill.com/view/journals/pneu/16/1/article-p169\\_16.xml?language=en](https://brill.com/view/journals/pneu/16/1/article-p169_16.xml?language=en). Accessed 2 November 2017.

<sup>9</sup> Gerald O'Collins, *Catholicism : A Very Short Introduction*, vol. 198, Very Short Introductions (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 37-39.

<sup>10</sup> The MLCs in Ghana had a monopoly on Christianity until the period after 1914 and 1937 when minor prayer groups emerged, which later led to spiritual churches/ *Sunsum Sore*, other classical Pentecostal churches emerged later locally influenced by foreign print publications in a Christian soil that was originally MLC dominated. See Omenyo, "The Charismatic Renewal Movement in Ghana," 169-71.

<sup>11</sup> Peter Hocken, *The Challenges of the Pentecostal, Charismatic, and Messianic Jewish Movements : The Tensions of the Spirit*, Ashgate New Critical Thinking in Religion, Theology and Biblical Studies (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), 11-12. Ogbu Kalu, *African Pentecostalism : An Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 13.

<sup>12</sup> In the beginning, the Roman Catholic Church missionary activities took root among the Fante of Elmina and Cape Coast, the Dagartsi of Jirapa and Nandom in the North, and the Ewes of Keta mainly. The Anglicans converted the Ga of Accra and Fante of the coastal regions, like Anomabo and Tatum. Colonial officials of Anglican faith posted there from the south influenced areas of the north (e.g., Tamale). Anglicans also reached Aixm, Sekondi, Dunkwa and Sefwi Bodu, Nsawam and Kumasi—all Akan-speaking tribes. The Methodists were fruitful among the Fante people of the coast while the Presbyterians Christianized Accra, the Akan of Akuapem,

were affiliated to Roman Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian, and Methodist churches and, of course, also a large affiliation belonging to African Traditional Religion (ATR). Additionally, Islam was the stronghold of the northern territories to a large extent.<sup>13</sup>

## 1.2 Definition of terminologies

*Leadership* is a skill that is utilized to influence followers to work towards goals for the purposes of the common good.<sup>14</sup> Also, a great leader presents a vision, articulates the vision, and creates a path to achieve that vision.<sup>15</sup> Leadership comes about often due to personal charisma or institutional office.<sup>16</sup>

*Empowerment* is the rational process through which persons experience their creative, liberating power or capacity to survive, affect others creatively, and make a positive difference.<sup>17</sup> Even though empowerment is not defined in economic terms in this research, a blind eye will not be turned to any economic implications if any exist. It was in the 1980s that the concept of women's empowerment was born out of critique and debates by the women's movement: women were discontent with some models in the developmental interventions of the time.<sup>18</sup> In more recent times, it is argued that women's empowerment has led feminist activists away from a broader-based alliance of social change activists.<sup>19</sup> This means that women's empowerment is expected to be more inclusive of all genders in the quest for fairness and aversion to prejudice. This is a laudable call to be inclusive of all people irrespective of gender. However, each movement has an agenda that it must focus on. Often when priorities are too broad in focus, intentions become blurred. For many, the aim of women's empowerment is first about focusing

---

and Ewe of Volta region while reaching Akan - Aburi, Odumasi, Kwahu, Akim, Anum and Asante, as well as the Dagomba's of Yendi. See Cephas Narh Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism : A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana*, vol. 32, Mission (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 2002), 45-46 and 53.

<sup>13</sup> Holger Weiss, "Variations in the Colonial Representation of Islam and Muslims in Northern Ghana, Ca. 1900–1930," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 25, no. 1 (2005): 2-4. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/13602000500114066>. Accessed 2 November 2017.

<sup>14</sup> Denise Linda Parris and Jon Welty Peachey, "A Systematic Literature Review of Servant Leadership Theory in Organizational Contexts," *Journal of business ethics* 113, no. 3 (2013): 377.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Nandera Ernest Mhando et al., "Modes of Legitimation by Female Pentecostal-Charismatic Preachers in East Africa: A Comparative Study in Kenya and Tanzania," *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 36, no. 3 (2018): 322.

<sup>17</sup> Carter Heyward, "Empowerment," in *An a to Z of Feminist Theology*, ed. Lisa & McEwan Isherwood, Dorothea (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 52.

<sup>18</sup> Srilatha Batliwala, "Taking the Power out of Empowerment - an Experiential Account," *Development in Practice* 17, no. 4-5 (2007): 558. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09614520701469559>. Accessed 10 May 2019.

<sup>19</sup> A. Cornwall and A. M. Rivas, "From 'Gender Equality and 'Women's Empowerment' to Global Justice: Reclaiming a Transformative Agenda for Gender and Development," *Third World Quarterly* 36, no. 2 (2015): 397. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01436597.2015.1013341>. Accessed 1 November 2019.

on women's issues and second how these issues relate to genders and gender relations more broadly.

*Gender* has a broad usage when it comes to meaning. It may refer to a real-world distinction of sex and may have three classes, such as masculine, feminine, and neuter.<sup>20</sup> In a more detailed definition, gender denotes the nature of our experience as women and men, female and male, feminine and masculine and includes the origins and attributions of these categories and their implications for all aspects of individual and public life.<sup>21</sup> This also means that gender goes beyond sexual difference as a category. In this thesis, *gender* as an analytical category will focus mainly on the female person within the CRGs of MLCs and secondarily, on her male counterparts, such as spouses, fellow adherents, and leaders.

*Pentecostalism* is a repetitive theme in this study due to the scope and interest of this work. It also serves as the genesis to the emergence of the CRGs of the MLCs. Interestingly, independent Pentecostal churches in Ghana spearheaded the emergence of CRGs, which in turn, influenced other CRGs in close proximity.<sup>22</sup> Pentecostalism has been difficult to define due to its nature and practice over a large geographic area as well as differences in practice. In this study, *Pentecostalism* refers to all of the Christian denominations that emphasize the Holy Spirit.<sup>23</sup> Allan Anderson (2004),<sup>24</sup> William Kay (2011),<sup>25</sup> and Beyer (2003)<sup>26</sup> have all delineated the boundaries for the categorization and analysis of Pentecostalism globally.

---

<sup>20</sup> Greville G. Corbett, *Gender*, Cambridge Textbooks in Linguistics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 1.

<sup>21</sup> Elaine Graham, "Gender," in *An a to Z of Feminist Theology*, ed. Lisa & McEwan Isherwood, Dorothea (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 78.

<sup>22</sup> Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism : A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana*, 32, 132-34.

<sup>23</sup> Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism : Global Charismatic Christianity*, 2nd ed. ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 3.

<sup>24</sup> Anderson defines the phenomenon as the distinct Christian movement that originated mainly from the Azusa street revival of Los Angeles in the United States of America as well as major points of origin like Mukti in India, Stone Church in Chicago, and Glad Tidings Tabernacle in New York. See Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism : Global Charismatic Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 43.

<sup>25</sup> William K. Kay, *Pentecostalism : A Very Short Introduction*, vol. 255, Very Short Introductions (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 18, 109.

<sup>26</sup> Beyer reiterates that Pentecostalism had several major beginnings of origin and never a centre to periphery mode. He also discusses that Pentecostalism can be most appropriately defined as a style of Christianity, although it has a distinct intentional self-identification which is globally linked due to a thematization in local practices, publications, sermons, and conference attendance. See Peter Beyer, "De-Centring Religious Singularity: The Globalization of Christianity as a Case in Point," *Numen* 50, no. 4 (2003): 373-74. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/3270505.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3A8107599437b3b2291ed15c6a16f4789c>. Accessed 24 June 2019.

According to J. Asamoah-Gyadu, *Pentecostals* comprise the churches that emphasize the Holy Spirit, with features like deliverance, prophesy, healing, glossolalia, and spontaneity, as prevalent characteristics.<sup>27</sup>

Especially useful for the Ghanaian context, the first category within Pentecostalism that is easily discernible is referred to as *Spiritual Churches/ Sunsum Sore/ African Instituted Churches*.<sup>28</sup> The genesis of the African Instituted/ Initiated/ Independent Churches (AICs) in Ghana goes back to the work of Prophet Wade Harris.<sup>29</sup> He preached across several countries in West Africa from Liberia to Ivory Coast, and the then Gold Coast due to a spiritual experience in prison, after being convicted of political misdemeanour.<sup>30</sup> Wade Harris garnered many followers, some of whom were the founders of the first AICs in Ghana, such as the Twelve Apostles Church of Grace Thannie.<sup>31</sup>

AICs are categorized as part of Christian Pentecostalism. It is necessary to note that certain distinct features such as that of polygyny, the use of herbs, and the observation of cultural taboos, are particular to this group.<sup>32</sup> It is interesting to note that although there is the general admission of AICs being the oldest form of Pentecostalism in Ghana, some scholars do not include it as the starting point in the history of Pentecostalism in Ghana. They prefer to begin with the work of Peter Anim, who is referred to as the father of Pentecostalism in Ghana.<sup>33</sup> This is inevitably due mainly to the synthesis or enculturation.<sup>34</sup> These practices of some of the AICs, border on ATR and often overshadow some Christian elements.<sup>35</sup> There exist therefore, a mixture of ATR or Indigenous African spirituality and Christianity within African Independent Churches or African Instituted Churches.<sup>36</sup>

---

<sup>27</sup> Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics : Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana*, Vol. 27, 13.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>29</sup> Kingsley Larbi, *Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity* (Accra: Blessed Publications, 2001), 59.

<sup>30</sup> Elizabeth Isichei, *A History of Christianity in Africa : From Antiquity to the Present* (London: SPCK, 1995), 284.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 285.

<sup>32</sup> Brigid M. Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion : The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches* (Lanham, Md: Lexington Books, 2006), 29.

<sup>33</sup> Omenyo, "The Charismatic Renewal Movement in Ghana," 170.; Abamfo Atiemo, *The Rise of the Charismatic Movement in the Mainline Churches in Ghana* (Accra: Asempra Publishers, 1993), 20.

<sup>34</sup> Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion : The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches*, 29-31.

<sup>35</sup> Isichei, *A History of Christianity in Africa : From Antiquity to the Present*, 277.

<sup>36</sup> Rose Amenga-Etego, "Gender and Christian Spirituality in Africa: A Ghanaian Perspective," *Black Theology* 10, no. 1 (2012): 22. <http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=949236d3-bcda-408d-bf2e-1baf56c78a40%40pd-c-v-sessmgr01&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWhvc3QtG12ZQ%3d%3d#AN=ATLA0001898798&db=rfh>. Accessed 10 October 2019.

Some of the unique practices of the AICs may not necessarily be categorized as Christian. However, the AICs still generally stand as Pentecostal churches, as postulated by the above-mentioned scholars. According to Sackey (2006), this calls for further critical examination as many AIC leaders lack theological training.<sup>37</sup>

Another category is the *classical Pentecostal*, the oldest of which is the Christ Apostolic Church in Ghana.<sup>38</sup> This is a church that began as a result of the efforts of Peter Anim (1890–1984). He initially came into contact with a Pentecostal publication by a church based in the United States of America.<sup>39</sup> He later claimed he had been miraculously healed from Guinea worm disease by appropriating the biblical principles he learnt from the Pentecostal publication. Peter Anim then began his Pentecostal church.<sup>40</sup> He later extended an invitation to a United Kingdom-based church, which he enjoined to send a missionary, James McKeown (1900–1989) in 1937.<sup>41</sup> James McKeown broke away and formed his own church, after a period of persecution from Anim and his followers due to doctrinal impasse.<sup>42</sup> The church that Peter Anim formed in Asamankese was the first classical Pentecostal church to be established in the then Gold Coast by local initiative and foreign physical assistance and contribution. Today, three churches still exist in Ghana as products of the Peter Anim and James McKeown initiative.<sup>43</sup>

The third wave or *neo-Pentecostal* churches are the latest (or youngest) group in Ghana. It has several points of origin. First, it is the influence of Nigerian Pentecostalism through theological training.<sup>44</sup> Many *neo-Pentecostal* churches emerged independently from Nigerian influences; nonetheless, the Nigerian contribution is substantial enough to earn a paragraph or two in mapping the historiography of the neo-Pentecostal churches in Ghana. Nigeria has been influential in the Pentecostal/ charismatic movement in Ghana through the channels of

---

<sup>37</sup> Their lack of theological training thus, made it easier for them to uphold and embellish traditional practices, such as water-carrying rituals and practice of polygamy. Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion : The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches*, 31.

<sup>38</sup> *James Mckeown Memorial Lectures* (Accra: Pentecost Press, 2004), 6-7.

<sup>39</sup> Robert W. Wyllie, "Pioneers of Ghanaian Pentecostalism: Peter Anim and James Mckeown," *Journal of Religion in Africa* 6, no. 2 (1974): 109. [https://www.jstor.org/stable/1594883?seq=1#metadata\\_info\\_tab\\_contents](https://www.jstor.org/stable/1594883?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents). Accessed 24 June 2019.

<sup>40</sup> Cephas Omenyo, *William Seymour and African Church Historiography: The Case of Ghana*, vol. 9 (2006), 251-53.

<sup>41</sup> Wyllie, "Pioneers of Ghanaian Pentecostalism: Peter Anim and James Mckeown," 112-13.

<sup>42</sup> Jones Darkwa Amanor, "Pentecostalism in Ghana: An African Reformation," *Cyberjournal for Pentecostal-Charismatic Research* 13 (2004): 23.

<sup>43</sup> *James Mckeown Memorial Lectures*, 66-70.

<sup>44</sup> Jane E. Soothill, *Gender, Social Change, and Spiritual Power : Charismatic Christianity in Ghana*, vol. vol. 30, *Studies of Religion in Africa* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 3.



theological training, the deliverance ministry and theological literature, which have affected Pentecostal/ charismatic circles in Ghana.<sup>45</sup>

Second, a number of charismatic leaders have been influential in the formation of neo-Pentecostalism in Ghana. Interestingly, the "father" of charismatic independent churches/ neo-Pentecostal churches in Ghana is Duncan Williams. He was one of the first to pioneer a charismatic independent church in Ghana, which had immense influence in the movement.<sup>46</sup> Duncan Williams was trained in the Bible School of Nigerian Benson Idahosa.<sup>47</sup> Other influential neo-Pentecostal/ charismatic leaders who attended the same Bible school are Christie Doe Tetteh, Charles Agyin Asare, and Matthew Addai Mensah.<sup>48</sup> Duncan Williams is said to have been instrumental in the training of leaders in a number of the largest charismatic independent churches in Ghana.<sup>49</sup> The doctrine of "spiritual fatherhood," is central to mentorship.<sup>50</sup> This ensured that the ministry of Duncan Williams influenced the majority of the neo-Pentecostal churches in Ghana. Some neo-Pentecostal churches also emerged due to Euro-American missionary work, such as the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel.<sup>51</sup> The Pentecostal non-denominational groups are also relevant in the Pentecostal/ charismatic movement in Ghana.

---

<sup>45</sup> According to Pastor Matthew Addai Mensah, he was one of the first Ghanaian pastors to begin the deliverance ministry in Ghana after he had learned the practice from the ministry of Benson Idahosa in Nigeria, for which he faced persecution in Ghana due to its novelty. See Paul Gifford, *African Christianity : Its Public Role* (Bloomington, In: Indiana University Press, 1998), 100.

<sup>46</sup> Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion : The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches*, 34.

<sup>47</sup> Benson Idahosa is a very influential personality in Nigerian Pentecostalism with its "tangled roots". Nimi Wariboko, *Nigerian Pentecostalism* (New York: University of Rochester Press, 2014), 20-21.

<sup>48</sup> Soothill, *Gender, Social Change, and Spiritual Power : Charismatic Christianity in Ghana*, vol. 30, 3.

<sup>49</sup> The charismatic Evangelical Church of Steve Mensah, the Lighthouse Chapel International of Dag Heward-Mills, and the Fountain Gate Chapel International of Eastwood Anaba are said to have received training, instruction, and guidance from the ministry of Duncan Williams due to his pioneering work as one of the first charismatic independent churches in Ghana. This is known from a series of sermons observed by the researcher in the Pentecostal/ charismatic movement between 2008 to 2012 with personal testimonies by Dag Heward-Mills, Steve Mensah, and Eastwood Anaba especially at a famous Pastors Conferences organized annually by LCI where the above-mentioned ministers often have speaking appointments. Additionally, see Nimi Wariboko, "Mission Is Mindset Versus Mindset: The Impact of Nigerian Pentecostal Network on Global Mission and Conscience," in *ASM- Eastern Fellowship* (New York 2015), 5-6.

<sup>50</sup> This idea is widespread in the independent charismatic churches/ neo-Pentecostal churches and a comprehensive teaching can be found in an inspirational Pentecostal book publication entitled, *My Father My Father* by Dag Heward-Mills (Accra: Parchment House Publisher, 2004), 29. This teaching promotes the idea that all Christians, including pastors, must submit to a more seasoned senior pastor as their father in ministry and faith, to guide them in their Christian life and calling.

<sup>51</sup> Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics : Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana*, Vol. 27, 15.

They include the Women's Aglow, Scripture Union, and Full Gospel Businessmen Fellowship. They draw from all Christian groups for Bible study, prayer, and other related activities.<sup>52</sup>

Finally, the CRGs of the MLCs are considered to be Pentecostal/ charismatic. This Christian synthesis is of interest to the foci of this study, as the rigorous standards of the Pentecostal movement may have effects on gender roles in specific contexts.<sup>53</sup> Emphasizing the Pauline teachings, prominent in classical Pentecostalism, it may hold particular patriarchal understandings of women's roles and functions.

### **Problem Statement**

Some of the key teachings in classical Pentecostalism are drawn from biblical verses that require women to submit to husbands, be silent in church, and defer to male authority. Assuming that charismatic renewal groups of the mainline churches in Ghana are informed by such key teachings, there is the potential of inequality between men and women in the CRGs of the MLCs. In many spiritual churches, some classical Pentecostals and neo-Pentecostal churches, women are not relegated to the background or prevented from leadership. Nonetheless, there is still the possibility of women being relegated to the background due to the Pentecostal/ charismatic nature of these CRGs. Moreover, historically, the MLCs have not easily permitted women's leadership as far as title holding at the highest levels are concerned. This study is therefore, motivated by a need to investigate such spaces in order to examine the ways in which women experience such spaces and their function therein. Seeking to assess the ways in which gender and religion is at play in these spaces. The thesis particularly focuses on the influences and tendencies of women's leadership, the experiences of women's leadership roles and possible resultant empowerment.

### **Research Questions**

The study examines the following questions:

- I. What are the influences and tendencies of women's leadership roles in the three charismatic renewal groups of the mainline churches in Greater Accra, Ghana?

---

<sup>52</sup> Cephas N Omenyo, "From the Fringes to the Centre: Pentecostalization of the Mainline Churches in Ghana," (2005): 47.

<sup>53</sup> Grace Davie, *The Sociology of Religion* (Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2007), 214-15.



This question will include an examination of the possibilities for women in leadership, the ways in which women are called upon to take up leadership positions, and the titles available for women in leadership.

- II. What are women's experiences of leadership and to what extent do their experiences contribute to empowerment?

This question will include an examination of practices that favourably contributes to women taking up positions of leadership and/ or practices that contributes to women's empowerment.

### **Objectives and relevance of study**

This study is of immense importance because there is a need for current data on the influences and tendencies of women's leadership in charismatic renewal groups in Ghana. There is also optimism that the findings derived from the final analysis of this study will serve as a catalyst that will drive forth interest and further research in this area.

During a prior study, it became clear that gender empowerment in the charismatic renewal groups of mainline churches is a novel area when it comes to research. The aim of scholarly endeavours, among other things, is to unearth findings that are ground-breaking and to contribute to produce new knowledge. This study will undoubtedly do so by providing critical data concerning women's leadership and women's empowerment in charismatic renewal groups of mainline churches in Ghana. Additionally, my unique positionality as a researcher with affinities, which shift in relation to the researched contributes to interesting new ways of approaching methodology. The critical reflections that go with it such a positioning is also of importance.

The findings of the study will serve as a launching pad for policy. It is the hope that the findings of the study will challenge the status quo of gender injustice in the society in general. Also, more specifically, in the religious landscape in Ghana and beyond. This is of utmost importance in a gendered world where all are inhabitants, both women and men.

### **1.3 Gender empowerment in the Ghanaian sphere**

Women's empowerment in Ghana is influenced by several factors, which paint an uneven picture that I try to give meaning and comprehension to in this section. By so doing, I briefly

employ intersectionality to investigate some of the structures of power that have influenced and continue to influence gender in Ghana. Intersectionality refers to the combination and implications of identities from an analytic concerned with structures of power and exclusion.<sup>54</sup>

Intersectionality concerns the interaction between gender and race, amongst other categories of difference in individual lives, and examines how such intersections affect social practices, institutional arrangements, and cultural ideologies with particular attention to the power and relations of power such intersections induce.<sup>55</sup> The position of women in Ghana, the expectations required of them, how they are regarded in the general scheme of things, and their roles especially in relation to their male counterparts are complex, overlapping, and diverse. Intersectionality as a lens is therefore useful in examining and unearthing the dynamics of power that influence gender in Ghana to date. Some of the dynamics of power that carve out an identity and that influence gender dynamics in Ghana are culture,<sup>56</sup> religion,<sup>57</sup> colonialism,<sup>58</sup> and education.<sup>59</sup>

### **Culture: and gender in Ghana**

The culture of a people is fundamental to the understanding and performance of gender in any given society. This is one intersectional dimension of importance when it comes to gender in Ghana. In Ghana, culture is steeped in tradition and this is impactful in the arena of gender roles, primarily because gender roles are determined by culture.<sup>60</sup> The cultures of the various ethnic groups in Ghana are not the same but portray patterns of similarity in many cases. The ethnic group of each individual and the community determines the culture and customs of

---

<sup>54</sup> Sumi Cho et al., "Toward a Field of Intersectionality Studies: Theory, Applications, and Praxis," *Signs* 38, no. 4 (2013): 797. [https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/669608?seq=1#metadata\\_info\\_tab\\_contents](https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/669608?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents). Accessed 24 June 2019.

<sup>55</sup> Kathy Davis, "Intersectionality as Buzzword: A Sociology of Science Perspective on What Makes a Feminist Theory Successful," *Feminist theory* 9, no. 1 (2008): 68. <https://journals-sagepub-com.ezproxy.uio.no/doi/pdf/10.1177/1464700108086364> Accessed 11 November 2020.

<sup>56</sup> Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion : The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches*, 51-52.; Harry Nii Koney Odamtten, "They Bleed but They Don't Die: Towards a Theoretical Canon on Ga-Adangbe Gender Studies," *Journal of Pan African Studies* 5 (2012): 118. [http://go.galegroup.com/ps/retrieve.do?tabID=T001&resultListType=RESULT\\_LIST&searchResultsType=SingleTab&searchType=AdvancedSearchForm&currentPosition=1&docId=GALE%7CA306596716&docType=Essay&sort=RELEVANCE&contentSegment=ZLRC-MOD1&prodId=LitRC&contentSet=GALE%7CA306596716&searchId=R1&userGroupName=oslo&inPS=true#](http://go.galegroup.com/ps/retrieve.do?tabID=T001&resultListType=RESULT_LIST&searchResultsType=SingleTab&searchType=AdvancedSearchForm&currentPosition=1&docId=GALE%7CA306596716&docType=Essay&sort=RELEVANCE&contentSegment=ZLRC-MOD1&prodId=LitRC&contentSet=GALE%7CA306596716&searchId=R1&userGroupName=oslo&inPS=true#). Accessed 24 June 2019.

<sup>57</sup> Mercy Amba Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa : African Women and Patriarchy* (Maryknoll, N.Y: Orbis Books, 1995), 113.

<sup>58</sup> Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion : The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches*, 55-56.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 62.

<sup>60</sup> Soothill, *Gender, Social Change, and Spiritual Power : Charismatic Christianity in Ghana*, vol. 30, 14.

Ghana. The task of putting forth the perspective of gender in Ghana as prescribed by culture and custom is complex due to the diversity and plurality of ethnic groups. Indeed, in all, Ghana has 72 ethnic groups.<sup>61</sup> There will not be room in this study to cover every group due to the brevity of the section dedicated to this topic. Some of the groups that will be highlighted in explaining Ghanaian culture and custom are the Akan,<sup>62</sup> Ga, Ewe, and Mole Dagomba, which cover the central and midsections, southern coastal, eastern, and northern portions of the country respectively.

There are also the patrilineal and matrilineal systems, which are widespread in Ghana. The Ga, Ewe, and Mole Dagomba ascribe to the patrilineal system, where the ancestral homeland, clan, inheritance of stools or skins are traced through the father's lineage.<sup>63</sup> For the Akan, due to their matrilineal practices, women wield authority in their communities in the spheres of religion, politics, and socio-economic dimensions.<sup>64</sup> Arguably, although matrilineal practices involve women in central roles, it does not necessarily remain unfettered by the patriarchal norms that dominate Ghanaian society.<sup>65</sup> The public roles available to women in Akan society are numerous and remarkable. Women can be chiefs as well as queen mothers, who also are considered "regent behind the regent" and are often involved in king "making" since the queen mother is the one who lowers the chief unto his stool.<sup>66</sup> The respected *abrewa* or old woman in Akan society also holds a place of authority in adjudication.<sup>67</sup>

In the extended family system, the males (such as grandfather, uncle, father, and husband) are often the wielders of ultimate authority in relation to the grandmother, aunt, mother, and wife. In the marriage unit or nuclear family, the husband or father is the leader and the authority figure in all matters.<sup>68</sup> The role of the female is generally that of a domestic caretaker, caregiver,

---

<sup>61</sup> Gifford, *African Christianity : Its Public Role*, 57.

<sup>62</sup> The Akans are the largest ethnic group in Ghana, made up of several sub tribes (eleven sub groups) such as the Asante, Fante, Nzema, Ahanta, Akyem, and Bono. The Akans are a matrilineal ethnic group and women play remarkable roles of leadership and authority. The implications of this ascription is that the children born to an Akan family belong to her mother's ancestral home and will inherit from their mother's lineage. See Roger S. Gocking, *The History of Ghana*, The Greenwood Histories of the Modern Nations (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 2005), 8.; Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion : The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches*, 51-52.; Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa : African Women and Patriarchy*, 144.

<sup>63</sup> Gocking, *The History of Ghana*, 9-10.

<sup>64</sup> Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion : The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches*, 4.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 157.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

<sup>67</sup> The *abrewa* or revered old lady in Akan, especially within the Ashanti system, has tremendous authority and is consulted for advice on royal and ruling matters and is therefore a fount of female power in a traditional Akan setting. *Ibid.*, 53.

<sup>68</sup> Even in the relatively little matter of child naming, the father in Akan society is the sole custodian of names that will be given to his children. After the day name or soul name is given, the father names his children after his

bearer of children, and economic supporter, depending on her livelihood.<sup>69</sup> Social roles historically assigned to women are the practical, domestic chores.<sup>70</sup> Therefore, in Ghana, not even the Akan elude male dominance in society and family settings, especially in recent times. However, this seems to be a manifestation that has gained more ground since the colonial era and not a traditional Akan practice since, the traditional setting gives room for female authority as discussed.

### **Colonialism and gender in Ghana**

The colonialization of the portion of West Africa, renamed Ghana, was firmly entrenched in 1901 by the British when Ashanti was finally conquered.<sup>71</sup> The British were largely able to impose many of their ideological cultural interpretations on the indigenes through a long process of legislation and imposition.<sup>72</sup> Colonialism as a dimension of intersectionality has carved out an undeniable identity for Ghana and its inhabitants of both genders, even after more than sixty years and this is quite entrenched.<sup>73</sup> Ghana as a former colony has without a doubt been heavily influenced by its past of having had colonial masters. One other important vehicle through which this was accomplished was through the Christianization of the inhabitants of the then Gold Coast locations. This was also the case for many other locations in Africa.<sup>74</sup> In my view, the consequences of their initiatives were inevitably two-pronged, with some positive sides on the one hand and some negative dimensions on the other, not only in Ghana but in other parts of Africa too.<sup>75</sup> The Gold Coast inhabitants stood to gain some benefits from this colonial arrangement as far as gender is concerned. However, immense damage was done to

---

family members starting with his parents, his aunts, uncles and siblings respectively, depending on the gender of the child. His wife has no say in this matter, even in a so-called matrilineal system, except the husband opts to include his wife in that decision. See Kofi Agyekum, "The Sociolinguistic of Akan Personal Names," *Nordic journal of African studies [elektronisk ressurs]* 15 (2006): 217. <http://www.njas.helsinki.fi/pdf-files/vol15num2/gyekum.pdf>. Accessed 4 July 2016.

<sup>69</sup> Amu, *The Role of Women in Ghana's Economy*, 8-9.

<sup>70</sup> Celia Deane-drummond, "Creation," in *The Cambridge Companion to Feminist Theology*, ed. Susan Frank Parsons, Cambridge Companions to Religion (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 191.

<sup>71</sup> S. A. De Smith, "The Independence of Ghana," *Modern Law Review* 20, no. 4 (1957): 348.

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1468-2230.1957.tb00448.x/epdf>. Accessed 2 June 2016.

<sup>72</sup> Sandra E. Greene, *Sacred Sites and the Colonial Encounter : A History of Meaning and Memory in Ghana* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002), 57-58. Mercy Amba Oduyoye and Rachel Angogo Kanyoro, *The Will to Arise : Women, Tradition, and the Church in Africa* (Maryknoll, N.Y: Orbis Books, 1992), 187-88.

<sup>73</sup> Cho et al., "Toward a Field of Intersectionality Studies: Theory, Applications, and Praxis," 798.

<sup>74</sup> Theresa M. Hinga, "Jesus Christ and the Liberation of Women," in *The Will to Arise, Women, Tradition and the Church in Africa* ed. Mercy Amba Oduyoye and Musimbi Rachel Angogo Kanyoro (New York: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1992), 187.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 188-89.

the positive elements that existed and gave avenues for female expression, authority, and leadership.

First, in close collaboration with the colonial government, the mission schools favoured the education of males over females—a transfer of nineteenth-century British practice.<sup>76</sup> The fact that it resonated with the pervading cultural understanding in some ethnic groups did not help matters. This traditional cultural orientation was that the principal and highest purpose of a woman was to keep the home, bear children, and nurture them, as is the case of the Ewe tribe and in other tribes.<sup>77</sup> This was so important in the minds of the indigenes that, among certain tribes such as the Ewe of Anglo, a woman's life was not seen to have fulfilled its purpose if she did not bear life and she would, therefore, be given a less desirable burial location because of a curtailed life and lack of progeny.<sup>78</sup> Among the matrilineal Akan, colonialism damaged the position of women in society, especially in the areas of leadership due to a lack of understanding of a culture outside their own.<sup>79</sup> It is noteworthy to also mention that high esteem and regard for motherhood is a widespread Ghanaian phenomenon across the board.<sup>80</sup>

Colonialism also eroded the understanding of the woman contributing to the life essence of offsprings, embedded in the myths of many tribes, due to Christian influences of Biblical teaching. The Akan, for instance, believe that the male and female contribute important elements such as the *mogya* (blood) and *sunsum* (spirit), underscoring the idea that both have equal share and influence in the new life.<sup>81</sup> The Ga, for instance, believe that the contributing element of the female to a child is the same as the component by the male.<sup>82</sup> There is another school of thought that puts forth the idea that, due to the low ranks available to African men in the colonial government after their education, they felt oppressed and in turn returned home to oppress their wives and children as a result of frustration.<sup>83</sup>

---

<sup>76</sup> Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion : The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches*, 55.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 8-9.

<sup>78</sup> Greene, *Sacred Sites and the Colonial Encounter : A History of Meaning and Memory in Ghana*, 66-67.

<sup>79</sup> Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion : The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches*, 61.

<sup>80</sup> Odamtten, "They Bleed but They Don't Die: Towards a Theoretical Canon on Ga-Adangbe Gender Studies," 118-19.

<sup>81</sup> Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion : The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches*, 57-58.

<sup>82</sup> Odamtten, "They Bleed but They Don't Die: Towards a Theoretical Canon on Ga-Adangbe Gender Studies," 115.

<sup>83</sup> Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion : The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches*, 66.

There are some positive dimensions of colonialism for the Ga people of the Greater Accra region. During the epoch that preceded colonialism, men were the ultimate wielders of power and women worked for their husbands in support of them in most cases.<sup>84</sup> Young women were indebted to older women and in trade and farming in a mode of the hierarchy while men still wielded power over this structure.<sup>85</sup> However, colonialism broke that trend and women became leaders in labour-intensive work with some in alliance with powerful men, therefore gaining some measure of independence and autonomy.<sup>86</sup> The dispensation of male dominance, then, is foreign to "only segments" of Ghanaian ethnic socio-political and religious practice and has come about due to colonialism to some extent.<sup>87</sup>

### **Religion and gender in Ghana**

Religion is a structure of power especially for adherents and overlaps as a form of identity due to affiliation. Interestingly, intersectionality helps reveal how gender is entwined with religion and the power structures at work.<sup>88</sup> Religion in Ghana exerts influence on its affiliates as well as giving them an identity in religiosity. In Ghana, there are three major religious identities that all impact gender and gender relations. In ATR, there is no discrimination against women in the priesthood, although every deity has his or her specificity.<sup>89</sup> Primarily, there are both male and female deities.<sup>90</sup> The Supreme Being in Ghanaian African thought is majorly ascribed with male attributes but it is also common to attribute female notions to the supreme deity and even a case of manifest androgyny.<sup>91</sup> In Akan practice, both males and females are the priests of the deities, although Oduyoye (1995) has discovered a pattern where the females serve the lesser deities and the males the higher deities.<sup>92</sup> According to Odamtten (2012), this is not the overall picture because of plurality and many examples of female priestesses in high authority.<sup>93</sup> ATR gives room for female leadership, authority, title-holding, and empowerment despite the

---

<sup>84</sup> Claire C. Robertson, *Sharing the Same Bowl : A Socioeconomic History of Women and Class in Accra, Ghana* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), 12.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 15-16.

<sup>87</sup> Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion : The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches*, 64.

<sup>88</sup> Cho et al., "Toward a Field of Intersectionality Studies: Theory, Applications, and Praxis," 797.

<sup>89</sup> Odamtten, "They Bleed but They Don't Die: Towards a Theoretical Canon on Ga-Adangbe Gender Studies," 115-16. Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa : African Women and Patriarchy*, 111-13.

<sup>90</sup> Odamtten, "They Bleed but They Don't Die: Towards a Theoretical Canon on Ga-Adangbe Gender Studies," 115.

<sup>91</sup> Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa : African Women and Patriarchy*, 111.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, 113.

<sup>93</sup> Odamtten, "They Bleed but They Don't Die: Towards a Theoretical Canon on Ga-Adangbe Gender Studies," 121.

instances of male dominance that exist. What this means is that opportunity for ultimate leadership is not always a reflection of normative social practice.

The highest percentage of Ghanaians ascribe to Christianity as their faith.<sup>94</sup> It is crucial to delve into Christianity and gender in Ghana. To accomplish this, the types of Christianity in Ghana and their effect on religion are important. Mainline churches are the historic churches of Ghana that are the direct antecedents of nineteenth-century missionary endeavour in the pre-colonial and colonial eras. The current MLCs in Ghana continue to mirror the ethos and practice of the churches in the nineteenth century in many ways. This ethos is heavily influenced by the Western inclination of that era.<sup>95</sup> As such, the MLCs with the unique exception of the Methodist Church in Ghana continue to gradually implement female ordination and leadership within their churches to some degree.<sup>96</sup> The Roman Catholic Church in Ghana, as in the rest of the world, only have nuns; there are no female priests as they ordain only males.<sup>97</sup> The Anglican Church in Ghana also portrays a pattern of male authority although there is a gradual change in recent times.<sup>98</sup> Although formerly preserving priesthood for males only, the Presbyterians began to ordain women, as informed by the parish priest during fieldwork. The sermons that emanate from the pulpits of the MLCs in Ghana to reflect their point of view on the gender issue will be an interesting research topic. According to Mercy Amba Oduyoye (2004), these churches are spaces for potential female subjugation and are bound to influence the world outside these churches where communities relate closely with the churches.<sup>99</sup> This I infer due to high Christian allegiance in Ghana and to MLCs, despite being in decline comparatively in some cases and locations.<sup>100</sup>

---

<sup>94</sup> Christians form 71.2% of the Ghanaian population. See Ghana Statistical Service, "2010 Population and Housing Census: Summary Report of Final Results," ed. Ghana Statistical Service (Accra, Ghana: Sakoa Press Limited, 2012), 40. [http://www.statsghana.gov.gh/gssmain/storage/img/marqueeupdater/Census2010\\_Summary\\_report\\_of\\_final\\_results.pdf](http://www.statsghana.gov.gh/gssmain/storage/img/marqueeupdater/Census2010_Summary_report_of_final_results.pdf). Accessed 23 May 2017.

<sup>95</sup> Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism : A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana*, 32, 43.

<sup>96</sup> The Methodist Church was the first mainline church in Ghana to ordain females as priests in 1979 in Ghana. See Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion : The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches*, 63.

<sup>97</sup> Susan A. Ross, "Church and Sacrament: Community and Worship," in *The Cambridge Companion to Feminist Theology*, ed. Susan Frank Parsons, Cambridge Companions to Religion (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 225.

<sup>98</sup> Anglican Church began ordaining females as priests in 2011 in Ghana. See Anglican Communion News Service, "Anglican Diocese of Accra Ordains First Female Priests," Anglican Communion Office. Last modified 11 June 2011. <http://www.anglicannews.org/news/2011/06/anglican-diocese-of-accra-ordains-first-female-priests.aspx>. Accessed 23 May 2017.

<sup>99</sup> Mercy Amba Oduyoye, *Beads and Strands : Reflections of an African Woman on Christianity in Africa*, Theology in Africa Series (Maryknoll, N.Y: Orbis Books, 2004), 92.

<sup>100</sup> Gifford, *African Christianity : Its Public Role*, 62.

Spiritual churches in Ghana also referred to as *sunsum sore*, are AICs that combine Pentecostal elements as well as practices that can only be referred to as ATR.<sup>101</sup> These churches include the Aladura churches, which are originally Nigerian, and the Twelve Apostles church and the Musama Disco Christo Church, to mention a few.<sup>102</sup> These churches in many cases have women founders; there have been instances where men have tried to usurp the positions of women in such churches.<sup>103</sup> The Spiritual churches are one of the profound arenas in Ghanaian Christianity where women are empowered in leadership, title-holding, and significant role-playing.

Classical Pentecostal churches appeared on the Ghanaian scene in the 1950s, some by indigenous initiative through western influences and others a purely Western import.<sup>104</sup> Some examples are the Church of Pentecost, Assemblies of God, and Christ Apostolic Church. Ansah's study of the largest Classical Pentecostal church in Ghana in 2015 showed that the church does not allow female ordination and leadership but prefers women to be on a differentiated ministerial track.<sup>105</sup>

Charismatic/ neo-Pentecostal churches in Ghana are an offshoot of the Classical Pentecostal churches and, in comparison to them, are more liberal, less traditional, and have a younger membership base.<sup>106</sup> The charismatic churches/ neo-Pentecostal in Ghana do not exempt women from pastoral leadership. Many of the charismatic churches/ neo-Pentecostals have female founders or co-founders.<sup>107</sup> These charismatic ministries allow full reign for women within their congregations for leadership, title-holding, and significant role-playing.<sup>108</sup> This practice is guided by their praxis, whereby different strands of churches ascribe to scripture to defend diverse, often oppositional practices.

African traditional religion is one of the religious spheres in Ghana where both men and women hold high religious leadership. This means that there are several instances of both male and

---

<sup>101</sup> Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics : Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana*, Vol. 27, 39.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., 20-21.

<sup>103</sup> Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion : The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches*, 33.

<sup>104</sup> Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics : Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana*, Vol. 27, 23-25.

<sup>105</sup> Anita Aba Ansah, "Gender Empowerment and Personal Fulfillment in Pentecostalism: A Case of Accra Ghana," (2015), 70-73.

<sup>106</sup> Gifford, *African Christianity : Its Public Role*, 80-82., 80-82.

<sup>107</sup> Enyonam Ernestina Novieto, "Women Leaders in Ghanaian Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches" (University of Ghana, 2013), 83.

<sup>108</sup> Ansah, "Gender Empowerment and Personal Fulfillment in Pentecostalism: A Case of Accra Ghana," 75.



female fetish priests and priestesses in ATR. The deities could be both male and female and the Supreme Being, though often understood in a male construct, has female characteristics. A good example is the *Ataa Naa Nyomo* or mother father God of the Ga ethnic group.<sup>109</sup> Another is the Akan *Afua Panini a ofiri tete* or ancient female.<sup>110</sup> Also, according to Elizabeth A. Johnson (2002) how we speak about God influences how we treat our fellow humans.<sup>111</sup> Thus, ATR of Ghana in some segments does not relegate women to the background in leadership in some instances as discussed. The androgynous nature of the Supreme Being as well as male and female representations of deities is no doubt a contributing factor to this practice, especially in ATR priesthood.

The main Islamic groups in Ghana are Ahmadiyya and Sunni Islam.<sup>112</sup> A brief discussion on Islam is beneficial because Islam is the second-largest religion in Ghana, accounting for 17.6 percent of the population's religious affiliation.<sup>113</sup> It cannot therefore, be ignored when gender and religion are spoken of. As in most of the rest of the world, there are no women Imams in Ghana. Muslim men are permitted to marry a maximum of four wives if they so desire, needless to say, Muslim women, do not have such an option.<sup>114</sup> Also, misogynist interpretations of one specific verse in the Quran, result in the perception that Muslim husbands are allowed to discipline their wives if need be.<sup>115</sup> The possible outcome of such interpretations render the disciplining of wives permissible.

Religion in Ghana paints an uneven picture pertaining to issues of gender and gender relations, and there is room for improvement across all the different main religions in Ghana. All the major religions have tremendous potential to do more for women within their circles and in the larger society.

## Education and gender

---

<sup>109</sup> Nyambura J. Njoroge and Musa W. Dube Shomanah, *Talitha Cum! : Theologies of African Women* (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2001), 141.

<sup>110</sup> Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa : African Women and Patriarchy*, 111.

<sup>111</sup> Elizabeth A. Johnson, *She Who Is : The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse* (New York: Crossroad, 2002), 4-5.

<sup>112</sup> Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism : A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana*, 32, 32.

<sup>113</sup> Service, "2010 Population and Housing Census: Summary Report of Final Results," 6. [http://www.statsghana.gov.gh/gssmain/storage/img/marqueeupdater/Census2010\\_Summary\\_report\\_of\\_final\\_results.pdf](http://www.statsghana.gov.gh/gssmain/storage/img/marqueeupdater/Census2010_Summary_report_of_final_results.pdf). Accessed 25 May 2017.

<sup>114</sup> Elias Kifon Bongmba and Jacob K. Mmmmauthor Olupona, *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to African Religions* (S.I.): S.I. : WILEY, 2012), 327-32.

<sup>115</sup> Quran 4:34; Quran 38:44.

In general terms, education is a channel through which a meritocracy is established in the nations of the world and Ghana is no exception. It is also an unmistakable tool of empowerment and has tremendous implications for gender and gender relations in Ghana. An intersectional prism seeks to excavate and expose multi-layered structures of power.<sup>116</sup> Power relations emerging from the ways in which education is structured and organized in Ghana, as well as the issue of gender-inclusive education at all levels is pertinent to this study. For there to be a genuine form of meritocracy, there has to be a fair opportunity for both sexes to access and acquire education. Unfortunately, since the advent of formal education in Ghana, boys have been favoured over girls in the opportunity to acquire an education. This was due to a cultural idea that a "woman's place is the kitchen" and also the nineteenth-century colonial preference to educate boys, which was a reflection of the society at the time.<sup>117</sup> Since that time, males have received higher education than girls in Ghana. However, recently, the government has put several measures in place to ensure that more girls have the opportunity to receive an education.

The government made education at the basic level free so that, among other motivating factors, more girls could be enrolled.<sup>118</sup> Education is also an avenue for women's independence and emancipation in a Ghanaian milieu of patriarchy.<sup>119</sup> The advantage of education often means financial independence and "a voice" that can speak out against the factors that seek to suppress women. In Ghanaian society, the prevalent predicament of women becoming subjugated to men can be lessened, if not also eradicated by women attaining education. Mercy Amba Oduyoye, though, warns that educated women still face sexism in Ghana despite their education.<sup>120</sup>

In marriage, the role of a Ghanaian woman as prescribed by culture, custom, and religion has not changed much despite education.<sup>121</sup> A woman is still expected to be a homemaker, child-

---

<sup>116</sup> Cho et al., "Toward a Field of Intersectionality Studies: Theory, Applications, and Praxis," 804.

<sup>117</sup> Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion : The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches*, 62.

<sup>118</sup> Government of Ghana, "National Action Plan Education for All: Ghana ", ed. Ministry of Education Youth and Sports (Government of Ghana 2003), 5-6. [https://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/sites/default/files/ressources/ghana\\_efa\\_nap\\_finalised\\_version.pdf](https://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/sites/default/files/ressources/ghana_efa_nap_finalised_version.pdf) Accessed 1 November 2019.

<sup>119</sup> Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa : African Women and Patriarchy*, 157.

<sup>120</sup> During fieldwork discussions with Prof. Mercy Amba Oduyoye, she reiterated that, even in the academic world in Ghana, she experienced opposition because she was a woman in spite of her credentials (1 May 2017). Interview, Accra.

<sup>121</sup> Grace Adasi and Dorothy Frempong, "Multiple Roles of African Women Leaders and Their Challenges: The Case of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana," *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences* Vol.4, No.11, 2014 no. ISSN (Paper)2224-5766 ISSN (Online)2225-0484 (Online) (2014): 63. [https://www.google.com/search?q=Multiple+Roles+of+African+Women+Leaders+and+their+Challenges&rlz=1\\_CIGCEA\\_enNO810NO810&oq=Multiple+Roles+of+African+Women+Leaders+and+their+Challenges&aqs=chrome..69i57j69i60l2.2516j0j8&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8#](https://www.google.com/search?q=Multiple+Roles+of+African+Women+Leaders+and+their+Challenges&rlz=1_CIGCEA_enNO810NO810&oq=Multiple+Roles+of+African+Women+Leaders+and+their+Challenges&aqs=chrome..69i57j69i60l2.2516j0j8&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8#). Accessed 23 May 2017.

bearer, nurturer, and cook and caretaker while her husband rules.<sup>122</sup> In most cases, the educated woman with a career must juggle that and marital responsibilities without expecting a hand from her husband.<sup>123</sup> The only compromise in many families in Ghana for busy wives who have to juggle employment outside the home is to acquire domestic help.<sup>124</sup> This is often possible because of the low minimum wage in Ghana and rural unemployment, however, economic differences also determines the extent to which such employments can be practiced in different demographics.<sup>125</sup> In my view, education has immense potential to enable women to be viewed differently in many ways and to be put on the same pedestal as men. However, some salient areas, especially the areas of marriage and religion, remain a challenge in Ghana despite education and improvements in that arena.

#### **1.4 Feminist theology and the interdisciplinary nature of this study**

This study focuses on the influences and tendencies of female leadership, women's experiences of leadership roles and possible resultant empowerment in the CRGs of the MLCs in Ghana. I am a trained feminist theologian and I lay immense emphasis on African feminist theology. Therefore, I deploy extensively several theories and concepts from African feminist theology as a lens for this study. As such, this study is housed in the discipline of feminist theology.<sup>126</sup> My interest in Pentecostalism has led to this study being informed by perspectives and concepts gleaned from Pentecostal studies. Furthermore, the sites of study are the CRGs, which are Pentecostal/ charismatic in nature and are categorized as such. Therefore, due to the interdisciplinary nature of this study, it contributes to the areas of African feminist theology and feminist theology, leadership studies, and Pentecostal studies.

This study is interdisciplinary due to bringing on board concepts and theories from several selected disciplines and fields of expertise due to the complex nature of the research aim. Interdisciplinary studies involve the process of answering a question, solving a problem, or

---

<sup>122</sup> Odamtten, "They Bleed but They Don't Die: Towards a Theoretical Canon on Ga-Adangbe Gender Studies," 119. Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion : The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches*, 185-89.

<sup>123</sup> Adasi and Frempong, "Multiple Roles of African Women Leaders and Their Challenges: The Case of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana," 64.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, 65.

<sup>125</sup> Amu, *The Role of Women in Ghana's Economy*, 25-26.

<sup>126</sup> In my academic training background, I hold a Master of Philosophy degree in Intercontextual Theology. In this regard, I was trained in post-colonial theology, liberation theology and feminist theology mainly. I opted to undertake extensive research of this thesis in the discipline of feminist theology. I also continued to be trained in Feminist theology at the Ph.D. level and undertake extensive research in this discipline with immense emphasis on African feminist theology.

addressing a topic that is too complex to be dealt with adequately by a single discipline.<sup>127</sup> The topic of influences and tendencies of women's leadership, women's experiences of leadership roles and possible resultant empowerment in the CRG of the MLC is indeed a complex. It is uncharted study area within the context of Ghana. It is complex because although the research focuses mainly on women's leadership, there is also immense interest in what these opportunities for leadership positions or the lack thereof imply in terms of empowerment—the rational process through which persons experience their creative, liberating power or capacity to survive, affect others creatively, and make a positive difference.<sup>128</sup>

Furthermore, the study context is multifaceted, in that even though the CRGs are Pentecostal/charismatic in nature, they are also part of the MLCs resulting in a mix of the differing ethos at play within the groups. Additionally, many factors undergird the issue of women's leadership and possible resultant empowerment in the Ghanaian context. It is necessary, therefore, to examine these issues in a multifaceted manner to arrive at an exhaustive and thorough undertaking. Therefore, theories from not only the disciplines of feminist theology, African feminist theology, and Pentecostal studies are deployed but also theories and perspectives from the fields of gender studies and leadership studies. By so doing, I amply utilize selected disciplinary concepts and modes of thinking to examine, support, and discuss complex findings.<sup>129</sup>

An interdisciplinary research approach has become ubiquitous in recent times due to its ability to act as a catalyst for innovation and—those game-changing insights—that help us solve some of the major problems and questions.<sup>130</sup> In theology, harnessing an interdisciplinary approach is not new as theology often draws from other disciplines. The interdisciplinary research approach flourishes across all the research domains of academy.<sup>131</sup> Theology is no exception. Thus in this study, the interdisciplinary approach aims to create an integration for problem-solving and critical perspectives.<sup>132</sup> This leads to an integration that deepens understanding of

---

<sup>127</sup> Julie Thompson Klein, "Mapping Interdisciplinary Studies. The Academy in Transition," (Association of American Colleges and Universities, 1999), 24. Accessed September 10, 2020. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED430437>

<sup>128</sup> Heyward, "Empowerment," 52.

<sup>129</sup> Veronica Boix Mansilla et al., "Targeted Assessment Rubric: An Empirically Grounded Rubric for Interdisciplinary Writing," *The Journal of higher education (Columbus)* 80, no. 3 (2016). Accessed October 7, 2020

<https://www.tandfonline-com.ezproxy.uio.no/doi/pdf/10.1080/00221546.2009.11779016?needAccess=true&>

<sup>130</sup> Bruce Brown, "Interdisciplinary Research," *European Review* 26, no. S2 (2018): 27. Accessed October 7, 2020 <https://www-cambridge-org.ezproxy.uio.no/core/journals/european-review/article/interdisciplinary-research/51E2F2571E346CDD2BAF36DBF57B1F0B>

<sup>131</sup> Ibid., 28.

<sup>132</sup> Klein, "Mapping Interdisciplinary Studies. The Academy in Transition," 18.

the topic at hand.<sup>133</sup> Concurrently, while employing an interdisciplinary approach, I endeavour to be grounded in the discipline of feminist theology with a strong emphasis on African feminist theology. This is accomplished so that concepts, notions or theories are gleaned from the discipline and fields deployed but these retain the characteristic descriptors of those specific disciplines.<sup>134</sup> Likewise, I endeavour to ensure that the inclusion of disciplinary insights or perspectives of choice are selective and driven by the purpose of the work in question.<sup>135</sup> Therefore, gender studies and leadership studies theories are harnessed because of the specific topic of influences of women's leadership, experiences of women's leadership roles and possible resultant empowerment. Therefore, the concepts of empowerment from gender studies, servant leadership from leadership studies, for instance are necessary and driven by the purpose of the study for thorough and holistic examination and analysis—a comprehensive research approach.

Producing an interdisciplinary understanding of quality demands clarity about the purpose of the inquiry and the ability to engage in a process of considered judgment and critique: weighing disciplinary options, and making informed adjustments to achieve their proposed aims.<sup>136</sup> Therefore, there are possible drawbacks of interdisciplinary work that are more probable when certain specific considerations are lax. There should be a spelt-out purpose for the research that guides the selective choices of theory and concepts gleaned from the disciplines employed.<sup>137</sup> For instance, servant leadership as a movement that aims at providing a new way of working, living, and being from a follower's perspective is a lens.<sup>138</sup> This is gleaned from leadership studies and correlates with the topic of women's leadership. This ensures coherence and suitability for the topic and its aim for the overall enrichment of the study. In my view, there is the need for thorough engagement of suitable scholarly material from the specific disciplines of choice and critical considerations to ensure academic rigour.

Undoubtedly, the interdisciplinary research approach is both rich and dynamic.<sup>139</sup> When a number of selective expert disciplines are deployed to collaborate in a study, each brings a deep

---

<sup>133</sup> Mansilla et al., "Targeted Assessment Rubric: An Empirically Grounded Rubric for Interdisciplinary Writing," 340.

<sup>134</sup> Brown, "Interdisciplinary Research," 26.

<sup>135</sup> Mansilla et al., "Targeted Assessment Rubric: An Empirically Grounded Rubric for Interdisciplinary Writing," 338.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*, 339.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, 338.

<sup>138</sup> Crystal J. Davis, *Servant Leadership and Followership: Examining the Impact of Workplace Behaviour* (Cham: Palgrave MacMillan, 2017), XV-XVI.

<sup>139</sup> Brown, "Interdisciplinary Research."

knowledge base to the table.<sup>140</sup> This ensures that a holistic and critical undertaking, which is nuanced, is achieved. In that, opportunities to advance the argument and examine from differing perspectives are not ignored or unnoticed.<sup>141</sup> This results in an exhaustive research undertaking that is both rich and critical.

Overall, in this sub-section, I present the entire study as grounded and housed in the discipline of feminist theology with a strong emphasis on African feminist theology due to the topic, its aim, the theories, and concepts deployed. I also present and discuss the utilization of an interdisciplinary approach for the study. I discuss the necessity of this approach due to the complex nature of the topic of influences of women's leadership, women's experiences of leadership roles and empowerment. Additionally, the context of the CRG as Pentecostal/charismatic existing within MLC as intricate and complex. I explain and discuss the flourishing of interdisciplinary approach in all academic domains, including theology for innovation and richness. A reflection of the possible drawback of such an interdisciplinary approach is discussed to ward off a lack of scholarly rigour.

#### **1.4.1 Intersections and affinities with practical theology**

The focus of this study intersects and has certain affinities with practical theology. Practical theology in Africa denotes a theological approach that seeks to understand and communicate the lived life of faith within a context of struggle.<sup>142</sup> This study is centred on the women of the CRGs and their lived experiences of leadership, connected with their male counterparts. Understanding leadership in relation to empowerment engages with feminist theology and African feminist theology and the category of experience functions as a central node for analysis. Incidentally, the hermeneutics of lived religion marks the distinction of practical theology from social sciences of religion and other theological disciplines.<sup>143</sup> Although this study is not housed in practical theology, there are undeniable intersections and affinities that connects this study with practical theology due to the emphasis on the category of experience of women in the CRGs.

---

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

<sup>141</sup> Mansilla et al., "Targeted Assessment Rubric: An Empirically Grounded Rubric for Interdisciplinary Writing," 341.

<sup>142</sup> Vhumani Magezi, "Practical Theology in Africa: Situation, Approaches, Framework and Agenda Proposition," *International journal of practical theology* 23, no. 1 (2019): 131. <https://www-degruyter-com.ezproxy.uio.no/view/journals/ijpt/23/1/article-p115.xml> Accessed 22 December 2020

<sup>143</sup> R. Ruard Ganzevoort and Johan Roeland, "Lived Religion: The Praxis of Practical Theology," *International Journal of Practical Theology* 18, no. 1 (2014): 93. <https://www.degruyter.com/view/journals/ijpt/18/1/article-p91.xml> Accessed 22 December 2020

Practical theology in Africa is characterised by reflecting on ways of living, understanding, and communicating God in a postcolonial African context that is constantly changing.<sup>144</sup> This implies that practical theology seeks to give meaning to/ understand lived religion and faith in specific contexts. In addition, it focuses on the field of lived religion in a hermeneutical mode that is attending to the most fundamental processes of interpreting life through conversations in which we construct meaning.<sup>145</sup> The study of the CRGs of the MLCs examines lived religion through the lens of women's leadership. Interestingly, while not named practical theology, feminist theology, clearly has a practical focus on liberation and empowerment in different ways.<sup>146</sup> This is a shared ambition of this study.

The history of practical theology as public or contextual theology is linked with liberation theology, feminist theology, and similar currents of theological thinking that take a critical stance toward societal praxis and look for possible contributions from the religious tradition.<sup>147</sup> Due to my training in specifically feminist theology under the broader specialization of contextual theology, there are interconnections between this study and practical theology. This is in terms of the critique of how theory is enacted/ practiced and embodied in the CRGs via lived religion in a specific context. Hence, there are affinities and intersections between this study and practical theology pertaining to a focus on lived religion, the category of experiences, the engagement with African feminist theology, and consequences for empowerment.

## 1.5 Conclusion

This first section of the chapter serves the purpose of introducing the main focus of the thesis. Terminologies are operationally defined in order to highlight the meaning of some crucial recurring terminologies including *Pentecostalism*, *gender*, and *empowerment*. The problem statement and research questions are declared to encapsulate the purpose of the entire project and give direction to the investigation and analysis. Gender in Ghana, as well as the factors that directly affect gender, are examined as a backdrop to the status quo. In this regard, intersectionality is deployed as a prism or lens to excavate and expose various layers of power

---

<sup>144</sup> Magezi, "Practical Theology in Africa: Situation, Approaches, Framework and Agenda Proposition," 131.

<sup>145</sup> R. Ganzevoort, "Forks in the Road When Tracing the Sacred Practical Theology as Hermeneutics of Lived Religion" (2009), 4. <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Forks-in-the-Road-when-Tracing-the-Sacred-Practical-Ganzevoort/c509d758677548461310bb6d15535979fb5d1015> Accessed 19 December 2020

<sup>146</sup> The Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians as a case in point has adopted a narrative, reflective and experiential approach to African women's issues. It has remained focused on women's liberation within theology. Magezi, "Practical Theology in Africa: Situation, Approaches, Framework and Agenda Proposition," 125.

<sup>147</sup> Ganzevoort and Roeland, "Lived Religion: The Praxis of Practical Theology," 99.

structures that inadvertently create multiple structures of inclusion and exclusion that have impactful implications for gender in Ghana. Finally, feminist theology as the discipline in theology where the study is grounded and housed is discussed as well as the choice of an interdisciplinary approach for the study, and the study's affinity with practical theology.



## PART II

### 1.6 The trajectory of events in the development of the charismatic renewal groups of the mainline churches in Ghana

This subsection aims to discuss some of the important events and arguments in the history of the trajectory of CRGs in the mainline churches of Ghana. It examines the arguments that support their emergence, the factors that have led to their success in some congregations, and its extinction in others for a duration. The focus is also on the difference between the MLCs and Pentecostalism in general. An attempt is made to delineate the reasons for the popularity of the Pentecostal movement in Ghana.

Charismatic renewal groups in the MLCs came about because of many influences. The elements of foreign influences also played a role. A close analysis of the genesis of the charismatic renewal groups shows foreign influences in several strands. It can therefore, be said that globalization has a hand in the appearance of charismatic renewal groups on the Ghanaian religious scene. Christianity itself is a western import into Ghana that began in its earliest manifestation in the fifteenth century.<sup>148</sup> It later gained ground in the nineteenth century through the assiduous efforts of a number of European missionaries and also local contributions.<sup>149</sup> It is therefore, no surprise that changes on the face of Christianity in Ghana would have a foreign impact as well. This is not to say that there were no indigenous initiatives; there most certainly were. Both will be discussed in detail.

Many early missionaries were men but there were also missionary wives and children who were keen on social welfare and provision of medical and educational facilities.<sup>150</sup> Among other activities they focused on women's roles as defined by the historic churches, often within the confines of a strictly patriarchal existing framework.<sup>151</sup> Catholic sisters were also instrumental in this era, often going where monks and fathers could not go.<sup>152</sup> Generally, women's experiences of faith have gone largely unrecorded down the ages, and women's spirituality has been a mostly a "hidden tradition."<sup>153</sup>

---

<sup>148</sup> Amanor, "Pentecostalism in Ghana: An African Reformation," 2-3.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid., 5-7.

<sup>150</sup> Hazel O. Ayanga, "Women in African Christianity," in *Anthology of African Christianity* ed. Isabel Apawo Phiri, et al. (Oxford: Regnum Books International, 2016), 944.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid., 945.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid., 945-46.

<sup>153</sup> Nicola Slee, "The Holy Spirit and Spirituality," in *The Cambridge Companion to Feminist Theology*, ed. Susan Frank Parsons, Cambridge Companions to Religion (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 172.

Pentecostalism as a whole is said to have its place of birth in the United States of America. The Azusa Street revival is mentioned as the epicentre of the worldwide Pentecostal movement in existence today.<sup>154</sup> Although, this is widely accepted, there are other centres of the Pentecostal revival that developed independently from the Azusa Street revival at the beginning of the twentieth century.<sup>155</sup> As Pentecostalism emerged in America, it seeped into some of the historic churches that existed there.<sup>156</sup> The Roman Catholic Church in many areas of America was no exception. Therefore, the charismatic renewal groups in the Roman Catholic Church were in full swing from 1967 in the United States of America.<sup>157</sup> Therefore, it gradually became a fixture in Roman Catholicism in some parishes. This made it a ubiquitous occurrence in very many congregations, with both the laity and clergy participating in the merits of the charismatic renewal groups. Interestingly, one of the first manifestations of the charismatic renewal groups in Ghana was by a Catholic sister who experienced a renewal in America and then imported it to Koforidua upon her arrival in Ghana.<sup>158</sup> Therefore, this first known occurrence emanated from one of the accepted birthplaces of modern Pentecostalism—the United States of America. The renewal in Koforidua as an American import laid the foundation of Roman Catholic Charismatic Renewal in Ghana.

Another notable example of foreign impact is the Presbyterian case. The Presbyterian Church in Ghana purposely sent out a Presbyterian minister to Scotland on a training programme to meet the charismatic renewal needs of the church in Kumasi.<sup>159</sup> The Reverend T. A. Kumi spent two years in Glasgow and Edinburgh studying mainly evangelism. The above two examples reflect the reality of the foreign influence on the Ghanaian charismatic renewal landscape with regards to CRGs of the MLCs.

Locally, charismatic renewal groups came about because of the movement of members from mainline churches to other Pentecostal/ charismatic churches. However, there are several

---

<sup>154</sup> Katherine Attanasi, "Spirit and Power: The Growth and Global Impact of Pentecostalism," ed. D. E. Miller, K. Sargeant, and R. Flory, *Constructing Gender within Global Pentecostalism* (Oxford: Oxford Scholarship Online, 2013), 5-9. Cecil M. Robeck, "The Origins of Modern Pentecostalism," in *The Cambridge Companion to Pentecostalism*, ed. Amos Yong and Jr Cecil M. Robeck, Cambridge Companions to Religion (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 20.

<sup>155</sup> Hocken, *The Challenges of the Pentecostal, Charismatic, and Messianic Jewish Movements : The Tensions of the Spirit*, 11-12. David D. Daniels, "North American Pentecostalism," in *The Cambridge Companion to Pentecostalism*, ed. Amos Yong and Jr Cecil M. Robeck, Cambridge Companions to Religion (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 74.

<sup>156</sup> Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism : Global Charismatic Christianity*, 158.

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*, 157-58.

<sup>158</sup> Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism : A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana*, 32, 104.

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*, 138.

reasons why many of the MLCs relented after an initial opposition against the charismatic renewal groups growing in their backyard.<sup>160</sup> One significant reason was the mass exodus of their members to Pentecostal churches and African Independent churches.<sup>161</sup> This occurrence can be attributed to the ethos of the Pentecostal churches and the AICs, which they found more attractive than the existing liturgical inclinations of the MLCs. The MLCs are accused of continuing in the liturgical and ecclesial trappings, which they had inherited from their European predecessors instead of contextualizing Christianity to fit the African worldview and demand.<sup>162</sup>

On arrival, the European missionaries decided that the African belief in reality as an admixture of both physical and spiritual without a dichotomy was superstitious.<sup>163</sup> The chasm between the Christianity that was presented to Africa and the worldview of the African as far as belief in the Spirits and the supernatural is being met by the Pentecostal movement in some respects. The Pentecostal ethos characterized by an emphasis on miracles, healing, and spiritual warfare resonates with the African mindset.<sup>164</sup> Additionally, prayer against evil forces and the prophetic is in tandem with the African mind-set.<sup>165</sup> As a result, when this brand of Christianity began to appear in Ghana from the 1930s it grew in adherents.<sup>166</sup> Indeed, many Ghanaians joined the budding Pentecostal churches in the form of AICs. It is no wonder that the Presbyterian Church in Kumasi Ghana found the mass exodus of their members to Pentecostal churches so alarming that they sent a minister to Scotland on a two-year scholarship to study evangelism to revive the church.<sup>167</sup>

Reverend Kumi returned after his studies and was very instrumental in training many leaders of the CRG within the Presbyterian Church in Ghana.<sup>168</sup> In Bechem in Ghana, a Presbyterian

---

<sup>160</sup> Michael J. McClymond, "Charismatic Renewal and Neo-Pentecostalism," in *The Cambridge Companion to Pentecostalism*, ed. Amos Yong and Jr Cecil M. Robeck, Cambridge Companions to Religion (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 38.

<sup>161</sup> Omenyo, "From the Fringes to the Centre: Pentecostalization of the Mainline Churches in Ghana," 45.

<sup>162</sup> Kailing, "A New Solution to the African Christian Problem," 491-93.

<sup>163</sup> *James Mckeown Memorial Lectures*, 138.

<sup>164</sup> This is that special mode and mood of prayers involved with utterances calculated to usher in freedom and promote human flourishing. See Nimi Wariboko, "Political Theology in Africa," in *Paul Tillich and Pentecostal Theology: Spiritual Presence & Spiritual Power*

ed. Nimi Wariboko and Amos Yong (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015), 135.

<sup>165</sup> Beyer, "De-Centring Religious Singularity: The Globalization of Christianity as a Case in Point," 373.

<sup>166</sup> *James Mckeown Memorial Lectures*, 7.

<sup>167</sup> Angelina Danso Boadaa, "The Development in Pentecostalism through Charismatic Renewal Movement in the Mainline Churches in Kumasi Ghana," in *Papers presented in Theological Positions Colloquium, Continental theological seminary* (Tubize, Belgium 2011), 24-25. <http://www.ctsem.ct/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/colloquim-2011-journal-FINAL.pdf>. Accessed 15 June 2016.

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

Church member went as far as to appeal to the Reverend Minister to begin a charismatic renewal group to stem the tide of members drifting to AICs in the area.<sup>169</sup> Also, in the earlier days, most of the MLCs were suspicious of the charismatic renewal groups. However, they came to realize its merits and even called on them to retain members in the area of evangelism. An example is the Presbyterian Church of Ghana. It went as far as setting up a committee to investigate the activities of the charismatic renewal groups; it also evicted the charismatic renewal groups from meeting on church premises in some instances but later called upon that same charismatic renewal group to assist in evangelism and revival.<sup>170</sup>

One major influence that led to the flourishing of charismatic renewal groups came about because of the influence of other Pentecostal/ charismatic groups.<sup>171</sup> It is apparent from how the charismatic renewal groups developed within the MLCs that they did not come about independently of the surrounding impact. Their flourishing was not merely a revival of prayer, Bible study, emphasis on speaking in tongues, or emphasis on healing. Instead, it can be readily observed that it was a direct effect of Pentecostalism outside these historic churches that had penetrated the ranks of the MLCs. Several of the leaders of the burgeoning renewal groups in their beginnings simply attended other churches such as classical Pentecostal churches.<sup>172</sup> Others also attended charismatic renewal groups in other historic churches different from the one they were affiliated to.<sup>173</sup> The MLCs under discussion in this study began to develop renewal groups at different times. Thus, influences were crisscrossing these different MLCs as would a wildfire catching untouched areas. For all these instances of going to another church tradition, experiencing the Pentecostal and bringing it back to one's church, many such cases can be traced to the independent Pentecostal churches in its environs.<sup>174</sup> Some examples within the Presbyterian Church in Ghana will suffice.

Other Presbyterian examples are that of Mr. Sakyi-Addo, who attended an Apostolic Church meeting in Agogo, and took away with him an experience that influenced the beginning of a revival group.<sup>175</sup> Another good Presbyterian example is the beginning of the Ramseyer Bible

---

<sup>169</sup> Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism : A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana*, 32, 132.

<sup>170</sup> Boadaa, "The Development in Pentecostalism through Charismatic Renewal Movement in the Mainline Churches in Kumasi Ghana," 23.

<sup>171</sup> Omenyo, "From the Fringes to the Centre: Pentecostalization of the Mainline Churches in Ghana," 45.

<sup>172</sup> Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism : A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana*, 32, 137.

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*, 156.

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*, 137-38.

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*, 137. The Apostolic Church and other churches such as the Church of Pentecost had a role to play in the renewal movement in Ghana. See Cephas N. Omenyo, "African Pentecostalism," in *The Cambridge Companion*

Study and Prayer Group, which was heavily influenced by both the Assemblies of God church and the Pentecostal Holy Church, both in Kumasi.<sup>176</sup>

In the Methodist church, a non-denominational Pentecostal group and a charismatic renewal group from the Presbyterian Church were instrumental in nurturing the Kpehe Methodist church renewal group.<sup>177</sup> The aforementioned examples show how ecumenism across the board was important for the development of the renewal groups of the MLCs. Interestingly, all of them having their driving force or catalyst from other groups as the Pentecostal movement took shape in their environs. This could be in the form of an independent Pentecostal church or an MLC, which had already been influenced by Pentecostalism, and so had its inclinations in the form of a charismatic renewal group. It could also be in the form of a fellowship, which was not a subset of any church but was purely Pentecostal in its practices.

Some of the charismatic renewal groups were in the form of AICs because of their practices. Whenever Pentecostalism within Africa is discussed, the phenomenon of AICs is always a central element. AICs are African instituted/ initiated churches and have the mark of being established by Africans.<sup>178</sup> They identify as Christian churches but are often accused of syncretism.<sup>179</sup> According to Allen Anderson, the Spiritual churches or AICs are inclined to Pentecostal elements and so are categorized as Pentecostal churches.<sup>180</sup> In Ghana, these Spiritual churches have varied origins. In some cases, they draw from the MLCs, which is quite understandable since the MLCs are the historical churches of Ghana and are therefore, the first churches ever to be established in Ghana.<sup>181</sup> The Spiritual churches, in turn, have influenced many of the renewal groups of the MLCs. This is due to the Pentecostal elements embedding the spiritual churches, such as prophesy and healing.<sup>182</sup>

Additionally, there have been instances where the charismatic renewal groups, which have emerged within the MLCs, have notable characteristics reflective of AIC. This may be the case

---

to *Pentecostalism*, ed. Amos Yong and Jr Cecil M. Robeck, Cambridge Companions to Religion (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 137.

<sup>176</sup> Boadaa, "The Development in Pentecostalism through Charismatic Renewal Movement in the Mainline Churches in Kumasi Ghana," 24.

<sup>177</sup> Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism : A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana*, 32, 156.

<sup>178</sup> Beyer, "De-Centring Religious Singularity: The Globalization of Christianity as a Case in Point," 372.

<sup>179</sup> Allan Anderson et al., *Studying Global Pentecostalism : Theories and Methods*, vol. 10, The Anthropology of Christianity (Berkeley, Calif: University of California Press, 2010), 18.

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

<sup>181</sup> Amanor, "Pentecostalism in Ghana: An African Reformation," 2-3.

<sup>182</sup> Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics : Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana*, Vol. 27, 21-22.

even though its leader may not have any clear connection to an existing AIC. In this case, it is the knowledge of healing that the individual has, most notably from a general knowledge of traditional healing practices that influences such inclinations as well as some biblical knowledge of methods of healing. In the Presbyterian Church, two notable instances are that of the Bechem and Akim Awisa prayer groups. The Bechem prayer group began at the request of some concerned church members. It is categorized as similar to the AIC because some of its leaders were polygamists; it also focused on prayer and healing and not necessarily Bible study per se.<sup>183</sup> The Akim Awisa prayer group was established by Prophetess Yaa Abram, some practices included healing with herbs and the use of prayer aids such as candles, powder, and water.<sup>184</sup>

The reason why Pentecostalism is popular is because of the impact of enlightenment on the MLCs, which does not resonate with the African mind-set in some of its arguments.<sup>185</sup> According to secularization theory, religion is supposed to see its demise in the modern age.<sup>186</sup> There are many reasons for that assertion. One of the most poignant forces of that postulation is the influence of enlightenment ideals over most of the western world starting from the eighteenth century.<sup>187</sup> This enlightenment concept seeped into the churches of the Western world whereby miracles are relegated to the category of myth and legend.<sup>188</sup> It is no wonder that in the beginning of Christianity in Ghana, many Christians experimented in their new faith and in ATR. This is a prevailing occurrence in many instances.<sup>189</sup>

Additionally, the nature of liturgy and practices of most churches of the MLCs have been found to be lacking in meeting the existential needs of their Ghanaian members. For instance, the Roman Catholic Church in Ghana is criticized for the use of Latin and Western idioms in church life as well as over-emphasis of sacraments to the detriment of the ministration of the Word.<sup>190</sup> The other MLCs have also been criticized for similar grievances over the years. They are said

---

<sup>183</sup> Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism : A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana*, 32, 132.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*, 133.

<sup>185</sup> Kailing, "A New Solution to the African Christian Problem," 491.

<sup>186</sup> Peter L. Berger, Effie Fokas, and Grace Davie, *Religious America, Secular Europe? : A Theme and Variations* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 10.

<sup>187</sup> *Ibid.*, 17-18.

<sup>188</sup> Kailing, "A New Solution to the African Christian Problem," 491-93.

<sup>189</sup> John Middleton, "One Hundred and Fifty Years of Christianity in a Ghanaian Town," *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute* 53, no. 3 (1983): 8.

[https://www.jstor.org/stable/1159973?sid=primo&origin=crossref&seq=1#metadata\\_info\\_tab\\_contents](https://www.jstor.org/stable/1159973?sid=primo&origin=crossref&seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents).

Accessed 25 June 2019.

<sup>190</sup> Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism : A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana*, 32, 102.

to have been unable to adequately satisfy the physical and spiritual needs of congregants because they tend to deny or explain away the existence of miracles and other mighty works attested to in the New Testament.<sup>191</sup> This overall picture is often put forth as the reason why the AICs flourished in Ghana and also why the Pentecostal/ charismatic movement is still going strong in Ghana and, indeed, in many parts of non-Western nations today.

In the initial stages, many of the charismatic renewal groups faced opposition from their MLCs. The emergence of the renewal groups or charismatic renewal groups in Ghana created contention between the burgeoning groups and their mother churches, the historic churches.<sup>192</sup> This is no surprise because the ecclesiology and liturgy, as well as the ethos of the MLCs and the renewal groups, are very different indeed. Two main elements influenced the practices of the renewal groups—the Pentecostal ethos and the practices of AICs. Although both can be categorized as Christian, the MLCs regard many of those practices as excesses.<sup>193</sup> Apart from the interpretation that many of the practices of the renewal groups were in excess, the MLCs also expressed the view that they embraced activities that were irreconcilable with the MLCs' practices. The renewal groups were often evicted from church property in the beginning as a result.<sup>194</sup>

In some cases, the leaders were punished by refusing them from participating in the Lord's Supper.<sup>195</sup> In one recorded incident, the leader of the renewal group was transferred to another town to curtail the activities of the renewal group.<sup>196</sup> The group members were often threatened by the MLCs and investigated by committees drawn up by the MLCs.<sup>197</sup> In response, the renewal groups sought other premises to continue their activities. They would often seek direction and guidance from other independent Pentecostal churches or other more established renewal groups. In some cases, some offended members would even defect from the renewal group to other Pentecostal churches. For that matter, the eventual acceptance of renewal groups

---

<sup>191</sup> Omenyo, "The Charismatic Renewal Movement in Ghana," 177.

<sup>192</sup> Boadaa, "The Development in Pentecostalism through Charismatic Renewal Movement in the Mainline Churches in Kumasi Ghana," 25.

<sup>193</sup> *Ibid.*, 24-25.

<sup>194</sup> Cephas N. Omenyo, "From the Fringes to the Centre: Pentecostalization of the Mainline Churches in Ghana," *Exchange: Bulletin of Third World Christian Literature* 34, no. 1 (2005): 44. [https://brill.com/view/journals/exch/34/1/article-p39\\_3.xml?language=en](https://brill.com/view/journals/exch/34/1/article-p39_3.xml?language=en). Accessed 15 June 2016.

<sup>195</sup> Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism: A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana*, 32, 137.

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.*, 137.

<sup>197</sup> Boadaa, "The Development in Pentecostalism through Charismatic Renewal Movement in the Mainline Churches in Kumasi Ghana," 27.

in the historic churches was not an easy one. It took time, labour, and deliberation on the part of both sides of the divide to conclude that they could co-exist to complement each other.

There were some MLCs that were less resistant to the budding renewal groups. In all the accounts of the beginning of renewal groups in Ghana, the case of the Roman Catholic Church seems to have been the least encumbered by opposition and strife. It can be said that the church recognized that the renewal groups had a role to play in the spiritual needs of the congregants. The Pope in the Vatican gave his blessings to Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR) and so the clergy was involved at an early stage despite earlier suspicions.<sup>198</sup> That is not to say that the Roman Catholic Church in Ghana did not oppose the new renewal groups. However, they did not go to the extent of evicting members from meeting on church property or exempting offending members from partaking in communion. They also did not transfer suspecting renewal group leaders to other towns or diocese as others did. There was underlying displeasure in the beginning due to its novelty but it seems that no aggravated measures were taken to stem the tide of the growing renewal groups. It can be said that the CCR is influential in Ghana today. It has many relevant seminars and training programmes for leaders and members alike. It also has several relevant subgroups and wings so that individuals can fit in. Their activities mainly focus on Bible study and prayer.

Some congregations even put an end to the renewal groups for a duration, as seen above. Among the MLCs examined in this study, the trajectory of events in connection with the renewal groups took many different turns. The initial reaction was suspicion by the church hierarchy and even some adherents. Some of the renewal groups took it upon themselves to investigate the new groups and so forth. Eventually, the MLCs officially announced their acceptance of the renewal groups. The case of the Methodist Church was significantly different, however. The renewal groups of the Methodist church in Ghana thrived for about a decade and a half, scattered independently across the length and breadth of the Methodist Church in Ghana.<sup>199</sup> However, the Church decided to restructure in 1993 after the earliest forms sprung up in 1979.<sup>200</sup> A committee in 1993 was set up to investigate the Methodist Prayer Fellowships and it decided that what the church needed was a total renewal and not a limitation to a few members within

---

<sup>198</sup> Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism : A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana*, 32, 110.

<sup>199</sup> Omenyo, "From the Fringes to the Centre: Pentecostalization of the Mainline Churches in Ghana," 45.

<sup>200</sup> Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism : A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana*, 32, 156.



a group.<sup>201</sup> The Methodist Church came up with what they dubbed the Methodist Prayer and Renewal Movement to address preaching evangelism, teaching, discipleship, prayer, worship, healing, counselling, welfare, and social action.<sup>202</sup> More recently, there is a Methodist Prayer and Renewal Programme (MPRP), which operates Bible study and prayer groups in Methodist congregations nation-wide in Ghana.<sup>203</sup>

Many of the renewal groups were responding to a heartfelt need for more Bible study and prayer which they found lacking in their MLCs. Modern societies have become secular because of the realization that science and technological advancement has become apt at answering some of the tough questions of life.<sup>204</sup> This may be the case in many secular locations in Europe and North America. However, many African locations still ascribe to the transcendent or the Supreme Being and to spirituality to answer many of the tough questions of life. The story is told of Prophetess Yaa Abram who began a renewal group because she was seeking answers to the demise of her ten children.<sup>205</sup> Many Ghanaians, therefore, join these renewal groups because of their search for answers to life's dilemmas.<sup>206</sup> Since, for Christians, the Bible is a go-to reference, Bible study is such a central aspect of the activities of the renewal groups.

Additionally, the Pentecostal movement has proven itself Christo-centric in its orientation and thus Bible centred in many cases. The MLCs, however, are often caught up in high clericalism, Anglo-Catholic models, and elite formalism, as in the case of the Anglican Church.<sup>207</sup> The renewal groups were more layman-oriented as opposed to the structure of the MLCs which may have contributed to its success and rate of growth. The MLCs as far as offices in the church are concerned are highly clergy centred. The clergy is responsible for most leadership activities during congregational meetings and beyond. However, with the emergence of the renewal groups, room has been made for proactive members to have the window of opportunity to play significant roles in leadership that otherwise would have been unavailable to them. Spontaneous

---

<sup>201</sup> Boadaa, "The Development in Pentecostalism through Charismatic Renewal Movement in the Mainline Churches in Kumasi Ghana," 28.

<sup>202</sup> Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism : A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana*, 32, 166.

<sup>203</sup> This was the case during fieldwork in Ghana in 2017 and 2018.

<sup>204</sup> François Gauthier and Tuomas Martikainen, *Religion in Consumer Society : Brands, Consumers and Markets*, Ashgate Ahrc/Esrc Religion and Society Series (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), 29.

<sup>205</sup> Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism : A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana*, 32, 132-33.

<sup>206</sup> Anderson et al., *Studying Global Pentecostalism : Theories and Methods*, 10, 41.

<sup>207</sup> Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism : A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana*, 32, 112.

singing, a personal initiative in prophecy, and personal witnessing all give room for lay people's full participation.<sup>208</sup>

In some cases, the emergence of charismatic renewal groups has led to schism and the loss of some individual members from the MLCs due to misunderstandings. The Methodist Church of Ghana cited the danger of division in its decision to for a duration; scratch out the renewal groups in favour of overall renewal in the Church.<sup>209</sup> This assertion is not unfounded as there have been occurrences of schism and tensions in the past because of the existence of the renewal groups.

The early attempts of renewal in the Anglican Church saw some schism. The Anglican priest Reverend Duah Agyemang became born again and led a renewal in his parish but he eventually resigned to form his Pentecostal/ charismatic church.<sup>210</sup> Some members of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana left the church to join a neighbouring Apostolic Church due to opposition from the Church against the renewal group of which they were members.<sup>211</sup>

In conclusion, the CRGs of the MLCs are very common across Ghana. They began in various locations of the country through the initiatives of clergy and laymen alike. The catalysts were neighbouring Pentecostal churches, other CRGs, and individuals who had experienced the charismatic renewal from other parts of the world. The initial reaction to the budding CRGs was suspicion and, in many instances, outright opposition. In due time, the MLCs have come to realize the need for renewal within their circles since the CRGs can infuse a new zest of zeal into the church. The major reason for the success of the renewal groups is its ability to meet the prayer, Bible study, healing, and other needs of the members, which can translate into the existential needs of the members. The liturgy of the renewal groups also counteracts the formality of the MLCs with its spontaneity and all-inclusiveness, boosting its popularity. The laypeople are also able to find self-expression in the renewal groups because it is not clergy dominated, thus creating a niche for initiative for the members. The fact that the Pentecostal ethos resonates with the African worldview which is spirit infused, miracle believing, and healing inclined also contributes to the popularity of the renewal groups in Ghana.

---

<sup>208</sup> Omenyo, "The Charismatic Renewal Movement in Ghana," 181.

<sup>209</sup> Boadaa, "The Development in Pentecostalism through Charismatic Renewal Movement in the Mainline Churches in Kumasi Ghana," 28.

<sup>210</sup> Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism : A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana*, 32, 116.

<sup>211</sup> *Ibid.*, 137.

## 1.7 Placing the study in context

At this juncture, it is imperative to discuss briefly the nature of the context which is Ghana and Greater Accra to be specific. This is necessary to place the research within a context and to enable readers to have a firm grasp of the area where the study is undertaken. Additionally, there is a brief discussion of the genesis of the MLCs on the soils of present-day Ghana.

### Historical information

The inspiration for the name Ghana was taken from the great Sudanic Empire of Ghana, which existed from the fifth to the thirteenth century, several hundreds of miles to the North West of modern Ghana.<sup>212</sup> The idea behind acquiring a new name for the young nation was to make a clean break from its colonial past. From her first contact with European traders, the location now called Ghana was formerly called the Gold Coast. The capital Accra is the headquarters for a substantial number of governmental departments and agencies for the entire country. Thus, state-owned establishments here employ a noticeable fraction of the workforce of the nation.<sup>213</sup> Many Accra dwellers also find themselves in the arena of small-scale businesses.<sup>214</sup> There are also employment and endeavours that cuts across all professions.

### History of the mainline churches in Ghana

In this subsection, the aim is to give a brief overview of the genesis of the three historic churches or the MLCs. In the beginning, chaplains accompanied European traders to the coasts of Ghana.<sup>215</sup> As time elapsed, missionary societies in Europe decided to send missionaries first to take care of the growing populations around the abode of the Europeans on the coast.<sup>216</sup> The focus then moved to the evangelization of the natives, which often came at a high price.<sup>217</sup> Many of the initial attempts did not yield any fruits. The initial European presence to the portion

---

<sup>212</sup> Gocking, *The History of Ghana*, 1.

<sup>213</sup> A. Krakah and D. Kombat, *Integrated Business Establishment Survey: National Employment Report* (Ghana Statistical Service, 2015), 10-12.

<sup>214</sup> "Accra," Encyclopædia Britannica, inc., <https://www.britannica.com/place/Accra>. <https://www.britannica.com/place/Accra>. Last modified 17 April 2013.

<sup>215</sup> Amanor, "Pentecostalism in Ghana: An African Reformation," 4.

<sup>216</sup> *Ibid.*, 2-4.

<sup>217</sup> "History of Ghana," GhanaWeb, <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/history/> Last modified 2019. <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/history/>. Accessed 30 May 2019.

of the West African coastline now called Ghana was by the Portuguese in 1482.<sup>218</sup> The aim of these Europeans initially was trade, mostly in slaves, ivory, and gold.<sup>219</sup> The next Europeans to arrive were the Dutch traders in the 15<sup>th</sup> century together with their chaplains.<sup>220</sup> By the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, other Europeans like English, Danes, and Swedish had arrived; all were building forts along the coastline.<sup>221</sup>

### **Roman Catholic missionaries**

In the fifteenth century, the earliest Roman Catholic presence in the Gold Coast was not marked by any substantive attainment of converts especially because the clergy were more chaplains than missionaries and served the spiritual needs of the Portuguese than the natives.<sup>222</sup> However, they did build schools as a means of an attempt at Christianization.<sup>223</sup>

### **Anglican missionaries**

The Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge (SPCK) had a close affinity with the Church of England and was able to arrive in the Gold Coast in 1751 by the efforts of the Reverend Thomas Thompson.<sup>224</sup> Reverend Thompson had expressed an interest in evangelizing the natives. Therefore, the Royal African Company requested the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG) to send a missionary, hence the arrival of Rev. Thompson.<sup>225</sup> Consequently, the presence of the Church of England's SPG was felt in 1752 in the Gold Coast.<sup>226</sup> The efforts of the SPG in the person of Rev. Thompson were futile as far as converts were concerned. He was, however, able to run a small school for the children around the castle, baptizing babies and organizing funeral services.<sup>227</sup>

### **Methodist missionaries**

One of the main channels of the mission by the Methodist Church was through the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society, established in England in 1813. Some natives who had attended

---

<sup>218</sup> "Pentecostalism in Ghana: An African Reformation," 2.

<sup>219</sup> E. A. Livingstone, "Feminist Theology," (Oxford University Press, 2014).

<sup>220</sup> Amanor, "Pentecostalism in Ghana: An African Reformation," 2.

<sup>221</sup> "History of Ghana". Last modified 2019.

<sup>222</sup> "Pentecostalism in Ghana: An African Reformation," 2-4.

<sup>223</sup> Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism : A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana*, 32, 45.

<sup>224</sup> *Ibid.*, 49.

<sup>225</sup> John S. Pobee, "The Anglican Church in Ghana and the Spg," (London: Continuum, c2000, 2000), 410.

<sup>226</sup> Adrian Hastings, *The Church in Africa : 1450-1950*, The Oxford History of the Christian Church (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 178.

<sup>227</sup> Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism : A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana*, 32, 49.

the Castle School of Phillip Quaque (1741–1816) had formed a group called the Bible Band or the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge in several towns.<sup>228</sup> The main masterminds behind the Bible Band were Joseph Smith and William Degraft who hailed from Cape Coast.<sup>229</sup> This shows that even though Phillip Quaque was an Anglican clergyman, his fruits in the persons of some of the individuals who attended his school contributed to the Methodist mission in Ghana tremendously.

In conclusion, this section focuses on Ghana and Greater Accra briefly by discussing some historical and economic information that serves as the context of the study. Furthermore, a brief presentation of how the three MLCs evolved in Ghana is highlighted. I discuss how European chaplains initially arrived on the shores of present-day Ghana intending to meet the spiritual needs of the European settlers involved in the trade. This led to the focus gradually shifting to include the evangelization of the natives.

---

<sup>228</sup> F. L. Bartels, *The Roots of Ghana Methodism* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1965), 8-9.

<sup>229</sup> Amanor, "Pentecostalism in Ghana: An African Reformation," 7.

# CHAPTER TWO

## SERVANT LEADERSHIP AND AFRICAN FEMINIST THEOLOGY

### 2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present and discuss the central theoretical perspectives employed in this thesis. I start by introducing servant leadership theory and discuss the relevance of this theory for the topic of the thesis. Second, I present African feminist theology. African feminist theology is a vast field, hence, for the purpose of a concise and a relevant discussion, I have chosen to foreground aspects of African feminist theology that I find particularly fruitful given the topic of the thesis. I end the theory chapter by putting servant leadership in conversation with African feminist theology so as to establish important connections and intersections, particularly as it pertains to the relationship between leadership and gender.

### 2.2 Servant leadership

#### 2.2.1 Introduction

Servant leadership is a burgeoning research area and a leadership theory linked to ethics, virtues, and morality.<sup>230</sup> It is considered relatively new compared to other prevalent leadership theories. Servant leadership is a movement that aims at providing a new way of working, living, and being from a follower's perspective.<sup>231</sup> Therefore, instead of the usual manner in which leadership is viewed, with the focus on the leader and his/ her qualities, servant leadership theory provides a way to examine or study leadership by being more inclusive of the follower or servant qualities. This does not ignore the idea of the leader in examining leadership but places emphasis on the leader as someone who also serves. Leadership is then, also about serving and being in service to the community, for example. According to servant leadership theory, the leader is someone who embodies both leader and servant dimensions. In that, it is an unorthodox approach to dealing with leadership.<sup>232</sup> Servant leadership contrasts with traditional leader-first paradigms, which applaud Darwinism and individualistic and capitalist approaches to life, implying that only the strong will survive.<sup>233</sup> It is a transformational theory

---

<sup>230</sup> Parris and Peachey, "A Systematic Literature Review of Servant Leadership Theory in Organizational Contexts," 378. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10551-012-1322-6>. Accessed 27 June 2019.

<sup>231</sup> Davis, *Servant Leadership and Followership: Examining the Impact of Workplace Behaviour*, XV-XVI.

<sup>232</sup> Parris and Peachey, "A Systematic Literature Review of Servant Leadership Theory in Organizational Contexts," 378.

<sup>233</sup> *Ibid.*, 390.

in the field of the academic study of leadership that has added valuable elements and concepts to the field.<sup>234</sup>

Servant leadership research has focused on myriad topics and concepts. Robert Greenleaf initially propounded the theory because of his studies on leadership.<sup>235</sup> He defined a servant leader as a leader who is a servant first and desires to serve.<sup>236</sup> Robert Greenleaf endeavoured to develop servant leadership since he originally conceived the theory, although he derived its coinage and impressions from reading *Journey to the East* by Hesse (1956) and its character Leo.<sup>237</sup> Others who agree with Greenleaf's understanding claim that servant leaders who are authentic are great and derive this greatness from the desire and will to be servants first.<sup>238</sup>

### 2.2.2 Servant leadership theory

The theory of servant leadership from its inception was mainly concerned with the idea of a leader who considers himself/ herself a servant. Others have added that, it is servanthood that is the leader's central identity.<sup>239</sup> A servant leader is not only one who is ready to serve others, a servant leader as a conscious choice—inspires leadership.<sup>240</sup> A servant leader is distinguished by both the primary motivation to serve and the conscious decision to do so. It becomes who they are, their self-identification.<sup>241</sup> Servant leadership theory emphasizes service to others as well as the recognition that the role of the organization is to create people who can build a better tomorrow.<sup>242</sup> The majority of research on servant leadership consists of establishing measurement tools to enable future scholars to explore servant leadership as a tenable theory.<sup>243</sup> There are other studies on servant leadership that focus on identifying key characteristics or attributes.<sup>244</sup> James Laub (1999) outlines in his literature review of servant leadership, important

---

<sup>234</sup> Michael G. Rumsey, "The Elusive Science of Leadership," (Oxford University Press, 2012), 456.

<sup>235</sup> James Alan Laub, "Assessing the Servant Organization : Development of the Servant Organizational Leadership Assessment (Sola) Instrument" (1999), 14. <https://olagroup.com/Images/mmDocument/Laub%20Dissertation%20Complete%202009.pdf>. Accessed 14 February 2019; Parris and Peachey, "A Systematic Literature Review of Servant Leadership Theory in Organizational Contexts," 378.

<sup>236</sup> Robert K. Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership : A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness* (New York: Paulist Press, 1991), 13.

<sup>237</sup> Parris and Peachey, "A Systematic Literature Review of Servant Leadership Theory in Organizational Contexts," 378.

<sup>238</sup> Larry C. Spears, "Reflections on Leadership : How Robert K. Greenleaf's Theory of Servant-Leadership Influenced Today's Top Management Thinkers," ed. Larry C. Spears (New York :: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1995), 3.

<sup>239</sup> B.J. Sims, *Servanthood: Leadership for the Third Millennium* (Mass: Cowley Publications, 1997), 18.

<sup>240</sup> Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership : A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness*, 13.

<sup>241</sup> Parris and Peachey, "A Systematic Literature Review of Servant Leadership Theory in Organizational Contexts," 379.

<sup>242</sup> *Ibid.*, 378.

<sup>243</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>244</sup> *Ibid.*, 378-79.

notions on attributes of a servant leader. These outlined central attributes of a servant leader are the ability to listen receptively, acceptance and empathy for others, foresight and intuition, awareness and perception, and powers of persuasion.<sup>245</sup>

Foregrounding attributes provide insight into how researchers have organized the complexity of Greenleaf's concepts on servant leadership into a theoretical framework. Russell and Stone's review (2002) revealed the following nine attributes as distinctive characteristics of servant leaders: vision, honesty, integrity, trust, service, modelling, pioneering, appreciation of others, and empowerment.<sup>246</sup> Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) developed an integrated model of servant leadership, which synthesized the attributes of servant leadership into five categories: altruistic calling, emotional healing, persuasive mapping, wisdom, and organizational stewardship.<sup>247</sup>

Van Dierendonck (2011) also concludes with another conceptual model, which identifies six key characteristics of servant leadership: empowering and developing people, humility, authenticity, interpersonal acceptance, providing direction, and stewardship.<sup>248</sup> All of these reviews exemplify different interpretations of Greenleaf's writings employing different terminologies; however, all include the fundamental dimension of servanthood or the willingness to serve others. In addition, a notion of empowerment, and/ the ability to empower others, emerges as a central attribute running through two of these reviews.<sup>249</sup>

Within the servant leadership model, the notion of servant leadership has been further extended, not only to include leaders, but also volunteers in formal or follower positions. According to Edward J. Breslin (2017), volunteers are leaders in their own right due to their display of both follower and leadership attributes.<sup>250</sup> These attributes are "altruistic calling, emotional healing, wisdom, persuasive mapping, and organizational stewardship."<sup>251</sup> Even though, all of these

---

<sup>245</sup> Laub, "Assessing the Servant Organization : Development of the Servant Organizational Leadership Assessment (Sola) Instrument," 15.

<sup>246</sup> Robert F. Russell and A. Gregory Stone, "A Review of Servant Leadership Attributes: Developing a Practical Model," *Leadership & organization development journal* 23, no. 3 (2002): 164. <https://www-emerald-com.ezproxy.uio.no/insight/content/doi/10.1108/01437730210424/full/html#loginreload> Accessed 12 March 2019

<sup>247</sup> John E. Barbuto and Daniel W. Wheeler, "Scale Development and Construct Clarification of Servant Leadership," *Group & organization management* 31, no. 3 (2006): 311. <https://journals-sagepub-com.ezproxy.uio.no/doi/abs/10.1177/1059601106287091> Accessed 14 February 2019

<sup>248</sup> Dirk van Dierendonck, "Servant Leadership: A Review and Synthesis," *Journal of Management* 37, no. 4 (2011): 1232-34. <https://journals-sagepub-com.ezproxy.uio.no/doi/abs/10.1177/0149206310380462> Accessed 17 March 2019

<sup>249</sup> Parris and Peachey, "A Systematic Literature Review of Servant Leadership Theory in Organizational Contexts," 380.

<sup>250</sup> Edward J. Breslin, "Servant Leadership and Volunteerism," in *Servant Leadership and Followership: Examining the Impact of Workplace Behavior*, ed. Crystal J. Davis (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017). 1.

<sup>251</sup> *Ibid.*, 3-4.



attributes are important, in any given case servant leaders may possess many of these characteristics, but perhaps not all. For instance, a group of servant leaders may exhibit altruistic calling (a willingness to sacrifice self-interest), emotional healing (self-actualization due to ideas of follower entertained by leader), wisdom (the ability to pick up cues from the environment),<sup>252</sup> and persuasive mapping (persuasion, conceptualization, and foresight).<sup>253</sup> As to the final element of servant leadership and volunteerism, which is organizational stewardship, the group may not operate in that area of practice. Organizational stewardship refers to a stance when volunteers contribute to greater society by way of activities beyond the sphere of the group, which benefits the community.<sup>254</sup> Volunteers/ followers often participate in servant leadership inadvertently and thus, they can be considered as servant leaders based on their attributes, although they may not possess all of the attributes, as discussed above.

There is no doubt that leadership theory is vital as a tool to engage one of the central themes of this thesis, namely, women's religious leadership. In the next section, I discuss the relevance of servant leadership for this study. It is also interesting to note, in the context of this thesis that focuses on religious leadership some vital insights in connection to servant leadership. In that, Greenleaf's (1970, 1977) unorthodox theory has evolved; servant leadership theory is now often connected to matters of religion, and ancient teachings and central religious characters, as embodiments of the servant leadership model.<sup>255</sup>

### **2.2.3 The relevance of servant leadership to this study**

In this study, servant leadership and followership has been brought on board to help explore and make sense of the influences and tendencies of women's leadership roles in a selection of charismatic renewal groups of the mainline churches in Ghana. Therefore, servant leaders who are "servants first" as an identity is a suitable theory that is relevant for this study.

Another reason why servant leadership theory is important for this study is that it harnesses the element of empowerment; the reviews discussed above notes that empowerment (of the self and of others) is a central attribute of servant leadership. The servant leader is to become one who provides exceptional services with high levels of ethics, integrity, and personal values that

---

<sup>252</sup> Ibid.

<sup>253</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>254</sup> Ibid.

<sup>255</sup> Statements of numerous great leaders and thinkers such as Mother Theresa, Moses, Harriet Tubman, Mohandas Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr, and even Jesus Christ and his teachings, to mention a few, are perceived to echo servant leadership. Parris and Peachey, "A Systematic Literature Review of Servant Leadership Theory in Organizational Contexts," 379.

empower the human spirit (self and others) in the organization and in community.<sup>256</sup> Empowerment is the rational process through which persons experience their creative, liberating power or capacity to survive which makes a positive difference.<sup>257</sup> Empowerment is important in this study since the thesis examines the extent to which women's leadership in mainline churches contributes to women's empowerment. It is also important to note that numerous studies have found that for religious persons, believing in God, or believing in the transcendent, is in itself empowering.<sup>258</sup> Similarly, taking part in religious practices, such as ritual worship could also be experienced as empowering by religious persons.

There is a positive correlation between spirituality and servant leadership; some studies use the teachings of Jesus Christ as a reference in servant leadership.<sup>259</sup> The use of Jesus Christ as an example of being a servant leader inspires religious leaders and adherents to actively use their faith to empower themselves and others. In addition, given that empowerment is a potent theme in servant leadership, servant leadership theory helps to explore and problematize the various ways in which leadership and empowerment are connected in the context of the study.

Followership is necessary because the people in the group or organization who help to build it are important. It does not only take leaders to build religious communities, followers (be they adherents, volunteers or others) are central to the development, establishment, and workings of religious community.<sup>260</sup> Followership, similar to that of servant leadership, includes the attribute of empowerment. Followership represents a niche where followers combine leadership in spite of their position and thus render exceptional services. This is valid because followers in their own right can be considered servant leaders: this is due to their ability to exhibit leader qualities.<sup>261</sup>

Commonly, leadership is associated with masculinity or maleness.<sup>262</sup> This means that when a leader is spoken of, it is often considered that the leader is likely to be a man instead of a woman. In Ghana, from my experience, that is definitely the case in some instances. Men are the

---

<sup>256</sup> Davis, *Servant Leadership and Followership: Examining the Impact of Workplace Behaviour*, XVI.

<sup>257</sup> Heyward, "Empowerment," 52.

<sup>258</sup> Lisa P. Stephenson, "Prophesying Women and Ruling Men: Women's Religious Authority in North American Pentecostalism," *Religions (Basel, Switzerland)* 2, no. 3 (2011): 411.

<sup>259</sup> Parris and Peachey, "A Systematic Literature Review of Servant Leadership Theory in Organizational Contexts," 387-88.

<sup>260</sup> *Ibid.*, 377.

<sup>261</sup> Davis, *Servant Leadership and Followership: Examining the Impact of Workplace Behaviour*, XV.

<sup>262</sup> Alyse Scicluna Lehrke and Kristin Snowden, "Servant Leadership and Gender," in *Servant Leadership and Followership: Examining the Impact on Workplace Behaviour* ed. Crystal J. Davis (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 26.

majority in leadership in most church settings.<sup>263</sup> There is a need to bridge the gender gap when it comes to leadership.<sup>264</sup> Servant leadership theory extend the scope of what leadership entails, an extension that foreground leadership attributes that one might argue are more often associated with “soft” and “feminine” qualities, as opposed to “hard” or “masculine” qualities. Yet, it is interesting to note that religious role models like Jesus Christ and the Buddha are commonly conceived of as embodying the servant leadership model as discussed. The noted focus on empowerment, inherent in the servant leadership model, is of course, also a central theme for African feminist theologians. Hence, servant leadership theory addresses some of the critical matters raised by African feminist theologians and is a good conversation partner in this regard.<sup>265</sup>

The interesting links within servant leadership is relevant for the focus of this thesis. The particular gender roles and attributes traditionally associated with women and men, respectively, where women are not really perceived to be leaders in many cases—not even in the domestic sphere, is of interest to this study and its focus on women’s religious leadership as one of its major themes. With the application of the servant leadership theory, new forms of leadership emerge that one can argue are more "suitable" for women if we take seriously the distinct gender roles and attributes associated with women and men in the context of Ghana.

The interesting links between servant leadership and gender also render visible a paradox. The servant leadership model invites individuals to embody two roles, the servant and the leader, although this is perceived to be one, the servant-leader. The model has the potential to transform women’s leadership in that, women’s associated attributes, such as that of being nurturing and kind, qualifies them for leadership.<sup>266</sup> However, this also means that women, in particular, are encouraged to embody these qualities in their leadership and as such, further strengthens the association of quite distinct gender roles in the societal context.

Put simply, the servant leadership model aims to unlock leadership opportunities for women while running the risk of maintaining distinct gender roles on the ground. Although the model expects that male and female leaders equally embody the attributes associated with servant leadership, the attributes are also embodied and contextualized in lived lives that are profoundly

---

<sup>263</sup> Ansah, "Gender Empowerment and Personal Fulfillment in Pentecostalism: A Case of Accra Ghana," 44.

<sup>264</sup> Lehrke and Snowden, "Servant Leadership and Gender," 26.

<sup>265</sup> This is also because of my training as a feminist theologian with emphasis of African feminist theology and its importance for this study as my researcher positionality.

<sup>266</sup> Lehrke and Snowden, "Servant Leadership and Gender," 28.

gendered. This is to answer the question of the majority of women who may not be leaders in specific contexts but are leading from behind or leading from within. Also, for those women who are leaders but insist in word and even in deed that men are actually the model for leadership and as women, are leaders because of a dispensation or simply a lacuna.

There are some complexities with servant leadership as a leadership theory. First, servant leadership has no consensus of definition.<sup>267</sup> The available literature is vast and diverse, leaving one to ponder about its exact content.<sup>268</sup> Furthermore, there is no agreed instrument or measurement of theoretical constructs as these are diverse.<sup>269</sup> Nonetheless, it remains an insightful theory that is useful in analysing leadership, and for this study in particular, which includes women's religious leadership.

#### **2.2.4 The link between servant leadership and other leadership typologies as a contrast**

Some leadership concepts will be discussed in this section, including definitions of leadership and concepts related to leadership. Closely linked to that are typologies of leadership. Furthermore, in the research, it can be easily identified that servant leadership as a theory can be linked to the typology of position-based leadership for example. A servant leader is one who is a servant first by identity, however; he/ she is still a leader (the one in charge).<sup>270</sup> At the same time, the follower is considered a servant leader. He/ she (follower) can thus be a leader-in-front (a type of position-based leadership), whereby leadership is unrelated to hierarchy and is informally constituted.<sup>271</sup> This is consistent with idea of the follower turned servant leader.

A detour into some concepts associated with leadership will be made in order to achieve nuance and a clear picture of what leadership is, what it is not, and what it entails. So as to present a background to servant leadership and to display or present its context, a brief discussion of the definitions of leadership is imperative at this juncture. Leadership is a skill used to influence followers in an organization to work enthusiastically towards goals specifically identified for the common good.<sup>272</sup> Furthermore, a great leader creates a vision for an organization, articulates

---

<sup>267</sup> Parris and Peachey, "A Systematic Literature Review of Servant Leadership Theory in Organizational Contexts," 378.

<sup>268</sup> Ibid., 370.

<sup>269</sup> Ibid., 389.

<sup>270</sup> Laub, "Assessing the Servant Organization : Development of the Servant Organizational Leadership Assessment (Sola) Instrument," 14.

<sup>271</sup> Keith Grint, *Leadership : A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford university press, 2010), 5.

<sup>272</sup> Parris and Peachey, "A Systematic Literature Review of Servant Leadership Theory in Organizational Contexts," 377.

the vision of the followers, builds a shared vision, crafts a path to achieve the vision, and guides into new directions.<sup>273</sup> Therefore, leadership comes about often due to personal charisma or institutional office.<sup>274</sup>

Leadership as a position is the traditional understanding of the concept of leadership. Servant leadership is the situation whereby an individual in an organization, be it formal (leader) or informal (follower), is afforded the position to lead due to their position in a hierarchy. This can also be referred to as leadership-in-charge.<sup>275</sup> Leadership-in-charge is a type of position-based leadership and it is crucial to reiterate that as long as incidents like mutiny and coup d'état exist, we learn that enactment of the leader's will or obedience is not a given.<sup>276</sup> Furthermore, other manifestations of informal leadership can emerge to counter leadership-in-charge or position-based leadership; an example is leading from within, which is a situation whereby informal leadership arises from within the system or hierarchy.<sup>277</sup> The notion of follower refers to one who informally combines the characteristics of both follower and leader to earn the moniker/ name "leader from within." Leading from the background or leading from within is a variation of the phenomenon of informal leadership that can exist in a hierarchy where a leader-in-charge or position-based leadership exists. In specific Pentecostal circles, is it common among women who maintain a presence in the background, yet possess influence.<sup>278</sup> For Grint, within the system where the leader-in-charge is "on top of matters," there can also emerge the leader-in-front who is lower in the hierarchy of leadership but can attract followers and even emerge as the leader-in-charge.<sup>279</sup>

Person-based leadership is postulated on the premise that it is who you are that determines whether you are a leader or not, based on one's character or personality.<sup>280</sup> In other words, leaders are born, not made. However, there are many instances where person-based leadership resides in multiple informal leaders and not just one charismatic leader.<sup>281</sup> This type of

---

<sup>273</sup> Ibid.

<sup>274</sup> Mhando et al., "Modes of Legitimation by Female Pentecostal-Charismatic Preachers in East Africa: A Comparative Study in Kenya and Tanzania," 322.

<sup>275</sup> Grint, *Leadership : A Very Short Introduction*, 4.

<sup>276</sup> This also gives room for leadership-in-front, where another leader emerges within the system who does not have absolute hierarchical leadership but is informally constituted: an example is a corporal in the army who accrues followers through leading from the front. Ibid., 4-6.

<sup>277</sup> Breslin, "Servant Leadership and Volunteerism," 1.

<sup>278</sup> Judith Casselberry, "The Politics of Righteousness: Race and Gender in Apostolic Pentecostalism," *Transforming Anthropology* 21, no. 1 (2013): 83. <https://anthrosource.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/traa.12004>. Accessed 1 July 2019.

<sup>279</sup> Grint, *Leadership : A Very Short Introduction*, 5.

<sup>280</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>281</sup> Ibid.

leadership also resonates with servant leadership because the servant leader is one who by identity is a servant first and is only referred to as a leader due to his role.<sup>282</sup>

For James Gregory Burns, a charismatic leadership is identical to transformational leadership or heroic leadership: charismatic leaders (an example of person-based leadership) possess dominance, self-confidence, the need to influence, and strong conviction.<sup>283</sup> In other words, the essence of a charismatic leader is his/ her characteristics, which can also include the ability to articulate appealing ideological goals and motivate others.<sup>284</sup> This is a good example of person-based leadership. A prophet is also a good example of a charismatic leader because usually he is a leader based on personal attributes or gifts that are often magical/ mystical while being able to endear self to others.<sup>285</sup> On the other hand, it is often impossible to attribute successes to one leader's personality because success is not usually accomplished in social isolation. Additionally, result-based leadership refers to leaders who are not theoretical or failed leaders but who actually achieve something.<sup>286</sup> A servant leader can also be seen as a result-based leader as long as there is a positive impact or outcome.

Process-based leadership refers to the processes or actions a leader undertakes to achieve successful leadership.<sup>287</sup> This idea has a link to servant leadership due to the everyday actions of self-sacrifice and service that is the hallmark of a servant leader. As exemplified by the discussed typologies of leadership, leadership is defined in a number of ways. Interestingly, the definitions are very much linked to the four-fold typology of leadership as position, person, result and process.<sup>288</sup> These definitions and attendant typology categories cover the depth of the concept of leadership as an academic subject area.<sup>289</sup>

This study engages African feminist theology so as to explore influences and tendencies of women's leadership, experiences of women's leadership roles and, connectedly women's empowerment in charismatic renewal groups of the mainline churches in Ghana. I will briefly therefore, examine feminist understandings of leadership. When it comes to women and leadership, two forms of leadership are cast into the limelight among the many leadership

---

<sup>282</sup> Bennett J Sims, *Servanthood: Leadership for the Third Millennium* (Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2005), 18.

<sup>283</sup> James G. Hunt, *Leadership : A New Synthesis* (Newbury Park, Calif: Sage Publications, 1991), 187.

<sup>284</sup> *Ibid.*, 187-88.

<sup>285</sup> Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics : Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana*, Vol. 27, 19 and 57.

<sup>286</sup> Grint, *Leadership : A Very Short Introduction*, 8.

<sup>287</sup> *Ibid.*, 11-12.

<sup>288</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>289</sup> The categories of the typology are not hierarchical. In other words, it is not the case that one approach to defining the concept as far as the four-fold typology is concerned is more vital than the other is.

typologies and the myriad definitional approaches available. Linda L. Carli and Alice H. Eagly (2007) employs *democratic versus autocratic* leadership, or *participative versus directive* leadership as major leadership styles.<sup>290</sup> Democratic leadership allows the follower to participate in the decision-making process while autocratic leadership discourages the follower from the decision-making process.<sup>291</sup> Carli and Eagly argue that the majority of women (in their study) utilize the democratic or participative style of leadership.<sup>292</sup> Furthermore, they establish that it often takes strong social networks for women to be in leadership even though they may be more qualified than men.<sup>293</sup> When women do become leaders after surmounting gender asymmetry, domestic responsibilities and sex discrimination, they are often expected to be more compassionate leaders than men.<sup>294</sup> This means that women are at the receiving end of certain gendered normative understandings when it comes to leadership.

## **2.3 African feminist theology**

### **2.3.1 Introduction**

African feminist theology is a vast and diverse field. African feminist theologians also share that ideal of bringing about empowerment and equality for women. However, this goal is connected to the socio-economic predicament of women in Africa.<sup>295</sup> For the purpose of this thesis, I have chosen to foreground aspects of African feminist theology that I find particularly fruitful given the topic of the thesis. As such, I have chosen to highlight the perspectives of a selection of African feminist theologians for whom the topic of women's religious leadership and connectedly empowerment is of great importance: Mercy Amba Oduyoye of Ghana, Rachel Musimbi Angogo Kanyoro from Kenya, Isabel Phiri from Malawi, and Sarojini Nadar from South Africa.

For Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (2014), a prominent African feminist author, the following is true:

*We teach girls to shrink themselves, to make themselves smaller. We say to girls, you can have ambition, but not too much. You should aim to be successful, but not too successful. Otherwise, you would threaten the man...Because I am female, I am*

---

<sup>290</sup> Linda L. Carli and Alice H. Eagly, "Overcoming Resistance to Women Leaders: The Importance of Leadership Style," in *Women and Leadership: The State of Play and Strategies for Change*, ed. Barbara Kellerman and Deborah L. Rhode (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2007), 135.

<sup>291</sup> Ibid.

<sup>292</sup> Ibid., 135-36.

<sup>293</sup> Grint, *Leadership : A Very Short Introduction*, 75.

<sup>294</sup> Ibid.

<sup>295</sup> Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa : African Women and Patriarchy*, 158.

*expected to aspire to marriage. I am expected to make my life choices always keeping in mind that marriage is the most important...why do we teach girls to aspire to marriage and we don't teach boys the same?*<sup>296</sup>

The above quote is not the foundation of feminist perspective in theology. However, it most certainly sheds light on the heavy burden of patriarchy and the unfair distinction of how we treat boys and girls differently and demand different representation and expectations from the very beginning. In terms of the Ghanaian context, the way in which young girls and boys are socialized translates into how society is structured in terms of gendered expectations.<sup>297</sup> This reality repeats itself in Christian spaces too, no doubt informed by a religion that carries within it clear male imagery and considerable male examples of leadership.<sup>298</sup>

### **2.3.2 Oduyoye on the oppression of African women by the language of traditional and modern structures**

Mercy Amba Oduyoye was a lone voice for a significant duration as an African feminist theologian grappling with the issues that face African women in society. She has, among other pertinent endeavours, formed the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians (CCAWT).<sup>299</sup> The CCAWT's aim was to address the concerns of African women, and the ways in which feminist perspectives in theology could work and be developed to address these concerns. One of her pertinent postulations is her statement that African women deal with not just one level of oppression but multiple levels. She mentions the following: political powerlessness, Western-type patriarchal structures, and economic powerlessness.<sup>300</sup> She calls these forms of oppression *injustice*.<sup>301</sup>

The language of tradition and tradition itself, unfortunately, have largely favoured males over females. For instance, it is a very common phenomenon among Akan peoples in Ghana that when an infant is born the question "has a (*nipa*) human been born or has (*aboa*) one less than human/ animal been born?" *Nipa* refers to the infant boy and *aboa*, the infant girl. Although this practice is ancient, and in modern times, it is often reduced to playful banter, it sheds light

---

<sup>296</sup> Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, *We Should All Be Feminists* (London: Fourth Estate, 2014), 27-28.

<sup>297</sup> Esther E. Acolatse, "Unraveling the Regional Myth in the Turn toward Autonomy" in *Women out of Order: Risking Change and Creating Care in a Multicultural World* ed. Jeanne Stevenson-Moesser & Teresa Snorton (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010), 223.

<sup>298</sup> Johnson, *She Who Is : The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse*, 4-8.

<sup>299</sup> Isabel Phiri, "African Women's Theologies in the New Millennium," *Agenda* 18, no. 61 (2004): 18. [https://www.jstor.org/stable/4066593?seq=1#metadata\\_info\\_tab\\_contents](https://www.jstor.org/stable/4066593?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents). Accessed 18 December 2018.

<sup>300</sup> Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa : African Women and Patriarchy*, 157.

<sup>301</sup> *Ibid.*



on societal norms. Tradition and the language that accompanies it is commonly the first culprit of female oppression.<sup>302</sup> To add to that, tradition prescribes custom and culture. The above *nipa/aboa* dichotomy is a custom informally passed down orally from generation to generation for mirth's sake. Such cultural inclinations and manifestations in language must be taken seriously. Another similar example was brought to my attention by Mercy Amba Oduyoye herself in conversations I had with her in her home on the 2nd February 2017. Oduyoye reiterated that, it was customary to accord expectations of bravery, exploits and laurels from male children while female children are accorded expectations of domesticity. Given this, this adage is spoken over the children in Akan circles: "a male has been born, he is a warrior and will wrought exploits for us and a female has been born she will fetch water for us." The example shows that tradition and the language of tradition informs female oppression.<sup>303</sup>

Even though, tradition and the language of tradition inform the oppression of women in some instances, there are other instances where tradition promotes femaleness in Ghanaian society. In Akan tradition, the *abrewa* or elderly woman is a great source of authority and influence in "spite of her femaleness, " as a member of the council of elders: the elders and kings consult her in matters of importance.<sup>304</sup> Secondly, in Akan Ghanaian societies, women are permitted to be monarchs and are not discriminated against in this regard.<sup>305</sup>

Concerning the language of modern structures, the colonial heritage has immense influence.<sup>306</sup> Originally, the language of creation/ composition of the human being gave equal credit of contribution to both male and female by Akan understanding.<sup>307</sup> Therefore, in precolonial times, among the Akan, there was a parallel scheme of female power (blood) and male power (semen).<sup>308</sup> In modern times, this language stemming from belief is changed in favour of monolithic patriarchy through colonialism, where man is the greater and the woman the lesser.<sup>309</sup> In addition, the understanding of God as female and male is oppositional to the language of modern times. Some of the dual names of God are *Mawu-Lisa* (Female and Male

---

<sup>302</sup> Ibid., 62.

<sup>303</sup> As what a woman can accomplish is restricted to household chores like "fetching water" while what is expected of the male has no restrictions at all and exceeds the boundaries of home and is beyond domesticity. Conversations with Mercy Amba Oduyoye, on 2 February 2017, Accra Ghana.

<sup>304</sup> Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion : The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches*, 51-53.

<sup>305</sup> Ibid.

<sup>306</sup> Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa : African Women and Patriarchy*, 157.

<sup>307</sup> Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion : The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches*, 57.

<sup>308</sup> Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa : African Women and Patriarchy*, 157.

<sup>309</sup> Ibid.

Creator) of the Ewe.<sup>310</sup> *Afua Panini a Ofiri tete* (Friday woman of ancient origins) of the Akan.<sup>311</sup> There is also *Ataa Naa Nyomo* (Elderly mother father God) of the Ga and Ga-Adangbe.<sup>312</sup> In modern times, male dominance has permeated all these dimensions of belief due to structures of power like colonialism with its western ideas of God as mirroring maleness.

As an African feminist theologian, Oduyoye raises the problematic ways in which women are oppressed within the modern structures of society, which include governmental systems. The quest of the governments over decades to raise the dignity of women and to ensure equality of the sexes in the areas of education, health care, and legislation has been problematic in the Ghanaian context.<sup>313</sup> There is much more to be done. Oduyoye argues that:

*The language used in describing women in both traditional and modern structures ... belie the statement of African men that African women are not oppressed.*<sup>314</sup>

The language of tradition include oral sayings such as the aboa/ nipa dichotomy. There are also adages that cheer on maleness but constricts femaleness as discussed. As Adichie (2014) points out, women are expected to shrink themselves for the man.<sup>315</sup>

### 2.3.3 Oduyoye on the androgyny of God

It is not a novel idea to affirm attributes of God in female terms since God, who is neutral, can embody both sexes/ gender. The argument is that God transcends both sex and gender; therefore, there should be efforts at a humanly inclusive theology, and the "envisioning" of God in a gender-inclusive way.<sup>316</sup> I will at this juncture, draw on how the Ga people of southern

---

<sup>310</sup> Thomas Houessou-Adin, "Mawu-Lisa," (2008). <https://sk-sagepub-com.ezproxy.uio.no/reference/africanreligion> Accessed 14 December 2020

<sup>311</sup> Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa : African Women and Patriarchy*, 111.

<sup>312</sup> Odamtten, "They Bleed but They Don't Die: Towards a Theoretical Canon on Ga-Adangbe Gender Studies," 115. <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/227108705.pdf> Accessed 18 April 2017

<sup>313</sup> Throughout their respective timespans, Ghana's democratically elected governments have all contributed their quota to gender equality and empowerment in one way or the other. However, these governmental policies have implementation deficiencies. Some of the policies include female representation in parliament, free senior high school education, and free maternal health care. See Republic of Ghana The Presidency, "Free Shs Has Come to Stay – President Akufo-Addo," Office of the President <http://presidency.gov.gh/index.php/briefing-room/news-style-2/753-free-shs-has-come-to-stay-president-akufo-addo>. Accessed 18 December 2018. Philip Ayizem Dalinjong et al., "The Implementation of the Free Maternal Health Policy in Rural Northern Ghana: Synthesised Results and Lessons Learnt," *BMC research notes* 11, no. 1 (2018): 2-4. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13104-018-3452-0>. Accessed 18 December 2018. Mary-Anne Addo, "Advancing Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women: Ghana's Experience," ed. Ghana Ministry of Finance & Economic Planning, UNDCF Vienna Policy Dialogue (Accra). [http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/newfunct/pdf/vpd\\_undcf.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/newfunct/pdf/vpd_undcf.pdf). Accessed 9 December 2018.

<sup>314</sup> Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa : African Women and Patriarchy*, 157.

<sup>315</sup> Adichie, *We Should All Be Feminists*, 27-28.

<sup>316</sup> Livingstone, "Feminist Theology."

Ghana refer to God. For them, God is *Ataa Naa Nyomo*,<sup>317</sup> or dual-gendered Supreme Being. As a result, God can and should be spoken of in terms of the feminine as well in order to empower women.

For Oduyoye (1995), African imagery of God does not pose much difficulty to the understanding of God. This is because in many African cultures, both male and female ascriptions are used to refer to deities, underscoring androgyny and proving that for them, God is beyond gender.<sup>318</sup> In addition, in Ghanaian vernacular, the names of deities could be neutral, however, due to the history of colonialism, Western Christian interpretations were imposed, which included a more rigid gendered language.<sup>319</sup> The understanding of God as male, for example, is absent in segments of some African cultures and hence languages as well, since God can, in some cases, be referred to in both male and female fashion. In many areas of African Traditional Religion, due to the androgynous nature of understanding God as both male and female, both sexes are priests of the deities, although this is not the case everywhere.<sup>320</sup> In the case of the Supreme Being as the ultimate sustainer of all, under whom other lower deities are found, maleness is sometimes ascribed; however, feminine attributes are still utilized in relation to the Supreme Being and so androgyny is the case.<sup>321</sup>

Commonly, whenever the biblical texts are read, the reader always brings to bear her own experiences. The traditional reading of the Bible and its interpretation puts men at the forefront in more instances than not. This has to be problematized because women have since time immemorial stood in solidarity with men and have played important roles throughout the history of the church.<sup>322</sup> One of the purposes of African feminist theology is to bring emancipation from traditional spirituality by focusing on human dignity, justice, diversity, and richness of creation.<sup>323</sup>

The insights on androgyny of God, the critique of the language of tradition and of modern structures have implications for women's experiences of leadership and women's leadership.

---

<sup>317</sup> Odamtten, "They Bleed but They Don't Die: Towards a Theoretical Canon on Ga-Adangbe Gender Studies," 111.

<sup>318</sup> Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa: African Women and Patriarchy*, 111.

<sup>319</sup> Martha Frederiks, "Miss Jairus Speaks: Developments in African Feminist Theology," *Exchange* 32, no. 1 (2003): 75. [https://brill.com/view/journals/exch/32/1/article-p66\\_7.xml?lang=en](https://brill.com/view/journals/exch/32/1/article-p66_7.xml?lang=en). Accessed 8 July 2019.

<sup>320</sup> Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa: African Women and Patriarchy*, 113.

<sup>321</sup> *Ibid.*, 111.

<sup>322</sup> *Who Will Roll the Stone Away?: The Ecumenical Decade of the Churches in Solidarity with Women*, vol. no. 47, Risk Book Series (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1990), 2.

<sup>323</sup> Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *Transforming Vision: Explorations in Feminist Theology* (Minneapolis, Minn: Fortress Press, 2011), 24.

In addition, they also have implications on the extent of empowerment for women due to their pervading practice present in specific African contexts.

### **2.3.5 Kanyoro on cultural hermeneutics and Bible translation**

In the field of cultural hermeneutics, Kenyan Musimbi Kanyoro is concerned with, among other things, the experiences of African women and feminist critique of culture.<sup>324</sup> Cultural hermeneutics also can, as its responsibility, critique colonial and white myths about African women.<sup>325</sup> For Kanyoro (2006), African feminist theology is an effort at repair of the imbalance and also of the critique of tradition and culture through the lens of African women and with their own voices.<sup>326</sup> Cultural hermeneutics also aims at sifting the good aspects of culture to affirm them, knowing that there is room to reject what is bad.<sup>327</sup>

Women have to strive to be a part of Bible translation so as to ensure that the experiences of women will be highlighted.<sup>328</sup> In this light, in the reading of the book of Ruth, the focus is on Orpah and not the usual Ruth and Orpah's courage not to marry her husband's relative.<sup>329</sup> Marrying your husband's brother is a cultural practice in parts of Africa, which is endorsed by some churches because of the story of Ruth. The predicament of Orpah, who does not follow the cultural status quo, should be celebrated by virtue of a feminist lens and critique. This approach at reading biblical texts works towards uprooting hegemonic interpretation that is oppressive through cultural validation.

Therefore, understandings and practices of African women and feminist critique of culture in relation to the Bible interpretation is important to examine the influences and tendencies of female leadership. In addition, an effort at uprooting the injustices of tradition and culture through the lens of African women is relevant for the exploration of the extent of empowerment in this study.

---

<sup>324</sup> Musimbi Rachel Angogo Kanyoro, "Cultural Hermeneutics: An African Contribution," in *Women's Visions: Theological Reflection, Celebration, Action*, ed. Ofelia Ortega (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1995), 21.

<sup>325</sup> K. Pui-lan, "Mercy Amba Oduyoye and African Women's Theology," *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 20, no. 1 (2004): 15. [https://www.jstor.org/stable/25002487?seq=1#metadata\\_info\\_tab\\_contents](https://www.jstor.org/stable/25002487?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents). Accessed 8 July 2019.

<sup>326</sup> Musimbi Rachel Angogo Kanyoro, "Beads and Strands: Threading More Beads in the Story of the Circle," in *African Women, Religion, and Health: Essays in Honour of Mercy Amba Ewudziwa Oduyoye*, ed. Isabel Phiri and S. Nadar (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2006), 39-40.

<sup>327</sup> Rachel Angogo Kanyoro, *Introducing Feminist Cultural Hermeneutics: An African Perspective*, Introductions in Feminist Theology (Cleveland, Ohio: Pilgrim Press, 2002), 70.

<sup>328</sup> Musimbi Rachel Angogo Kanyoro, "Interpreting Old Testament Polygamy through African Eyes," in *The Will to Arise: Women, Tradition, and the Church in Africa*, ed. Mercy Amba Oduyoye and Musimbi Rachel Angogo Kanyoro (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1992), 99.

<sup>329</sup> Pui-lan, "Mercy Amba Oduyoye and African Women's Theology," 18.

### 2.3.6 Phiri and her-stories

Isabel Apawo Phiri is also an influential feminist theologian from Malawi. In her book chapter “*Called at twenty-seven and ordained at seventy-three,*” interesting perspectives emerge due to gleaning from the story telling of the experiences of African women. It is noticeable that African feminist theologians often tell stories from which theories and perspectives are born. The book in which the above chapter is found, *Her-Stories: Hidden Histories of Women of Faith in Africa* (2002), is no exception. The story is told of Victory Nomvete Mbanjwa, ordained at seventy-three although she entered theological school at twenty-seven.<sup>330</sup> The reason for this was that she was situated in a context that favours men over women.<sup>331</sup> Unfortunately, the church to which Victory belonged succumbed to this injustice in that women who had received theological training since the creation of the church were not welcomed into ordained ministry.<sup>332</sup> Victory N. Mbanjwa’s story is that of struggle and great courage.<sup>333</sup> As well as the spirit to persevere and overcome as a woman called by God.

Drawing from the above, Victory N. Mbanjwa’s experience is an unnerving situation although common. As seen across denominational lines, it is often the case that women face difficulty when it comes to ordination for a variety of reasons. Mbanjwa was side-lined into a differentiated ministerial track for many years before she was finally ordained, albeit too late. Some women in other denominations experience a differentiated ministerial track for a whole life time of ministry.<sup>334</sup> A differentiated ministerial track is often informed by Pauline letters such as that in Titus 2:3–5, where older women are admonished to teach younger women.<sup>335</sup> This informs the decision to create a different ministerial track for women separate from that which men tread.<sup>336</sup> Men do not have any such restrictions and are given free authority in the congregation to minister to all and sundry irrespective of sex: women often minister only to women and children.<sup>337</sup> The existence of barricades for women’s leadership, especially when it comes to ordination, is an injustice.

---

<sup>330</sup> Isabel Phiri, “Called at Twenty Seven and Ordained at Seventy Three! The Story of Rev. Victory Nomvete Mbanjwa in the United Congregational Church in Southern Africa,” in *Her-Stories: Hidden Histories of Women of Faith in Africa*, ed. Isabel Phiri, Devarakshanam Betty Govinden, and S. Nadar (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2002), 119.

<sup>331</sup> *Ibid.*, 112.

<sup>332</sup> *Ibid.*, 123.

<sup>333</sup> *Ibid.*, 137.

<sup>334</sup> Ansah, “Gender Empowerment and Personal Fulfillment in Pentecostalism: A Case of Accra Ghana,” 72.

<sup>335</sup> *Ibid.*, 86.

<sup>336</sup> Stephenson, “Prophesying Women and Ruling Men: Women’s Religious Authority in North American Pentecostalism,” 2.

<sup>337</sup> Ansah, “Gender Empowerment and Personal Fulfillment in Pentecostalism: A Case of Accra Ghana,” 72.

Victory Mbanjwa's story as an example of the differential treatment of women when it comes to religious leadership and ordination is of essence to examine women's leadership and how the available positions or the lack thereof play out. The implications for the women drawing from discussions in the Victory Mbanjwa case is also relevant for this study.

### 2.3.7 Nadar and her-stories

Sarojini Nadar is an influential African feminist theologian. In the book, *Her-stories: Hidden Histories of Women of Faith in Africa*, she pens a remarkable story which works as a theoretical tool. Nadar emphasizes the need for *her-story* as opposed to *his-story*/ history, the latter being stories about events told by men, of men, and in favour of men. Nadar traces the journey of ordination of two South African women of Indian descent. May Laban did not initially desire to be ordained, although she attended theological school.<sup>338</sup> Eventually, she was ordained as a priest of the Anglican Church in 1993 but faced challenges as she experienced sexism and strife from individuals refusing to accept her place and function as a priest.<sup>339</sup> Evangeline Israel came into ministry with little education or theological training but showed adequate knowledge of the Bible.<sup>340</sup> She faced challenges from individuals who questioned her calling because she was a woman. Later, she accessed theological education in various avenues but continued to face challenges in finding a position in the church in a desired capacity.<sup>341</sup> This goes to show that churches often do not seek the leadership of women readily.<sup>342</sup> Finally, a decade after qualifying from Bible school, she was ordained and appointed in the church.<sup>343</sup>

From the experiences of these two churchwomen, it is observable that women indeed work hard in fields of ministry. This was the case even while they awaited ordination, both women did not rest on their laurels but were active in ministry in one way or another, and so was Victory in Phiri's account.<sup>344</sup> Despite their efforts, in the words of Oduyoye, "these churches, which often take the form of patriarchal hierarchies, accept the material service of women but do not listen

---

<sup>338</sup> S. Nadar, "Journeying in Faith: The Stories of Two Ordained Indian Women in the Anglican and Full Gospel Churches in South Africa," in *Her-Stories: Hidden Histories of Women of Faith in Africa* Pietermaritzburg, ed. Isabel Phiri, Devarakshanam Betty Govinden, and S. Nadar (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications 2002), 140.

<sup>339</sup> Ibid., 140-42.

<sup>340</sup> Ibid., 145-46.

<sup>341</sup> Ibid., 149.

<sup>342</sup> Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa: African Women and Patriarchy*, 173.

<sup>343</sup> Nadar, "Journeying in Faith: The Stories of Two Ordained Indian Women in the Anglican and Full Gospel Churches in South Africa," 151.

<sup>344</sup> Phiri, "Called at Twenty Seven and Ordained at Seventy Three! The Story of Rev. Victory Nomvete Mbanjwa in the United Congregational Church in Southern Africa," 128.

to their voices, seek their leadership or welcome their initiatives."<sup>345</sup> Women in many spheres of church life have similar experiences. The Ghanaian context is no exception.<sup>346</sup> What is the foundational reason for the intentional exclusion and the difficulties that are put in the path of women in their quest to be religious leaders? Maheshavri Naidu and Nina Hoel (2013) put forth this foundational difficulty succinctly:

*One of the particular issues that androcentric exegetes have commonly pronounced upon has been women's sexual difference from that of men—which, ostensibly, "naturally" stimulates the production of asymmetrical gender roles. Deprecating assumptions pertaining to women's bodies, sexuality, reproductive capacities—and, let us not forget, their provocative bleeding—have generated a multitude of exclusionary religious beliefs and practices.*<sup>347</sup>

Men in religious spaces have capitalized on the sexual differences as well as the resultant reproductive responsibility/ role of women, using these as limitations to exclude women from roles and positions of religious leadership. Another factor drawn from the aforementioned imposed limitations are gender roles, which further lay restrictions on women. Therefore, women are condemned and relegated to the backrows of the church for many reasons, including their physiology and sexuality.<sup>348</sup> These have led to a plethora of unfounded reasons why women cannot do what men do.

Furthermore, it is the "funny" things that women's bodies do, such as bleeding and swelling (menstruation and pregnancy), that often differentiate them from men.<sup>349</sup> Menstruation and

---

<sup>345</sup> Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa : African Women and Patriarchy*, 173.

<sup>346</sup> Taking a leaf from 'her-stories,' 'The fact of my experience is that the differentiation of male and female, the favouritism that exists, or the rigid gender roles was not imposed by my parents in formative years. It has informed my feminist stance that men and women are equal. In 2006, during a small Bible study meeting of a charismatic mega church on the campus of University of Ghana Legon, the words admonishing wives to submit to husbands were emphasized for the first time to my hearing. The reaction was disquiet on my part because even then, without the adequate and requisite vocabulary or tools, one thing was crystal clear in my mind: that 'husbands, love your wives' also had elements of reciprocal submission in that command. Thus, husbands loving wives and wives submitting to husband implies both spouses working at a consensus and both reciprocating either command by the two agents in the union. This has implications beyond the sphere of home and for leadership.

<sup>347</sup> Maheshvari Naidu and Nina Hoel, "Continuities and Departures: Women's Religious and Spiritual Leadership," *Journal for the Study of Religion* 26, no. 2 (2013): 6. <http://www.scielo.org.za/pdf/jsr/v26n2/01.pdf>. Accessed 20 February 2019; Jeanne Becher, *Women, Religion, and Sexuality : Studies on the Impact of Religious Teachings on Women* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1990), 149.

<sup>348</sup> Rachel Angogo Musimbi Kanyoro, "Engendered Communal Theology: African Women's Contribution to Theology in the 21st Century," in *Talitha Cum! Theologies of African Women*, ed. Nyambura J. Njoroge and Musa W. Dube (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2001), 172.

<sup>349</sup> Eliza Getman and Sarojini Nadar, "Natality and Motherism: Embodiment within Praxis of Spiritual Leadership," *Journal for the Study of Religion* 26, no. 2 (2013): 60.

pregnancy invites discrimination against women by individuals who draw from patriarchal understanding.<sup>350</sup>

### **2.3 The relevance of African feminist theology for this study**

African feminist theology is relevant to this study because the study examines the influences and tendencies of women's leadership, women's experiences of leadership roles as well as the extent to which women's leadership contributes to women's empowerment. In the context of Ghana, women can be leaders, but continue to maintain the traditional family setting.<sup>351</sup> Due to the social gendered scripts taught to women at home, in school, in church, and in the general community by word and deed, many Ghanaian women believe that men are "natural" leaders.

African feminist theology articulates a theology that is inclusive of women's experiences in such a way that aims to transform church and society.<sup>352</sup> It is therefore, a relevant lens through which to examine women's religious leadership in the context of Ghana. Tradition, as discussed, is a major culprit of female oppression. Tradition contributes to how women, be it in leadership or otherwise, perceive themselves. Some women shy away from leadership because, as Adichie (2014) argues, they have been taught, "to shrink themselves so as not to threaten the man."<sup>353</sup> An African feminist theology that questions and challenges tradition is therefore, central for this study as it speaks to women who continue to struggle with patriarchal and normative religious and cultural traditions.

African feminist theologians argue that one of the reasons why women feel that they are not "enough" (in leadership or followership) is because of particular interpretations of biblical texts that render women less human than men. Her-stories proposed by Nadar and Phiri put forth women's experiences with sexism, discrimination, societal pressures, and institutional patriarchy that African women of faith in their calling to ministry do struggle with.<sup>354</sup>

Finally, the underlying foundational difficulty hampering the full potentials of women to achieve recognized leadership lies in patriarchal understandings of sexual difference, reproductive roles, and physiology.<sup>355</sup> This is in essence the foundational crux of the matter

---

<sup>350</sup> Ibid.

<sup>351</sup> Amu, *The Role of Women in Ghana's Economy*, 40.

<sup>352</sup> Ursula King, "Feminist Theology in the Third World," in *An a to Z of Feminist Theology*, ed. Lisa Isherwood and Dorothea McEwan (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 68-70.

<sup>353</sup> Adichie, *We Should All Be Feminists*, 28.

<sup>354</sup> Phiri, "Called at Twenty Seven and Ordained at Seventy Three! The Story of Rev. Victory Nomvete Mbanjwa in the United Congregational Church in Southern Africa," 122-24. Nadar, "Journeying in Faith: The Stories of Two Ordained Indian Women in the Anglican and Full Gospel Churches in South Africa," 140-42.

<sup>355</sup> Naidu and Hoel, "Continuities and Departures: Women's Religious and Spiritual Leadership," 6.



upon which all prejudices against women are built. What it implies is that women are not men. Such an insight speaks to the study in a profound manner in that women are instrumental in all the positions, which they find themselves, both as leaders and as followers. Whatever their roles may be, women themselves are socialized by power structures and dominant discourses to accept the status quo. African feminist theologians argue that women's *difference* from men (in physiology, reproduction, and sexuality) does not mean that they are *inferior* to men. Thus, not only can and should they be in religious leadership, women also need to be empowered so as to claim their full humanity.

#### **2.4 The relationship between servant leadership theory and African feminist theology**

Servant leadership is an expanding and novel research area in leadership studies, interconnected and related to ethics, virtues, and morality.<sup>356</sup> African feminist theology focuses on the critique of injustice and the disparity that women experience within structures of society.<sup>357</sup> Therefore, African feminist theologians wish to disrupt and dismantle male domination of women, which translate as oppression and injustice. While servant leadership theory provides insight to understand (religious) leadership in new and interesting ways, African feminist theology argues for women's religious leadership on theological grounds among other endeavours linked to the empowerment of women.

Servant leadership is a movement that strives to carve out a fresh approach to being, living and working from a follower's viewpoint.<sup>358</sup> Equally, African feminist theology emphasizes the experiences of African women to uproot the imbalance within societal structures (including religious ones) so that African women can be empowered to live humane lives.<sup>359</sup> Relatedly, servant leadership theory is sympathetic to the follower even in leadership. In fact, after surveying servant leadership theory, it becomes apparent that it interrelates with African feminist theologians' views and aims for women's empowerment in religious leadership in my view. However, the servant leadership model also runs the risk of further solidifying certain gender roles.<sup>360</sup> This implies that because women are taught subservience due to traditional asymmetrical gender roles, the expectancy of women leaders is that of a mode of meekness.

---

<sup>356</sup> Parris and Peachey, "A Systematic Literature Review of Servant Leadership Theory in Organizational Contexts," 378. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10551-012-1322-6>. Accessed 27 June 2019.

<sup>357</sup> Kanyoro, "Beads and Strands: Threading More Beads in the Story of the Circle," 39-40.

<sup>358</sup> Davis, *Servant Leadership and Followership: Examining the Impact of Workplace Behaviour*, XV-XVI.

<sup>359</sup> Kanyoro, "Beads and Strands: Threading More Beads in the Story of the Circle," 39-40.

<sup>360</sup> Lehrke and Snowden, "Servant Leadership and Gender," 27.

Noticeably, relations of power are hierarchical (servant/ leader, subordination/ domination, and female/ male) and are gendered.<sup>361</sup> This logic requires problematization if gender equality is an aspiration worthy of actualization.

Hence, the servant leadership model may achieve a self-defeating end result in an environment of patriarchy, where entrenched gender roles may be further engrained. Interestingly, servant leadership asserts that it is enabling women to lead in a feminine mode. However, it inadvertently replicates underlying assumptions about gender.<sup>362</sup> This is because the servant is associated with subordination and leadership associated with domination. This maps onto the female/ male binary; servant leadership, then, accentuates these gender differences and further perpetuates patriarchal norms in specific contexts of entrenched male dominance.

Hence, the use of servant leadership as a viable and useful theory can be grounded in the aspirations and aims of African feminist theology; servant leadership then can be "checked" by African feminist theology to be of full value in male dominated contexts. This is to avoid further perpetuation of gender roles and female subservience. This is the case because from a traditional gender hierarchy standpoint, the feminine and masculine are associated with subjugation and domination, respectively.<sup>363</sup> Therefore, the servant is considered the feminine and the leader corresponds to the masculine. Nonetheless, the empowering aspect of servant leadership; the notion of the leader serving others, regardless of status or structural power, challenges culturally persistent norms of leadership as a manifestation of hierarchies.<sup>364</sup>

## **2.5 The relationship between leadership and gender in light of women's leadership in African Pentecostalism**

By definition leadership applies to both sexes. Yet, the attributes associated with the sexes in turn informs the workings of gender. This has implications for the way gender plays out in leadership. As argued by Mhando et al (2018), there are specific cultural expectations associated with the roles women are expected to play in society as a whole.<sup>365</sup> Commonly,

---

<sup>361</sup> Deborah Eicher-Catt, "The Myth of Servant-Leadership: A Feminist Perspective," *Women and language* 28, no. 1 (2005): 18-19.

<sup>362</sup> Kae Reynolds, "Servant-Leadership: A Feminist Perspective," *The International Journal of Servant Leadership* (2016): 16 and 18.

<sup>363</sup> Eicher-Catt, "The Myth of Servant-Leadership: A Feminist Perspective," 18-20.

<sup>364</sup> Reynolds, "Servant-Leadership: A Feminist Perspective," 32.

<sup>365</sup> Mhando et al., "Modes of Legitimation by Female Pentecostal-Charismatic Preachers in East Africa: A Comparative Study in Kenya and Tanzania," 322. <https://www.tandfonline.com/action/showCitFormats?doi=10.1080%2F02589001.2018.1504162> Accessed December 2, 2020.

women are perceived to be subordinate to men and this has consequences for religious leadership. In particular, the understanding of women as subordinate to men renders them disadvantaged in leadership positions. When women do become leaders after overcoming patriarchal normativity, they are often required to be more compassionate leaders than men.<sup>366</sup> Hence, one can argue that leadership is not a neutral category, but is fraught by way of holding unequal expectations for women and men.

Interestingly, historically the African Initiated Churches, popularly known as *Sunsum sore* in Ghana, began to crop up as spiritual churches serving as vehicles through which women under inspiration could lead in the churches, thereby spearheading the Pentecostal revolution in Ghana.<sup>367</sup> Prophet Wade Harris, succeeded in igniting a flame in women of sacred power. Wade Harris was one of few individuals who brought reform in the area of women seclusion due to menstruation taboos among other cultural practices that inhibited women from actively participating in religious life and Christian leadership of the AIC genre.<sup>368</sup>

In the years when spiritual churches/ African Initiated Churches appeared on the Ghanaian Christian Pentecostal scene, one thing was apparent: the mainline churches in Ghana promoted exclusive male leadership in their churches at the time.<sup>369</sup> Spiritual churches/AICs created opportunities for women to not only lead, but also to be free from ecclesial control. The flourishing of spiritual churches served to revitalize women in religious leadership in Ghana.<sup>370</sup> The women leaders in spiritual churches gained the autonomy, liberty, and authority to be innovative in their activities as church leaders. Additionally, Pentecostal women leaders practiced spiritual warfare, ascetic spiritual exercises, miracles of healing in various variations, as a way of legitimizing their leadership/ calling and ministry.<sup>371</sup> As a religion often referred to as populist, the Pentecostal/ charismatic movement ensured that anyone can be a spiritual

---

<sup>366</sup> Grint, *Leadership : A Very Short Introduction*, 75.

<sup>367</sup> Sheila S. Walker, "Women in the Harrist Movement," in *The New Religions of Africa, Modern Sociology* ed. Bennetta Jules-Rosette (Norwood, N. J.: Ablex 1979), 87-91.

<sup>368</sup> This was widely practiced, in both the Ivory Coast and the then Gold Coast, due to the belief that women in such a state were a taboo to the deities and an offence to society. In addition, lengthy widowhood rites and expensive funerals were no longer valid in his religious system. *Ibid.*, 90.

<sup>369</sup> Ross, "Church and Sacrament: Community and Worship," 225. The Methodist Church was the first mainline church in Ghana to ordain females as priests in 1979 in Ghana. See Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion : The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches*, 63. Anglican Church began ordaining females as priests in 2011 in Ghana. See Service, "Anglican Diocese of Accra Ordains First Female Priests".

<sup>370</sup> Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics : Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana*, Vol. 27, 55-56.

<sup>371</sup> Mhando et al., "Modes of Legitimation by Female Pentecostal-Charismatic Preachers in East Africa: A Comparative Study in Kenya and Tanzania," 326.

leader/ pastor even if they lack seminary training.<sup>372</sup> This made it possible for women of sacred power to become spiritual leaders within this movement even without formal seminary training.

In the case of the Twelve Apostle Church of Grace Tani, her knowledge of herbs due to her past foray into traditional medicine, added an edge to her leadership. Her skills empowered her to assist those who sought her assistance especially in the area of healing.<sup>373</sup> Other innovative practices of the spiritual churches are the utilization of blessed water or sanctified water for healing and divination.<sup>374</sup> In other parts of Africa, like in Mozambique, the appeal for Zionist churches (a nomenclature for AIC) prophesying, tongue speaking, and divine cure powered by the Holy Spirit, was particularly strong and, accordingly, their numeric rise was especially spectacular, with an appreciable number of women leaders.<sup>375</sup> On the Nigerian AIC scene, two dynamic women founders of repute are Archbishop Dr. Dorcas Siyanbola Olaniyi and Prophetess Dr Stella Olujimi Ajisebutu, both founders/ leaders of churches in Yoruba land, are examples of female religious leaders that display commitment to promoting female church leadership.<sup>376</sup>

Another example is the church that James Mckeown founded, the Church of Pentecost (COP) formerly Gold Coast Pentecostal Church. This church while being a classical Pentecostal church, was established through the financial support of Christiana Obo, who sold her gold ornaments to fund the church.<sup>377</sup> In the initial stages of the establishment of Church of Pentecost, women enjoyed full authority to minister to congregations and also to operate their gifts while being in leadership.<sup>378</sup> James Mackeown indicated that women were anointed in the Spirit.<sup>379</sup> This is very central to Pentecostal belief due to its principle that underscores the idea that spiritual leadership is endorsed by the anointing of the Holy Spirit, irrespective of sex.<sup>380</sup>

---

<sup>372</sup> Donald E. Miller, *Global Pentecostalism : The New Face of Christian Social Engagement*, (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2007). 178.

<sup>373</sup> For which I must underscore, is a very pertinent area in Ghanaian society due to a struggling health care system. As well as for the masses of impoverished Ghanaians, who cannot afford the health care bills from the health care services and facilities available in the country. Walker, "Women in the Harrist Movement," 86-87.

<sup>374</sup> *Ibid.*, 87.

<sup>375</sup> Victor Agadjanian, "Women's Religious Authority in a Sub-Saharan Setting: Dialectics of Empowerment and Dependency," *Gend Soc* 29, no. 6 (2015): 987-88. <https://journals-sagepub-com.ezproxy.uio.no/doi/pdf/10.1177/0891243215602106> Accessed November, 2020

<sup>376</sup> Dorcas Olaniyi is selected on the basis of her success story and popularity and Stella Ajisebutu combines an academic career with ministry. Bolaj Olukemi Bateye, "Forging Identities: Women as Participants and Leaders in the Church among the Yoruba," *Studies in world Christianity* 13, no. 1 (2007): 5.

<sup>377</sup> She was also one of the first itinerant female preachers in the early days of Church of Pentecost, together with Prudence Anaman. *James Mckeown Memorial Lectures*, 85-86.

<sup>378</sup> *ibid.*, 85.

<sup>379</sup> *ibid.*, 85-87.

<sup>380</sup> Stephenson, "Prophesying Women and Ruling Men: Women's Religious Authority in North American Pentecostalism," 412-13. Accessed November 26, 2020. [www.mdpi.com/journal/religions](http://www.mdpi.com/journal/religions)

Nevertheless, this stance of Church of Pentecost was diluted eventually. In fact, the relegation of women in leadership was rooted in such a way that, accomplishments made by women like Prudence Anaman and Christiana Obo will be deemed unique in the future of the church.<sup>381</sup> This was because of a preference to follow the Pauline letters in Biblical texts. In an interview, with a leader in an analogous classical Pentecostal church variant in Ghana, the following was proffered:

*For us in this church, women are not ordained into ministry. This is because we follow the apostolic tradition of scripture and the Pauline tradition that only shows men as ministers of the gospel. There will come a time in the future when women may be ordained as ministers in this church but we as a church are not yet in that place. We believe that revelation is progressive so for now only men are ordained as ministers in this church, although women can attend our Bible school to learn more about the faith but they will not be ordained.*<sup>382</sup>

The statement underscores the idea that in many classical Pentecostal churches, women's formal leadership, while no longer opposed in principle, often remained limited to subordinate roles.<sup>383</sup> Women in these circles are impeded in ordination and ultimate leadership but are allowed to minister in some secondary capacity, often in the arena of women and children ministry as on the Mozambican Christian scene.<sup>384</sup> Women almost never minister to entire congregation of both sexes, except occasional events within some churches in classical Pentecostalism. Instead, these extraordinary and called women of God minister to and have authority only over women and children.<sup>385</sup> The classical Pentecostal churches in general are culpable for despatching and demoting women to the background when it comes to leadership and ordination.<sup>386</sup>

In the beginning of the emergence of neo-Pentecostalism in Ghana, men dominated, but in recent times, many women have come to the limelight of leadership, thus influencing the gender

---

<sup>381</sup> James Mckeown Memorial Lectures, 85-86.

<sup>382</sup> Ansah, "Gender Empowerment and Personal Fulfillment in Pentecostalism: A Case of Accra Ghana," 63.

<sup>383</sup> Agadjanian, "Women's Religious Authority in a Sub-Saharan Setting: Dialectics of Empowerment and Dependency," 985. <https://journals-sagepub-com.ezproxy.uio.no/doi/pdf/10.1177/0891243215602106> Accessed November 30, 2020.

<sup>384</sup> Ibid., 996-97.

<sup>385</sup> Novieto, "Women Leaders in Ghanaian Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches," 88.

<sup>386</sup> Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics : Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana*, Vol. 27, 55.

structures of Pentecostalism.<sup>387</sup> In neo-Pentecostalism, there are no gender restrictions on pastoral training and ordination. In addition, both men and women can enrol, train, be ordained, and attain the highest level of leadership just as men if they so choose. Therefore, within specific Pentecostal spaces, there is emancipatory power evident among the women exemplified by opportunity for public leadership roles.<sup>388</sup>

One dynamic Pentecostal woman founder of a neo-Pentecostal church in Ghana is Christie Doe Tetteh, who was mentored by one of the most important figures in African Pentecostalism, Benson Idahosa of Nigeria.<sup>389</sup> Founder Christie Doe Tetteh is also one of the few women leaders to establish a Bible school in Ghana, which has hitherto been the domain of men.<sup>390</sup> Apostle Lyanne Koffi is also a founder of a neo-Pentecostal church with several branches in Ghana, established after what she considers miraculous healing of lupus and cancer for which she had battled for seven years.<sup>391</sup>

Within neo-Pentecostal Christianity in Ghana, there has emerged a trend that is fuelling women to influence the movement in ways that they hitherto could not. This is the phenomenon of pastor's wives as co-pastors and leaders with full reign over entire congregations.<sup>392</sup> One example of such co-pastors is Emelia Boadi-Dakwa.<sup>393</sup> Another is Rita Marian Korankye Ankrah. These women co-pastors often work side by side with their husbands to establish the churches, which in official terms were founded by the husbands.<sup>394</sup> In reality, these women worked hard to bring the churches to the growth and status that they currently enjoy. Although the women co-pastors minister to entire congregation on regular basis, they also have a special responsibility when it comes to women. In particular, they are responsible to organize women's groups. Women's groups can take different formats. It could be weekly meetings for women, where women are exhorted and led through prayer sessions or conferences and programmes for

---

<sup>387</sup> Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion : The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches*, 166-70.

<sup>388</sup> Mhando et al., "Modes of Legitimation by Female Pentecostal-Charismatic Preachers in East Africa: A Comparative Study in Kenya and Tanzania," 319. <https://www.tandfonline.com/action/showCitFormats?doi=10.1080%2F02589001.2018.1504162> Accessed December 2, 2020.

<sup>389</sup> Gifford, *African Christianity : Its Public Role*, 77.

<sup>390</sup> Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion : The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches*, 166.

<sup>391</sup> Novieto, "Women Leaders in Ghanaian Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches," 100-02.

<sup>392</sup> Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion : The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches*, 167.

<sup>393</sup> *Ibid.*, 172.

<sup>394</sup> Novieto, "Women Leaders in Ghanaian Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches," 137-39.

women on ad hoc basis.<sup>395</sup> Women as co-pastors initially ministered exclusively in women's arena within congregations. With the elapse of time however, they are accorded full authority to minister over entire congregations.

Apart from Pentecostalism's ability to bring liberation through women's leadership in a myriad of instances as discussed above, there are limitations of Pentecostalism. When women become Pentecostal, they embrace the ethos of the movement.<sup>396</sup> Often they then bring in their husbands and sons.<sup>397</sup> The ethos is encapsulated in a code of conduct.<sup>398</sup> In the context of Colombian Pentecostalism, as in other spaces of Pentecostalism, when a husband of a Pentecostal wife joins a Pentecostal congregation or group and conforms to their code of conduct, machismo or behavioural excesses are reformed.<sup>399</sup> At the same time, men are accorded definitive authority in both the home and church spaces, a gender paradox.<sup>400</sup> This perpetuates male dominance to a degree. Interestingly, machismo is a complex of male personality, which includes aggression, alcoholism, and womanizing.<sup>401</sup> The ethos of Pentecostalism is expansive however; teetotalism, marital fidelity and high morality as a rule are all standards of rigor expected of Pentecostals. In a machismo society, men can be extremely abusive to women, can be financially irresponsible due to alcoholism, as well as exhibit neglect of their families.<sup>402</sup> Pentecostal rigorous standards has a reformation power over such excesses of conduct; this bonds the family and improves the situation of the family unit, creating both positive and negative dimensions.<sup>403</sup>

In South Africa, the Pentecostal ethos of rigour that inhibits divorce even in abusive marriages is a negative outcome of Pentecostalism: this influence is born of its prescribed code of conduct.<sup>404</sup> Some South African men are abusive towards their spouses.<sup>405</sup> In many Pentecostal spaces, men possess ultimate authority (as in many societies).<sup>406</sup> This can breed abuse of

---

<sup>395</sup> Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion : The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches*, 168-69.

<sup>396</sup> Elizabeth E. Brusco, *The Reformation of Machismo : Evangelical Conversion and Gender in Colombia* (Austin, Tex: University of Texas Press, 1995), 77-79.

<sup>397</sup> Elizabeth Brusco, "Gender and Power " in *Studying Global Pentecostalism: Theories and Methods*, ed. Allan Anderson, et al. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 79.

<sup>398</sup> John Thomas Nichol, *The Pentecostals*, Rev. ed. ed. (Plainfield, N. J: Logos International, 1971), 55.

<sup>399</sup> Brusco, "Gender and Power " 87.

<sup>400</sup> Davie, *The Sociology of Religion*, 215.

<sup>401</sup> Brusco, *The Reformation of Machismo : Evangelical Conversion and Gender in Colombia*, 78.

<sup>402</sup> Davie, *The Sociology of Religion*, 214-15.

<sup>403</sup> Donald E. Miller et al., *Spirit and Power: The Growth and Global Impact of Pentecostalism* (Oxford University Press, 2013), 18-19.

<sup>404</sup> Attanasi, "Spirit and Power: The Growth and Global Impact of Pentecostalism," 248.

<sup>405</sup> Ibid., 252-53.

<sup>406</sup> Nicole Rodriguez Toulis, *Believing Identity : Pentecostalism and the Mediation of Jamaican Ethnicity and Gender in England*, Explorations in Anthropology (Oxford: Berg, 1997), 215.

authority and resultant spousal abuse. In such cases, the dissolution of the marital union is the most logical resort. However, Pentecostal spiritual leaders and their members, including the abused, from their rhetoric insist that God hates divorce.<sup>407</sup> Interestingly, even the category of Pentecostal womenfolk who succeed in divorcing still insists that it is a breach of God's laws and are thus in error.<sup>408</sup> Therefore, many Pentecostal women continue to endure abusive and toxic marital life because of Pentecostal standards of conduct, expectation and edicts. Therefore, Pentecostalism has a liberating dimension and a limiting dimension paradoxically. When it comes to women's leadership, Pentecostalism is a trailblazer in many respects. However, as seen in the Colombian case, Pentecostalism is beneficial regarding reforming machismo but it also places the man in an authoritative position above the female spouse/ wife in the union. The South African case shows that Pentecostalism has dimensions of limitations due to specific Biblical interpretation concerning divorce. This does not bode well for women's empowerment.

## **2.8 Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have discussed the theoretical lenses utilized in this study. I presented and discussed servant leadership theory, with a particular focus on attributes. I showed how the theory expands the notion of leadership. Furthermore, I introduced some insights from African feminist theologians that brings to bear on the topic of women's religious leadership and critique of the language of tradition and modern structures. Particularly, I noted African feminist theologian's critique of patriarchy in all its shades, which hamper women's full humanity, and by extension, their possibilities for leadership. I also discussed the relationship between servant leadership theory and African feminist theology as well as the relationship between gender and leadership in the light of female leadership in specific locations in Pentecostal Africa. Connected to that discussion, is the liberational dimensions of Pentecostalism by way of women's leadership and the Colombian reformation of machismo with its gender paradox. However, the South African case portrays other limitations of Pentecostalism that fails to liberate women from toxic marital or abusive unions.

---

<sup>407</sup> Attanasi, "Spirit and Power: The Growth and Global Impact of Pentecostalism," 248.

<sup>408</sup> Ibid., 251-52.



## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODS AND RESEARCH POSITIONING

#### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines and discusses the methods utilized in the process of undertaking empirical research as well as reflections concerning research positioning. The chapter begins with a presentation of the research methods, participant observation and semi-structured interviews. It also discusses the rationale for choosing these particular qualitative methods. Next, I present the research procedures for this study, which include the development of an interview guide, sampling techniques, and processes of data analysis. The chapter moves on to discuss ethical challenges that emerged during my empirical research. Finally, I engage the topic of research positioning and reflect on my own positionality in the field.

#### 3.2 Research methods

I wanted to study the influences and tendencies of women's leadership, women's experiences of leadership and the extent of empowerment in three CRGs of the MLCs in Greater Accra, Ghana. It was therefore, useful to employ empirical methods to collect data that would address my central research questions. I chose semi-structured interviews and participant observation as my main methods. These empirical methods enable the collection of what is commonly referred to as "thick description" in anthropological fieldwork.<sup>409</sup> Thick description is detailed and informative and is acquired through sufficient probing.<sup>410</sup> In the context of semi-structured interviews, this is achievable when the questions posed are open-ended, which avoids the eliciting of yes or no answers. Instead, a rich cluster of narrative material emerges that enables thick descriptions of situations while also involving interpretations by the researcher.

I chose semi-structured interviews because they best suited my aim of accruing information from the participants in a flexible manner. This was achieved by adopting open-ended questions that permitted participants to speak more expansively about their experiences. Participant observation was chosen because it enables access to diverse experiences and other informative indicators about the field holistically.<sup>411</sup> Semi-structured interviews and participant observation complement each other in that, the methods work to fill in gaps within the data: this is

---

<sup>409</sup> Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures : Selected Essays* (London: Fontana, 1993), 6.

<sup>410</sup> Ibid.

<sup>411</sup> Graham Harvey, "Field Research," in *The Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in the Study of Religion*, ed. Michael Stausberg and Steven Engler (London: Routledge, 2011), 218.

accomplished by a more embodied, tactile, or closer contact via a combination of the two methods in the field.<sup>412</sup>

### **3.2.1 A Reflection of coherence between the research question and the methods**

This study aims to explore the influences and tendencies of women's leadership roles and women's experiences of leadership in a selection of charismatic renewal groups of the mainline churches in Ghana. In addition, it examines the extent to which women's leadership in mainline churches contributes to women's empowerment.

In my opinion, a qualitative study is best suited to address my research questions. The research questions are primarily concerned with human or social phenomena. Such human and social phenomena are best suited to be explored qualitatively due to the descriptive richness that can be derived from such an approach.<sup>413</sup> Furthermore, qualitative research is able to examine the quest for the meaning ascribed to social phenomena.<sup>414</sup> Finally, I opted to undertake qualitative research due to my interest in the experiences of leadership of women in the CRGs as well as the tendencies and influences connected to it.<sup>415</sup> Moreover, the topic of my thesis is under-researched, and thus a qualitative methodological approach is expedient to arrive at novel findings.

Semi-structured interviews permit female participants to speak for themselves: prioritizing women's experiences is valuable to conduct critical research, particularly when examining possibilities for empowerment.<sup>416</sup> Therefore, for the research question related to the influences and tendencies of leadership positions, women's experiences of leadership, and empowerment in CRGs, qualitative research proved to be an immensely rewarding approach. It is founded on an understanding that experience, as a category of analysis, is a prerequisite for theorizing about it.<sup>417</sup> As a study of human and social phenomenon, which requires descriptive richness of the experiences and motivations of women, it renders a qualitative approach suitable.

---

<sup>412</sup> Rosalind I. J. Hackett, "Auditory Materials," *ibid.* (New York), 453.

<sup>413</sup> Michael Stausberg and Steven Engler, "Introduction: Research Methods in the Study of Religion," in *The Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in the Study of Religion* ed. Michael Stausberg and Steven Engler (New York: Routledge, 2011), 7.

<sup>414</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>415</sup> This is especially in terms of possible resultant empowerment for women within these circles.

<sup>416</sup> Mary Jo Neitz, "Feminist Methodologies," in *The Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in the Study of Religion* ed. Michael Stausberg and Steven Engler (New York: Routledge, 2011), 63.

<sup>417</sup> Harvey, "Field Research," 222.

### 3.2.2 Participant observation

For Vered Amit (2000), fieldwork is essentially a social undertaking and not a lonesome adventure by a researcher: it takes full physical, mental, and emotional dedication.<sup>418</sup> In the context of this study, participant observation was done to be able to gain insight into the realities of the individuals and the groups in context.

Participant observation is a method used to gather in-depth data. Observation is a scientific method that, when combined with other methodologies, yields systematic facts or data.<sup>419</sup> It is a method of verifying data acquired through other methods (such as interviews).<sup>420</sup> Observation while participating enables a researcher to pick up not only verbal information but also nonverbal cues that can lead to more probing and thus, in-depth enriching data.<sup>421</sup> Participant observation was a vital component of the gathering of empirical data because it transcends verbal indications to include motivations. Consequently, lived reality is sought after.<sup>422</sup> This implies that not just the words and practices are aimed at but also the sum of realities of the inhabitants of the setting.

Participant observation facilitates the opportunity to accrue varied experiences on the spot as well as other enriching signals that lead to more information about the field as a whole.<sup>423</sup> Another advantage of participant observation is that, it can act as a supplement to interviews. This is because not every seemingly important enquiry can be pursued in an interview session but varied salient practices, beliefs, and motivations of essence to the study can come to the fore during participant observation.

Furthermore, there is sometimes a lack of holistic clarity during the interview sessions but rapport building from participant observation mitigates this possibility. By employing participant observation, I was able to receive further insight, with rapport building as an integral component. Rapport building and trust building are very important when undertaking empirical research, undoubtedly. Many scholars argue that rapport is more easily accomplished when researching one's own setting or context.<sup>424</sup> A longer stay in the field means that the researcher

---

<sup>418</sup> Vered Amit-Talai, *Constructing the Field : Ethnographic Fieldwork in the Contemporary World*, European Association of Social Anthropologists (London: Routledge, 2000), 1.

<sup>419</sup> Chakravanti Rajagopalachari Kothari, *Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques* (New Age International, 2004), 9.

<sup>420</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>421</sup> Yvonna S. Lincoln and Egon G. Guba, *Naturalistic Inquiry* (Beverly Hills, Calif: Sage, 1985), 276.

<sup>422</sup> Amit-Talai, *Constructing the Field : Ethnographic Fieldwork in the Contemporary World*, 11.

<sup>423</sup> Harvey, "Field Research," 218.

<sup>424</sup> Catherine Marshall and Gretchen B. Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 6th ed. ed. (Los Angeles, Calif: SAGE, 2016), 106-07.

has time to build a good rapport while close engagement and involvement enhances the research.<sup>425</sup> Participant observation is a central method in achieving rapport.

Participant observation was necessary for my study as an empirical tool because it enabled the learning of discourses, practices, and cues in a natural setting that was not available during semi-structured interviews. Also, participant observation engendered trust-building between the researcher and participants because it promoted the idea that the researcher has become a participant and respects the contexts. This is due to being bodily present and participating in their circles.

Through participant observation, I was able to experience the world of the participants and their circles as a whole. This was not just an experiential process but the recording was also important for the sake of the analysis of the data that took place later.<sup>426</sup> The recording was done by making notes in a fieldwork diary throughout the process in the field while participating and observing. Therefore, the activities of the groups were written down in a journal/ fieldwork diary for purposes of analysis.

#### *Participant observation sites*

I worked among three different charismatic renewal groups. They are the Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR), the Methodist Prayer and Renewal Programme (MPRP), and the Anglican Bible Study and Prayer Group (ABSPG). On my first visit to these congregations, I attended their ordinary Sunday services. I also continued to attend these services as much as I could for all the three churches, albeit disproportionately to some extent. At the Roman Catholic Sunday mass, I aimed to take in the general trend of how things were carried out in the process of celebrating mass. I also made it a point to record both male and female roles in the various aspects of the celebration of mass in a fieldwork diary.

In the Methodist Church, I endeavoured to take in all activities, especially the roles women played and the content of the sermons by participating and observation, as in the Roman Catholic Church. In the Anglican Church, I observed the entire process of the church service being mindful of the roles of men and women as well as the content of the sermons. For both the second and first legs of interview, I participated in Roman Catholic mass for eight visits and its CCR meeting for ten specific visits. In the Anglican Church, I participated in the church

---

<sup>425</sup> Ibid., 124.

<sup>426</sup> Kirsten Hastrup, *A Passage to Anthropology : Between Experience and Theory* (London: Routledge, 1995), 21.

itself for thirteen visits in total and its ABSPG the same number of times since the ABSPG meeting preceded the church service. Finally, in the Methodist Church, I participated in the main service six times and in its MPRP meetings nine times.

### *Charismatic renewal group meetings*

The meetings of the CCR took place once a week for one hour in the evening, and took two different formats. The first format began with prayer followed by worship, which is when slow-tempo songs in either the local language or English are sang in unison in a meditative and solemn manner. After this, the praise session ensued. This time, fast-tempo music was sung amidst clapping, dancing, and playing of tambourines. At that juncture, the teaching session began. This was where the coordinator, guided by a pre-established topic, taught on a specific theme for about thirty minutes. Announcements made up the last element of this format of the CCR meeting as well as a short prayer said. The second format was also ushered in by prayer and entailed the usual worship, characterized by slow-tempo music. Then came praise, characterized by fast-tempo music, dancing, and clapping. Bible discussions replaced a teaching session or sermonette. As usual, the dissemination of announcements ended the sessions, although there was usually the saying of the Lord's Prayer while holding hands for both meeting styles.

In the MPRP, the meetings took place twice per week, for one hour in the evening and three hours in the morning, respectively. The one-hour meetings took the following format: there were the initial prayer sessions followed by praise time. Teaching then took place in the form of a sermonette. There was an opportunity to ask questions that ensued after the teaching; there was also a time for monetary contribution popularly called in those circles "offering time". Then came testimony time, where adherents gave personal accounts of what they believed God had done in their lives. Sometimes there were deliverance sessions, where hands were laid on adherents with various challenges to cast out evil forces from their lives. The three-hour meetings were similar to the one-hour meetings, the only difference was that, the individual activities were lengthier. Furthermore, there were prolonged discussions, testimony sessions, and deliverance sessions.

In the ABSPG, the meetings took place once per week for the duration of one hour in the morning and took the format of prayer and Bible discussion. There were several groups at a time, where different languages were spoken for each specific group. These were the English language group, the Akan Twi language group, the Ga language group, the Kusase language

group, the Dangme Language group, and the Ewe language group. The sessions entailed contributions to discussions, opinions expressed, questions, and answers about biblical texts.

### **3.2.3 Semi-structured interviews**

Semi-structured interviews are aimed at eliciting the views of participants in a way that participants might reveal hidden transcripts. Hidden transcripts are the deeds and words of insiders that are expressed privately, privy only to the ones they trust.<sup>427</sup> The dichotomy of privileged and unprivileged has existed throughout time immemorial, thus leading to the occurrence of hidden and open transcripts.<sup>428</sup>

Semi-structured interviews follow a script but also can inculcate follow-up questions.<sup>429</sup> This can generate hidden transcripts with sufficient probing. Interestingly, a shrouded or veiled version of the hidden transcript can exist in a public transcript in a subdued way.<sup>430</sup> Also, there are opposing perspectives on issues or experiences by the privileged, on the one hand, and by the underprivileged on the other.<sup>431</sup> Therefore, one on one conversations with participants facilitated by semi-structured interviews are beneficial for eliciting hidden transcripts. These are the views of participants that may be unexpressed and do aid in filling gaps that may exist, while enriching data. The semi-structured interviews were undertaken with 33 participants.

## **3.3 Research procedures**

The research procedures incorporate the techniques utilized in the research as well as all that captures the specific sites of the research. The methodological consequences must be that research procedures must be virtuous, in the sense that objectivity and honesty are taken into account thoroughly to ensure academic rigour.<sup>432</sup>

### **3.3.1 Interview guide**

The interview guide was developed and piloted in a Ph.D. methods course, which I took at the University of Oslo. It was prepared with slight differences to address the different groups of participants. These groups are adherents who are women, adherents who are men, and leaders of both sexes. The issues of leadership opportunities, title-holding opportunities, playing roles,

---

<sup>427</sup> James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance : Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 10.

<sup>428</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>429</sup> Marshall and Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 150.

<sup>430</sup> Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance : Hidden Transcripts*, 10.

<sup>431</sup> Ibid.

<sup>432</sup> Jeppe Sinding Jensen, "Epistemology," in *The Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in the Study of Religion*, ed. Michael Stausberg and Steven Engler (London: Routledge, 2011), 49.

gender dynamics in those circles, empowerment, and spirituality were some of the themes that the interview guide centered on.

The interview guide was developed in the English language. However, because some of my participants were not well versed in the English language. I opted to translate and to speak the local language while guided by the interview guide. The interview questions were open-ended. This was done to avoid the situation whereby only "yes" or "no" answers are elicited.

Prior to entering the field, I had internalized the interview guide. The strengths of knowing the interview guide extemporaneously engenders the ability to focus 100% on what the participant is saying. The interview questions were informed by my central research question. This does not presuppose or assume particular answers but ensures that there is a coherence between the central research question and data collection. Ghana has seventy-two tribes and thus a plethora of languages.<sup>433</sup> Nine of which are written and taught in schools.<sup>434</sup> The lingua franca of Ghana is the English language but not every individual is literate. Admittedly, I am well versed in some local languages and so was able to communicate effectively.

### 3.3.2 Research setting

The physical geographic location for the research was Greater Accra in Ghana. The Greater Accra region happens to be the smallest in terms of land surface area, which is 3,245 km<sup>2</sup>.<sup>435</sup> Interestingly, Greater Accra is the second most densely populated region, comprising of the twin metropolitan cities of Accra and Tema.<sup>436</sup> I chose this location because I know it considerably well, having lived in this location for almost two and half decades prior. Greater Accra, being a very religious conurbation has many mainline churches, so it was a good choice as a fieldwork site.

The specific sites of the study were the charismatic renewal groups of the mainline churches. These mainline churches are numerous; however, I chose three of these congregations. They are the Roman Catholic, Anglican, and Methodist churches. These Christian traditions are originally the work of nineteenth-century European missionaries. Therefore, their European nineteenth-century founders handed down the original polity, ethos, and liturgy of these

---

<sup>433</sup> Gifford, *African Christianity : Its Public Role*, 57.

<sup>434</sup> GhanaWeb, "Ghanaian Languages," GhanaWeb, <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/tribes/languages.php>. Accessed 18 March 2019.

<sup>435</sup> "Greater Accra." Last modified 2019. <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/tourism/GreaterAccra.php>. Accessed 1 August 2018.

<sup>436</sup> Ibid. Last modified 2019. <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/tourism/GreaterAccra.php>. Accessed 1 August 2018.

churches to them.<sup>437</sup> However, it must be mentioned here that with the emergence of the CRGs as well as the rise of independent Pentecostal/ charismatic churches in Ghana, the face and nature of these historic churches/ MLCs are changing to keep up with what their members desire.<sup>438</sup>

The CRGs take different formats in different congregations. Therefore, I was expecting dissimilar manifestations in different locations. It was expected that not all congregations would have CRGs, but this was not a problem as I found congregations with CRGs. In addition, some of the congregations as a whole had become Pentecostal/ charismatic in their style of worship due to the Pentecostalization of some of the mainline churches.<sup>439</sup> Despite this, the intention was not to be guided by preconceptions but rather look with "fresh eyes" and examine thoroughly while not ignoring what the facts were in each particular situation.<sup>440</sup>

It was necessary to be able to physically enter the research context and gain access to the congregations. I first, endeavoured to make contact with the nearest congregations. This was because there were several congregations of each church scattered across the locality. The aim was to locate an active CRG within each congregation. In the few months, it took to prepare to begin my Ph.D. studies, while at home I did some preliminary studies in some MLCs close to my abode. As a result, I was able to have a feel of the research context. Key individuals in the MLCs informed me that, the CRG met once a week to carry out their activities. Therefore, it was no surprise that, for this research and within the context, I spent considerable time each week within these CRGs.

While engaged in these circles, interviewing, participating and observing, I had to bear a few things in mind. I experienced three different church traditions and had to respect expected norms and practices that existed in each specific sub context.

### **3.3.3 Participants**

The participants of both sexes can be classified into four main categories:

- 1) Priests of the congregations.
- 2) Leaders of the CRGs.

---

<sup>437</sup> Omenyo, "The Charismatic Renewal Movement in Ghana," 176-77.

<sup>438</sup> Ibid., 180-81.

<sup>439</sup> Omenyo, "From the Fringes to the Centre: Pentecostalization of the Mainline Churches in Ghana," 56.

<sup>440</sup> Nina Hoel, "Embodying the Field: A Researcher's Reflections on Power Dynamics, Positionality and the Nature of Research Relationships," *Fieldwork in Religion* 8, no. 1 (2013): 31.



3) Unmarried/ single members of the CRGs

4) Married individual members.

**Priests:** The three priests of the three mainline churches in the specific congregations were interviewed as participants. All of the priests were males.

**Leaders of the charismatic renewal groups:** A number of title holding leaders of the CRGs were interviewed as participants based on their availability. Some of these leaders were males others were females.

**Married Members:** It was important to me that some of the participants be married due to my interest in the family unit and gender dynamics. Originally, I wanted to interview married couples from all the three CRGs who are in the same marital union. This did not occur in the ABSPG and the MPRP. This was due to the lack of willing married couples who attended the same CRG. However, I was able to make do by interviewing married people in all the congregations without their spouses except in the CCR, where the initial intention materialized. In the CCR, there were married couples in the same union readily available. These thus, became participants. However, they were interviewed separately to avoid undue duress that could emanate from their spouses.

**Unmarried/ Single Members:** Men and women who were single/ unmarried, from all three CRGs were also participants, as not just the experiences and opinions of the married people were deemed relevant but also that of single/ unmarried members.

#### ***Number of participants interviewed***

In the CCR, 17 members were interviewed in total. Of this number, 8 were women and 9 were men. In the MPRP, 6 members were interviewed in total, 4 were women and 2 were men. In the ABSPG, 10 members were interviewed, of which 6 were women and 4 were men.

#### **3.3.4 Sampling techniques**

For this study, I utilized purposive sampling as my main sampling technique. Purposive sampling is intentional in its selection of participants. This means that participants with specific characteristics are intentionally selected. For purposive sampling, the researcher actively selects the most productive sample to answer the research question.<sup>441</sup> The selection criteria was the

---

<sup>441</sup>M. N. Marshall, "Sampling for Qualitative Research," *Fam Pract* 13, no. 6 (1996): 523.  
<https://academic-oup-com.ezproxy.uio.no/fampra/article/13/6/522/496701> Accessed November 23, 2021.

following: participants needed to be adult females and males who were ordinary members of the CRG. The clergy in charge of the congregations irrespective of sex were also included, although all three were incidentally male. Finally, the official titleholders or leaders of the CRGs were also counted in.

I critically examined my data and realised that the Roman Catholic Church had a congregation of about six hundred members, the Methodist an average of four hundred members, and the Anglican Church an average attendance of two hundred and fifty members. This accounted for the disparity in participants for the three research sites mentioned above. These figures inadvertently reflect the size of the congregations since they were not the same in membership numbers, having a direct effect on the size of their CRGs and therefore, the participants available. As a result of my initial satisfaction with the fieldwork process in both the CCR and MPRP, not only in the number of interviews and the participation but also in the richness and depth of data, I decided to focus only on the ABSPG on the second leg of fieldwork in Ghana. This was to bring the data to the level of richness achieved from the other two CRGs.

Altogether, thirty-three (33) individuals of both sexes were interviewed. Some were married and others were single. Due to interest in varied experiences of women some of whom were single and other married, there was the need to interview this spectrum of participants as mentioned above. Regarding sample size, initially I had wanted to interview at least ten participants from each CRG but I was also open to any changes that would occur based on availability and the willingness of the participants themselves. Therefore, in the end, I interviewed seventeen participants from the CCR, ten participants from the ABSPG, and six participants from the MPRP. This was based on availability and the willingness of members from these groups to become participants in the study and the sizes of the CRGs.

To reach the above-mentioned participants, I first had to contact the gatekeepers of the congregations. The interview setting/ location was mostly in a peaceful environment because of the tape-recording process but less tranquil conditions did not overcome the process. The interviews were conducted in a location where the interviewee was not in threat of any sense of fear or coercion about their views. I preferred the homes of the participants at an appropriate time, where family members or others were not able to interfere with the process. This was not always the case, however, and I also used other locations. Such as homes, church premises, and workplaces.

### 3.3.5 Interview process

The interviews spanned an average of an hour for all the sessions. One hour was enough to give the participants sufficient time to answer the questions in the interview guide and follow questions up through probing or clarification when the need arose ensued. The interviews were also audio recorded to be able to transcribe verbatim. This kind of verbatim transcription is necessary in order to honour the voices of participants and to ensure unbiased data, which are true to the views, opinions and the experiences of participants.

### 3.4 Analysis

Data analysis was the next step after transcription and it was of immense importance in this qualitative research. During this process, data reduction was necessary due to the sheer amount of data.<sup>442</sup> Not every element of data collected was relevant for the study. Reduction of data was accomplished after coding and categorizing. In this section, I give a detailed account of how the data was analysed. By doing so, I explain the coding techniques I utilized, how those aided me to arrive at my analysis, and some salient analytical approaches.

#### Coding the data

Coding often plays a significant role in inductive analysis.<sup>443</sup> It was necessary in this study to utilize different kinds of coding in order to manage, analyse, and interpret the bulk of data. Coding is generating labels for phenomena identified in the data through themes or categories.<sup>444</sup> I compared the viability of themes and explanations, checking them against the data.<sup>445</sup> I also constantly compared the data of the three CRGs in terms of their practices, rhetoric, and events. I then compared how the data and analysis resonated. This initial process helped to identify patterns and key ideas while labelling them.<sup>446</sup> Open coding was also done at the initial stages to immerse one's self in the data and to filter out material that is likely to be less productive.<sup>447</sup>

The first kind of coding I utilized was open coding. Initially, I delved deeply into the accrued data and colour-coded them sentence by sentence, linking the codes to specific categories.<sup>448</sup> I

---

<sup>442</sup> Svend Brinkmann, *Qualitative Interviewing, Understanding Qualitative Research* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 112.

<sup>443</sup> *Ibid.*, 62.

<sup>444</sup> Marshall and Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 222.

<sup>445</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>446</sup> *Ibid.*, 222-23.

<sup>447</sup> Steven Engler, "Grounded Theory," in *The Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in the Study of Religion*, ed. Michael Stausberg and Steven Engler (London: Routledge, 2011), 259.

<sup>448</sup> *Ibid.*, 258-59.

could have chosen to use computer-based techniques of coding; however, I chose the manual method. I first chose to colour-code the data by utilizing predetermined categories, also called theory generated codes.<sup>449</sup> Codes were therefore, applied to categories and themes in colour format.<sup>450</sup> Consequently, theory generated codes were the second kind of coding I utilized in this work. Theory generated codes are also referred to as theory-driven codes and are derived before analysis.<sup>451</sup> This may often emanate from the undertaken literature review.<sup>452</sup> An example of how I colour-coded using categories is as follows. One category was *formal leadership* and I assigned a particular colour to it. I then went through the entire data, highlighted by colour all statements that pertained to formal leadership, both in the participant observation notes and in the interviews with participants. Having done this meticulously, I then made a note of the frequency and patterns that pertained to that theme.

I also utilized vivo codes, which are codes arising from real-life data.<sup>453</sup> An instance of how I used vivo codes is as follows. While reading and rereading the data and also during the process of analysis, a vivo code was derived from a female participants' view of women in leadership. The participant referred to such women as *women who were men in spirit*. This category was one of the categories that led to the generation of vivo codes. Therefore, coding is the process of examining, comparing, conceptualizing, and categorizing data.<sup>454</sup> Thus, vivo codes or data driven-codes were the third kind of codes used in this study. Therefore, actual statements and behaviours in the data also led to the generation of codes.<sup>455</sup>

As a result, the use of the types of codes mentioned above led to a more holistic process of analysis. Even though predetermined categories for coding data are often challenged, they are still useful.<sup>456</sup> All these kinds of coding coupled with the other analytic concepts in this section helped me to arrive from the particular to the more general.<sup>457</sup> This is necessary for findings and conclusions. As a result, I coded my data into categories or themes of relevance to the study.

---

<sup>449</sup> Marshall and Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 216.

<sup>450</sup> *Ibid.*, 220.

<sup>451</sup> Brinkmann, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 117.

<sup>452</sup> Marshall and Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 218.

<sup>453</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>454</sup> Svend Brinkmann and Steinar Kvale, *Interviews : Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research Interviewing*, 3rd ed. ed. (Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage, 2015), 227.

<sup>455</sup> Marshall and Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 220.

<sup>456</sup> *Ibid.*, 213.

<sup>457</sup> Brinkmann, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 117-18.

During coding, I ensured that dates, educational levels, ages, marital status, and other relevant information were properly kept track of, as this is invaluable information.<sup>458</sup> These were however, anonymized. Identity markers particularly, age, employment and educational background were replaced by broader terminologies. Some of which are age, which was replaced by younger/ older. For employment, skilled/ unskilled work and for educational background, basic/ higher education and so on.

### **Thematic analysis**

As part of the analysis, thematic analysis was deployed. This is where core themes were extracted by examining the data within and between transcripts.<sup>459</sup> This means that data was read and reread repeatedly to identify core themes from the transcripts. By doing this, the intention was to identify topics that recurred to arrive at themes.<sup>460</sup> In addition, local expressions and metaphors were also taken into account, including similarities and differences in the data: taking note of linguistic connectors like "because" and "since," and using scientific concepts as a springboard for themes.<sup>461</sup> Important themes were then gleaned from the data as topics that repeatedly occurred. In addition, interesting local terminologies were taken seriously as they held the key to important information from the field. The causes of occurrences were also indispensable and were taken into account in thematic analysis.

### **Comparative analysis**

Comparison underlies most research activities, informs much research, and is embedded in standard research methods that are not usually considered or labelled as comparative.<sup>462</sup> In this study, a comparative analysis was inculcated. The three CRGs were compared on all levels with the available data material, which are organized into categories. In order to utilize comparative analysis, I had to translate the research question into relevant categories, reflect on what the respective data are, and visualize factors in the data as a helpful analytical tool for comparison.<sup>463</sup> For instance, the research question is, "what are the influences and tendencies of women's leadership, experiences of women's leadership roles, and the extent of possible empowerment?" While reading and rereading the data material based on this research question,

---

<sup>458</sup> Marshall and Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 213.

<sup>459</sup> Alan Bryman, *Social Research Methods*, 5th ed. ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 11.

<sup>460</sup> *Ibid.*, 586.

<sup>461</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>462</sup> Michael Stausberg, "Comparison," in *The Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in the Study of Religion*, ed. Michael Stausberg and Steven Engler (London: Routledge, 2011), 35.

<sup>463</sup> *Ibid.*, 31-35.

a category that was developed from the research questions and the material available in the data was *the language deployed on access to women's leadership positions and servant leadership*. I then presented relevant material on this theme from the three CRGs under study by way of presentation, comparing, and contrasting of available data material in the discussions. Thus, a comparative analysis was a useful tool in this study.

### **Analytic memos**

When it came to writing an analytical memo, I chose to do what is termed a "cluster," which falls under analytical memos. A cluster is creative work in which the researcher creates diagrams of relationships while forming outlines according to what is overarching.<sup>464</sup> I also utilized observational notes throughout participant observation and interviewing which was very beneficial indeed.<sup>465</sup> This aided me to identify links within the data.<sup>466</sup>

### **Interpreting the data**

Data interpretation was a necessary step in the process. Typically, it includes presenting meaning in a deeper, more critical way as well as text expansion.<sup>467</sup> This enables one to engender clarity and further analyse. Interpreting data is imperative in qualitative research. An important consideration I took into account was transparency. The purpose of displaying, and also interpreting qualitative data is to demonstrate a chain of evidence in a transparent way.<sup>468</sup> Nonetheless, the importance of interpretation and the use of human judgement is very important in this kind of research.<sup>469</sup> This also refers to telling the story.<sup>470</sup> In interpreting the data, there was the need to exhaustively bring meaning to quotes from interviews and explain observations.

## **3.5 Research ethics and ethical challenges**

In order to undertake data collection in Ghana, I had to seek permission and approval from the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (Norsk Senter for Forskningsdata). It took about a month of correspondence, completing forms, and meeting requirements. This was to ensure that the research was ethical. Some key dimensions of this exercise were to ensure that the data collected was well protected and saved, that the research would not in any way bring about any form of

---

<sup>464</sup> Marshall and Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 223.

<sup>465</sup> *Ibid.*, 221.

<sup>466</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>467</sup> Brinkmann and Kvale, *Interviews : Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research Interviewing*, 235.

<sup>468</sup> Brinkmann, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 113.

<sup>469</sup> *Ibid.*, 116.

<sup>470</sup> Marshall and Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 228.

harm to the parties involved, and, above all, that academic and professional rigour was guaranteed for this study.

The ethical issues encountered in this study are numerous. There was the need for anonymity, the need for informed consent, the need to conduct a study that will not harm the sensibilities of the individuals. Additionally, there was the need to protect participants from harm, the need for debriefing, and the participants' prerogative to withdraw from the study at any time, among other salient points.

In order to ethically undertake the study, certain considerations had to come into play. Informed consent was very important for the sake of ethics in this study: for the respect of the participant, beneficence, and justice.<sup>471</sup> Informed consent forms were prepared in advance before going into the field. Participants were also given an information sheet, which contained information about the purpose and objective of the research.<sup>472</sup> The forms were necessary because the issue of the legitimacy of the study might have come into question. In addition, the gatekeepers of the various research sites needed a legitimate document to ascertain the authenticity of the study and thus to permit that the study is carried out under their jurisdiction. Informed consent also served as documentation of evidence showing that the permission of participants was sought.

The participants might be suspicious of the researcher, even more so if (and in my case) they come into the knowledge that the researcher belonged to another church. They might have felt that I was a spy sent by my denomination or an individual with some other ulterior motive. This was why it was crucial to acquire an informed consent form. In such a way, participants who were concerned about the authenticity of the research could be assured that it had been given ethical clearance by the relevant authorities.<sup>473</sup>

I highlighted that the core purpose of the research was to contribute to academic knowledge. If participants are not properly briefed about the study, there may be misunderstandings. Therefore, on the informed consent and information sheet, there was a summary of what the study would entail. I explained to the participants the aims and objectives of the study. There was a need not only to seek permission from the heads of the congregations but also the individual participants. Therefore, informed consent forms, as well as information sheets were

---

<sup>471</sup> Ibid., 51.

<sup>472</sup> Brinkmann and Kvale, *Interviews : Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research Interviewing*, 93. 93.

<sup>473</sup> Which are the University of Oslo and NSD or Norwegian Centre for Research Data (Norsk Senter for Forskningsdata).

provided.<sup>474</sup> These were given to the gatekeepers or heads of the congregations as well as the participants. There needed to be no elements of deception or invasion of privacy, so every interview was carried out in agreement with the participant in terms of the duration of the interview and the venue.

The participants were assured that their names were not to be revealed in the study and would remain anonymous throughout the study and beyond, to protect their privacy and identity.<sup>475</sup> To achieve protection of the informants' privacy was of essence and goes hand in hand with respect towards what they stand for.<sup>476</sup> In the case of the church leaders, anonymity was secured through the use of pseudonyms in the study for those who were interviewed. The names of the congregations were also not disclosed, making it less possible for individuals to identify the clergy in charge of particular congregations. All participants were assured anonymity to the best possible extent and were notified of this in the informed consent form. This was engendered for the safety and security of the participants in relation to their privacy. Without this, the information they revealed could have placed them in harm's way as far as disapproval and criticism are concerned.

I informed the participants that they could withdraw from the study at any time should they so desire.<sup>477</sup> This happened in a fourth CRG site, the Presbyterian Church, thus it is not part of the current study. Concerning this site, I was unable to undertake interviews and sufficient participant observation. This was for reasons that are quite clear and apparent. I was able to speak to the gatekeeper of the Presbyterian congregation. I participated in several of their services and charismatic renewal group meetings. All seemed in order until I began scheduling appointments with potential participants. This proved impossible indeed. Some refused to participate, others gave excuses, and some failed to show up for the scheduled interviews. This was very consistent and unusual as I had good communication with the gatekeeper, I had been partaking in participant observation, and participants had been properly informed about the study. I therefore, had to respect the wishes of these adherents since not even one of them offered to be a participant. This is what I considered to be the withdrawal of participants from the study. This was their prerogative and as a researcher, I had to respect that.<sup>478</sup>

---

<sup>474</sup> These can be found in the appendix.

<sup>475</sup> Marshall and Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 126.

<sup>476</sup> Frederick Bird and Laurie Lamoureux Scholes, "Research Ethics," in *The Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in the Study of Religion*, ed. Michael Stausberg and Steven Engler (London: Routledge, 2011), 83.

<sup>477</sup> *Ibid.*, 87.

<sup>478</sup> *Ibid.*, 96.



On the other hand, the issue also had to do with the consent of the participant, their agreeability to the study, and the continual renegotiating of their consent as well as their willingness.<sup>479</sup> This did not materialize. Consequently, I was unable to include the Presbyterian renewal group in the study, which accounts for why three renewal groups were included in this study and not four.

By virtue of my affinities with the other CRGs, gaining access to them was unhindered. I had been a Roman Catholic for almost two decades, and during that time, I was also a member of CCR for a duration. Concerning the Methodist Church, my biological parents were both Methodists and I had attended Methodist churches in my high school years while vacationing with my biological mother.<sup>480</sup> When research is undertaken in a familiar environment where there are affinities, the hurdle of breaking barriers is eliminated.<sup>481</sup> Unfortunately, the hurdle of breaking the barrier was unsurmountable in the Presbyterian Church's charismatic renewal group.

The interview guide included elements of a sensitive nature, particularly related to the topic of gender and leadership, which also brings to bear questions of religiosity. As the researcher, I maintained high ethical sensitivity to the participants of the study by honouring their voices throughout the research process.<sup>482</sup> Therefore, it was necessary and ethical to build rapport and trust before the entire process began.<sup>483</sup> In any given research, there are challenges to be surmounted. My research was no different, especially in the field collecting data. However, I followed ethical guidelines and the outcome has been rewarding.

### **3.6 Researcher positionality**

Examining the positionality of the researcher is necessary for this research. This is because the positionality may have implications for the study. In that, researcher positionality influences the interview dynamics and the relationship between participants and researcher.<sup>484</sup> My positionality is that of an African feminist and a trained feminist theologian researching in a familiar location of Greater Accra Ghana. Additionally, I have considerable experience in the

---

<sup>479</sup> Marshall and Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 146.

<sup>480</sup> I however, grew up as Roman Catholic because my stepmother, who raised me, was a practicing Roman Catholic.

<sup>481</sup> Marilyn Strathern, "Anthropology at Home," in *The Limitations of Auto-Anthropology in A. S. A. Monographs*, ed. Anthony Jackson (London: Tavistock, 1987), 17.

<sup>482</sup> Marshall and Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 281.

<sup>483</sup> Harvey, "Field Research," 218.

<sup>484</sup> Hoel, "Embodying the Field: A Researcher's Reflections on Power Dynamics, Positionality and the Nature of Research Relationships," 16-18.

CCR as I was a Roman Catholic adherent for almost two decades. As a researcher, I was aware of my positionality and how it may influence the entire process.

Researchers are often in a position of power in relation to their participants, although power relations may shift and are not rigid.<sup>485</sup> The researcher is often the individual asking the questions. To ameliorate this effect, whereby the power position of the researcher can influence the way the participants answer interview questions, I maintained a demeanour of naivety about the participant's world. It was the researcher's responsibility not to be suggestive with regards to the kind of answers the participants should give. Furthermore, the researcher must also be ready for a change in the power play whereby the interviewee takes a turn to ask the researcher for a request.<sup>486</sup> They may also ask questions since they are in conversation in the interview process.

When I conducted research in the Roman Catholic Church, I was aware that I had left this group about a decade ago. There was the possibility that the participants and their congregations would refuse to cooperate with me because I am currently a non-denominational Christian and not a Roman Catholic as I once was. In Ghana, there has been a marked competitiveness between the Pentecostal/ charismatic congregations and the MLCs for instance.<sup>487</sup> Therefore, I did have some anxiety as to what to expect in the field. A certain level of cordialness, openness, and rapport is required for successful fieldwork in such an arena, and an absence of such was bound to go against the process and pose a challenge.

In this work, there were already some advantages on my side. I was privileged to have the best of both worlds in relation to the Roman Catholic Church and its CRGs and their practices. I am well versed in the territory, having spent the first twenty years of my life as a Roman Catholic and during a period of that time, the CRG activities were ongoing. I was privileged to experience them thoroughly, although a lot must have changed since then. Thus, I have thorough experience in the Roman Catholic Church and its CRG. In addition, I attended Methodist church for a limited time also.<sup>488</sup> As a former member of a mainline church for a considerable period, I was privileged to have attended Bible study, revival meetings, and miracle and healing services of the charismatic renewal movement in the past. According to

---

<sup>485</sup> Ibid., 33.

<sup>486</sup> Ibid.

<sup>487</sup> Omenyo, "The Charismatic Renewal Movement in Ghana," 117.

<sup>488</sup> During my high school years, I vacationed with my mother who was a Methodist church member and thus attended Methodist church for a limited time during those years even though I was a practicing Roman Catholic at the time.

George Marcus (1998), the similarities between the researcher and the individuals in the field is of essence in the areas of research design and fieldwork because it produces interesting analysis.<sup>489</sup> One way that this can materialize is that, as a former member of CCR, I have a level of foreknowledge. This association engendered a deeper understanding of the phenomena under study and eased access into the context in some instances. A researcher without such affinities may not be able to have access to the context in some cases.

In addition, because of my positionality, by virtue of education, stay abroad, and non-membership in the groups in recent times, the members of the context could perceive me differently from how they would perceive their folk within their circles. For instance, the researcher can be viewed as a cynic due to a pronounced interest in academic research in the field of theology. Some confessional Pentecostal/ charismatics do not concur with the academic study of theology and religion. Another possible inclination that could have taken place was that one could have been viewed as an individual possessing some ability to bring about financial relief to a situation, as I experienced in prior research.<sup>490</sup> Furthermore, the positionality as an academic may engender attributes of power associated with the researcher.

Although I grew up in the Greater Accra region and may have some links to some of the MLCs, especially the Roman Catholic Church, it was only proper to endeavour to reacquaint myself into the specific contexts.<sup>491</sup> The reason for this was to immerse myself as much as possible in the context. This, I believe, thwarted any form of unwarranted suspicion from the individuals within the context. In this way, I was able to earn the trust of the individuals within the context of the study and be welcomed into their world. The truth is that when an individual hails from the geographic location of the context, he or she may take many things for granted. To avoid such vices of familiarity, I purposely participated in the activities of the group under study. When this is accomplished, the researcher can discover more about her own society or organization due to her physical presence and curiosity about not just activities but the meanings behind those activities.<sup>492</sup> This was, of course, very different from going to an unfamiliar destination to do research.

---

<sup>489</sup>George E. Marcus, *Ethnography through Thick and Thin*, Anthropology Online (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), 15.

<sup>490</sup> Ansah, "Gender Empowerment and Personal Fulfillment in Pentecostalism: A Case of Accra Ghana," 56.

<sup>491</sup> Strathern, "Anthropology at Home," 30.

<sup>492</sup> Ibid., 31.

Finally, as mentioned, my positionality as one with considerable experience also shifted depending on my location in the Anglican, Methodist, and Roman Catholic domains.<sup>493</sup> As a researcher, caution of overemphasizing the similarities between oneself and the context with which one has intense affinities is required, although this should not stand in the way of benefiting from the holistic knowledge that can be derived.<sup>494</sup>

The three elements of gender, ethnicity, and language were factors that informed the nature and trajectory of work in the field. As a female researcher, a number of possibilities as to the challenges of positionality were likely to be inevitable. In the CRGs of the MLCs, the possibility of patriarchy could have implications for the pre-planned agenda of participant observation and interviews as experienced in other sites of research.<sup>495</sup> I am Akan Fante by birth and ethnicity and so I speak the Fante language fluently. I also speak Twi and other languages similar to Twi and Fante due to linguistic similarity.<sup>496</sup> I grew up in the capital Accra; therefore, I speak the Ga language of the indigenous people of Accra remarkably well. With these major local languages at my fingertips, I was able to undertake interviews without too many hurdles.<sup>497</sup> Therefore, there was no need for assistance from translators in this study.

Positionality as an adherent (or otherwise) of religion comes into play. As can be inferred, I am a practicing Christian. I therefore, assumed the posture of methodological theism in this ethnographic research. This was my preference, which I felt best suited me due to who I am as a person and my positionality. Methodological theism is the situation whereby the researcher who is carrying out ethnography affirms or shares the ontological reality of the research religious subjects.<sup>498</sup> This means that the researcher does not bracket off, ignore, abstain, or limit herself to role-play.<sup>499</sup> Methodological theism takes seriously the importance of experience, including religious experience, insisting that anthropological understanding must integrate intellectual, bodily, emotional, and multi-sensory ways of knowing.<sup>500</sup> Even though

---

<sup>493</sup> Hoel, "Embodying the Field: A Researcher's Reflections on Power Dynamics, Positionality and the Nature of Research Relationships," 32.

<sup>494</sup> Marcus, *Ethnography through Thick and Thin*, 15.

<sup>495</sup> In a study I undertook in a classical Pentecostal congregation in Ghana, I vividly recall the challenges I faced, possibly due to my position as female. I had pre-requested permission to take pictures but was interrupted by a male elder of the church in spite of permission granted earlier on.

<sup>496</sup> I am competent in two other languages because of linguistic similarity with my mother tongue Fante. These are the Akan languages, Bono and Akuapem Twi.

<sup>497</sup> I communicated with participants in the languages in which they were most competent, including English language for many of those who were educated to a higher level.

<sup>498</sup> S. Bielo James, *Anthropology of Religion: The Basics*, The Basics (Taylor and Francis, 2015), 39.

<sup>499</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>500</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.

the posture aims to collapse the distance between the researcher and participants, it should not be dismissed as "going native" by the researcher.<sup>501</sup> My participation in the practices of the participants was not done as a detached researcher. I immersed myself in the field intensely in all rituals. I suppose this was not very difficult to do as my history as a Christian has been very adaptable to some of these denominations already.<sup>502</sup>

Even though the denominations have differences, I have long focused on the 20 percent/ 80 percent rule. It has been recognized that Christianity accomplished harmony by unifying in 80 percent of similarities that exist across the board and rendering 20 percent of differences as unessential in principle, while guaranteeing unity.<sup>503</sup> This personally guides me as a practitioner of Christianity and affects my positionality as well as the anthropological posture I assume in ethnographic research.

My positionality as an African woman with both Ghanaian and Western education no doubt also affected some of the above traits. The topic of this research was influenced by positionality, which, as mentioned, includes my identity as an African feminist theologian, a former member of the CCR movement, and my formal education within Ghana and beyond. The reasons why I am a feminist are multiple but one major reason is my upbringing. My father, who was the greatest influencer during my foundational years, allowed his daughters and sons equal opportunity. Unlike many African homes, I was not burdened with asymmetrical gender roles. This led me to hold the belief that men and women are equal from a very young age. Other female influencers, such as USA's Oprah Winfrey, helped shape my identity as a feminist in my formative years. Today, African feminists such as Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and Mercy Amba Oduyoye continue to enhance my identity as an African feminist and African feminist theologian respectively. It is thus, no surprise that this study is housed in the discipline of feminist theology (with emphasis on African feminist theology) especially as I am trained in this specific discipline (feminist theology) within theology.

### *Positionality and bias in analysis*

As discussed, my positionality in relation to this study is that of a former member of the Roman Catholic Church, who also has had experiences of CCR and in the Methodist church. My

---

<sup>501</sup> Ibid.

<sup>502</sup> My biological parents were Methodists and so I have experience in this denominations as well as the Roman Catholic Church. However, I was raised by my stepmother who is a Roman Catholic, I therefore was a practicing Roman Catholic for the first twenty years of my life.

<sup>503</sup> Beyer, "De-Centring Religious Singularity: The Globalization of Christianity as a Case in Point," 376.

positioning as an African feminist theologian and as an indigene of Ghana, with knowledge and experiences pertaining to a variety of religious fields, can be challenging. I am aware that my researcher positionality and familiarity with the context could result in bias, particularly due to preconceived ideas.

As part of data analysis, I endeavoured to hold at bay my preconceived notions and to critically examine the data by utilizing a number of analytical approaches and coding techniques to monitor and curtail the possibility of bias in data analysis. In the process of analysis, bias which hampers the trustworthiness of the data analysis could occur. In order to monitor and curtail this possible occurrence, I deployed multiple theories hinged on different perspectives during analysis. This is because the utilization of multiple perspectives or theories ensures the trustworthiness of data analysis and findings.<sup>504</sup> Some of the theories I deployed to offset bias in the analysis that may arise from my positionality were gleaned from African feminist theology and servant leadership theory.

People may be liable to evidence that confirms their expectations and measured in registering relevant counterevidence or concentrating on data that support one's preconceptions and dismissing contradictory evidence, a tendency dubbed "confirmation bias."<sup>505</sup> Confirmation bias often takes place in the process of data analysis. One way I attempted to avoid confirmation bias was to employ not only theory generated codes but also vivo codes. Vivo codes are codes that arise from empirical data.<sup>506</sup> A cluster, which is diagrammatic also aided in identifying meaningful links and patterns. The process of generating codes incorporates a thorough reading and rereading of the data to identify actual statements and behaviour patterns in the data that are then categorized into themes.<sup>507</sup>

Undertaking analysis with the specific positionality of experience in the field could create bias. However, through the channel of multiple useful theories and perspectives, analytical tools such as a cluster and thorough techniques of coding, I endeavoured to curb possible bias in analysis stemming from my positionality.

---

<sup>504</sup> Jean S. Peterson, "Presenting a Qualitative Study: A Reviewer's Perspective," *The Gifted child quarterly* 63, no. 3 (2019): 154. <https://journals-sagepub-com.ezproxy.uio.no/doi/pdf/10.1177/0016986219844789> Accessed 23 September 2020.

<sup>505</sup> Petteri Nieminen et al., "Nature of Evidence in Religion and Natural Science," *Theology and science* 18, no. 3 (2020): 453. <https://www-tandfonline-com.ezproxy.uio.no/doi/pdf/10.1080/14746700.2020.1786221?needAccess=true&> Accessed 9 November 2020.

<sup>506</sup> Marshall and Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 218.

<sup>507</sup> *Ibid.*, 220.

### **3.7 Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have outlined and discussed the research methods employed in this study. I provided a rationale for my choice of methods. In developing the interview guide, I discussed my target group, the criteria, and sampling techniques. As far as ethical quandaries were concerned, pertinent issues were deliberated on. Issues such as informed consent, anonymity, and prerogative to withdraw from the study were delved into. Additionally, details of data analysis were presented to engender clarity. All research studies have some challenges. Some of the challenges here included the inability to access one of the sites, thereby rendering the study a three-sited research rather than the anticipated four sites. I concluded this chapter by problematizing my positionality, which considered my stance as an African feminist theologian with thorough experience and affinity with the context, while also taking into account possible bias that may emerge in the analysis due to my positionality and closeness to the research sites.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PENTECOSTALIZATION AND PENTECOSTAL/ CHARISMATIC PRACTICES: DATA PRESENTATION FROM PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION

#### 4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I systematically present data accrued from participant observation as well as give relevant information on events surrounding the process. The observations are from the three charismatic renewal groups or Bible study and prayer groups of three mainline churches.

##### 4.1.1 At home and in the field

Upon arriving in Ghana in December of 2016, I settled in the house of a relative in an area of Greater Accra. The first impulse was to go online and search for Roman Catholic, Anglican, Methodist, and Presbyterian congregations close to my abode. This was due to the need to re-immense myself in the location and to inhabit the site. The aim was to delve deeply into the lived experiences of the adherents of the MLC's renewal groups who lived in this location to arrive at a rich comprehension that will lead to effective theorizing.<sup>508</sup> Another reason was to ensure easy access and avoid transportation difficulties. Given that Greater Accra is a religious region, a plethora of churches was within accessible reach.<sup>509</sup> I inhabited the same location as the congregation and its adherents. Interestingly, this location was quite familiar to me due to years of living in Greater Accra. However, it was important that I tried to lay aside pre-conceptions and examine the sites with fresh eyes.

The first point of call was the gatekeepers of the Roman Catholic congregation. Below are important excerpts of what transpired during the first and second legs of data collection. The first leg was from December, 2016 to May, 2017. The second leg of data collection began from February, 2018 to August, 2018, where the focus was on visiting specifically the Anglican congregation and its ABSPG.

##### 4.1.2 Field entry: first leg

Upon arrival in Ghana in December of 2016 for the first leg of the fieldwork, which spanned about six months. I initially intended to rent accommodation in a specific location of Greater

---

<sup>508</sup> Hastrup, *A Passage to Anthropology : Between Experience and Theory*, 22.

<sup>509</sup> This can be said due to the proliferation of churches on every street corner as well as the presence of religious inscription in sight at every turn. Even shops and vehicles have religious inscriptions of all kinds on them—a testament to a religious region filled with religious inhabitants.



Accra, I have chosen to call Salvation. In this suburb, I had a friend who was a university student, who could assist me in getting in touch with the owner of an apartment in a suburb where, to my knowledge, several students resided. Unfortunately, my friend could not be of assistance and that avenue to search for accommodation was unsuccessful. My brother offered me accommodation but his home was too far removed from the city centre. I also wanted to avoid the hectic traffic jams, so I declined. Therefore, while boarding the aircraft from Oslo to Accra, I did not know where I would live or the exact location of the research I was about to undertake. Nonetheless, I was optimistic that everything would fall into place. At the airport, I was received by my uncle. He offered to take me in until I could establish my accommodation situation. In the end, I spent the entire six months in his home in Greater Accra. These turn of events influenced the location of the research within Greater Accra.

In the days that followed my settling in at home, I went online to search for the closest MLC congregations. I discovered that there was a Roman Catholic Congregation within the vicinity. The Methodist congregation was also easily accessible from my abode. However, the Anglican congregation was further away, but I endeavoured to reach it and I succeeded. I was optimistic as well as satisfied that my multiple sites of research were geographically established. On the very first Sunday after my arrival in the motherland, I visited the Roman Catholic congregation.

### **First visit to the Roman Catholic Congregation**

My first visit to the Roman Catholic congregation was eventful. The routine was familiar. The sights and sounds were reminiscent of my Roman Catholic childhood and teen years. It included hymns and a local medley of praise and adoration. However, before all this could play out, the researcher in me was observing. Observing during participation is indispensable because even though the research does not depend solely on the observable, it contributes to the production of information, the data.<sup>510</sup>

Even before I visited the Roman Catholic congregation, I endeavoured to visit the mission house of the Roman Catholic congregation to schedule an appointment and to speak to the priest. There, I was able to speak to the priest and one other layman who was active in the church.

### **First Visit to the Methodist Congregation**

---

<sup>510</sup> Marcus, *Ethnography through Thick and Thin*, 62.

The first visit to the Methodist congregation was on a Sunday morning in Greater Accra. I arrived at the service on time and took a seat at the back. The Methodist liturgy was also familiar due to my past in a Methodist church in a small town in Ghana, where my mother lived at the time. After the service, I met with the priest. I introduced myself and explained the purpose for which, I had come. I explained my project, the research to be undertaken, and my need for permission among other important issues. I spoke about my parents' hometown and how I was from the Central Region and my connections with the small town where my mother lived, which happens to be the ancestral hometown of all Fante people. This was a deliberate attempt at rapport building. There was no hesitation on the part of the priest to assist me with permission. He was kind enough to introduce me to an evangelist in the church whose job was to answer all my queries and assist me throughout the process. I ended this venture by taking the contact information of both the evangelist and the priest, the latter whom I have chosen to call Reverend Mensah.

### **First Visit to the Anglican Congregation**

The events that led to the visit to the Anglican congregation were more indirect than with the other two research sites. In my first attempt, I merely searched for the nearest Anglican Church online and visited it one fine Sunday morning. I had never been to an Anglican Church service before. It was very solemn with priests in full cassocks and other vestments worn by various role players. After the service, I approached the priest about my intent. I interacted with the priest who was the gatekeeper of that congregation. I spoke about my studies, my fieldwork, and my interest in his congregation. He gave me the address of the Anglican congregation that became the third research site. He explained that his congregation was new and had not yet established a CRG. I therefore, made my way to that designated Anglican congregation. I joined the service, which was not very different from the first. What struck me about this congregation was that the scripture reading was done in about four local languages.

Also, a choir performed amazingly well in the genre of contemporary local gospel music. I was immensely intrigued by this dimension to say the least. After the service, I was privileged to have a private audience with the priest, who I have called Reverend Barima. It turned out that he was my tribesman. I spoke briefly about my ethnic background and informed him about my studies, my project, my research work, and my intent among other pertinent discussions. He was not hesitant at all and I was duly informed about the date and times of the CRG meetings. I ended that discussion with many thanks.

During the first leg of fieldwork, I lived among the individuals of the three CRGs visiting their homes, churches, and even work places. I spoke to them on the telephone, conversed with them on social media platforms, and attended extra church activities with them. It was an enriching experience. Thus, I was engaged in multi-sited ethnography in terms of identities in diffused time-space because of the multiple sites of activity.<sup>511</sup> This means that, although this work was situated in Greater Accra, it was in different suburbs and church traditions, thereby engendering an enriching experience.

#### **4.1.3 Field entry: second leg**

During the second leg of fieldwork in Ghana from February 2018, spanning about six months, I re-immersed myself in the context. The first and second legs of fieldwork took place in 2017 and 2018 respectively because I was of the view that it would best suit my purposes so that I could have a second chance in the field to collect enriching data. I was successful this time in making prior arrangements for accommodation and transportation for the second leg. I was to live with a good friend of mine in a suburb of Greater Accra. First, I stayed at my uncle's home for a few days. He could not accommodate me this time because he was expecting guests from overseas, a prior arrangement. I then moved to my friend's house for about a month. Her lease in that accommodation was up but she had bought a new house in a different suburb still in Greater Accra so we moved to that location. It is in this house that I stayed for the rest of my stay in Greater Accra Ghana for the duration of fieldwork.

#### **Anglican Congregation on the second leg**

On the very first Sunday, after my arrival in Ghana, I made my way to the congregation of the Anglican Church to seek permission once again. On this leg, I focused only on the Anglican congregation since I had enough material for the other two congregations. The priest welcomed me and once again gave me the permission, as he was the gatekeeper. I began to speak privately with participants over the duration. I also spent a lot of time in the ABSPG undertaking participant observation and interviews.

#### **4.2 Catholic Charismatic Renewal: preliminary meeting with the parish priest**

The internet was useful in finding the location of the parish of choice, where I called upon the mission house to speak with the Catholic priest. I was prepared with all the necessary documentation and had permission from the Norsk Senter for Forskningsdata (Norwegian

---

<sup>511</sup> Ibid., 79-80.

Centre for Research Data). I was asked to wait for the priest in the company of a male Catholic youth leader. The purpose of the visitation was made known and I was almost immediately given access to the congregation and the CCR. Rapport building is necessary for the research process.<sup>512</sup> My experience with the Roman Catholic Church highlighted the social dimension, dedication, and interaction.

#### **4.2.1 Catholic Charismatic Renewal and its mother parish**

The CCR of which I was privileged to study is situated in the Greater Accra Region, Ghana. The Roman Catholic congregation held one mass on Sundays as observed during participation. Interestingly, Pentecostalization of the MLCs was very evident from the get-go. As a researcher, I was familiar with the current trends in the MLCs based on academic material from studies the world over. However, on the microscopic level in this congregation, I was still amazed by the prevalence of the reality on the ground. I was privileged as one privy to Ghanaian Roman Catholicism and so I had some expectations born of the erstwhile familiarity. My expectation was that there should be readings after the priests and other role players had taken their various positions in the sanctuary. On the contrary, a Pentecostal scene began to unfold in a Roman Catholic major mass on that Sunday morning. There emerged at the left-hand corner of the altar, young men and women who ushered the parishioners into Pentecostal-like worship, where there was intermittent glossolalia spoken by the worship leader. This turn of events proves why researchers who have affinity with the field context or researchers collecting data at "home" ought to lay aside preconceived ideas so they do not miss current developments.<sup>513</sup>

Thus, the opening scene of my fieldwork gave the promise of endless material on the topic of renewal or charismatic features to be unearthed in the smaller groups but also in the larger parish body. The next event in the mass that significantly captured my attention was the sermon. It took effort to be cognisant of my current environs of a Roman Catholic Mass. Once again, I emphasize my familiarity with Catholic liturgy and its component sermon style. As a former member of Roman Catholicism, who grafted onto a charismatic mega church, which lasted for almost a decade, mastery of the liturgy and sermon style of both spectra of the Christian divide was locked in a template of memory. Therefore, "the steps to solution" type sermon which is usually a charismatic style akin to the ministry of especially Dag Heward-Mills and Mensa Otabil (both renowned neo-Pentecostal pastors in Ghana) was interesting to encounter in a

---

<sup>512</sup> Marshall and Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 124.

<sup>513</sup> Hoel, "Embodying the Field: A Researcher's Reflections on Power Dynamics, Positionality and the Nature of Research Relationships," 31.

Roman Catholic mass on a Sunday morning. Pentecostalization of the MLCs in Ghana was definitely etching deep markings on Christianity on the Ghanaian landscape in unexpected ways by this account. Nonetheless, thereafter, the usual Roman Catholic style liturgy followed.

#### **4.2.2 CCR meeting participation: your teachings give me comfort**

*"Owura tena me nkyen kakra ade reye asa. Wo nkyerekyere*

*yi ama me ho ato me. Enti Owura tena me nyen kakra. Ade*

*reye asa."*

Translation: "Lord, sit by me a little longer, night is about to fall.

Your teaching gives me comfort. Therefore, my Lord, sit by me

a little longer. Night is about to fall."

The above chorus was one of the worship songs at the opening session of the first CCR meeting that I attended. It encapsulates one of the major aims of CCR. This aim is to go further with the Lord, to spend more time in his presence/ in his house. Also, to gather and listen more intently to his teachings in the evening after the mass had ended earlier in the morning. It must be mentioned here that, the song was greatly moving.<sup>514</sup> It was new to my auditory senses indeed. It was amazing to me how it taught one of the cardinal purposes of the gathering of adherents for the CCR. The time was six o'clock in the evening on Sunday 1st January and the scene was the parish in a portion of Greater Accra.

Before the songs, (which were sung in the local dialect and English language) came prayer. A foundational prayer segment always preceded the CCR sessions. There were usually young men leading the prayer with women standing a few steps behind them, supporting in prayer time. As a researcher interested in the gender dynamics of leadership, such fine details were of utmost importance and relevance. Therefore, oscillating between prayers, worship, listening, contributing, and observing while mentally recording, was a skill that had to be harnessed during the duration of fieldwork.

The prayer leader, who gave prayer topics, which the adherents prayed about, began the foundational prayer. A male led the prayer as a leader of the prayer group. After this came the

---

<sup>514</sup> The song was originally composed by a Presbyterian singing band, as was told to me by the daughter of Presbyterian minister, as a fast tempo song. It has also been commercially recorded by a popular Ghanaian gospel musician in Ghana in recent times.

worship session (characterized by slow-tempo music), also led by a male leader flanked behind by three supporting women singers. Once again, the preference of male leaders is seen in this scene, even in an area where women traditionally are perceived to flourish through singing. It was interesting to note that no Roman Catholic hymns were sung; rather, popular Pentecostal songs and other local gospel songs were sung during the renewal meeting. This is one of the characteristics of the MLC's Bible study and prayer groups that can be identified as charismatic or Pentecostal in nature. Then came Bible study. A male read the sermon in the English language and a female read in the Twi language. This was the first time during the renewal meeting that a woman led in some manner. It was obvious though, that the onus fell on her because she was the only one present who was literate in the Twi language. Therefore, it was clear that women were brought on board only when it was inevitable or when their skills were needed.

This incident was opportune and gave some leeway to a female person to play a role. Furthermore, after praises and worship, there was a minute of silence to usher in prophecy but there was no prophecy at that time. This was another Pentecostal feature present in the CCR. During Bible study, there was a contextualized study of Deuteronomy 6:23 where the main theme was "our enemies can do their most but what God has said concerning us, is what will come to pass."

True to the form of CCR, there was a prophecy after the final prayers that said: " someone has been waiting for God to answer a prayer request for a long time, God will answer this year." There was no explanation for the prophecy since it was assumed that it was self-explanatory. Usually, prophecies are given to encourage adherents. In this case, the prophecy was not only a prediction of impending answered prayer for the adherents but also an exhortation for them.

#### **4.2.3 CCR meeting participation: new Pentecost for new evangelization**

In another CCR meeting, the session took a different format. It included the usual prayer, worship, and praise sessions, but this time around, a woman led the praise session. Such instances where women led were few. The meeting was then organized in an open forum format. The forum was chaired by the coordinator, who was male, and many issues were discussed. The theme for CCR for the year was also announced: "New Pentecost for New Evangelization."

Some of the issues discussed ranged from admonition for intercessors to be on time, to a need for an increased financial contribution. As well as the admonition for all to visit absent members and also request for dates for Growth in the Spirit Seminars after Life in the Spirit Seminars.

There were also issues raised on the request to harness more Bible quotation in counselling and contributions during the discussions to make counselling and advice effective and grounded in the Bible. It was the case in many of the CCR meetings attended that men were in leading roles while women took secondary positions. As observed, the men were teachers, prayer leaders, and worship leaders in majority of the meetings I attended. Women were, however, mostly singers and local language Bible readers.

The question then is what are the reasons for the disparity in roles between males and females in the CCR? It must be said that, in spite of male dominance in leadership in the CCR, women made up the majority of the CCR members and led *from behind* or better still *from within*. This was because not only were they the majority but the onus lay on them to carry out the activities of the CCR such as prayer, worship, Bible study, and paying of dues, to mention a few. Additionally, they are the very individuals who vote into power the leaders of the CCR. They also have the right to voice out any misgivings both to the parish priest and also on platforms such as the occasional open forums organized by the CCR. As such, they are not entirely powerless; these women, although having roles as mothers, wives and, in some cases, as workers, make the CCR a commitment. They leave their various homes to converge at the church premises for the prayers and Bible study that make the CCR a reality. They contribute their dues that are used to assist other members in the group.

#### **4.2.4 CCR meeting participation: women in the background**

The CCR meeting began with a prayer by a male leader. This male leader was someone who would be considered in those circles as a gifted intercessor. He prayed with fervour and eloquence as well as with language choices that suggested knowledge in spiritual and biblical insight. I was moved by his prayer because it reminded me of what these meetings were about from my past participation many years ago. Then came the worship session with the usual slow-tempo music. This was characterized by male leaders in the front, flanked by supporting singers on either side. The songs were repetitive and were sung with solemnity and reverence by all present. The worship leaders held up hands in a worship style that is quite foreign in the Roman Catholic Church and more akin to the Pentecostal movement. I noticed that some adherents also worshipped in this manner while others knelt while the worship session was underway. Kneeling in worship is not unusual in Roman Catholic liturgy. In fact, in my experience, Catholics do more kneeling in worship than most church traditions. However, the difference is that this type of Pentecostal-like worship does not exist in Roman Catholic liturgy. This worship phase as described is specifically set aside for singing slow rhythmic songs of a particular

distinction. When coupled with kneeling, this transports one into the Pentecostal/ charismatic realm, as that is the common practice of the aforementioned movement.

The third phase was praise time characterized by fast-tempo music. Roman Catholics in Ghana also have durations in the liturgy where fast tempo music is the norm coupled with dancing and clapping. However, in such a case, the songs that are sung are not considered Pentecostal of the Nigerian, American, and, more recently, the Australian genre.<sup>515</sup> There was a lot of clapping during this phase in the CCR. All engaged in dancing vigorously and so did I as a participant in the CCR. There was limited inclusion of instruments but this was made up for with a double local drum and tambourines. All the songs were either Pentecostal or local gospel songs. It is noteworthy that none of the songs were Roman Catholic hymns, a deviation from usual Roman Catholic mass practice. The Bible passages for discussion on that day were Acts 2 and Acts 4. These discussions were done by dividing the adherents into groups. There were, therefore, three groups led by two women and one man. After this discussion broke apart, the male leader spoke on eight tips from the Pope on evangelism. Afterwards, a male leader led the prayer of intercession. There was a duration allotted for the monetary contribution, which was undertaken. It was stated that CCR in Ghana was fifty years old. Summarily, in the CCR, men held the major leading roles throughout the duration of my fieldwork. They were the prayer leaders, worship leaders, praise leaders, and coordinators or teachers. Women stayed in the background as backup singers and adherents. In one instance, women led smaller groups for discussions. The session was very Pentecostal, no hymns were sung but rather the music was Pentecostal gospel songs. The worship style was also characterized by Pentecostal elements.

#### **4.2.5 CCR meeting participation: zonal meeting**

This particular CCR meeting was a zonal meeting in Greater Accra. I was invited by the CCR coordinator, who was of the view that the experience would be helpful for the study. I was of course, delighted to be invited. The Roman Catholic cathedral was an appreciable distance from the CCR location, also in Greater Accra. We arrived at the premises of this very popular cathedral right on time as most of the congregants were conveyed in the church bus. On arriving at the premises, I took my position in a pew. The Cathedral was almost filled to capacity as more adherents of the CCR across the region trooped in.

---

<sup>515</sup> These are the main circles from which Pentecostal/ charismatic English language music emanates to feed churches and groups with music considered gospel. This information is arrived at due to about a decade of living the Pentecostal experience in the past, between 2006 and 2014.



The following scene unfolded. I was surprised to see a priest in a cassock leading on the podium. I had become used to laymen in the forefront of the CCR. However, this was a zonal meeting after all. He said a brief prayer in the humble and direct manner that I have come to associate with Roman Catholic clergy and prayer. However, what was to come was quite unfamiliar. The priest ushered us all into an intercessory or prayer session; this was not exactly Roman Catholic, I must indicate. It is not that Roman Catholics are not ushered into prayer during mass, they are. However, their prayers are often in the form of a responsorial Psalm.<sup>516</sup> It could also be briefly during bidding prayers.<sup>517</sup> Therefore, this occurrence was very Pentecostal/ charismatic, whereby individuals went into prayer mode for a comparatively more significant duration with much energy and raised voices.

Afterwards, there was a worship session where local gospel only was the norm. There was no praise session in this meeting. Another priest in a cassock took the podium to give a sermon. This priest was no doubt there for his Pentecostal/ charismatic fervour. His sermon was not brief but what struck me the most was his reprimand of female adornment. This is not to say that the Roman Catholic Church in Ghana is any more accepting of such adornment by women but they most certainly do not have that as a major theme in a sermon as the Pentecostal churches do. Nonetheless, this was a CCR zonal meeting and therefore was bound to have Pentecostal/ charismatic features, although I was unprepared for what transpired. The zonal meeting ended with announcements and a closing prayer. It was a long way back home. During the drive back, I pondered the events of the meeting.

#### **4.3 Anglican Bible Study and Prayer Group: preliminary meeting with the parish priest of the Anglican congregation**

On the first visit to the Anglican congregation where I found the ABSPG, a few hurdles had to be overcome. Once this was done, in terms of finding that congregation, I met with the priest. However, on the Sunday morning, I arrived in a long flowing dress with very little make-up on. I knew from experience that these were conservative circles. Particular types of clothing, such as trousers worn by a woman were not appropriate here. I did my best not to offend sensibilities. Prepared with all necessary documentation, I participated in the service as an ordinary church

---

<sup>516</sup> This is when adherents prayerfully repeat the same prayer sentence sequence after the priest says certain specific prayers. As such, there is no initiative or personal prayer during this time.

<sup>517</sup> This is when individuals are chosen to say prayers before the altar during mass on specific topics such as *world peace* and *protection for families*. In my experience, there are two ways that this can be done. Either the prayers are said by the chosen adherents with intermittent song chorus from the congregation after each prayer only or duration of brief prayer is allotted where the congregation prays individually although in silence/ in whispers.

member since everyone is welcome to attend church. I had never attended an Anglican Church service before so it was interesting and insightful. One thing was apparent; it was very solemn and relatively more subdued than say, a typical Pentecostal Sunday service.

After the service, I approached an usher (guide) about how I needed to speak to the priest. He arranged this and that same day I had an audience with the priest of the Anglican Church. Typically, getting a chance to speak to a priest, especially in the MLCs is not bureaucratic, in that you do not have to go through too many processes to do so. The same is not the case in other circles. I was therefore, glad with the rapid response. I met and shook hands with the priest. He had the aura that almost all priests especially of MLCs possess, of piety and humility, which commands respect on one's part. I then introduced myself and relayed the purpose, which motivated me to join their service that morning. I also spoke about my background as a Ghanaian and spoke a little about my family background. I endeavoured to accomplish this as a way of rapport building. Whether it was because of commonality or appreciation for academic pursuits, I was given permission there and then after a brief perusal of documentation. He then introduced me to one of the leaders of the ABSPG, who later became a participant in the study. I made certain that I had the contact information of both individuals.

#### **4.3.1 ABSPG and its mother congregation**

As a researcher assiduously trying to make use of the duration in Ghana, I worked on the three congregations simultaneously. Concerning the Anglican Church, I initially found a congregation close to the Roman Catholic parish and decided to visit. Once there, I was redirected to another location about an hour's drive from the Roman Catholic Church where access was obtained from the gatekeepers. The main gatekeeper was, of course, the Reverend Father of the parish who was kind enough to explain the workings of the existing ABSPG. It is important to note that one cannot just barge into the group and start interacting and taking notes; the researcher must be respectful of the privacy of the group she intends to study.

The mother/ main congregation had an average church attendance of two hundred and fifty adherents and was usually full to capacity each Sunday morning. The services were typical Anglican service as would be found in any part of the world. There were High-Church features such as the emphasis on ritual, sacraments, priestly authority with all its trappings, and specific adornments. However, there was a slight deviation that was unexpected, to say the least. There existed a singing group led by a man who became one of the participants in the study. The songs

sang were mostly Ghanaian contemporary gospel music, which is upbeat and was delivered each Sunday with exceptional vitality.

Another feature was the fact that the services were tailored in a multi-ethnic or tribal manner. This could be seen in how the Bible reading was delivered in multiple local languages concurrently. This multi-ethnic inclination trickled down to their renewal group, which was also multi-ethnic in nature. I attended many of the Anglican mother church Sunday services and, very often, each one had additional features. There were at least two instances where a prophet was invited to give a sermon. In one instance, a bishop visited and gave a sermon. On another Sunday, there was a youth group inauguration and on another, there was a parochial church council meeting for the voting in of leaders. In fact, it was never dull and this psyched me to expect the unexpected each Sunday. These Sunday service participation were undertaken throughout the entire duration of fieldwork during both the second and first legs of field immersion.

#### **4.3.2 ABSPG meeting participation: how to claim God's promises**

There were six Bible study groups in a session that morning as on all the other Sundays. They were the English, Akan, Ga, Dangme, Kusase, and Ewe language groups. They were organized in a circular sitting arrangement within the sanctuary, and the adherents were grouped with each having a leader. The priest made it a point to visit each group from time to time, spending a few minutes speaking to them one after the other. In the Akan-speaking group, there was Bible study in the aforementioned language of which the topic was "how to claim God's promises." I spent time with this group on this particular day. Prayers were said before discussions began. The prayer was briefly spoken by the leader. The leader or teacher who coordinated the activities of the group was male. The rest of the members, both male and female, contributed during discussions.

The Bible topic was introduced by the leader. The text was then read by a member of the group. Some Bible verses discussed were Psalm 34:19 and Isaiah 58:7–8. Regarding, the first chosen text, the leader elaborated on the issue of the unavoidable difficulties that all Christians will have. He also spoke on how God will not permit Christians to face temptations that they are not able to bear. Regarding, the second chosen text, he elaborated on performing charity towards the poor as a way of bringing forth blessing from the Lord. The adherents in the group were invited to give an interpretation of the texts. They responded individually by presenting different perspectives and explaining how they understood the text. They also gave real-life

examples of how the texts paralleled daily experiences and how they are applied in current times. There was a bone of contention during the discussion about why Christians should have difficulties in the first place and how they are not always able to resolve them. These were hard questions that were answered by reassurances to have faith, as was one adherent's contribution.

This particular ABSPG session ended with a prayer said by an adherent who was called upon to pray. There was no worship session or praise session in this renewal group meeting. In fact, the ABSPG was always in this format on Sundays. It was basically made up of prayer time and Bible discussion. It is noteworthy to mention here that there was another ABSPG meeting on a weekday, which was different in format. In addition, I also noticed that though there were no lengthy prayer sessions, leaders arrived earlier and prayed on their own while they awaited the gathering of the adherents.

#### **4.3.3 ABSPG meeting participation: a man is the head**

On another Sunday, I visited another group other than the Twi-speaking group—the English-speaking group. It began with a prayer by the leader asking the Holy Spirit to dwell in the meeting and give understanding to the hearers. The Bible topic was then introduced, followed by the reading of the related biblical texts. The leader of the English group was a young woman. The Bible study and prayer meeting unexpectedly raised interesting issues about gender. Since there were six groups, the Reverend Father rotated among the groups every few minutes. In this instance, even though the topic was "envy," marriage was under discussion. The biblical text was on the marriage of Abraham and Sarah, how Sarah envied Hagar, among other discussions. The Reverend Father decided to give his take on marriage. The following were the words of the Reverend Father concerning marriage,

*Men and women's roles must be defined and should not be left behind no matter what. Childcare, cooking, and chores are women's duties. A man should earn more [income] than his wife. According to Ephesians 5:23, a man is the head. Any family that does not have a man as the head is in trouble.*

The above is the pervading belief in Ghana but I was struck nonetheless, about the extent of patriarchy in all arenas, both in church and within the institution of marriage. It is the case in such an arrangement that often the husband does not help the wife concerning childcare and chores at home. At the same time, the divine decree is ascribed to, defending such behaviour by appealing to biblical texts and hegemonic interpretation. In the case of interpretation of the Bible verse, the agent of the undertaking was the priest, who was giving this information to his

congregants in the charismatic renewal group. In his words: "any family that does not have a man as the head is in trouble." For me, this is quite a problematic assertion. Being a Rev. Minister is a position of power and opinions expressed create a lasting impact on adherents who are not trained readers when it comes to the interpretation of scripture. I was also struck by the female leader, who upon hearing the sermonette did not seem perturbed as there was a deep silence. I, for one, was in mild trepidation though doing my best to remain calm. This session was indeed very insightful and was characterized by the expression of diverse opinions by the group. It ended with a prayer by one of the adherents in the group.

#### **ABSPG Meeting participant: the prophetic**

This session was the weekday charismatic renewal group meeting open to all but designed for the leaders of the ABSPG. On this occasion, there was an invited guest. This was a prophet from a different congregation. He was often invited to the renewal group's weekday meetings and even to the larger mother church. This was because of his apparent Pentecostal/ charismatic leanings and gifts, which he possessed. He was very energetic in the delivery of his sermons and unapologetic. These characteristic sermon styles can be considered Pentecostal/ charismatic in nature and most certainly not the style of MLCs. The MLC sermon delivery style as part of High-Church liturgy is usually mellower in nature. The Rev. Minister explained it by saying that the prophet was there to help him with his flock of congregants. What exactly he meant by that is anybody's guess but I rationalized that it was to stem the exodus of individuals who enjoyed the stylings of a prophet from leaving the church. In this particular session, he sermonized on the theme and biblical texts that would be used the next Sunday in the ABSPG meeting. There was a long prayer session after his delivery whereby, all were upstanding in prayer, with some walking back and forth. There was no praise time or worship time characterizing this meeting session.

#### **4.4 Methodist Prayer and Renewal Programme: preliminary meeting with the priest of the Methodist congregation**

I endeavoured to gain access to the renewal group through gatekeepers. The location of the congregation was ascertained and an appointment was scheduled with the Reverend Minister in charge. This was done by going on the internet and looking for locations of the available churches in the suburb of Greater Accra. I found one church in the locality. I prepared to attend this Methodist church on Sunday morning as a channel to gain access. This was the most viable approach because most churches do not have a church office that is run during the week.

Therefore, an attempt at visiting the church office during the week would prove futile, if not a slow process; even if the researcher encounters an administrator, it is not guaranteed that the priest who is usually the gatekeeper will be present. In addition, I know from experience that church workers can be challenging, in that they are often protective of the clergy and are likely to utilize bureaucratic processes that may derail the entire process.

The priest is always in church on Sundays and he makes a point of greeting newcomers. I took advantage of this fact as a means to have an audience with him. On that Sunday morning, I participated in the Methodist service. There was a moment when all newcomers were asked to stand up so they are welcomed by the congregation. At this time, all new comers were given a few minutes to speak. I introduced myself briefly without giving away too much. In doing so, I was now a recognizable individual who had been welcomed into the church, thus my foot was in the door. At the end of the service, I was one of the individuals who waited to speak to the priest and I had to wait my turn in a short queue. I was welcomed by the priest.

It was at this juncture that I lay bare all my intentions. I spoke about my nationality as Ghanaian from the Central Region of Ghana, my education as a graduate of the University of Ghana, and my further studies that I had undertaken, and which I was currently pursuing in Norway. I spoke about my project and the fieldwork, which I hoped to undertake with his permission. I informed him about the necessary documentation which I had acquired and handed him the informed consent document. He and I conversed for a bit about my family background. We found commonality as we were from the same tribe, which aided rapport building. As the purpose for my imposition was explained verbally and the information letter had also been given, permission was then granted. I was given information about the meeting times of the renewal group, which was twice a week. I was also introduced to a male evangelist who was my contact person in that church.

#### **4.4.2 MPRP and its mother congregation**

As stated, in order to gain access to the MPRP, I had to first gain access to the larger church. In addition, I am of the view that attending the larger church/ mother church as much as possible earns one the trust of the church and its adherents. The members begin to consider you one of their own and so I endeavoured to attend as much as possible. The church had a Sunday attendance of about four hundred members.

On Sunday morning, the service began with a duration allotted for the congregants to pray while a male leader led them. What was striking was that it was only this mother church among the

three which had this feature. This, of course, took place after the choir procession into the sanctuary. There were times for Bible reading, the main sermon, various prayers, monetary contributions, and announcement reading. The intermittent reading of Scripture was very solemn indeed. Another striking thing was the fact that the entire Sunday service was done in Twi language, including the sermon. I noticed how the priest (who is Fante) tried to speak perfect Twi but with a heavy Fante accent. There was also a time of vigorous singing and dancing which occurred during the offering time, where monetary contributions were given. The service ended with a benediction given by the priest.

#### **4.4.3 MPRP meeting participation: spiritual warfare**

On the first MPRP meeting, the leader (or teacher) was a female who taught on the topic of love, using branches that bear fruit as symbolism. She also led a prayer session while singing intermittently. Afterwards, she entered a deliverance or exorcism phase (spiritual warfare) where she called for those tormented by nightmares to be prayed for and delivered. She said to the adherents, "when you have a nightmare cancel it with the blood of Jesus because the Bible says every handwriting of ordinance against us is wiped out with the blood of Jesus." We were then ordered to stretch out our hands and pray for the deliverance of the people who came forward who were supposedly tormented by nightmares. Much of what she mentioned in prayer was spoken in a Pentecostal manner: "we break and destroy the plans of the enemy, if a positive dream is from God it should come to pass but if it is not positive, it should be broken, destroyed and uprooted." It was very interesting to observe that Pentecostal inclinations were very strong in the MPRP from rhetoric to the deliverance session and much emphasis was placed on dreams, which are dominant features in Pentecostalism.

Further on, individuals with prayer requests were asked to come forward. This was undertaken by a male leader who also prayed for the individuals who came forward. There was, however, another woman who acted as a singer and usher (guide or helper). Interestingly, the prayer spoken by the male leader for those individuals with prayer requests was quite lengthy. Particular attention was given to a woman with marital difficulty. A lot of time was spent praying and exorcising this woman from marital difficulty. Both the leader and woman being prayed for walked in a circular manner in unison where questions and counsel ensued between them. This action is often undertaken to drive out evil spirits perceived to be hampering one's Christian life. This act of driving out evil spirits is also a strong Pentecostal feature as a dimension of deliverance activity or spiritual warfare. There was then offering time, prayer, and

announcements which closed the first MPRP meeting I attended. In this particular MPRP meeting, there was a clear balance in the roles men and women played.

### **MPRP Meeting excerpt: testimony giving**

On this particular occasion, I arrived at the renewal group meeting on time. I noticed that there were more women in attendance than men. This was on a weekday morning when most individuals are at work. It is therefore, safe to say that these individuals fall into the category of homemakers, self-employed workers, and perhaps workers who are on leave. It was therefore, no surprise to see a generous number of adherents at the renewal group meeting on a weekday. The session began with a prayer by a woman leader in heartfelt candour. She prayed asking the Holy Spirit to be the teacher in the gathering, among other requests. The adherents stood in silent reverence and concurrence, many with closed eyes and bowed heads, and with a resounding Amen, the prayer came to an end to usher in other activities.

It was now worship time in that MPRP gathering. Another female leader took the first leader's place in front of the gathering. She led all in a worship session, where several songs were sung, albeit repetitively. Most of these songs were local Ghanaian gospel songs. No Methodist hymns were sung throughout the duration of the meeting. I have always had an appreciation for gospel music of all kinds. This moment in time was no exception. I allowed myself to be a participant first and a researcher or observer second. I immersed myself in the experience and allowed the music to waft over me and in a sense transport me to another realm. The realm I express here is what I call "the worship realm," a concept very familiar in the Pentecostal/charismatic circles. In a meditative manner, one immerses oneself in the words of the worship song laying aside all other mental forays to be one hundred percent committed to the worship exercise. This was not difficult to do because many of the songs are profound in meaning. In addition, many of the songs encapsulate Christian tenets and are thus reinforcing for adherents entering worship. They are aided by the profound lyrics, which mean a lot to faith.

After the slow rhythm of the worship session coupled with simple musical instruments like a local twin drum and tambourines, it was time for praise. I do not begrudge praise time; as an African through and through, dancing is definitely something I revel in, especially in any form of a church setting. The same female leader led the praise time while clapping and dancing. Most of the adherents joined in too. I did, however, observe how vigorously everyone was engaged in this to decide just how uninhibited I would be. This may not seem like something necessary, but back in Norway where I study, I was once reprimanded in a classical Pentecostal



congregation for being too excessive or lacking in moderation in my dancing. I realise that every Christian setting is different and my aim is to blend in and not to stand out. I also endeavoured not to offend the sensibilities of the group that I intend to study. In fact, the Methodist Church of Ghana and its renewal groups have rules governing many dimensions of conduct. As I experienced in 2015 in Ghana, wearing trousers is unacceptable in this church. Much to my embarrassment, I was reprimanded by an elderly person on one occasion and even had to return home to change into something more appropriate.

After the praises session it was teaching time. One dynamic elderly female leader, whom I was also privileged to interview on a later date, undertook this. She was in teaching mode and was quite knowledgeable in the content of biblical texts. During this teaching time, she took her time to ask the congregation questions. In turn, adherents proffered answers fuelled by divergent views. In fact, the discussions that took place were very informative. There was also testimony time. This was where individuals waited their turn to stand in front of the gathering to speak on what they believed to be the doings of God in their life. The following was said by a female adherent of the MPRP:

*I just returned from my village and hometown where I am from, safely. I want to thank God for protecting me as I left the city and spent a duration among my clansmen. We all know the many calamities that befall individuals when they travel back to their home villages. I am fortunate to return to the city without evil befalling me. I want to bless the name of the living God for this.*

The above was stated by a female adherent who was of the view that her village was a dangerous place due to individuals in her clan who practice incantations (witchcraft or sorcery) and who can harm members of their own clan. The ancestral village of an individual is perceived as a place that can be very sinister. In addition, roads that lead to such rural areas are often in a bad state and this leads to accidents. However, unfortunate incidents are often ascribed to spiritual forces present in the ancestral locations that are believed to transcend geographical boundaries rather than the nature of the roads. There were several other testimonies, after which a male leader prayed for the testimony givers. The session ended with a benediction from the male leader.

#### **4.4.4 MPRP meeting participant: fighting for what is yours**

On this occasion, the meeting began with a female leader as the coordinator, acting as master of ceremonies. In my opinion, during this time, she broke convention by giving testimony. She

claimed that a school-going child was plagued by a visitation of marine spirits (demonic spirits believed to dwell in the ocean). She had succeeded in delivering the child by way of spiritual warfare and thus, was giving testimony of what God had done. In other words, by praying, the child was no longer experiencing the marine visitation (probably in dreams). She also admonished all to pray over groceries after purchase before using them in cooking. After this, another female leader ushered all into praises coupled with dancing. The sermon was by a female leader on the topic of "fighting for what is yours." She preached on 1 Kings 21:1–19 and John 16. The sermon was about fighting for one's rights, especially with respect to property.

The female preacher spoke especially to the women since the women were in the majority. She said that even if you are a woman, you should fight for what belongs to you. It was a very spirited sermon delivery, executed with a lot of energy. She walked back and forth across the stage, she stamped her foot for emphasis, and she raised her voice from time to time. She insisted that children of God had to fight for their rights and not succumb to weakness. I especially felt moved by this sermon because I could relate to her admonition. I was also intrigued that a woman was in a position to be in a leading role in this charismatic renewal group. There was music and dancing accompanying offering/ collection time of monetary contributions. Announcements were also made to inform members of upcoming events. There was also the closing prayer, which ended with a resounding Amen.

#### **4.5 Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have presented a detailed overview of the first and second legs of the field entries. The visit to the Roman Catholic Church revealed Pentecostalization on a different level. In the CCR meeting, I witnessed strong Pentecostal/ charismatic features with subdued female leadership participation. In the Anglican Church and its ABSPG, the first meeting with the priest was undertaken without too many hurdles. The Anglican mother church was multi-ethnic and traditional in many respects while accommodating a more modern and dynamic singing group. The ABSPG meetings were also multi-ethnic with six language groups, where intense Bible discussions took place. There was a strong female leadership presence in these meetings but the rhetoric by the priest in one instance revealed gender inequality as a belief held. In addition, the grafting of the prophetic into the ABSPG was portrayed, which is a clear Pentecostal/ charismatic feature. In the Methodist church and its MPRP, the incidents that led to gaining admission into the site were discussed. The Methodist mother church and its inclination for a relatively more vigorous prayer culture were discussed, among other features. In the MPRP meetings, I discussed several Pentecostal/ charismatic features from spiritual

warfare/ deliverance to giving of testimonies with undertones of belief in the spiritual forces and belief in dreams as efficacious in daily life. There was a strong female leadership presence in this charismatic renewal group.

## CHAPTER FIVE

# WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP, EMPOWERMENT, PARTICIPATION, AND GENDER DYNAMICS: DATA PRESENTATION FROM SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

### 5.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to present data that emerged from semi-structured interviews. The semi-structured interviews revolved around women's experiences of leadership, empowerment, participation, and gender dynamics. As part of the topic of leadership, data is presented from both formal and informal leadership in the CRGs. Gender empowerment also focused on data that point to all the diverse ways that empowerment is actualized in the experiences of participants. There are other forms of participation and engagements in the data that are relevant and show the effects of the CRGs in the experiences of participants and communities where they dwell. Ghanaian family structure is also a strong theme in the data and influences and informs tendencies in relation to leadership and possible resultant empowerment thus, data on this is presented.

### 5.2. Formal leadership in the renewal groups of the mainline churches

Leadership is an important topic in this study. Essentially, leadership refers to all the title and non-title holding positions in the CRGs. Formal leadership is hierarchically constituted. Put simply, it refers to all the title-holding positions in the CRGs at the top leadership structure. Examples of formal leadership are coordinator for the CCR, the teacher or leader for the ABSPG, and the teacher or leader for the MPRP. These are all designated as formal leadership roles that are clearly identified within the respective groups at the highest levels. The following are some responses from participants during interviews concerning formal leadership within the workings of the charismatic renewal groups of the mainline churches.

I met Oye of CCR, at the church premises before the commencement of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal group meeting. We extended handshakes in greetings and exchanged pleasantries. Instead of sitting inside the church premises, we chose to sit outside the rear entrance. This was an easy spot to opt for because there already was a bench to sit on. The ambiance was relaxing and the environment quite peaceful. There was some stillness all around,

although the rustle of leaves and noises from people passing by could be heard, as well as birds chirping. None of these sounds was distracting enough to disrupt this interview session.

As we began, I was impressed by how outspoken and remarkable Oye was. As I interacted with her, the respect I had for her grew. She was truly an admirable woman. Here was an elderly woman with limited education but she had not allowed that to perturb or hinder her from leadership. It is true that she had to delegate some duties due to her roles as wife and homemaker. Even though the herculean burden of being the sole homemaker for very many women in Ghana is common, it was admirable to acknowledge the sacrifices this woman made on a daily basis for her family and in her role as leader formerly. Now she was an adherent while being a full-time worker. This interview was one of the most insightful as many issues emerged that served to enrich this study. She expressed how she came to be in the CCR due to experiences of nightmares, her desire for a solution and how intercessory prayers aided her to overcome that trauma. Concerning women gaining access to leadership positions within the CCR, positions available and perspectives on women in leadership roles, Oye stated the following:

*The markers important for choosing leaders are the ability to go through training called the Life in the Spirit Seminars (LSS) and commitment. Markers like marriage, sex, and age are not considered. The LSS helps you to understand the Bible and you can be exposed to biblical knowledge to help you do the work as a leader adequately. The leadership titles are singing leader, coordinator, healing and deliverance leader, and so on. Women are allowed to be leaders in these capacities. These days we want the youth to take up these positions. Although women are not barred. I was an intercessory coordinator until I handed over to a younger person. Women who become leaders must have love and acceptance for all people. Men in this CCR are accepting of women leaders.*

It can be gleaned from the above that when it comes to appointing leaders in the CCR, training is important. This is because the Life in the Spirit Seminars are organized, and serve the purpose of grooming and producing leaders. Life in the Spirit Seminars take a total of nine weeks to complete. During this process, the gifts of the Spirit/ talent/ charisma of the participant are identified with which he or she will serve in the CCR. Specific leadership training is also proffered for the attending participants to prepare them for leadership roles. For that matter, markers or categories that may be deal breakers for leadership in other circles (such as marital

status, age, and sex) are irrelevant for this group according to the participant. Age is so irrelevant a category that the youth are a target group for leadership, so much so that, there was a time when Oye held the position of intercessory leader. However, she deliberately handed over her position to a younger person. This buttresses the point that this is not a gerontocratic group (leadership by older people). This group may be considered progressive for that stellar principle of shirking gerontocracy but the question remains, what about the position of women then? The participant also alluded to the fact that the burden on a woman leader is greater than that on a male leader. She presented this as women having to have love and acceptance for all by virtue of her place as a woman leader, as if this was not necessarily required of a man.

Another member of the CCR, Nyansa was very informative indeed. He initially, asked me about my faith. I told him about my background and explained that I was raised Roman Catholic but had been visiting a few Pentecostal congregations for a couple of years now. Of course, I was concerned that other Roman Catholics (or in this case Nyansa) would judge me harshly for leaving the Roman Catholic Church. However, Nyansa came across as a humble man, and although I noticed a slight sense of disappointment in his countenance, he became one of the people I would speak to on several occasions during the course of the fieldwork about the workings of the CCR.

He also alluded to the notion of leadership as admitting all individuals and was not discriminatory when it comes to marital status, gender or age. This is what he said about the delegation of duties concerning attending zonal meetings:

*Women are not barred from positions [of leadership] ...this is without discrimination. With one year of tenure, it [leadership tenure] used to be two years. CCR has nine zones in Greater Accra so every parish sends representatives to the zonal meetings. The zonal meetings take nine weeks and the lessons are seven with two other agendas. The recent past coordinator was a woman. I would like my wife to be a leader. CCR measures markers based on spiritually so there is no discrimination. Women who become leaders perform well. For instance, they are very good at secretarial duties. Their coordinator's duties, as well as teaching assignments are done excellently. Currently, these are [some of] the positions: coordinator, assistant coordinator, secretary, assistant secretary, treasurer, and ministry leaders. These are all males. Women's ministry leader is a female. Previously, the positions of intercessory leader, secretary, women's ministry, and coordinator were females. The reason for the change*

*is that some got married and others moved away. In LSS, at any particular point in time, if no woman shows the ability to intercede or teach, there is no way such a leader will emerge. One disadvantage of LSS is that, for instance, after being empowered and equipped with certain important tools, one male leader left with some important female followers to start a new church.*

According to Nyansa, there is no gender favouritism in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. This implies that women are treated no differently from men concerning leadership positions. He explains that the leadership office duration for a term is one year although the tenure of office used to be two years. There are zonal meetings organized for the charismatic renewal group, which are nine weeks long. On the issue of female leadership, he recalls that the past immediate coordinator was a woman. Women were also leaders in three other leadership positions in the CCR previously. Nyansa claims that he likes the idea of his wife assuming the position of a leader in the renewal group. He makes known the practice of the charismatic renewal group whereby, the criteria for leadership is not gender biased but is instead based on spirituality. This spirituality refers to commitment to the group and its tenets. Such practices include belief/ faith and other outward habits like prayer and Bible reading.

According to Nyansa, women in leadership in the charismatic renewal groups of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal have had stellar tenures of office. Interestingly, he cites secretarial duties as one of the areas where women excel. This is rather baffling since secretarial duties can be performed well by both men and women. It is, then, interesting that such an example was proffered. As a backup question that he answered after further inquiry, he later admits that women excel in other areas of leadership. He informs that there was only one female leader out of the available leadership positions. Only the women's ministry has a female leader. Remarkably, in the last tenure, women held four positions but due to travel and marital constraints, the situation changed. He also implies that the blame for the absence of female leaders can be laid at the feet of the women themselves, "some got married." For him, after the LSS, it is expected that leaders emerge with a particular ability to possess prayer fervour for intercession and Bible study aptitude for teaching: sometimes women do not qualify. He also bemoaned the drawback of LSS: while it is intended to build leaders, some of the individuals leave after they have been equipped to lead, to start their own churches.

The interview with Soreno of the MPRP, was held at the church premises of the Methodist congregation. After greetings were exchanged and a brief conversation, the interview was off

to a good start. This interview was very insightful. This was because Soreno was very forthcoming with responses that were detailed and rich indeed. We sat on a porch of the main church entrance. There were the usual stirrings and mild clamour of people passing by but nothing too distracting as to impede the process of interviewing. We had retrieved chairs from the interior of the church premises and we got on with the agenda at hand. After an interesting interview session, Soreno handed me her complimentary card. This was because she was the founder of an evangelistic outreach programme. I received this with thanks. I wondered if the MPRP members were aware of her personal evangelistic project and I found it remarkable what this elderly woman had taken upon herself to do. Soreno was very active indeed. She was a teacher, a leader, and was active in all dimensions of the workings of the charismatic renewal group. Here are some of her thoughts when it comes to women's leadership:

*I am a leader in the MPRP. I teach, preach, and undertake outreach. In church, I attend many leadership training programmes. I have undergone leadership training for leaders, counsellors, etc. To be a preacher one has to undertake preaching courses Part 1 and 2. I joined MPRP because I have dedicated my life to God's work. I have been dedicated to God since I was a young girl. I believe God called me even before I was born; my parents attest to this. The Methodist Church permits female leadership. Even the classical Pentecostal churches now permit this. This is because when one comes into Christianity, one is like a child not having much knowledge. However, when one stays Christian for some time, knowledge grows and one becomes a mature Christian. It is a gradual progression. Individuals behave the same. In the Old Testament, women were not allowed to inherit property but someone had only daughters, some women contested this and God listened and changed the rules so women could inherit property. In the wisdom of God...we cannot really comprehend God...someone may be a woman but in realm of the spirit she is male [her courage, ability and spirit]. God gives such women. Their sex is no longer a marker for leadership.*

Soreno introduces herself as a leader in the MPRP. Her duties include preaching and outreach activities. She explains that in order to perform the aforementioned roles, she undertook training for those respective activities. Her reason for joining the MPRP was because of a personal decision to be committed to God. She reiterates that she has had the mind-set of being set apart for God since her childhood and claims her parents had an insight of this turn of events even before she was born. Therefore, she has become a charismatic renewal group leader in a church



that has women leaders. She refers to the classical Pentecostal denominations in Ghana who are notorious for barring women from leadership. In her observation, even classical Pentecostals now permit women in leadership. She proffers a metaphor of a child growing and knowing better with maturity as the reason for change in policy and attitudes of erstwhile gender-biased church groups. She states that knowledge increases with time and this should overturn detrimental policies that are sex biased. She further introduces a biblical example of how some women in the Old Testament challenged the law of only men inheriting property and how God listened to them.<sup>518</sup> This is very profound indeed.

The question, then, is: why would God allow the gender injustice in the first place? This participant readily supplies an answer: in the wisdom of God, mortal men cannot fully understand God. Furthermore, for her, a countless number of women are on par with men in terms of courage, intellect, talent, and many other admirable traits. She calls this ‘*women who are men in the realm of the spirit*’ although they are physically women. She says some women transcend expectations and it is God that gives such women. In explaining physical "women who are men in spirit," the benchmark for excellence has in many contexts been that of maleness. Therefore, when a woman is excelling, she is compared to a man and maleness may even be ascribed to her.

One participant, Brempong, of the Anglican Bible Study and Prayer Group, made some profound statements that triggered important discussions. He was busy and it was hard to find a time to meet, however, eventually it worked out and I met him at a campus where he studied. Overall, it was an efficacious session of interviewing. We ended the session with many thanks on my part. As a young man, he seemed a bit uncertain about what was theologically acceptable concerning women in religious leading positions. He had not yet made up his mind about this and seemed to be betwixt decisions. Here are some of his thoughts on the topic:

*For the groups, our Reverend Minister asked for volunteers so the criteria for participation and leadership are willingness and confidence. There was no initial training for leaders. However, we have been meeting separately to discuss the topic and content. There are women priests in the Anglican Church in Ghana. In Paul's letters, women are not supposed to lead but I am not sure if those Pauline letters were for those specific churches or for all Christians today. Women do not necessarily flaunt power when given the opportunity. Frankly, I think both men and women fall prey to*

---

<sup>518</sup> She refers to Numbers 27:1–11, concerning the daughters of Zelophehad.

*this with equal measure. In Christ, there is no male nor female. If in a meeting a woman can prophesy then God does not discriminate among the sexes.*

Brempong informed me during the interview that the conditions for leadership were commitment and belief in one's self. This was so because the Reverend Minister requested volunteers to lead in the various capacities. Therefore, it was those who were willing, who became leaders. Concerning leadership training, provision was made in weekly meetings, where the topics to be discussed on Sunday, during the ABSPG meetings were engaged. The Anglican Church in Ghana ordains women into the priesthood but the participant expressed uncertainty as to whether that was a correct line of action. He claimed that Paul's letters state that women are not supposed to lead. However, the interpretation and application of the texts was baffling to him. This is with regards to whether the verse is relevant for today's setting or should be left alone as a text only relevant for the believers at that time and in that specific context. He continued to express his view that both men and women could make mistakes when given the chance to be leaders with equal measure. To buttress his point that women are worthy of leadership in spite of the ambivalences, he put forth prophesying women as God's validation of such women. This is where God himself has given women the gift of prophecy as a sign that, he approves of women in every sense of the word. Therefore, God does not discriminate between the sexes according to the participant in spite of his earlier misgivings.

Reverend Mensah of MPRP was also another participant with much to relay on the topic of formal leadership.<sup>519</sup> The interview with Reverend Mensah was scheduled on a weekday in the church office of the Reverend Minister.<sup>520</sup> He was very welcoming and informative. The ambience in the office was calm and there were no disturbances. Others sat in the waiting area or corridor to speak to the Reverend Minister. He was very knowledgeable in the history of the Methodist Church in Ghana and how, for example, earlier practices shed light on current trends in the charismatic renewal group and the Church as a whole. He states the following:

*The Methodist Church believes in priesthood of all believers, irrespective of sex. It is in our constitution that no one should be discriminated against. Anyone with traces of the*

---

<sup>519</sup> The Reverend Minister is a priest of the Methodist church under study; it is one congregation out of many in Greater Accra Region. Greater Accra Region comprises of two metropolitan cities with about 20 Methodist church congregations according to Google Maps. Therefore, the Reverend Minister's anonymity is guaranteed due to the multiplicity of congregations in the Greater Accra Region. <https://www.google.com/maps/search/methodist+churches+in+greater+accra/@5.5515819,-0.354049,13z/data=!3m1!4b1>

*grace of God is allowed to play a role. This is also scriptural; Peter said of a truth, I concede that God is no respecter of persons but to every nation, those who fear him God saves them. With regards to training in the Methodist Church, because of problems in the past there are training programmes. An example is the Freeman Centre of Leadership and Development in Kumasi and the Lay diaconal order at Kumasi to train lay workers, after which certificates are given.*

The Reverend Minister puts forth one of the basic tenets of the Methodist Church, namely that all believers are considered priests regardless of the sex of the individual. Furthermore, the constitution of the Church is adamant that there be no discrimination towards any individual. In the Methodist Church, any individual with elements of Godly abilities and talents can be ascend to a leadership position in the Church, be it formal or informal. In addition, he buttresses his point by deploying a biblical text, specifically the words of Peter.<sup>521</sup> In this text, it implies that God has no regard for human characteristics such as sex or status, nationality or geographic location. Rather, what is important is the fear of God, which makes salvation possible. In order to prepare individuals for leadership, there were various training programmes put in place so that individuals could acquire the necessary qualification and certification upon completion.

### **5.3. Informal leadership and playing a role**

Informal leadership refers to the various ways in which adherents can actively undertake responsibilities in the charismatic renewal groups to ensure its smooth operation. Informal leadership comes about because there are vacant positions of responsibilities to be filled in the charismatic renewal group's set up. These responsibilities do not come with official titles but are pertinent to the success of the group's operations and very existence. Some of these informal positions are backup singers, prayer warriors or intercessors, and ushers or guides. On the above topic, interviews were conducted.

I interviewed Sompaa of the CCR at his workplace. We spoke at length before the "official" interview began. He explained that he was originally from a different country and had already been a member of CCR in his home country; it was therefore, very natural for him to join the CCR in the city where he lived in Ghana. As a young migrant with no strong bonds in Ghana, he explained, the CCR serves as a place to confer and form some bonds. He stated the following concerning women's leadership roles:

---

<sup>521</sup> The verse the priest refers to can be found in Acts 10:34.

*The reason for the existence of women leaders is that the Holy Spirit uses the person available and that can be a woman, as the case may be. The most important thing is if the person has a gift. The leader encourages the ladies by giving them roles and duties. He even pays [the fee] for women to go on programmes to experience more of the renewal and learn about CCR. I must say, women are more attracted to singing ministry than the other groups.*

For him, the most important determinant is whether a person possesses a gift that can be utilized in the charismatic renewal group. He is of the view that the leader motivates the women in the group to be active and take up roles/ informal leadership. He claims that the leader pays so that women can attend programmes in order to motivate them in the renewal group. It is the participant's observation that there are a higher number of women in the singing group than in the other groups.

For Menaye of the MPRP, another participant, even with informal leadership it does not come across as the norm where it is inclusive of women even if they show the ability to do so. I interviewed Menaye in her home. She was enthusiastic to give her input on the topic of women's leadership. She was at home with her baby when I arrived. We constantly had to distract the baby with objects including my recording device cover. This added a noted positive atmosphere to the session and we ended it with smiles and a promise of meeting at church. As one with a high education, one immediate result was that the language of interaction was English. Despite being educated, she was unemployed, which enabled her to be active in the charismatic renewal group. Menaye noted the following about women's leadership:

*The women are allowed to lead sometimes...although men often do lead too. Women are allowed to lead when the leaders see that you participate often and you have the ability. Some people dislike that women lead because there are men available and the Bible says so. There is an ongoing debate whether this is right or wrong.*

In Menaye's view, men are often leaders playing significant roles even in informal leadership in the MPRP but women are also given the opportunity to do the same. However, there are divergent views on whether this is biblically acceptable. This shows that what biblical texts contain or how biblical texts are interpreted are crucial to many adherents' understandings of women's religious leadership. However, hegemonic and often patriarchal interpretation is often still the norm and this is where the contention lies. Such interpretation fuels the views of many

indeed, as the participant alludes to. This is important because some men are still unhappy about women leading in CRGs as is stated by Menaye.

Another participant, Ohene, of the ABSPG, illustrates some of the contention that Menaye describes above. Ohene was a pleasant elderly man and an active member in the church. We sat under a summer hut on the church property where Ohene's wife interrupted us a few times. Despite this, interview went quite smooth. Here is what Ohene said:

*Usually the women are leaders of women's groups. Women lead but I do not think it is a good idea. This is because the Bible does not permit women to lead to the best of my knowledge so I think the only reason that such a practice is taking place is because there are fewer men with adequate knowledge of the Bible in some cases. I think the church has deviated from the Bible because women should not lead. However, men with knowledge of the Bible may be lacking/ unavailable. Sometimes people read the Bible and do not understand. An example is the Ethiopian eunuch. I think this is why women are permitted to lead this time around.*

Ohene recounts that women often lead when the group is made up of only women. He does not approve of women leading even informally when men are present in the group. He claims the Bible does not support the practice where women lead men. He attributes the trend of women leading both sexes to a lack of men with ample Biblical knowledge. He is certain the church is in error for permitting such practices. He asserts that the Bible is difficult to understand for some and cites the Ethiopian eunuch as a Biblical example.<sup>522</sup> This will be further problematized in analysis.

Another participant was Father Barima of the Anglican Church.<sup>523</sup> We spoke at great length about my research and the purpose for which I was at the Anglican Church that morning. Father Barima was well-spoken and distinguished in demeanour. We sat at in a small reception area

---

<sup>522</sup> The verse/ Biblical text is Acts 8:26-40.

<sup>523</sup> The Reverend Minister is a priest of the Anglican Church under study; it is one congregation out of many in Greater Accra Region. Greater Accra Region comprises of two metropolitan cities with about 20 Anglican Church congregations according to Google Maps. <https://www.google.com/maps/search/anglican+church+congregations+in+greater+accra/@5.5512443,-0.3540489,13z/data=!3m1!4b1>

Therefore, the Reverend Minister's anonymity is guaranteed due to the multiplicity of congregations in the Greater Accra Region.

right in front of the church office. He was very frank in his responses and this was very helpful. Father Barima noted the following:

*We sponsor leaders for leadership training in another city. We also give training on weekdays on the specific topics and how to conduct the discussions. When women are given prominent roles in the church, it helps with the growth of the church. This is because women form the majority in the church. Even Jesus' ministry had many women. In sometime past, the orthodox church/ MLC neglected some dimensions of interest for the people and [yet,] there are changing needs of the congregations. Thus, members are attracted to other churches so the church must try to meet the needs of the congregation.*

Father Barima corroborated the statements of other participants about the existence of training for adherents in order to play significant roles/ in informal leadership in the ABSPG. He is in favour of women in prominent roles in the church. He opines that women are the majority in the church and so deserve to have opportunities to play significant roles. He asserts that Jesus' ministry had women therefore; the current church cannot do differently. He also added that the MLCs used to be negligent concerning the needs of its adherents. This, he claims, is counterproductive for the church in terms of membership.

#### **5.4 Gender empowerment in the charismatic renewal groups stemming from participation and leadership**

Gender empowerment is an important subject matter in this study. It includes all the diverse ways by which adherents, especially women, actualize their potentials and are equipped to lead more engaging, rewarding, and gratifying lives through the activities of the charismatic renewal groups. This often stems from participation and leadership opportunities. The aim here is to ascertain the existence or otherwise of elements of empowerment dynamics for women in the CRGs and the varied ways that these dynamics come about. Here, I connect empowerment to data emerging from participants' reflection on participation and leadership in the CRGs of the MLCs.

I was fortunate to be invited into the home of Dela of the CCR. Her husband was away at work and her toddler was at home with her. She was very softly spoken and I worried that her voice would be faint on the recording device. I therefore, urged her to kindly speak up. That did not do much good due to the clear evidence that she was naturally softly spoken. Apart from that worry at the recesses of my mind and the toddler demanding attention from time to time, we

duly completed the session without further difficulty. Later, I was pleased to realise that the recording was excellent in spite of my earlier fears. Due to her education, our language of communication was English. She was clear and concise in her responses and she noted the following concerning her involvement in the CCR:

*I joined the group because of friendship. I have made a lot of friends. In the group, there is no discrimination; women are allowed to be leaders. God helps me in personal life. I had three miscarriages but now I have two children, for that matter, I know that God is really alive.*

From the above, it can be deduced that Dela derives some form of empowerment from being part of the charismatic renewal group. This is because the networking that takes place due to participation in the group, again leads to bonding friendships. Additionally, her emphasis on God seems to enable her to survive difficult times, while also deriving or ascribing success due to transcendent powers. In addition, she mentions the misfortune that befell her in conceiving and carrying to term. She considers the birth of her two children as the evidence of God's existence in her life.

Oforiwaa of the ABSPG also notes that she has profited/ has been empowered from participating in the charismatic renewal group. I interviewed Oforiwaa at her workplace, which was an open space and so there were people passing by, some of whom interrupted the interview with greetings much to my chagrin. Nonetheless, it was generally a successful and interesting session. She complained about the community in which she lived and how it was indeed a shantytown. She spoke about her low income, a result of low education and in effect, employment that put her in a low-income bracket. Her family could not afford to live in a better neighbourhood, which was improved and safer according to her. When it comes to her participation in the church, she notes the following:

*I was born into this church. I moved from another city to this city and continued in the church. I have profited from joining the charismatic renewal group. This is because even the Bible says that we should pray without ceasing. The teaching is also helpful, especially if one decides to follow the teachings. In the charismatic renewal groups, there are several classes so there are different groups and women lead in some of the groups.*

Oforiwaa asserts that she has derived certain gains/ empowerment from being part of the charismatic renewal group. She specifically mentions the opportunity for prayer, as well as teachings that are given. She also observes that women are leaders in the group. Prayer is often the key to African Pentecostalism and ABSPG is a charismatic renewal group with Pentecostal features. Therefore, prayer is taken very seriously in these circles and is a source of enablement and inspiration for adherents.

For Adoma, her husband functions as a great support in encouraging her to partake in church activities. I was enthralled to interview Adoma, as I had witnessed her activities in the MPRP even on the first day of visiting the charismatic renewal group. We sat in an alcove of the church building. Midway through the session, noise began emanating from a nearby building adjacent to the church. After a while, we realised that it was a local grain grinding business in operation. It was not the best place to continue the interview as the noise was incessant. However, we pressed forward and continued. There was definitely a sigh of relief when I later listened to the recording and heard that the background noise did not drown out the actual interview conversation. Adoma confided in me that even though women are capable just as men, in her view, many people—both men and women are not ready to accept a woman leader. As a comparison, she referred to the election in the United States of America that had elected Donald Trump and not Hillary Clinton.<sup>524</sup> She also confided in me about accommodation difficulty linked to a land dispute and a cumbersome financial predicament. Adoma stated the following concerning women's activities in church and notes particular gender dynamics that can affect women's participation (positively and negatively):

*There are many roles and women undertake all these activities. Women are also allowed to lead and teach; I lead services. I lead worship and prayer. Another woman preaches. One undergoes training before becoming a leader. All leaders undergo training. Also, if you have zeal, one can be given other roles like prayer and worship. An individual can also be called upon randomly to take up roles. Through that, one can be encouraged to go for training to become a local preacher and teacher. My husband is supportive and he even encourages me to do more. Some husbands, however, may not be as supportive. I know one such couple; the woman used to attend our congregation but her husband has prevented her from attending these days.*

---

<sup>524</sup> In her view, Hillary Clinton's inability to become president had something to do with her being a woman.



For Adoma, the MPRP is beneficial/ empowering because there are many roles available for women. She leads in a number of different capacities and makes mention of other women who do the same. She mentions training and zeal as necessary perquisites to be leaders. Furthermore, from time to time, individuals are called upon to take on responsibilities and are even compelled to go for training to equip them for leadership. A supportive husband is definitely a plus but not all husbands are supportive, she says.

Additionally, on the theme of gender empowerment Nkunim of the CCR had enriching insights to offer. I was honoured to interview Nkunim in his home. He and his wife welcomed me one evening. We sat in his living room together with his wife. We chatted a bit about current affairs for a brief duration. The interview then began in earnest. I found the environment in which we conducted the interview to be conducive; there were no interferences or distractions. The couple was also friendly and welcoming to me. The remarks and responses of the participant were valuable and crucial for the study. As an educated man, I was not surprised that Nkunim held a leadership position. It was often the case that when one is educated and male, one is more likely to be a formal leader as observed. He stated the following about women's participation in church:

*Baptism enables gender to be abrogated and both sexes can become all things, including leaders. The CCR enables women to have an avenue for prayer, church-going women in Ghana like prayers because it helps them in their problems. It also enables them to seek people to pray for them. Teaching is also for empowerment. Monies are also given during pivotal times for members like funerals, naming ceremonies, etc.*

The participant is of the view that baptism is what makes the difference. He also emphasizes the need for women in particular to gather and pray. Additionally, dues that are contributed are given to individuals to support them during certain occasions in life. This, of course, depends on the group itself or the agent and the dimension of the network as well as how viable and effective it is in mobilization. The charismatic renewal group thus look inwardly for assistance both in cash and in kind. The profits, which are accrued from membership in a group, are the basis of assistance to the participants and they are economically beneficial to a degree; the profits, which adherents benefit from, are a major motivation for their allegiance and participation. The above factors of avenue for prayer and financial support are useful/ empowering to members who participate.

Wiafe, of the ABSPG, was vehement about his views concerning financial support and also notes the importance of faith in regulating behaviour:

*A man who is not womanizing and chasing multiple women saves money definitely. Therefore, it is a good thing especially for the marriage union. I think there will be financial stability. In the same vain, money will be saved that would have gone to excessive alcoholism. However, the money saved may also go to church projects since the reason for abstinence from womanizing, alcoholism is dedication to the church, and its ABSPG. However, I believe God will bless me and others who do so in due time. Additionally, the church and ABSPG also help dedicated members financially during occasions like funerals, naming ceremonies, weddings etc. Therefore, the individual contributions are put to good use for individuals and their loved ones. Christ Jesus is whom we pray through and also in his name. Even disciples baptized in Jesus name. The Holy Spirit assists and strengthens us and helps us in prayer. Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit, I know when I die, I will have everlasting life. I can also say my personality has radically changed. My friends testify to this. I used to be a very violent and impatient person. I have really changed because of my faith.*

For Wiafe, abstinence from excesses like alcoholism and sexual promiscuity can improve personal finances. He believes that this kind of financial responsibility is beneficial to a marriage union. He claims that money is redirected that would have been spent on wooing other women or paying for an alcoholic habit. He adds that those amounts of money will in turn go to funding church projects and that God eventually blesses such church financiers. He mentions that there is financial assistance given to adherents during pivotal times of their lives. He explains the relevance of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit for his faith and his hope for eternal life. He attests that his faith has made a positive impact on his personality. These elements are empowering due to the positive impact accrued.

### **5.5 Other forms of participation and activities/ engagements**

There exist other forms of activities that give individuals a sense of accomplishment, that do not emanate from leadership positions in the CRGs. These refers to the various ways in which women express themselves or participate in the groups and how they interact with the community, they inhabit. This is especially so in the absence of leading roles and what their views on their positioning are. The interest here is activities undertaken by the adherents within the charismatic renewal groups that are relevant for this study but which are not considered formal or informal leadership. They can also be activities undertaken by the adherents because of their devotion to the charismatic renewal group or linked to influences from the charismatic renewal group within the community where they abide. This sense of accomplishment by the

participants is closely linked to empowerment that is not linked to leadership but rather linked to activities/ engagements from and by association with the CRG.

Oye noted the following:

*In my former congregation in a local community, women were active. The hustle and bustle of the city changes that a lot. In that congregation, we used to pray for members even without their knowledge. God did many mighty works at that time. We got many solutions to problems. The same applies in this congregation; women are not barred in any way.*

Oye compares rural life with the city experience. In her view, women are more active in the rural setting of the charismatic renewal groups than in the city context. She claims that the manner of the fast-paced city makes it difficult for women to do as they would have done in the less stressful rural set up. She gives an example of how effective the rural renewal group was due to the ability to be more committed. In her experience, prayers were answered in tremendous ways even though they were made for people who had no inkling that they were being prayed for. She compares the two contexts and, for her, the common denominator is that women are not barred in any way. Therefore, for her answered prayer made for others based on engagement in the CRG is an accomplishment/ positive outcome or is empowering due to participation.

Another participant who shed light on participation and engagements was Kare. I interviewed Kare of the ABSPG in a wooden shed on the church premises. This was right after church so children and adults alike were in conversation while others walked in and out of the church enclosure. It was not a very conducive environment for an interview session, but we made do and it was worth it in the end. Kare stated the following concerning gender dynamics in leadership positions:

*Some years ago, men did more but now gradually the church is opening up for women [more] because now we have female priests. Many women are doing well and are being encouraged. The decision-making body of the church, the Parochial Church Council, has many women now on the board and in all other areas [of endeavour].*

As far as other forms of participation are concerned, the participant alludes to the fact that women are increasingly contributing their quota both in leadership roles and in all other capacities. Women are the majority in the charismatic renewal group. They have the will to

participate/ engage and do so by way of their commitment to the charismatic renewal group. Thus, formal leadership and engagement for women has improved according to the participant. However, the accomplishments of women as doing more in all arena points to participation and its empowering influences.

Additionally, on the topic of other forms of participation and engagements, I interviewed Akosua of the MPRP. We sat at the front section of the building opposite the actual sanctuary since there was a porch and seating area available. After the pleasantries were exchanged, we went on directly to begin the interview session. It proved to be one of the most interesting sessions of the week and I was very grateful for her insight. At the end of the session, Akosua's son came along. We exchanged greetings and they left together. She also confided in me about a number of challenges. I was very sorry to hear this and gave her some words of encouragement. Her predicament on many fronts was obviously dire. She was also not gainfully employed. Such was her predicament of which she made known to me in conversation. Therefore, it can be inferred that being a member of the charismatic renewal group where she could confer, relate, perhaps receive help, and counsel was important to her. Akosua noted the following concerning the topic of women in participation and engagements in the church:

*Women are allowed to be leaders in MPRP because after Christ died the curtain of the temple was torn in two so women can now do what men can do as Christ has made this possible. In Church and in the MPRP, nothing negative is said about women leading, but the other day on a bus; I led travellers in prayer and was reprimanded and questioned by a man.*

Akosua reiterates that women in leadership is a given in recent times in the MPRP. However, by way of participation in the charismatic renewal group, she takes her learned practice "on the bus" where she faced opposition by a man. This goes to show that some men do not agree with women's free expression of their beliefs. In Ghana, it is common for an individual to freely practice their belief by, for example, praying on a bus/ leading prayer on a bus. Therefore, the contention here was not that she prayed but that she was a female expressing herself/ asserting religious initiative on a bus. This sheds light on the empowering influences of the CRGs for women but also reveals the stance of the communities where these women of faith inhabit.

### **5.6 Ghanaian family structure and gender dynamics: its ramifications**

In this sub section, I endeavour to unearth the ramifications of the CRGs in relation to Ghanaian family structure and gender dynamics. Additionally, the bedrock of society on which the

charismatic renewal groups and all that relates and interacts with them is a viable area worthy of analysis. The following are excerpts from interviews that speaks to the notions of family structures and gender dynamics at work in the contexts examined. Ghanaian family structure is important because it has its own unique characteristics that have consequences for gender dynamics. These contingencies of Ghanaian family structure and resultant gender dynamics affect the CRGs in more ways than one.

Dela of the CCR noted the following:

*If I have the opportunity, I would like to be a leader; my husband will permit me. God helps me in my personal life. Now, I am expecting God to help me in my business. The CCR teaching has helped us in our family a lot.*

The above statement highlights the "Ghanaian society" in terms of the structure of the family and the marriage unit. Dela in her marriage must request permission from her husband in order to be a leader in the renewal group. From observation as a vested participant, the work that goes into preparation for a two-hour Bible and study session or the CCR meeting is time consuming. For the CCR, there are three levels of meeting sessions: the parish level, the zonal level, and the regional level. I observed that Dela had to care for her family, as is the Ghanaian way for wives and mothers usually. Her place in society informs her position in the sphere of institutionalized religion. As my field notes affirm, she is an ordinary member due to time-consuming responsibilities at home. Some of the duties at home are caring for children, cooking, and house chores. The work of attending meetings on Sundays and zonal meetings in which I participated reflects the effort exerted. In my opinion, this results in work for dedicated individuals such as Dela. She believes that the CCR teachings are beneficial for her family.

Oye, also a member of the CCR, noted the following:

*For many women when they are nominated, they decline. This is because of house chores and family responsibilities. In my case, when I was appointed, I informed the leaders categorically that, I could not attend zonal meetings because I do not have a house help/a domestic helper at home, so they had to nominate someone else to attend zonal meetings and bring the information to me. This is because the meetings are long in duration and it is after mass meanwhile, I have responsibilities at home. My husband is very busy; he is rarely home, so when he is, I have to be home to take care of him. I cannot neglect him and the home at such times.*

The above information is a succinct presentation of family life and marriage for the participant. It shows how stratified and gendered the home situation can be as far as responsibilities are concerned. As a wife, the participant is behaving to undertake wifely duties, which include care of husbands and the home in general. The men are often breadwinners and the final authority within the marriage in many cases. One way that women can lessen their burdens at home is to employ the services of housekeepers, but not all can afford this, as is the case for the participant.

Ekuba from the CCR also gave great insight into Ghanaian family structure and gender dynamics. When I met with Ekuba of the CCR, her husband was helping with the cooking (pounding a local dish called *fufu*). I must admit that I was a bit surprised as this dynamic stands in stark contrast with what I am accustomed when it comes to households in Ghana and men's lack of participation in such chores. I sat in a very comfortable living room with the participant. I noticed that she looked very familiar and after a brief enquiry, I was able to make the connection. It turned out that this participant was the sister of a high school friend of mine. We then chatted at length about her sister. I also filled her in on my endeavours since high school days. We then began the interview. This was very informative and insightful indeed. As a young educated professional who married her childhood friend with whom she grew up, I expected a different narrative. The burden of housekeeping and childcare, I assumed, would be less for a professional. However, the participant, who had an education and career, complained in a similar way to female participants who were not as educated. Paradoxically, I noticed that she was married to a man who cooked and so helped at home to some extent. Perhaps the situation was different in some respects, especially for a younger generation of women with an education and a career, as seen in this case. Ekuba noted the following about her work-life balance and the role of the church:

*For me, my work closes late and I have to take care of my child, also work deadlines exist. I wake up at 4 am each day. On weekends, there is a lot to do at home, especially if one has no help. So many women who have a career and are married are unable to take on leadership roles. Catholic Charismatic Renewal has influenced my life because I began attending as a child. I received teaching from LSS etc. One is taught on many issues. We also look up to the leaders who serve as examples to us. Catholic teachings are core in the CCR but one's eyes are open more and you become more diverse [have exposure]. Therefore, CCR members do not often leave the Catholic Church... I think you also learn how to use money because I have a leader who gives me advice on projects.*

According to Ekuba, a lot can be said on the topic of gender dynamics. Once again, Ghanaian family structure is illuminated here. It is often the sole responsibility of the woman to take care of the children. As a wife and mother, she is the primary care giver and also happens to be a professional. She explains that, as this can be a reason for fewer women in significant leading roles. According to her, she works until late each day and has to take care of her child after each day. Furthermore, she has chores on the weekends and other home duties. She states the tremendous burden of combining careers or jobs with marriage and its implications as the reason why women are unable to take up positions in the CRGs. Her reflections supports those made by the other two participants above. For her, one core element of the CCR is Catholic teaching but there is more to it. Charismatic elements are included so members who prefer this stay in the church. There are other benefits too, such as having individuals in one's life who give advice on projects.

Father Mbro was one of the participants from the CCR.<sup>525</sup> Father Mbro, the gatekeeper of the CCR and one of the first authority figures I was privileged to meet and confer with. I was very appreciative of the insights that he brought to bear on the question of women's leadership. We first conversed about my studies and then about some of the trips, he had been on abroad and the culture shock he had experienced while being abroad. Having similar stories to share, we reminisced about some of our experiences. Father Mbro was very opinionated in a good way about many of the issues to discuss concerning women's leadership. He noted the following:

*Women are not barred from being leaders. Perhaps the hindrance is that they cannot read or write and perhaps do not have [free] time. Life in the Spirit Seminars (LSS) and Growth in the Spirit Seminars (GSS) are designed for members to learn and to know which ministry to join in the renewal. LSS is organized once a year to enable one to choose a ministry. LSS is for CCR members. Ghanaian society is patriarchal and that is why ladies may not want to take up positions. Education is also an underlying factor but it will take time for equality or equity in leadership as far as women are concerned. Some of the women are illiterate, so they feel disempowered*

---

<sup>525</sup> The Reverend father is a priest of the Roman Catholic Church under study; it is one congregation out of many in Greater Accra Region. Greater Accra Region comprises of two metropolitan cities with about 20 Roman Catholic Church congregations according to Google Maps. <https://www.google.com/maps/search/roman+catholic+churches+in+greater+accra/@5.5514131,-0.3540489,13z/data=!3m1!4b1>

Therefore, the Reverend father's anonymity is guaranteed due to the multiplicity of congregations in the Greater Accra Region.

*from taking leadership positions. CCR constitution is what guides our activities in that, nothing bars women from leadership.*

Father Mbro had some pivotal insights. For him, even though gender dynamics at home affects the work women do in the CCR, there is more to the story. Many women are not as educated as men, in his experience, which often affects their confidence to be in the forefront. He goes straight to the point that Ghanaian society is patriarchal. This has made both men and women conform to prejudice against women. He also speaks of the fact that nothing is barring women from being in the front except lack of education that affects confidence. Father Mbro's rather generous understanding of gender dynamics in the church is contrasted by Teyle, a member of the ABSPG.

Teyle and I had a smooth process of interviewing although there were others going about their activities while we underwent the interview process at the front section of the church. In terms of women's equality to men and consequences for leadership, she noted the following:

*I joined (charismatic renewal group) because of the group discussions. There are so many benefits both spiritually and educationally. There are Bible verses, which we discuss and one has to study them during one's quiet time. I do not think men and women are equal in my view because men do things that women cannot do even though I cannot recall exactly what men do that women cannot do but that is my opinion. I am not certain about the stance of the men because the men may pretend to be happy that women are leaders but we cannot tell what they really think.*

Teyle was of the opinion that there are benefits derived from being a part of ABSPG. These include religious dividends and helpful knowledge proffered to adherents. She opined that in her view men and women are not equal because for her, men are accomplishing what women are not able to realise. She did not give any concrete reasons for her claims. She is unsure about the true viewpoint of men due to the possibility of dishonesty.

Similarly, Ama, who was a leader in the ABSPG, highlighted the "natural" hierarchy in the church, yet also put forth complications to this "natural" legitimacy. Prior to that meeting, I attended her ABSPG meeting where I participated in listening to her sermonette and group discussion. She was articulate and confident in her leadership style. In our interview, she conveyed the following:

*Men and women are not equal because of the roles they play. Men are created for a different purpose and so I do not think women are inferior but there is an order of hierarchy. For example, in the church, God is the head with Christ in second position*



*and then the priest... It is a global concern, people question why women should be leaders in the church but on the day of resurrection, it was women (including Mary Magdalene) who discovered the empty tomb and women were asked to go and proclaim the resurrection. Women were the first to preach about the resurrection. Additionally, the woman of Samaria after she had an encounter with Christ went and told the people to come and see and this is a form of ministration. She was asked to go and proclaim Christ. Furthermore, women played roles: Miriam was a prophetess in the days of Moses.*

The participant Ama claims that men and women are not equal due to differing purposes in life. In the same breath, she claims that this does not connote inferiority on the part of women. She further asserts that there is a hierarchy in place where men are the leaders just as God is the leader over the church. She also gives Biblical examples of women, by her interpretation; women can be leaders as in the case of Prophetess Miriam, the woman of Samaria, and Mary Magdalene.

Nunana, another leader in the ABSPG and a leader and teacher in one of the charismatic renewal groups, whom I interviewed, noted the "natural order" of gender by starting with the Bible:

*The Bible says we shall know the truth and the truth make us free. The Bible says women should submit to their husbands. We are all humans but women should submit and it works for our own good.*

For Nunana, she appeals to Biblical texts of the Pauline letters to reiterate that men are the natural born leaders in the home and in society. She is of the firm belief that this approach where women accept that men are the leaders by deferring to them works out for the best for all concerned.

Adoma, who earlier noted the spaces available to women in the church and how her husband supports her in her work at the church, connects women's work towards equality in Ghana to the increased divorce rates in Ghana:

*There is the upsurge of divorce cases because of women striving to be equal to men. In Ghana, divorce is lesser because we let the men have the upper hand. You know the saying that "an elderly person does not commit error." This helps marriages to hold together. MPRP helps couples because we learn about peaceful coexistence. One woman gave a testimony that if not for the group's teaching; she would have divorced by now. It helps my marriage also personally.*

Adoma, the participant attributes the rise in the occurrence of divorce to the trend towards gender equality. She claims that in the Ghanaian context the divorce rate is less pronounced

because women countenance male dominance. She is of the view that this preserves marriages. For her, the MPRP enables spouses to learn skills that ensure amicable marriages. She cites an example of a woman who attributes the successful preservation of her marriage to the MPRP. Adoma's narrative thus illuminates a critical tension that I will discuss further in analysis, namely that in Ghana marriages are not broken (result in divorce) due to patriarchal customs (despite women's struggle for equality) and the MPRP preaches peaceful coexistence, that helps women to remain in marriages.

Another participant, Tiokor of the CCR, emphasized women's household duties as a barrier to them being in central positions in church. For the interview, we opted to sit at the front section of her home, as there was a welcoming breeze to offset the usual hot and humid Greater Accra weather. She had her baby with her throughout the interview process. This did not pose any challenge even though her child needed to be soothed or attended to from time to time. She was a stay-at-home mother with little education. She said:

*Men and women are not equal because women cannot perform as well as men due to the responsibilities of women in the home. Women have to cook, clean, and take care of the children. If women receive help at home, I think they can perform as well as the men in the CCR and beyond the home setting.*

For Tiokor, men and women are not equal for specific reasons. Due to the underlying reasons that foreground this inequality, she claims that women cannot excel in the same way that men excel as leaders. She puts forth cooking, cleaning, and childcare as the reasons why women are held back in leadership and general performance beyond the home setting. She concludes by saying that women can excel just as men do if they receive assistance in the domestic arena.

Finally, Yofie of the MPRP spoke to both tradition and processes of change when reflecting on women's leadership roles in the church. We sat in the back corner of the church sanctuary in an attempt to create some form of seclusion in the midst of the hustle and bustle that characterized the end of meetings at the MPRP. Yofie was an elderly man and commanded respect due to being a senior in a Ghanaian setting. He was one of the few male leaders in the MPRP and also married to a woman who also held a position of religious leadership:

*I came to join the Bible study and [prayer group] because my wife is a leader in the Methodist Church, and I am helping her. I believe the teaching of Bible study and prayer group is helping gradually to change things in the family. Gradually, it is changing things and is bringing peace and bringing love. The word of God has influenced our*

*marriage style and that is what is keeping our marriage for the last forty-one years, although I come from a polygamous [family] background.*

Yofie explained that he joined the MPRP because his wife holds religious leadership in the Methodist church and so he joined initially to assist her. He is of the view that the MPRP has a positive influence on marriages because of its teachings on peace and love. He ascribes the success of his marriage thus far to the word of God. Thus, for him the MPRP preserves the traditional order of marital patriarchy and males as the natural leaders. This will be further analysed.

### **5.7 Conclusion**

The data presented in this chapter is connected to a number of themes or topics. For the first topic, it was clear from the elicited quotes that, in principle, women were not barred from formal leadership in all of the three charismatic renewal groups. On the topic of informal leadership and playing a role, many of the participants across the three groups were of the view that women were very active in playing roles. They were also holding some form of authority and were even encouraged to do so. Under the topic of gender empowerment in the CRGs stemming from participation and leadership, the participants expressed that they received benefits/empowerment from being part of the CRGs by way of the teaching, answered prayers, character transformation, guidance, and aid. On the topic of other forms of participation, women in different circumstances of the community exhibited initiative and personal expression. Some experienced opposition from men while doing this. Concerning the topic of Ghanaian family structure, light was shed on gender dynamics as behoving the woman to have responsibilities tied to the home. The order of men as the "natural leaders" was the belief held while simultaneously challenged by women as secondary to men in religious leadership.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP ROLES: FINDINGS, ANALYSES, AND DISCUSSIONS**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

The aim of this chapter is to analyse critically and discuss relevant data material in concert with the pertinent theoretical lenses. Servant leadership and African feminist theology are deployed as the major critical lenses to engage empirical findings. The data is accrued from both semi-structured interviews and participant observation. This chapter has two main sections. The first dwells on language deployed on access to women's leadership positions and servant leadership. The second dwells on the use of the Bible texts by participants.

#### **6.2 The language deployed on access to women's leadership positions and servant leadership**

The study aims to examine the influences and tendencies of women's leadership, women's experiences of leadership roles in the CRGs and the extent to which leadership contributes to empowerment. In this section, I am interested in all the titled and non-titled positions available in the CRGs and the language deployed by participants in reference to these range of positions. Servant leadership is indispensable in this regard, as it is reflected in the recognizable leadership style both formal and informal adopted by women in the CRGs.

In this section, the focus is not only on how participants speak about women's access to leadership but also the practices and beliefs connected to women's access to leadership. The leadership positions are generally tied to top positions in the hierarchy of the CRGs, but some are informally constituted. The formally constituted and titled positions at the top of the hierarchy include, for example, coordinator, teacher, and leader, while the informal leadership positions are singer and usher/ guide, to mention a few. The informal positions bring individuals into the forefront of activities irrespective of hierarchy; thus, they are relevant in analysis and discussions of the language employed by participants about women's access to leadership.

##### **6.2.1. Love and acceptance for all by servant leaders**

According to several participants from the CCR, LSS training is intended to equip individuals with abilities and tools to be competent leaders in the charismatic renewal group. It emerged from the empirical data that categories such as marital status, age, and sex were not relevant

determinants for leadership in the three CRGs. Nonetheless, in the CCR, there was no woman in a leadership position except for in the women's ministry. Victor Agadjanian (2015) asserts in the context of Christianity in Sub-Saharan Africa that while no longer opposed in principle, women's formal leadership often remains limited to subordinate roles.<sup>526</sup> The rhetoric/language used affirms equal opportunity for leadership training, yet there were very few women in leadership positions in the CCR. Women had been leaders in the past in the CCR, but their position had reverted to males. Interestingly, Agadjanian (2015) argues that this is a trend in many Christian contexts; leadership reverts to male leaders after initial stages of female leadership.<sup>527</sup> In the initial stages of establishment and formation, hierarchies may not have calcified. This may have enabled women to wield leadership in the initial stages. It is the case also in other contexts with vibrant Pentecostal/charismatic movements, like North America, that women initially had governing authority but are later restricted to ministering authority.<sup>528</sup> Governing authority is attached to the highest levels of leadership hierarchies, while ministering authority is linked to the traditional work of the ministry but devoid of ultimate leadership wielding power.<sup>529</sup>

On the issue of women's access to leadership, it became clear in the data material that the expectations required for women leaders were higher than those for male leaders were. It emerged from the empirical data that women leaders in particular were required to have love and acceptance for all due to their sex. This suggests implicitly, that the traits (love and acceptance) were not necessarily required of male leaders as it was markedly mentioned in connection to women. Such a finding is reflective of what Keith Grint (2010), presents in his book on leadership, namely that expectations required of men in leadership are different from those required of women in leadership.<sup>530</sup> Alyse Scicluna Lehrke and Kristin Snowden (2017), point to the servant leadership model as a model that best reflects the leadership style of women as it mirrors traditional gender roles for women while also permitting women to be leaders.<sup>531</sup> In this context, it is also important to note that traditional gender roles are based on a binary and hierarchical understanding of gender. To illustrate, Deborah Eicher-Catt (2005), for example, argues that feminine and masculine scripts are connected to subjugation and

---

<sup>526</sup> Agadjanian, "Women's Religious Authority in a Sub-Saharan Setting: Dialectics of Empowerment and Dependency," 985.

<sup>527</sup> Ibid., 984-85.

<sup>528</sup> Stephenson, "Prophesying Women and Ruling Men: Women's Religious Authority in North American Pentecostalism," 421.

<sup>529</sup> Ibid.

<sup>530</sup> Grint, *Leadership : A Very Short Introduction*, 75.

<sup>531</sup> Lehrke and Snowden, "Servant Leadership and Gender," 26-27.

domination, respectively.<sup>532</sup> Thus, dimensions of servant leadership theory maintains that women and men are different from one another on some level and should maintain differentiated gender roles. The theory implies that these gender roles should not be problematized or revised but should be maintained so that men and women can be comfortable in their established gender roles while operating as leaders. Therefore, in contexts of patriarchy for instance, servant leadership should deploy feminist perspective to avoid some of the challenges brought on by an uncritical utilization of servant leadership.<sup>533</sup>

Elizabeth Brusco (1995) reiterates that gender roles remain in a domain of asymmetrical role distribution in many contexts.<sup>534</sup> Thus, to insist, as a dimension of servant leadership does, that gender roles ought to be maintained to fulfil servant leadership ideals is problematic depending on the context. This is due to, as Nandera Ernest Mhando et al (2018) states, the already existing cultural expectations about the roles within society that women should play.<sup>535</sup> Furthermore, Servant leadership claims compatibility with female gender roles.<sup>536</sup> This perpetuates gender roles that often are stereotypical and asymmetrical in male-dominated contexts. Therefore, for Lehrke and Snowden (2017), servant leadership risks the danger of being a redesign of traditional leadership in favour of the masculine.<sup>537</sup> Hence, by operating from a viewpoint of condoning particular traits for women in leadership, segments of the CRGs are inadvertently entrenching patriarchy by tipping the scales of equality.

Interestingly, there is the idea that a dimension of servant leadership resonates with feminist perspective. Servant-leadership lays claim to a less hierarchical and participative approach to organizational objectives and ethics; it is cognisant of the subjectivity and situatedness of members.<sup>538</sup> Feminist critique and gender perspective can therefore, integrate with servant leadership to appeal to the inclusion of the female experience.<sup>539</sup> Servant leadership has the potential to promote the feminist agenda. This is possible through shedding light on women's

---

<sup>532</sup> Eicher-Catt, "The Myth of Servant-Leadership: A Feminist Perspective," 18. <https://go-gale-com.ezproxy.uio.no/ps/i.do?p=LitRC&u=oslo&id=GALE%7CA133864711&v=2.1&it=r> Accessed January 16, 2021.

<sup>533</sup> Reynolds, "Servant-Leadership: A Feminist Perspective," 32.

<sup>534</sup> Elizabeth E. Brusco, *The Reformation of Machismo: Evangelical Conversion and Gender in Colombia* (Austin, Tex: University of Texas Press, 1995), 10. Naidu and Hoel, "Continuities and Departures: Women's Religious and Spiritual Leadership," 6.

<sup>535</sup> Mhando et al., "Modes of Legitimation by Female Pentecostal-Charismatic Preachers in East Africa: A Comparative Study in Kenya and Tanzania," 321.

<sup>536</sup> Lehrke and Snowden, "Servant Leadership and Gender," 27.

<sup>537</sup> Ibid., 33.

<sup>538</sup> Reynolds, "Servant-Leadership: A Feminist Perspective," 32.

<sup>539</sup> Ibid.

experiences and bringing about changes in the traditionally hierarchical and male-dominated leadership mechanism that dominates even in religious circles. For, Linda Carli and Alice Eagly (2007), the leadership style of men are autocratic rather than participatory, while the opposite is the case for women's leadership style.<sup>540</sup> A symbiosis of feminist agenda and servant leadership can circumvent male dominance and result in leadership for both men and women, which supports the dignity and full humanity of both sexes. This is where, there is equal expectation of both sexes and a heavier duty is not placed on any individual on the gender divide.

As discussed above, traditional servant leadership theory is considered a seamless solution to the problem of male-dominated organizations, where the female is considered subordinate. However, in specific contexts like the CRGs, servant leadership is inadvertently at play in the chosen leadership style of the women, matters are complex. The women of the CRGs remain subordinate due to the idea that women as leaders have a different set of standards that they must meet, such as love and acceptance for all unlike their male counterparts. On the other hand, the women servant leaders of the CRGs tend to incorporate social justice in their approach to leadership. As noted, women are summoned to have love and acceptance for all. Social justice is a core notion of servant leadership, whereby each individual is summoned to exercise mutually reinforcing servant-leadership for social responsibility within communities and to secure social justice.<sup>541</sup> To achieve social justice, there must be an acknowledgement of love for all or a core consideration—mutually reinforcing servant leadership for social justice. For this reason, elements of social justice is present in the servant leadership practices of the women of the CRGs.

Furthermore, research has shown that women in leadership are expected to accommodate the conflicting demands of their roles as women and as leaders: they are not expected to assert clear-cut authority over others, as men do.<sup>542</sup> This imbalance breeds female subordination. If men and women are equal, it follows that fair treatment must be given to both. Fair/ just treatment must incorporate fair/ just expectations. Expectations from different quarters of society influence behaviour and trigger undue burden for women. In order not to oppress women with burdens that are their preserve alone, the call for social justice should be a joint effort to counter the injustice that women face in male-dominated societies. In such contexts,

---

<sup>540</sup> Carli and Eagly, "Overcoming Resistance to Women Leaders: The Importance of Leadership Style," 135.

<sup>541</sup> Robert K. Greenleaf et al., *The Servant-Leader Within : A Transformative Path* (New York: Paulist Press, 2003), 37.

<sup>542</sup> Carli and Eagly, "Overcoming Resistance to Women Leaders: The Importance of Leadership Style," 134.

women usually occupy subordinate positions. Social justice implies a call for humility, authenticity, courage and forgiveness.<sup>543</sup> These traits are not gendered in any way, implying a call for action on both sides of the gender divide.

Accepting higher standards or specific traits of expectations of women in a male-dominated society, resonates with Deniz Kandiyoti's concept of "bargaining with patriarchy" (1988). Kandiyoti (1988) argues that bargaining with patriarchy involves women who strategize within male dominated contexts by optimizing options and maximizing security through active and passive resistance in the face of oppression.<sup>544</sup> When women accept, internalize, and promote specific standards for women vis-à-vis men, such as the summoning of love for all, they are strategizing within a set of concrete constraints concerning male dominance. In this case, this form of patriarchal bargaining is in relation to religious male dominance/ authority. Expectation accompanies perception and only women are expected to have a love and acceptance for all when they serve in leadership positions. Therefore, there is a laid out exclusive standard for women as a requirement for leadership. To bargain implies to interrogate but then to accede/ kowtow. Therefore, women may interrogate the laid out requirements but often do accede in order to derive leadership opportunities.

The conditioning of women in the CRGs to servant leadership has a long history. Many middle-aged or older female participants in this study have limited education and many engage in petty trading for a livelihood. Although not expressed in constitutional statements concerning prerequisites for holding formal leadership, it has become clear from my fieldwork that higher education is linked to the opportunity for formal leadership in the CRGs. Women have gained access to higher education only recently.<sup>545</sup> This is possible if they can afford the fees. Hence, the ability of those who are older to have attained leadership positions was severely limited in specific cases.

There was an occurrence where a female leader in the CCR had to delegate her responsibility of attending zonal meetings to others because of her low level of education, as one dimension of limitation. She also mentioned asymmetrical roles at home, such as the responsibility of taking care of her husband and housekeeping as reasons for limited dedication to her leadership

---

<sup>543</sup> Reynolds, "Servant-Leadership: A Feminist Perspective," 12.

<sup>544</sup> Deniz Kandiyoti, "Bargaining with Patriarchy," *Gender & society* 2, no. 3 (1988): 274.

<sup>545</sup> Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion : The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches*, 55.



roles at the time. According to the data, the self-identity of the women of the CRGs is grounded in entrenched relegation of women to the second position in several cases.

Servant leadership promotes ideals of being, living and working from the follower's perspective.<sup>546</sup> However, in the CRGs, factors such as a lack of education, resultant illiteracy and patriarchy conflate the positive ideals of servant leadership. Intersectionality, as an analytical lens, is useful in this context. For Sumi Cho et al (2013), intersectionality refers to the combination and implications of identities from an analytic concerned with structures of power and exclusion.<sup>547</sup> Hence, the differing factors that affect the women of the CCR are varied and have diverse implications on their experiences of leadership and their access to leadership positions itself.

Leadership is usually associated with authority/ power at the top of the hierarchy. In most cases, a select group from the larger grouping of followers/ volunteers become leaders. This creates exclusions carved out by structures of power or the very organization of the institution, which is stratified. It follows then that, servant leadership theory in the context of the CRGs calls for an intersectional analysis. An intersectional analysis is cognisant of other compelling influences that are present in the lives of the women and men in the CRGs. The result of servant leadership in conjunction with an intersectional analysis is that it takes into consideration influences that have impact. Some intersectional factors as aforementioned above are low education for older women, and religious patriarchy that calls for specific traits for women in leadership and cultural patriarchy expectations that causes women to accede to unequal requirements. False readings connected to leadership experiences are thus, problematized and addressed. This then problematizes servant leadership as a panacea for female leadership, which employs the so-called feminine style of love for all, without recourse/ regard to factors such as entrenched patriarchy.

Many of the women in the CCR and the CRGs at large operate as servant leaders. As was apparent from participant observation, they form the majority in the charismatic renewal groups. In the CCR, women were not very visible as leaders among the nine regular available leadership positions with one ad hoc position. One woman held a position, which was as leader in the women's wing or women's ministry. Nonetheless, in the absence of significant leading

---

<sup>546</sup> Davis, *Servant Leadership and Followership: Examining the Impact of Workplace Behaviour*, XV-XVI.

<sup>547</sup> Cho et al., "Toward a Field of Intersectionality Studies: Theory, Applications, and Praxis," 797.

roles, women were very active in intercession, one of the major activities of the CRGs. For Eicher-Catt (2005), the servant is usually the feminine and the leader, the masculine.<sup>548</sup> Therefore, the traditional formula of maleness as synonymous with leadership and femaleness as synonymous service/ the servant /secondary positions was rife.

Remarkably, according to the data, the women of the CCR often intercede without the knowledge of the people they are praying for at any given time. The women in the CCR who pray so much are followers. However, by taking the initiative to pray for others who have not even solicited for such prayers, they are exhibiting leadership characteristics and thus are practising servant leadership. For Davis (2017), servant leadership puts forth the notion that followers are categorized as servant leaders when they draw from the power within and provide services with integrity and personal values to empower the human spirit.<sup>549</sup>

The followers or adherents of the CCR, whose main activity besides Bible study is prayer/ intercession, are indeed servant leaders because of their engagement in intercession and their participation in it. This brings enablement to the human spirit, by virtue of the values that they have internalised in the CCR. One critical finding of the study, then, is that the adherents of the CCR, of whom the majority are women, are engaged in a spirituality that enables their stance as servant leaders due to intercession. They claim that such intercession often produces positive outcomes. For them, this activity helps others to cope, to survive, to be liberated and to actualize potentials, due to the participation and engagement of the spirituality of servant leaders.

During participant observation, a male coordinator chaired the forum-style CCR session and all other sessions of the CCR. Not once did women lead any of the meetings as the chair, which is a common phenomenon within Pentecostalism.<sup>550</sup> Women were to minister solely to other women. The choice of the word "allow" to describe women's access to leadership reverberates throughout the data. Historically, the mission churches perpetuated elements of female servitude to males.<sup>551</sup> Therefore, for generations in Christian Africa, male leadership was the norm, the standard, and the ideal. As a result, male leaders enjoy a level of entitlement that women leaders do not. When women become leaders, they are "allowed" to do so (by men), it

---

<sup>548</sup> Eicher-Catt, "The Myth of Servant-Leadership: A Feminist Perspective," 18. <https://go-gale-com.ezproxy.uio.no/ps/i.do?p=LitRC&u=oslo&id=GALE%7CA133864711&v=2.1&it=r> Accessed January 16, 2021.

<sup>549</sup> Davis, *Servant Leadership and Followership: Examining the Impact of Workplace Behaviour*, XVI.

<sup>550</sup> Tapiwa Praise Mapuranga, "Bargaining with Patriarchy? Women Pentecostal Leaders in Zimbabwe," *Fieldwork in religion* 8, no. 1 (2013): 81.

<sup>551</sup> Bateye, "Forging Identities: Women as Participants and Leaders in the Church among the Yoruba," 2.

is not their birthright; they are held to higher expectations because they have been "allowed" what was not historically theirs for the taking. It is no wonder then that, women are expected particularly to have love and acceptance for all when this may not necessarily be required of men.

The practice of the differentiated ministerial track is very prevalent in classical Pentecostal churches in Ghana.<sup>552</sup> In the Mozambican case, similar trends exist, especially among women church leaders who become such by virtue of their status as wives to husbands who are the main spiritual leaders.<sup>553</sup> The duties of such women leaders are often limited to dealing with what are specifically deemed women's issues and guiding women's meetings within the congregation, although these women become influential in their congregation's activities.<sup>554</sup> Nevertheless, the presence of one woman in a leadership role can, in some capacity, break the cycle of the absence of women in leadership in the broader scheme of things.

Thus, a finding of this study is that through the dual lenses of servant leadership and intersectionality, women in formal leadership are summoned to have a love for all, which is considered a feminine trait and a responsibility reserved solely for a woman leader. That same burden is not placed on a male leader. In addition, the lack of education of the majority of women belonging mainly to the middle-aged and older generations in the CRGs has consequential limitations on women in leadership. This is also a form of bargaining with patriarchy, whereby women strategize within male dominated contexts by optimizing options and maximize security through active and passive resistance in the face of oppression.<sup>555</sup>

### **6.2.2 Followers as servant leaders**

All participants from the CRGs asserted that there was no bias based on sex in the CRG leadership. It was noted that in the past, there had been several female leaders in the CCR. Several participants mentioned spirituality as an element that is important in choosing leaders, but sex was not a relevant category for leadership in the CCR. Spirituality is where the individual displays devotion to the charismatic renewal group as well as its practices. Such practices include a belief that translates into outward practices like prayer and personal biblical internalisation, as observed during participant observation. It emerged that women in leadership in all the CRGs did an excellent job while in office. In spite of the remembrance of women in

---

<sup>552</sup> Ansah, "Gender Empowerment and Personal Fulfillment in Pentecostalism: A Case of Accra Ghana," 72.

<sup>553</sup> Agadjanian, "Women's Religious Authority in a Sub-Saharan Setting: Dialectics of Empowerment and Dependency," 996.

<sup>554</sup> *Ibid.*, 997.

<sup>555</sup> Kandiyoti, "Bargaining with Patriarchy," 275.

leadership in the CCR in the past, that was not the case in the current tenure. During participant observation, women in the CCR were relegated to the lower levels of the formal leadership structure and were effectively in a differentiated ministerial track. It was clear that the women were the majority in the CCR. However, they played roles like backup singers, intercessors, and biblical passage-readers in Twi language; a woman was the leader of only one group—the women’s ministry. Majority of the women acted as servant leaders of the follower variant in the CCR but not as formal leaders.

There are two categories of servant leaders. Davis (2017) points to the first category, where the leader is at the top of the hierarchy and yet, by identity, is a servant who plays the role of a leader.<sup>556</sup> The second is where the follower is at the bottom of the hierarchy and yet is considered a servant leader because he/ she walks a chosen path in a group, despite sometimes profoundly difficult challenges.<sup>557</sup> One such profound challenge that women in the CCR have to deal as emerged from the data, is male dominance and its attendant implications of lesser education, unskilled jobs, and lower incomes. Even so, the women followers or ordinary members of the CCR can be servant leaders of the second variant/ category in their own right.

The issue of servant leadership, however, becomes oversimplified when it leads to the conclusion that it is a new way of creating a leadership style that accommodates female traits while women lead without disrupting gender roles for males and females.<sup>558</sup> First, gender roles in such contexts are often fixed for men and women. For example, a male participant mentioned secretarial capacities, implying women are better suited for such work than men. Nonetheless, women and men have the ability to excel as secretaries, and secretarial duties are not specifically the preserve of women: this is a fixed gender role at play. Interestingly, he later admitted that women do well in all capacities in the CRG. Therefore, a leadership style like servant leadership can entrench female subordination/ subjugation, because the feminine is presumed to be subordinate while the masculine is considered the leader/ dominant.<sup>559</sup> In addition, Lehrke and Snowden (2017) argue that leadership is often associated with masculinity or maleness.<sup>560</sup> Eicher-Catt (2005) notes that servant-leadership is as dangerous as romanticizing any leadership model: deconstructive, feminist interpretations of leadership and

---

<sup>556</sup> Davis, *Servant Leadership and Followership: Examining the Impact of Workplace Behaviour*, XVI.

<sup>557</sup> Ibid.

<sup>558</sup> Lehrke and Snowden, "Servant Leadership and Gender," 26

<sup>559</sup> Eicher-Catt, "The Myth of Servant-Leadership: A Feminist Perspective," 18-19.

<sup>560</sup> Lehrke and Snowden, "Servant Leadership and Gender," 26.

servant-leadership warn of mixed messages and gender blindness in the language of servant-leadership discourse.<sup>561</sup> This implies that a critical analysis of servant leadership shows that as a theory, it requires problematization due to dimensions of entrenchment of gender roles on one hand. Additionally, the limitation of a possible redesign of the masculine is a possibility. For both possible excesses of the theory, feminist perspective is a veritable theory to deploy.

As mentioned, during my fieldwork, out of nine permanent available leadership positions and one ad hoc leadership position in the CCR, only one was held by a woman. In addition, the female was a leader in the women's ministry of the CCR. It is a very common phenomenon to create a restrictive niche for women in many Christian circles. Stephenson (2011) refers to this as a different ministerial track where women operate in separate ministering roles from men.<sup>562</sup> For example, in a Christian group, women might be permitted to minister only to women and children. This is in itself a form of patriarchal bargaining, where women strategize within concrete constraints via active and passive resistance to maximize security and optimize options in the face of oppression.<sup>563</sup> This specific case is a form of passive resistance as an element of patriarchal bargaining, where women comply/ accede to the structural patriarchal system to gain leadership. In the South African context, Victory Nomvete Mbanjwa was not ordained in her church for almost a lifetime, even though she had completed theological school.<sup>564</sup> Instead, she spent those long years ministering to women and children.<sup>565</sup> Churches are culpable of such inclinations in many instances. They automatically create women's groups and put women in charge, while men hold all other positions of power. This creates a different track within which women are expected to operate and has the capacity to stifle the full potential of women to do more.

Men were in full reign in the CCR, where they minister to all. However, as observed, the actual situation on the ground was that women could only minister to other women in the women's wing of the CCR group, called the women's ministry. This was in spite of the affirming rhetoric by the participants about women permitted in leadership roles in the CCR. It was the case that

---

<sup>561</sup> Eicher-Catt, "The Myth of Servant-Leadership: A Feminist Perspective," 32.

<sup>562</sup> Stephenson, "Prophesying Women and Ruling Men: Women's Religious Authority in North American Pentecostalism," 421.

<sup>563</sup> Kandiyoti, "Bargaining with Patriarchy," 274.

<sup>564</sup> Victory Nomvete Mbanjwa was ordained at seventy-three although she entered theological school at twenty-seven years of age. Unfortunately, the church of which Victory belongs to succumbed to this injustice. Women had received theological training since the creation of the church but the passage of women into ordained ministry continued to have difficulties. See Phiri, "Called at Twenty Seven and Ordained at Seventy Three! The Story of Rev. Victory Nomvete Mbanjwa in the United Congregational Church in Southern Africa," 123.

<sup>565</sup> *Ibid.*, 123 and 37.

the past immediate coordinator/ leader of the CCR had been a woman and that there were also other women in leadership capacities then. Yet, this was not the case in the present. Many Christian groups share the same turn of events; women were in the limelight in the beginning but no longer are playing significant roles, due to entrenched patriarchy.<sup>566</sup> Women themselves operate within these constraints of male domination by adopting varying forms of active and passive resistance to maximize their security and optimize their options.<sup>567</sup> They do this by accepting the status quo. This means that on a structural level women accede to patriarchy by following laid down rules like a different ministerial track. A passive form of resistance is noticeable here, where women interrogate but do accede to structural patriarchy. It was clear from the data that male leaders did not face the challenges that female leaders had to face. For Acolatse (2010), a man's birthright as a male puts him at an advantage in the Ghanaian setting before other factors can even begin to come into play.<sup>568</sup>

From an intersectionality perspective, a combination of identities connected to power structures carves out exclusion.<sup>569</sup> This implies that certain multiple and overlapping factors can put one at disadvantage due to their powerful influences. First, as male, men usually had a better education than women had and by virtue of this, are more literate in the *lingua franca* of the country, English language. Secondly, as a male in the context of Greater Accra, men are not the primary caregivers, nurturers and homemakers in their marital unions, affording them the opportunity to be fully functioning leaders in the CRGs. In a specific occurrence, it emerged from the data that, a female leader had to delegate some of her responsibilities during her leadership. This was due to being female and the attendant factors that affected her daily in her context as a sole homemaker.

Interestingly, a female, participant of the CCR, was of the view that women could perform as well as men if they received assistance at home. Additionally, if female leaders had received a better education, their chances of obtaining skilled work would have been higher. Furthermore, even though they might not entirely escape male dominance, they most likely would have had

---

<sup>566</sup> James Mckeown Memorial Lectures, 85. Currently, women are not released into ministry in the same manner in the Church of Pentecost in Ghana except in women's ministries, as ascertained by a conversation with Dr Opoku Onyinah of the Church of Pentecost in June 2014.

<sup>567</sup> Kandiyoti, "Bargaining with Patriarchy," 274.

<sup>568</sup> Generally, in Ghanaian Akan societies the male child (as in most ethnic groups in Ghana) is valued more than the female child is. See Acolatse, "Unraveling the Regional Myth in the Turn toward Autonomy" 223.

<sup>569</sup> Cho et al., "Toward a Field of Intersectionality Studies: Theory, Applications, and Praxis," 797.

better tools to utilize in attempts to bargain with patriarchy. This would have enabled more active forms of resistance. One such tool would have been a higher income that would have enabled them to acquire domestic help so they could do more outside the home, as suggested by a number of female participants.<sup>570</sup> Therefore, tools such as a higher education, a higher income, help or assistance with traditional female roles, all enable active forms of resistance within the overarching patriarchal structures. This dimension of patriarchal bargaining for Damaris Parsitau (2012) is in relation to patriarchal family/ marriage.<sup>571</sup> This is where women in a male dominated family exchange being subservient for gains. They may also trade assertiveness for subservience to gain a marital union based on a system of patriarchal marriage/ family already in place.<sup>572</sup>

In a specific forum-style meeting of the CCR, a woman led the praise session. From my observation, this was not the norm, even though it is popularly believed that it is a traditional role of women to lead in song at church. There are cultural expectations about the roles women should play in society and about their demeanour in public.<sup>573</sup> This is especially so within Pentecostalism in major locations in Africa.<sup>574</sup> Restricting women to traditional roles can limit their potential to do much more. Depriving women of erstwhile traditional roles is counterproductive. When this is done, women have no opportunity to play a role or hold an informal leadership position. Thus, bargaining with patriarchy, whereby women accept gender roles in the church setting in order to survive church politics, is expected in these circles of the CRGs.<sup>575</sup> In the end, according to Tapiwa Mapuranga (2013) bargaining with patriarchy can result in advantages that may supplant patriarchy, as have occurred in the Zimbabwean case.<sup>576</sup> Giving informal leadership positions to women, whether in the form of traditional female roles or not, is a crucial starting point from which women can develop their abilities and flourish.

From the data it emerges, then, that gender does play an important role when considering women's access to leadership. Interestingly, many participants specifically noted that a person's spirituality was what determined one's capacity for leadership, while gender, as well as

---

<sup>570</sup> Oye of CCR stated the need to care for her husband and home as one of the reasons why she was limited during her leadership tenure.

<sup>571</sup> This is where male dominance/authority is entrenched. See Damaris Parsitau, "Agents of Gendered Change: Empowerment, Salvation and Gendered Transformation in Urban Kenya," (2012), 209.

<sup>572</sup> Ibid.

<sup>573</sup> Mhando et al., "Modes of Legitimation by Female Pentecostal-Charismatic Preachers in East Africa: A Comparative Study in Kenya and Tanzania," 321.

<sup>574</sup> Ibid.

<sup>575</sup> Mapuranga, "Bargaining with Patriarchy? Women Pentecostal Leaders in Zimbabwe," 83.

<sup>576</sup> Ibid., 76.

education, age, and marital status did not really matter. Nevertheless, from the material, gender emerges as a central category. As Musa Dube (2016) argues gender determines who has the power to speak and to be heard, and who has the power to hold positions of leadership.<sup>577</sup> Therefore, it is necessary for women not only to occupy formal leadership roles that come with clearly defined offices and titles but also to participate actively in informal leadership. The latter roles do not come with titles *per se* but still afford women the opportunity to manifest their potential, leading sometimes to further opportunities to optimize their potential. Informal positions of leadership are as important as formal positions for helping women build self-esteem and confidence.

In the empirical material it is clear that servant leadership is practised by women as a choice, but that men expect this model of leadership from women in this context. Secretarial duties are automatically linked to women who might play a formal leadership role ahead of any other traditionally masculine duties of a leader. A dimension of servant leadership claims to maintain traditional female traits when women lead. Therefore, servant leadership perpetuates fixed gender roles, which further entrenches female subjugation by relegating women to their traditional, subordinate positions. In addition, the intersectional characteristics of age, sex, education, and power have implications for the study. As seen in the CRG, education and its attendant literacy have implications for leadership and the ability to carry out full leadership duties.

### **6.2.3 Women who are men in the spirit as servant leaders**

In the MPRP, the participants had much to contribute to the study. It was apparent from the empirical data that, the leaders in the MPRP, had undertaken training to hold leadership positions as was the case for the other CRGs. According to Donald Miller (2007), one of the root ideas of Pentecostalism is the priesthood of all believers, with everyone being of equal value in God's sight.<sup>578</sup> This ideology foregrounds female leadership in more progressive, non-classical Pentecostal circles.<sup>579</sup> It was apparent that sex is no longer a determinant for leadership because there are many women who excel in courage and ability. However, such women were sometimes called "women who are men in spirit/in the realm of the spirit." It was thought-provoking to realise that women who excel or are extraordinary in some way are ascribed male

---

<sup>577</sup> Musa W. Dube, "Gender and Bible in African Christianity," in *Anthology of African Christianity*, ed. Isabel Phiri, et al. (Oxford: Regnum Books International, 2016), 144.

<sup>578</sup> Miller, *Global Pentecostalism : The New Face of Christian Social Engagement*. 177.

<sup>579</sup> Classical Pentecostal churches still maintain an exclusive male ordained ministry. See Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics : Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana*, Vol. 27, 55.



characteristics. As servant leaders, women in the MPRP are expected to embody two identities at the same time: to remember that they are female but to ascribe to the male ideal concurrently. Lehrke and Snowden (2017) reiterate that the servant leader is supposed to embody the servant and the leader simultaneously.<sup>580</sup>

On the face of things, such an assertion seems to be a positive claim. In many quarters of the church world, when it comes to excelling, femaleness in itself is not enough; being female is inadequate because maleness is the ideal in society. From a feminist standpoint, women and men are equal. This is the crux of the matter. In the church world, to be female has never been enough; but to be male has. My summation of the argument is that, even in a CRG where women are in the highest echelons of authority and enjoy full reign, rhetoric that hints at inequality and what I call a state of "not being enough" and a state of "self-doubt" also exists. Gender is playing a role here. For Dube (2016), gender refers to a set of behavioural, cultural, psychological, and social characteristics associated with masculinity and femininity.<sup>581</sup> The same roles are given to both males and females, but females have to assume maleness and the supposed ideal characteristics associated with masculinity. The assumption of maleness/ a kind of adorning a male cloak is identifiable by rhetoric like "women that are men in the spirit put forth," where women leaders are ascribed maleness. This is a clear case of bargaining with patriarchy via active resistance. For Kandiyoti (1988), this is an active form of resistance in a male dominated setting.<sup>582</sup>

As in the other two CRG groups, training was a requirement for all aspiring leaders of the MPRP and was open to all, irrespective of sex. Several participants were insightful in explaining the trend towards women in leadership, which in their view was more commonplace than before. It emerged from the data, that knowledge increases, intensifies with time, and must improve situations. Therefore, if women were not in leadership in the past, then radical/transformative knowledge in the present must bring about change. This means that gender-justice is imperative in order to deliver salvation and especially, in this case, to deliver liberation.<sup>583</sup>

Interestingly, an example of how God sanctioned inheritance laws to change was put forth in the MPRP. This was relayed in connection to how women could inherit property in the Old

---

<sup>580</sup> Lehrke and Snowden, "Servant Leadership and Gender," 28.

<sup>581</sup> Dube, "Gender and Bible in African Christianity," 144.

<sup>582</sup> Kandiyoti, "Bargaining with Patriarchy," 274.

<sup>583</sup> Dube, "Gender and Bible in African Christianity," 144.

Testament. It was affirmed that this was proof that the status quo can be challenged and changed. Furthermore, the trend towards more women in leadership in specific cases, like the MPRP, is due in part to the active resistance of the women in word and deed in the form of bargaining with patriarchy over time. Kandiyoti (1988) categorizes the forms of patriarchal bargaining as both active and passive.<sup>584</sup> An instance of active resistance is the use of sermons and biblical texts to assert their God-given mandate to fulfil their calling: this is a kind of active resistance to summon all to be cognisant of their abilities linked to their full humanity. Another form of active resistance is where; women conform to male and the general societal expectations of male ideals in rhetoric while upholding male dominance but do wield leadership even in the milieu of such rhetoric in order to maximize security as a servant leader.

As servant leaders, the women of the CRGs use language that expresses self-effacement in relation to men in a male dominated setting. An example is the language of subordination utilised when describing female servant leaders as "women who are men in the spirit," suggesting that mere womanhood is not enough to excel. A servant leader is thus, one who identifies as a servant/ subordinate through a primary motivation to serve as her self-construction, even as she leads as her role.<sup>585</sup>

From a feminist point of view, dimensions of servant leadership has the potential to wreak havoc for the expression of the full autonomous humanity of women as equal to men in ability. It potentially and inadvertently can continue to evoke the imbalance that women face in male dominated societies. Thus, Kae Reynolds (2016) points to the imbalance as that which perpetuates essentialist assumptions of gender differences based on biological determinism.<sup>586</sup>

The idea that "women are men in the spirit," expressed often unwittingly by women, highlights the magnitude of the task. The factors that inform such an assertion are unjust and yet common. Even in a domain where women are given full reign in all capacities, the view of maleness as the ideal is not abandoned. In the Ghanaian context, it is common rhetoric to refer to a woman as "male" in some form or another when she is independent, ambitious and successful. This is because women are expected always to be under some form of male authority, be that of a father, husband or other male members of the family.<sup>587</sup> It is therefore, often said reproachfully or even with admiration that "such a person [female] acts like a man."

---

<sup>584</sup> Kandiyoti, "Bargaining with Patriarchy," 275.

<sup>585</sup> Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership : A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness*, 13.

<sup>586</sup> Reynolds, "Servant-Leadership: A Feminist Perspective," 9.

<sup>587</sup> Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa : African Women and Patriarchy*, 135.

All individuals can choose to be exceptional in performance; it has nothing to do with maleness or femaleness. In my experience in the Ghanaian setting, this preference for men is a societal practice born from custom and understanding of who a male is and who a female is as well as the expectations associated with each. For instance, traditionally, laurels beyond the sphere of the home setting are not expected of women.<sup>588</sup> For generations, higher education was largely a preserve of male children.<sup>589</sup> It is thus, important to be cognisant of the fact that this appeal to maleness in describing female excellence permeates even churches that may seem feminist in their leaning.

Susan Rakoczy (2004) writes about how early Christian writings reflects this notion of men being placed above women in value. In the first century AD, the Jewish historian Josephus wrote that women are inferior to men and must be submissive to them since God has given authority to men.<sup>590</sup> Furthermore, the Gospel of Thomas, which clearly is "sympathetic" to the cause of women, nonetheless states, "for every woman who makes herself male will enter the kingdom of heaven."<sup>591</sup> Augustine of Hippo expressed that only man is created in the image of God and woman is the image of God when joined to her husband.<sup>592</sup> Such narratives are reflective of Christianity as a tradition that historically, upheld the status of men over women due to patriarchy. Maleness was viewed as the ideal and women had to recognize maleness as such. This norm is still present today in the circles of the CRGs. An attempt to trace gender bias in leadership/ maleness as the ideal touches on different epochs and strands. This begins with for Ghanaian Christianity, from the earliest Roman Catholic Christian missionary activities to Protestant Christian missionary activities in the Ghanaian context.<sup>593</sup> This continued to manifest in some types of classical Pentecostalism in Ghana historically.<sup>594</sup> This captures the Ghanaian Christian historical landscape broadly as far as the main typologies of Roman Catholic, Protestant and from the latter, its Pentecostalism.

A female participant in the MPRP, used the phrase about women who excel, referring to them as "men in spirit," which is predicated on women's assumed insufficiency and subservience. In so doing, she exemplified women who practice servant leadership and assume that maleness is

---

<sup>588</sup> Amu, *The Role of Women in Ghana's Economy*, 8-9.

<sup>589</sup> Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion : The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches*, 55.

<sup>590</sup> Susan Rakoczy, *In Her Name : Women Doing Theology* (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2004), 32.

<sup>591</sup> *Ibid.*, 33.

<sup>592</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>593</sup> Ayanga, "Women in African Christianity," 945-46.

<sup>594</sup> Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics : Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana*, Vol. 27, 55.

the standard of excellence while womanhood does not reach the same level of excellence. Her stance stems from socialization carried out within families, clans, ethnic groups, and the larger community, which comprises both religious and educational institutions—indeed, the whole society. There is a resonance between this form of concurrence with male dominance and classic patriarchy. Here, women themselves adhere to rules/ beliefs that result in a devaluation of their labour and their persons, so that they collude in the reproduction of their own subordination.<sup>595</sup> This is often a way to strategize and manipulate the affection of those who are the traditional leaders (men) and by so doing, kowtow to their rules, beliefs and expectations, depending on the specificity of the given context.<sup>596</sup> This implies that because society in this context is patriarchal, women have to "court the affections" of a patriarchal society through rhetoric that makes maleness the ideal. This is a dimension of classical patriarchy because it devalues the performance of women and further regurgitates/ perpetuates male dominance. Interestingly, it is within this same dimension of classical patriarchy that women in the MPRP exhibit active resistance in sermons and in leadership at the top of the hierarchy.

The women therefore, assume a subordinate/ servant position as leaders while taking on the male essence/ leader role in order to execute the performance of leadership. A servant leader understands himself/ herself to be secondary/ a servant by identity and is ready to serve as a conscious choice while being inspired to lead; the leader role is simply a role/ a performance.<sup>597</sup> Even though some women leaders had low-level education, it did not bar them from leadership, nor did it curtail aspects of their leadership. In the case of one elderly female participant, the fact that she was divorced and not engaged in full-time work gave her the leisure to involve herself fully in leadership. This was not the case for other younger and married women in the CRGs.

#### **6.2.4 Prophecy women sanctioned for servant leadership**

For several of the participants, devotion and self-assurance were very important in the quest for leadership because it takes initiative on the part of the potential leader, who must volunteer to lead. Participants affirmed that there are women leaders in the Anglican Church in all capacities and at every level but a few drew on Paul's letters to challenge this practice. A poignant admission by a male participant concluded that the accepted practice of female prophets in the church is a sign of approval from God that women ought to lead in a church setting. According

---

<sup>595</sup> Kandiyoti, "Bargaining with Patriarchy," 280.

<sup>596</sup> Ibid., 280-81.

<sup>597</sup> Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership : A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness*, 13.

to Mhando et al. (2018) while there is a biblically based expectation of subservience from women in Pentecostal Christianity, the orientation towards charisma forms a basis of leadership, as in the Kenyan and Tanzanian cases.<sup>598</sup>

Many of the other participants, both men and women, made statements about women's value being lesser than that of men or expressed doubts about the full autonomous humanity of women in relation to men. This might be due to male dominance in the Ghanaian context, which permeates all areas of endeavour, including the churches and their CRGs. Therefore, there is a paradox of sorts in the ABSPG, which engenders servant leadership as a strategizing survival skill in leadership for the women in the CRGs. The men also expect this attitude from a woman leader; it is acceptable to them because it reinforces the cultural norms of male dominance.

Eicher-Catt (2005) asserts that the patriarchal nature of Christianity, which is embedded in its sacred scriptures, resonates with the choice of servant leadership by and for women.<sup>599</sup> For, Kandiyoti (1988) women seek to manipulate or accept what exists in male-dominated contexts by kowtowing to what pertains, due to an inability to conceive better alternatives in specific settings.<sup>600</sup> Servant leadership is a strategy or leadership style adopted by the women and expected of the women by the men. It combines ethics, virtues and morality.<sup>601</sup> One such virtue is humility.<sup>602</sup> This ethic of humility that is intrinsic in servant leadership compounds subservience in an already male-dominated context.

Several comments by participants in the CRGs highlighted the importance of biblical interpretation and the use of the Pauline letters as a source of authority by charismatic Christians. A hegemonic interpretation of the Pauline letters in reference to women in leadership engenders disquiet and reservations for some members. Many are unaware of the fact that Paul's language about women is not part of an exclusive revelation, nor are his words on women a direct message from God.<sup>603</sup> In addition, Paul contradicts his own message of freedom in Christ Jesus in Galatians 3:28 and reverts to a language about the subordination of women that conforms to that of his contemporaries, found, for example, in 1 Corinthians

---

<sup>598</sup> Mhando et al., "Modes of Legitimation by Female Pentecostal-Charismatic Preachers in East Africa: A Comparative Study in Kenya and Tanzania," 330.

<sup>599</sup> Eicher-Catt, "The Myth of Servant-Leadership: A Feminist Perspective," 23.

<sup>600</sup> Kandiyoti, "Bargaining with Patriarchy," 282.

<sup>601</sup> Denise Parris and Jon Peachey, "A Systematic Literature Review of Servant Leadership Theory in Organizational Contexts," *Journal of Business Ethics* 113, no. 3 (2013): 378.

<sup>602</sup> Reynolds, "Servant-Leadership: A Feminist Perspective," 12.

<sup>603</sup> Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa: African Women and Patriarchy*, 190.

14:34.<sup>604</sup> The solution to this problem of antithetical interpretations is a contextual reading of biblical texts and the involvement of women not only in Bible-reading but also in biblical translation<sup>605</sup> and interpretation to uplift women.<sup>606</sup>

Finally, for some male leaders of the ABSPG, they were in a privileged position as educated and male in the Ghanaian context. Born male, the male leaders of the CRGs automatically were ascribed higher value than their female counterparts according to the statements of participants. Traditionally leadership, persuasion, and superiority are ascribed to maleness, while servanthood, empathy, and inferiority are ascribed to femaleness in specific contexts.<sup>607</sup> This privileged position enjoyed by men can be perceived to be threatened by a situation of female prominence in leadership.

According to Claire Robertson (1987) ethnic groups in Ghana dating back to precolonial times held the view of male superiority and had a system of male dominance over women that still has implications for current times.<sup>608</sup> In addition, early missionary proselytizing during the Victorian era in segments of the African continent also upheld the attitude that a man was a superior being meant by God and nature to dominate the world, while women were to obey and serve.<sup>609</sup> Men are reluctant to give up their positions of dominance and so appeal to religious patriarchy to reiterate their already entrenched positions at the top of the hierarchical structure. The paradox is that, it emerged from the data that prophesying women are considered as divine mandate for women with sacred power to operate in leadership, a leadership that is evidentially servant leadership, in order to placate the existing structure of male dominance.

### **6.2.5 God as no respecter of persons and servant leadership**

It was clear from the empirical data that in the MPRP, all adherents of the Methodist Church, be they in the CRGs or the larger church body are considered priests, regardless of sex. For Dube (2016) in her study of gender and the Bible, she argues that roles and characteristics often associated with maleness and femaleness are not divinely given but socially constructed.<sup>610</sup> The constitution of the Church, which is the legal governing document with fundamental, entrenched principles, makes provision against discrimination based on one's sex. The

---

<sup>604</sup> Ibid.

<sup>605</sup> Kanyoro, "Interpreting Old Testament Polygamy through African Eyes," 99.

<sup>606</sup> Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa : African Women and Patriarchy*, 190.

<sup>607</sup> Eicher-Catt, "The Myth of Servant-Leadership: A Feminist Perspective," 18-19.

<sup>608</sup> Robertson, *Sharing the Same Bowl : A Socioeconomic History of Women and Class in Accra, Ghana*, 12-13.

<sup>609</sup> Bateye, "Forging Identities: Women as Participants and Leaders in the Church among the Yoruba," 2.

<sup>610</sup> Dube, "Gender and Bible in African Christianity," 144.

determinant for leadership is godliness and individual talents. As one participant pointed out, drawing on the words of Peter: "of a truth, I concede that God is no respecter of persons but to every nation those who fear him, God saves."<sup>611</sup>

There was also an indication that there are training programmes available for potential leaders, who will take up the mantle upon completion. The foundation of opportunity enshrined by the Methodist Church is bound to affect its CRG in a monumental way. Elizabeth Johnson (2002) attests to women as equal to men in the mystery of grace while prizing the genuine humanity of women as precisely human in their own right and even independent from personal identification with men.<sup>612</sup> It assumes that women are not inferior to men and are fully human independent of men. Therefore, the mystery of Grace and God's choice of dealing with all people is decisively blind to one's sex. It is also bestows value of being human without respect to personal attributes like sex.

Several participants claimed that women are "allowed" to teach and lead, this is crucial in understanding the predicament of the women in the CRGs, even though they are leaders in the MPRP. The language deployed "allow" is telling indeed. This implies that the women of the CRGs on some seemingly non-benign level require permission to be leaders in the CRGs. They may be leaders, but not in the same way, men are perceived to be leaders. The word "allow" here, foregrounds the idea that male leadership is the norm, while female leadership has come into play by virtue of the structures in place that have relaxed or broken the rules of existing norms. Mapuranga (2013) points to historical antecedents where there was no space for women in leadership in Christian Africa due to their lack of education and qualification by missionary education, which reinforced gender stereotypes already existing in specific African cultures.<sup>613</sup> This male entitlement, born of male dominance, continues to impinge on the language used to describe female access to leadership in current times.

The notion that women are "allowed" to be leaders, shows that women do not have the same inherent entitlement that men have. Therefore, in many cases they accept their identity as subordinate or servile, even in leadership. This second-class/ servant mentality was evident in some cases during my participant observation of women in the limelight and was attested to inadvertently by several participants, despite the assertion of the equal access of both sexes to positions of teaching and leadership in the CRGs. It echoes the same understanding voiced by

---

<sup>611</sup> The passage he refers to is found in Acts 10:34.

<sup>612</sup> Johnson, *She Who Is : The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse*, 8.

<sup>613</sup> Mapuranga, "Bargaining with Patriarchy? Women Pentecostal Leaders in Zimbabwe," 79.

some participants that womanhood is not enough in itself in connection with leadership within these contexts. It is no surprise, then, that women who are "allowed" to be leaders in the MPRP and other mainline CRGs often retain their traditional taught positioning as second to, subordinate and assistant to male persons, even as leaders and choose to practice servant leadership. For Parris and Peachy (2013), servant leaders distinguish themselves by their primary motivation to serve and the conscious decision to do so, which is their self-construction.<sup>614</sup> Therefore, the women of the CRGs who practice their brand of servant leadership have servant leadership as a self-construction, a mindset by which they deliver leadership via a motive of service.

### **6.2.6 The Holy Spirit as no respecter of persons and servant leadership**

It was expressed that the Holy Spirit is no respecter of persons in the CCR. There was the pervading belief that the Holy Spirit is the invisible empowering force of the CRG and thus, chooses adherents for the work, irrespective of sex. Asamoah-Gyadu (2013) notes in his study of contemporary Pentecostal Christianity that Pentecostalism especially focuses on the conscious promotion of experiences of the Holy Spirit.<sup>615</sup> This claim to the promotion of experiences of the Holy Spirit was expressed as choosing leaders without regard to their sex.

In addition, according to participants, the leaders were instrumental in including women in significant roles within the CCR. However, through participant observation these significant roles were often secondary positions in the hierarchy. There was the claim that women were encouraged by literally being assigned roles and responsibilities and sponsored monetarily to attend programmes that would equip them as believers and prepare them for the work of the CCR. In spite of all the affirming language utilized by participants, the CCR was not able to harness opportunities for women effectively. Even in informal leadership, women were rarely the lead singers in the singing ministry; they were often backup singers. During one particular session,<sup>616</sup> a female was the lead singer; but this was the exception rather than the norm throughout participant observation.

Women in the CCR were followers and yet, by virtue of an altruistic calling, they volunteered in informal leadership roles as backup singers, back up intercessors and local language Bible

---

<sup>614</sup> Parris and Peachey, "A Systematic Literature Review of Servant Leadership Theory in Organizational Contexts," 379.

<sup>615</sup> J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, *Contemporary Pentecostal Christianity : Interpretations from an African Context*, Regnum Studies in Global Christianity (Eugene, Or: Wipf & Stock, 2013), 5.

<sup>616</sup> This was in the forum session of the CCR meeting which I participated in at the CCR meeting session.



readers. Since followers who are also volunteers can be considered servant leaders, these women in the CCR can be said to have exhibited leadership qualities in their altruistic calling.<sup>617</sup> For Parris and Peachey (2013) their servant leadership stance is akin to service to others, which is its core motivation.<sup>618</sup> Furthermore, the CCR is a group that can be considered as one that rewards its adherents with a number of benefits due to membership and participation. As was evident during my observation, the CCR is a network for adherents with a common goal. The benefits that they derived were identified by, for example, the training they receive that equips them to play significant roles, as attested to by participants. When leaders support adherents financially to acquire the requisite training and exposure by attending paid-for programmes, reciprocity takes place. This is a dimension of a group that exhibits dedication to participants and vice versa. The adherents who, by their participation in the network, access these paid services or training programmes reciprocate in turn by playing roles in the CCR. They then use the knowledge acquired from the programmes they attended in the groups which they have formed a network of support and bonding.

Remarkably, bargaining with patriarchy in a highly patriarchal society was entrenched in different ways. Women in the CCR took the second position, accepting secondary roles like back-up singers while reserving the formal leadership positions for men. Eventually, they might get the chance to be lead singers, a step in the right direction. Nevertheless, their acceptance of gender roles in the church had the potential for one or more of them to break into ultimate leadership in the CCR. As seen, a woman rose to be a coordinator in the past in the CCR, providing a clear example of the supplanting of patriarchy. By contrast, Mapuranga (2013) points to the case of Zimbabwean Pentecostal women, who bargained with patriarchy by getting into the territory previously assumed to be masculine, but were unwilling to challenge patriarchy while they promoted biblical hermeneutics that was subservient.<sup>619</sup> This implies that the women were leaders however; they "courted the affections" of a structurally patriarchal system by bargaining. They bargained by regurgitating dominant biblical interpretations due to a pervading male dominance for gain.

Additionally, although participants claimed the CCR gave equal opportunity to women, the situation on the ground contradicted that assertion. Women in the CCR were in leadership only

---

<sup>617</sup> Breslin, "Servant Leadership and Volunteerism," 4.

<sup>618</sup> Parris and Peachey, "A Systematic Literature Review of Servant Leadership Theory in Organizational Contexts," 378.

<sup>619</sup> Mapuranga, "Bargaining with Patriarchy? Women Pentecostal Leaders in Zimbabwe," 76.

in the ad hoc ministry—women’s ministry. The question then remains, why are women in the CCR restricted to arenas like ministering only to other women? Christianity has largely found excuses to relegate women to the backbenches when it comes to leadership positions over adherents. This has taken place for a variety of reasons. Susan Rakoczy (2004) points to the inundation of male imagery in Christianity in both the biblical texts and their interpretation as playing a contributing role.<sup>620</sup> How a religion talks about God has an enormous effect on how the religion will play out in many dimensions.<sup>621</sup> This includes how the religion structures leadership and the place of women. This influence does not escape the Roman Catholic Church, where Mary, the mother of Jesus/ Mary the mother of God, occupies a position of veneration and adoration, unlike in most other Christian traditions. In fact, some would argue that the Roman Catholic Church falls prey to the relegation of women to the backbenches more than other traditions, since there are no female priests. Therefore, in my view, stronger/ more proliferation of female symbolism is crucial in Christendom. Only then can symbolism be considered as effective or otherwise in uplifting women.

However, the situation is further complicated, because the CCR is the Pentecostal/ charismatic group of the Roman Catholic Church. The Pentecostal/ charismatic banner is accompanied by its own unique characteristics. The movement is complex in that, in its classical strand, women rarely occupy formal positions at the top of the leadership hierarchy.<sup>622</sup> However, women who belong to the third wave of Pentecostalism,<sup>623</sup> the neo-Pentecostalism movement, have held leadership positions more recently.<sup>624</sup> It is difficult to say whether the classical groups influence the current state of the CCR due to similar tendencies to the CCR group under discussion. Undoubtedly, the Roman Catholic tradition has influenced its CCR in spite of its Pentecostal/charismatic nomenclature and bearing. The age-old bias against women in the Church is undoubtedly that women’s bodies are different from those of men. Getman and Nadar (2013) concisely point out it is the funny things that women’s bodies do, bleeding, swelling, and all the contingencies that come with that make men wary of women in significant roles.<sup>625</sup> Women are seen as the weaker vessels. The descriptions of women’s access to leadership in the

---

<sup>620</sup> Rakoczy, *In Her Name : Women Doing Theology*, 32.

<sup>621</sup> Johnson, *She Who Is : The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse*, 4-5.

<sup>622</sup> Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion : The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches*, 33.

<sup>623</sup> Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics : Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana*, Vol. 27, 26.

<sup>624</sup> Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion : The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches*, 166.

<sup>625</sup> Getman and Nadar, "Nativity and Motherism: Embodiment within Praxis of Spiritual Leadership," 60.

CCR are positive. However, the status quo speaks volumes, and participant observation data tells a contradictory tale of women relegated to the background, even in so-called traditional women's leadership positions in segments of the CRGs.

### **6.2.7 The Bible says so and servant leadership**

Participants from the MPRP believed women play significant roles in the MPRP because they are allowed to do so, based on their frequent participation and personal ability. This happens especially, when women show dedication and capability. In spite of the prevalence of women in significant roles, some prefer men to be in significant positions instead. Such adherents appeal to biblical texts to support their claims that women should not be playing significant roles in the MPRP. However, in the circles of the CRGs and the Pentecostal/ charismatic churches at large, the Pauline letters are often quoted to underscore such beliefs and practices against women's leadership.<sup>626</sup>

Many factors influence the reasons adherents, especially men, prefer to keep women from playing significant roles in formal or informal leadership. On the face of it, it is as though men just want to uphold what is written in biblical texts. However, no venture is undertaken in a void or is devoid of biases when one fails to be self-critical. Since men were often in charge of biblical interpretation, keeping women out of these roles was often done to favour men. For Getman and Nadar (2013), because women's bodies do bleed and swell, this makes men wary of women in significant roles/ leadership.<sup>627</sup> The fact that women experience menstrual cycles and men do not, and that women get pregnant and men do not influences many men in the Pentecostal/ charismatic movement to believe that women are not fit to play significant roles. This could be in formal or informal leadership. Oduyoye (1995) argues that the opinions expressed in the so-called Pauline references in biblical texts are not necessarily divine revelation but are very often used to curtail female leadership in Pentecostalism.<sup>628</sup> The Pauline letters comprise components of female exclusionary directives. Such as that in 1 Corinthians 14:34 as an example.

By way of comparison, all the CRGs claim to give equal opportunity to both sexes to become leaders through training programmes. However, while bargaining with patriarchy in the CCR, women leaders were treading a differentiated ministerial track. Thus, in a male dominated

---

<sup>626</sup> This was evidential in the statements of some of the participants who deployed such texts. Also see Ansah, "Gender Empowerment and Personal Fulfillment in Pentecostalism: A Case of Accra Ghana," 63.

<sup>627</sup> Getman and Nadar, "Nativity and Motherism: Embodiment within Praxis of Spiritual Leadership," 60.

<sup>628</sup> Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa: African Women and Patriarchy*, 190.

context women grapple with male dominance and exchange assertiveness for gains in the face of oppression through strategies.<sup>629</sup> As servant leaders, they only minister to other women in the women's ministry, unlike the men, who had full reign in the CCR. The CCR was quick to point out that the past immediate coordinator of the CCR had been a woman. What of the present then? This is a valid question because as mentioned, some who advocate ideas that are initially liberating often revert to positions that are more conservative.<sup>630</sup>

Leadership in all facets of Christianity must be an ongoing process and practice, not an erstwhile endeavour. In segments of the CRGs, the ultimate leadership roles for women are lacking. However, bargaining with patriarchy has the potential to supplant or dislodge patriarchy, illustrated by women's past role as leaders in the CCR. Therefore, women in such contexts while exchanging assertiveness for gains do maximize opportunities and options; this is a form of strategy due to male dominance/ oppression.<sup>631</sup>

In the ABSPG, as a case in point, the equality that women enjoyed was further buttressed by observable evidence, spoken of in relation to access to women's leadership. Out of six groups, there were three female leaders. Despite this, participants spoke of and expressed doubt about the legitimacy of women in leadership within their circles because of hegemonic interpretations of Pauline texts aimed to side-line women and curtail access to women's leadership. Some of these Pauline texts are about the subordination of women an example is 1 Corinthians 14:34.

Women leaders assumed a servant leadership style in the CRGs. In the MPRP, the fact that women had a strong presence in leadership emerged during my participant observation. The constitution of the Church made provision for this, and the clergy had a strong message that supported women in leadership by uprooting hegemonic biblical interpretations blocking women's access to leadership. Nevertheless, the repeated extemporaneous comments that women were 'allowed' to lead revealed that male dominance remained the assumed norm in those circles. Even in such a strong atmosphere of female empowerment evident in female leadership, there was still an undertone of doubt while utilizing biblical texts in several

---

<sup>629</sup> Parsitau, "Agents of Gendered Change: Empowerment, Salvation and Gendered Transformation in Urban Kenya," 209.

<sup>630</sup> Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa: African Women and Patriarchy*, 190-91. Stephenson, "Prophesying Women and Ruling Men: Women's Religious Authority in North American Pentecostalism," 413-14. <https://www.mdpi.com/2077-1444/2/3/410>. Accessed 22 October 2019.

<sup>631</sup> Kandiyoti, "Bargaining with Patriarchy," 275.

instances. The implication of this statement is that women are still grapple with male dominance.

The CCR and MPRP also encouraged women to hold significant positions of importance. Yet, the language of male dominance again was utilized, this time by even female participants, who spoke of women being allowed to lead. The perception that women needed permission to lead underscored how male dominance was considered the norm once more, often with Biblical references. In the MPRP, women were playing significant roles, but some had misgivings about doing so. They appealed to biblical texts to support their claim that women should be side-lined because men were present. One major finding is that, despite women holding leadership in progressive circles like the MPRP, there are still those who do not support the leadership of women. Such individuals use hegemonic biblical interpretations to justify deep-seated cultural biases.

### **6.3 The use of the Bible**

Throughout the data, the participants deployed specific biblical texts in various ways to support their claims about a number of issues connected to the influences and tendencies of women's leadership roles and the extent of their resultant empowerment. The frequency of their personal volition to harness Bible passages is very interesting and relevant. The ways in which participants employ biblical texts give insight into their theology. It is interesting to compare the different ways their use and interpretation of some of the biblical texts may converge or may be dissimilar to the ways in which African feminist theologians employ biblical texts.

#### **6.3.1 The Ethiopian eunuch**

Ohene from ABSPG stated that women were usually leaders of women's groups. He added that women also led groups of both sexes, but he did not believe this is a practice supported by biblical precedence. He believed that the Bible does not permit women's leadership of both sexes. He claimed that women were now in leadership over men because some men did not possess adequate knowledge of the Bible. For Ohene, as was the case with the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8:26–40, some men do not possess adequate Bible understanding, so women with knowledge have had to come to the rescue. Thus, in his view, women were not the original leaders but have been permitted to lead because of a lack of qualified males. The Ethiopian eunuch did not understand the biblical passage he was reading, but Phillip preached the gospel to him beginning with the text the Ethiopian initially did not understand. In a sense, Ohene believed men should lead women and that some men were failing to lead due to a lack of

knowledge. His reference to the Ethiopian eunuch implies that men who could not lead were lacking in true male essence, like the Ethiopian eunuch.

As an elderly man in Ghanaian society, Ohene is automatically ascribed authority and respect within his ethnic group. For Robertson (1984) based on norms in place before colonial times seniority is ascribed with respect in specific ethnic groups.<sup>632</sup> These norms persist today; seniority and sex are crucial to the right to chart one's own path in life and the liberty to do so without opposition. According to Oduyoye (1995) in Akan society, a woman is not regarded as an autonomous being as a man is and she is expected to be under the authority of the men in her family of birth first.<sup>633</sup> If she marries, she is expected to be under the authority of her husband; another layer of authority slides into place if her husband is senior to her, which is the usual practice.<sup>634</sup> Viewed through the lens of intersectionality, Kathy Davis (2008) asserts that categories like social practices, institutional arrangements, cultural ideologies, and the outcomes of these interactions in terms of power have consequences.<sup>635</sup> The layers of identity/categories that create and affect his person inform Ohene's views on womanhood vis-à-vis leadership, first as a male in Ghanaian society, and then as a senior. Therefore, Ohene is informed by cultural patriarchy that is born of traditional, societal and even religious structures of male dominance as seen in his responses while appealing to biblical texts.

### **6.3.2 Baptism and the abrogation of gender**

Nkunim from the CCR mentioned baptism as a means of equality among the sexes rather than the biblical creation account. According to his personal theology, if not for baptism, differentiation between men and women would exist, which would have consequences for leadership.<sup>636</sup> In his view, baptism gives a Christian impetus for and validation and initiation into the faith (as the case may be), as well as equality.<sup>637</sup> However, in African feminist theology, God created both male and female humans equally in the image and likeness of God—Imago Dei (Genesis 1:26-27; 5:1-2).<sup>638</sup> Therefore, for those who espouse this theology, both sexes are equal, with or without baptism. Ohene's theology is radically different from the African

---

<sup>632</sup> Robertson, *Sharing the Same Bowl : A Socioeconomic History of Women and Class in Accra, Ghana*, 12.

<sup>633</sup> Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa : African Women and Patriarchy*, 135.

<sup>634</sup> *Ibid.*, 54.

<sup>635</sup> Davis, "Intersectionality as Buzzword: A Sociology of Science Perspective on What Makes a Feminist Theory Successful," 68.

<sup>636</sup> Theology of ordinary women is expressed in many ways, including songs, prayers, and everyday lives. Elizabeth Amoah, "Theology from the Perspective of African Women," in *Women's Visions: Theological Reflection, Celebration, Action* ed. Ofelia Ortega (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1995), 1-2.

<sup>637</sup> He seems to rely on 1 Corinthians 12:13 as his reference.

<sup>638</sup> Oduyoye, *Who Will Roll the Stone Away? : The Ecumenical Decade of the Churches in Solidarity with Women*, no. 47, 53.

feminist perspective in theology, where Imago Dei and equality of the sexes is the point of reference. From an African feminist lens, biblical ethics demand that moral agents responsible to God be on the side of the oppressed to defeat the enemies of the Imago Dei.<sup>639</sup>

The opportunities the CRGs provide women for leadership and the playing of significant roles are ways by which male dominance is supplanted. Such opportunities for women create channels/ processes that rationally result in liberation and self-actualization through creativity to affect the self and others.<sup>640</sup> Once realised, the desires of some of these women to be leaders become instances of positive differences made for themselves, synonymous with self-actualization. Such a positive difference not only affects the individual but also the community because other women in particular benefit from women holding significant roles. Women leaders exhort or sermonise differently than men in many instances, as I observed in the field during participant observation in the MPRP. They call upon women to take their places as full beings in ways that male leaders are silent about in their sermons. Male leaders in some cases even perpetuate patriarchal stereotypes, as I observed in the field during participant observation in the ABSPG, for example.

According to Kathy Davis (2008), for intersectionality as a lens, gender and categories like education and employment, social practices, institutional arrangements, cultural ideologies, and the outcomes of these interactions in terms of power are crucial.<sup>641</sup> Nkunim, a young and educated male in Ghanaian society, had several factors interacting in his favour. He held a leadership position in the CCR. His education ensured that he was literate in the English language, and he was engaged in skilled work. As a male, social practices dictated that he was not the primary caregiver at home, unlike his female counterparts in the CCR.

For Oduyoye (1995) Ghanaian cultural ideologies exemplified in oral folk tales clearly portray an image of womanhood tied to a lifelong role of self-effacing service in the home setting.<sup>642</sup> Nkunim's employment and resultant income bracket ensured that if need be, he could employ assistance in the home, unlike several women in the CCR who were, in a sense, dispossessed monetarily because of their low education, unskilled employment and resultant low income. This is an important intersectional insight that resonates with the observation made by a young

---

<sup>639</sup> *Daughters of Anowa : African Women and Patriarchy*, 185.

<sup>640</sup> Heyward, "Empowerment," 52.

<sup>641</sup> Davis, "Intersectionality as Buzzword: A Sociology of Science Perspective on What Makes a Feminist Theory Successful," 68.

<sup>642</sup> Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa : African Women and Patriarchy*, 53-54.

unemployed homemaker, that women could be leaders if they received assistance at home. Therefore, even though baptism abrogates sex, it is clear that it does not abrogate gender in these circles. This is due to the implications that accompany sex: gender roles born of cultural ideologies, social practices and institutional arrangements.

### **6.3.3 The torn curtain of the Jewish temple after the crucifixion**

Akosua, a member of the MPRP, appealed to the Bible to support her view that women are now allowed to hold significant positions. Women can now engage in positions or opportunities of leadership that were once forbidden to them because, for her, "the curtain of the Jewish temple was torn in two" after the crucifixion of Jesus Christ (Matthew 27:51), so women can thereafter do what men are able to do. For her, even though the MPRP and even the Church permits women in leadership, the greater community does not. On one occasion, Akosua took the initiative to engage in the common Ghanaian practice of praying on a bus over the travellers. A man then reprimanded her because he did not believe it was a woman's place to pray when men were present.

Women's liberation focuses on bringing women out into society as full participants and recognised agents.<sup>643</sup> For Oduyoye (1995) in her feminist theology, the operative Christian principle that endorses the equal value of all persons is *Imago Dei* in the Old Testament. This is different from the torn temple curtain of the New Testament.<sup>644</sup> As an untrained lay reader of the Bible, the participant theologized differently from African feminist theology but made the same point concerning the equality of men and women in the eyes of God, drawing on a different biblical passage in support. This is an interesting and insightful finding indeed.

The reprimand on the bus could have been influenced by either Ghanaian societal beliefs or Christian patriarchal beliefs coupled with hegemonic biblical interpretations.<sup>645</sup> This asserts that women are less in value than men and should not take any initiative that might imply some level of control when men are present. A majority of Ghanaians are socialised from their infancy to accept male control. Oduyoye reminds us of the *nipa/ aboa* dichotomy, whereby the infant boy is referred to as *nipa*, "human" and the infant girl as *aboa*, "less than human" in Akan

---

<sup>643</sup> Susan Frank Parsons, "Redeeming Ethics," in *The Cambridge Companion to Feminist Theology*, ed. Susan Frank Parsons, Cambridge Companions to Religion (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 208.

<sup>644</sup> Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa: African Women and Patriarchy*, 175.

<sup>645</sup> Some of the hegemonic biblical interpretations draw on the narrative of creation in Genesis 2 and the Pauline letters. Feminist theologians such as Phyllis Trible and Mercy Amba Oduyoye debunk these mitigating interpretations: Phyllis Trible, "Eve and Adam: Genesis 2-3 Reread," in *Womanspirit Rising: A Feminist Reader in Religion*, ed. Carol P. Christ and Judith Plaskow (San Francisco: Harper and Row 1979), 75-76. Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa: African Women and Patriarchy*, 190-92.



culture.<sup>646</sup> This sets the tone for the value bestowed on individuals right from birth in the Akan setting. A male who is socialized in this manner internalises the idea that he is more important than a female child or person and is the natural first choice in relation to importance and value. Lay readers may theologize as Akosua did that the curtain of the Jewish temple and its tearing holds significance for women's equality as full beings. However, in general society, where the power of male domination is born of societal practices, institutional arrangements and cultural ideologies beyond even the liberating confines of CRGs like the MPRP, women's equality is not accepted, as seen in the exchange on the bus.

Furthermore, Oduyoye recalls the age-old adage spoken over the children born to an Akan family, "a male has been born to us, he is a warrior and will do exploits for us and a female is born to us, she will fetch water for us."<sup>647</sup> This is also a channel of socialization in society that is internalised from infancy and childhood that gives the man the impetus to think of himself as more worthy than his female counterpart. According to this age-old adage, the man is accorded expectations of greatness and accomplishments beyond the home setting. The woman, on the other hand, is expected to be restricted to the domestic duties of housekeeping.<sup>648</sup> Therein lies the source of asymmetrical gender roles. It is evident that these roles stem in part from the culture and traditions of the society. This is detrimental to the full humanity of women.

Therefore, a major finding is that, although the CRGs are making strides for the good of women to actualize their potential as ones called to the mission of the church just as men, Ghanaian society is not necessarily on board with this agenda. Akosua's use of the Bible points to the equality of the sexes established by the symbolic tearing of the veil of the Jewish temple at Jesus' death and resurrection. However, the larger society continues to demand subservience and self-effacement from women, due to cultural and religious patriarchy. Women can pray all they want in CRG circles overall adherents irrespective of sex, but the minute they attempt to do the same in other spaces, they are reminded of their place ascribed by society behind men and under their directives, not vice versa. A reverberating contention throughout the study is that no matter the strides women make in the church setting, their position in the home and as second-class citizens in the community is set in stone culturally for many.

---

<sup>646</sup> *Aboa* can also mean fool or animal while *Nipa* means human being. Conversations with Mercy Amba Oduyoye, 2 February 2017, Accra Ghana.

<sup>647</sup> Conversations with Professor Mercy Amba Oduyoye, 2 February 2017, Accra Ghana.

<sup>648</sup> Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa : African Women and Patriarchy*, 81.

## 6.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have examined the language participants utilized in speaking about women's access to leadership positions. The theory of servant leadership has been crucial to this endeavour because it encapsulates the stance and identity of the women leaders and followers in the CRGs. It is apparent that women are held to specific standards of expectations and accountability in the CCR. Additionally, the followers/ volunteers who became informal servant leaders in the CCR shed light on the willingness of women to be in the background within the CCR to step up. The language of women as men in the spirit is truly poignant, where women bargain with patriarchy as servant leaders in the MPRP. The idea that God and the Holy Spirit are no respecters of persons, voiced by members of the MPRP and CCR respectively, aims to abrogate sex as a limiting factor for women's access to leadership positions. However, the theory of intersectionality highlights how education, gender and its implications such as skilled work create exclusions from leadership for women in some respects. Additionally, women who do become leaders have to bargain with patriarchy and operate as servant leaders in a male-dominated context of religious male authority.

Finally, the examination of how three participants, one from each CRG, used biblical texts to reflect their personal theological stance concerning women holding positions of leadership was discussed. All were untrained Bible-readers, and each relied on a different text. For the male participant from the ABSPG, men who do not have biblical comprehension lack some essence of maleness and are likened to the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8:26–40. Their inability to lead opens up opportunities for trained women to teach the Bible and to lead. The male participant from the CCR claimed that baptism abrogates gender, apparently relying on 1 Corinthians 12:13, even though an application of intersectionality highlighted how several women in the CCR did not have the entitlement he did as an educated male connected to the structures of power. The female participant from the MPRP cited Matthew 27:51 to support her understanding that the tearing of the veil of the Jewish temple at Jesus' death and resurrection indicates that women can do what men do in the new age inaugurated by this act. Nonetheless, her subsequent experience of being reprimanded for leading prayer on a public bus shows that sections of the larger society are not prepared for female religious leadership. All three participants differ from the biblical justification favoured by African feminist theology, which relies on the statements in Genesis on 1:26-27 and 5:1-2 that males and females are created equal in the image of God.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN**

### **EMPOWERMENT, GENDER AND PENTECOSTALISM: FINDINGS, ANALYSIS, DISCUSSIONS**

#### **7.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, I discuss and analyse data from both participant observation and semi-structured interviews. The primary focus of the chapter is the analysis and findings connected to the influences and tendencies of women's leadership, women's experiences of leadership roles and the extent to which it contributes to women's empowerment. I draw on African feminist theology to discuss issues of gender and empowerment. I also engage Pentecostalism, to ascertain elements of empowerment or otherwise and the gender dynamics where present. Finally, dreams impinging on reality and deliverance/ exorcism are also discussed as findings emerge as a tendency and influence of Pentecostalism, which were found to have some empowering elements.

#### **7.2 Empowerment and women's participation in the CRGs**

Empowerment is connected to all the benefits derived from being involved in the CRGs in the available capacities. Empowerment can pertain to benefits from being a leader who has received leadership training and is in some capacity of leadership. Empowerment also focuses on the benefits of being a servant leader specifically as practised by women in these circles. Elements like prayer, Bible study, bonding, networking, financial aid, and coping are discussed. These are analysed by virtue of empirical data that is found relevant to the question of empowerment. However, other activities that give individuals a sense of empowerment aside from leadership in the CRGs are also relevant as they give opportunities for expression, training, and fulfilment for those who seek to be followers. Such activities include the various ways in which women participate in the groups and how they interact with the community. This is especially so in the absence of leading roles in specific instances. The activities also include those undertaken by the adherents because of their devotion to the charismatic renewal group or linked to influences by and from the CRG within the community where they abide. An example is prayer in community spaces.

##### **7.2.1 Transcendent help and empowerment**

Friendship emerged as an important reason for which several participants in the study joined and or remained members of the CRGs. Several participants expressed that they first joined the

CRGs because it enabled friendships to develop and helped facilitate an important network of relationships. The notion of friendship also further extend to include God, in other words, participants spoke of God as a friend who comes to their aid when need be and whom they rely on and trust. They expressed such a friendship as a real "presence." Interestingly, according to Oduyoye (1995), the language used for God uses no gender specifics rather we make God in our own image.<sup>649</sup> Drawing from that, God as the Supreme Being is beyond gender and we call him ascriptions per our human experiences in relation to him. Therefore, God is for the participants, a great divine friend. For Harvey Cox (2001), Pentecostal Christianity commonly depicts a God who is not aloof but rather, reaches out to touch human lives and hearts in the midst of turmoil.<sup>650</sup> Interestingly, the Akan word for God is *Onyankopon* or Great friend. Some participants spoke about the importance of such a personal relationship. One female participant shared her experiences of three miscarriages, how God provided help, and she now has two children. In honouring her voice, she stated that "God is really alive" and the birth and presence of her children in her life as testament to God's friendship and help.

This friendship of God for the participants is also exemplified in the song "Lord, sit with me a little longer." As emerged from the data, the participants draw friendships with the Supreme Being in the CRGs by going further in fellowship in these sessions of CRG meetings. God as Onyankopon or Great friend is part of Akan understanding of the Supreme Being. For Kanyoro (2002), there is the need to sift the good aspects of culture (and religion) to affirm them, knowing that there is room to reject what is bad.<sup>651</sup> To opine that African culture in all its entirety is/ was not flawed in any way is to romanticize. Therefore, African culture just like all others has both negative and positive elements. Therefore, good dimensions such as God as Great friend from Akan understanding of who God is speaks to the core of cultural hermeneutics agenda.

It is well researched that many African Christian women attribute the positive outcome of their endeavours to God.<sup>652</sup> Such a perspective resonates and is reflective of the findings in this study. Moreover, the networks of relations that are formed in the renewal groups constitute a source of empowerment to participants. Participants expressed that the help in terms of intercessory

---

<sup>649</sup> Ibid., 111.

<sup>650</sup> Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven : The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-First Century* (Cambridge, Mass: Da Capo Press, 2001), 5.

<sup>651</sup> Kanyoro, *Introducing Feminist Cultural Hermeneutics : An African Perspective*, 70.

<sup>652</sup> Susan Frank Parsons, *The Cambridge Companion to Feminist Theology*, Cambridge Companions to Religion (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 166.

prayer given and received, many of which had real life outcomes that empowered them in challenging times. According to Nancy Ammerman (2014), friendships are reflective of succour, aid, assistance and moral guidance.<sup>653</sup> The participants report that the charismatic renewal groups contribute a sense of belongingness and help in their daily lives.

Many of my participants expressed that the CRGs are spiritually empowering because the teachings and prayers deepen their faith in God. In the case of another female participant from the CCR, she believed that God helped her in her personal life. She ascribed her ability to cope in a phase of her life where she experienced nightmares to intercessory prayers in the CCR. She invariably had experienced trauma that resulted in nightmares but received her resolution by intercessory prayer in the CCR. Carter Heyward (1996), points to empowerment as the process through which persons experience liberating power or capacity to survive which makes a positive difference.<sup>654</sup> In this study, it appears that for many participants, the CRGs serve as a safe haven. Participants expressed that in addition to practicing a spirituality that, for them, aids not only to receive spiritual guidance and a network of friendships but they also experience spiritual empowerment. Furthermore, a female participant from ABSPG expressed that the CRG afforded the opportunity for prayer and guidance that was deemed helpful as a spirituality. Several participants across board also relayed in similar terms about the intercessory prayer and the moral guidance, which was available to them in the CRGs.

Spiritual empowerment is not a physical or tangible phenomenon. The participants in this study expressed spiritual empowerment in relation to practices like partaking in songs, prayer, teaching, and guidance. Moreover, participants expressed that they experienced a form of transcendent encouragement/ help that enabled them to face, adequately cope with, and survive many of the challenges of life. In addition, there is often a positive turn of events. This is often because of the patient survival mode—the elapse of time as they go through empowering processes that participation in the CRGs affords them. Therefore, they survive the hardships, are alive, and well to experience the positive difference or change that often comes with time. The song titled "Lord, sit with me a little longer," in one lyrical phrase says, "your teachings give me comfort." This also epitomizes the spiritual empowerment derived from teaching/ moral guidance derived from the CRGs to the adherents.

---

<sup>653</sup> Nancy Tatom Ammerman, *Sacred Stories, Spiritual Tribes : Finding Religion in Everyday Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 3.

<sup>654</sup> Heyward, "Empowerment," 52.

Interestingly, for Jay Drydyk (2013), in his research on empowerment, agency, and power put forth that on the grounds of the dilution of empowerment, some have advocated for the shelving of empowerment to inculcate back transformation of gender relations.<sup>655</sup> According to E. Palmer (2017), in his study of gender justice, there are instances where empowerment is about choice, decision-making, and opportunity devoid of the relational or a transformative dimension.<sup>656</sup> In defence of the deployment of empowerment in this study, it is not erroneous to return to how empowerment was employed, when transformation and relational dimensions were core to its conception, especially as exemplified in the field of feminist theology. In this perspective, empowerment means a process of personal and interpersonal/ relational growth and impact for the wellbeing of all.<sup>657</sup> In the field of feminist theology, Heyward (1996) stresses that empowerment also embraces transformation, where there is the experience of openness, growth, and change.<sup>658</sup> For Kanyoro (2006), on transformation and change, in my view, this is exemplified in her take on African feminist theology, as an effort at repair of the imbalance and of the critique of tradition and culture through the lens of African women and with their own voices.<sup>659</sup>

In this study of the CRGs of the MLCs, there are certainly elements of transformative and relational processes of mutual change. First, concerning the relational dimension, justice (for women as complete human beings) is what is the focus and not just the attempt at changing the status quo arbitrarily. Second, in terms of the transformative dimension, it involves not only humans but also the sacred, while also achieving justice and compassion through active commitment.<sup>660</sup> This is line with the critique of culture/ tradition (often embedded with Religion/ the sacred) and the critique of what is bad and negative within it.<sup>661</sup> This is in itself a transformative agenda.

Empowerment has to do with utilizing creativity and liberational power to aid individuals to cope and survive by realising their potential as well as impacting/ affecting one's self and others.<sup>662</sup> This means that empowerment comes about by an individual's ingenious efforts that

---

<sup>655</sup> Jay Drydyk, "Empowerment, Agency, and Power," *Journal of Global Ethics* 9, no. 3 (2013): 250.

<sup>656</sup> E. Palmer, *Gender Justice and Development: Vulnerability and Empowerment* (Taylor & Francis, 2017), 6. <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/e/9781315723396> Accessed 1 November 2019

<sup>657</sup> Marie Gibling, "Empowerment," in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*, ed. M. Letty Russell and J. Shannon Clarkson (London: Mowbray, 1996), 83.

<sup>658</sup> Heyward, "Empowerment," 52.

<sup>659</sup> Kanyoro, "Beads and Strands: Threading More Beads in the Story of the Circle," 39-40.

<sup>660</sup> Heyward, "Empowerment," 53.

<sup>661</sup> Kanyoro, *Introducing Feminist Cultural Hermeneutics : An African Perspective*, 70-71.

<sup>662</sup> Heyward, "Empowerment," 52.

liberates and leads to positive outcomes. Cornwall and Rivas (2015), assert that claims have been made that empowerment is little or nothing of the clamour for equality or equity that once was so intrinsic to the feminist agenda.<sup>663</sup> Empowerment may be considered an overused term by some. However, it is still relevant for the work of women's upliftment as full human beings with opportunities in many parts of the world where patriarchy is still rife. As a term, it may be redundant in many parts of the world where women have experienced liberation on diverse fronts. However, in Ghana, which is the context of the study, there is much to be accomplished for women as fully autonomous beings with opportunities for empowerment.

To ameliorate false positive readings of empowerment, it is important to keep in focus the meaning of empowerment as a result or outcome.<sup>664</sup> For participants in this study, the outcome or end result of participating in the CRG has been opportunities for bonding, the ability to cope in difficult times, and resolution of difficulty. Thus, participation in the CRGs is perceived to be a source of empowerment to participants in many respects.

### **7.2.2 Prayer, bonding and empowerment**

Prayer was considered an immense benefit of participating in the ABSPG. Participants explained these benefits by way of the opportunity it affords participants them to pray. One participant from ABSPG appealed to biblical texts to buttress the importance of prayer and the need to pray ceaselessly. According to Kwame Bediako, a renowned African theologian, the fact remains that many Africans and Ghanaians specifically have internalized the Bible/Christian message because of the communities of African Christians that exist today.<sup>665</sup> This is evident in how many participants appealed to Biblical texts in their arguments. Many of the participants across the three CRGs also spoke of the teachings as a form of spiritual and moral guidance to adherents and its importance for an adherent. These teachings include Bible discussions, which have as a core activity the rereading of the Bible. For Kwok Pui-lan (2002), regarding her research on feminist theology, these re-readings give sustenance, hope, and empowerment as it has done for other beset women in other regions of the world.<sup>666</sup> These re-readings are mirrored in the biblical readings at the grassroots levels in the CRGs. In the

---

<sup>663</sup> Cornwall and Rivas, "From 'Gender Equality and 'Women's Empowerment' to Global Justice: Reclaiming a Transformative Agenda for Gender and Development," 397.

<sup>664</sup> Drydyk, "Empowerment, Agency, and Power," 251.

<sup>665</sup> Kwame Bediako, *Christianity in Africa: The Renewal of a Non-Western Religion*, Studies in World Christianity (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1995), 4-5.

<sup>666</sup> Kwok Pui-lan, "Feminist Theology as Intercultural Discourse," in *The Cambridge Companion to Feminist Theology*, ed. Susan Frank Parsons, Cambridge Companions to Religion (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 26.

ABSPG, women were empowered to lead in some of the clusters. In relation to the women in the CRGs, they accessed empowerment by personal spiritual development as well as improvement in individual wellbeing through the actualizing of potentials in leadership.

Many participants spoke of the benefits involved in being a member in the CRG. A first identifiable benefit was that of a network of support available. A second was an opportunity to practice a spirituality based on one's belief. A third benefit was to receive moral guidance. Participants also claimed they grow in the knowledge of their faith through the Bible discussions. The fieldwork conducted in the ABSPG is reflective of women being able to become leaders.

Comparatively, although women were empowered in the CCR, empowerment which could have been realised from leadership, is curtailed to some extent due to the treading of a differentiated ministerial track.<sup>667</sup> Similarly, in the South African context, Victory Nomvete Mbanjwa was not ordained in her church for almost a lifetime, even though she had completed theological school.<sup>668</sup> The South African example is that of churchwoman in a male dominated context who faced barricades to leadership. For Oduyoye (1995), many churches are structured in the form of patriarchal hierarchies, accepting the material service of women but commonly do not listen to their voices, seek their leadership or welcome their initiatives.<sup>669</sup> Nadar (2002), reiterates that this is often due to sexism and strife from church leadership.<sup>670</sup> Therefore, there are strains of disempowerment in the CRGs, where women were leading only women. Several reasons were given for the status quo. However, all this can be surmounted by a deliberate intention that affirms women's presence as the majority in these groups who are just as able as men are.

Participants expressed that belonging to a group also provides a resource that is beneficial. They become dedicated and committed members of the CRG, contributing their time, abilities, talents, and insights. In turn, they received spiritual mentorship. They also received an opportunity to practice the Pentecostal/ charismatic renewal, which has its own specific

---

<sup>667</sup> Aforementioned in chapter 6.

<sup>668</sup> Victory Nomvete Mbanjwa was ordained at seventy-three although she entered theological school at twenty-seven years of age. Unfortunately, the church of which Victory belongs to succumbed to this injustice. Women had received theological training since the creation of the church but the passage of women into ordained ministry continued to have difficulties. See Phiri, "Called at Twenty Seven and Ordained at Seventy Three! The Story of Rev. Victory Nomvete Mbanjwa in the United Congregational Church in Southern Africa," 123.

<sup>669</sup> Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa : African Women and Patriarchy*, 173.

<sup>670</sup> Nadar, "Journeying in Faith: The Stories of Two Ordained Indian Women in the Anglican and Full Gospel Churches in South Africa," 140-42.



features. The ABSPG as a Pentecostal/ charismatic movement has characteristics that are unique to it. For example, the ABSPG involves energetic or fervent prayer, prophesy, upholding of biblical content over church tradition, and emphasis on the Holy Spirit. All these characteristics are not necessarily standard Anglican Church practice. Anglican Church members, who desire this kind of spirituality, therefore access the ABSPG to have a Pentecostal/ charismatic experience. It has already been established that the women leaders of the ABSPG clusters are servant leaders in their identity, which no doubt has its drawbacks, as already discussed. Nonetheless, there are real elements of empowerment as potentials are actualized in the form of women in leading roles.

As servant leaders, many of the women leaders are position-based leaders or are in the leadership-in-charge category. This is because leadership-in-charge as a position-based leadership; makes it possible for the individual to lead due to their position in a hierarchy.<sup>671</sup> This is the first type of servant leadership identifiable in the CRGs. This is whereby, the women are at the top of the hierarchy but maintain the identity of servants while playing the role of leaders.<sup>672</sup> The second type of servant leader is the follower who can be considered a servant leader because she combines the attributes of a servant and a leader.<sup>673</sup> Participants who are female leaders expressed that although they are in charge due to their positions, they maintain the identity of servants. This is so because a number of women of the ABSPG, maintained that women were not equal to men and that men are ideally supposed to be leaders in all arenas. They backed their views with biblical references. These expressions of subordination in the opinions of women leaders in the ABSPG are arguably not very empowering or uplifting for women in the CRGs.

Similarly, for Bateye (2007) in the AICs of the Nigerian Yoruba context, women leaders prove to be largely unsure of themselves and are submissive rather than assertive in their Pentecostal milieu.<sup>674</sup> This dimension of the stance of the women of the ABSPG is rather disempowering and does not reflect women as fully autonomous beings. The rhetoric of the women in the ABSPG suggests submissiveness rather than assertiveness from women in relation to men. Although, on the structural level of leadership women were leaders in very visible and prominent leadership roles.

---

<sup>671</sup> Grint, *Leadership : A Very Short Introduction*, 4-6.

<sup>672</sup> Sims, *Servanthood: Leadership for the Third Millennium*, 18.

<sup>673</sup> Breslin, "Servant Leadership and Volunteerism." 1.

<sup>674</sup> Bateye, "Forging Identities: Women as Participants and Leaders in the Church among the Yoruba," 9-10.

However, some empowering dimensions cannot be ignored for the sake of a holistic presentation of the happenings in the CRGs in a nuanced manner. For Davis (2017), servant leaders draw from the power within to provide exceptional services with high-level ethics, integrity, and personal values that empower the human spirit in the group, personal lives, and community.<sup>675</sup> Therefore, because of the characteristics or special traits of the servant leader, they are able to empower or equip others to also survive, cope adequately, and to be liberated by virtue of the resources they afford their followers/ adherents in the group. This means that servant leadership is empowering in so many ways. However, other assailing or related factors of the specific circles can lead to counter empowerment for a specific gender in that group, especially if those circles have a foundation and practice of patriarchy as discussed above.<sup>676</sup>

During participant observation, I joined the Twi Akan-speaking group of ABSPG. The leader was male and he led the activities during that session. Various topics were discussed, preceded by a prayer. Some of the topics discussed were difficulties of the Christian life, temptations, and charity to the poor. This is one example of the how the ABSPG serves as a channel of moral guidance for its adherents. According to Ammerman (2007), on her research on lived Religion, such groups are a repository that serves as a channel of moral and spiritual guidance.<sup>677</sup> An interesting argument is the idea that Pentecostal Christianity gives only superficial and temporary empowerment to African women: conversely, there is the notion that it is creating new autonomous spaces for African women to exercise their freedom from male monopolies of power.<sup>678</sup> The paradoxically liberating but limiting impact of Pentecostal Christianity is acknowledged.<sup>679</sup> This is the case especially for women in the CRGs. For the women, it is liberating to be part of the CRGs, as there are spiritual resources available. This enabled them to cope and survive during difficulties of life as attested to by many participants across the three CRGs, by way of opportunities for prayers and teachings provided.

Remarkably, a major finding in the ABSPG was that there was gender balance in leadership as well as an immense resource of spiritual and moral guidance for adherents. In fact, it is necessary to state that when it comes to all of the three CRGs, spiritual resources were key reciprocal benefits of a commitment to the groups. The ABSPG operated at several levels of

---

<sup>675</sup> Davis, *Servant Leadership and Followership: Examining the Impact of Workplace Behaviour*, XVI.

<sup>676</sup> See chapter 6.

<sup>677</sup> Ammerman, *Sacred Stories, Spiritual Tribes : Finding Religion in Everyday Life*, 3.

<sup>678</sup> Mhando et al., "Modes of Legitimation by Female Pentecostal-Charismatic Preachers in East Africa: A Comparative Study in Kenya and Tanzania," 321.

<sup>679</sup> Mhando et al., "Modes of Legitimation by Female Pentecostal-Charismatic Preachers in East Africa: A Comparative Study in Kenya and Tanzania," 321.

benefit from the individual to the organization as a whole. Attanasi (2013), reiterates that Pentecostal/ charismatic churches provide women invaluable and otherwise unavailable opportunities such as mentoring, skills development, and positive affirmation: such resources enable women better to navigate life in different arenas.<sup>680</sup>

In addition, at the structural level, gender equality is realised in leadership within the ABSPG. This is realised in the fact that there are women in half of the leadership positions available. There is an equal presentation of women in positions of leadership in this group. Women are at the helm of affairs and in charge of organizing and leading some of the groups. However, there are some significant drawbacks when it comes to how participants perceive themselves as leaders as mentioned. Finally, from an intersectional perspective, the aim is to examine the multiple positioning in life in respect of the power relations that are central to it.<sup>681</sup> One female participant, for example, was engaged in unskilled labour and had low education. As a result, it in turn influenced her income. Due to her low income, she by her own admission was living in a poor neighbourhood, where security was compromised. Therefore, the factors of lack of education, unskilled work, a low income as well as poor living conditions put her at a disadvantage. Her case is a common one among many of the participants in the CRGs. Interestingly for Brusco (2010), in some instances; individual marginalization explains one dimension of women's attraction to Pentecostalism.<sup>682</sup> This is where women are drawn to Pentecostalism because it affords them an opportunity for expression and status.<sup>683</sup> Thus, women in the CRGs, who were marginalized in some respects, found some expression by the practice of a Pentecostal spirituality, which comprised fervent prayer. The women who do become leaders also gain status in the CRGs while operating as servant leaders. Many of the women leaders in the CRGs from an intersectional perspective have multiple identities that render them powerless in the domain of the larger society. Another female participant from the MPRP complained about economic hardship concerning accommodation and strife between herself and her landowner, which could render her and her family homeless. Another female participant mentioned her employment as petty trading, while common in Ghana, renders one into a subsistence economic path. Therefore, several of the women had socio-economic

---

<sup>680</sup> Attanasi, "Spirit and Power: The Growth and Global Impact of Pentecostalism," 5.

<sup>681</sup> Ann Phoenix and Pamela Pattynama, "Intersectionality," *The European journal of women's studies* 13, no. 3 (2006): 187-88. <https://journals-sagepub-com.ezproxy.uio.no/doi/pdf/10.1177/1350506806065751> Accessed 26 August 2019.

<sup>682</sup> Brusco, "Gender and Power " 77.

<sup>683</sup> Ibid.

challenges that may not translate as power and status in the communities where they dwell. However, in the CRGs they actualize self-expression and status as leaders while in service.

### **7.2.3 Zeal and gender dynamics**

From the empirical data, it is evident that women in the MPRP and ABSPG had a strong leadership presence. Specifically, they lead and teach in their specific CRGs. Furthermore, they lead worship and prayer, among other activities. A participant who was herself a leader in the MPRP mentioned the evidence of zeal/ strong desire as an important trait that can pave the way for one to be a leader/ play significant roles in the MPRP. Other participants across the three CRGs also mentioned confidence, availing one's self and interest as prerequisites for taking leadership positions: these are comparable to zeal. In addition, to prepare an adherent who is keen to be a leader, he/ she undergoes training to equip and further empower them in the CRGs. To add to that, adherents are randomly chosen to lead without any initiative on their part in some instances in the CRGs. The adoption of this surprise element can also lead to a fulfilling and empowering journey for adherents, although some may also decline for a variety of reasons.

It emerged from the study that, husbands have immense influence over the family and their spouses. According to Oduyoye (2005), there is the need to play fair with women and not to take for granted that women are content with possible oppression.<sup>684</sup> From the empirical data, it is clear that some of the participants experienced that their husbands exerted control over them in the home and beyond. Oduyoye (2005), further states that, marriage simply transfers women from one suzerain (maternal uncle) to another—that of her husband among the Akan.<sup>685</sup> Participants underscored that the support of one's husband and his permission are important for their participation in the CRGs. As a case in point, one female participant expressed that her husband understood/ was accommodating of her participation and activities in the MPRP. For other participants, this was not the case. An example was where a husband succeeded in forbidding his wife from being part of the MPRP altogether. Several female participants also relayed the need for the understanding/ approval of their spouses in this regard. As Oduyoye (1995) puts it, there is a layer of authority placed on women in segments of Ghanaian society due to marriage to a man and especially so when the husband is the older of the two.<sup>686</sup> This is indeed counterproductive for women's empowerment especially in the CRGs and the potential for empowerment through participation due to its patriarchal context.

---

<sup>684</sup> Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa : African Women and Patriarchy*, 160.

<sup>685</sup> *Ibid.*, 135.

<sup>686</sup> *Ibid.*, 54.

It can be deduced that the CRGs are channels that enable adherents to find fulfilment and to have their potentials materialize. This is because potentials can be actualized and succumb to the urge of fulfilment.<sup>687</sup> This is tantamount to empowerment, due to the different ways the desires of the women that translates as their zeal to participate, go through training, and attain to leadership. This is evident especially for the female adherents who are keen to lead or to become more visible in the MPRP and ABSPG. Their desires come to fruition because women are not inhibited from leadership and visibility in the MPRP and ABSPG. They are encouraged, chosen, and trained in the group to be empowered to be whom they desire. They emerge as dynamic leaders because of these opportunities. This is undoubtedly empowering for them because, through creative ability, they break the cycle of women's exclusion in leadership thereby, accessing liberation to make a positive difference for themselves and others.

One of the ways that they make positive impact and garner empowerment is through their sermons, unlike in some of the sermons and utterances by male spiritual leaders.<sup>688</sup> The voices and experiences of women has the potential correct imbalances of the cultural/ traditional (religious) status quo.<sup>689</sup> As emerged from the data, some of such utterances perpetuate male dominance.

Women leaders, especially in the MPRP, exhort women to fight the systems that leave women oppressed.<sup>690</sup> This was evident during participant observation. Women leaders also teach women to exercise their rights as full humans irrespective of the challenges that they may face.<sup>691</sup> This tends to promote justice for women—a dimension of empowerment. During participant observation, a female leader preached a sermon on how women should fight to possess their own property and to assert themselves as fully human, able to change the course of their lives through determination. It was an extraordinary exhortation and was uplifting, to say the least. It also contrasted some disempowering sermons from male spiritual leaders based on its contents as observed in participation. An instance was in a meeting session during participation, the male spiritual leader claimed that a male should earn more than his wife by

---

<sup>687</sup> Nimi Wariboko, *The Pentecostal Principle : Ethical Methodology in New Spirit*, Pentecostal Manifestos (Grand Rapids, Mich: Eerdmans, 2012), 172.

<sup>688</sup> In a short exhortation by a male spiritual leader in the CRG, he perpetuated gender stereotypes and affirmed asymmetrical gender roles, thereby teaching the continual subjugation of women while upholding patriarchy.

<sup>689</sup> Kanyoro, "Beads and Strands: Threading More Beads in the Story of the Circle," 39-40.

<sup>690</sup> This was expressed by one female participant of the MPRP, during an interview with her. She expressed that, in the Old Testament, God changed the law and permitted women to inherit property because the women questioned the status quo. This was a short sermon by her which sheds light on the empowering messages that women leaders deliver and which impact other women positively.

<sup>691</sup> In an MPRP meeting, a female leader gave a sermon on how women should own their own property and how they should fight for their inheritance from forbearers.

virtue of maleness alone. Additionally, he mentioned that a marriage that did not have a man as its leader is in trouble. He went on to mention entrenchment of domestic gender roles. All of such rhetoric is disempowering for female empowerment and contrasts female sermonising as was observed due to its upliftment of female personhood.

Zeal as a quality in one's character that can catapult one to leadership emerged as vital for leadership. Many of the participants expressed that they possess the quality of zeal as a personality trait for leadership. These participants who were leaders can be considered as falling under the category of person-based leadership. For Grint (2010), this is where you are prescribed as a leader by one's character or personality.<sup>692</sup> Person-based leadership is reflective of servant leadership in that an individual's intrinsic character is that of servants, whereas the leader aims to be of service. This is evident in the leadership style of service by the women leaders in this study. One key virtue of servant leadership that the women leaders adopt is sacrifice and altruism. Breslin (2017) refers to altruistic calling as a willingness to sacrifice self-interest.<sup>693</sup> Therefore, many of the women possess charisma and zeal as person-based leaders who are also servant leaders because of the quality or characteristic of altruistic calling and zeal.

A number of the female leaders of the MPRP were of the older generation. A case in point is one female elderly leader in the MPRP who was remarkable indeed. She had limited education and yet was able to be a leader in the CRG. Through an intersectional lens, there is the need to consider the ways systems of power interrelate and how they carve identities for individuals.<sup>694</sup> This was a woman who had little education, was involved in unskilled work, and yet was a leader in the MPRP. Therefore, education/ literacy and seniority as factors/ systems that mutually act in concert have implications for the leadership positions of women in the CRG. As a senior, the demand for her efforts in childcare and nurturing were more likely curtailed. Even though she had little education that may limit her English language proficiency and even literacy, she was able to be a full-fledged leader in the MPRP. In my fieldwork, I observed that the language of communication in the MPRP was Akan Twi and Akan Fante, the most common

---

<sup>692</sup> Grint, *Leadership : A Very Short Introduction*, 7.

<sup>693</sup> Breslin, "Servant Leadership and Volunteerism," 3-4.

<sup>694</sup> Collins Patricia Hill, "It's All in the Family: Intersections of Gender, Race, and Nation," *Hypatia* 13, no. 3 (1998): 63. <https://onlinelibrary-wiley-com.ezproxy.uio.no/doi/pdfdirect/10.1111/j.1527-2001.1998.tb01370.x> Accessed 11 November 2020.

local languages in southern Ghana. This created an opportunity and was devoid of exclusion for women with limited education in the MPRP.

To add to that, many of the women as the majority (leaders and adherents alike) in the MPRP were noticeably of the lower-income bracket as petty traders, pensioners, and homemakers. Therefore, it is safe to state that many women remain in the CRGs for the same reasons as other women do in other contexts: as evidenced in their testimonies of empowerment derived. Brusco (2010), points to these reasons as spirituality, a supportive community, and fulfilment.<sup>695</sup> Therefore, language, seniority, and curtailed responsibilities of nurturing younger children or the lack thereof construct intersectionalities that include or exclude women in leadership positions in segments of the CRGs.

Remarkably, when women become leaders, three significant events occur. First, they become fulfilled because they exhibited the zeal and desire to be leaders and so are gratified by the opportunity for expression. Second, they are empowered in some respects because they receive training that equips them to become leaders and they wield that power with all that comes with it. Third, they empower other women because their sermons, exhortations and rhetoric are liberating and aid women to embrace who they are as full humans able to take charge of their destinies as the case may be. When women are involved in Bible interpretation, then, it contributes to the uprooting of hegemonic interpretations that are antithetical to women's empowerment. According to Kanyoro (1992), a contextual reading of biblical texts by women for the purposes of bible translation is imperative.<sup>696</sup> Gleaning from her argument, this activity ought to extrapolate to include interpretation at the grassroots level to exhort women. For Oduyoye (1995), women cannot leave Bible translation, study, or interpretation to an all-male clergy.<sup>697</sup>

As such, the CRGs are helping to bring women into the limelight as actors on the grassroots level who can bring about empowerment through biblical interpretation. This is, then, a finding of the study: the CRG is an avenue for women's empowerment and a channel for positive biblical interpretation for women's liberation on a number of fronts. The disempowering dimension also exists: these are present in an unexpected ways in some of the responses of women themselves as demure and not assertive regarding male dominance.

---

<sup>695</sup> Brusco, "Gender and Power " 86.

<sup>696</sup> Kanyoro, "Interpreting Old Testament Polygamy through African Eyes," 99.

<sup>697</sup> Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa : African Women and Patriarchy*, 190.

Finally, it is argued that there is an association between empowerment's lack of recognition of underlying structural connections with the relations of power that produce inequality and discrimination, rendering it mere rhetoric.<sup>698</sup> Empowerment as deployed in this study does not ignore the factors that produce inequality and discrimination. Factors like education, literacy and patriarchy are critically part of participants' life worlds and forms and shape possibilities for empowerment. The individual actions of the women are also recognized as empowering due to the internal volition that they exhibit by being voluntary active members and leaders who display zeal. Their acts that are self-effacing and counterproductive are not ignored either.

### **7.3 Gender and African feminist theology**

In this subsection, I endeavour to examine the ramifications of the CRGs in relation to gender through the lens of African feminist theology. The following are excerpts of fieldwork interviews accrued in a semi-structured manner and insights from participant observation. Ghanaian family structure is also important because it has its own unique characteristics that have consequences for gender. These contingencies of Ghanaian family structure and resultant gender dynamics affect the workings of the CRGs in many ways. The intent here is to discuss these thematically and to arrive at findings.

#### **7.3.1 Male spousal authority and permission**

It emerged across the CRGs that women as a necessity required the permission of spouses for the participation and leadership in the CRGs. According to Oduyoye (1995), it is clearly stated that in Ghanaian family structure the husband is usually the ultimate leader in the family unit.<sup>699</sup> As such, a wife requires the permission of her husband in engagements or opportunities beyond the home setting. Insight is gained into the magnitude of authority that husbands have over wives from many of the participants. This, of course, stems from the fact that Ghanaian society is patriarchal, as was expressed by the priest of the CCR. For Oduyoye (1995), when an Akan woman marries, she is transferred from the authority of her uncle to the authority of her husband where she remains a "subject" and not an individual with full autonomy as her husband.<sup>700</sup> A similar transfer of authority from male kin (father or uncle) to a husband is also a practice of other tribes. For example, a female participant from the CCR is from the Ewe ethnic group and not Akan but she still defers to her husband in marriage, as inscribed by Ghanaian family structure as stated by her. The Pentecostal ethos also strengthens the patriarchal family

---

<sup>698</sup> Cornwall and Rivas, "From 'Gender Equality and 'Women's Empowerment' to Global Justice: Reclaiming a Transformative Agenda for Gender and Development," 399.

<sup>699</sup> Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa : African Women and Patriarchy*, 134-35.

<sup>700</sup> *Ibid.*, 135.



structure.<sup>701</sup> This is because it maintains that the man is authoritarian in the marriage unit and that the woman must defer to him in all things. These structures of power exclude many women from taking up positions of leadership in the CRGs.

From the above, one can identify power structures that have implications for the empowerment of women in the CRGs, utilizing the lens of intersectionality. Intersectionality refers to the combination and implications of identities from an analytic, concerned with structures of power and exclusion.<sup>702</sup> Some of the structures of power seen in this study are culture, concerning the patrilineal and matrilineal inclination of ethnic groups in Ghana. For Kanyoro (2006), African feminist theology is an effort at repair of the imbalance and of the critique of tradition and culture through the lens of African women and with their own voices.<sup>703</sup> Therefore, the identities of women as belonging to ethnic groups such as the Akan and Ewe implies that the culture of these groups has some bearing on them as structures of power. In connection with leadership, such patriarchal traditions have the potential to keep women subjugated and under the authority of male kin (husband, uncle or father). Therefore, in this study, empowerment is not examined in isolation; rather, the study highlights other mitigating factors that interact with the possibilities for empowerment. In this study, culture/ tradition emerges as weighty frames that have implications for women's roles and gender dynamics as a whole.

A female participant of the MPRP also stated that for her, the escalation of divorce cases in other contexts is due to the desire for gender equality. In the Ghanaian milieu, "the divorce rate is relatively low," she argued, due to women tolerating male dominance. These "save" marriages in her view. The participants were of the view that traits were imbibed from the teachings in the CRGs that aid the success of marriages. A participant buttressed her argument with a scenario of a woman who ascribed the longevity of her marriage to the activities of the MPRP. This is a case of bargaining with patriarchy, where women forgo being assertive for gains in marriage by compromising and accepting subordination.<sup>704</sup> These women are in a context of male dominance, which is entrenched. There are expectations by society for women in marriage that are yet to be successfully challenged even in the religious sphere. Thus, for majority of

---

<sup>701</sup> Parsitau, "Agents of Gendered Change: Empowerment, Salvation and Gendered Transformation in Urban Kenya," 209. [https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1057/9781137017253\\_9](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1057/9781137017253_9) Accessed 2 December 2020

<sup>702</sup> Cho et al., "Toward a Field of Intersectionality Studies: Theory, Applications, and Praxis," 797. [https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/669608?seq=1#metadata\\_info\\_tab\\_contents](https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/669608?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents). Accessed 24 June 2019.

<sup>703</sup> Kanyoro, "Beads and Strands: Threading More Beads in the Story of the Circle," 39-40.

<sup>704</sup> Donald E. Miller and Tetsunao Yamamori, "Organizing the Saints: Giving the Ministry to the People," in *Global Pentecostalism, The New Face of Christian Social Engagement*, Includes Dvd (University of California Press, 2007), 209.

these women, they opt to negotiate these expectations by accepting subservience in order to gain marital unions due to structural patriarchy.

Similarly, regarding patriarchal marriage, this overlaps with the expectations of subservience that exists within the pervading cultures making matters direr. According to Oduyoye (1995), an Akan remains a "subject" and not an individual with full autonomy as her male counterparts, who receive a measure of autonomy by marriage.<sup>705</sup> Therefore, it can be stated that, Pentecostalism although is empowering in many ways is also disempowering or oppressive in several ways. This especially so when it overlaps with pervading elements in the existing cultures. In some instances, the aversion to divorce by the Pentecostal ethos can lead to women having to endure spousal abuse.<sup>706</sup> Interestingly, even the abused do maintain that divorce is a breach of the law of God in spite of their predicament of oppression in specific contexts.<sup>707</sup>

In a session of a CCR meeting, it opened with a song titled, *Owura tena me nkyen kakra* or "Lord sit with me a little longer." It speaks to the immanence of God in the lives of the adherents as succour and anchor; a God that is not aloof. Furthermore, the song is also a summation of what the CCR and the other CRGs were about—taking extra time to experience another dimension of spirituality. The spirituality practised and received through the medium of a group or organization leads to a measure of spiritual knowledge and expertise available to an individual or a culture.<sup>708</sup> This is precisely what ensued in the CCR whereby spiritual knowledge in the form of Bible lessons and prayers as well as resources of spirituality such as song, worship, and prophecy and was the culture. This is a reverberating basis for the existence of the CRGs especially in relation to its spiritual benefits for the adherents characterized as being distinctively Pentecostal/ charismatic.

Remarkably, men were leaders in almost all the main leading capacities in the meeting sessions of the CCR. However, a woman was called upon to read the Akan Twi Bible in a particular session. It was clear that this occurred because she was one of the few individuals in the group who could read in that local language. She was, therefore, resorted to in order to aid individuals who were more fluent in the Akan Twi language. For Kanyoro (2006), African feminist theology critiques the pervading culture through the lens of African women and with their own

---

<sup>705</sup> Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa : African Women and Patriarchy*, 135.

<sup>706</sup> Attanasi, "Spirit and Power: The Growth and Global Impact of Pentecostalism," 248.

<sup>707</sup> Ibid.

<sup>708</sup> Anthony Middlebrooks and Alain Noghiu, "Leadership and Spiritual Capital: Exploring the Link between Individual Service Disposition and Organizational Value," (2010): 73.

voices.<sup>709</sup> This requires that the experiences of African women must be brought to bear not just when there is a lacuna but as deliberate praxis. It became clear, therefore, that in terms of leadership, women in the CCR were often an afterthought. They were only considered when there was a void that men could not readily occupy. This is another instance of bargaining with patriarchy; whereby women accept the opportunities, they can get in the Pentecostal/charismatic movement without challenging the existing patriarchal structures as a way of gaining some benefits by being subservient.<sup>710</sup> This means that women who are leaders or desire to be leaders as well as those who may play significant roles in churches often have to conform to the gendered world around them.<sup>711</sup> Having said this, I was duly informed, that the immediate past coordinator in the CCR had been a woman. Nonetheless, if in the past the CCR had done better for female presentation in leadership, it was not so in current times.

### **7.3.2 Asymmetrical gender roles and the female limitation**

A significant number of participants also gave much insight into Ghanaian family structure and gender dynamics. They attested that the reason for the lack of a strong presence of women in the CCR can be attributed to asymmetrical gender roles in the home. This seems to be the case in the CCR. However, during participant observation, it was noticeable that women were the majority as well as the having the responsibilities of running the CCR in the background. As it is in other similar Pentecostal circles.<sup>712</sup> Asymmetrical gender roles exist often where women have the sole duty of childcare and housekeeping (among other related duties) without the expectation of help from husbands. Ultimately, women carry the heavier end of the load.<sup>713</sup> The question, then, is what is the source of such gender injustice at home, where the wife is the subordinate or domestic helper to the husband? Oduyoye puts forth the idea that when boys are born, it is said that a mighty man of valour has been born.<sup>714</sup> However, when an infant girl is born, it is said that "she will fetch water for us."<sup>715</sup> Therefore, Oduyoye (1995) reiterates society itself, made up of tribes, clans and families, is a culprit of the predicament of women, which can be surmised as injustice.<sup>716</sup> In addition, as Acolatse (2010), has underscored, the age-old

---

<sup>709</sup> Kanyoro, "Beads and Strands: Threading More Beads in the Story of the Circle," 39-40.

<sup>710</sup> Mapuranga, "Bargaining with Patriarchy? Women Pentecostal Leaders in Zimbabwe," 74-75.

<sup>711</sup> Agadjanian, "Women's Religious Authority in a Sub-Saharan Setting: Dialectics of Empowerment and Dependency," 1000.

<sup>712</sup> Parsitau, "Agents of Gendered Change: Empowerment, Salvation and Gendered Transformation in Urban Kenya," 210.

<sup>713</sup> Acolatse, "Unraveling the Regional Myth in the Turn toward Autonomy" 223.

<sup>714</sup> Conversations with Mercy Amba Oduyoye, on 2 February 2017, Accra Ghana.

<sup>715</sup> Conversations with Mercy Amba Oduyoye, on 2 February 2017, Accra Ghana.

<sup>716</sup> Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa: African Women and Patriarchy*, 157.

saying of the *aboa/ nipa* dichotomy accorded to infant girls and infant boys respectively, poses a problem: women are often placed in a position of a disadvantage because of it.<sup>717</sup> Oduyoye further argues:

*The language used in describing women in both traditional and modern structures ... belie the statement of African men that African women are not oppressed.*<sup>718</sup>

From the above, some of the language of traditional orientation is the *aboa/ nipa* dichotomy ascribed to maleness and femaleness as well as adages of traditional orality that celebrate maleness but inadvertently undermine femaleness. A male participant from the MPRP, let it be known that his wife was a spiritual leader, thus he became a member to assist his wife. For, him the teachings born of the ethos of the MPRP preserves marriages. This may be the case. However, the sole intention of preserving marriage above all else can be oppressive to women in specific situations.<sup>719</sup> Therefore, the Pentecostal ideal although has its advantages, also has negative consequences that are disempowering for women in particular, depending on the marital situation. Interestingly, a dimension of the burden of women, the expectations attached to women in marriage, and in the home is that, even when they excel outside the home, they experience restriction at home. From the case of a female participant of the CCR, it can be seen that despite attaining the position of leader or coordinator in the past, her responsibilities at home curtailed her ability to fully perform the position of leader. Based on the empirical data, women participants are very dedicated to their responsibilities at home as wives and nurturers, often to the detriment of the pursuit of leadership. Echoing Acolatse (2010), women are nurtured early into keeping their place.<sup>720</sup> Also, Adichie (2014), argues that females are conditioned to "shrink themselves" and are taught not to have too much ambition so as not to threaten the man rather, marriage should be a woman's greatest goal.<sup>721</sup>

Societal expectations that inform gender dynamics solidify gender roles. For participants in this study, being a woman and being a wife prescribed domestic roles at home that had implications for their roles beyond the home. Commonly, duties at home are the priority, and religious leadership come second. The prism of intersectionality considers the subordinate subject.<sup>722</sup>

---

<sup>717</sup> Acolatse, "Unraveling the Regional Myth in the Turn toward Autonomy" 223.

<sup>718</sup> Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa: African Women and Patriarchy*, 157.

<sup>719</sup> Attanasi, "Spirit and Power: The Growth and Global Impact of Pentecostalism," 252-53.

<sup>720</sup> Acolatse, "Unraveling the Regional Myth in the Turn toward Autonomy" 223.

<sup>721</sup> Adichie, *We Should All Be Feminists*, 27-28.

<sup>722</sup> Cho et al., "Toward a Field of Intersectionality Studies: Theory, Applications, and Praxis," 798.

Therefore, a more holistic and nuanced examination of Ghanaian family structure, gender dynamics and the implications for women in the CRGs is achieved in relation to the empowerment of women in these circles.

### 7.3.3 The absent women

The constraints of employment in concert with family responsibilities emerged as an underlying cause of absent women leaders in segments of the CRGs. This was especially so in the CCR. Participants from CCR expressed how the juggle of family responsibilities with a career/employment plays a role in restricting women from leadership in the CCR. Participants attested that it was very difficult to do so and to take up leadership positions. The care of the home, childcare, and other "wifely duties" without assistance are given by several participants as the reason why many women are absent in leadership positions in the CRGs. Women are rather encouraged to make sacrifices for the sake of the family.<sup>723</sup> Therefore, the hopes, aspirations, and dreams of empowerment were often curtailed for women because of how Ghanaian family structure is gendered as indicated by many of the participants.

As attested by participants, Ghanaian society, broadly, includes dimensions that are disempowering for women. Nonetheless, Ghanaian society also include dimensions that potentially can lead to the empowerment of women. The Ga ethnic group in southern Ghana, for example, believe that God is *Ataa Naa Nyomo*, a dual-gendered Supreme Being as elderly mother father God.<sup>724</sup> Oduyoye (1995) indicates that this form of androgyny of God is found also in the Akan culture with *Afua Panini a Ofiri tete* as the Friday woman of ancient origins.<sup>725</sup> Furthermore, the Ewe ethnic group calls the Supreme Being the dual name *Mawu-Lisa*, meaning, female and male creator.<sup>726</sup> The imagery of femaleness in the Godhead in Ghanaian society/ culture provides a tool that when harnessed has the potential to be empowering for women. This is because the imagery is a powerful symbolic force that can inch away at male dominance to bring about equality of the sexes. Remarkably, in some instances, the vernacular names of deities were neutral but due to the history of colonialism, Western Christian interpretations were forced upon the existing African societies, which included a more rigid

---

<sup>723</sup> Acolatse, "Unraveling the Regional Myth in the Turn toward Autonomy" 226.

<sup>724</sup> Odamtten, "They Bleed but They Don't Die: Towards a Theoretical Canon on Ga-Adangbe Gender Studies," 111.

<sup>725</sup> Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa : African Women and Patriarchy*, 111.

<sup>726</sup> Houessou-Adin, "Mawu-Lisa." <https://sk-sagepub-com.ezproxy.uio.no/reference/africanreligion> Accessed 14 December 2020

gendered language.<sup>727</sup> Therefore, the relegation to the periphery of elements from Ghanaian religio-cultural belief (androgyny of God) and the replacement of it by the western understanding of God in modern-day Ghana is the case. Oduyoye (1995) calls this the language of modern structures that belie or contradict the stance that African women are not oppressed.<sup>728</sup>

One major way of employing androgyny of God to empower women is through the rhetoric of women and men in a myriad of instances in society. This includes the socialization processes in the home setting and then in the larger society. A very potent channel is the church itself, as a structure of power; it plays an undeniable role in the socialization of adherents. During participant observation, it was clear in the statements of female participants that their stance has been influenced by church teachings. Especially in relation to their belief that they were subordinate to men. Therefore, sermons by both women and men leaders that deploy the androgyny of God emanating from Ghanaian belief in the Supreme Being has the potential to uplift women, when brought from the periphery to the centre in sermons that inadvertently socialize adherents. This was not the case according to the data as God was referred to often in rigid gender mode.

In addition, in the present scheme of things, all wise mothers are tacitly enjoined to take heed to bring up their daughters to know their culturally accepted position vis-à-vis men in specific contexts.<sup>729</sup> From an early age, these responsibilities are taught to young girls as part of their socialization due to the culture/ tradition. From the numerous views of the women participants, they unequivocally accept the norm of asymmetrical gender roles even though they insist that it is one of the main underlying causes of the absence of women in leadership, especially in the CCR. They have learnt by socialization not to challenge the status quo. Interestingly, a careful analysis of the ages of women leaders in the MPRP, show that majority of them are of the older generation. They therefore have fewer responsibilities at home, at least in relation to the care of young children. In the ABSPG, there was a mirror scenario as well as the instance of one female leader being unmarried. This is an important factor that informs whether women can become leaders in the CRGs or not. A cultural stereotype of expectations and conduct therefore exists.<sup>730</sup>

---

<sup>727</sup> Frederiks, "Miss Jairus Speaks: Developments in African Feminist Theology," 75. [https://brill.com/view/journals/exch/32/1/article-p66\\_7.xml?lang=en](https://brill.com/view/journals/exch/32/1/article-p66_7.xml?lang=en). Accessed 8 July 2019.

<sup>728</sup> Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa : African Women and Patriarchy*, 157.

<sup>729</sup> Acolatse, "Unraveling the Regional Myth in the Turn toward Autonomy" 224.

<sup>730</sup> *Ibid.*, 225.

Thus, for Kanyoro (2002), there is the need to sift the good aspects of culture (and religion) to affirm them, knowing that there is room to reject what is unacceptable.<sup>731</sup> The dimensions that are good include the inclusions of the female ascriptions of God in the androgyny of God, which have the potential to empower women. These inclusions of female ascriptions were absent in the circles of the CRGs. The inclusions of the female ascriptions has the potential to reimagine and reshape the language emanating from modern structures such as colonial and Western influences on religio-cultural belief. The disempowering dimensions are the forms of socialization that do not uplift women but rather oppress them, evident in adages and sayings embedded in an oral culture, such as the aboa/ nipa dichotomy. The relegation to the periphery of the androgyny of God due to modern structures is also disempowering.

A female participant from the CCR, claimed that men and women are not equal. For her, women are unable to perform as leaders like their male counterparts. She cites nurturing of children, food preparation and housekeeping as the main mitigating factors. She further states that women can prevail if only they receive assistance with the above-mentioned tasks. Such perspectives of inequality of the sexes contributes to women being absent from positions of religious leadership. For Kanyoro (2001), women are condemned and relegated to the backrows of the church for many reasons, including their physiology and sexuality.<sup>732</sup> Furthermore, for Naidu and Hoel (2013) androcentric exegetes have commonly pronounced women's sexual difference from that of men—which, ostensibly, "naturally" stimulates the production of asymmetrical gender roles.<sup>733</sup> This implies that as the participant opined, women's functions often invite gender roles, which are used to exclude women from religious leadership.

Additionally, concerning empowerment, it has been criticized because of an exclusive focus on it to the detriment of other factors, such as tradition/ culture and family structure in relation to providing, say literacy, as empowerment can give false-positive readings.<sup>734</sup> This is where that which may not contribute to empowerment is misread. In this study, other factors are taken seriously when analysing the data and not empowerment alone. This ensures that a nuanced examination is achieved. Such factors include family structure and tradition/ culture to mention a few. Therefore, empowerment in this study examines and undertakes analysis by also taking

---

<sup>731</sup> Kanyoro, *Introducing Feminist Cultural Hermeneutics : An African Perspective*, 70.

<sup>732</sup> Kanyoro, "Engendered Communal Theology: African Women's Contribution to Theology in the 21st Century," 172.

<sup>733</sup> Naidu and Hoel, "Continuities and Departures: Women's Religious and Spiritual Leadership," 6. <http://www.scielo.org.za/pdf/jsr/v26n2/01.pdf>. Accessed 20 February 2019; Becher, *Women, Religion, and Sexuality : Studies on the Impact of Religious Teachings on Women*, 149.

<sup>734</sup> Drydyk, "Empowerment, Agency, and Power," 251.

into account age, education/ literacy, employment, culture, and tradition intersectionally. Furthermore, it has been well researched and argued by feminist scholars of religion that women's difference from men, particularly their physiology and reproductive roles, constitute a central building block of patriarchy. For Naidu and Hoel (2013), they argue that such perspectives obviously, have implications for women's access to religious leadership.<sup>735</sup>

### **7.3.4 Education, literacy and culture**

From the empirical data, it is indicative that education and attendant literacy is an important determining factor of female religious leadership. Education is, of course, a very powerful tool that equips and empowers individuals to be leaders and to play significant roles in every sphere of life. In Ghana, men have historically been more educated than women have.<sup>736</sup> While this is on the decline in recent times, the repercussions of past practices still manifest today. Unlike in the ABSPG and the MPRP, the main language of communication and discussions in the CCR was the English language. The only point in the discussions, where Akan Twi was spoken was during the reading of the Akan Twi Bible to translate what had been read into the English language.

Comparatively, there were more women in leadership in the ABSPG and the MPRP. While the ABSPG was organized into different language groups, the mode of language for the MPRP was mainly Akan Twi. It therefore, emerges that due to the often limited education circumstance of many of the women, this affects their confidence as stated by one participant and therefore hinders such women in the CCR particularly. The underlying reason for the initial favouritism in the education of boys over girls can also be attributed to the colonial preference of boys over girls in education.<sup>737</sup> Acolatse (2010), states that cultural stereotypes of appropriate striving for different genders can also account for the disparity in education.<sup>738</sup> As Oduyoye (1995), puts forth, the boy is lauded as a mighty man of valour but the girl is referred to as a water fetcher.<sup>739</sup> Such practices can potentially lead to girls not realizing their full potentials as full humans equal to their male counterparts.

---

<sup>735</sup> Naidu and Hoel, "Continuities and Departures: Women's Religious and Spiritual Leadership," 6.

<sup>736</sup> Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion : The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches*, 62.

<sup>737</sup> *ibid.*, 62-63.

<sup>738</sup> Acolatse, "Unraveling the Regional Myth in the Turn toward Autonomy " 225.

<sup>739</sup> Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa : African Women and Patriarchy*, 87. Conversations with Mercy Amba Oduyoye, on 2 February 2017, Accra Ghana.



In connection to Ephesians 5:23, this verse is invariably resorted to as conferring leadership to the husband over the wife.<sup>740</sup> This is in reference to, "any family that does not have a man as the head is in trouble," as expressed by a male spiritual leader in the CRG. This pointed to some of the inspirations that have influenced the orientation and opinion of both male and female adherents in the sections of the CRGs. This is because, during semi-structured interviews, I asked adherents of the ABSPG (two of whom were female leaders) if they thought men and women were equal. This probe as a backup question, was informed by the pervading expectation of female subservience. I wanted to gain insight into what participants believed. I was particularly interested in what the women believed. Interestingly, all the women I interviewed from the ABSPG were of the view that women were not equal to men. Some claimed that the Bible has established the man as the leader and the woman as second in command. In addition, they were of the view that women were to submit to men, as they believed this was biblically commanded.

Concerning the interpretation for Ephesians 5:23 due to its utilization as the most common biblical text deployed by participants, the following is the case. Ephesians 5:23 can be interpreted in concert with Ephesians 5:25 (a continuation of that biblical text), which commands husbands to love their wives. In addition, 1Corinthians 13:4-7, which is about the biblical operational definition of love, is indispensable for this line of argument. This includes the following. Love/ charity suffereth [suffers] long and is kind...<sup>741</sup> Love is not self-seeking...<sup>742</sup> Love/ charity vaunteth [vaunts] not itself and is not puffed up...<sup>743</sup> This, among other dimensions is the concept of love in the biblical text.

Therefore, from an African feminist point of view, what men claim about Biblical interpretation must be questioned by women readers in order to contribute to theological thinking via women's life experiences.<sup>744</sup> Therefore, with this in mind a contextual rereading of Ephesians 5:23 is incomplete without Ephesians 5:25, and in concert with 1Corinthians 13:4-7, drawing from African feminist theology. Interestingly Oduyoye (1995), argues that Paul controverts his own message of freedom in Christ Jesus in Galatians 3:28 and regresses to a language about the subordination of women that conforms to that of his contemporaries.<sup>745</sup> The answer that can

---

<sup>740</sup> This verse states that, "the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body of which he is the saviour."

<sup>741</sup> In the King James Bible version. 1Corinthians 13:4,

<sup>742</sup> In the Amplified Bible version. 1Corinthians 13:5

<sup>743</sup> In the King James Bible version. 1Corinthians 13:4

<sup>744</sup> Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa : African Women and Patriarchy*, 190.

<sup>745</sup> *Ibid.*, 191.

mitigate interpretations that condone women's subservience is a contextual reading of biblical texts by women for the purposes of bible translation as argued by Kanyoro (1992).<sup>746</sup> Interpolating from that, interpretation at the grassroots level to uphold women as full beings is vital.<sup>747</sup> Therefore, a husband as the head, who requires a wife to subject/ submit herself to him, is also required to love his wife. Whereby, love is further operationally defined as follows:

It [love] does not rejoice at injustice and unrighteousness, but rejoices when right and truth prevail. Love bears up under anything and everything that comes, is ever ready to believe the best of the person, its hopes are fadeless under all circumstances, and it endures everything without weakening.<sup>748</sup>

Therefore, due to the command to bear all things and not to rejoice in injustice, implied in the instruction to love, there are implications. It consequently infers that, to love is to intrinsically make sacrifices and compromises for the wife as a husband. Sacrifice connotes compromise in all its shades, by so doing, spousal submission and subjection are supposed to be mutual in a marital union for both parties, according to a feminist contextual reading of the above-mentioned biblical texts employed. For Oduyoye (1995), it is crucial that Christian women be aware that what men claim Bible say is not definitive due to wide translations but rather women must question and do their own thinking.<sup>749</sup>

The stance of subservience even of women in leadership is observable. Therefore, women in the ABSPG can be characterized as servant leaders; even though they were at the helm of affairs, they have been taught to perceive themselves as lower than men or subordinate to them. It is difficult to discern and infer whether they truly believed this or were simply repeating or regurgitating what they had been taught. Nonetheless, as servant leaders, these women were combining leadership roles with the hearts and minds of a servant first and as an identity.<sup>750</sup>

In the patriarchal society of Greater Accra Ghana, tradition and culture inform the ways in which women are able to negotiate and indeed, to access religious leadership. Some participants in this study expressed that women are not equal to men. The Bible and participants' belief in the authority of the biblical interpretations inform their understanding of gender dynamics and the view that women are to submit to men. In this way, participants in this study signal the

---

<sup>746</sup> Kanyoro, "Interpreting Old Testament Polygamy through African Eyes," 99.

<sup>747</sup> Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa : African Women and Patriarchy*, 190.

<sup>748</sup> In the Amplified version. 1Corinthians 13:6-7

<sup>749</sup> Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa : African Women and Patriarchy*, 190-91.

<sup>750</sup> Sims, *Servanthood: Leadership for the Third Millennium*, 18.

magnitude of work still to be accomplished in order to secure gender equality in leadership, and gender equality in society more broadly.

#### **7.4 Pentecostalism, participation, and activities**

There are other forms of activities that give individuals an opportunity and sense of expression, aside from leadership for women in the CRGs. These refer to the various ways in which women express themselves or participate in the CRGs and how they interact with the community in numerous ways. This is especially so in the absence of leading roles and what their views on their positioning are. The interest here is activities undertaken by the adherents within the CRGs that are relevant for this study in connection to Pentecostalism as a whole. They can also be activities undertaken by the adherents as a result of their devotion to the CRG or linked to influence by and from the CRG.

##### **7.4.1 Intercession and miracle**

It was evident from the empirical data that there existed a belief among participants concerning answered prayer occurring in the CRGs when prayers were made for individuals. There was also mention of women who did much in the running of the day-to-day activities of the CRG. However, in all cases, there was the insistence that there was no discrimination against women in the opportunities for leading positions. A vast number of followers/ adherents in the CCR join the CRGs for healing, miracles and spiritual fulfilment, as is the case in other Pentecostal contexts.<sup>751</sup> They also believe that by virtue of the Holy Spirit they receive gifts/ abilities, which set themselves apart for preparation for the work of the CCR, although the women often work in the background as in the CCR.<sup>752</sup> Women in the CCR thus, worked in the background. For Naidu and Hoel (2013), the following is the case as the foundational basis for women's leadership exclusion. Deprecating assumptions pertaining to women's bodies, sexuality, reproductive capacities—and, let us not forget, their provocative bleeding—have generated a multitude of exclusionary religious beliefs and practices.<sup>753</sup>

Nonetheless, the ability to intercede is recognized as a practice bestowed on participants as charisma or a spiritual gift. As such, participants as adherents expect miracles/ mighty works when they intercede for individuals. They often do receive answered prayers, as attested by

---

<sup>751</sup> Brusco, "Gender and Power " 86.

<sup>752</sup> Working in the background may not be leadership but affords women the opportunity of skill utilization and development of potentials. See Parsitau, "Agents of Gendered Change: Empowerment, Salvation and Gendered Transformation in Urban Kenya," 210.

<sup>753</sup> Naidu and Hoel, "Continuities and Departures: Women's Religious and Spiritual Leadership," 6. <http://www.scielo.org.za/pdf/jsr/v26n2/01.pdf>. Accessed 20 February 2019; Becher, *Women, Religion, and Sexuality : Studies on the Impact of Religious Teachings on Women*, 149.

many of the participants during interviewing. Adherents therefore, provide services with selflessness/ integrity and personal values to empower the human spirit as servant leaders.<sup>754</sup> This involves assisting others to be liberated, to survive, to cope, and to actualize potential by affecting others around them.<sup>755</sup> The dimensions of answered prayer is empowering for the women who practice the faith activity of prayer that for them birth miracles.

During participant observation, in the session that opened with the song, *Owura tena me nkyen kakra* or "Lord sit with me a little longer," a number of occurrences took place that are relevant for discussions. It was evident that the purpose of the meetings was to make room to receive spiritual and moral guidance.<sup>756</sup> This was evident in the teachings, discussions, worship, song and prayer that permeated the activities of the CCR and indeed the two other CRGs as well. One interesting occurrence in this particular session was the giving of prophecy by a male adherent. Giving of prophecy is a strong Pentecostal practice, given the current mainstay practice of the CRGs. The CCR therefore, was an arena for free expression of Pentecostal tendencies without restriction, as was also the case in the ABSPG and the MPRP. Prophecies were considered a message from God spoken by an individual who possesses the gift of prophecy. The prophecy was intended to encourage adherents in most cases. Therefore, the Pentecostal features were very visible in the CCR. This was evident not only in the giving of prophecy but also in the Pentecostal-like worship and praise style adopted in their meeting sessions. Elements such as prophecy and song as emerged from the data are empowering for participants.

Furthermore, the songs sang were varied but there was the exclusion of hymns, which are typically the mainstay of Roman Catholic liturgy. Therefore, in the CCR, strong Pentecostal features were exhibited. However, when it comes to women in any form of leadership, this was lacking except in one instance. The roles that women played were as backup singers, supporting prayer warriors, and adherents; they were in the fold but mainly in the background.<sup>757</sup> However, by observation, it was clear that women were the majority within the CCR, as is typically the case in many Pentecostal groups or congregations.<sup>758</sup> This is indeed problematic in case where women are majority and yet lag behind in leadership. For Phiri (2002), many churchwomen

---

<sup>754</sup> Davis, *Servant Leadership and Followership: Examining the Impact of Workplace Behaviour*, XVI.

<sup>755</sup> Heyward, "Empowerment," 52.

<sup>756</sup> Ammerman, *Sacred Stories, Spiritual Tribes : Finding Religion in Everyday Life*, 3.

<sup>757</sup> Parsitau, "Agents of Gendered Change: Empowerment, Salvation and Gendered Transformation in Urban Kenya," 210.

<sup>758</sup> Brusco, "Gender and Power " 80.

find themselves in a system that favours men over women.<sup>759</sup> Victory N. Mbanjwa, as a case in point, belonged to church that succumbed to this injustice, where women who had received theological training since the creation of the church were not welcomed into ordained ministry.<sup>760</sup> Kanyoro (2002) affirms the agenda of African feminist theology as focusing on the critique of injustice and the disparity that women experience within structures of society.<sup>761</sup>

Nonetheless, the motivation for the existence of groups such as the CCR in mainline churches is perceived in how they harbour Pentecostal tendencies to meet the existential needs of adherents.<sup>762</sup> By virtue of the typology put forth by Linda Woodhead (2014), the Roman Catholic Church is categorized under church Christianity.<sup>763</sup> The Pentecostal movement combines major elements from mystical and biblical Christianity because of its focus on the Word and Spirit.<sup>764</sup> However, in my observation, the CCR inculcates the mystical dimensions of the Pentecostal movement in the form of prophecy.<sup>765</sup> It also holds some of the church Christianity dimensions familiar to Roman Catholic Church itself, where authority from heaven rests with clergy, who are usually male.<sup>766</sup> This has a profound effect on the nature of hierarchy or leadership distribution of the sexes, which mirrors that of the larger Roman Catholic Church.

At this same session, the theme for the year was announced: "New Pentecost for New Evangelism." I find this very relevant in buttressing the idea that this CCR takes their designation as a charismatic/ Pentecostal movement seriously. I can firmly say that evangelism and the Pentecostal emphasis is not the mainstay of Roman Catholicism. This is also a form of Pentecostalization of the MLCs in an indirect and inadvertent manner.<sup>767</sup> However, "Pentecostalization" and Pentecostal elements in the Roman Catholic Church and the CCR respectively was limited to specific dimensions: these were in prayer, song, worship and general activities that make up the meetings sessions. It did not affect leadership in any way in the

---

<sup>759</sup> Phiri, "Called at Twenty Seven and Ordained at Seventy Three! The Story of Rev. Victory Nomvete Mbanjwa in the United Congregational Church in Southern Africa," 112.

<sup>760</sup> Ibid., 123.

<sup>761</sup> Kanyoro, "Beads and Strands: Threading More Beads in the Story of the Circle," 39-40.

<sup>762</sup> Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism : A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana*, 32, 132.

<sup>763</sup> Linda Woodhead, *Christianity : A Very Short Introduction*, 2nd ed. ed., vol. 119, Very Short Introductions (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 58.

<sup>764</sup> Ibid., 72.

<sup>765</sup> Prophecy is however, not new to the Roman Catholic Church but among the laity of the CCR this is a Pentecostal influence as observed.

<sup>766</sup> Woodhead, *Christianity : A Very Short Introduction*, 119, 61.

<sup>767</sup> Omenyo, "From the Fringes to the Centre: Pentecostalization of the Mainline Churches in Ghana," 56.

current tenure. In some strands of Pentecostalism, such as the AICs women are in leadership.<sup>768</sup> Recently, among the neo-Pentecostals women continue to be in leadership.<sup>769</sup> However, in the CCR, leadership was the main preserve of men as observed. There is a fundamental difference between the Pentecostal movement and Roman Catholicism. In Roman Catholicism, the authority to be a leader has been via the priesthood per church tradition. In this tradition, the following is true,

*By the imposition of hands and through the words of the consecration, the grace of the Holy Spirit is given, and a sacred character is impressed in such wise that bishops, in an eminent and visible manner, take the place of Christ himself, teacher, shepherd, and priest, and act as his representatives... By virtue, therefore, of the Holy Spirit who has been given to them, bishops have been constituted true and authentic teachers of the faith and have been made pontiffs and pastors.*<sup>770</sup>

This means that it is only by ordination into the priesthood that, in this case, a male priest receives the grace to be a teacher/ clergy of the faith. This has affected the gender divide in leadership in the Roman Catholic Church. In Pentecostalism, on the other hand, the grace to be a spiritual leader is believed to come upon all who believe and makes spiritual leadership possible for all. Consider the following:

*Pentecostals believe that all Christians can experience the same empowerment of the Holy Spirit. This empowerment is most likely to happen at a time separate from conversion or water baptism. The emphasis for many Pentecostal churches is on the teaching of the 'full gospel.'*<sup>771</sup> *Pentecostals believe the effects of the work of the Holy Spirit as seen in the book of Acts are continuing today and until Jesus returns. Churches were formed for the sake of believers and also the community in which they live. As the people of God gathered, their lives were transformed by the work of the Holy Spirit, as they learned more from the Bible and were encouragements to each other. They were to be witnesses to the community of Christ who is alive.*<sup>772</sup>

---

<sup>768</sup> Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion : The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches*, 31.

<sup>769</sup> *Ibid.*, 165.

<sup>770</sup> Libreria Editrice Vaticana, "Catechism of the Catholic Church," [http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/\\_P4U.HTM](http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_P4U.HTM). Accessed 17 June 2019.

<sup>771</sup> Teresa Chai, "Pentecostalism in Mission and Evangelism Today," *International Review of Mission* 107, no. 1 (2018): 117.

<sup>772</sup> *Ibid.*, 124.

Therefore, in many strands of Pentecostalism, both sexes can be witnesses as well as clergy/spiritual leaders in the church, unlike in Roman Catholicism, because of the difference in the conferment of spiritual leadership, which allows the possibility of being, for example, a priest irrespective of sex. The Holy Spirit is conferred upon Roman Catholics during confirmation also.<sup>773</sup> However, the priests who are all male are recognized as the only true and authentic teachers of the faith and have been made pontiffs and pastors. This is a major difference between the two traditions and this has influenced leadership in this regard. A counter-argument may be that there were women in the past tenure of leadership in the CCR. The reality remains that in the current tenure among nine leadership positions and one ad hoc position, a woman was a leader in only one capacity. This is problematic especially in a group where women are the majority. This does not behove well for women's empowerment in the CCR. Oduyoye (1990), reiterates that God created both male and female as equals in his image and likeness—Imago Dei according to Genesis narrative.<sup>774</sup> Furthermore, Oduyoye (1995), calls for biblical ethics to demand that the moral agents responsible to God be on the side of the oppressed to defeat the enemies of the Imago Dei.<sup>775</sup>

#### **7.4.2 A state of self-doubt as a condition**

In the ABSPG, several of the participants made it known that, in general terms; women are more engaged in all areas of the Anglican Church with the ABSPG being no exception. One participant opined that the fact of the existence in current times of women priests and women on the decision-making board of the church, called the Parochial Church Council is a sign of a positive turn and of good things to come. For the participants, women are active in all arena and are encouraged in all activities linked to the church and ABSPG.

For, several of the participants, there was a general trend of females engaged with participating and being active in every facet of the workings of the Anglican Church and its ABSPG. This was evident as women were participating on decision-making boards. Women were being ordained and they were doing more in all areas.<sup>776</sup> There is no wonder then that the

---

<sup>773</sup> Vaticanana, "Catechism of the Catholic Church". [https://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc\\_css/archive/catechism/p2s2c1a2.htm](https://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/p2s2c1a2.htm) Accessed November 19 2020

<sup>774</sup> Oduyoye, *Who Will Roll the Stone Away? : The Ecumenical Decade of the Churches in Solidarity with Women*, no. 47, 53.

<sup>775</sup> *Daughters of Anowa : African Women and Patriarchy*, 185.

<sup>776</sup> The Anglican Church began ordaining females as priests in 2011 in Ghana. See Service, "Anglican Diocese of Accra Ordains First Female Priests". <http://www.anglicannews.org/news/2011/06/anglican-diocese-of-accra-ordains-first-female-priests.aspx>. Last modified 11 June 2011. Accessed 23 May 2017.

empowerment of women was in all segments of the Anglican Church and was evident in the ABSPG. This is because, in a cluster of six ABSPGs, three of its leaders were women demonstrating equality at first perusal that cannot be said to exist in other groups. Miller and Yamamori (2007), reiterate that women are mainly in the background in many Pentecostal context the world over.<sup>777</sup> According to Nadar (2002), this is often due to sexism and strife from church leadership in discrimination against churchwomen.<sup>778</sup>

Interestingly, interviews with some female participants in the ABSPG attested to the fact that, in spite of this spotless equality chalked by them, it was not holistic equality in some respects. In follow up questions, especially after I had heard the comments of a spiritual leader that gave me insight, one thing was clear: several of the women participants unequivocally expressed that, in their view, women were not equal to men. They often expressed this by appealing to hegemonic biblical interpretation to buttress their argument. The Pauline injunctions on women have had influence on the Pentecostal movement.<sup>779</sup> This one possible influence informs the stance of the women in the ABSPG. Adichie (2014), argues that females are conditioned to "shrink themselves."<sup>780</sup> Therefore, there exists patriarchal understanding that weaves through both religion and societal norms.

However, one could comprehend to a degree the reasons for such a trajectory of events from observation during participation. This is because a spiritual leader had made the following comments during a meeting session of CRG. He expressed that asymmetrical gender roles should be upheld and should be entrenched. He was of the view that "men should earn more than women should." He was inadvertently claiming that women were not equal to men. Therefore, the leaders, who are often male, have socialized many of the women who have been in this church from their infancy in this way. Thus, a condition of not being enough and a stance of self-doubt are lodged in the psyche of these women in the segments of the CRGs with not even the leaders escaping such a condition. Similarly, according to Bateye (2007), in her study of Pentecostal women leadership in Yoruba land, women leaders in the Pentecostal Yoruba context were largely unsure of themselves and were submissive rather than assertive on issues

---

<sup>777</sup> The CCR being one such group, where women were mainly in the background as is the case in many Pentecostal context the world over. See Miller and Yamamori, "Organizing the Saints: Giving the Ministry to the People," 208-09.

<sup>778</sup> Nadar, "Journeying in Faith: The Stories of Two Ordained Indian Women in the Anglican and Full Gospel Churches in South Africa," 140-42.

<sup>779</sup> Miller and Yamamori, "Organizing the Saints: Giving the Ministry to the People," 209.

<sup>780</sup> Adichie, *We Should All Be Feminists*, 27-28.



of women and the Bible.<sup>781</sup> For Naidu and Hoel (2002), they argue that such perspectives, obviously, have implications for women's access to religious leadership.<sup>782</sup> For Getman and Nadar (2013), the physiological and reproductive functions of women such as menstruation and pregnancy invites discrimination against women by individuals who draw from patriarchal understanding.<sup>783</sup> This is often the foundational reasons for patriarchal understanding.

During participant observation, a participant and leader from the CRG stated that asymmetrical gender roles should be the norm and that, "any household that does not have the man as the head is in trouble." He stated that he married a woman who was hard working concerning housekeeping, childcare, and domestic chores. He upheld this as the ideal for wives and that women who did not possess these qualities were lacking in full female essence. He admitted that he never watched his children when they were babies and toddlers and that he eschewed house chores. He made all this known as a template by which all other couples should follow as he was a leader. I observed that all were quiet and did not have a divergent view but listened in reverence during this time. For Naidu and Hoel (2013), even though hegemonic biblical interpretation is utilized as a justification to subjugate women, the real factors are the fact of the physiological difference between men and women, as well as reproductive difference.<sup>784</sup>

Interestingly, another leader from the ABSPG deployed the Genesis narrative to explain that women were the "assistants of men." She claimed that women were created second to men to be helpmates to them. Therefore, she was somewhat second to, unequal to, subordinate to, and only helper in relation to men. This way of interpreting Genesis narrative is a common one. There is a counter-argument levelled against such interpretation. According to Phyllis Trible (1979), such interpretation is problematic because the word "helper" in Genesis 2:18 refers to *ezer* which has many uses, including in relational terms God as helper to Israel; this does not connote inferiority in any way.<sup>785</sup> Furthermore, the fact that woman was created out of the rib of man often incites inferiority in dominant interpretations of Scripture. The following is a more liberating interpretation according to Phyllis Trible:

---

<sup>781</sup> Bateye, "Forging Identities: Women as Participants and Leaders in the Church among the Yoruba," 10.

<sup>782</sup> Naidu and Hoel, "Continuities and Departures: Women's Religious and Spiritual Leadership," 6.

<sup>783</sup> Eliza Getman and Sarojini Nadar, "Natality and Motherism: Embodiment within Praxis of Spiritual Leadership," *ibid.*: 60.

<sup>784</sup> Maheshvari Naidu and Nina Hoel, "Continuities and Departures: Women's Religious and Spiritual Leadership," *ibid.*: 6-7.

<sup>785</sup> Trible, "Eve and Adam: Genesis 2-3 Reread," 75.

*In Genesis 2, woman is created solely by deity without the effort of man, who is by now in a deep sleep and is not an eyewitness to this process. He, like woman, is created from the dust of the earth and had his life hanging by the breath of life of deity; neither is he superior to woman but expresses solidarity and equality in the poem in Genesis 2:21-23.<sup>786</sup>*

Furthermore, because of the stance of the women who deploy the interpretation that women are the help to men in reference to the above biblical text, this can be considered as hegemonic interpretation. As already mentioned, and as is evident from the above, these women leaders in the ABSPG can be considered as servant leaders. This is because a servant leader is one who can embody both leader and follower dimensions.<sup>787</sup> In Pentecostalism, due to the ethos where women are expected to be subordinate in the church and home, women are compelled to bargain with patriarchy.<sup>788</sup> This is where women trade prestige and authority within religious settings for gains.<sup>789</sup> In the case of the ABSPG, the gains of patriarchal bargaining in this Pentecostal circles include the opportunity to be servant leaders. By so doing they kowtow to the pervading rhetoric of female subordination. Elsewhere, women Pentecostal leaders reinforce patriarchy through their sermons thereby, bargaining with patriarchy to maximize security.<sup>790</sup> This particular instance is in relation to religious authority.

#### **7.4.3 Dreams impinging on reality and deliverance/ exorcism**

Right from the get-go, it was apparent that "women run the show" in the MPRP, it was a woman's affair largely. The leader or teacher was female. Even though Pentecostal-charismatic Christianity may promote women's subservience (in many Pentecostal spaces) in some of its theological discourses, its orientation is towards charisma that makes anyone who is gifted a leader, thereby making possible in practice what is discouraged in doctrine.<sup>791</sup> This means that women of sacred power have room to lead by virtue of their charisma, which they possess in a myriad of spaces in the Pentecostal/ charismatic movement.

---

<sup>786</sup> Ibid., 76.

<sup>787</sup> Parris and Peachey, "A Systematic Literature Review of Servant Leadership Theory in Organizational Contexts," 378.

<sup>788</sup> Brusco, "Gender and Power" 80.

<sup>789</sup> The gains could be more domesticated and less abusive husbands. See Miller and Yamamori, "Organizing the Saints: Giving the Ministry to the People," 209.

<sup>790</sup> Mapuranga, "Bargaining with Patriarchy? Women Pentecostal Leaders in Zimbabwe," 83.

<sup>791</sup> Mhando et al., "Modes of Legitimation by Female Pentecostal-Charismatic Preachers in East Africa: A Comparative Study in Kenya and Tanzania," 330.

Many activities took place during a session of MPRP but the most significant was the element of exorcism, locally referred to as deliverance, which inculcates spiritual warfare. The female leader asked those who were experiencing nightmares to walk to the front of the sanctuary. She then conducted said exorcism with prayers and declarations.<sup>792</sup> Another male leader prayed for the adherents who came forward. Activities like prayers and exorcism are also a form of religious benefit to the adherents. This is because they serve as a cleansing process and are often assumed spiritually therapeutic while often believed by adherents to produce positive tangible results—a benefit of being in the group. Many in the Pentecostal/ charismatic movement in specific locations of Africa largely expect a spiritual kind of intervention by supernatural beings in their daily lives.<sup>793</sup> Thus, religious capital is derived from the beliefs and behaviours exhibited by the individuals through the culture of the organization.<sup>794</sup> In the Tanzanian and Kenyan cases, women in the Pentecostal/ charismatic movement display spiritual warfare (of which deliverance/ exorcism is an element) to seek legitimacy as well as render this service as a payoff to adherents.<sup>795</sup> Similarly, in the CRGs of MLCs specifically in the MPRP, spiritual warfare with its attendant deliverance /exorcism is a common benefit—a payoff for being in the group as an adherent. This activity no doubt legitimizes women of sacred power in the MPRP as seen in their dominance in the CRG under discussion.

Belief in dreams impinging on reality is a Ghanaian or even an African worldview.<sup>796</sup> It is the belief that the spiritual world (of which the dream state is considered part) has consequences for physical life and daily living.<sup>797</sup> In the African context, dreams are understood as avenues for insight with spiritual connotations.<sup>798</sup> This is because there is not much distinction between the natural and the supernatural in the African thought system.<sup>799</sup> Interestingly, Pentecostalism

---

<sup>792</sup> Exorcism has to do with casting out of demons: deliverance includes exorcism and the reversal of the effects of negative physical and spiritual forces that may be at work against individual destinies. J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, *Sighs and Signs of the Spirit: Ghanaian Perspectives on Pentecostalism and Renewal in Africa* (Oxford: Wipf & Stock, 2015), 149.

<sup>793</sup> Mhando et al., "Modes of Legitimation by Female Pentecostal-Charismatic Preachers in East Africa: A Comparative Study in Kenya and Tanzania," 330.

<sup>794</sup> Middlebrooks and Noghiu, "Leadership and Spiritual Capital: Exploring the Link between Individual Service Disposition and Organizational Value," 72.

<sup>795</sup> Mhando et al., "Modes of Legitimation by Female Pentecostal-Charismatic Preachers in East Africa: A Comparative Study in Kenya and Tanzania," 326.

<sup>796</sup> Kailing, "A New Solution to the African Christian Problem," 491.

<sup>797</sup> *Ibid.*, 490-91.

<sup>798</sup> Esther E. Acolatse, "Christian Divorce Counseling in West Africa: Seeking Wholeness through Reformed Theology and Jungian Dreamwork," *Journal of Pastoral Theology* 21, no. 1 (2011): 2.

<sup>799</sup> Kanyoro, *Introducing Feminist Cultural Hermeneutics : An African Perspective*, 66. Virginia Fabella and Mercy Amba Oduyoye, *With Passion and Compassion : Third World Women Doing Theology : Reflections from the Women's Commission of the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians* (Maryknoll, N.Y: Orbis Books, 1988), 38.

succeeds because it has retrieved and restored primal spirituality to the Christian tradition in a way that correlates with questions raised by the masses.<sup>800</sup> In their practice, the MLCs rarely took the Ghanaian or African worldview into consideration, as have Pentecostals.<sup>801</sup> In fact, the Pentecostal movement reverberates with the Ghanaian or African worldview in that; there is a strong emphasis on the spiritual world impinging on the physical world.<sup>802</sup> It was therefore very interesting to witness such a strong Pentecostal/ charismatic element in the MPRP.

Interestingly, Pentecostalism flourishes where there is a rich local belief in the supernatural.<sup>803</sup> A case in point is Korean Pentecostalism, research points to the success of Pentecostalism in Korea as drawing from ancient Korean shamanism.<sup>804</sup> The question then is, why this is the current trend in MLCs like the Methodist Church in Ghana. First, as stated, the Pentecostal movement takes into consideration the local worldview, which is still very relevant for most Ghanaians in spite of factors such as westernization and even aspects of Christianity itself. Due to this factor, Pentecostalism is the fastest-growing Christian denomination in Ghana.<sup>805</sup> More Ghanaians are leaving the historic churches/ MLCs and are joining the Pentecostal movement. Therefore, it evident that the MLCs have been convinced by circumstances to permit Pentecostal elements in their Bible study and prayer groups.<sup>806</sup> There is also Pentecostalizing even in their main churches, as was seen in the Roman Catholic case.<sup>807</sup>

Therefore, women are at the helm of affairs in the MPRP in a very positive way. In addition, the mainline churches' CRGs, such as the MPRP, are taking very seriously the Ghanaian worldview, which was initially not their forte. Another finding is that, the Methodist Church's ability to combine all three dimensions of church, biblical, and mystical Christianity,<sup>808</sup> Therefore there are implications for the MPRP. The MPRP is heavily influenced not only by the Pentecostal movement but also by the ethos of the Methodist Church. This is where there is the permitting of authority to rest with Christians without necessarily requiring sacraments or

---

<sup>800</sup> N. Wariboko, *The Charismatic City and the Public Resurgence of Religion : A Pentecostal Social Ethics of Cosmopolitan Urban Life*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2014). 82.

<sup>801</sup> Omenyo, "From the Fringes to the Centre: Pentecostalizing of the Mainline Churches in Ghana," 53-54.

<sup>802</sup> Kailing, "A New Solution to the African Christian Problem," 495-96.

<sup>803</sup> Nichol, *The Pentecostals*, 54.

<sup>804</sup> Sturla J. Stålsett, *Spirits of Globalization : The Growth of Pentecostalism and Experiential Spiritualities in a Global Age* (London: SCM Press, 2006), 4.

<sup>805</sup> Gocking, *The History of Ghana*, 11.

<sup>806</sup> The Bible study and prayer groups by nomenclatures and categorization/ typology are in fact Pentecostal/charismatic in nature. See Omenyo, "From the Fringes to the Centre: Pentecostalizing of the Mainline Churches in Ghana," 47-48.

<sup>807</sup> This occurred where there was a brief Pentecostal-like worship session where glossolalia/ tongue speaking took place during mass on a Sunday morning as observed during participation.

<sup>808</sup> Woodhead, *Christianity : A Very Short Introduction*, 119, 86.

clergy, as is the feature of mystical Christianity.<sup>809</sup> In addition, the mystical Christianity element, where the divine rests with the human experience of the supernatural is a Methodist church feature.<sup>810</sup> Therefore, overall, the Methodist church by its nature facilitates women's leadership. In addition as in other cases in East Africa, despite its teachings, Pentecostal Christianity in itself is considered a force for positive change regarding gender disparity in African societies.<sup>811</sup>

## **7.5 Conclusion**

The chief focus of this chapter has been the analysis and findings connected to the influences and tendencies of women's leadership, women's experiences of leadership roles and the extent to which it contributes to women's empowerment. On the theme of empowerment stemming from participation and leadership, some of the discussions are as follows. It emerged that participants receive transcendent help as well as bonds of friendships carved out from the incidence of participation. This is a form or an element that is empowering since bonds of friendship translate into aid and succour. On the theme of gender and African feminist theology, it shed light on Ghanaian family structure and gender dynamics as behoving the woman to have responsibilities tied to the home setting, therefore restricting activities outside it. Concerning the theme of Pentecostalism, participation, and activities, all the participants from the CRGs of the MLCs were of the view that women were doing so much more than in the past. In the CCR, it was recognized that women were engaged in the spirituality of intercession which they claim results in answered prayer petitions. They undertake such prayer intercession so that others can cope, survive, and experience a positive impact: a means of spiritual empowerment. In the ABSPG, it was customary that women were involved in decision-making and were now found amongst all echelons of power in the ABSGP and even the Anglican Church itself. However, women considered themselves as less than men in some respects. Finally, there was the practice of deliverance/ exorcism that stems in part from the foundation of the African belief in the supernatural. This resonates with Pentecostal belief in an undeniable and remarkable way and offers insight into the very existence of CRGs within the MLCs.

---

<sup>809</sup> Ibid.

<sup>810</sup> Ibid., 71 and 86.

<sup>811</sup> Mhando et al., "Modes of Legitimation by Female Pentecostal-Charismatic Preachers in East Africa: A Comparative Study in Kenya and Tanzania," 330.

# CHAPTER EIGHT

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

### **8.1 Introduction: what the study is about**

The thesis examines the influences and tendencies of women's leadership in a selection of three charismatic renewal groups of the mainline churches in Ghana. The thesis also examines women's experiences of leadership roles and the extent to which it contributes to women's empowerment. Scholarly studies confirm that mainline churches in Ghana (and elsewhere in Africa) and Pentecostal/ charismatic movement differ when it comes to ethos.<sup>812</sup> In some segments of the Pentecostal/ charismatic movement, such as among the neo-Pentecostals, women in religious leadership is encouraged.<sup>813</sup> In others, such as the classical Pentecostals, women are barred from such leadership functions.<sup>814</sup> Such differences are further navigated within the context and historical trajectories of mainline churches. Clearly, context and location matters, and this study takes Greater Accra, Ghana, as its empirical location so as to explore the dynamics between renewal groups, gender, and religious leadership.

### **8.2 Influences and tendencies of women's leadership: main findings**

#### **8.2.1 The Catholic Charismatic Renewal Group**

From the empirical material gathered, it became apparent that women held limited leadership roles in the CCR. One important finding in this regard was that the CCR practiced a differentiated ministerial track, which meant that women minister to women only.<sup>815</sup> Hence, although women in positions of leadership were few and far between, they did exist, and then, notably, only in gendered forms. Of course, the Roman Catholic Church is very clear on its inclusive policy when it comes to women in religious leadership. Such a stance, unsurprisingly, constitutes a major influence when it comes to perspectives and practices of women's leadership in the CCR. Following Woodhead's (2014) church typology, which categorize churches based on conceptions of power/ authority in human and divine realms and consequences for their organizational structures and society, the Roman Catholic Church is considered under Church Christianity.<sup>816</sup> Here, the institution is a primary focal point and the

---

<sup>812</sup> Kailing, "A New Solution to the African Christian Problem," 490.

<sup>813</sup> Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics : Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana*, Vol. 27, 55-56.

<sup>814</sup> *Ibid.*, 55.

<sup>815</sup> Stephenson, "Prophesying Women and Ruling Men: Women's Religious Authority in North American Pentecostalism," 2.

<sup>816</sup> Woodhead, *Christianity : A Very Short Introduction*, 119, 58-61.

authority of spiritual leadership is through the channel of priesthood/ clergy.<sup>817</sup> Such a structure normalizes the tendency towards males in ultimate leadership in its corresponding CCR and also perpetuates patterns of exclusion/ inclusion along gendered lines.

It emerged from my empirical material that the practice of prophecy, a major characteristic of the Pentecostal movement, is present in the CCR. Together with songs and prayers, commonly associated with Pentecostal/ charismatic movement, prophesy constitute part of the “normalcy” of the CCR. Although studies on Pentecostalism have found that the practice of prophesy is not exclusively a male category, on the contrary, women are visibly occupying such an arena too. However, in my empirical material this was not the case when it came to the CCR. Similar to the tendency found in Agadjanian’s study (2015), women’s religious leadership in the CCR seems to have regressed after an initial period where one could find women in ultimate leadership.<sup>818</sup>

### **8.2.2 The Methodist Prayer and Renewal Programme**

Among the Methodist Prayer and Renewal Programme, women held a wide variety of visible leadership positions. Women also ministered to mixed-gender groups. The Methodist Church in Ghana started ordaining female priests in 1979.<sup>819</sup> Hence, it is perhaps not that surprising that such a long history of inclusive leadership makes a notable impact on contemporary leadership practices within the MPRP. Again, following Woodhead’s typology (2014), the Methodist church combines elements from Church Christianity, biblical Christianity and mystical Christianity.<sup>820</sup> All the three Churches have elements of the three typologies, it must be mentioned. However, when it comes to where power is located the emphasis is more specific. Whereas Church Christianity has a focus on the institution of the church, scripture plays a key role in biblical Christianity.<sup>821</sup> Mystical Christianity, interestingly, locates authority in spiritual experience, focusing not only on God the Father and Son but also on the Spirit—the divine is conceived to be known by the human heart and not in sacraments or scriptures.<sup>822</sup> In my study, I could trace this combination of elements and as such, agree with Woodhead’s categorization. However, what does such a combination of typologies reflect in terms of leadership? In my study, the norms of the institution when it came to inclusive leadership was notably important.

---

<sup>817</sup> Ibid.

<sup>818</sup> Agadjanian, "Women's Religious Authority in a Sub-Saharan Setting: Dialectics of Empowerment and Dependency," 984-85.

<sup>819</sup> Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion : The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches*, 63.

<sup>820</sup> Woodhead, *Christianity : A Very Short Introduction*, 119, 86.

<sup>821</sup> Ibid., 58-60.

<sup>822</sup> Ibid., 71.

Furthermore, this also meant that women entered into relationship with scripture in a manner that was active (being interpreters/ advocates), not passive (being recipients). Moreover, spiritual experiences and the widely acknowledged intimate perception of God-human relationally among participants, strengthens women-inclusive practices, also where leadership is concerned. Due to its inclusive character, the MPRP is also found to be conducive to neo-Pentecostal influences, which further embrace the autonomy of women in leadership.

Importantly, in the MPRP, communication took place using local languages, primarily Akan Twi and Akan Fante. It was apparent from the data that a majority of the women participants had low educational backgrounds, which meant that their English language literacy was quite limited. Nonetheless, employing the local languages of Twi and Fante facilitated women's participation in leadership in the MPRP. Such a finding bids well for an analysis using intersectionality as a critical lens. I will get back to this in the next subsection.

### **8.2.3 Anglican Bible Study and Prayer Group**

In the ABSPG, my material showed that women held a variety of leadership positions. They were leaders in the language groups that constituted the ABSPG and women received equal opportunity for leadership training. Although not as early as the Methodist Church, the Anglican Church in Ghana started ordaining women into priesthood in 2011.<sup>823</sup> The inclusive leadership structure was well-established among participants as they frequently made it known that women were included at all levels of leadership within hierarchical structure of the Anglican Church itself. Hence, also here, the historical trajectory of the institution when it comes to religious leadership form a noted tendency and is also reflected in the ABSPG in Ghana. Following Woodhead (2014), the Anglican Church is categorized under church Christianity.<sup>824</sup> However, contrary to the Roman Catholic Church, the focus on institution and clergy does not perpetuate a patriarchal institutional hierarchy, but rather is reflective of a gender-inclusive model at the level of the organization and leadership.

Unique to the ABSPG was the presence of a prophet. He often ministered his prophetic gifting during Anglican Church services itself. However, he was also instrumental in the training sessions of the ABSPG. Although not an example of women's prophetic leadership, the Pentecostal influence was clearly articulated in the ABSPG and makes for an interesting case

---

<sup>823</sup> Service, "Anglican Diocese of Accra Ordains First Female Priests". Last modified 11 June 2011. <http://www.anglicannews.org/news/2011/06/anglican-diocese-of-accra-ordains-first-female-priests.aspx>. Accessed 23 May 2017.

<sup>824</sup> Woodhead, *Christianity : A Very Short Introduction*, 119, 57-60.



of religion-mixing, that is, the synergies that develop between the mainline churches with that of the Pentecostal/ charismatic movement—another notable tendency in my empirical material.

Interestingly, similar to the MPRP, the ABSPG also made use of local languages in their communication. This had the effect that women were able to take up positions of leadership, as the use of local languages enabled women to be included into different functions. It is likely that if English had been the dominating language, fewer women would have occupied these positions due to their generally lower level of education compared to the men.

One remarkable finding in the ABSPG is that, despite women being visibly present in positions of leadership, several participants maintained that women are not equal to men. Some participants used biblical texts and dominant interpretations of biblical texts to support this view, others noted gendered differences and in particular highlighted women's duties in the home as a key priority. Ghanaian culture/ tradition perpetuates gendered norms along these lines, epitomized in the *aboa/ nipa* construction in Akan culture.<sup>825</sup> The influence of male dominance affects women's self-perception even if in positions of leadership.

### **8.3 History, patriarchy, and literacy: discussions**

In this section, I highlight the influences and tendencies of women's leadership through three themes/ tropes that emerged as particularly salient in my empirical material: historical trajectory; patriarchal understandings of gender and gender relations; and, local languages, illiteracy and education. I approach my research sites comparatively, emphasising the different, yet at times, similar ways in which the tropes inform the workings of women's leadership in the CRGs.

#### **8.3.1 Historical trajectory**

Interestingly, the CRGs examined reflected, to a large degree, the established leadership structures and ideals of their mother/ main churches. Pertaining to gender dynamics in leadership, it was perhaps unsurprising that the CCR had an almost exclusively male leadership just like the Roman Catholic Church. In the ABSPG, there were women who held positions of ultimate spiritual leaders, reflecting the practice in the Anglican Church. There was a similar trend in the MPRP, where women held positions of ultimate spiritual leaders, a finding that notably also mirrors that of the Methodist Church.

---

<sup>825</sup> *Aboa* can also mean fool or animal while *Nipa* means human being. Conversations with Mercy Amba Oduyoye, 2 February 2017, Accra Ghana.

Delving into the historical trajectories of these three mother churches, it is perhaps predictable to assert that, of course, history informs and shapes the present. Yet, we also need to ask, given this weighty history, what are in fact the implications for women's religious leadership in contemporary Ghana? And, what are the various ways in which women who either wish to take up leadership positions or hold leadership positions navigate their religious pasts, individually, collectively, institutionally, or even, dogmatically? In Roman Catholic Church in Ghana, beginning from the earliest mission activities on the Gold Coast, the chaplains and later priests were invariably males.<sup>826</sup> However, there were instances where Catholic sisters were instrumental in promulgating the faith, for example, by being able to go to places where monks and fathers could not go.<sup>827</sup> Unfortunately, in a historical perspective, it is the case that women's experiences of faith have gone largely unrecorded and women's spirituality and spiritual practices is often named a "hidden tradition" across Christian denominations.<sup>828</sup> Therefore, that which is transmitted from generation to generation of Christians is commonly beliefs and practices based in male experiences, and also, more often than not, the experiences of male religious authorities and spiritual leaders.

Remarkably, however, the first CRG in the Roman Catholic Church in Ghana was initiated by a woman. A Roman Catholic sister experienced charismatic renewal in America and then travelled to Koforidua, Ghana, where she introduced her experience as the basis for the CRG.<sup>829</sup> It is thus not without women's involvement and initiative that the emergence of both Catholicism in Ghana and the Catholic Charismatic renewal have occurred. Nonetheless, Roman Catholicism is known for its high clericalism, elite formalism, and male leadership, and these characteristics also hold true for the Ghanaian Roman Catholic scene.<sup>830</sup> The strong presence and weighty history of male leadership makes it exceedingly challenging for women to enter into formalized positions of leadership, yet the practice of a differentiated ministerial track does enable women to come into positions of leadership. More interesting, perhaps, is that my material shows that women in the CCR do carve out spaces or find lacunae where they engage in leadership. It was particularly interesting to note that many women lead in ways that is reflective of the servant-leadership model. In my material this came to the fore through the

---

<sup>826</sup> Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism : A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana*, 32, 45.

<sup>827</sup> Ayanga, "Women in African Christianity," 945-46.

<sup>828</sup> Slee, "The Holy Spirit and Spirituality," 172.

<sup>829</sup> Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism : A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana*, 32, 104.

<sup>830</sup> *Ibid.*, 112.

practice of intercession, an activity that not only highlighted a religious practice that enabled women to insert themselves, but also a practice that women in the CCR found to be meaningful in terms of empowerment, of self and of others. Focusing on the aspect of religious practice, then, it emerges that historical trajectories are permeable and are being navigated by women in ways that holds the potential for both leadership and empowerment.

Missionaries from the Anglican Church, came after the Roman Catholic missionaries. Similar to the Roman Catholic antecedent, the main chaplains and missionaries were male.<sup>831</sup> However, the wives of the missionaries were commonly in charge of welfare and provision of medical and educational facilities and in this way they too shaped the development of the Anglican Church in Ghana.<sup>832</sup> During the emergence of the ABSPG in Ghana both men and women played important roles in making the ABSPG a mainstay in the Anglican Church.<sup>833</sup> Even though the Anglican Church often also is associated with high clericalism, Anglo-Catholic models, and elite formalism,<sup>834</sup> intertwined with a religious patriarchal tradition, the Anglican Church has in some respects broken the mould. Pivotaly, with the ordination of women from 2011, the Anglican Church started to erode religious patriarchy.<sup>835</sup> Such a development was also noticeable in the ABSPG, where women held positions of formal leadership. It was also evident that members "explained" gender-inclusive leadership by using religious discourse (God approved of it), although some members referred to Paul's letters to challenge such a practice.

Although women were more visible as leaders in the ABSPG compared to the CCR, they too commonly practiced a leadership style reflective of the servant leadership model. It became evident in my material that the servant leadership model was understood to be the most suitable for women leaders and that male congregants expected such a leadership style from women leaders. Hence, on the one hand, women's leadership in the ABSPG emerged as a well-established practice—reflective of the historical trajectory of its mother church. On the other hand, women's leadership seemed to be tempered by a particular model or mould that highlight the gendered paradox of the servant leadership model.

---

<sup>831</sup> Hastings, *The Church in Africa : 1450-1950*, 178.

<sup>832</sup> Ayanga, "Women in African Christianity," 944.

<sup>833</sup> Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism : A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana*, 32, 116.

<sup>834</sup> *Ibid.*, 112.

<sup>835</sup> Service, "Anglican Diocese of Accra Ordains First Female Priests". Last modified 11 June 2011. <http://www.anglicannews.org/news/2011/06/anglican-diocese-of-accra-ordains-first-female-priests.aspx>.

Comparatively, the Methodist Church in Ghana had a similar emergence just like the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Church, where the main chaplains and missionaries were consistently males.<sup>836</sup> In the case of the Methodist church, like the Anglican Church, missionaries were often accompanied by their wives.<sup>837</sup> These missionary wives were often tasked with the duties of education of women and other duties decided by the patriarchal religious establishment of that epoch. Women are primarily considered to be servants and helpers of men within segments of African Christianity.<sup>838</sup> However, women played important roles in the missionary enterprise and contributed to the growth and development of the Methodist Church in Ghana.

The Methodist church drawing from Woodhead (2014), shows that it has an admixture of dimensions of church Christianity, biblical Christianity and mystical Christianity.<sup>839</sup> Therefore, the focus is not on mainly the institution of the church, while authority in spiritual experience is emphasized, the divine is revealed to the human heart and not in sacraments or scriptures only.<sup>840</sup> Thus, authority in sacraments and the institution of the Church that curtails lay involvement in leadership is curtailed. Nonetheless, the participants from the MPRP made it known that they employed servant leadership as a choice. Among the three MLCs Methodist Church was the first to begin the ordination of women.<sup>841</sup> This reflects on the strong female presence of leadership visibility by women in the MPRP.

### **8.3.2 Patriarchal understandings of gender and gender relations**

In my empirical material, it became evident that patriarchal understandings of gender and gender relations influenced women's leadership in the CRGs. Several of the participants were of the view that Ghanaian society was to a large extent, patriarchal. A number of participants mentioned that they believed that men and women were not equal. Many participants deployed biblical texts to support their arguments. Other participants mentioned the burden of duties born of asymmetrical gender roles (e.g. women's nurturing and housekeeping responsibilities) as the cause or reason for why men and women were not equal.

How do these understandings of gender and gender relations affect women's leadership? Early Christian records tell a tale of men, considered superior to women. Palestinian Jewish historian

---

<sup>836</sup> Bartels, *The Roots of Ghana Methodism*, 4-5.

<sup>837</sup> Ibid., 55-56.

<sup>838</sup> Bateye, "Forging Identities: Women as Participants and Leaders in the Church among the Yoruba," 2.

<sup>839</sup> Woodhead, *Christianity : A Very Short Introduction*, 119, 86.

<sup>840</sup> Ibid., 58-71.

<sup>841</sup> Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion : The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches*, 63.

Josephus wrote in the 1<sup>st</sup> century, that women are inferior to men and ought to submit to them since the authority has been given to men by God.<sup>842</sup> Augustine of Hippo was of the view that man alone is created in the image of God and woman is the image of God when joined to her husband.<sup>843</sup> The history of Christianity, with its church fathers and long interpretive tradition, points to patriarchal understandings of gender and gender relations. Such a tendency is still telling in Christianity today, also in Ghana. One consequence of such a stance in relation to leadership on a more general level, is that for centuries women were not able to take up positions of ultimate spiritual leadership. Men were considered chosen by God to be leaders. According to Oduyoye (1995), churches, then, take the shape of patriarchal hierarchies that accepted the material service of women but did not seek women's leadership or welcome their initiatives.<sup>844</sup>

In my material, it was evident that patriarchal understandings of gender and gender relations influenced the manner in which women exercised leadership in the CRGs for all the three groups. In some respects, women bargained with patriarchy so as to enter into positions of leadership, formal and informal. For, Mapuranga (2013), women in other contexts in male dominated settings bargained with patriarchy and attained positions formerly assumed to be masculine while hesitant to contest patriarchy.<sup>845</sup> For many women leaders, they accepted maleness as the ideal or the "face" of leadership, both in terms of organizational structures and Christian dogma, while at the same time embodying the role of leaders. Some women leaders also accepted a higher standard for women in leadership, a standard that was not required of male leaders. The women also kowtowed to expectations of being diffident/ demure and humble while embodying leadership roles. By recognizing the terms of the "game" so to speak, some women leaders were able to strategize and navigate in a primarily male dominated organizational and societal context. Moreover, women's leadership is highly reflective of the servant leadership model, a model I found to be practiced across the CRGs. Such a leadership style could also be read as a bargaining strategy. The women leaders of the CRGs commonly played to the identity of the servant, an identity which explicitly resonates with patriarchal understandings of gender and gender relations. In other words, one possible reading of the servant leadership model is that it ensures that women lead without disrupting established gender roles. At the same time, as evidenced by my material, women leaders who embodied this leadership style also expressed that leadership enabled possibilities for empowerment of

---

<sup>842</sup> Rakoczy, *In Her Name : Women Doing Theology*, 32.

<sup>843</sup> *Ibid.*, 34.

<sup>844</sup> Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa : African Women and Patriarchy*, 173.

<sup>845</sup> Mapuranga, "Bargaining with Patriarchy? Women Pentecostal Leaders in Zimbabwe," 76.

self and others. Hence, the servant leadership model is here located in a complicated empirical context. The established gender roles were not necessarily challenged or subverted, but in fact enabled women to take up positions that may facilitate meaningful and enriching experiences via strategies.

Ghanaian tradition and culture is also a crucial contextual locus since it informs the position of women in society, including women's possibilities for leadership. Ghanaian culture and tradition is complex. It comprises of the beliefs and practices of the diverse ethnic groups inhabiting the nation. The Akan are the largest ethnic group in the country. An examination of beliefs and practices of the Akan people testifies to the existence of patriarchal understandings of gender and gender relations, as is also the case for other ethnic groups in the country.

My material shows that several of the participants were of the opinion that men are supposed to wield ultimate spiritual leadership. Some claimed that women had simply been "allowed" to be leaders. The language deployed in relation to women's leadership is telling of patriarchal understandings of gender and gender relations emanating not only from religious patriarchy but also cultural and traditional patriarchy. The language used in describing women in both traditional and modern structures contradict the statement that African women are not oppressed according to Oduyoye (1995).<sup>846</sup> A close examination of the language used in traditional Akan setting shows that it is commonplace to refer to a male infant as *nipa*/ human and the infant girl *aboa*/ less than human.<sup>847</sup> Although this practice is archaic and considered playful banter, its symbolic is not lost on Ghanaian Akan peoples. Moreover, heroism, exploits, and laurels are expected from male children beyond the home while female children are expected to be restricted to the home setting. Accordingly, this adage is pronounced in Akan settings, "a male has been born, he is a man of valour and a female has been born she will fetch water for us."<sup>848</sup> Tradition and the language of tradition informs Ghanaian views on gender and gender relations. Tradition also is a socializing discourse, and the men and women of the CRGs explored in this study are all informed by such dynamics.

---

<sup>846</sup> Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa : African Women and Patriarchy*, 157.

<sup>847</sup> Acolatse, "Unraveling the Regional Myth in the Turn toward Autonomy" 223.

<sup>848</sup> Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa : African Women and Patriarchy*, 87.

### 8.3.3 Local languages, illiteracy and education

From the inception of formal education in Ghana during colonial times, boys were favoured over girls in education.<sup>849</sup> There were two main reasons for this: first, the colonial government was influenced by 16<sup>th</sup> century European practices which were by and far patriarchal.<sup>850</sup> Second, the ethnic groups in Ghana commonly practiced discrimination against females when it came to striving considered appropriate for the sexes. Women were primarily seen as caregivers whose responsibilities in the domestic sphere took priority.<sup>851</sup> In recent times, however, the education of women in Ghana is steadily increasing, primarily due to a number of governmental interventions.<sup>852</sup> Nonetheless, due to such a long history of prioritizing boy education, there exist a gendered education gap. What consequences does such an educational gap have on women's possibilities for religious leadership?

Obviously, the lack of formal education informs one's ability to speak, read, and write in the English language—the official language of Ghana. Due to the relatively low educational levels among women, they are less likely to be able to communicate in the English language. This was true for the empirical material that I collected. However, although the use of English and issues pertaining to English literacy had the effect that women were further removed from positions of leadership in some places, I also found that the use of local languages in some of the CRGs were connected to women being able to take up positions of leadership. The three CRGs displayed different tendencies and practices in this regard.

The MPRP and the ABSPG had a very visible female presence in leadership. One reason for this, I contend, was that these two groups used local languages in their religious practices. In effect, by employing Akan Twi and Akan Fante, women also notably elderly women, were able to take up a variety of leadership positions. The same cannot be said for the CCR, where very few women were in positions of leadership and where the language of communication was English. Such a finding shows us that language matters and language brings to bear on the call for gender inclusive leadership. Intersectionality gives us tools to think with when considering the connections between women's leadership and the use of language. Notably, the context of an educational gap informs the development and formation of faith communities, therein also the possibilities for women to take up leadership. Hence, it is not singularly the historical and

---

<sup>849</sup> Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion : The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches*, 55.

<sup>850</sup> *ibid.*, 62-63.

<sup>851</sup> Acolatse, "Unraveling the Regional Myth in the Turn toward Autonomy " 225.

<sup>852</sup> Ghana, "National Action Plan Education for All: Ghana " 5-6.

some contemporary Christian trajectories of male exclusive leadership/ authority that informs the possibilities for more gender inclusive ways to conceive of leadership alone. So, too, does contextual dynamics, like education, like traditional culture, and norms/ expectations concerning gender and gender relations. Interestingly, though, some of the CRGs, like the MPRP and the ABSPG, showed that the use of local languages functioned as an enabling factor. Women took up positions of leadership in these groups and, as such, not only did such fluidity when it comes to language create possibilities for women, such a dynamic is cognisant of social and educational contexts that call for the production of inclusive (religious) spaces.

#### **8.4 Women's experiences of leadership and empowerment**

Women's experiences of leadership roles and the extent to which it contributes to women's empowerment is central to this study. In all the three CRGs, it emerged from the data that women were given equal opportunities for leadership training. In this one area at least, it can be inferred that the Christian principle of *Imago Dei*, reflecting the equal value of all persons, is invoked.<sup>853</sup> In the CCR, women had the opportunity to attend Life in the Spirit Seminars and Growth in the Spirit Seminars. These seminars were organised as training programmes in order to prepare for leadership positions in the CCR. In the ABSPG, women were free to attend preparatory sessions for leaders that were held once a week. These sessions introduced and discussed the topics for the weekly ABSPG meeting. The Methodist Church also organised leadership training programmes for individuals who wished to be leaders irrespective of their gender. For the women in this study, the experience of attending such training programmes led to increased confidence in taking up positions of leadership and gave them a sense of spiritual nourishment, also enabling them to provide spiritual nourishment to others. The women leaders commonly initiated sermons that summoned women to assert themselves in matters such as owning property and asserting themselves as full beings. In this way, the women leaders influenced other women in order to improve their wellbeing. I argue that such a dynamic resulted in female congregants experiencing a sense of empowerment. Many expressed hopefulness about personal situations that were difficult. At the same time, when it came to dogmatic content, women leaders did not engage in a hermeneutics of suspicion nor did they exceedingly deconstruct patriarchal Biblical narratives, although there were a few notable exceptions. Similar to Mapuranga's study on women Pentecostal leaders in Zimbabwe (2013),

---

<sup>853</sup> Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa : African Women and Patriarchy*, 175.



women leaders seemed to perpetuate a hermeneutics that advocates for quite masculinist views of gender and gender relations.<sup>854</sup>

#### **8.4.1 Using religious texts to argue for women's religious leadership**

Notably, some of the participants in my study used religious texts to support or condone women's religious leadership. These included texts on the story of the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8:26–40, references to the curtain of the Jewish temple being torn asunder after the crucifixion of Jesus Christ in Matthew 27:51, and baptism as a gender inclusive practice in 1 Corinthians 12:13. Additionally, prophesying women, and God/ Holy Spirit perceived as "no respecter of persons"—a phrase used to indicate spiritual equality were also employed by participants to underscore sanction for women's religious leadership referring to Acts 10:34.

Many participants, both men and women, seemed to struggle with the idea of women in religious leadership. For some participants, women were now religious leaders because, like the Ethiopian eunuch, some men simply lacked spiritual and religious understanding. In the case of the women participants who expressed misgivings about women's religious leadership, some of them were themselves leaders. Such views were quite unexpected and testified to the complexity of the issue. It emerged from the data that some women participants were of the view that men and women were fundamentally different. As such, their views mirror what Naidu and Hoel (2013) argue, that the underlying foundational difficulty of women's leadership lies in patriarchal understandings of sexual difference, reproductive roles, and physiology.<sup>855</sup> In this sense, women participants themselves perpetuated such views.

One participant mentioned that after the crucifixion and death of Jesus Christ the curtain of the Jewish temple tore in two. For this participant, such an act symbolized the abrogation of the former order of things, implying that women could now do what they previously had been unable to do. The participant suggested that the death of Jesus Christ had not only purchased salvation for all but also female liberation, which included the possibility of religious leadership for women.

For some participants, baptism ensured that men and women are equal. In this sense, baptism does not only secure initiation into the faith but also ensures gender equality. One participant drew on the biblical text of 1 Corinthians 12:13. In 1 Corinthians 12:13 it says, for by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have

---

<sup>854</sup> Mapuranga, "Bargaining with Patriarchy? Women Pentecostal Leaders in Zimbabwe," 76.

<sup>855</sup> Naidu and Hoel, "Continuities and Departures: Women's Religious and Spiritual Leadership," 6.

all been made to drink into one Spirit.<sup>856</sup> Although, the biblical text does not include sex as a feature but rather ethnicity/ nationality and social standing, it is clear that the participant brings to the reference of that text his own interpretation and bearing. As such, for him baptism not only revokes the above mentioned features to secure equality but also makes males and females the same in faith and before God. In this sense, the participant embodies the traits of an interpretive moral agent, who, according to Oduyoye (1995) stand on the side of the oppressed to defeat the enemies of the Imago Dei.<sup>857</sup> Thus, women are equally created in the image and likeness of God, equally redeemed by Christ, and equally sanctified by the Holy Spirit.<sup>858</sup>

Nonetheless, as Naidu and Hoel argue (2013), deprecating assumptions pertaining to women's bodies, sexuality, and reproductive capacities have generated a multitude of exclusionary religious beliefs and practices.<sup>859</sup> Such assumptions affect women's opportunities and experiences of leadership, and also their possibilities for experiencing empowerment. Yet, some of my participants do create some gender inclusive caveats, and some use religious texts and practices/ rites to do this.

#### **8.4.2 Women leaders are held to a different set of expectations**

My empirical data indicates that women leaders often were held to a different standard and/ or a different set of expectations than men. First, it was repeated throughout the data that women had been allowed to become leaders in recent times. Indicating that "someone" is allowing women to become leaders, and that "someone" also can disallow women from being leaders. Second, in the CRGs women were categorically expected to have love for all as a prerequisite for leadership. This expectation only pertained to women. Third, in my data it appears that women were expected to be self-deprecating and demure. This was not expected of men. From a traditional gender hierarchy stance, the feminine and masculine are connected to subjugation and domination respectively.<sup>860</sup> This traditional gender understanding informs the proclivities of the set of standards expected of women whether they are leaders or not. Interestingly, women themselves regurgitate these different standards of self-deprecation themselves.

Several female participants both leaders and adherents alike across the three CRGs claimed that women were not equal to men. They gave a number of reasons for their stance. Some used

---

<sup>856</sup> In the New King James Version (NKJV).

<sup>857</sup> Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa : African Women and Patriarchy*, 185.

<sup>858</sup> Johnson, *She Who Is : The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse*, 8.

<sup>859</sup> Naidu and Hoel, "Continuities and Departures: Women's Religious and Spiritual Leadership," 6. Becher, *Women, Religion, and Sexuality : Studies on the Impact of Religious Teachings on Women*, 149.

<sup>860</sup> Eicher-Catt, "The Myth of Servant-Leadership: A Feminist Perspective," 18-20.

biblical texts to support their claims. Others claimed that men are superior to women for the sake of the preservation of the marriage unit, and thus, men are natural leaders. Many participants said that the responsibilities of domestic chores and care of the home result in women carrying a heavier load than men. Due to the gendered nature of socialization, women are placed in a position of disadvantage. Such a disadvantage resulted in some women participants not taking up positions of religious leadership. They noted that their domestic responsibilities did not allow for such tasks, however meaningful.

Another interesting finding when it came to gendered expectations was the notion that women who were leaders or were extraordinary were not considered mere women but actually women who were men in the spirit. Thus, women who had achieved a sense of success or excellence were identified as males. As a result of traditional understandings of gender, where women are taught subordination, such a "phrase" explains women's religious leadership on male terms. Additionally, as put forth by one of the leaders of the CCR, patriarchy is the norm. Such views, and indeed, such norms, obviously affects women's self-image and possibilities for empowerment.

A number of participants made it known that women are expected to excel in the area of traditional female gender roles. They are expected to excel when it comes to cleaning, cooking, nurturing children and general housekeeping. These duties might seem unnegotiable for women in Ghanaian society. Moreover, in this traditional scheme, women are not supposed to expect assistance from husbands in these duties since they are considered female responsibilities. At the same time, many women take on employment and other leadership roles outside the home, as evidenced in my study. This does not absolve participants from their domestic responsibilities. Some male participants expressed that women had to perform their duties of childcare and chores in the home without question. Some female participants expressed their daily struggle of juggling their duties at home with employment and leadership in the CRGs. A number of women participants relayed their experiences of finding a balance between household duties, employment, and leadership in the CRGs.

My material shows that when women do become leaders they are expected to balance different roles. There is clearly a different set of expectation and standard for women and men in this regard. This has the effect that some women choose not to take up leadership positions, because they prioritize their domestic responsibilities. Second, for those who do take up leadership, they need to chase the myth of the super woman—primary care giver, leader, and worker

extraordinaire. This implies that empowerment is thus, curtailed in this dimension for women who grapple with such intersectional factors.

### **8.4.3 Experiences of empowerment due to membership, bonds of friendship, and spiritual practice**

It was undeniably the case that participants experienced empowerment due to being members of the CRGs. Central to the tenets of empowerment is the capacity to survive or cope and the outcome of positive difference.<sup>861</sup> Several of the participants claimed that by becoming members of the CRGs they had experienced empowerment through the guidance that the CRGs espoused. One major activity of the CRGs was teaching and discussions related to biblical texts. These discussions were varied and cut across every area of life. Many of the participants found the knowledge and admonitions from these teachings useful for their lives from their religious point of view. These re-readings of biblical texts give sustenance, hope, and empowerment as it has done for other women grappling with life's issues in other contexts.<sup>862</sup> Several of the participants claimed that the teachings of the CRGs helped them change who they were, a welcomed and positive transformation. The spirituality practised and received through the medium of the CRGs, were experienced both as transformative and empowering. One participant spoke about how the teachings and prayers had aided her during a period of her life characterised by trauma and distress. Another participant spoke of what she called exposure to knowledge, which aided her to comprehend and strengthen her faith. Many other participants also relayed the importance of the teachings of the CRGs in challenging periods of their life and how they received guidance that aided them to cope and survive.

Some of the participants relayed that membership in the CRGs got them connected to practices of mentorship, a practice that was experienced as exceedingly meaningful and empowering. Several of the participants noted that promising and gifted adherents were mentored by the leaders of the CRGs. They did this by encouraging them to avail themselves for significant positions in the CRGs. They also in some cases paid for gifted adherents to attend leadership programmes to prepare them for higher roles in the CRGs.

The CRGs also served as a network that constituted a sense of social support for the adherents. This was an unquestionable source of empowerment for many of the participants in the study. Empowerment includes all the ways by which individuals experience liberation, a positive

---

<sup>861</sup> Heyward, "Empowerment," 52.

<sup>862</sup> Pui-lan, "Feminist Theology as Intercultural Discourse," 26.

impact, and achieve wellbeing for self and the community.<sup>863</sup> The CRGs emerged as a source of succour for adherents in times of upheaval in their lives. Losing loved ones and funerals go hand in hand. Funerals in Ghana are extremely elaborate and expensive. During such times, the CRGs condole with grieving members and also give financial support. During moments of celebration such as baby dedications/ naming ceremonies and weddings the CRGs also support their members in cash and in kind. As such, the CRGs serve as a network that comes to the aid of members during major events in their lives. They also provide both emotional and monetary support to their members during such times. Participants experienced such facets of the organization as personally empowering.

Another way by which membership leads to empowerment is through the avenue of skills development of adherents. Pentecostalism commonly creates avenues for members to receive helpful abilities such as skills development and affirmation through training.<sup>864</sup> The CRGs organize a number of programmes for members geared at skills development. These programmes are aimed at preparing ordinary members to be equipped to take up significant roles in the CRG. These programmes groom adherents in the area of teaching, chairing of meetings, leading in spiritual practices such as prayer, and in acquiring organizational skills. To add to that outside of the formal programmes, adherents also imbibe skills by sheer practice due to playing roles in the CRGs. They are equipped in oratory/ speaking skills, leadership and organizational skills due to volunteering and participating in such roles in the CRG.

Notably, a critical analysis of how participants experience empowerment reveals that there are aspects that also are counterproductive in relation to empowerment. It emerged from the data that there was a strong aversion against divorce in spite of the circumstances or the state of the marriages in question. Comparatively, in South African Pentecostalism, the ethos of rigour often inhibits divorce even in abusive marriages: this influence is born of its prescribed code of conduct.<sup>865</sup> A number of the participants attributed the relatively less divorce rate to women's ability to countenance male dominance in marriage as a way to appease men and preserve marriages. Several participants both male and female, deployed biblical texts to support the above assertion, claiming that the biblical or Pentecostal/ charismatic way of an amicable marriage was simply wives deferring to male authority. Hence, organizational attitudes and ethos of networks/ mentors /leaders can also lead to quite detrimental practices and affect

---

<sup>863</sup> Giblin, "Empowerment," 83.

<sup>864</sup> Attanasi, "Spirit and Power: The Growth and Global Impact of Pentecostalism," 5-6.

<sup>865</sup> *Ibid.*, 248.

women negatively. Attitudes and practices when it comes to divorce is one such case that can be understood as not only disempowering, but, at times, also detrimental to women's well-being.

#### **8.4.4 Women's leadership and empowerment**

From my material, it becomes apparent that empowerment moves along two intersecting dimensions. For many participants, including those women who had taken up positions of religious leadership, an experience of spiritual empowerment was expressed. Forging a close and intimate relationship with God, together with the practices of praying/ singing /dancing, enabled women participants to become spiritual agents. At times, such spiritual agency resulted in addressing or solving individual challenges or helped participants to cope when facing difficult times. In this sense, spiritual empowerment contributed to empowering participants in the realm of the social, clearly showing that the dimension of the spiritual and the social, for many participants, are entwined in the Ghanaian context. For my participants, spiritual empowerment emerged within organizational structures wherein gender and gender relations were differently conceived. For some participants, the organizational structure with its historical trajectory and particular Christian discourses enabled women's participation and helped facilitate experiences of empowerment. Thus, even though there is expectation of subservience from women in Pentecostal Christianity, the orientation towards charisma forms a basis of leadership in specific contexts.<sup>866</sup>

For others, this was not the case. What also appeared to be quite evident for most participants was that societal dynamics reflected through traditional cultures, education, and gender norms informed their experiences and possibilities for leadership. Interestingly, cultural stereotypes of befitting ambitions expected account for differences in education for males and females.<sup>867</sup> Dependent on the CRG, participants experienced different degrees of alignment between societal dynamics and religious worldviews and practices, including the position of women's religious leadership. In this sense, what emerged as particularly salient in relation to women's experiences of spiritual empowerment is that it must always be in conversation with the social context and the particular gendered scripts that exist. As in the case of CRGs that clearly promote marriage as an ideal, that is, divorce is not seen as an option, one must critically examine the potential spiritual empowerment accrued. As well as the consequences for

---

<sup>866</sup> Mhando et al., "Modes of Legitimation by Female Pentecostal-Charismatic Preachers in East Africa: A Comparative Study in Kenya and Tanzania," 330.

<sup>867</sup> Acolatse, "Unraveling the Regional Myth in the Turn toward Autonomy " 225.

women's empowerment in the more general sense. Examining the interaction between the social and the spiritual, gives us important insights pertaining to women's experiences in general and women's possibilities for leadership in particular.

In this study, it appeared that women were subject to quite gendered expectations concerning womanhood, which affected their possibilities and choice of leadership. In addition it informed their style of leadership, namely, the women in this study who did take up positions of religious leadership performed a leadership style reflective of the servant-leader model. In this sense, other than being a leader, these women did not really challenge the gendered scripts of society nor church, neither the gendered expectations that often came with women's religious leadership. In this sense, empowerment in the religious sense almost seems to be restricted to spirituality, as women's theological or organizational competencies rarely translates into deconstructing and/ or reconstructing the social reality. Even so, in my material I also found evidence of the importance of women leaders when it came to the empowerment of other women, and then not only in the spiritual sense. It emerged from my material that women were involved in Bible interpretation; women did minister to other women (and also to men). As such, some women did contribute to inform and form inclusive theologies where women were conceived to be fully human—a theological trajectory which undoubtedly also constitutes a critical and ethical voice vis-à-vis traditional culture and patriarchal social dynamics. This is a trajectory that is filled with empowering potential.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- "Accra." Encyclopædia Britannica, inc., <https://www.britannica.com/place/Accra>.
- Acolatse, Esther E. "Christian Divorce Counseling in West Africa: Seeking Wholeness through Reformed Theology and Jungian Dreamwork." *Journal of Pastoral Theology* 21, no. 1 (2011): 2-2.
- . "Unraveling the Regional Myth in the Turn toward Autonomy". In *Women out of Order: Risking Change and Creating Care in a Multicultural World* edited by Jeanne Stevenson-Moesser & Teresa Snorton. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010.
- Adasi, Grace , and Dorothy Frempong. "Multiple Roles of African Women Leaders and Their Challenges: The Case of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana." *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences* Vol.4, No.11, 2014 no. ISSN (Paper)2224-5766 ISSN (Online)2225-0484 (Online) (2014): 63-68.
- Addo, Mary-Anne "Advancing Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women: Ghana's Experience." edited by Ghana Ministry of Finance & Economic Planning. Accra.
- Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi. *We Should All Be Feminists*. London: Fourth Estate, 2014.
- Agadjanian, Victor. "Women's Religious Authority in a Sub-Saharan Setting: Dialectics of Empowerment and Dependency." *Gend Soc* 29, no. 6 (2015): 982-1008.
- Agyekum, Kofi. "The Sociolinguistic of Akan Personal Names." *Nordic journal of African studies [elektronisk ressurs]* 15 (2006): 206-35.
- Amanor, Jones Darkwa. "Pentecostalism in Ghana: An African Reformation." *Cyberjournal for Pentecostal-Charismatic Research* 13 (2004).
- Amenga-Etego, Rose. "Gender and Christian Spirituality in Africa: A Ghanaian Perspective." *Black Theology* 10, no. 1 (2012): 8-27.
- Amit-Talai, Vered. *Constructing the Field : Ethnographic Fieldwork in the Contemporary World*. European Association of Social Anthropologists. London: Routledge, 2000.
- Ammerman, Nancy Tatom. *Sacred Stories, Spiritual Tribes : Finding Religion in Everyday Life*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014.
- Amoah, Elizabeth. "Theology from the Perspective of African Women." In *Women's Visions: Theological Reflection, Celebration, Action* edited by Ofelia Ortega. Geneva: WCC Publications, 1995.
- Amu, Nora Judith. *The Role of Women in Ghana's Economy*. Accra: Friedrich Ebert Foundation, 2005.
- Anderson, Allan. *An Introduction to Pentecostalism : Global Charismatic Christianity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- . *An Introduction to Pentecostalism : Global Charismatic Christianity*. 2nd ed. ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014.
- Anderson, Allan, Michael Bergunder, André Droogers, and Cornelis van der Laan. *Studying Global Pentecostalism : Theories and Methods*. The Anthropology of Christianity. Vol. 10, Berkeley, Calif: University of California Press, 2010.
- Ansah, Anita Aba. "Gender Empowerment and Personal Fulfillment in Pentecostalism: A Case of Accra Ghana." 2015.
- Asamoah-Gyadu, J. Kwabena. *African Charismatics : Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana*. Vol. Vol. 27, Leiden: Brill, 2005.



- . *Contemporary Pentecostal Christianity : Interpretations from an African Context*. Regnum Studies in Global Christianity. Eugene, Or: Wipf & Stock, 2013.
- . *Sighs and Signs of the Spirit: Ghanaian Perspectives on Pentecostalism and Renewal in Africa* Oxford: Wipf & Stock, 2015.
- Atiemo, Abamfo. *The Rise of the Charismatic Movement in the Mainline Churches in Ghana* Accra: Asempa Publishers, 1993.
- Attanasi, Katherine. "Spirit and Power: The Growth and Global Impact of Pentecostalism." In *Constructing Gender within Global Pentecostalism*, edited by D. E. Miller, K. Sargeant and R. Flory Oxford: Oxford Scholarship Online, 2013.
- Ayanga, Hazel O. . "Women in African Christianity." In *Anthology of African Christianity* edited by Isabel Apawo Phiri, Dietrich Werner, Chammah Kaunda and Kennedy Owino. Oxford: Regnum Books International, 2016.
- Barbuto, John E., and Daniel W. Wheeler. "Scale Development and Construct Clarification of Servant Leadership." *Group & organization management* 31, no. 3 (2006): 300-26.
- Bartels, F. L. . *The Roots of Ghana Methodism*. London: Cambridge University Press, 1965.
- Bateye, Bolaj Olukemi. "Forging Identities: Women as Participants and Leaders in the Church among the Yoruba." *Studies in world Christianity* 13, no. 1 (2007): 1-12.
- Batliwala, Srilatha. "Taking the Power out of Empowerment - an Experiential Account." *Development in Practice* 17, no. 4-5 (2007): 557-65.
- Becher, Jeanne. *Women, Religion, and Sexuality : Studies on the Impact of Religious Teachings on Women*. Geneva: WCC Publications, 1990.
- Bediako, Kwame. *Christianity in Africa : The Renewal of a Non-Western Religion*. Studies in World Christianity. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1995.
- Berger, Peter L., Effie Fokas, and Grace Davie. *Religious America, Secular Europe? : A Theme and Variations*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008.
- Beyer, Peter. "De-Centring Religious Singularity: The Globalization of Christianity as a Case in Point." *Numen* 50, no. 4 (2003): 357-86.
- Bird, Frederick, and Laurie Lamoureux Scholes. "Research Ethics." In *The Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in the Study of Religion*, edited by Michael Stausberg and Steven Engler. London: Routledge, 2011.
- Boadaa, Angelina Danso "The Development in Pentecostalism through Charismatic Renewal Movement in the Mainline Churches in Kumasi Ghana." In *Papers presented in Theological Positions Colloquium, Continental theological seminary* Tubize, Belgium, 2011.
- Bongmba, Elias Kifon, and Jacob K. Mmmmmauthor Olupona. *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to African Religions*. S.I.]: S.I. : WILEY, 2012. doi:10.1002/9781118255513.
- Breslin, Edward J. . "Servant Leadership and Volunteerism." In *Servant Leadership and Followership: Examining the Impact of Workplace Behavior*, edited by Crystal J. Davis. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017.
- Brinkmann, Svend. *Qualitative Interviewing*. Understanding Qualitative Research. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- Brinkmann, Svend, and Steinar Kvale. *Interviews : Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research Interviewing*. 3rd ed. ed. Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage, 2015.
- Brown, Bruce. "Interdisciplinary Research." *European Review* 26, no. S2 (2018): S21-S29.
- Brusco, Elizabeth. "Gender and Power ". In *Studying Global Pentecostalism: Theories and Methods*, edited by Allan Anderson, Michael Bergunder, André Droogers and Cornelis Van der Laan. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010.
- Brusco, Elizabeth E. *The Reformation of Machismo : Evangelical Conversion and Gender in Colombia*. Austin, Tex: University of Texas Press, 1995.

- Bryman, Alan. *Social Research Methods*. 5th ed. ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.
- Carli, Linda L. , and Alice H. Eagly. "Overcoming Resistance to Women Leaders: The Importance of Leadership Style." In *Women and Leadership: The State of Play and Strategies for Change*, edited by Barbara Kellerman and Deborah L. Rhode. San Francisco: Jossey- Bass, 2007.
- Casselberry, Judith. "The Politics of Righteousness: Race and Gender in Apostolic Pentecostalism." *Transforming Anthropology* 21, no. 1 (2013): 72-86.
- Chai, Teresa. "Pentecostalism in Mission and Evangelism Today." *International Review of Mission* 107, no. 1 (2018): 116-29.
- Cho, Sumi, Kimberle Crenshaw, Williams, and Leslie McCall. "Toward a Field of Intersectionality Studies: Theory, Applications, and Praxis." *Signs* 38, no. 4 (2013): 785-810.
- Corbett, Greville G. *Gender*. Cambridge Textbooks in Linguistics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- Cornwall, A., and A. M. Rivas. "From 'Gender Equality and 'Women's Empowerment' to Global Justice: Reclaiming a Transformative Agenda for Gender and Development." *Third World Quarterly* 36, no. 2 (2015): 396-415.
- Cox, Harvey. *Fire from Heaven : The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-First Century*. Cambridge, Mass: Da Capo Press, 2001.
- Dalinjong, Philip Ayizem, Alex Y. Wang, Caroline S. E. Homer, and Philip Ayizem Dalinjong. "The Implementation of the Free Maternal Health Policy in Rural Northern Ghana: Synthesised Results and Lessons Learnt." *BMC research notes* 11, no. 1 (2018): 341-41.
- Daniels, David D. "North American Pentecostalism." In *The Cambridge Companion to Pentecostalism*, edited by Amos Yong and Jr Cecil M. Robeck. Cambridge Companions to Religion, 73-92. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014.
- Davie, Grace. *The Sociology of Religion*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2007.
- Davis, Crystal J. . *Servant Leadership and Followership: Examining the Impact of Workplace Behaviour*. Cham: Palgrave MacMillan, 2017.
- Davis, Kathy. "Intersectionality as Buzzword: A Sociology of Science Perspective on What Makes a Feminist Theory Successful." *Feminist theory* 9, no. 1 (2008): 67-85.
- Deane-drummond, Celia. "Creation." In *The Cambridge Companion to Feminist Theology*, edited by Susan Frank Parsons. Cambridge Companions to Religion, 190-205. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- Drydyk, Jay. "Empowerment, Agency, and Power." *Journal of Global Ethics* 9, no. 3 (2013): 249-62.
- Dube, Musa W. "Gender and Bible in African Christianity." In *Anthology of African Christianity*, edited by Isabel Phiri, Dietrich Werner, Chammah Kaunda and Kennedy Owino. Oxford: Regnum Books International, 2016.
- Eicher-Catt, Deborah. "The Myth of Servant-Leadership: A Feminist Perspective." *Women and language* 28, no. 1 (2005): 17.
- Engler, Steven. "Grounded Theory." In *The Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in the Study of Religion*, edited by Michael Stausberg and Steven Engler. London: Routledge, 2011.
- Fabella, Virginia, and Mercy Amba Oduyoye. *With Passion and Compassion : Third World Women Doing Theology : Reflections from the Women's Commission of the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians*. Maryknoll, N.Y: Orbis Books, 1988.
- Frank Parsons, Susan. "Redeeming Ethics." In *The Cambridge Companion to Feminist Theology*, edited by Susan Frank Parsons. Cambridge Companions to Religion, 206-23. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

- Frederiks, Martha. "Miss Jairus Speaks: Developments in African Feminist Theology." *Exchange* 32, no. 1 (2003): 66-82.
- Ganzevoort, R. "Forks in the Road When Tracing the Sacred Practical Theology as Hermeneutics of Lived Religion." 2009.
- Ganzevoort, R. Ruard, and Johan Roeland. "Lived Religion: The Praxis of Practical Theology." [In English]. *International Journal of Practical Theology* 18, no. 1 (30 Jun. 2014 2014): 91-101.
- Gauthier, François, and Tuomas Martikainen. *Religion in Consumer Society : Brands, Consumers and Markets*. Ashgate Ahrc/Esrc Religion and Society Series. Farnham: Ashgate, 2013.
- Geertz, Clifford. *The Interpretation of Cultures : Selected Essays*. London: Fontana, 1993.
- Getman, Eliza, and Sarojini Nadar. "Nativity and Motherism: Embodiment within Praxis of Spiritual Leadership." *Journal for the Study of Religion* 26, no. 2 (2013): 60-73.
- Ghana, Government of. "National Action Plan Education for All: Ghana ", edited by Ministry of Education Youth and Sports: Government of Ghana 2003.
- GhanaWeb. "Ghanaian Languages." GhanaWeb, <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/tribes/languages.php>.
- . "Greater Accra."
- Giblin, Marie. "Empowerment." In *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*, edited by M. Letty Russell and J. Shannon Clarkson. London: Mowbray, 1996.
- Gifford, Paul. *African Christianity : Its Public Role*. Bloomington, In: Indiana University Press, 1998.
- Gocking, Roger S. *The History of Ghana*. The Greenwood Histories of the Modern Nations. Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 2005.
- Graham, Elaine. "Gender." Chap. 78 In *An a to Z of Feminist Theology*, edited by Lisa & McEwan Isherwood, Dorothea. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996.
- Grant, Jacquelyn. *White Women's Christ and Black Women's Jesus : Feminist Christology and Womanist Response*. American Academy of Religion Academy Series. Vol. no. 64, Atlanta, Ga: Scholars Press, 1989.
- Greene, Sandra E. *Sacred Sites and the Colonial Encounter : A History of Meaning and Memory in Ghana*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002.
- Greenleaf, Robert K. *Servant Leadership : A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness*. New York: Paulist Press, 1991.
- Greenleaf, Robert K., Hamilton Beazley, Julie Beggs, and Larry C. Spears. *The Servant-Leader Within : A Transformative Path*. [in English] New York: Paulist Press, 2003.
- Grint, Keith. *Leadership : A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford university press, 2010.
- Hackett, Rosalind I. J. "Auditory Materials." In *The Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in the Study of Religion*, edited by Michael Stausberg and Steven Engler. New York: Routledge, 2011.
- Harvey, Graham. "Field Research." In *The Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in the Study of Religion*, edited by Michael Stausberg and Steven Engler. London: Routledge, 2011.
- Hastings, Adrian. *The Church in Africa : 1450-1950*. The Oxford History of the Christian Church. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994.
- Hastrup, Kirsten. *A Passage to Anthropology : Between Experience and Theory*. London: Routledge, 1995.
- Heyward, Carter. "Empowerment." Chap. 52 In *An a to Z of Feminist Theology*, edited by Lisa & McEwan Isherwood, Dorothea. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996.

- Hinga, Theresa M. "Jesus Christ and the Liberation of Women." In *The Will to Arise, Women, Tradition and the Church in Africa* edited by Mercy Amba Oduyoye and Musimbi Rachel Angogo Kanyoro. New York: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1992.
- "History of Ghana." GhanaWeb, <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/history/>
- Hocken, Peter. *The Challenges of the Pentecostal, Charismatic, and Messianic Jewish Movements : The Tensions of the Spirit*. Ashgate New Critical Thinking in Religion, Theology and Biblical Studies. Farnham: Ashgate, 2009.
- Hoel, Nina. "Embodying the Field: A Researcher's Reflections on Power Dynamics, Positionality and the Nature of Research Relationships." *Fieldwork in Religion* 8, no. 1 (2013).
- Houessou-Adin, Thomas. "Mawu-Lisa." 411-13, 2008.
- Hunt, James G. *Leadership : A New Synthesis*. Newbury Park, Calif: Sage Publications, 1991.
- Isichei, Elizabeth. *A History of Christianity in Africa : From Antiquity to the Present*. London: SPCK, 1995.
- James, S. Bielo. *Anthropology of Religion: The Basics*. The Basics. Taylor and Francis, 2015. doi:10.4324/9781315728407.
- Jensen, Jeppe Sinding "Epistemology." In *The Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in the Study of Religion*, edited by Michael Stausberg and Steven Engler. London: Routledge, 2011.
- Johnson, Elizabeth A. *She Who Is : The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse*. New York: Crossroad, 2002.
- Kailing, Joel B. "A New Solution to the African Christian Problem." *Missiology: An International Review* 22, no. 4 (1994): 489-506.
- Kalu, Ogbu. *African Pentecostalism : An Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Kandiyoti, Deniz. "Bargaining with Patriarchy." *Gender & society* 2, no. 3 (1988): 274-90.
- Kanyoro, Musimbi Rachel Angogo. "Beads and Strands: Threading More Beads in the Story of the Circle." In *African Women, Religion, and Health: Essays in Honour of Mercy Amba Ewudziwa Oduyoye*, edited by Isabel Phiri and S. Nadar. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2006.
- . "Cultural Hermeneutics: An African Contribution." In *Women's Visions: Theological Reflection, Celebration, Action*, edited by Ofelia Ortega. Geneva: WCC Publications, 1995.
- . "Interpreting Old Testament Polygamy through African Eyes." In *The Will to Arise: Women, Tradition, and the Church in Africa*, edited by Mercy Amba Oduyoye and Musimbi Rachel Angogo Kanyoro. Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1992.
- Kanyoro, Rachel Angogo. *Introducing Feminist Cultural Hermeneutics : An African Perspective*. Introductions in Feminist Theology. Cleveland, Ohio: Pilgrim Press, 2002.
- Kanyoro, Rachel Angogo Musimbi. "Engendered Communal Theology: African Women's Contribution to Theology in the 21st Century." In *Talitha Cum! Theologies of African Women*, edited by Nyambura J. Njoroge and Musa W. Dube. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2001.
- Kay, William K. *Pentecostalism : A Very Short Introduction*. Very Short Introductions. Vol. 255, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- King, Ursula. "Feminist Theology in the Third World." In *An a to Z of Feminist Theology*, edited by Lisa Isherwood and Dorothea McEwan. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996.
- Klein, Julie Thompson. "Mapping Interdisciplinary Studies. The Academy in Transition." Association of American Colleges and Universities, 1999.
- Kothari, Chakravanti Rajagopalachari. *Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques*. New Age International, 2004.

- Krakah, A., and D. Kombat. *Integrated Business Establishment Survey: National Employment Report*. Ghana Statistical Service, 2015.
- Larbi, Kingsley. *Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity* Accra: Blessed Publications, 2001.
- Laub, James Alan. "Assessing the Servant Organization : Development of the Servant Organizational Leadership Assessment (Sola) Instrument." 1999.
- Lehrke, Alyse Scicluna , and Kristin Snowden. "Servant Leadership and Gender." In *Servant Leadership and Followership: Examining the Impact on Workplace Behaviour* edited by Crystal J. Davis. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017.
- Lincoln, Yvonna S., and Egon G. Guba. *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Beverly Hills, Calif: Sage, 1985.
- Livingstone, E. A. "Feminist Theology." Oxford University Press, 2014.
- Magezi, Vhumani. "Practical Theology in Africa: Situation, Approaches, Framework and Agenda Proposition." *International journal of practical theology* 23, no. 1 (2019): 115-35.
- Mansilla, Veronica Boix, Elizabeth Dawes Duraisingh, Christopher R. Wolfe, and Carolyn Haynes. "Targeted Assessment Rubric: An Empirically Grounded Rubric for Interdisciplinary Writing." *The Journal of higher education (Columbus)* 80, no. 3 (2016): 334-53.
- Mapuranga, Tapiwa Praise. "Bargaining with Patriarchy? Women Pentecostal Leaders in Zimbabwe." *Fieldwork in religion* 8, no. 1 (2013): 74-91.
- Marcus, George E. *Ethnography through Thick and Thin*. Anthropology Online. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998.
- Marshall, Catherine, and Gretchen B. Rossman. *Designing Qualitative Research*. 6th ed. ed. Los Angeles, Calif: SAGE, 2016.
- Marshall, M. N. "Sampling for Qualitative Research." *Fam Pract* 13, no. 6 (1996): 522-26.
- McClymond, Michael J. "Charismatic Renewal and Neo-Pentecostalism." In *The Cambridge Companion to Pentecostalism*, edited by Amos Yong and Jr Cecil M. Robeck. Cambridge Companions to Religion, 31-51. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014.
- Meyer, Birgit. "The Power of Money: Politics, Occult Forces, and Pentecostalism in Ghana." *African Studies Review* 41, no. 3 (1998): 15-37.
- Mhando, Nandera Ernest, Loreen Maseno, Kupakwashe Mtata, and Mathew Senga. "Modes of Legitimation by Female Pentecostal-Charismatic Preachers in East Africa: A Comparative Study in Kenya and Tanzania." *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 36, no. 3 (2018/07/03 2018): 319-33.
- Middlebrooks, Anthony, and Alain Noghiu. "Leadership and Spiritual Capital: Exploring the Link between Individual Service Disposition and Organizational Value." (2010).
- Middleton, John. "One Hundred and Fifty Years of Christianity in a Ghanaian Town." *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute* 53, no. 3 (1983): 2-19.
- Miller, Donald E. *Global Pentecostalism : The New Face of Christian Social Engagement*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2007.
- Miller, Donald E., D. E. Miller, Kimon H. Sargeant, K. H. Sargeant, Richard Flory, and R. Flory. *Spirit and Power: The Growth and Global Impact of Pentecostalism*. Oxford University Press, 2013. doi:10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199920570.001.0001.
- Miller, Donald E., and Tetsunao Yamamori. "Organizing the Saints: Giving the Ministry to the People." In *Global Pentecostalism. The New Face of Christian Social Engagement*, Includes Dvd, 184-210: University of California Press, 2007.
- Nadar, S. "Journeying in Faith: The Stories of Two Ordained Indian Women in the Anglican and Full Gospel Churches in South Africa." In *Her-Stories: Hidden Histories of Women*

*of Faith in Africapietermaritzburg*, edited by Isabel Phiri, Devarakshanam Betty Govinden and S. Nadar. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications

2002.

Naidu, Maheshvari, and Nina Hoel. "Continuities and Departures: Women's Religious and Spiritual Leadership." *Journal for the Study of Religion* 26, no. 2 (2013): 06-11.

Neitz, Mary Jo. "Feminist Methodologies." In *The Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in the Study of Religion*

edited by Michael Stausberg and Steven Engler. New York: Routledge, 2011.

Nichol, John Thomas. *The Pentecostals*. Rev. ed. ed. Plainfield, N. J: Logos International, 1971.

Nieminen, Petteri, Juuso Loikkanen, Esko Ryökäs, and Anne-Mari Mustonen. "Nature of Evidence in Religion and Natural Science." *Theology and science* 18, no. 3 (2020): 448-74.

Njoroge, Nyambura J., and Musa W. Dube Shomanah. *Talitha Cum! : Theologies of African Women*. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2001.

Novieto, Enyonam Ernestina. "Women Leaders in Ghanaian Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches." University of Ghana, 2013.

O'Collins, Gerald. *Catholicism : A Very Short Introduction*. Very Short Introductions. Vol. 198, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Odamtten, Harry Nii Koney. "They Bleed but They Don't Die: Towards a Theoretical Canon on Ga-Adangbe Gender Studies." [In English]. *Journal of Pan African Studies* 5 (2012/04//

// 2012): 110+.

Oduyoye, Mercy Amba. *Beads and Strands : Reflections of an African Woman on Christianity in Africa*. Theology in Africa Series. Maryknoll, N.Y: Orbis Books, 2004.

———. *Daughters of Anowa : African Women and Patriarchy*. Maryknoll, N.Y: Orbis Books, 1995.

———. *Who Will Roll the Stone Away? : The Ecumenical Decade of the Churches in Solidarity with Women*. Risk Book Series. Vol. no. 47, Geneva: WCC Publications, 1990.

Oduyoye, Mercy Amba, and Rachel Angogo Kanyoro. *The Will to Arise : Women, Tradition, and the Church in Africa*. Maryknoll, N.Y: Orbis Books, 1992.

Omenyo, Cephass. "The Charismatic Renewal Movement in Ghana." *Pneuma* 16, no. 1 (1994): 169-85.

———. *William Seymour and African Church Historiography: The Case of Ghana*. Vol. 9, 2006.

Omenyo, Cephass N. "From the Fringes to the Centre: Pentecostalization of the Mainline Churches in Ghana." (2005).

Omenyo, Cephass N. "African Pentecostalism." In *The Cambridge Companion to Pentecostalism*, edited by Amos Yong and Jr Cecil M. Robeck. Cambridge Companions to Religion, 132-51. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014.

———. "From the Fringes to the Centre: Pentecostalization of the Mainline Churches in Ghana." *Exchange: Bulletin of Third World Christian Literature* 34, no. 1 (2005): 39-60.

Omenyo, Cephass Narh. *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism : A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana*. Mission. Vol. 32, Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 2002.

Onyinah, Opoku. *James Mckeown Memorial Lectures*. Accra: Pentecost Press, 2004.

Palmer, E. *Gender Justice and Development: Vulnerability and Empowerment*. Taylor & Francis, 2017.

- Parris, Denise Linda, and Jon Welty Peachey. "A Systematic Literature Review of Servant Leadership Theory in Organizational Contexts." *Journal of business ethics* 113, no. 3 (2013): 377-93.
- Parris, Denise, and Jon Peachey. "A Systematic Literature Review of Servant Leadership Theory in Organizational Contexts." *Journal of Business Ethics* 113, no. 3 (2013): 377-93.
- Parsitau, Damaris. "Agents of Gendered Change: Empowerment, Salvation and Gendered Transformation in Urban Kenya." 203-21, 2012.
- Parsons, Susan Frank. *The Cambridge Companion to Feminist Theology*. Cambridge Companions to Religion. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- Patricia Hill, Collins. "It's All in the Family: Intersections of Gender, Race, and Nation." *Hypatia* 13, no. 3 (1998): 62-82.
- Peterson, Jean S. "Presenting a Qualitative Study: A Reviewer's Perspective." *The Gifted child quarterly* 63, no. 3 (2019): 147-58.
- Phiri, Isabel. "African Women's Theologies in the New Millennium." *Agenda* 18, no. 61 (2004): 16-24.
- . "Called at Twenty Seven and Ordained at Seventy Three! The Story of Rev. Victory Nomvete Mbanjwa in the United Congregational Church in Southern Africa." In *Her-Stories: Hidden Histories of Women of Faith in Africa*, edited by Isabel Phiri, Devarakshanam Betty Govinden and S. Nadar. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2002.
- Phoenix, Ann, and Pamela Pattynama. "Intersectionality." *The European journal of women's studies* 13, no. 3 (2006): 187-92.
- Pobee, John S. "The Anglican Church in Ghana and the Spg." 409-22. London: Continuum, c2000, 2000.
- Pui-lan, K. "Mercy Amba Oduyoye and African Women's Theology." *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 20, no. 1 (2004): 7-22.
- Pui-lan, Kwok. "Feminist Theology as Intercultural Discourse." In *The Cambridge Companion to Feminist Theology*, edited by Susan Frank Parsons. Cambridge Companions to Religion, 23-39. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- Rakoczy, Susan. *In Her Name : Women Doing Theology*. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2004.
- Reynolds, Kae. "Servant-Leadership: A Feminist Perspective." *The International Journal of Servant Leadership* (01/01 2016).
- Robeck, Cecil M. "The Origins of Modern Pentecostalism." In *The Cambridge Companion to Pentecostalism*, edited by Amos Yong and Jr Cecil M. Robeck. Cambridge Companions to Religion, 13-30. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014.
- Robertson, Claire C. *Sharing the Same Bowl : A Socioeconomic History of Women and Class in Accra, Ghana*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984.
- Ross, Susan A. "Church and Sacrament: Community and Worship." In *The Cambridge Companion to Feminist Theology*, edited by Susan Frank Parsons. Cambridge Companions to Religion, 224-42. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- Rumsey, Michael G. "The Elusive Science of Leadership." Oxford University Press, 2012.
- Russell, Robert F., and A. Gregory Stone. "A Review of Servant Leadership Attributes: Developing a Practical Model." *Leadership & organization development journal* 23, no. 3 (2002): 145-57.
- Sackey, Brigid M. *New Directions in Gender and Religion : The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches*. Lanham, Md: Lexington Books, 2006.
- Schüssler Fiorenza, Elisabeth. *Transforming Vision : Explorations in Feminist Theology*. Minneapolis, Minn: Fortress Press, 2011.



- Scott, James C. *Domination and the Arts of Resistance : Hidden Transcripts*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990.
- Service, Anglican Communion News. "Anglican Diocese of Accra Ordains First Female Priests." Anglican Communion Office.
- Service, Ghana Statistical. "2010 Population and Housing Census: Summary Report of Final Results." edited by Ghana Statistical Service. Accra, Ghana: Sakoa Press Limited, 2012.
- Sims, B.J. *Servanthood: Leadership for the Third Millennium*. Mass: Cowley Publications, 1997.
- Sims, Bennett J. *Servanthood: Leadership for the Third Millennium*. Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2005.
- Slee, Nicola. "The Holy Spirit and Spirituality." In *The Cambridge Companion to Feminist Theology*, edited by Susan Frank Parsons. Cambridge Companions to Religion, 171-89. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- Smith, S. A. De. "The Independence of Ghana." *Modern Law Review* 20, no. 4 (1957): 347-63.
- Soothill, Jane E. *Gender, Social Change, and Spiritual Power : Charismatic Christianity in Ghana*. Studies of Religion in Africa. Vol. vol. 30, Leiden: Brill, 2007.
- Spears, Larry C. "Reflections on Leadership : How Robert K. Greenleaf's Theory of Servant-Leadership Influenced Today's Top Management Thinkers." edited by Larry C. Spears. New York :: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1995.
- Stålsett, Sturla J. *Spirits of Globalization : The Growth of Pentecostalism and Experiential Spiritualities in a Global Age*. London: SCM Press, 2006.
- Stausberg, Michael "Comparison." In *The Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in the Study of Religion*, edited by Michael Stausberg and Steven Engler. London: Routledge, 2011.
- Stausberg, Michael, and Steven Engler. "Introduction: Research Methods in the Study of Religion\S." In *The Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in the Study of Religion* edited by Michael Stausberg and Steven Engler. New York: Routledge, 2011.
- Stephenson, Lisa P. "Propheying Women and Ruling Men: Women's Religious Authority in North American Pentecostalism." *Religions (Basel, Switzerland )* 2, no. 3 (2011): 410-26.
- Strathern, Marilyn. "Anthropology at Home." In *The Limitations of Auto-Anthropology in A. S. A. Monographs*, edited by Anthony Jackson. London: Tavistock, 1987.
- The Presidency, Republic of Ghana. "Free Shs Has Come to Stay – President Akufo-Addo." Office of the President
- <http://presidency.gov.gh/index.php/briefing-room/news-style-2/753-free-shs-has-come-to-stay-president-akufo-addo>.
- Toulis, Nicole Rodriguez. *Believing Identity : Pentecostalism and the Mediation of Jamaican Ethnicity and Gender in England*. Explorations in Anthropology. Oxford: Berg, 1997.
- Trible, Phyllis. "Eve and Adam: Genesis 2–3 Reread." In *Womanspirit Rising: A Feminist Reader in Religion*, edited by Carol P. Christ and Judith Plaskow. San Francisco: Harper and Row 1979.
- van Dierendonck, Dirk. "Servant Leadership: A Review and Synthesis." *Journal of Management* 37, no. 4 (2011): 1228-61.
- Vaticana, Libreria Editrice. "Catechism of the Catholic Church." <http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/P4U.HTM>.
- Walker, Sheila S. "Women in the Harrist Movement." In *The New Religions of Africa, Modern Sociology* edited by Bennetta Jules-Rosette. Norwood, N. J.: Ablex 1979.
- Wariboko, N. *The Charismatic City and the Public Resurgence of Religion : A Pentecostal Social Ethics of Cosmopolitan Urban Life*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2014.



- Wariboko, Nimi. "Mission Is Mindset Versus Mindset: The Impact of Nigerian Pentecostal Network on Global Mission and Consciousness." In *ASM- Eastern Fellowship*. New York, 2015.
- . *Nigerian Pentecostalism*. New York: University of Rochester Press, 2014.
- . *The Pentecostal Principle : Ethical Methodology in New Spirit*. Pentecostal Manifestos. Grand Rapids, Mich: Eerdmans, 2012.
- . "Political Theology in Africa." In *Paul Tillich and Pentecostal Theology: Spiritual Presence & Spiritual Power*
- edited by Nimi Wariboko and Amos Yong. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015.
- Weiss, Holger. "Variations in the Colonial Representation of Islam and Muslims in Northern Ghana, Ca. 1900–1930." *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 25, no. 1 (2005): 73-95.
- Woodhead, Linda. *Christianity : A Very Short Introduction*. Very Short Introductions. 2nd ed. ed. Vol. 119, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.
- Wyllie, Robert W. "Pioneers of Ghanaian Pentecostalism: Peter Anim and James Mckeown." *Journal of Religion in Africa* 6, no. 2 (1974): 109-22.

## **Appendix**

### **Interview guide for participants**

The study aims at finding answers to the following questions:

Interview Guide/Themes

Introduction:

1. Can you tell me about your involvement here in XX group?
2. What is your motivation for being part of this group?

Theme: Leadership (inclusion/exclusion, gender empowerment/disempowerment)

3. Can you tell me about the ways in which women are given an opportunity to become leaders in this renewal group?

Connected theme: Information about participants understandings of gender equity/equality in this regard

4. In what ways are women in this renewal group called upon to take up leadership positions?

a. Connected theme: What are the characteristics of women leaders (marital status, theological education, age, length of membership etc.?)

5. What titles are available for women in leadership?

6. a. FOR FEMALE PARTICIPANTS ONLY: As a woman, would you like to take on a leadership position and why?

b. FOR MALE PARTICIPANTS ONLY: Would you like women to take on a leadership position and why?

7. In your opinion, how are women who take up leadership positions spoken of/about within this renewal group?

8. In what ways does this renewal group enable women to take up leadership roles?

If his renewal group is encouraging women to take up leadership positions, why do you think this is so? If the renewal group does not encourage women to take up leadership positions, why do you think this is so? How is it done? Connected theme: guiding principles

9. Can you tell me about some of the activities here in the renewal group that you see as positive for women? (linked to the theme of gender empowerment; also includes activities during service)

## **Informed consent form**

### **Lord, Sit with me a Little Longer: A Study of Women's Leadership and Gender Empowerment in the Charismatic Renewal Groups of the Mainline Churches in Ghana**

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. You have been asked to participate in this study because you are a member or leader in this particular charismatic renewal group.

The purpose of the study is to explore the positions of women in the charismatic renewal milieu in Accra. The study welcomes your participation. Any information you provide, about your experiences or understanding of practices would be of enormous value to this study. The study is exploring the opportunities for leadership, title holding and role playing for women in this specific charismatic renewal group.

**This study will be done fulfilling all ethical requirements;** all the information collected during the interviews will be kept confidential by the researcher. I envision that the interview will take 1-2 hours. The questions that you will be asked during the interview are about your experiences of the practices of this renewal group. Please answer as honestly and truthfully as you can and know that your participation is **voluntary**. Your honest responses will help me understand the functioning of charismatic renewal groups of mainline churches. The key focus of this study is your opinions and experiences. Ultimately your answers will be included as part of academic publications and presentations. However, no one will be able to trace the information you gave out during the interview back to you. All publications and presentations where this interview data is used will use made-up names and will not include any descriptions that might identify you as the participant.

Due to the fact that the study explores personal experiences, many of the questions you will be asked to answer are personal in nature. In the event that you experience distress during/after the interview session, I am readily available to provide you with contact information of counselling centres and/or put you in contact with these.

There is no guarantee that you will benefit directly from the study. However, the researcher and supervisor believe that this research will help to make an important contribution to research addressing the ways in which women are positioned within charismatic renewal groups. As such there is a potential benefit that this research might have on developing strategies to empower women in such circles.

On your request, I will be happy to give you a copy of any publications that is based on this collected research material. The interview will be audio-taped and the researcher will be taking notes during the course of the interview. Only the researcher and her supervisor(s) will have access to this information. No one else will read (or hear) your responses to the interview questions. The data emerging from the research will be stored in a secure and appropriate manner. You can withdraw your consent at any time during the research and interview process.

This project is stipulated tentatively to be completed in **31/12/18** but may also be extended to **31/12/19** or beyond, depending on academic factors such editing and supervisory indication. After the above-mentioned date data will be anonymized and the whole study published based on **voluntary participation** by both institution of the churches and adherents.

If you have any questions concerning this form of consent please ask the researcher before you sign this form.

If you have read this document and given the chance to ask any questions now, or at a later time or if the document has been read and explained to you, please sign or make your mark below.

- I have been informed by \_\_\_\_\_ (the interviewer) about the nature, conduct, benefits and risks of this study
- I have also received, read and understood the above written information regarding the study
- I give my permission for the interview to be audio-taped
- I am aware that the results of the study including personal details regarding identity will be anonymously processed into academic publications and presentations
- I may, at any stage during the interview, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation in the study

- I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and (of my own free will) declare myself prepared to participate in the study

I voluntarily agree to participate in the research study described above.

---

Print Participant's **First Name and Initial of Last Name**                      Date

I have discussed the proposed research study with the participant, and in my opinion, they understand the benefits, risks and alternatives (including non-participation) and are capable to freely consent to (or refuse to) participate in this research study.

---

Print **Name of Person** Obtaining Consent    Date

**A signed copy of this consent form must be 1) retained on file and 2) the second one given to the participant for their records.**