

**WOMEN LEADERS IN GHANAIAN PENTECOSTAL/CHARISMATIC
CHURCHES**

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis, with the exception of literature cited, which has been duly acknowledged, is the result of my own research work carried out in the Department for the Study of Religions, University of Ghana, under the supervision of Prof. Elom Dovlo, Prof. Elizabeth Amoah and Prof. David Westerlund.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my dear husband Rev. Kwesi Novieto who has been of a great support throughout these years of study. He did not only endure my long absence from home, but gave me all the help I needed to make me realise this dream. The Lord bless you richly.



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AIC(s)	African Independent Church (es)
CoP	Church of Pentecost
DOVVSU	Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit (of the Ghana Police Service)
CHRAJ	Commission for Human Rights and Administrative Justice
FIDA–Ghana	The Federation of Women Lawyers in Ghana
GIMPA	Ghana Institute for Management and Public Administration
GPC	Ghana Pentecostal Council
GPCC	Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council
MOWAC	Ministry of Women’s and Children’s Affairs
NACCC	National Association of Charismatic Christian Churches
NCWD	National Council on Women and Development
NDC	National Democratic Congress
NGO	Non–Governmental Organisations
PNDC	Provisional National Defence Council
TLGM	The Lord’s Garden Ministries

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ABSTRACT

There seem, in the 21st century, to be a new generation of women leaders who are playing major leadership roles, such as becoming pastors and establishing their own churches. Previous women's leadership was confined to leading women, children and groups within their churches. This research seeks to investigate the factors influencing the changing status of women in the Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches. It also examines the leadership roles of Pentecostalist women.

The research is founded on the intersectionality theory which holds that a number of factors interact to influence the place and position of women. The work is also set within Max Weber's (1864-1920) concept of charismatic leadership which is based on divine origin and a form of heroism. Data was collected through interviews, participant observation, as well as messages of these women leaders, where available. The work focuses on the life and ministry of three women leaders in three selected Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches. Two of these women have founded and led a church and prayer centre while the third, a wife of a head pastor, is also recognised as the co-founder of the church.

The research revealed that some women do not go through any formal theological training before assuming church leadership. Some of such women may use claims to the Holy Spirit's empowerment to legitimise their call to leadership, mainly against the backdrop of society's hesitation to accept women's leadership. Indeed, in addition to the challenge of society's reluctance in certain cases to accept their leadership, women who wish to take up leadership position have to contend with the wider society's affirmation of their position. This means, as leaders, these women have had to prove their capabilities to their communities of faith to gain acceptance. Besides that, women leaders also negotiate their social and religious spaces in order to perform their roles as leaders. In the process, they sometimes endorse religious and socially accepted norms which contradict women's empowerment.

In spite of these challenges, women have unique roles and contributions as leaders in the Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches. These include counselling, service to the community especially the needy and special focus on mentoring fellow women. Thus, it is important for women to continue to play significant leadership roles in the church to enhance its growth. The reason is that women in leadership as the research further shows can go a long way to complement the role of their male counterparts. Ultimately, not only the Pentecostal and Charismatic society but the society as a whole benefits from such leadership. It is hoped that the example of these women would create greater opportunities for future female leadership in the church. This study contributes to the historical study of women in Pentecostal movement in Ghana.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

That, leadership roles in the church in Ghana, since its inception, have been the preserve of men cannot be an overstatement.¹ Within the context of this study, which is situated within the church in Ghana, leadership is defined as ‘the process of social influence, which maximises the efforts of others, towards the achievement of a goal’.² The trend of marginalising women within the leadership of the church is to the extent that, in Ghana, usually when one mentions the word ‘pastor,’ the notion that many people have is that the person in reference is a man. This is reflected in the development of the terminology ‘lady pastor’ as a designation for women pastors in some of the Charismatic Churches.³

¹ See Mercy A. Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa: African Women and Patriarchy*, (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1999), p.177; Robert Addo-Fenning, ‘Christian Missions and Nation-Building in Ghana: An Historical Evaluation,’ in J. L. Cox & Gerrie Ter Haar (eds.), *Uniquely African? African Christian Identity from Cultural and Historical Perspectives*, (Trenton: Africa World Press, 2003), pp. 193-212; Allison M. Howell, *The Religious Itinerary of a Ghanaian People: the Kasena and the Christian Gospel*, (Accra: Africa Christian Press, 2001), pp.108-114; Richard Foli, *Christianity in Ghana: A Comparative Church Growth Study*, (Accra: Trust Publications, 2006); Hans W. Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, (Accra: Waterville Publishing House, 1967); M. A., Oduyoye, *Hearing and Knowing: Theological Reflections on Christianity in Africa*, (Accra: Sam Woode Ltd, 2000); M. A., Oduyoye, ‘Christian Engagement with African Culture: Religious Challenges’ in . L. Cox & Gerrie Ter Haar (eds.), *Uniquely African? African Christian Identity from Cultural and Historical Perspectives*, (Trenton: Africa World Press, 2003), pp.89-108; Rachel E. Tetteh, ‘Women in the Church’ in M. A. Oduyoye & Musimbi Kanyoro, *Talitha Qumi! Proceedings of the Convocation of African Women Theologians*, (Accra: Sam-Woode Ltd., 2001), pp. 172-182.

² Forbes: <http://www.forbes.com/sites/kevinkruse/2013/04/09/what-is-leadership/>, [accessed February 5, 2014].

³ For instance is used in the Lighthouse Chapel International.

Pentecostals and Charismatics in Ghana are 28.3 percent of the total population and approximately 40 percent of Christians in Ghana.⁴ Pentecostal and Charismatic churches are growing in membership and are exerting a lot of influence on other Christian denominations. Some of the churches have big auditoriums that house about 3000 – 5000 people. Warehouses and cinema halls have been turned into chapels.⁵ The Pentecostalist worship styles have had their impact largely on, the Roman Catholic and the mainline Protestant churches. Asamoah-Gyadu refers to this influence as ‘Pentecostalisation of Ghanaian Christianity’ and Omenyo calls it ‘Pentecost outside Pentecostalism’.⁶

Historically, within the Pentecostal tradition, the situation of keeping women out of leadership has been renowned, especially within the classical Pentecostal churches in Ghana. In the case of the Church of Pentecost, one of the major classical Pentecostal churches in Ghana, women are noted to have been the bedrock of the church and James McKeown, the founder of the church, has been cited to have said that if he had his own way, he would have given leadership positions to women.⁷ It was because he saw the abilities and capabilities of women. However, the structures within the church tradition in which he was working did not allow him to engage female leaders.⁸

⁴Ghana Statistical Service, ‘2010 Population and Housing Census’, (May, 2012), http://www.statsghana.gov.gh/docfiles/2010phc/Census2010_Summary_report_of_final_results.pdf [accessed April 16, 2013], p.40. There are three main religions – Christianity, Islam and the Indigenous Religions in Ghana. Roughly, 71.2 percent of Ghanaians admit to being Christians, with 17.6 percent and 5.2 percent professing to be Muslims and practitioners of the Indigenous religions respectively. (Ghana Statistical Service, ‘2010 Population and Housing Census’, p. 6).

⁵ For instance Lighthouse Chapel, Winners Chapel, Winners Ghana, Royalhouse Chapel have all transformed warehouses into chapels.

⁶ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*: p. 18; Cephas N. Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism: A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in Mainline Churches in Ghana*, (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum Publishing House, 2006).

⁷ Christine Leonard, *A Giant in Ghana* (West Sussex: New Wine Press, 1989), p. 55.

⁸ Leonard, *A Giant in Ghana*, p. 55.

Ordained leaders in the Church of Pentecost are persons who are categorised as pastors, teachers, evangelist, prophets and apostles, depending on their calling and these are men.

However, what has become apparent today within the landscape of Pentecostalism in Ghana is that Pentecostalist churches⁹ have been experiencing constant increase in the number of women leaders. The women studied in this work are clear examples of that trend. This emergence of women leaders within the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches in Ghana can be considered as a reflection of the phenomenon of growing opportunities for women in the church and society. It has been argued that women are also regaining their place in the movement in which they played very important roles in shaping.¹⁰ The phenomenon of women as leaders itself is not new to Ghanaians, for it is part of the indigenous religion and culture.¹¹ It has been averred that the introduction of Christianity and colonization partly accounted for the removal of

⁹ I use the term Pentecostalism and Pentecostalist churches mainly to refer to classical Pentecostal churches with Western origins and/or links to Western churches as well as new independent Pentecostal or Charismatic churches and ministries. Classical Pentecostal churches in Ghana include churches like Assemblies of God, Apostolic Church and Church of Pentecost. Independent Pentecostal and Charismatic churches, established from late 1970s, include the Christian Action Faith Ministries, popularly known as Action Chapel and the International Central Gospel Church. For the purposes of this work, the AICs are excluded from the group of Pentecostals. As it were, Allan Anderson, in his work *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 103-106, points out that the AICs have few connections with classical Pentecostalism and are also different in many ways. Their contribution is however, not overlooked as they form a significant part of any history of Pentecostalism and Charismaticism in Ghana and perhaps the whole of Africa. What some Ghanaian scholars would call neo-prophetic churches, which is a growing phenomenon in Ghanaian Christianity have also been excluded in this study. The two different movements are similar, the neo-prophetic as a kind of revival of the AICs especially in the use of ritual symbolism for healing and protection. That is not to say classical Pentecostals and Charismatics do not make use of ritual symbolisms.

¹⁰ Estrela Alexander, *The Women of Azusa Street*, (Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press, 2005) pp. 15-16.

¹¹ Brigid M. Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion: the Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches*, (Oxford: Lexington Books, 2006), pp. 51-56; J. K Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics: Current Developments within Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana*, (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2005), p. 55

opportunities for women.¹² However, this has been reversed by some Protestant churches when they started admitting women into the ordained ministry. For instance, the Presbyterian Church of Ghana decided to admit women into the ordained ministry in 1977.¹³

At the turn of the 21st century, in Ghana, names of women leaders in the Pentecostal and Charismatic circles such as Rev. Christie Doe Tetteh and Mrs. Gifty Afenyi-Dadzie¹⁴ are popular. These are women noted for their charismatic stature and boldness and they are conspicuous not only among the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches but among Ghanaian Christians in general and the society as a whole. These women have directly or indirectly mentored a number of women who look up to them as role models for leadership in the church. Some of these known and unknown women protégés are harnessing their potentials for leadership in the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches, thus, leading to changing leadership roles. It may partly account for the new generation of increasing number of women leaders in the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches.

Generally, within Pentecostalism in Ghana, the Charismatic churches have been at the forefront of accepting women into significant leadership positions. For example, the

¹² Ifi Amadiume, *Male Daughters, Female Husbands: Gender and Sex in an African Society*, (London: Zed Books Ltd., 1992), pp.119, 121, 140; Musa W. Dube, 'Postcoloniality, Feminist Spaces and Religion' in Laura E. Donaldson and Kwok Pui-Lan (eds.), *Postcolonialism, Feminism and Religious Discourse*, (New York: Routledge, 2002, pp.100-120), p. 111.

¹³ <http://www.warc.ch/dp/rw9912/07.html> , [accessed February 10, 2010].

¹⁴ Rev. Christie Doe Tetteh is the first woman to have established a charismatic church in 1994. Today her name has become a household name and she heads a church with about 3000 worshippers weekly. Mrs Gifty Afenyi-Dadzie is the prayer leader of Women's Aglow, a para – church organisation with Pentecostal and Charismatic orientation. She is also a public figure – a journalist who was the president of the Ghana Journalist Association. She leads the Women's Aglow in monthly prayer meetings at the Independence Square.

Royalhouse Chapel did not initially have women in the ordained ministry. The turning point however came with the ordination of Rev. Mrs. Rita Korankye Ankrah, the wife of the Apostle General, the leader of the church. In recent times, there has been a resurgence of women founding churches, this time within the Pentecostal movement. Apostle Mrs. Lyanne Koffi, Founder and General Overseer of the Lord's Garden Ministries, is an example of such women. Accordingly, this study which is on women leaders in Ghanaian Pentecostal and Charismatic churches uses the two women as case studies.

The third case, Deaconess Hannah Barnes, is drawn from the Church of Pentecost (CoP). It must be emphasised that, irrespective of the situation whereby the CoP does not allow women into significant leadership roles in the church, the church does not prevent people from exhibiting their spiritual gifts. This situation fostered the setup of prayer centres by individuals, women included. Because the church does not formally allow women in leadership roles, some women with spiritual gifts who could not play direct leadership roles therefore set up prayer centres. Interestingly, men patronize these centres for retreats; and in times of challenges, they seek spiritual guidance there, irrespective of whether the leader is a woman or man. Thus, while women may be prevented from institutional leadership, their spiritual leadership is somewhat recognised. Asamoah-Gyadu highlights the dichotomy between the institutional and spiritual leadership when he states that 'although they may be excluded from the hierarchy of direct political decision-making, their spiritual leadership is affirmed

because of their expressive prophetic and healing powers attributed to the process of the Spirit'.¹⁵

In the light of these developments within Ghana's Pentecostalist churches, it is important to place the discussion within a context which serves as filter through which these developments are analysed and understood. Because of the strong connection between the performance of religion and other aspects of life, especially developments within the wider society, an obvious context for this work are the social changes and dynamics occurring within the Ghanaian society in general. The Ghanaian society is fast changing with a strong awareness of gender issues as well as gender advocacy. The debates on gender and the voices of these advocates are paying off in that the government has pledged to ensure gender equity, and more young women are becoming major players in women's leadership and advocacy. The advocacy for women has also resulted in the appointment of women into quite a few high profile positions. For instance, in recent times women have had the opportunity to serve in the high offices of the Chief Justice and Speaker of Parliament. In each instance, it was the first time a woman had occupied such a position in the history of Ghana. Some of these women have brought their leadership experiences to bear especially on the Pentecostal scene in the country, possibly influencing the increasing acceptability of women leadership in the church. Thus, public or private lives or experiences can influence religious lives. It can also be argued that social change has direct or indirect influence on religious life in Ghana and therefore serves a context for this work.

¹⁵ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, p. 55.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Classical Pentecostals have not had women in formal leadership positions especially as ordained ministers, though they have served in order roles such as leading children, youth and fellow women. This has been the case with the Pentecostal movement in Ghana though women have shown the potential and capacity for leadership, played significant roles in the church and are a majority in the church. The Pentecostal and Charismatic churches in the last decade have however, seen more women taking up major leadership positions as pastors than in the past. In other words, the leadership status of women in the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches is changing. This thesis probes the factors that are influencing the changing status of women in the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches.

1.3 Objective

The major objective of this research is to investigate the changing status of women in Pentecostal and Charismatic churches in Ghana. Using three selected women leaders as case studies, it specifically investigates the phenomenon of women's leadership in the Pentecostal and Charismatic movement in Ghana. It also examines the ministry of the selected women leaders in this movement. In order to meet this broad objective three specific objectives have been set for this thesis. These are:

- i. To explore the factors that account for the ongoing recognition of women's leadership in Ghanaian Pentecostal and Charismatic churches.
- ii. To examine the roles played by the emerging women leaders in Pentecostal and Charismatic churches in Ghana.
- iii. To discuss the challenges and prospects of women's leadership in these churches.

1.4 Research Questions

With contemporary practice of women leadership in the church and an increasing societal acceptance of women leadership in the Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches, there are a myriad of questions one may ask. The research, however, focused particularly on three questions:

- i. Based on the background that women had limited roles, why are Pentecostal and Charismatic churches now recognising women in leadership roles?
- ii. With the changing status of women, are the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches defining new roles for women or are women leaders integrated into the traditional roles that the male leaders had hitherto been playing?
- iii. What kind of challenges women leaders in Pentecostal and Charismatic churches face?

1.5 Scope

There are many Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches in Ghana and they have formed two major ecumenical bodies – the Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council (GPCC)¹⁶ and the National Association of Charismatic Christian Churches (NACCC). The GPCC has a membership of 184 churches countrywide,¹⁷ while the

¹⁶ The Classical Pentecostal churches established an ecumenical body – Ghana Pentecostal Council (GPC) – which brought together mainly those churches but also a few others. It was officially inaugurated in November 1969 first under the name ‘Ghana Evangelical Fellowship’ with the coming together of the Assemblies of God, the Church of Pentecost, Elim Pentecostal Church, the Christ Apostolic Church and The Apostolic Church. ([www.http://ghanapentecostalcouncil.org](http://ghanapentecostalcouncil.org), [accessed May 11, 2010]) The name was later changed to the Ghana Pentecostal Council. Even though the Charismatic churches have their own Charismatic Council, membership of GPC has grown over the years as it has been admitting a number of Charismatic and new Pentecostal churches. The name has thus been modified to reflect this phase – Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council. By 1999, thirty years after its establishment, membership had grown to 156. (E. K Larbi, *Pentecostalism: the Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity*, (Accra: Centre for Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies, 2001), pp. 77).

¹⁷ Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council, <http://www.gpcghana.org/member%20churches.pdf>, [accessed April 16, 2013].

NACCC has more than 200 member churches.¹⁸ There are also many Pentecostal and Charismatic churches that have not joined any ecumenical body. Essentially, even though there are many Pentecostal and Charismatic churches, the work is limited to three churches which are the Church of Pentecost, the Royalhouse Chapel International and the Lord's Garden Ministries. The Church of Pentecost is one of the oldest and the largest classical Pentecostal churches in Ghana, which recognises spiritual leadership of women. The Royalhouse Chapel International is one of the leading charismatic churches in Ghana, which ordains women as pastors. The Lord's Garden Ministries is one of the emerging women-led charismatic churches. Although there are differences between the classical Pentecostal churches and Charismatic churches (which represent neo-Pentecostalism), it is hoped that the findings would be representative of the general phenomenon of Pentecostalism.

1.6 Previous Research

Pentecostal and Charismatic churches have become difficult to define due to their historical, social and political diversities. Modern Pentecostalism has been generally defined as a form of Christianity emerging in the early 20th century and developing into what Hollenweger has classified as (i) Classical Pentecostals; (ii) The Charismatic renewal movement in existing mainline Protestant and Catholic churches; (iii) Pentecostal or Pentecostal-like independent churches,¹⁹ which are important in many parts of Africa including Ghana. These different forms seem to represent the general phenomenon of the Pentecostal movement.

¹⁸Modern Ghana, <http://www.modernghana.com/news2/40221/1/rev-steve-mensah-chairs-naccc.html>, [accessed April 16, 2013].

¹⁹ Walter J. Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments Worldwide*, (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1997), p.1.

Classical Pentecostals highlight the believer receiving the Holy Spirit's baptism, often with the initial evidence of speaking in tongues (glossolalia). The Charismatic movement highlights 'life in the Spirit' with much emphasis on the gifts of the Spirit, which include glossolalia but also several other gifts such as gift of healing.²⁰ In addition to belonging to different historical periods in church history, the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements have theological and doctrinal differences.

Allan Anderson gives a broad definition of Pentecostalism as 'all churches and movements that emphasize the working of the Spirit both on phenomenological and on theological grounds'.²¹ His definition here includes African Independent Churches (AICs), Classical Pentecostals, Charismatic movements within the mainline churches and new Charismatic or neo-Pentecostal churches.²² It is important, however, to distinguish among the different strands. In Ghana, and other parts of Africa, for instance, the AICs may be seen as precursors of Pentecostalism as the Holiness Movement was to Western Pentecostalism.²³

Global Scene

Modern Pentecostalism is traced mainly to William Seymour's Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles, which occurred from 1906-1909, with links to Charles Parham's Bible school and Agnes Ozman, who spoke in tongues on January 1, 1901.²⁴ Pentecostalism is known for its rapid expansion, influence and spread through publications and the work of missionaries. *The Apostolic Faith* was a particularly

²⁰ Stanley Burgess, 'Introduction' in Burgess (ed.) *Encyclopedia of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity*, (New York: Routledge, 2006) p. xiii.

²¹ Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, pp. 13-14.

²² Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, p. 13.

²³ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, p.38; Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, p. 93.

²⁴ Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, pp. 86-90.

significant journal which recorded the events of the revival at Azusa Street and beyond. The periodical had a substantial international readership. Missionaries reached over twenty-five countries in two years.²⁵ The North American origin has been challenged as some revivals predate it and others developed around the same time but independent of the events of Azusa Street.²⁶ The revival is believed to have already taken place in South India in 1860, Wales in 1904-05, later in Korea in 1907–08 and Chile in 1909. The Charismatic movement, or the neo-Pentecostal churches as some scholars call them, began as renewal movements in the mainline Protestant churches in the 1960s. Later there were the primarily non-denominational movements of which some developed into new churches.

Pentecostalism within a century has experienced a global expansion to become the second largest Christian group in the world. Latin America, Africa and Asia have experienced the most growth, but it has worldwide representation. Statistics have been different depending on, among others things, definitions of scholars. At the turn of the 21st century the figure was estimated at 523 million worldwide. Other scholars who distinguish between classical Pentecostals and other independent churches have smaller figures.²⁷ There is however, a general consensus on the enormous growth of the movement becoming a global phenomenon. A feature of Pentecostalism that accounts for its global nature is its adaptability to indigenous worldview.²⁸ The

²⁵ Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 42.

²⁶ Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, pp. 35-38.

²⁷ Joel Robbins, 'The Globalization of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity', in *Annual Review Anthropology*, 33 (2004), pp. 117-143. arjournals.annualreviews.org, accessed 05/28/10; Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, p. 11

²⁸ Allan Anderson, 'Globalization and Independent Pentecostals in Africa from a South African Perspective' in *Who is Afraid of the Holy Ghost: Pentecostalism and Globalization in Africa and Beyond*, (Trenton: Africa World Press, 2011), pp. 133-154, p.134.

common features are ‘filtered and reinterpreted through the framework of local social and cultural contexts before they are assimilated within Pentecostal belief and practice in the region’.²⁹ The massive growth may have attracted studies relating to the Pentecostal and Charismatic movement.

A majority of the increasing membership of the Pentecostal and Charismatic movement are poor and working-class people³⁰ and, in general, there are more women than men.³¹ Probably more women have been attracted because it presents liberation and empowerment of the Holy Spirit. This suggests a deprivation theory to explain the growth of the movement as it ‘provides a therapeutic release for the poor, socially marginalized and dispossessed.’³² There is however, also a growing membership among the middle class and even upper class people.³³

The Pentecostalism has been known for its utilization as well as restriction of the potentials of women.³⁴ Women’s participation has evolved through different phases from operating freely to restricted roles and more recently increasing participation in leadership. It must be noted that the first Pentecostal in modern Pentecostalism is a

²⁹ Satyavrata, ‘Globalization of Pentecostalism’, p. 221.

³⁰ David Westerlund, ‘Introduction’ in David Westerlund (ed.) *Global Pentecostalism: Encounters with Other Religious Traditions*, (London: I.B: Tauris & Co Ltd, 2009), pp. 1, 6; Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, p. 271.

³¹ Cecilia Mariz & Maria Machado, ‘Pentecostalism and Women in Brazil’ in Edward L. Cleary & Hannah W. Stewart-Gambino, (eds.), *Power, Politics and Pentecostals in Latin America*, (Colorado: Westview Press, 1997), p. 41; Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, p. 273.

³² Ivan M. Satyavrata, ‘Globalization of Pentecostalism’ in Burgess (ed.) *Encyclopedia of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity*, (NY: Routledge, 2006), (218 – 223) p. 220.

³³ Paul Gifford, *Ghana’s New Christianity: Pentecostalism in a Globalising African Economy*, (London: Hurst & Co. Ltd., 2004), pp. 26-27.

³⁴ Alexander, *The Women of Azusa Street*, pp.66-67; Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, pp. 274 – 275.

woman – Agnes Ozman.³⁵ Alexander, writing on early 20th century Pentecostalism, shows significant roles women played in the establishment and spread of Pentecostalism. Lucy Farrow is noted as the one who introduced William Seymour to the Pentecostal experience.³⁶ This experience subsequently led to the revival on the Azusa Street.

Women have always been leaders of some sort especially in the history of 20th century Pentecostalism. They have worked as administrators, preachers, teachers and missionaries; with some probably living in missionary areas for the rest of their lives.³⁷ Perhaps women were attracted because they saw the possibility of greater participation in ministry. Indeed women prayed, preached, taught and served on administrative boards at the beginning of the revival.

However, a few years later Seymour is said to have come out with strict rules regarding the role of women in the church.³⁸ Why did he come out with such distinctive roles? Was the movement adapting to the stratified social structure? Alexander thinks it was done for the movement to gain acceptance and respect among middle class denominations: ‘While written polity made all levels of ministry accessible to all qualified persons, unofficial custom held that only men could hold top positions and/or be appointed as pastor of viable congregations’.³⁹ Thus, although

³⁵ Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, p.88.

³⁶ Alexander, *The Women of Azusa Street*, p. 44; Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, pp. 115.

³⁷ Alexander, *The Women of Azusa Street*, pp.33 – 35, 46.

³⁸ Alexander, *The Women of Azusa Street*, pp. 66 -67.

³⁹ Estrela Alexander, ‘Women’ in Burgess (ed.) *Encyclopedia of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity*, (NY: Routledge, 2006) (459-463), p. 460.

women could preach, heal and evangelise, men monopolize institutional positions.⁴⁰

At this point they became like other forms of Christianity, where although women form the majority and had capacities for leadership positions the social and institutional structures did not give them the opportunity.

This reflects that although Pentecostals and Charismatics seem to recognise patriarchy, nevertheless, they have opportunities towards gender equality. There is a strong influence of the Pauline concept of women subordinating themselves to men in the church. In spite of this, however, Pentecostals acknowledge women's involvement since they identify two bases of authority: inspirational and institutional.⁴¹

Consequently, women receiving inspirational or spiritual abilities may work in the church as preachers, healers, evangelists but usually not as institutional leaders. Women also have the opportunity to develop their leadership skills largely through female services. This has been characteristic of the Pentecostal churches. Nonetheless, in recent times women, especially in Charismatic churches, do not only exercise inspirational leadership but institutional as well.

Ruth Burgess explains that while women in Protestant churches have gained the opportunity to have full ordination and assume institutional leadership due to activism and women in Charismatic churches are influenced by expanded women's roles in the society, Pentecostal women prefer to remain in the inspirational leadership.⁴² On the other hand men are required to give up those things that society regards as manly like

⁴⁰ Bernice Martin, 'The Pentecostal Gender Paradox' in R. K Fenn. (ed.) *The Blackwell Companion to Sociology of Religion*, (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2001), p. 54.

⁴¹ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, p. 55.

⁴² R. V Burgess, 'Feminism in Women' in Burgess (ed.) *Encyclopedia of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity*, (NY Routledge, 2006), pp. 200-204.

alcoholism and sexual adventures, and rather spend more time with the family.⁴³ This may be said to be an attempt of domesticating men in the Pentecostal movement.

African Regional Scene

Anderson refers to Pentecostalism (including Charismatism) in Africa as a ‘big business’ and ‘African Reformation’ due to its growth, influence and contribution to global Pentecostalism.⁴⁴ It is present in many countries in Southern, Central, Eastern and Western Africa with the West African sub-region experiencing particularly rapid growth. The Pentecostal and Charismatic churches have influenced other forms of Christianity.⁴⁵ According to Andrew Walls,⁴⁶ the centre of Christianity has shifted to Africa and it is time for reverse mission. It is however, not certain whether Africans are politically, economically and financially equipped to return mission. Pentecostals are sending missionaries within and outside Africa with some establishing ‘African’ churches in the Diaspora. However, these churches are mostly immigrant churches. Thus, one can say they are basically gathering their own and not necessarily reaching out as missionaries.

Before the influence of Western Pentecostal missionaries could be felt in the West African sub-region, one of the prominent African prophets, the Liberian William Wade Harris, had begun preaching in Ivory Coast and the west coast of Ghana in 1913–1914.⁴⁷ Even though the African initiative in the Pentecostal and Charismatic history in Africa cannot be denied, it is important to note that periodicals of the

⁴³ See Martin, ‘The Pentecostal Gender Paradox’.

⁴⁴ Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, p. 103, 121.

⁴⁵ Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, p.98.

⁴⁶ Andrew F. Walls, *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History: studies in the Transmission and Appropriation*, (Maryknoll. New York: Orbis Books, 2002), p. 31.

⁴⁷ Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, p.68.

Pentecostal movement spread throughout many parts of the world including Africa. An example is *The Apostolic Faith* which was issued by Azusa Street.⁴⁸ More so it has been documented that missionaries were sent from the Azusa Street to places including Liberia, Angola and South Africa. Indeed, it has been noted that two of the three Pentecostal missionaries who first went to Liberia from Azusa Street in 1907 were women.⁴⁹ Thus, Wade Harris, being a Liberian, it is not clear whether he was influenced by the Pentecostal missionaries who were there earlier.

The activities of Wade Harris and other male prophets, who moved from place to place led to the establishment of AICs through the efforts of women, thus making women significantly involved in the development of AICs.⁵⁰ Examples of women as founders or co-founders include Grace Tani – the Church of the Twelve Apostles (Ghana), Hannah Barnes – Musama Disco Christo Church (Ghana) and Christiana Abiodun Akinsowon – Cherubim and Seraphim Church (Nigeria).⁵¹ Thus Asamoah-Gyadu observes that ‘in the African Christian context, the inclusive role of women in religious leadership has been truer of the independent indigenous Pentecostal movements than of any other churches.’⁵²

It is argued that the nature of Pentecostalism has influenced its engagements in the primal context of Africans in that while Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches may demonize the traditional religious systems. Paradoxically, Ogbu Kalu sees the indigenous worldview dominating contemporary African experience and shaping the

⁴⁸ Alexander, *The Women of Azusa Street*, p. 11; Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, p. 40

⁴⁹ Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, p. 115.

⁵⁰ Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion*, p. 31.

⁵¹ Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion*, p.31.

⁵² Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, p. 55.

character of African Pentecostalism.⁵³ Since the indigenous worldview often gives space to women for religious leadership, Sackey links the opportunity for women to play significant roles in African churches to the important roles they play in the indigenous religions as priestesses, healers, diviners and custodians of rituals.⁵⁴

Kalu, in discussing charisma and women in African Pentecostalism, categorises female roles to include women as founders, Sisters and First Ladies.⁵⁵ Examples of women as founders are Margaret Wanjiru, Helen Ukpabio and Christie Doe Tetteh. These women established their own churches in the 1990s in Kenya, Nigeria and Ghana respectively.⁵⁶ Usually, women with charismatic gifts are allowed to use them without challenging the status quo (as Sisters and First Ladies). These women, as Kalu observes, have challenged the restriction on women above the expression of their gifts.⁵⁷

Ghanaian Scene

As argued by some scholars, the Pentecostal revival is scattered and cannot be traced only to North America. Larbi, Asamoah-Gyadu, Omenyo and Sackey have illustrated strands/typology/waves in their discussions of the renewal movements within the Church in Ghana.⁵⁸ These waves are chronological although there are some cases where renewals overlap. African Independent Churches, also called Spiritual

⁵³ Ogbu Kalu *African Pentecostalism*, (Oxford: University Press, 2008), p.170.

⁵⁴ Brigid Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion: The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches*, (Oxford: Lexington Books, 2006), p. 73.

⁵⁵ Kalu, *African Pentecostalism*, p.148.

⁵⁶ Kalu, *African Pentecostalism*, pp.148-152.

⁵⁷ Kalu, *African Pentecostalism*, p. 150-152.

⁵⁸ Larbi, *Pentecostalism*; Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*; Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*; Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion*.

Churches or *Susum sorè*⁵⁹ in Akan are known to be the first of these renewal movements. These churches have Ghanaian origins. The second is Classical Pentecostalism, which though was Western mission-related Pentecostal churches, had very significant indigenous initiatives. The third strand involves Para-Church or non-denominational fellowships like Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship, Women's Aglow, Scripture Union and Town Fellowships. The activities of the non-denominational groups led to the fourth and fifth strands of renewal. These are Renewal groups in the Catholic and mainline Protestant churches and the establishment of Independent Pentecostal and Charismatic churches or ministries respectively. Currently there is another phase of renewal movement quite different from Pentecostal and Charismatic churches. These are called Prophetic churches and there are a lot of engagements of rituals and symbolism and are similar in many ways with the AICs.⁶⁰ With the Prophetic churches, it may be argued that the AICs are rather in a new phase.

Some scholars such as Sackey, though recognizing the differences, however, use the general term AICs in referring to the revival movements mainly because they have indigenous initiatives.⁶¹ Even though she differentiates between the AICs using their theological and doctrinal differences, she mainly differentiates using the different historical paradigms. This is reflected as she refers to them as older and newer AICs. Her classification is challenging in the sense that the categorization of the Charismatic/renewal movements in the mainline churches does not fit in.

⁵⁹ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, p. 2.

⁶⁰ Cephas N. Omenyo & Abamfo O. Atiemo, 'Claiming Religious Space: the Case of Neo-Propheticism in Ghana' in Cephas N. Omenyo & Abamfo O. Atiemo (eds.), *Ghana Bulletin of Theology, New Series*, Vol.1, No. 1, (Accra: Department for the Study of Religions, University of Ghana, July 2006), p.66.

⁶¹ Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion*. Sackey refers to the AICs, and the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches as AIC due to the indigenous establishment and initiative.

In the case of Ghana, the antecedents to Pentecostal movement had no direct relation with western Pentecostal missionaries.⁶² Prophets Wade Harris, John Swatson and Sampson Opong are known to be forerunners of the Pentecostal movement in Ghana.⁶³ Their activities led to the establishment of the AICs mainly by their converts.⁶⁴ Some formed renewal groups in the mission churches but could not fit into those churches and thus were forced to establish their own churches to reflect their experience. They included in their worship and practice some indigenous cultural and religious practices.⁶⁵ The global Pentecostal influence came in later leading to what is classified as classical Pentecostal churches. The success of the establishment of classical Pentecostalism in Ghana is a case of indigenous initiative with men and women playing significant role in its establishment and developments; a typical example being the Church of Pentecost.⁶⁶

In the 1960s a number of para-church organisations such as Scripture Union, Town Fellowships, Women's Aglow and Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship were established in Ghana and these were Pentecostal in nature.⁶⁷ This eventually led to revival movements within the mission or mainline churches, a phenomenon Omenyo calls 'Pentecost outside Pentecostalism'.⁶⁸

Some of the revival movements in the mainline churches established fellowships, some of them leading to another form of independent churches, having a lot of

⁶² Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, p. 38; C. G. Baeta, *Prophetism in Ghana: A Study of some Spiritual Churches*, (Achimota: Africa Christian Press (reprint), 2004), p.6.

⁶³ Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, pp. 67-73.

⁶⁴ Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, p. 73; Baeta, *Prophetism in Ghana*, p. 8

⁶⁵ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, p. 40. Baeta, *Prophetism in Ghana*, pp.41- 42, 54

⁶⁶ Quist, 'Roles of Women', pp. 18 -19.

⁶⁷ Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, p. 88.

⁶⁸ Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*.

influences from similar churches especially in the United State of America. Asamoah-Gyadu points out that they ‘are very keen to reflect their international character and connections although they were born entirely out of indigenous initiatives.’⁶⁹ There were other influences from the media, modernity, gender ideologies among others.

Apart from the classical Pentecostal churches, there are many independent Pentecostal and Charismatic Christians in Ghana today, and one would easily lose count in an attempt to map them. Many worship in tents, uncompleted buildings, schools, classrooms, warehouses and cinema halls, with an increasing number having their own church buildings, some in huge auditoriums. They are very similar in worship styles. Presently, the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches particularly in Ghana have common characteristics.

Sackey⁷⁰ and Soothill⁷¹ have specifically studied the changing roles of women on the Ghanaian Pentecostal and Charismatic scene. Soothill focuses on women in Charismatic churches, while Sackey looks at women in the AICs as well as Pentecostal and Charismatic churches. In their gender discourse they focus on issues such as gender complementarity and dual leadership, perceptions and relationships.

In the face of the changing roles of women in the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches, this study will contribute to knowledge by unearthing the contributions and

⁶⁹ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, p. 27.

⁷⁰ Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion*.

⁷¹ J. E. Soothill, ‘Gender, Social Change and Spiritual Power’ in Ghana in P. Gifford (ed.) *Studies of Religion in Africa*, (Leiden: Brill, 2007).

challenges of women in church leadership and the interface between gender roles in the church and Ghanaian public/social space.

1.7 Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

The theoretical framework that underpins the work is the intersectionality theory. This theory holds that the various social and cultural constructions which inform different forms of discrimination against women are for instance, influenced by intersections of race, gender, and ethnicity.⁷² Cultural patterns of oppression are not only interrelated, but are bound together and influenced by the intersectional systems of society, such as gender, class, ethnicity [religion and culture].⁷³ That is to say these factors are mutually constituted and not to be seen as fixed or distinct categories.⁷⁴ The intersectionality theory provides a tool for analysing various systems of inequality as well as to develop a politics of resistance and empowerment.⁷⁵ The theory of intersectionality helps to explain and understand the positions, barriers and steps of improving the status of women in the church and the society.

An understanding of intersectionality is a vital element in gaining political and social equality and improving the democratic system. For Letty Russell, giving equal opportunities to women would be an attempt at liberation from dehumanization.⁷⁶ Thus, to fully understand the positions of women in Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches, one must investigate and examine the ways in which leadership structures,

⁷² See Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness and the Politics of Empowerment*, 2nd ed., (New York: Routledge, 2000).

⁷³ Collins, *Black Feminist Thought*, p.299

⁷⁴ Laura Gillman, 'Beyond the Shadow: Re-scripting Race in Women's Studies,' in Smith College, *Meridians: Feminism, Race, Transnationalism*, Vol. 7, No. 2, Indiana University Press 2007, p. 120, <http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/mer/summary/v007/7.2gillman.html>, [accessed October 25, 2010].

⁷⁵ Gillman, 'Beyond the Shadow', p.120.

⁷⁶ Letty Russell, *Church in the Round: Feminist Interpretation of the Church*, (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), p. 57.

social processes and social representations are shaped. For this study, I discuss specifically how gender, age, ethnicity and culture, class/socio-economic situation and Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity influence and affect women's lives in the church. The role of the media in this influence cannot be overemphasized. The study explores how these factors interact in empowering or disempowering circumstances to women and men in the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches and how women negotiate within the space they have. Musimbi Kanyoro has suggested that African women would have to 'challenge the cultural socialization by rejecting the assumption that the roles of men and women have been fixed either by the Creator or culture'.⁷⁷

Age is important in this analysis as it is in the context of ethnic/cultural background, which has some religious limitations on women of childbearing age; to the extent that it has been argued that older women are men.⁷⁸ It is important to see how their age affects them in their leadership roles. The women being studied are middle aged; however, it would be important to know what opportunities they had when they were younger as well as whether younger and/or older women today have more opportunities. The kinds of opportunities they had and how they accessed those opportunities were also assessed.

These intersections that may be said to affect the positions and roles of women in the Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches in Ghana today may also have a background in

⁷⁷ Musimbi R. A. Kanyoro, 'Engendered Communal Theology: African Women's Contribution to Theology in the 21st Century', in Nyambura J. Njoroge and Musa W. Dube (eds.) *Talitha Qumi! Theologies of African Women*, (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2001), p. 168.

⁷⁸ Elom Dovlo, 'The Effects of Religion and Traditional Barriers on Women's Potential for Development' in K. Osam, (ed.), *Legon Journal of Humanities*, Vol. XI (1998), 85- 101, p. 97.

post-colonialist thoughts that relate to women. In most parts of Africa, the introducers of Christianity disregarded some aspects of the culture of the converts which they labelled as evil. Thus, Western culture was intended to replace the indigenous culture as well.⁷⁹ Missionaries had the support/security of the colonizers and they in turn implemented their (colonizers) agenda.⁸⁰ Thus, as Kwok Pui-lan puts it, 'Christianization and Westernization became almost synonymous process in the colonial period'.⁸¹ This form of institutionalised (Catholic and Protestant) Christianity and Westernization marginalized women.⁸² In its history, the story of the Pentecostal movement has not been different, as the women who played vital roles remain mostly nameless.⁸³

The gender constructions of the Westerners and/or colonizers of the African were such that women were not engaged in specialised and productive work outside the home. They were limited to accepting low-paid and unpaid domestic jobs.⁸⁴ This influenced the status of women in the colonised communities. It is no wonder that most of the history of missionary work has very little information on women, though some accompanied their husbands.

Some other women came as missionaries, while others just had their names mentioned, and their work was limited to women and girls. In the history of the

⁷⁹ J. Kofi Agbeti, *West African Church History*, (Leiden: Brill, 1986) Missionaries in their report wrote about not just depopulating hell and populating heaven but also that converts could be seen in western cloaks as well.

⁸⁰ See Agbeti, *West African Church History*.

⁸¹ Kwok Pui-lan, *Postcolonial Imagination and Feminist Theology*, (Kentucky Westminster John Knox Press, 2005), p.17.

⁸² Kwok Pui-lan, *Postcolonial Imagination*, p. 9.

⁸³ Alexander, *The Women of Azusa Street*, p. 10.

⁸⁴ Kwok Pui-lan, *Postcolonial Imagination*, pp. 13-14.

Pentecostal mission in Ghana, for instance, although Sophia McKeown, the wife of James McKeown played a significant role in the commencement of their missionary work in Ghana, her role is only mentioned in passing. More so, like earlier white women missionaries of the time, because of the understanding that she had about the place of women, Sophia McKeown focused on the women and girls, teaching them vocational skills.⁸⁵

The indigenous religious and cultural system of Ghana has a gender system that includes both women and men in its spiritual and social structures.⁸⁶ It is however, argued that some of the indigenous cultures experienced the imposition of some aspects of Western cultures at the time. One such aspect was the limitation of women to private or domestic roles. The missionaries enforced strict gender roles – training boys for priesthood and trade while the girls were taught domestic services such as European forms of cooking, cleaning, sewing and child care.⁸⁷

In the church as well as in the society there are changes in the roles of women and men and this, in a way, challenges the gender ideals for both men and women. These influence people's view of women 'crossing their boundaries' and raise questions of gaining more space. The changing roles of women is also a challenge to those already in leadership, mostly men, with regards to accepting women as 'new entrants' into their fold.

⁸⁵ Leonard, *A Giant in Ghana*, p.55.

⁸⁶ Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion*, pp. 51-55; Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa*, pp.110 - 115.

⁸⁷ See Agbeti, *West African Church History*.

Issues of gender are usually related to questions of authority or power. Thus for these women, what sort of power do they have? How did they attain it and to what extent do they exercise the kind of power or authority they have? Neil Thompson discusses what he calls the three levels of power as personal, cultural and structural.⁸⁸ The personal level is for the individual to develop confidence, sense of worth as well as enhancing skills. Power at the personal level gives one the ability to influence and develop others.⁸⁹ The cultural or discursive level exposes the framework in which people find themselves and how they question such stereotypes. The structural level looks at positions and the opportunities available and ways in which one becomes conscious of it.⁹⁰

Power may also be looked at in terms of structure/political, agency and experience. Michel Foucault argues that no one owns power but rather a machinery and that power is everywhere and not within our control.⁹¹ Understood in terms of what power does, and not what it is, Foucault sees power from the perceptions of male ownership.⁹² Thinking of power in this way takes it from the domain of that which is gendered. From this perspective it can be said that ‘power is not limited to that which is coercive and domineering, but encompasses the ability to influence and to act’.⁹³ Women’s roles can thus be considered as power relations.

⁸⁸ Neil Thompson, *Power and Empowerment*, (Lyme Regis Russell House, 2007), pp. 21- 22.

⁸⁹ S. K. Ofori & Shine Ofori, *Church Management and Administration: A Focus on the Congregation*, (Accra: E.P. Church of Ghana Press, 2002), p. 49.

⁹⁰ Thompson, *Power and Empowerment*, pp. 21- 22.

⁹¹ Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: The Will to Knowledge*, (London: Penguin, 1998), p. 63.

⁹² Cf. Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, ‘Michel Foucault: Feminism’, www.iep.utm.edu/foucfem, [accessed February 20, 2014].

⁹³ Oyeronke Olajubu, ‘A Socio-Cultural Analysis of Yoruba Women and the Re-imagining of Christianity’ in *Feminist Theology*, Vol. 16(3), (Los Angeles: Sage Publications 2008), p. 317, DOI: 10.1177/0966735008091401, <http://fth.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/16/3/312> [accessed November 30, 2009].

The work is also set within Max Weber's (1864-1920) concept of charismatic leadership. This concept is based on divine origin and a form of heroism. He identifies three forms of leadership as bureaucratic, traditional and charismatic leadership.⁹⁴ Weber defines charismatic leadership as, 'resting on devotion to the exceptional sanctity, heroism or exemplary character of an individual person, and of the normative patterns or order revealed or ordained by him.'⁹⁵ For Weber, 'charisma will be applied to a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is considered extraordinary and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities. These are such as are not accessible to ordinary person but are regarded as of divine origin.'⁹⁶ Weber distinguishes Charismatic leadership from traditional and bureaucratic leadership in such ways that whereas traditional and bureaucratic leadership strive on permanence, rules and impartiality,⁹⁷ charismatic leadership is temporal,⁹⁸ depending on the leader's ability to perform miracles.⁹⁹ Thus, the followers have a personal devotion towards the leader¹⁰⁰ which is based on the traits of the leader such as the demonstration of unusual insight and accomplishment.¹⁰¹ Charismatic leaders are sometimes transformational, bringing changes into the lives of followers.¹⁰² Weber's concept of charismatic leadership allows leadership opportunities to women. Indeed Kevin

⁹⁴ George P. Hansen, *The Trickster and the Paranormal*, (Philadelphia, P.A: Xlibris, 2001), p. 102

⁹⁵ Ketan Palshikar, *Charismatic Leadership*, p.2,

<http://www.unc.edu/~ketan/documents/Charismatic%20Leadership.pdf>, [accessed, February 20, 2014],

⁹⁶ Hansen, *The Trickster and the Paranormal*, pp. 102-103.

⁹⁷ Christopher Adair-Toteff, 'Max Weber's Charisma' in *Journal of Classical Sociology*, Vol.5 (2), 2005, p.193, <http://jcs.sagepub.com/content/5/2/189>, [accessed February 20, 2014].

⁹⁸ Adair-Toteff, 'Max Weber's Charisma,' p.191.

⁹⁹ Adair-Toteff, 'Max Weber's Charisma,' p.194.

¹⁰⁰ Adair-Toteff, 'Max Weber's Charisma,' p.194.

¹⁰¹ Palshikar, *Charismatic Leadership*, pp. 8-9.

¹⁰² R. Bolden, J. Gosling, A. Marturano & p. Dennison, a review of leadership theory and competency frameworks, (Dunsford Hill: Centre for Leadership Studies, 2003), pp. 14-17.

Groves posits that more women than men are likely to enact Charismatic leadership.¹⁰³

1.8 Methodology

The life story method is used to examine the lives of three women leaders in selected Pentecostal and Charismatic churches. The life story method which is an aspect of Biographical research method is a qualitative research method.¹⁰⁴ According to Brian Roberts biographical research “uses stories of individuals and other ‘personal materials’ to understand the individual life within its social context”.¹⁰⁵ For Robert Atkinson, ‘a life story is a fairly complete narrating of one’s entire experience of life as a whole, highlighting the most important aspects’.¹⁰⁶

Life stories are deeply personal and the narrators may choose how much they want others to know of their stories. The storytellers are usually the only witnesses, raising questions of accuracy and reliability. However, the life stories can be cross examined using ‘other written, visual or oral accounts’.¹⁰⁷ As Roberts has noted, ‘the intention in the study of lives is to gain an understanding of individuals’ life experiences within their socio-historical context’.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰³ Kevin Groves, ‘Gender Differences in a social and emotional skills and charismatic leadership in *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, Vol. 11, No. 3. 2005, pp.31-32, <http://jlo.sagepub.com/content/11/3/30>, [accessed February 20, 2014].

¹⁰⁴ N.K. Denzin, *Interpretive Biography*, (Newbury Park: Sage, 1989), p. 27.

¹⁰⁵ Brian Roberts, *Biographical Research: Principles and Practice in Survey Research*, (Buckingham: Open University Press, 2002), p. 3.

¹⁰⁶ Robert Atkinson, *The Life Story Interview*, (Sage Publication, 1998), p.8.

¹⁰⁷ Roberts, *Biographical Research*, p. 8.

¹⁰⁸ Roberts, *Biographical Research*, p.13.

The stories these women tell about themselves about their past, present or future may be coloured by their perceived or real positions.¹⁰⁹ The concept of ‘dialogical self’ also becomes apparent, showing how as individuals they interact with themselves and the world. They show how they have negotiated within power relations, agency and moral responsibility which are influenced by their traditional roles as women.¹¹⁰

Thus, there are influences of cultural and social forces (especially issues of marriage) that work on the lives of women. As Marjo Buitelaar puts it, ‘what makes the concepts of the dialogical self so interesting in the study of intersectionality is that it provides tools to analyse how individuals speak from different I–positions within the self, switching between various collective voices and sometimes mixing them as they take different positions’.¹¹¹

The lives and ministries of the three women were sampled as a case study of women leaders in the Ghanaian Pentecostal and Charismatic churches. These women represent three different categories of women leaders within the Pentecostalist churches in Ghana. These categories are an ordained woman who has established her own church, a pastor’s wife who is ordained and a lay woman leader who has established a prayer camp. In analysing their lives the study followed, not their full life stories, but the events and processes that have had and still have direct or indirect influence on their positions and ministries.

¹⁰⁹ M. Buitelaar, ‘Accounts of Intersectionality in the Life-Story of a Well-Known Daughter of Moroccan Migrant Workers in the Netherlands’ in *European Journal of Women Studies*, Sage Publications, London 1350-5068 Vol. 13(3) ,(2006) pp. 259- 276 <http://ejw.sagepub.com> [accessed April 6, 2010].

¹¹⁰ See H.J.M Hermans,& A. Hermans-Konopka, *The Dialogical Self: Positioning and Counter-Positioning in a Globalizing World*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

¹¹¹ Buitelaar, ‘Accounts of Intersectionality’pp. 261-262.

Even though there are other categories of women leaders, the experiences of these women, it is believed, may not be very different from other women. The three women were chosen mainly because they form a category of a second generation of women leaders in the Pentecostal movement in Ghana. Even though being outstanding in their work as leaders, they may not be as popular as others. They also bring different perspectives to the study. Specifically, they are involved in administration, social work and prayer as well as healing. I investigated different factors that encourage or discourage their participation in the activities of the church. In evaluating their ministry in the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches in Ghana, some specific contributions and challenges are highlighted.

The main materials for this work are from qualitative interviews and observant participation. The interviews were recorded and notes taken while participating in their activities. I also examined their messages and thoughts, which were recorded in audio and video. The interviews were interactive, giving the opportunity for some level of adjustment and seeking for more clarifications as occasioned. Questions asked were open-ended, allowing the respondents the freedom to regulate their answers.¹¹² Michael Q. Patton notes that observant participation helps the researcher to understand the phenomenon independently from ‘the insights of others obtained through interviews’.¹¹³ Patton is however quick to note that ‘not everything can be

¹¹² Bill Gillman, *Research Interviewing: The Range of Techniques*, (Berkshire: McGraw-Hill education, 2005), pp. 4-5, <http://site.ebrary.com/lib/sodertorn/Doc?id=10161349>, [accessed, December 14, 2009].

¹¹³ Michael Quinn Patton, *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods, 3rd Edition*, (London: Sage Publications, 2002), p. 23.

directly observed or experienced'.¹¹⁴ Thus, the interviews and observant participation complements each other in understanding the phenomenon.

In January 2010 I interviewed the three women who are the focus of this study. I had not studied any of the women in my previous work, though they were part of the broader perspective of that study. The appointment was the first time of meeting personally with all of them but I was accorded a high level of courtesy. Being a woman, Pentecostal and interested in their work may have also been an advantage and influenced them to be more welcoming.¹¹⁵

During the time I was able to meet once with two of the key respondents and twice with the third key respondent. Their husbands and main assistants were also interviewed. With the first two respondents, I had an extensive interview that lasted approximately 90 minutes. In the case in which I had the opportunity to meet one of the respondents a second time, it gave me time to reflect and to follow up on some issues raised in the first interview.

Between October 2010 and February 2011, I engaged mainly in observant participation. This gave me the opportunity to critically observe the activities of the selected women and to interact with members of their churches. First-hand information was acquired through this observation and it has a significant impact on the work.

¹¹⁴ Patton, *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*, p. 23.

¹¹⁵ Bahira Sherif, 'The Ambiguity of Boundaries in the Fieldwork Experience: Establishing Rapport and Negotiating Insider/Outsider Status' in *Qualitative Inquiry*, 2001; 7; p.440 <http://qix.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/7/4/436>, [accessed May 3, 2010]. As a Pentecostal, I did not have to struggle with issues of isolation and acceptance.

The Researcher as an Insider/Outsider

In this study, I interact with emic (insider) and etic (outsider) viewpoints. With my Pentecostal background I consider myself as an insider as it gives me greater access and deeper understanding of issues. My background, I believe, has influenced my research interest in African Pentecostalism with a focus on women's place and leadership. As an insider I am able to fully engage in observant participation. Using emic focus, I understand, appreciate and identify with the studied women's attitudes, experiences and life stories.¹¹⁶

However, I consider myself as a critical insider, notwithstanding my bias in favour of women having more space in the church. This may have implications on the interpretation of my data, even though I remain as objective as possible, which requires distancing oneself from the phenomenon. The three women belong to congregations which are different from mine and that makes me somewhat of an outsider.

1.9 Structure

The work is structured into six chapters with the first chapter serving as the general background to women's leadership on the Pentecostal and Charismatic scene. To set the work in context, chapter two sets the stage with the background of these women being studied – the Ghanaian society and Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity respectively. The chapter begins by looking at the women in the pre-Christian context

¹¹⁶ Russel T. McCutcheon (ed.), *The Insider/Outsider Problem in the Study of Religion: a Reader* (New York: The Tower Building, 2005), p.32.

in Ghana. It explores women leadership in traditional societies which is also so much intertwined with the indigenous religions.

This is necessary because the indigenous religious systems have underlined perceptions of women in the contemporary society. Women sometimes find themselves bound, as per the dictates of the culture and tradition although modernity and post-modern patterns have given women access into areas which before were perceived as a man's sphere. Contemporary Ghanaian society has witnessed women as part of the global process venturing into the so-called man's world as far as education, politics, economy and leadership in private and public, religious and non-religious life. Christianity has made the greatest impact with women taking on significant leadership roles. Chapter Two also focuses on women leadership in Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches. It takes a general look into how women have negotiated their space as well as worked within it. It is important here to analyse the different Pentecostal and Charismatic constructions of gender and how these affect or influence women in different leadership opportunities.

In chapters three to five, I present and analyse the lives and ministries of the three women leaders thematically. Chapter three examines how these women worked their way into leadership. Their specific contributions as leaders and the kind of social action they are engaged in are assessed in chapter four, while the specific challenges that they face as leaders as well as women are studied in chapter five. Chapter six concludes the work with an overview of the study, summary of major findings and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN RELIGION AND SOCIETY

2.1 Introduction

The concept of leadership raises an academic debate among scholars as to how best to define it. Scholars have defined leadership from various perspectives. Some scholars define leadership in terms of its association with masculinity. Anne Perschel, a leadership psychologist, for instance defines leadership as 'equated with masculine traits including the tendency to be dominant, aggressive and individualistic, to take charge, provide answers and exert control.'¹¹⁷ Such masculine definitions have partly contributed to the debate on leadership and gender particularly on feminine leadership. Other scholars have defined leadership in terms of social influence, transformation, the ability to control or dominate, and the ability to exercise power. According to Roach and Behling, leadership is "the process of influencing an organized group toward accomplishing its goals."¹¹⁸ To Dwight D. Eisenhower "leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it."¹¹⁹ The above leadership definitions suggest that scholars focus on various dimensions of leadership, making the debate on leadership ongoing.

In this chapter, the discussion on women's leadership focuses on Kevin Kruse's definition of leadership as 'the process of social influence, which maximises the

¹¹⁷Anne Perschel, "Leadership and Gender: Why it Matters-How It's Changing" in *The Linkage Leader*, www.linkageinc.com [accessed February 18, 2014].

¹¹⁸ Quoted in R. Hughes, R. Ginnet & G. Curphy, *Organizational Leadership*, (McGraw-Hill Primis, 2006) p.7, http://khg.edu.vn/upload/file/eBook_Organizational%20Leadership.pdf, [accessed February 18, 2014].

¹¹⁹ Quoted in Institute for Strategic leadership: <http://www.leadership.ac.nz/resources/quotes/>, [accessed February 18, 2014].

efforts of others, towards the achievement of a goal'¹²⁰ with underpinnings of the Max Weber's concept of Charismatic leadership¹²¹ as discussed in chapter one.

In looking at women's leadership in the Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches, it is essential to study the context of these women. Focus is placed on their socio-cultural background and the Christian context in general. This chapter looks at the historical development of women leadership opportunities in the church in Ghana. It looks at the different opportunities for women's leadership in the mainline Protestant¹²² and Pentecostalist traditions. To understand the opportunities that women have for leadership, it is important to have an overview of women in the Ghanaian society. We therefore study women in the traditional Ghanaian society before its encounter with Christianity and modernization as well as the current state of women in the contemporary Ghanaian society. Perhaps the changing society may have influenced the various leadership opportunities for women in the history of Christianity in Ghana. How Pentecostals and Charismatics have constructed gender have in one way or the other also influenced women's role in those churches and this is also discussed.

The different situations/circumstances are informed by socio-cultural situations with its attendant changes and the changing roles of women in Christianity, specifically in the Pentecostal and Charismatic traditions. These factors intersect to influence the positions and roles of Christian women.

¹²⁰ Forbes: <http://www.forbes.com/sites/kevinkruse/2013/04/09/what-is-leadership/>, [accessed February 5, 2014].

¹²¹ Ketan Palshikar, 'Charismatic Leadership', <http://www.unc.edu/~ketan/documents/Charismatic%20Leadership.pdf>, [accessed February 18, 2014].

¹²² For the purposes of this work, Mainline churches refers to historical churches that belong to the Catholic Bishops Conference and the Christian Council of Ghana.

The next section takes a look at the socio-cultural background of the women under study. The Akan traditional society was used mainly to study the indigenous and cultural backgrounds of these women. Though there are differences between the Akan indigenous and socio-cultural systems and that of other groups in Ghana and other parts of West Africa, there are also vast similarities between them. Examples were, nonetheless, drawn from other ethnic groups where necessary. Focus is on the Akan society also because the women in this study either belong to this group or are connected to it in some ways. Rev. Mrs. Rita Korankye Ankrah and Apostle Mrs. Lyanne Koffi are Akan. Deaconess Mrs. Hannah Barnes, though not an Akan, was socialised among the Akans. More so, she is married to an Akan. These would subsequently show whether or not the indigenous religious and cultural backgrounds of these women may have imparted their positions in the church in any way.

2.2 Women in Akan Traditional Society

The Akan community forms the largest ethnic group in Ghana, a multi-cultural society.¹²³ The Akan constitute 49.1% of the estimated Ghanaian population of 24.2 million people. Other major groups include the Mole-Dagomba being 16.5%, the Ewes comprising 12.7% and the Ga Dangbe making 8%.¹²⁴ These major groups have subgroups and diverse cultures. The Akan, being the major group seem to have an influence on other groups.

¹²³ John D. K. Ekem, *Priesthood in Context: A Study of Priesthood in Some Christian and Primal Communities of Ghana and its Relevance for Mother –Tongue Biblical Interpretation*, (Accra: Sonlife Press, 2009), p. 27.

¹²⁴ Ghana Statistical Service, 2010 Population and Housing Census: Provisional Results, February 3, 2011.

The Akans in Ghana are made up of people in Ashanti, Brong Ahafo, Central and parts of Eastern and Western regions of the country. As pointed out by Ekem each Akan group is made up of clans/lineages and smaller family units.¹²⁵ These clans are headed by *ebusuapanyin* (Family head), usually a male is in charge of the general welfare of the people, while *obaapanyin* (the elderly woman) is concerned about issues affecting the women in the family. K. A. Busia notes that the *obaapanyin* deals with marriages and divorce of members in her lineage.¹²⁶ The chief (*ohene*) is the head of a town or village which is formed by a number of clans or families. Another important political position is the *obaahemaa* or the queen mother who takes charge of the affairs of women in the society.¹²⁷

Like other African peoples, the cultural practices and indigenous religions of the Akans are mainly interwoven. The religious usually gives meaning to all they do.¹²⁸ This is reflected in rites of passage and festivals for instance. During naming and/or marriage ceremonies, the gods and other spirits are invoked for their presence and blessings.¹²⁹ Queen mothers, in addition to their socio-political roles, have religious roles. Priestesses are also seen to be involved in judicial matters as part of their religious duties.¹³⁰

¹²⁵ Ekem, *Priesthood in Context*, p. 28.

¹²⁶ K. A. Busia, *The Position of the Chief in the Modern Political System of Ashanti: A Study of the Influence of Contemporary Social Changes in Ashanti Political Institution*, (London: Frank Cass & Company Ltd, 1968), p. 20.

¹²⁷ Ekem, *Priesthood in Context*, p. 29.

¹²⁸ John S. Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion*, 2nd Ed. (Oxford, Heinemann Educational Publishers, 1991), p. 10.

¹²⁹ T.N. O. Quarcoopome, *West African Traditional Religion*, (Ibadan: African Universities Press, 1987), pp. 110-113, 122-123.

¹³⁰ Ekem, *Priesthood in Context*, p.55.

In the socio-cultural, political and religious constructions of the traditional Akan, there are spaces or roles specifically for both women and men. As pointed out by Brigid Sackey, gender relations in Africa are inclusive as well as exclusive and also flexible.¹³¹ Looking at the women in Akan traditional society, I have highlighted some of the opportunities for women's leadership. Akan women's leadership roles before their encounter with other religions, especially Christianity, are discussed.

Before the coming of other religions, Akans had their own religious systems which were (are) interwoven with cultural practices. The cultural practices still do have influence even though people have many new religious affiliations. It must be noted that many of these cultural practices, which had been in place before the introduction of Christianity, still form part of the worldview of the Akan society. In the following section we look at various religious and cultural ideas relating to women and how these influence the roles that women played and/or continue to play in the traditional society.

Akan Indigenous Religious Ideas in Relation to Women

In the indigenous Akans religious system, just like the traditional religions of other Ghanaian societies, there are beliefs in God, divinities, ancestors as well as evil spirits. These religious ideas are mainly from oral sources such as rituals, myths, legends, folktales, proverbs, songs and other stories.¹³² Because these oral sources play very important roles in shaping the indigenous religious ideas, they have in a

¹³¹ Brigid Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion: The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches*, (Oxford: Lexington Books, 2006), p. 60.

¹³² Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion*, p. 20 – 30. The Akan Traditional Religion has no sacred books and literature has been by outsiders of the religion, thus it has been argued that the best sources for study are the oral sources.

way, influenced the perception of women and their roles in the traditional society. The general traditional view of women among the Akans is that of ambivalence which, creates a paradox. They are esteemed as life and caregivers, and at the same time they are believed to be weak, irrational and feared as having negative spirits.¹³³

Although God is neither male nor female but a spiritual being, symbolic expression of the Supreme Being is both male and female.¹³⁴ This traditional ambivalence is captured in scholarship with most scholars of the Akan Traditional Religion, writing about God as a male.¹³⁵ There are also others who represent the Supreme Being also as a female.¹³⁶ In either case, the Supreme Being is also considered as a dual entity, as attributes and pronouns relating to God are not gender specific.¹³⁷ Indeed, the thought of the Supreme Being, called *Nyame*, *Onyakopon*, or *Odomankoma* among the Akans is both male and female; as they also recognise a female creator.¹³⁸ The Gas and the Ewes have similar male/female principle as they call God *Atta Naa Nyommo* (father mother God) and *Mawu-Lisa* respectively.¹³⁹ The male principle is symbolised usually by the sun and the female by the moon and earth. The moon is seen as the mother aspect of *Nyame* as it is calm, delicate and peaceful. In this regard, Eva

¹³³ Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa: African Women and Patriarchy*, (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1995), pp. 46 – 49. Women seem to earn positive images due to the biological roles of procreation and caring for children, apart from that they are portrayed in a disharmonious way.

¹³⁴ Rose T. Abbey, 'Rediscovering Atta Naa Nyommo – The Father Mother God' in Nyambura J.Njoroge & Musa W. Dube (eds.), *Talitha cum! Theologies of African Women*, (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2001), p.141.

¹³⁵ J. B. Danquah, *The Akan Doctrine of God*, (London: Lutterworth Press, 1944). Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion*; Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, (London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1985). Kofi Asare Opoku, *West African Traditional Religion* (Accra: FEP International Private Limited, 1978), p. 15. Kwame Gyekye, *An Essay on African Philosophical Thought: The Akan Conceptual Scheme*, Revised Edition, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995), pp. 68 – 76.; Quarcoopome, *West African Traditional Religion*, p. 53.

¹³⁶ Eva L. R. Meyerowitz, *The Sacred State of the Akan* (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1949), p. 69. Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa*, pp.111.

¹³⁷ Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa*, p. 110.

¹³⁸ Meyerowitz, *The Sacred State of the Akan*, p. 69.

¹³⁹ Asare Opoku, *West African Traditional Religion*, p. 15.

Meyerowitz writes: ‘*Nyame*, the great mother, is visible to her people in the night sky, and above all in the moon, which represents her maternal characteristics.’¹⁴⁰ This is distinct from the male aspect which is represented by the sun which is fierce and hot.¹⁴¹

The female aspect of God is mostly represented by the earth goddess because of her role in sustaining human life.¹⁴² *Asaase Yaa* or *Asaase Efua* (the Akan earth goddess) is revered and, as a result, there are several taboos regarding the earth.¹⁴³ Asare Opoku notes that ‘in Akan society, she [the earth goddess] ranks after God and is the second deity to be offered a drink at libation.’¹⁴⁴ Indeed the earth goddess shares some similarities with the Supreme Being which should explain why in the worship of God and the earth goddess, there are neither shrines nor priests.¹⁴⁵

A woman’s ability, therefore, to bear children places her in a special relationship with God with whom she shares creative potentials.¹⁴⁶ Among the Akans therefore fertility is very essential as it guarantees the continuity of the society. The barren woman is thus looked on with contempt. However, as Peter Sarpong puts it, the woman must

¹⁴⁰ Meyerowitz, *The Sacred State of the Akan*, p. 69.

¹⁴¹ Meyerowitz, *The Sacred State of the Akan*, pp. 37 – 38.

¹⁴² Elom Doylo, ‘The Effects of Religion and Traditional Barriers on Women’s Potential for Development’ in Kweku Osam, (ed.) *Legon Journal of the Humanities*, Vol. XI, 1998. 85-101.

¹⁴³ Elizabeth Amoah, ‘Akan Conceptions of the Relationship between Humanity and Nature’ in Elizabeth Amoah (ed.) *Where God Reigns: Reflections on Women in God’s World*, (Accra: Sam – Woode Ltd., 1997) pp. 4 – 5. Some of the taboos regarding the earth include not going to the farm on their sacred days i.e. Thursdays or Fridays among the Ashantis and Fantes respectively. One is also expected not to have sex on the bare ground or in the bush.

¹⁴⁴ Asare Opoku, *West African Traditional Religion*, p. 56. He believes that this places the Earth goddess in a class of her own.

¹⁴⁵ Asare Opoku, *West African Traditional Religion*, pp. 29 -30, 56.

¹⁴⁶ J.S. Mbiti, ‘Flowers in the Garden: The Role of Women in African Religion’ in Jacob K. Olupona, (ed.) *African Traditional Religions in Contemporary Society*, (New York: Paragon House, 1991), pp. 59 – 72.

combine motherliness with motherhood.¹⁴⁷ In consequence though a woman is expected to be a biological mother, her abilities to nurture and care for others is also very significant as it influences positive images about her womanhood.

Attributes and appellations to God also enhance positive images of women which are mostly based on their nature and roles. For instance attributes like *obaantampa* (good/devoted mother) push the images of God close to that of a woman. Some of these attributes about the nature of women are for instance reflected in J. H. Nketia's *Funeral Dirges of the Akan People*¹⁴⁸ and Afua Kuma's *Jesus of the Deep Forest*¹⁴⁹ as shown below.

The following are some Akan dirges relating to women which were collected and translated by Nketia:

1. The woman who gives to both mother and child
2. Grandmother, the big cooking pot that entertains strangers.
3. You are a mighty tree with big branches laden with fruit. When they come to you they find something to eat.¹⁵⁰

Kuma has appellations about the nature of God. She writes from a Christian perspective but she displays her traditional cultural context in which she lives. Though most of her appellations are masculine portrayals of God (Jesus), there are some that point to the nature of women. She captures it thus:

Oyamyeni, the generous and merciful Jesus,
Who gives a thousand gifts has come;
He brings with him presents for his people...

¹⁴⁷ Peter Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect: Some Aspects of Ghanaian Culture*, (Accra: Ghana Publishing Corporation, 1974), p. 69.

¹⁴⁸ J. H. Nketia, *Funeral Dirges of the Akan People*, (Achimota: James Townsend & Sons Ltd., 1955).

¹⁴⁹ Afua Kuma, *Jesus of the Deep Forest: Prayers and Praises of Afua Kuma*, (Jon Kirby, English translation), (Accra: Asempa Publishers, 2006).

¹⁵⁰ Nketia, *Funeral Dirges* p. 35.

Onyankopon Amponyinam: God the provider,
Who has medicine for hunger...

Let's go to Jesus' city,
Called *Soe – di – bi*
(Put down your load and have something to eat)
He is the great city,
Whose children are always well fed,
When he goes he brings enough to satisfy us.¹⁵¹

These dirges and sayings tell about the nurturing nature of women which portray women as being caring and protective. Thus women share such imagery with God.

Though Akans believe in God, they, like other African societies tend to relate more with the divinities. This is based on the belief that God is quite distant. Divinities (*Abosom*) are believed to be children or messengers of God, having been created by God, live in or identified with specific geographic locations, natural phenomena or animals and have specific functions.¹⁵² Whereas 'language for God uses no gender specific pronouns', the divinities are connected with specific genders. They could be male or female and also have priests and priestesses serving them in shrines or temples.¹⁵³ It is in connection with the divinities that the major religious lives flow because they (divinities) usually act on behalf of God¹⁵⁴ and many rituals are directly related to them.

The choice of the functionaries in a shrine is dependent on the divinity and this has made it possible for both men and women to perform sacred roles of priesthood. Women are priestesses, diviners and medicine women. They also offer special

¹⁵¹ Kuma, *Jesus of the Deep Forest*, pp. 25, 27, 37.

¹⁵² Gyekye, *African Philosophical Thought*, p. 73; Asare Opoku, *West African Traditional Religion*, pp. 54 – 55.

¹⁵³ Asare Opoku, *West African Traditional Religion*, pp.54 – 55; Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa*, p.110.

¹⁵⁴ R. S. Rattray, *Ashanti*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923), p. 141.

services in the sacred places and also to the divinities. It is in offering of their services that there is a high marginalisation of women, sometimes having their human rights denied. Mercy Oduyoye notes that there are more women occupying lower-ranking levels of the functionaries, since the mediums are mostly women and the priests are largely men.¹⁵⁵ Some of the divinities that are known to be male are believed to have female divinities as wives. Nonetheless some priests who serve male divinities take on human wives for the divinities they serve and then become the visible husbands on their behalf.¹⁵⁶

The Supreme Being and the divinities, being spirits are believed to live in the invisible world. This invisible world is also believed to have a host of spirits including human spirits, both good and evil.¹⁵⁷ Whereas the good spirits of the ancestors are generally viewed as male, the evil spirits/powers of witchcraft are seen as female.¹⁵⁸ That is not to say only female have witchcraft powers but as Dovlo writes,

¹⁵⁵ Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa*, p.113; Oduyoye, 'Women and Ritual in Africa' in Oduyoye M. A. and Kanyoro M. R. A. (Eds.), *Will to Arise*, (New York, Orbis Books, 1992), p. 10. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, p. 173.

¹⁵⁶ The system where women become visible wives of divinities is more prevalent among Ewes and Adangmes along the south-eastern coast of Ghana and is known as the *Trokosi* institution. This is a system whereby a young virgin is sent to the shrine to avert calamities that befall her family for crimes committed by a member of the family against another person. The calamity occurs because the aggrieved person seeks redress from the gods for crimes committed against him/her. Elom Dovlo and A. K. Adzoyi in their research on the *Trokosi* institution (Elom Dovlo & A. K. Adzoyi, 'Report on Trokosi Institution,' (International Needs, 1995).) noted that the most common crime is stealing usually of items which are not expensive. When the girls are taken to the shrines they become spiritually married to the gods and its proxy the priest.¹⁵⁶ These girls and women thus serve as human wives to the divinities.

¹⁵⁷ Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion*, pp.70 – 80.

¹⁵⁸ Elizabeth Amoah, 'Violence and Women's Bodies in African Perspective' in Mary J. Mananzan, Mercy A. Oduyoye, Elsa T. J. Shannon Clarkson, Mary C. Grey & Letty M. Russel (eds.) *Women Resisting Violence: Spirituality for Life*, (Maryknoll, Orbis Books, 1996), p. 85.

‘traditionally, when witchcraft is seen as good, it is associated with men, while the evil use of witchcraft power is normally associated with women.’¹⁵⁹

Similarly, Abraham Akrong notes that ‘in popular Ghanaian folklore, the face of witchcraft is feminine.’¹⁶⁰ More women are accused of being witches possibly because they may have called attention to themselves by being for instance, extremely rich or poor, old or even exhibiting some form of extraordinary skill or deviant behaviour.¹⁶¹ Thus belief in witchcraft is used to ensure gender stereotypes are kept.

In this vein Akrong comments that:

It is not uncommon even today to hear men describing enterprising and brilliant women as ‘witches,’ simply because they are seen as renouncing their traditional roles and venturing into roles that are reserved for men, thus crossing the gender boundaries. As a result many women do not want to go beyond their respective roles, for fear of becoming the object of witchcraft accusations.¹⁶²

It is important to note that in spite of these accusations women do venture into fields that are beyond their traditional roles in the society.

As noted earlier, indigenous religious beliefs are from oral sources and these have influenced the ideas relating to women, which are both negative and positive.

Examples of these are some portrayals of women in myths, folktales and proverbs.

For example, it is a general Akan belief that the first humans were in a state of

¹⁵⁹ Elom Dovlo, ‘Witchcraft in Contemporary Ghana, in Gerrie Ter Haar (ed.), *Imaging Evil: Witchcraft Beliefs and Accusations in Contemporary Africa*, (Trenton: Africa World Press, 2007), p. 68.

¹⁶⁰ Abraham Akrong, ‘A Phenomenology of Witchcraft in Ghana’ in Gerrie Ter Haar (ed.), *Imaging Evil: Witchcraft Beliefs and Accusations in Contemporary Africa*, (Trenton: Africa World Press, 2007), p. 61.

¹⁶¹ Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa*, pp. 120 – 123.

¹⁶² Akrong, ‘A Phenomenology of Witchcraft,’ p. 63.

paradise – having everything they needed, with God being close to them, but they lost it and in place of that humans began to experience diseases, suffering and death.¹⁶³

The change in the fortune of humans is explained by many myths as due to some fault on the part of messengers (usually animals) sent from God or human fault.¹⁶⁴ A number of myths however, blame women for the loss. A popular Ashanti myth explains that a woman forced God to decide to live higher up the sky because she always knocked God with her pestle while pounding *fufu*.¹⁶⁵ An attempt to reach to God failed and many people died in the process.¹⁶⁶ Such myths may have influenced perceptions of women as causing problems or worsening the state of humans, thus giving them a negative image.

Since Akans use folktales to explain why certain things are or became,¹⁶⁷ such traditions go a long way to influence thoughts about women. Similarly, proverbs, which are mainly constructed by elders of the community, are used to invoke thoughts about women.¹⁶⁸ Oduyoye draws some proverbs from J. G. Christaller's *Twi Mmeseusem*, a collection of 3,679 proverbs, to discuss the Akan thoughts, views, expectations and roles of women. Some of the proverbs are as follows:

1. What you would not have repeated in the streets, do not tell your wife in the bed chamber. (JCG 2958)
2. Like fowls, women of Akropon do not forage in one place. (JCG 1844)
3. Women love where wealth is. (JCG 29)
4. The tortoise has no breast and yet she feeds her young ones. (JCG 1914)

¹⁶³ Asare Opoku *West African Traditional Religion*, p. 22.

¹⁶⁴ Quarcoopome, *West African Traditional Religion*, p. 30.

¹⁶⁵ *Fufu* is a local Ghanaian meal made with cassava and plantain, cocoyam or yam. It is usually pounded in a wooden mortar and with a wooden pestle.

¹⁶⁶ J.S. Mbiti, 'Flowers in the Garden', p.62. Asare Opoku, *West African Traditional Religion*, pp. 23 – 24. Quarcoopome, *West African Traditional Religion*, p. 30.

¹⁶⁷ Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa*, p. 37.

¹⁶⁸ Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa*, pp. 58 – 61.

5. Like hens, women wait for cocks to crow to announcing the arrival of daylight. (JCG 1664)
6. When a woman makes a drum, it is kept in a man's room. (JCG 22)¹⁶⁹

These proverbs show both positive and negative portrayal of women. It is also a reflection of what men, who are believed to have constructed these proverbs, think about women. The first three proverbs above perceive women in the negative. Because women are believed to be gossips and unstable, they are not to be told secrets or things which are not meant for public knowledge. This is because they would spread it to others. They are also believed to love wealth and therefore tend to be unfaithful. However, the main positive perception of women again stems out of her biological and nurturing roles. The woman as portrayed in the fourth proverb may not have the means but she would manage to care for her children. Thus, though the woman is regarded as being undiscerning, ungrateful, demanding and a gold digger, she is esteemed because of her biological roles and expectations of her in the sustenance of the society.

Apart from the positive or negative portrayal of women, there are also gender expectations of them. These expectations are reflected in the fifth and sixth proverbs cited above. These strict gender roles prevent women from doing certain things in the community.

The Status of Women in the Akan Family System

The Akan concept of the human being indicates that the human is made up of the material and immaterial including *okra* (soul), *sunsum* or *ntoro* (spirit), and *mogya*

¹⁶⁹ Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa*, pp. 58 – 61.

(blood).¹⁷⁰ Of these the *mogya* is explained to be given by the mother and this gives a person a social status with rights and obligations in the society. Asare Opoku writes: ‘the *mogya* received from the mother gives a child his status and membership within the family and clan. At the same time, it spells out his obligation as a citizen in the matrilineal society such as the Akan.’¹⁷¹ From the Akan concept of humans, therefore, a positive image of women can be derived because of the significant role they are believed to play in the making of humans.

It is also of their conception of humans that the Akans derive their notion of matrilineal inheritance. It is believed that the woman is connected with the blood of her child and this is what gives the child rights and responsibilities in the society. Quarcoopome explains that ‘the link between one generation and another is thus through the female line. This accounts for the matrilineal system of inheritance, where a man is inherited by the children of his sister. The sister is thought to have the family blood in her, transmitting it to her children.’¹⁷² Women then become sustainers of the society through childbirth. This makes marriage and procreation very important to the Akan. It is part of the life of any woman since it seems to be an acceptable state for women. It is through childbirth that they gain a majority of their positive images in the society. The three women leaders in this study have their lives interwoven with marriage and childbearing. In introducing themselves, they were quick to make

¹⁷⁰ For detailed discussions on the Akan concepts of the human being see Gyekye, *African Philosophical Thought*, pp. 85 – 103. Asare Opoku *West African Traditional Religion*, pp. 94 – 100. Gyekye discusses that some scholars like Busia and Rattray hold that *sunsum* and *ntoro* are synonymous, but he distinguishes between them. However, my interest here is that in the Akan concept of the human being, both the mother and father contribute significantly.

¹⁷¹ Asare Opoku *West African Traditional Religion*, p. 99.

¹⁷² Quarcoopome, *West African Traditional Religion*, p. 105.

references to their husbands and children. This kept coming up during the interview sessions.

Inheritance is matrilineal also because the Akans' origins are attributed to a mythical female ancestor.¹⁷³ As in the case myths, it is difficult to establish their female ancestry historically. However, it seems to be a reasonable assumption to explain the Akan lineage organization.

On the other hand the father connects with children spiritually through the *ntoro*. It is believed that this is what guides and protects the child. If the *ntoro* is weak, the child may be susceptible to evil spirits. One of the reasons why men have the right to name children is because they are considered as spiritual protectors.¹⁷⁴ Thus as the mother gives a person social status and inheritance, the father gives spiritual protection.

In marriage, however, it is believed that there is a transfer of authority from the father of the woman to the husband. This is because the woman's *sunsum* is believed to be weak and thus, is in need of the guidance and protection of the man's *sunsum*.¹⁷⁵ Oduyoye thus opines that in the Akan conception of humanity, 'the male *ntoro* [*sunsum*] becomes the disciplinary element in the life of all persons. Femaleness is therefore subject to the spirit of discipline and conditioned to accept male domination

¹⁷³ Brian Schwimmer, 'Akan Social Organisation,' (Department of Anthropology, University of Manitoba, 2003) http://www.umanitoba.ca/faculties/arts/anthropology/tutor/case_studies/akan/lineage.html, [accessed June 15, 2012].

¹⁷⁴ Mercy A. Oduyoye, *Beads and Strands: Reflections of an African Woman on Christianity in Africa*, (New York: Orbis Books, 2004), p. 84; Oduyoye, 'Women and Ritual in Africa', p. 17.

¹⁷⁵ Elizabeth Amoah, 'The Changing Perspective of some Akan Beliefs and Practices' in Amoah, E. & Oduyoye M. A., (eds.) *When Silence is no Longer an Option*, (Accra: Sam Woode Ltd., 2002), pp. 16 - 17. Some of the negative labelling and perspective of women are because of the belief of women having a weak spiritual component.

as the norm of societal life¹⁷⁶ though she gives social status to the male. It is thus not surprising that irrespective of the fact that inheritance is through the matrilineal lineage, men are heads of families whether it is the nuclear or extended.

It is expected of women to be hard working in the traditional society. This may mean walking long kilometres to farms, working on the farms, carrying firewood, fetching water from the streams, cooking and taking care of the home. The type of work one does is usually gendered by the society. An Akan proverb translated as ‘a woman sells garden eggs and not gun powder’ illustrates the gendered work in the society. The idea is that gunpowder, which is used by men for war or hunting, cannot be sold by women; as women are not expected to engage in these vocations.

This indicates that although both women and men can engage in commerce, there are rules regarding the type of trade expected of them. In discussing the prescription of the feminine among the Akans, Oduyoye says: ‘men and women are taught what is appropriate for them and they are firmly enjoined to steer clear of inappropriate roles. Thus, in the Akan society, a person is not free to develop any competence solely out of personal inclination... If a woman insists on taking on a male role, she will only add it to her assigned female roles.’¹⁷⁷ Oduyoye further shows, as shall be pointed out later in this chapter, that women have actually developed their skills and potentials beyond their gendered socialization.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁶ Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa*, p. 115.

¹⁷⁷ Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa*, p. 61 – 62.

¹⁷⁸ Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa*, p.62.

The Akan woman's status signifies that being matrilineal does not imply matriarchy. That is to say though a person's identity is derived from the mother, the society is not governed by women. The woman must always be under the authority of the man, though she might be older and even more experienced than the man.¹⁷⁹ The *ebusuapanyin* (head of family), who is always thought of as a man is the head of his mother's clan. He gets the opportunity to lead through his mother, and even though there may be *obaapanyin* (literal: old woman), she may not assume the role of the *ebusuapanyin*. It is usually the *ebusuapanyin* with his elders (also men) who make the decisions affecting the family and sometimes the society as a whole.

Though Akan men are expected to take decisions that generally affect the home, there are several instances where women are noted to take important decisions that affect the home and society at large.¹⁸⁰ Though Oduyoye points out that the only place a woman makes her decision is the kitchen,¹⁸¹ it can also be established that even in the kitchen the woman may still be driven by the will and wishes of a man who could be a father, husband, brother or son. The kitchen then becomes the place where men's decisions are implemented. However, practically it can be said that women's decision-making extends beyond the kitchen. In some exceptional cases, they have been exclusively in charge of homes due to several factors such as war, divorce, single-parenting and/or deaths. In such instances, we can say women have been leaders of their homes, and their decisions have consequently influenced the home and perhaps society as well.

¹⁷⁹ Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa*, p. 57-58.

¹⁸⁰ Cf. Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa*, p.53

¹⁸¹ Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa*, p.53.

For Akan women however, the role of sustaining the society seems to give them a special privilege in decision making. Thus as Oduyoye also writes, ‘since Akan women and their children remain members of their matrilineage throughout their lives, it is in that group that the women function as decision–makers.’¹⁸² As would be subsequently discussed, women play important decision making roles in the Akan political system.

Women in the Akan Socio-Political System

Women are engaged at different levels of the political systems of the Akan society. They are involved in chieftaincy, governance and the general welfare of the society, which sometimes implies warfare. In general, however, women are not seen directly influencing decision-making and policies which are important aspects of the political system, although, the queen-mother plays very significant roles among the Akans. In addition, the notion of the proverbial *Abrewa* (old lady) who is consulted during tough decision making, points to an indirect significant role of women in decision-making. Though the *Abrewa* may be compared to a man in the sense that she is menopausal and does not bear children anymore,¹⁸³ these are indications of the female as representation of wisdom.¹⁸⁴

Traditional political leadership among the Akan is based on gender equity. This is based on what Irene Odotei describes as a ‘dual and separate spheres of authority, where men and women occupy leadership positions that parallel and complement

¹⁸² Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa*, p. 90.

¹⁸³ Esther Oduraa Ofei-Aboagye, ‘Women’s Wisdom and the Challenge of Religion in Africa,’ in Mercy Oduyoye (ed.), *Women in Religion and Culture: Essays in Honour of Constance Buchanan*, (Ibadan: Sefer Books, 2007), p. 50.

¹⁸⁴ Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion*, p. 53.

each other.’¹⁸⁵ The chiefs are usually male and women serve as queen mothers. All traditional societies in Ghana have some sort of female leaders. She may be the queen, wife of the chief or a leader of the women. The ‘queen-mother’ concept is popular among the Akans, Ewes and Gas in Ghana.

Though chiefs are mostly male, however, there have been a few female chiefs among the Akans. This usually happened in circumstances where there was no male heir to the stool. Boafo-Arthur cites an example of two female chiefs, Nana Dwaben Serwaa of the Dwaben people in the 1960’s and currently Nana Osei Yiadom Boakye II of Adammobe, who became chiefs because there was no male contender.¹⁸⁶ Busia also notes that, in the past, queens served as heads of royal lineages when men went to war.¹⁸⁷

As noted earlier in this chapter, the chief (*Ohene*) is the head of a clan or town and the queen mother or the *obaahemaa* (female ruler) is mainly in charge of the women in the society. Busia writes that ‘the queen mother is described as the mother of the chief. She is more often his sister but constitutionally she is regarded as the chief’s mother.’¹⁸⁸ Her position therefore affects her function as policy maker, in that she is part of the highest court of decision-making.

¹⁸⁵ Irene Odotei, ‘Women in Male Corridors of Power’ in Irene Odotei & Albert K. Awedoba (eds.), *Chieftaincy in Ghana: Culture, Governance and Development*, (Legon: Sub-Saharan Publishers, 2006), p. 81.

¹⁸⁶ Boafo-Arthur, K. ‘Chieftaincy in Ghana: Challenges and Prospects in the 21st Century’ in *African and Asian Studies*, Vol. 2, no. 2, (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2003) (pp. 125-153) p. 135.

¹⁸⁷ Busia, *The Position of the Chief*, p. 20.

¹⁸⁸ Busia, *The Position of the Chief*, p. 19.

Among the Akans the queen-mother is the female ruler as well as the king maker. Being regarded as the chief's 'mother' gives her a lot of power. She has the role of choosing the suitable person to become the next chief anytime the office of the chief becomes vacant. It is also her offspring who becomes the heir to the throne. This is because it is believed that it is the 'queen who alone can transmit royal blood... the children of the King cannot be heirs to that stool.'¹⁸⁹ It can thus be said that it is the queen mother who bears the king.

In the chief's court, which is seen as the highest point of decision-making, the only woman who may be present is the queen mother. This is because the chief's court is usually made up of the chief and the elders who are mostly men. Even though she is the only woman her voice is very powerful and her views are respected.¹⁹⁰ Showing the power of the queen mother, Meyerowitz writes:

During the enstoolment ceremony [of the chief] she, as his 'mother', and in the presence of all, admonishes him to rule the state well and gives him advice as to his future conduct. She is the only one permitted to criticize him in court, or at a state meeting, or criticize any of his counsellors whom she believes to be in the wrong.¹⁹¹

She thus serves as the main counsellor to the chief and rules indirectly. Other roles of the queen-mother among the Akans include leading and representing the women, being a member of the general council, taking part in legislation and being involved in the maintenance of order, and settling disputes relating to family, property and inheritance.¹⁹² Busia adds that the queen-mother adjudicates household cases and

¹⁸⁹ Rattray, *Ashanti*, pp.294 – 295.

¹⁹⁰ Florence A. Dolphyne, *The Emancipation of Women: An African Perspective*, (Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 1991), p.41.

¹⁹¹ Meyerowitz, *The Sacred State of the Akan*, p. 40.

¹⁹² Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa*, p. 94. Oduyoye argues that this system is both a delegated matriarchy and matrilineage.

disputes between members of the royal lineage. She is also consulted on the marriages of the royal lineage.¹⁹³

An important role of traditional leaders is to protect their society. It has been noted some Akan women also went to war to protect their society. Rattray mentions four queen mothers of Ashanti who went to war. These are Juaben Serwaa of Juaben, Ata Birago of Kokofu, Akyia of Asansu and the well-known Yaa Asantewaa of Ejisu who led the Ashantis in a war against the British.¹⁹⁴ Rattray however, notes that these women went to war because they had passed menopause.¹⁹⁵ Busia refers to an oral tradition which notes that women were chiefs but they could not perform their duties such as going to war or attending important meetings because of menstruation. They, therefore, asked the men to take over their positions.¹⁹⁶ It may thus be due to menstrual prohibitions that made men to take over certain positions that women could equally occupy.

Young girls and older women however, went to war to render services to the men.

During war, Oduyoye describes the roles of women as thus:

Parading at the rear of the battle line, they performed religious rituals, chants, and dances to bring about victory and ward off evil. The women left at home carried on similar assignments and they also taunted able-bodied 'war dodgers' to join the battle or 'get lost'.¹⁹⁷

These supporting roles are as important as those performed by the men on the battlefield.

¹⁹³ Busia, *The Position of the Chief*, p. 19.

¹⁹⁴ Rattray, *Ashanti*, p.81.

¹⁹⁵ Rattray, *Ashanti*, p.81.

¹⁹⁶ Busia, *The Position of the Chief*, p. 20.

¹⁹⁷ Oduyoye *Daughters of Anowa*, p. 99, Oduyoye, 'Women and Ritual in Africa', p. 18.

Some African female scholars such as Sackey, Oduyoye and Odotei have also argued that women's political leadership positions among the Akans have been adversely affected by colonization. They have the same opinion that women were stripped off their political power as the public domain was seen as that of the male.¹⁹⁸ Thus, women lost privileges they had in the traditional societies. Okeke argues in the same vein when she discusses Igbo women in Nigeria.¹⁹⁹ Rattray, in an answer to why he had not noticed the importance of the queen mother, was told: 'The white man never asked us this; you have dealings with and recognize only men; we supposed the European considered women of no account, and we know you do not recognize them as we have always done.'²⁰⁰

This thought obviously has changed; nonetheless, it has its repercussion on the status of women in the Akan society. In contemporary times, queen mothers do not seem to have the national recognition that chiefs have; for instance, there is the National House of Chiefs which recognises the role of chiefs at the national level. Since it is a representation of chiefs, female chiefs and queen mothers seem to suffer low recognition because they have no representation and their place is undermined. Odotei reveals that the differences in female traditional leadership in Ghana pose complexities for women's representation in the House of Chiefs both regionally and on the national level.²⁰¹ Though women may have lost some traditional political recognition, it has not affected their traditional spiritual authority. They continue to play very important religious roles in the Akan society.

¹⁹⁸ Sackey, *New Direction in Gender and Religion*, p.61, Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa*, pp.95-96, Odotei, 'Women in Male Corridors of Power,' pp. 81-83.

¹⁹⁹ Okeke, Philomina E. *Negotiating Power and Privilege: Career Igbo Women in Contemporary Nigeria*, (Ohio University: Center for International Studies, 2004), p. 4.

²⁰⁰ Rattray, *Ashanti*, p.84.

²⁰¹ Odotei, 'Women in Male Corridors of Power,' p. 83.

Women's Traditional Spiritual Authority

Akan religious activities include many rituals and women play very significant roles therein. Although, women serve in high offices like priestesses and queens, some serve as slaves. Religious roles are also gendered. Women are responsible for certain rituals relating to especially women such as aspects of puberty and widowhood rites. It may also be argued that more women perform those rituals because more women than men go through those rites.

Priesthood is a very important office in the traditional religious system. Priests and priestesses among the Akans are referred to as *Akomfo* (singular – *Okomfo*).²⁰² Priesthood is not for everyone as it is the deities that identify, call and equip one to be able to perform priestly functions. Those functions are mainly finding solutions to human problems. Both men and women can be called into priesthood in the Akan society.²⁰³ Priests and priestesses are believed to serve as intermediaries between the divinities and humans and also as a mouthpiece of the divinities. Hence, indirectly, the welfare of the society depends on them. Their functions imply that they have high spiritual abilities as they communicate with the divinities. Thus it is interesting that though most women may not be in high ranking positions as noted earlier, more women than men are called into priesthood.²⁰⁴

There are however, some high ranking priestesses among the Akans. An example is the Asante *Okomfohemaa*, Nana Afia Saa in Kumasi. Nana Afia Saa is recognised as

²⁰² For detailed discussion on priesthood in Akan Traditional Religions see Ekem, *Priesthood in Context*, pp.43-56.

²⁰³ Asare Opoku, *West African Traditional Religion*, p. 74.

²⁰⁴ Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa*, p.120.

a chief-priestess who falls under the highest rank of Ekem's categorisation of Akan traditional priest and priestesses.²⁰⁵ George Osei revealed that Nana Afia Saa was elevated to the position of Chief priestess in 1962 because of the spiritual powers that she displayed.²⁰⁶ Nana Afia Saa is also known for her expertise in herbal medicine.²⁰⁷

The queen-mother, apart from social and judicial responsibilities, also plays very important religious roles. She has direct links with the ancestors and as the king-maker, she has the sole responsibility of introducing the new chief to the ancestors. Sackey argues that 'if chiefship among the Akan is a sacred office and the sanctity begins the moment the queen introduces him to his ancestral stool, then the queen mother is de facto the highest ranking religious personality in Asante.'²⁰⁸ What the queen-mother is doing here however, is performing some religious duties to fulfil the requirements of her political position. Contrarily, Ekem is of the view that the interaction of the chief and for that matter the queen mother with the spiritual world does not bring them into them full priesthood. He thus categorizes them as informal priests.²⁰⁹ In this case, though the queen mother's role of introducing a new chief is inarguably a very important role, it does not necessarily make her the highest religious personality.

Even though women play significant religious roles, their full participation in certain rituals is hindered for the reason of being women. One of the major factors prohibiting Akan women from fully participating in the societal and religious

²⁰⁵ Ekem, *Priesthood in Context*, p. 45.

²⁰⁶ George Osei, *Traditional Priesthood in Focus: The Biographies of some Religious Leaders in Ghana*, M. Phil thesis, (University of Ghana, Legon 2009), pp. 100 – 102.

²⁰⁷ Osei, 'Traditional Priesthood in Focus', pp. 95 – 97, Ekem, *Priesthood in Context*, p. 54.

²⁰⁸ Sackey, *New Direction in Gender and Religion*, p. 18.

²⁰⁹ Ekem, *Priesthood in Context*, p. 43.

activities is menstruation.²¹⁰ Osei mentions that it is taboo for Akan priestesses and other women to be in the shrines during menstruation.²¹¹ This however, poses a paradox since menstruation is believed to be a life-giving power at the same time as the menstrual blood is seen as a powerful negative spirit in that blood is sacred and thus taboo.²¹²

It is thus interesting that Osei, however, reveals that Nana Afia Saa did not mention menstruation as a taboo. Two reasons may account for this. Firstly she might have been long past menopause at time of Osei's research.²¹³ Hence it could not prevent her from performing religious rituals and duties. Secondly it is possible that she had taken and accepted menstrual prohibitions, adjusting her work to it. With this background, she may not view menstrual prohibitions as a challenge to her work.

The general belief surrounding the menstrual blood is that it is very potent and has the ability to nullify some spiritual power. The menstruating woman 'must not touch any talisman, any male or participate in any ritual... such a woman renders a man vulnerable to evil spirits and annuls all other powers.'²¹⁴ Due to this belief about the polluting nature of women, they are usually not placed in charge of many rituals. Since religion permeate all facets of the Akan society, the idea of the polluting nature of women has for instance, affected their active participation in war. Menopausal women are, therefore, given the opportunity to play certain roles especially in some rituals. Though women are noted to have participated in war, they must be outside the

²¹⁰ Oduyoye, *Beads and Strands*, p. 84.

²¹¹ Osei, 'Traditional Priesthood in Focus', p. 36

²¹² Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa*, p. 119.

²¹³ Osei, 'Traditional Priesthood in Focus', p. 84. At the time of his research in 2009, Nana Saa was already 97.

²¹⁴ Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa*, p. 119.

childbearing bracket; either reached menopause or not reached puberty.²¹⁵ Oduyoye thus thinks that ‘the supposed ritual impurity of the menstruating woman places her outside full involvement in religious rituals for almost half of her life.’²¹⁶ Dovlo argues that allowing women to participate in rituals only after menopause makes them what he calls ‘honorary men.’²¹⁷ In the case of girls who have not reached puberty, they are yet to attain ‘womanhood.’ Thus, the opportunity given to young girls cannot be taken as a real chance for women since they have not assumed adult life with its rights and obligations.²¹⁸

From the foregoing, the woman’s status in the cultural and traditional environment is one of ambivalence. There are still some general traditional views about women that get in the way of harnessing their full potential. Women are usually under more pressure to marry and procreate, while the man is believed to always be able to do that at a later time. Married women are also expected to perform their traditional roles of taking care of the home. These factors among others make men rise faster than women in most spheres. In general, Akan women have different reactions to their perceived low state: acceptance and internalization on one hand and activism and negotiation for change on the other hand. Ghana has had incidences of women who have questioned and acted in ways to bring significant changes in the society to the benefit of women.

²¹⁵ Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa*, p. 116.

²¹⁶ M. A. Oduyoye, *Hearing and Knowing: Theological Reflections on Christianity in Africa*, (Accra: Sam Woode Ltd, 2000), p. 123.

²¹⁷ Dovlo, ‘The Effects of Religion,’ p. 97.

²¹⁸ Peter Sarpong, *Girls’ Nubility Rites in Ashanti*, (Tema, Ghana Publishing Corporation, 1977), p.13.

2.3 The Contemporary Ghanaian Society and Women

Social and religious changes have been seen to have both negatively and positively affected gender roles in Ghana. It is argued for instance that the lesser roles of women in national politics and decision-making in contemporary African societies are due to colonial policies,²¹⁹ since women play significant roles in traditional politics and decision-making.

As part of the missionary enterprise in Africa and in Ghana in particular, 'new cultures' were introduced to the converts and the indigenous people. For instance, the African Christians were expected to dress in a way that conformed to that of the missionaries. Cephas Omenyo refers to Ephraim Amu, who was prohibited from preaching at a Presbyterian Church because he wore a traditional cloth.²²⁰ In the process, the missionaries demonized the indigenous cultures,²²¹ notwithstanding the reality that 'no culture is absolutely negative or wholly pure.'²²² The cultures introduced at the time did not give women space, thus it affected the traditional position of women.

In general, emphasis was placed on male formal education, which gave men access to positions in the new society. Also positions of women in the old were overlooked. For instance, in the traditional Akan society, the powers of the kings and queens were

²¹⁹M. A. Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa*, pp. 95 – 96. Sackey, *New Direction in Gender and Religion*, pp. 61–62.

²²⁰Cephas N. Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism: A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in Mainline Churches in Ghana*, (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum Publishing House, 2006), p. 65.

²²¹Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, p. 65; Kwame Bediako, *Christianity in Africa: The Renewal of a Non-Western Religion*, (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1995), p. 69. The missionaries distanced themselves from indigenous religions and cultures.

²²²Musa Dube, 'Postcoloniality, Feminist Spaces and Religion' in Donaldson, L & Kwok Pui-lan (eds.), *Postcolonialism, Feminism and Religious Discourse*, (London: Routledge, 2002) p. 116.

reduced with the introduction of the colonial governors, a change which has affected the traditional rulers in the country to present times. However, the position of governors was taken on by men. This was perhaps a good opportunity for the male leadership, but no such position was created to replace the position of traditional women leaders. Thus, with the coming of independence in 1957, Ghanaians took over those positions and those political systems have persisted to date with more men than women taking political positions.

In the 21st century, the Ghanaian woman lives in a hybrid of foreign and indigenous social order. She, in many ways, may have outlived the thoughts and practices of the traditional religio-cultural systems but still holds onto some heritage carried into the current society in the form of culture and customary practices while embracing Western practices as modern. For instance, Dolphyne asserts that African women, irrespective of their educational or professional status, know that it is their duty to cook and keep the home.²²³ In recent times, changes may be due to women's activism and/or negotiation within the social order²²⁴ or the awareness of men of the need to give women the opportunity to enhance their potential. With their new opportunities however, women usually have to combine their leadership roles with their traditional role as homemakers, wives and mothers.

Christianity and Islam have also had significant impacts on Ghanaians, with the resultant effect of having increasing adherents with a seemingly corresponding declining allegiance to the traditional religion. The traditional religion has also been

²²³ Dolphyne, *The Emancipation of Women*, p.5.

²²⁴ Okeke, *Negotiating Power and Privilege*, p. 4.

perceived by Christians and Muslims as demonic and pagan. However, because the traditional religion is interwoven with the cultural practices, it invariably influenced these ‘new’ religions, which is one of the factors that have led to the Africanisation of Christianity. That is to say, society continually influences religious practices and in this sense, contemporary Ghanaian society has a part in encouraging women's leadership in Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches.

There are gradual changes occurring in relation to the state of women in Ghana regarding education, economy, politics and leadership. Women have always been in the majority with regards to population. According to the 2010 population and housing census, they constituted 51.3% with males being 48.7%.²²⁵ Being in the majority has most of the time not translated into relevant positions and roles for women. Though it has been argued that women lost some traditional political powers due to colonization, women have had to struggle to regain those powers they lost to colonialism.

Women's Activism

Women's activism in Ghana, or other parts of Africa, is not new; there have been instances where women have acted and also negotiated their course.²²⁶ Protests by women in West Africa have a history of spontaneity. They may be silent on personal

²²⁵ Ghana Statistical Service, *2010 Population and Housing Census*, (May, 2012), http://www.statsghana.gov.gh/docfiles/2010phc/Census2010_Summary_report_of_final_results.pdf, [accessed April 16, 2013], p. 21.

²²⁶ Examples from Nigeria: Madam Tinubu an ‘*Iyalode*’ (Mother of all women) among the Yoruba protested against British colonization; ‘*Iban Isong*’ (Daughters of the land), among the Ibibio, an organization that bring irresponsible husbands into account. (Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa*, pp. 96 – 98.

issues but not issues that collectively affect them; when they had acted or reacted, it was for themselves or the society in general.

Successive governments in Ghana have established a number of institutions to respond to women's issues. These include the Ministry of Women's and Children's Affairs (MOWAC), the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit (DOVVSU) of the Ghana Police Service and the Commission for Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ). Even though DOVVSU and CHRAJ do not deal with women directly, issues regarding domestic violence and human rights affect more women than men.

The Ministry of Women's and Children's Affairs (MOWAC) was established by an executive instrument in January 2001 as a national machinery to respond to the challenge of gender inequality.²²⁷ MOWAC has the mandate to initiate and co-ordinate the formulation of policies; to promote gender mainstreaming and child development issues; empowerment of women; survival, development and growth of children and the protection of the rights of women and children.²²⁸ This national machinery was to replace the National Council on Women and Development (NCWD) which was established in 1975 in response to the UN request to establish a national machinery for the advancement of women. MOWAC has been given a cabinet status with the hope that gender issues would receive attention at the highest level of decision making, but it is not clear whether this has been achieved. They have

²²⁷ The Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs: <http://www.mowacghana.net/> [accessed 29 January 2010].

²²⁸ The Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs: <http://www.mowacghana.net/mandate.html> [accessed 29 January 2010].

at their disposal less than 1% of the national budget to deal with issues of gender equality,²²⁹ which is woefully inadequate.

The Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit (DOVVSU) of the Ghana Police Service is a unit of the Service responsible for handling issues of domestic violence; it used to be the Women and Juvenile Unit but was broadened into the DOVVSU. Its officers are mandated to protect, apprehend and prosecute perpetrators of domestic violence and child abuse.²³⁰ It is worth noting that a majority of the victims of domestic violence, as recorded and dealt with by the unit are women. DOVVSU educates the society on crime prevention, especially at the grassroots levels like schools, churches, and markets. They have clinical psychologists and counsellors who provide counselling for victims and survivors of domestic violence. There are social workers who deal with matters relating to non-maintenance and marital issues. They also refer their clients, if need be, for medical and other support services.²³¹

The Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) was established by an Act of Parliament (Act 456) in 1993.²³² With its mandate being human rights, the Commission investigates all complaints on the violation of human rights and freedoms as stipulated in the 1992 Constitution of Ghana.

²²⁹ The Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs: <http://www.mowacghana.net/mandate.html> [accessed 29 January 2010].

²³⁰ Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit: <http://www.ghanapolice.info/dvvsu/dvvsu.htm> [accessed March 3, 2010].

²³¹ Ghana Police Service: <http://www.ghanapolice.info/dvvsu/dvvsu.htm> [accessed March 3, 2010].

²³² The Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice: www.chrajghana.org, [accessed March 3, 2010].

In addition to the country's developmental strategies, civil society institutions, women's rights groups and Non-Governmental Organisations have been working to improve the state of women in Ghana. These women's advocates and organisations do not only push for the participation of women but also empower women to be involved in politics and leadership at all levels. An example is The Ark Foundation, one of the human rights Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) that focuses on the protection of women and children in Ghana. As part of their programme they train young women between the ages of 20 and 40 to be leaders and advocates with the aim of raising a group of contemporary women leaders and activists in all spheres of life who can push women's issues at any level.²³³

The Federation of Women Lawyers in Ghana (FIDA-Ghana), an NGO, has also been committed to the enhancement of the status of Ghanaian women and children through legal aid, research and publications. FIDA-Ghana is committed to addressing discriminatory practices in the society, promoting and protecting the rights of women and children. They also hold governments accountable on obligations towards enforcement of international treaties and conventions that affect women and children.²³⁴

A group of women-focused NGOs and individuals concerned about the state of women in Ghana submitted 'The Women's Manifesto for Ghana' in 2008. The document spelt out issues that confront women in Ghana and made demands on the government to address them. The issues included women's economic empowerment,

²³³ The Ark Foundation: http://www.benakconsult.com/arkfoundation/about_us.php [accessed February 25, 2010].

²³⁴ FIDA Ghana: <http://www.fidaghana.org/> [accessed February 25, 2010].

social policy and development, discriminatory practices against women and human rights and the law.²³⁵ The manifesto also gave birth to the Women Manifesto Coalition. The Coalition seeks to monitor how the government addresses the needs of women and also advocates for greater attention for women in all spheres of life.

From these efforts from governments, institutions and groups interested in women's empowerment, women are moving gradually from the periphery to the centre of the society. They are very effective in their advocacy and push strongly for laws and bills that favour women. They push politicians to make promises and ensure that those promises are fulfilled; for instance ensuring gender equality. More organisations are becoming interested in providing services for victims of violence, the majority of whom are women. In consequence women's traditional and religious roles are changing in that these efforts afford them a lot of opportunities in their religious spheres. Among other things women's activism and negotiation have had educational, economic, political and religious influences on the life of women in Ghana.

Women's Education

One of the avenues through which women can gain more leadership opportunities is education. The colonial practice of educating more men than women persisted in the Ghanaian society long after independence. Boys' education had been preferred to that of girls. Many girls also drop out of school before or at the end of the basic level due to factors such as poverty, early marriage or teenage pregnancy. George P. Hagan shows that

While female pupils outnumber males in pre-school age group, and are at par in primary schools, a process of falloff occurs from the middle school

²³⁵ The Women's Manifesto for Ghana, (The Coalition on the Women's Manifesto for Ghana, Accra, 2004).

age that is, as girls mature into women, that results in a total imbalance of 2 males to 1 female at the tertiary level.²³⁶

Mary Tanye notes ‘that negative attitude towards women’s education, the dowry system, control of women’s lives, male privilege and time constraints as well as the multiple roles women must perform are some of the cultural barriers impeding women’s access to education.’²³⁷ More men have higher education than women and this ultimately makes men more functional in the public and the administrative spheres.

Ghana in general has an average literacy rate but averagely women’s education is lower than men; illiteracy is thus prevalent among females, and there are many of them who have never been to school.²³⁸ Since more males have access to education, it explains why there are more men in knowledge and skill based industries. The United Nation’s Millennium Development Goals for Ghana aim to curtail these challenges of women. It therefore tasked the government in the year 2000 to ensure the elimination of gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2005 and to all levels of education by 2015.²³⁹

Thankfully some of those few women who had access to education are today making history in the nation. It thus follows that the more women are educated; the more

²³⁶ George P. Hagan, *Gender: Evolving Roles and Perceptions*, in *Gender: Evolving Roles and Perceptions*, Accra: Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences, Proceedings 2004, 2006), pp. 55-56.

²³⁷ Mary Tanye, ‘Access and Barriers to Education for Ghanaian Women and Girls,’ in *Interchange*, Vol. 39/2, 167–184, 2008. (Springer 2008), DOI: 10.1007/s10780-008-9058-z, [accessed June 13, 2012].

²³⁸ Akosua K. Darkwah, ‘Education: Pathway to Empowerment for Ghanaian Women?’ in *IDS Bulletin*, Vol. 41, Number 2, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd. March 2010), p. 30.

²³⁹ Millennium Development Goal, Ghana: <http://www.indexmundi.com/ghana/millennium-development-goals.html>, [accessed June 13, 2012].

significant changes will be seen with regard to women's leadership. Sackey notes how women in the AICs, in spite of their religious experiences and empowerment had handed the leadership over to men due to lack of formal education. She distinguishes them from women in the Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches, who have not transferred their roles because they see themselves as having the requisite educational background. Thus education plays a vital role in leadership positioning.

There have been a number of steps to encourage girls to be educated in contemporary times. Governments and agencies have embarked on girl-child education policies, programmes to encourage girls and women into areas of mathematics and science. Currently the free basic education programme may improve the opportunity for more girls being in school. There is also an Affirmative Action policy for women who wish to have higher education,²⁴⁰ the number of women in the universities is increasing and influencing a growing number of women executives both in the public and private sectors.

There is no doubt that the education of the girl and consequently the woman builds up self confidence in her and improves her managerial and leadership skills and abilities as well as broadens the woman's outlook in terms of relationships in the home and society. To attain this, it behoves on the families of girls to allow or encourage them to be in school. Some women who have gained greater opportunities in contemporary Ghanaian society had either parents or family members accepting the educational policy, especially the education of the girl child as well as girls growing up in homes

²⁴⁰ Dzodzi Tsikata, *Affirmative Action and Prospects for Gender Equality in Ghanaian Politics*, (Accra: Abantu, 2009), p. 36.

where house work was not shared according to sex.²⁴¹ A serious setback, though, is that education in the rural areas of Ghana is still a challenge, due to the lack of facilities and teachers.²⁴² Thus, many rural girls and boys may find themselves in the classroom at one time or another but not have anything to show for it. There is also a greater influence of the cultural systems in rural communities, affecting the perceptions and maintenance of gender roles in those communities.

Women and the Economy

The low percentage of educated women reflects on their placement in the economy. Women are found in all sectors and levels of the economy, with only a few women in the supervisory roles, with the greater percentage at the lower levels.²⁴³ Darkwah rightly asserts that ‘women’s general lack of access to education is reflected in labour force participation rates. While women dominate in the informal economy, their presence is poorly felt in the formal sector of the economy where incomes are generally higher and more secure.’²⁴⁴ The expectations of women make them engage in unpaid work which is usually not recognised; as they work so much at home, taking care of the children, there is little time left to work outside the home. Thus, women contribute significantly to the economy whether at home or out of home.²⁴⁵

²⁴¹ Rose Mensah-Kutin & Sarah Akrofi-Quarcoo, *Women on the Wheels of History*, (Accra: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 2007), pp. 8, 17. This booklet profiles some of the women from different socio-economic backgrounds and contexts and their contributions towards the national development of Ghana.

²⁴² Tsikata, *Affirmative Action*, p. 41.

²⁴³ Ghana Statistical Service, *2010 Population and Housing Census*, pp.75-80; Nora Judith Amu, *The Role of Women in Ghana’s Economy*, <file:///F:/women%20economist/Role%20of%20women%20in%20ghana%20economy.pdf>, [accessed March 20, 2014], p. 20.

²⁴⁴ Darkwah, ‘Education: Pathway to Empowerment’, p. 29.

²⁴⁵ Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa*, pp. 100-101.

In the Ghanaian informal economy, however, women are very visible in the public sphere; they can be found everywhere – mostly in the marketplace, and on the streets – engaged in retailing or in petty trading, farms, offices, banks and other industries. Women are found mostly in areas such as sewing, catering, nursing and teaching – jobs that seem to translate the traditional roles of women. There are also more women in the informal sector than in the formal sector, but they have been found to exert a lot of influence in the space they are in. In the market places, for instance, women form associations to determine the prices of goods, which go a long way to determine the economy of the State.

In the past, more men filled the positions of authority; it was common to find a woman as a bank teller but not as a manager, a waitress and not the owner. They may work alongside with men but were under their supervision. Apart from lacking the requisite educational qualifications, women have had challenges getting into positions of authority due to social expectations.²⁴⁶

It is remarkable to note that in the midst of this seeming economic limitation of women, there were a few women who were able to break the status quo and have made history. One of such women is the late Mrs. Esther Ocloo, an industrialist, who established Nkulenu Industries in 1942, producing processed foods both for local and international markets. Her products are known to be the first processed indigenous food from Africa to be officially accepted in markets in the United States of America and Europe.²⁴⁷ Mrs Ocloo is also credited with leadership qualities, in that after the

²⁴⁶ Amu, *The Role of Women in Ghana's Economy*, p. 38.

²⁴⁷ Nkulenu Industries: <http://nkulenu.com/About%20us.html> [accessed August 25, 2011].

independence of the country, in a bid to protect local industries, she led a group of Ghanaian industrialists to form the Federation of Ghana Industries which has now been broadened to become the Association of Ghana Industries.²⁴⁸ She did not only lead in the formation of the group but also was the first president. However, only one other woman, Mrs. Elizabeth Joyce Villars of Camelot Ghana Limited has been president apart from Mrs. Esther Ocloo.²⁴⁹ This is however, not surprising, since there are more men than women engaged in the industrial sector.

Perhaps women like Mrs. Esther Ocloo have challenged women resulting in an emergence of more women leaders in institutions. A number of women can be cited as heads of state and private institutions. There are also examples of a few other women who have found their way into occupations which were hitherto considered to be the preserve of men, for instance engineering, law, industrial practice and management and/or administration. In the same vein women in the church and in particular the Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches have not only become ministers, but also lead their own churches, another domain which was also seen as a preserve of men.

Politics and Leadership

National Politics and Leadership

Ghanaian governments have promised increased opportunities for women, but their efforts still fall short of gender equality. Men continue to greatly outnumber women in the Council of State, Parliament, Cabinet and Ministerial posts. The Council of State

²⁴⁸ Association of Ghana Industries: <http://www.agighana.org/About-Us/A-Brief-History.aspx> [accessed August 31, 2011].

²⁴⁹ Association of Ghana Industries: <http://www.agighana.org/About-Us/A-Brief-History.aspx> [accessed August 31, 2011].

which is a body of elders that advises the President, ministers and other government institutions had only 3 women out of the current 24 members as at August 2011.²⁵⁰ None of these three women represent any of the ten regions of the country. These women will thus have to work harder to push the interest of women. In the 2008 Parliamentary elections, the number of women in parliament decreased from 25 to 20.²⁵¹ The low number of women who contest especially parliamentary elections has been blamed on political parties' failure to put more women on their ticket. As of August 2011, women headed only 5 out of the 23 ministries, with 3 serving as deputy ministers. There was only one regional minister who was a woman with 3 other women serving as deputy regional ministers.²⁵² These, clearly woefully fall short of the 40% women representation promised by the then President, Prof. John E. A. Atta-Mills during his election campaign.

Despite the fact that women do not have a high proportional representation, the number of women who have risen to very high politically-related positions in Ghana is increasing steadily; there seems to be an encouraging trend for women's participation in politics in Ghana. Two of the high ranking members of the State were women – the Speaker of Parliament and Chief Justice before the former left that position. Since 2000, for the first time in Ghana, women have also been appointed into very sensitive positions as the Inspector General of Police and Attorney General. Women apart from being bank managers as well as making strides as entrepreneurs have also been heads or acting heads in the Statistical Service, Commission for

²⁵⁰ Ghana Government Portal: <http://www.ghana.gov.gh> [accessed August 22, 2011]. The constitution requires the membership of the Council of State to be 25; however, a former Chief Justice is yet to be appointed to the Council.

²⁵¹ Ghana Government Portal: <http://www.ghana.gov.gh> [accessed August 22, 2011].

²⁵² Ghana Government Portal: <http://www.ghana.gov.gh> [accessed August 22, 2011].

Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) and the Ghana Immigration Service.

Ghana has not had a woman as a president yet, but the journey is on and it is hoped that in the near future we shall see women in this position as well. In the 2008 presidential and parliamentary elections, there were three female vice presidential running mates. These women enjoyed a relatively positive reception and support even though it did not materialise into votes. It may be argued that somehow Ghana is getting ready for a woman president. Perhaps Liberia electing a woman as president in recent times has some positive influence on Ghanaians. There were actually cries, especially for the two major political parties in the country (the National Democratic Congress and the New Patriotic Party), to have women as vice presidential candidates. In the last election – 2012, it was a popular expectation especially among many women activists that women would take up these positions. This implies that the issue of lack of qualified women cannot be used as an excuse in the future especially by the political parties.

With these opportunities and other emerging ones, women have the prospects to influence decisions at the highest levels. It is also possible that issues concerning women will receive appropriate attention. These women also serve as role models for women to endeavour to become leaders in all sectors including the church.

Christian Women in Political Leadership

The political landscape of Ghana has seen the impact of Christian women. The belief that godly women bring value and ethical standards to whatever they do is effectively

blended with the changing role of women in the society. Sackey observes that ‘in consonance with women being encouraged to increase their participation in politics, Charismatic Christian women also are persuading women not only to exercise their voting rights but also to get into politics and contest elections at assembly, district, parliamentary or even presidential levels.’²⁵³ There are a number of Pentecostalist women in politics and they serve as role models for women to take leadership positions in the church.

A clear example of a Christian woman in politics is Mrs. Gifty Afenyi-Dadzie. She belongs to the Word Miracle Church International, a Charismatic Church, headquartered in Accra. She is also the National Prayer Director of the Women’s Aglow International, Ghana, a non-denominational women’s fellowship that brings together Christian women in Ghana for spiritual empowerment and intercession for national and related issues. Her Christian commitment aside, Mrs. Afenyi-Dadzie was a member of the Council of State between 2004 and 2008. She has also served on several boards and is recognised as the first female president of the Ghana Journalists Association. She distinguishes herself in the performance of her duties as well as bringing her Christian principles to bear on those secular duties, thus serve as a role model for a number of women.

Hon. Joyce Aryee can also be cited as a Christian woman in politics. She distinguished herself as a Minister of State in the erstwhile PNDC and NDC government (1992–1996). She also served as the first woman to be appointed as the Chief Executive Officer of the Ghana Chamber of Mines in 2001. A position she is

²⁵³ Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion*, p.195.

noted to have occupied with great success and distinction for a decade till 2011.²⁵⁴ She serves as a Board member of several state and private organizations. Hon. Aryee is also the Council Chairperson of the Central University College, the biggest private University College in Ghana.

Calling herself an evangelist, Joyce Aryee has founded and serves as the Head Pastor of the Salt and Life Ministry in Ghana. She preaches on Sunny FM (A Ghanaian Radio Station in Accra) every Tuesday morning and also hosts 'Methodist Hour' on Sunday afternoons at the same radio station. She has been a great advocate for Christian women groups and the youth for the past decades.

The likes of such women have positioned the status of the Christian women in an advanced political dimension. This has also influenced the roles of women especially in the leadership of the Church. Women such as Mrs. Gifty Afenyi-Dadzie and Hon. Joyce Aryee have become role models for women's leadership in the church.

2.4 Women's Leadership in the Church in Ghana

Successful Christian missionary activity in Ghana began in the 19th century. Church historians, writing on missionary work in Ghana²⁵⁵ have been silent on the role of women. Mention is however, made of their wives as coming along with them but information on them is very scanty. Sackey notes that women missionaries (wives of missionaries and nuns) were the first to convert women through education and Western forms of housewifery, cooking and needlework. Women's conversion and

²⁵⁴ Daily Guide: <http://www.dailyguideghana.com/?p=28491>, [accessed June 12, 2012].

²⁵⁵ Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, Agbeti, J.K., *West African Church History*, (Leiden, 1986), Debrunner, H., *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, (London, Spottiswoode, Ballantyne and Co. Ltd. 1967) Larbi, E. K., *Pentecostalism :The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity*, CPCS, Accra. 2001.

education, in this case, did not have the objective of enhancing their leadership skills. Nevertheless, their efforts led to the establishment of schools for girls: secondary, vocational and training colleges setting the pace for increased leadership opportunities for women in the church.

Women's leadership in the Church in Ghana has been on different levels and perspectives. More women serve as leaders of children, youth and themselves (other women). Women continue to play significant roles teaching children at the Sunday school. This may be seen as a transfer of their traditional role of nurturing children. There are also more women involved in the Singing ministry, ushering and general services, which seem to be an extension of their roles at home and in the society. However, leadership in the form of priesthood and leading whole congregations started with the African Indigenous Churches (AICs), then the Protestant churches and more recently the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches.²⁵⁶ Unlike the women in the AICs and the Protestant Churches, women's leadership in the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches seem to have coincided with major changes in the society with regards to the status of women.

The changing status of women in the Ghanaian society coupled with the status of women in the traditional society, especially the Akan, could be said to be increasingly influencing women leadership in the Christian tradition. More so, in the past decade some women preachers and pastors, especially in the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches have distinguished themselves, thus proving their capabilities. Even though

²⁵⁶ Sackey, *New Directions in Religion and Gender*, p. 63-65.

the issue of the ordination of women into the pastoral ministry in some Pentecostal and Charismatic churches is still debated, more women are being ordained into the priesthood and are taking leadership positions.

A number of women have established their own churches in the Pentecostalist movement. Women are also gaining acceptability as leaders. A report of the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life revealed that 82% of Christians in Ghana would accept women into religious leadership.²⁵⁷ Reasons that could be outlined for the increasing women's roles include more education for women, advocacy and activism on gender equality and fight against gender violence and women taking key sensitive positions in the society. Even though these changes in the Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches seem to reflect similar occurrences in Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches in the United States of America, it also points to the argument that different factors influence the state of women in the church.

It has been argued that renewal movements in the Church have had limited roles for women as they become more institutionalized; this trend has been pronounced in the AICs and the classical Pentecostal churches. In contemporary times however, women especially in the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches seem to be having more space as those churches become more institutionalized. Women who have become leaders are recognized mainly because of their inspirational leadership skills.²⁵⁸ Richard Foli believes that considerations of women leaders would positively affect church growth in Ghana. He writes:

²⁵⁷ The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, April 2010. pp. 54–55.

²⁵⁸ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, p. 55.

The church in Ghana has to make a conscious effort to bring our female, who are in the majority in most church denominations, to the limelight and involve them more prominently in the leadership of the Church. Apart from showing some amount of fairness to the female members of the Church, this attempt to bring a lot more female to the limelight has the potential of helping the rapid growth of the church in Ghana.²⁵⁹

The following section looks at a brief history of the women's leadership in Christian denominations in Ghana. Women's participation in churches in Ghana, just like other places, has been high, but until recently, it has not reflected in leadership and decision making positions in the church.

Women Leaders in Mainline Churches

Even though the Catholic Church recognises the role of women in the life of the Church and even raises them to the level of saints, it does not accept the priesthood of women. The Catholic Church in Ghana has not ordained any woman into priesthood. Women serve as nuns, playing a lot of significant roles in the church and society. In instances where there are no priests, they may administer the parishes. There are also a number of women's groups in which women play various roles. Since 1975 the Women's Ordination Conference has been advocating for women in the Catholic Church to be ordained as priests, deacons and bishops. One of their aims is to bring structural changes by addressing the basis for the exclusion of women in the church administration.

²⁵⁹ Richard Foli, *Christianity in Ghana: A Comparative Church Growth Study*, (Accra: Trust Publications, 2006), p. 295.

The struggle for women's ordination and full participation in the church²⁶⁰ paved way for the ordination of women in the Ghanaian Protestant churches as well. Women have been ordained in The Methodist Church since 1977, the Presbyterian Church of Ghana and the Evangelical Presbyterian Church since 1979 and recently the Anglican Church, Ghana since 2009.²⁶¹ In spite of the relatively long history of the ordination of women in some of the Protestant churches, no woman has attained the highest leadership position of President, Moderator or Presiding Bishop in those churches.

Women's ordination in these churches has not yet qualified them into the leadership of the church as it has been a male preserve. This is not different from other sectors where men rise up higher and faster into leadership positions. The issues women leaders are confronted with, especially combining marriage and family responsibilities have made some women to slow down. Though these ordained women serve as ministers, a majority of them in the Presbyterian Church of Ghana for instance serve as chaplains of hospitals and educational institutions.²⁶²

In the Methodist Church, Ghana though no ordained woman priest has become the President or Presiding Bishop, a woman was appointed the lay leader of the church in 2009; the first in the history of the church. Also in the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, the first woman Presbytery Chairperson, Rev. Alice Kyei Anti contested for the position of Moderator in 2004 at the General Assembly held in the University of Cape

²⁶⁰ Mercy Amba Oduyoye, *Hearing and Knowing: Theological Reflections on Christianity in Africa*, (Accra: Sam Woode Ltd, 2000), p.124-125; Daniel Torto, *Ordination of Women: A New Agenda*, (Accra: Advent Press, 1998), pp. 1-5.

²⁶¹ www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/artikel.php?ID=164093, [accessed July 2, 2010].

²⁶² Grace Sintim Adasi, 'Ordained Women Ministers in the Presbyterian Church of Ghana: Roles and Challenges,' PhD Thesis, (University of Ghana, 2012), pp.130-133.

Coast even though she did not emerge the winner. These are evident that women are gaining greater opportunities which are yet to yield visible results in the area of leadership.²⁶³

In the Protestant Churches, women also have opportunities for leadership at various levels. In the Presbyterian Church of Ghana for instance, women have opportunity to be part of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Council, the highest points of decision-making of the church.²⁶⁴ Their representations are significant at all levels down to the grassroots – the congregational level. As ordained ministers, women serve as district ministers, in charge of a number of congregations, ministers in charge of single congregations, chaplains of schools, and Presbytery clerks.²⁶⁵ Lay women have opportunities as group leaders, teaching children, Bible study teachers, ushers as well as lay representative at the General Assembly amongst others.

Women Leaders in Pentecostal and Charismatic Traditions

African Indigenous Churches

The African Indigenous Churches²⁶⁶ (AIC), or what is known as the ‘spiritual churches’, served as a catalyst for women leadership in Christianity in Ghana. These churches are very much influenced by African indigenous religious and cultural practices.²⁶⁷ The AICs played a major role in the Africanisation of Christianity, even though they are sometimes branded as practicing syncretism as they combine

²⁶³ Sintim Adasi, ‘Ordained Women Ministers,’ p. 186.

²⁶⁴ Presbyterian Church of Ghana, *Constitution*, (Accra: Waterville Publishing House, 2000), p. 35-39.

²⁶⁵ Sintim Adasi, ‘Ordained Women Ministers,’ p. 130-157.

²⁶⁶ They sometimes also called African Instituted Churches or African Independent Churches.

²⁶⁷ Baeta, *Prophetism in Ghana*, pp. 16-17; Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, pp.36-38.

Christianity with indigenous religions. Women's position in the AICs have greatly been influenced by the indigenous religions as well as portions of the Bible which were found to be similar to indigenous practices, especially those regarding laws on purity.²⁶⁸

The AICs have been significant for having women being in high leadership positions such as being founding members, healers and prophetesses. Women like Grace Tani (Ghana) and Captain Christiana Abiodun Akinsowon (Nigeria),²⁶⁹ among others, have brought to bear their potential as founders and leaders of churches. Grace Tani and John Nackabah, converts of William Wade Harris, founded the Twelve Apostles Church. Captain Christiana Abiodun Akinsowon co-founded the Cherubim and Seraphim Movement with Moses Orimolade. These women had some inspiration directly or indirectly from women's roles in the indigenous religions.

Even though women founded these churches and had spiritual gifts and authority, men were made administrative leaders, and in some cases women had to give up their leadership to men. Thus women in the AICs are accorded ceremonial leadership without political power. Sackey in her study of AICs outlines reasons why women founders gave up leadership to men as follows: the status quo, literacy, disorder of women, Pauline injunctions and dewomanization.²⁷⁰ These reasons have been used against women leadership in the church; for instance Western education became a

²⁶⁸ Baeta, *Prophetism in Ghana*, p.50.

²⁶⁹See Larbi, E. K., *Pentecostalism, The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity*, (Accra: Centre for Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies, 2001), p. 69. Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa*, p. 126.

²⁷⁰ Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion*, pp. 65 – 69.

condition for access to leadership and as more men were educated they became leaders.²⁷¹

One issue that still stands out and affects not only the AICs but other Christian denominations in Ghana and perhaps other parts of Africa is what Sackey calls ‘disorder of women’, which includes the idea that women have ‘infantile mental faculties, witchcraft, menstrual uncleanness and inability to keep secrets.’²⁷² Menstrual uncleanness is, however, a major issue that creates ambivalence for women in the AICs.²⁷³ Women are thus limited in their participation in the performance of certain rituals and sacraments. Women therefore do not have the full benefits of increased opportunities for leadership in these churches because of the limitations.

The issue of menstrual uncleanness has foundations not only in the indigenous religions and culture but also in the Old Testament as well. Thus, some women during menstruation would not want to participate in any sacrament.²⁷⁴ Even though it is not a rule in most churches in Ghana, sometimes society expects them to exclude themselves during such times. For example, one of the comments posted on www.ghanaweb.com reacting to the news of the ordination of women priest in the Anglican Church warned that ‘women priest should be sure not to conduct mass during their periods,’²⁷⁵ that is their menstrual period. Sackey also notes for instance that Rev. Christie Doe Tetteh would be present in church but would not preach. It

²⁷¹ Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion*, p. 62.

²⁷² Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion*, pp.66 – 67.

²⁷³ Deidre H. Crumbley, ‘Power in the Blood’: Menstrual Taboos and Women’s Power in an African Instituted Church,’ in R. Marie Griffith & Barbara D. Savage (eds.), *Women and Religion in the African Diaspora: Knowledge, Power and Performance*, (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2006), pp. 81-83.

²⁷⁴ Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion*, pp. 66 - 67.

²⁷⁵ www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/artikel.php?ID=164093, [accessed July 2, 2010].

may be said that she is yielding halfway to the pressure of exclusion due to menstruation. This is an influence of culture, such that people could make statements and injunctions.

Classical Pentecostal Churches

Women in the classical Pentecostal churches, just like in the AICs, are free to make use of their spiritual gifts, but the same cannot be said of their leadership roles. In the history of the classical Pentecostal churches in Ghana, apart from the Assemblies of God church which has a few women pastors, it is not common to see an ordained woman pastor.²⁷⁶

The Church of Pentecost, the largest classical Pentecostal church, has for instance had a history of women playing significant roles in the church. Women have been in charge of branches only on occasions where no male was available. Once there are males (even if incapable), leadership is handed over to them. In this sense the only titles women may attain is deaconess. However, women exercise their leadership skills in the women's groups where men are not usually leaders.

As leadership is skewed towards men, they have more opportunities to use their gifts in the leadership structure of the church. For women, on the other hand, although they are seemingly allowed to exercise their spiritual gifts freely, opportunities to exercise those gifts are limited. Perhaps it is in the bid to spur on women to create more opportunities for themselves that the Church of Pentecost allow women to establish and lead prayer camps; the most outstanding of these women in the history of the

²⁷⁶ Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion*, p. 63.

church is Deaconess Grace Mensah's Edumfa Prayer Camp in the Central region. Thus with limited opportunities in the church to operate, these women have created new spaces for themselves.

Recently the leadership of the church has placed a ban on the opening of prayer camps with the intention of building up the prayer ministry of the local branches. The question arises as to where women who find themselves called would direct their gifts. With the branches having their leadership structures favouring men, would women be given the opportunity to enhance their potential or would it be a further attempt to frustrate their efforts at creating new prospects for themselves?

Charismatic Churches

Until the 1990s, the Charismatic churches in Ghana were not ordaining women into the pastoral ministry. However, they have brought significant changes in women's role into Ghanaian Christianity by introducing different types of female leadership. These include female founders and leaders of churches; ordination of pastors' wives who become co – leaders with their husbands; female pastors who are single or whose husbands are not pastors and women lay leaders. Apart from those who have established their own churches, these women leaders are in the ministry of both men and women led churches. There is also a growing number women–founded and led Charismatic churches, the first being Rev. Christie Doe Tetteh's Solid Rock Chapel International. This has gained her the designation 'first lady' in Ghanaian Charismatic circles, and she has thus, become a role model for Ghanaian Pentecostalist women.

Another major shift in women's leadership in the Charismatic churches in Ghana is the ordination of pastors' wives. In most Charismatic churches in Ghana, the head pastor's wife was the first to be ordained before other women. It leaves a question as to whether the motive behind such ordination is a safeguard for succession plans. Such women, it can be said, attain the special role of deputy leader primarily by virtue of marriage to the pastor though they may have the qualities to become leaders as well. During one of my interviews, I asked a pastor's wife when she became a pastor; she said 'from the day I got married to my husband'.²⁷⁷ In the case of the woman in question, she had not been ordained, yet she had the title 'Reverend' and the role she was playing was by virtue of the fact that she was married to the Head Pastor. In another case, the pastor's wife in pointing out that her ordination was not just by virtue of marriage to the head pastor said: 'I was first a deacon in the church, I became a pastor and after being a pastor when they found me fit and they thought I had worked really hard I was ordained.'²⁷⁸

The position of the head pastor's wife has also become a very important one in terms of leading women's group or other pastors' spouses. By leading the women who usually form the majority of the membership, they also have an opportunity to lead a large, sensitive group whose activities can affect the growth of the church. It may be argued that Pastors' wives leading women while the Pastors lead both men and women may imply that women's leadership is still incomplete. However, it needs to be investigated why women leaders seem to lead or have a passion for fellow women rather than leading both men and women.

²⁷⁷ A Head Pastors' wife, Interviewed, January 20, 2010, Accra.

²⁷⁸ Rev. Mrs. Rita Korankye Ankrah, Interview, January 17, 2010. In some Charismatic churches in Ghana, leaders who are commissioned may be called deacons and pastors. Ordination usually comes with the title 'Reverend.'

One of the prominent changes that have affected women's roles in the Charismatic churches has been the establishment of Pastors' Wives and Women in Ministry Association in 1995 by Francisca Duncan-Williams, the then wife of Bishop Nicholas Duncan-Williams, the founder and leader of the Christian Action Faith Ministry, the first Charismatic church in Ghana. The main objective was to provide support for one another because as women leaders they faced some common challenges.²⁷⁹

Women's Groups

There are women's groups in the churches in Ghana and they are very significant groups as women form a larger percentage of the membership of these churches. Organising them well is thus a factor of growth in churches. As one woman pastor once said; 'you see, women can make or destroy the church so they have to be organised very well'. Indeed, the women groups have the history of better organising themselves and are of great support to churches.

Women's groups have been one area that provides opportunities for women to exhibit leadership skills especially in the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches. In the Classical Pentecostal churches it provided an opportunity for ordinary women to become leaders. Such leaders may not have any relational links to the leaders of the church who are mostly men. In the Charismatic churches, however, the wives of the leaders become leaders of the women's ministry, dealing directly with issues regarding women. Whereas in the Classical Pentecostal churches women attain

²⁷⁹ Jane Soothill, *Gender, Social Change and Spiritual Power: Charismatic Christianity in Ghana*, (Leiden: Brill, 2007), pp.113-121.

leadership of the women by virtue of potentials and capabilities, in the charismatic churches, conjugal relationship plays a very key role.

In addition to the women's groups in the churches, there are also non-denominational groups that bring together women from all churches for their common interests. Notable among them are the GHACOE Women's Ministry and Women's Aglow. There are also attempts to bring together pastors' wives and female ministers. These associations have created opportunities and have also empowered some women to harness their potential. Women's Aglow is Pentecostal in nature. In line with the growing nature of Pentecostalism and Charismatism in Ghana, it has attracted thousands of women into the group as well encouraged many of them into leadership in the various churches and societies. One notable and highly publicised feature of the Women's Aglow is its monthly prayer meetings, currently held at the Independence Square, Accra, usually led by Mrs. Gifty Afenyi-Dadzie, the National Prayer Leader. They have similar meetings in some regional capitals.

2.5 Pentecostal and Charismatic Construction of Gender

In the history of Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches, there seem to be different constructions of gender and these have influenced the roles that women play in the church. In the beginnings of the Pentecostal movement in the early 20th century, women were free to exercise their potentials.²⁸⁰ This was contrary to the experience of women in the society at the time. According to Estrelida Alexander:

At the time when the larger society was wrestling with the issue of a woman's rightful place, these women found a place for themselves at Azusa Street. While most denominations had not begun to ordain women or allow

²⁸⁰ Estrelida Alexander, *The Women of Azusa Street*, (Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press, 2005) pp. 15-16.

them in the pulpit, these women claimed for themselves ordination by God and made a pulpit wherever they found themselves at the Azusa Street Mission and on the surrounding streets and campgrounds.²⁸¹

As Sackey argued, during the early stages of the Church, which she calls the 'prophetic stage', women have had significant roles.²⁸² The church at this stage relied more on spiritual gifts, and this gave more opportunities for women to take up leadership roles. This is similar to the case of women in the African Independent Churches.

As the movement got established into churches, roles were limited to suit the situations of the time. A few years into the Azusa Street Revival, Seymour is noted to have brought a significant change that was to affect the leadership positions of women in the movement. There were distinctions between the roles of men and women in worship and leadership such that 'though women had been members of the loosely organized early administrative board, the increasingly tighter structure put into place during latter years essentially excluded women in positions of authority.'²⁸³ There are a number of factors including the Bible, church doctrine, culture and the nature of women,²⁸⁴ which intersect and have been used to determine women's limited roles in the church. Whereas parallels of women's leadership in the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches in Africa or Ghana in particular may be linked with the female religious authority in the traditional religious system,²⁸⁵ women leaders in the movement do not agree to it. This is because they do not find any allegiance to the

²⁸¹ Alexander, *The Women of Azusa Street*, p. 38.

²⁸² Sackey, *New Direction in Gender and Religion*, p. 74.

²⁸³ Alexander, *The Women of Azusa Street*, p. 67.

²⁸⁴ Ernestina Quist, 'Roles of Women in the Church of Pentecost', M. Phil thesis, (University of Ghana, Legon 2002).

²⁸⁵ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, p. 55.

traditional system as they frown on the traditional worship.²⁸⁶ They seem to find more leaning towards societal changes in gender roles.

In contemporary times, through the influence of women's struggles in the church and society,²⁸⁷ women are regaining the freedom to harness their potential. In general, however, it may be argued that although Pentecostalism has been called a 'women's movement' because of the opportunities it seemingly gives to women, it 'sets out to reinforce patriarchal gender norms, not to undermine them. Nonetheless, it may offer new ideas and roles that women can utilize to reinterpret gender norms and may even ultimately destabilize the prevailing hegemonic gender ideology'.²⁸⁸

Most classical Pentecostal churches have restricted women from certain leadership positions such as the priesthood. On the other hand the Charismatic churches are allowing women into priesthood and also giving them the opportunity to harness their potential. Their emphasis on the gifts of the Holy Spirit which is extended to talents gives credence to other roles in the church apart from the priesthood. For instance, women who sing well are seen to partner with preachers and pastors. They usually sing before or along as the pastors preach; in recent times these singers are referred to as ministers.

Thus, Pentecostal and Charismatic emphasis on gifts 'give women who are endowed with charismatic gifts the opportunities to minister those gifts at the ritual level

²⁸⁶ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, pp. 55 – 56.

²⁸⁷ Daniel Torto, *Ordination of Women: A New Agenda*, (Accra: Advent Press, 1998), pp. 1-5.

²⁸⁸ Carol Ann Drogus, *Private Power or Public Power: Pentecostalism, Base Communities, and Gender*, http://www.domcentral.org/library/cleary_books/pppla/pppla04.pdf.

without challenging the patriarchal base of the polity'.²⁸⁹ This has enlarged women's role in the movements in addition to the specialised roles such as music ministry, prayer cells and the teaching of children and youths. Ogbu concludes that 'Pentecostal gender practice has been pragmatic: By enlisting their wives, by recognizing charismatic gifts and the presence of successful female-led ministries, by literalist reading of the Bible that often cuts both ways, by modernizing their institutions and engaging in large-scale mission, pastors have opened the space for women.'²⁹⁰

In creating new spaces for themselves, women establish and lead churches or congregations or even groups. These are women in churches that may not provide opportunities for women to become leaders in ways they wish, thus they establish their own centres where they can use the potentials in them. They become accepted later when the impact of their leadership is felt. As noted earlier, the first of such women in the recent Charismatic circle is Rev. Christie Doe Tetteh. Being a strong example to women, today there is an increasing number of women who are creating new spaces for themselves.

It must however, be noted that there were earlier women who in the same circumstances, and also for other reasons, established their own ministries – women as founders in the African Independent Churches and the case of Edumfa Prayer Camp in the Church of Pentecost. Some have established themselves by negotiating within the spaces they have – leading women and children, becoming a pastor's wife without necessarily questioning the status quo. In most of these cases, they are then identified by the male leaders and given positions.

²⁸⁹ Ogbu Kalu *African Pentecostalism*, p. 152, www.oxfordscholarship.com, [accessed May 11, 2011].

²⁹⁰ Ogbu, *African Pentecostalism*, p 165.

As the head pastors' wives, it may be argued that they get into leadership positions by virtue of marriage. They are given powers because of marriage as they are seen as being the power behind the man (Pastor). One can, however, argue that being a Pastor's wife opens one to a number of opportunities that empowers one to achieve certain qualities for leadership. This opens up opportunities for women to get into dual leadership. In most cases of dual leadership however, the women are usually the assistant pastors though they may be more powerful or perhaps have better administrative skills. There are also some women leaders or pastors whose husbands are not pastors.

Inspiration or spirituality is very important to a woman's leadership as she needs some form of legitimization through an explicit divine encounter to make her gain acceptance. For some women the question of acceptance may become a hindrance. For her to be accepted she has to prove herself and this is an issue for women. In a discussion with some Pentecostal males, when the question of women leadership came up, one question asked was 'are you women ready?' but I ask 'has the institutions provided women with the requisite opportunities for them to become ready?' It is as though to say men are the yardstick for women's leadership; she must lead as a man and lead to perfection. But do not men try and fail several times? If a woman fails in her leadership attempt, must fingers be pointed at her? Secondly, it is challenging for women, if the institutions do not provide the opportunities that would prepare them for leadership. It is thus important to note how some Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches are transforming some of their perspectives to suit societal changes.

2.6 Summary

This chapter has examined the various leadership opportunities for women in the traditional and contemporary society as well as in the churches in Ghana. With a focus on the Akan religious and cultural systems, it is evident that roles are gendered and both women and men play significant leadership roles. The indigenous religious and cultural systems give opportunities, while at the same time also prevents women from attaining some positions in the society.

The coming of Christianity tied together with the cultures of the missionaries resulted in a much limited space for women's leadership. However, the African Indigenous Churches, drawing from the traditional religious systems, set the pace for women's leadership in Christianity in Ghana. Coupled with this, the contemporary Ghanaian society has had a lot of influences affecting the place of women in the society.

The significant changes occurring in women's leadership in the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches are due to changing gender perspectives which have been influenced by a number of factors including activism, awareness and perhaps new experiences of women. There is therefore an increasing recognition of women in leadership roles in the church. With this background, the next chapter, using specific case studies, investigates the phenomenon of women's leadership in the Pentecostalism movement in Ghana.

CHAPTER THREE

THREE WOMEN LEADERS IN GHANAIAN PENTECOSTALISM: THEIR LIFE STORIES

3.1 Introduction

In examining the phenomenon of women leaders in the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches - that is women rising to act and function as officials of their church,²⁹¹ this chapter focuses on the background of the selected women. It looks at the intersection of factors and issues that brought them into church leadership. The phenomenon of women becoming leaders in the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches in Ghana is growing and becoming more acceptable. Indeed there seems to be a continuance of women pastors, with a new generation of women pastors who may be classified as the second generation. Yet there are still some entrenched patriarchal systems these women may have had to negotiate their way around to attain their current status.

This chapter, therefore, looks at how these women went about negotiating their way around the said systems to achieve the recognition they have. The lives of these women are studied, identifying those factors that led them into becoming leaders in their churches. The questions and issues with which these women had to deal with to become leaders are also examined in this chapter. As there had been some women leaders on the Ghanaian Pentecostal and Charismatic scene before the women under study rose into leadership, it is important to identify those who served as mentors to these women and how they impacted them. There is also the need to examine the challenges of earlier leaders, as compared to that of the second generation so as to

²⁹¹ Bolaji Olukemi Bateye, 'Forging Identities: Women as Participants and Leaders in the Church among the Yoruba' in *Studies in World Christianity*, p.5 <http://muse.jhu.edu>, [accessed April 27, 2010].

determine whether there have been differences in the challenges women face in becoming leaders in the church overtime.

3.2 Life Stories

The women under study are Rev. Mrs. Rita Korankye Ankrah (Rev. Rita) , Co-Founder of Royalhouse Chapel, Apostle Mrs Lyanne Koffi (Apostle Lyanne), Founder and General Overseer of the Lord's Garden Ministries and Deaconess Mrs. Hannah Barnes (Deaconess Hannah), Founder and Leader of the Agyenkwa Prayer Centre affiliated to the Church of Pentecost.

These women were chosen because they fall into the category of second generation of Ghanaian women leaders of Pentecostal and Charismatic churches. Some well-known women, who mostly could be identified as first generation women leaders have been widely researched. Some of these women are Rev. Christie Doe Tetteh of Solid Rock Chapel and Maame Grace Mensah of the Edumfa Prayer Camp. The ex-wife of Archbishop Duncan-Williams, Francisca Duncan-Williams has also received attention from scholars for her work in Christian Action Faith Chapel.

Asamoah Gyadu in examining current developments within independent indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana looks briefly at the conversion, training and work of Rev. Christie Doe Tetteh.²⁹² In her book which highlights the leadership roles of female pastors and pastors' wives, Soothill²⁹³ quite significantly mentions Christie Doe Tetteh and Francisca Duncan-Williams. Sackey²⁹⁴ also uses the cases of Maame

²⁹² Asamoah Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, pp.111, 213, 218.

²⁹³ See Soothill, *Gender, Social Change and Spiritual Power*.

²⁹⁴ See Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion*.

Grace Mensah, Christie Doe Tetteh and Francisca Duncan-Williams to show the changing status of women in independent Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches. There have also been theses and long essays presented to the University of Ghana which study women in leadership positions in Pentecostalism in Ghana.²⁹⁵

One notable similarity about Rev. Rita, Apostle Lyanne and Deaconess Hannah is that they all regarded women such as Rev. Christie Doe Tetteh, Maame Grace Mensah and Francisca Duncan-Williams as role models of women in church leadership. That is to say they modelled their leadership along the lines of the said women, who had been leaders ahead of them.

Apart from their exceptional leadership skills, the women under study also take personal interest in issues affecting women as well as the poor and the underprivileged in the society. For instance, they all support the education and development of orphans and needy students in different ways. Thus, though they may seem not to be in the limelight, the women examined in this study are involved in activities which are significant enough to be studied.

It must be noted that as these women related their life stories and the events that led to their becoming leaders, they reshaped those stories and events, explaining them as divine intervention or the guidance of God. In examining their assumption of

²⁹⁵ See Alvin Roosevelt McBorrough, 'The Role of Women in Charismatic Churches in Ghana,' Long Essay, (University of Ghana, 1997), Enyonam Anku, 'Women in Leadership Positions in the Church: A Case Study of some selected Charismatic Churches in Ghana,' Long Essay, (University of Ghana, 2001), Beauty Emefa Agbavor, 'The Pastors' Wife in the Presbyterian Church of Ghana and The Church of Pentecost,' Long Essay, (University of Ghana, 2001), Dan N. Asihene, 'The Edumfa Prayer Camp: A City of Refuge,' M.A thesis (University of Ghana, 2008).

leadership, the intersectionality theory was used to ascertain how intersections of religion, gender, cultural and sexual orientation influenced their current positions in their churches. The life stories of these women are thus used to illustrate how different factors lead some women to become leaders in Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches. The following are their individual life stories.

Rev. Mrs. Rita Korankye Ankrah

Rev. Mrs. Rita Korankye Ankrah, (Rev. Rita) Mama Rita as she is affectionately called was the first woman to be ordained in the Royalhouse Chapel International. She is the wife of Rt. Rev. Sam Korankye Ankrah, the Apostle General of Royalhouse Chapel International, a Pentecostal Charismatic Church. With its headquarters located at No. 3 Awudome, Ring Road Central, near Obetsebi Lamptey Circle in Accra, the church has other branches within the Greater Accra and other Regions except in the Northern, Upper East and Upper West Regions of Ghana. There are also international branches of the church in the United States of America, United Kingdom and other parts of Europe.²⁹⁶

Initially the name of the church was International Bible Worship Centre but it was renamed the Royalhouse Chapel International on 4th November, 2000. The change of name coincided with the movement of the headquarters and the main branch from rented premises to its own property. The Royalhouse Chapel is a member of the Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council (GPCC) and Rt. Rev. Sam Korankye Ankrah is the current First Vice President of the Council.

²⁹⁶ Royalhouse Chapel <http://www.royalhousechapel.org>, [accessed January 13, 2012].

In church, Rev. Rita seems to have a sense of importance around her. Her ‘Armour Bearers’²⁹⁷ manage and direct those who wish see her. Usually there is a long queue of people waiting to see her, with a few people jumping the queue because of some special relations with the Armour Bearers or because Rev. Rita asks to see the person before others. Whatever the case, once one endures the waiting time; one will find she is a pleasant person to be with.

Born as Rita Marian Owusu on 23rd May 1962, she is of an Akan parentage, her father from Akrokeri in the Ashanti Region and mother from Wassa Akropong in the Western Region. Being a Roman Catholic, she attended St. Theresa’s School, North Kaneshie, Accra, for her primary education and proceeded to St. Mary’s Secondary School, Accra. She, however, had to rewrite her GCE Ordinary level in Zion Secondary School, Anloga in the Volta Region in June 1982.

It was in Zion Secondary School that she became a born again Christian through the evangelistic work of Sam Korankye Ankrah who was to be her husband later. After rewriting the GCE Ordinary level, she passed well and hoped to gain admission to the sixth form but a relative had enrolled her at Accra Polytechnic. She was thus compelled to study for a Diploma in Business Studies between 1983 and 1985. After her studies in Accra Polytechnic, as she puts it, she lost interest in her dream of having a university education and went ahead to marry. She got married on 6th September 1986, at the age of 24 and has four children. At age 41, in 2003, she revived her dream in university education; because according to her she believed the

²⁹⁷ The Armour Bearers are a group of young women whose duty is to pray for her. They also carry her bag, sometime take her telephone calls as well as manage those who want to see her.

course would enrich her role in the church. She therefore enrolled at Ghana Institute for Management and Public Administration (GIMPA) for her first degree and then a master's degree in Leadership and Governance at the same institution.

She however, believes that she began sharpening her leadership qualities when she became the School Representative Council (SRC) President in Accra Polytechnic in the 1984/1985 academic year. This makes her to note that attending Accra Polytechnic was a blessing for her though, at the time, she felt she went there against her wish. She recalls this experience with gratitude saying 'I didn't know it was a training ground for me.'²⁹⁸

After her Diploma, she worked with the Bank for Housing and Construction for 10 years, from 1st August 1988 till 1998 when she resigned from the bank to help her husband full-time. Within the same year that she resigned she became the first lady pastor and after a year, that is 1999, she was ordained as a lady Rev. Minister.

In addition to her leadership roles in the church, she also engages in business. She has shops that are mainly into catering services. She caters for weddings and other occasions. She is also an event planner. One of the things she said about herself was 'I am a very good organiser, everybody around me tells and knows about my organisational skills. If I decide to organise a camp meeting, birthday party, programmes for couples or programmes for singles it will come out well.'²⁹⁹ It could

²⁹⁸ Rev. Mrs. Rita Korankye Ankrah, Interviewed, January 17, 2010, Royalhouse Chapel.

²⁹⁹ Rev. Mrs. Rita Korankye Ankrah, Interviewed, January 17, 2010, Royalhouse Chapel.

be explained that as the Premier Lady of the church, she has a ready market for her businesses.

Being the wife of the Apostle General, Rev. Rita is regarded as the co-founder and ‘Premier Lady’ and the Senior Associate Pastor of the church, a phenomenon which is similar in other Charismatic Churches in Ghana.³⁰⁰ She serves as the Director of Social Services of the church and chairs the board of Royalhouse Chapel Scholarship Foundation, (the church’s scholarship foundation). She is also the President General of the Royal Ladies, the women’s ministry of the Church.

In her view, she always knew even as a child that she was going to work for God. As a girl, being a Catholic, she told everybody, that she was going to be a Catholic nun, and she tried preparing herself towards that dream. She would spend part of her vacation in a Catholic Convent in Agomenya. This interest was high when she was in the primary school. However, later experiences of strictness of the nuns in the secondary school that she attended discouraged her from pursuing that desire.

Contrary to the general societal norms of her time as a child, she was taught, in primary school, (St. Theresa’s School) by some Europeans teachers to speak her mind. She took advantage of this especially because she is an extrovert. However, the situation in her secondary school, though also Catholic school, did not have the same traditions that prevailed in her primary school. With an emotional strain she describes her situation as ‘unfortunately for me in my school (secondary school) it wasn’t like

³⁰⁰ McBorrough, ‘The Role of Women,’ pp. 29, 43. Examples are Rev. Mrs. Dora Tackie Yarboi, wife of Bishop Nii Tackie Yarboi, Victory Bible Church and Rev. Mrs. Joy Otabil wife of Rev. Dr. Mensa Otabil, International Central Gospel Church. In some churches the wives of the founders are called Co-General Overseer.

that, you are not made to speak your mind, you are made to believe what ‘Sister’ says, teacher says, even when they accused you wrongly you couldn’t defend yourself.’³⁰¹ She described two incidents: one in which she questioned her headmistress for clarification on an issue and it was regarded as an insult and in the second case, she was wrongly accused for an offence she had not committed but did not get the opportunity to defend herself and was made a day student as a result of that.³⁰² These things accordingly discouraged her from becoming a nun but she says ‘within me, there was a voice that kept telling me that I was going to do the work of God’.³⁰³ Knowing she already had a desire to work in the church, she quickly became very much engaged in evangelistic activities later when she became ‘born again’ even before she accepted to marry Sam Korankye Ankrah, a path which has influenced her current leadership position.

Rev. Rita does not only support her husband behind the scenes through prayers and encouragement,³⁰⁴ but she plays other visible roles in the church. As the President General of the Royal ladies, her greatest influence is over the women in the church. This role has a limiting effect in that although, practically, she may wield a lot of influence as the Head Pastor’s wife, technically she has oversight responsibility over only the women. This would not be the case for women who are in charge of whole congregations.

³⁰¹ Rev. Mrs. Rita Korankye Ankrah, Interviewed, January 17, 2010, Royalhouse Chapel

³⁰² Rev. Mrs. Rita Korankye Ankrah, Interviewed, January 17, 2010, Royalhouse Chapel. For secondary schools with boarding facilities, it is sometimes regarded as a privilege to be in the boarding houses as students times are much more regulated than those who come from home daily. Thus it becomes a punishment for certain grave offences for the student to be made a day student. It is also usually humiliating experience for such students and it mostly affects their academic performance.

³⁰³ Rev. Mrs. Rita Korankye Ankrah, Interviewed, January 17, 2010, Royalhouse Chapel

³⁰⁴ Agbavor, ‘The Pastors’ Wife,’ p. 42

Apostle Mrs. Lyanne Koffi

Apostle Lyanne Koffi is the founder and Head Pastor of The Lord's Garden Ministries, (TLGM). Apostle Lyanne Koffi was born Lyanne Grant, to Lt. Colonel C. S. C. Grant and Mrs. Elizabeth Grant on January 14, 1967, and is from Takoradi in the Western Region of Ghana. She was born a Methodist and she referred to herself as being a nominal Christian as she saw going to church, which she did, as a social kind of life and not for spiritual purpose.

She got married in 1987 during her national service following her Sixth Form education. She gave birth to her first child which was still born. Subsequently she enrolled at the University of Ghana and read Sociology and Psychology. It was at the University that she became a born again Christian. As would be discussed later in this chapter, her conversion into Pentecostalism was driven by the desire to speak in tongues and to be like some Pentecostal Christians. The loss of her first baby and other subsequent health challenges are the intersections that gradually directed her path into Christian leadership.

The beginnings of the church she established is linked to a miraculous healing she had in the United Kingdom. This is captured on the churches website as follows:

The vision of TLGM was birthed in the heart of Rev. Koffi in 1995 after she experienced first-hand in her own life, the deliverance, healing power and love of God. God dramatically healed her after a 7 year battle with cancer and lupus.³⁰⁵

Upon her return to Ghana, she lived with her husband who works with the Volta River Authority and was stationed at Akosombo in the Eastern Region. She started a prayer

³⁰⁵ The Lord's Garden Ministries, <http://thelordsgardenministires.com>, [assessed November 8, 2009].

meeting together with a friend in her living room. They decided to fast and pray every Wednesday, interceding for the Akosombo township. They had identified some vices, including prostitution in the town. The prayers were thus efforts meant to avert those vices.³⁰⁶ People joined the prayer meeting and in two years their number increased to about 30 people. She was thus forced to move the fellowship out of her home to start a non-denominational prayer meeting in 1997.

In her view, her activities caused a revival within the Christian church in Akosombo.³⁰⁷ The prayer meetings attracted people from different churches. She also started all night prayer meetings and 'Jesus marches', where the group walked through some principal streets sharing tracts and witnessing as well. She also organised crusades which she dubbed 'Akosombo for Christ' crusades. It is important to note that as she initiated these programmes, churches in the community also began to do same more frequently. Though the churches may have different motives for having similar programmes, especially the fear of losing their members, she believes that she influenced them positively, leading to a revival in Akosombo. On her part, however, she redirected those who accepted Christ during her crusades and prayer meetings to already established churches since she did not have a church. She noted that some of those people are in key leadership positions in the respective churches they joined.

³⁰⁶ Akosombo is one of the major towns the Eastern Region of Ghana. It houses Ghana's major hydroelectric plant and dam. It has a terminal for the Volta Lake Transport and is one of the major tourist attractions in Ghana. Thus it attracts a lot of professionals working at the Hydro plant as well as many tourists and traders.

³⁰⁷ This is further discussed in Chapter four.

In 2005, the fellowship developed into a church and Sunday church services were started, with the headquarters in Akosombo. By 2010, branches had been established in Akrade, Pepease and Kpong in the Eastern Region, with two branches in Accra and one in Takoradi.

From her point of view she did not have the intention of establishing a church; as she puts it:

At that time really I didn't have a mind that I was going to start a ministry. All I knew was that God was just bringing these people, they needed to hear the word of God, some needed to be healed, some needed to be set free from demonic oppression and I felt the power of God within me, so really that was what I was doing and the people kept coming; it was one need that led to the other.³⁰⁸

However, this seems to be the trend of the beginnings of most independent Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches that have been established in Ghana.³⁰⁹ It usually starts as a non-denominational fellowship and gradually transforms into a church. In her case when her house became too small they moved to an open space till a time when they counted 350 people. It was at that point she asked God what she should do with the people.

One unique thing about Apostle Lyanne is that though she started a church, she still holds the non-denominational fellowship meetings in Akosombo. She started another fellowship in Accra in 2009 when she joined her husband on transfer. Her maintenance of the fellowship may be because of the impact the fellowship had on the Akosombo township. This might have influenced her to continue holding such

³⁰⁸ Apostle Lyanne Koffi, Interviewed, January 13, 2010, Cantoments, Accra.

³⁰⁹ E.K. Larbi, *Pentecostalism: the Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity*, (Accra: Centre for Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies, 2001), pp. 336-340; Paul Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity: Pentecostalism in a Globalising African Economy*, (London: Hurst & Co. Ltd., 2004), p.27.

meetings. More so, as a non-denominational group, the people who supported her were from already established churches.³¹⁰ Thus when the fellowship developed into a church, it was unlikely those people would maintain their loyalty. Apostle Lyanne as a founder and leader of a church plays an important part in the decision making of the church. The next section discusses Deaconess Hannah the founder of Agyenkwa Prayer Centre under the auspices of the Church of Pentecost.

Deaconess Mrs Hannah Barnes

Deaconess Mrs. Hannah Barnes is the Founder and Leader of Agyenkwa Prayer Centre, located at Kasoa in the Central Region of Ghana. Though she comes from Adidome in the Volta region, she was brought up in Wassa Simpa in the Western region. It was because her father had migrated to the Western region. She has a basic level of education; after her elementary school, she was enrolled in a vocational school, Kumasi City Girls to learn to become a seamstress. She worked as a seamstress for a while at Mankessim in the Central Region. She however, loved to be in church and to work there than to do any secular work.

Sharing her story, she sees her life as ordered or influenced by God. Her parents were members of the Church of Pentecost and thus, she was socialised in the church. She acknowledges that God has been gracious to her as she was called by Jesus from her childhood and this she explains as a result of having the 'love of God' in her.

³¹⁰ In recent times charismatic leaders have established groups they call 'Partners' that support their personal ministries, which is usually independent from their churches. Membership of this support group is not limited to members of their respective churches. This is discussed into detail in Chapter four.

She links her current position and work with her association with Maame Grace Mensah, the founder and the then leader of the Edumfa Prayer centre. She notes that from Mankessim where she was working as a seamstress, she visited her mother who was then in Fante Nyankomase, near Edumfa also in the Central Region. This visit marked the turning point in her life, charting the path for her present work and position.

At Fante Nyankomase, the closest Church of Pentecost branch was at Edumfa which was mainly a prayer centre but doubled as an assembly or branch of the church. She therefore visited the church at Edumfa. It was during that visit that she was noticed by Maame Grace Mensah, the prophetess and leader of the prayer centre. She narrated her encounter with Maame Grace at Edumfa. She said that when Maame Grace saw her, she held her and asked: ‘whose child are you? God’s hand is on you. God will use you to work for Him. I will not let you go. I am fortunate to have you (I have found you like a gift in the field) and will take you as a wife for my sister’s son.’³¹¹

She was made not only to stay at the centre but also to marry a nephew of the prophetess. She was thus the first to have her marriage celebrated at the centre in 1978. The centre became her home though she lived a few years with her husband in Nigeria where she had her only son, after a number of miscarriages.

At the Prayer Centre she served as one of the assistants to Maame Grace Mensah, the leader. She was however, the only aide who was Ewe, so she used to serve as a translator for the visitors who could only speak Ewe and could not understand the

³¹¹ Mrs. Hannah Barnes, Interviewed, January 14, 2010, Agyenkwa Prayer Centre, Kasoa.

Akan language. One of such regular visitors was Elder Peter Bedzo, who currently happens to be her main assistant.

It was at the Edumfa Prayer Centre in 1992 that she had a revelation that made her to move to Kasoa, still in the Central region but very close to the Greater Accra Region to begin her healing ministry. It is important to mention that at the time she moved to Kasoa, Elder Peter Bedzo was already in Kasoa. This raises questions as to whether the revelation to move to Kasoa was not influenced by Elder Bedzo's presence at the same location. She later moved to her current location also in Kasoa in 2000 to start her own Agyenkwa Prayer Camp, mainly due to some challenges she had with the leadership at the first place which was a prayer camp established by the Church of Pentecost. She has built the structure and operations of the camp to reflect that of the camp at Edumfa, independent yet affiliated to the Church of Pentecost.

Deaconess Hannah is usually seen wearing a white *slit* and *kaba*³¹² with a white headgear and a white scarf around her shoulders. She also keeps her natural hair without adding hair extension or applying chemicals to it. She attributes her practice of keeping her hair natural to a revelation she had in which God queried her in a dream regarding why she had applied chemical to her hair.³¹³ Even though she attributes this practice to a vision that she had, it is also practiced by Maame Grace Mensah at the Edumfa Prayer Centre, thus there could be a possible influence from Maame Grace.

³¹² *Slit* and *Kaba* is a popular Ghanaian name for a long skirt and blouse sewn with a wax print cloth.

³¹³ Mrs. Hannah Barnes, Interviewed, January 14, 2010, Agyenkwa Prayer Centre, Kasoa. Majority of Ghanaian women apply chemical to their hair for easy management. However, in recent times it is becoming fashionable for women to keep their hair down cut and without application of any chemical.

The issue of neither applying chemical nor hair extensions, among other things, has led to the Church of Pentecost severing its relationship with the Edumfa Prayer Centre.³¹⁴ It is important to note that this is a personal practise of Deaconess Hannah, which she may have learnt from Maame Grace. Even though she keeps her hair natural, she does not prevent other people from adding chemicals or attachments to their hair. Hence it is not clear whether the revelation was a personal one or if she has been silent on enforcing it on her clients to prevent conflict as has happened at the Edumfa Prayer Centre.

Apart from learning on the job at the Edumfa prayer Centre, she didn't go through any formal training. She has a strong belief that in all things it is Jesus who reveals Himself to her. She claims she is spiritually taught by the Holy Spirit. Thus, for her, her 'tutelage' under Jesus influences all the activities she is engaged in. She also believes that her opportunity to lead as a woman is through her desire as well as by the grace of God.

The next section looks at the conversion experiences of these women as well as their participation in Pentecostalism. This is because it is their participation which set the tone for them to become women leaders in Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches.

3.3 Conversions and Participation in Pentecostalism

One of the benefits that have been claimed for women's conversions and participation in Pentecostalism is the increased opportunities for women. This was noted by Cecilia

³¹⁴ Office of the Chairman, 'Propagation of False Teachings and Practices at the Edumfa Prayer Centre', (Circular, The Church of Pentecost, General Headquarters, Accra, May 7, 2011).

Mariz and Maria Machado that for Pentecostal women their ‘conversion experience does lead to a revaluing of the self in relation to God and others that increases women’s autonomy.’³¹⁵ Asamoah–Gyadu also observes that especially in Charismatic churches, ‘the religious experience of salvation is considered the gateway to the renewal and spiritual empowerment of the believer and of the believing community.’³¹⁶ Religious conversion is commonly viewed as a ‘radical change of worldview and identity’. It suggests a complete and total change in a person’s life. However, in practice it is a gradual process of different levels of participation within a religious movement, in this case Pentecostalism.

Reflecting this, Henri Gooren in his new model of conversion career, outlines five levels of church participation.³¹⁷ These are pre-affiliation, affiliation, conversion, confession, and disaffiliation. Pre-affiliation is where a person may have some ideas due to contacts with the group. Affiliation is the point where a person may be a registered member of the church, but his/her membership does not make any impact in the person’s life. At the conversion stage, there is a ‘radical personal change of life and worldview, and a commitment to a new community’. He notes that conversion may lead to confession which refers to the peak of one’s participation, characterised by ‘strong evangelism’. Disaffiliation however, refers to the situation where a person loses commitment as well as membership to the group, perhaps converting to another church, group or ideology.

³¹⁵ Cecilia Mariz & Maria Machado, ‘Pentecostalism and Women in Brazil’ in Edward L. Cleary & Hannah W. Stewart-Gambino, (eds.), *Power, Politics and Pentecostals in Latin America*, (Colorado: Westview Press, 1997), pp. 41 – 42.

³¹⁶ Asamoah Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, p. 149.

³¹⁷ Henri Gooren, ‘Towards a New Model of Conversion Careers: the Impact of Personality and Contingency Factors’ in *Exchange* Volume 34, Number 2, (Leiden, Brill, 2005) p.154, DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1572543054068514> [accessed January 25, 2012].

Gooren further notes that the different stages in one's participatory life in the church are influenced by certain factors including personality, contingency, social and institutional.³¹⁸ It is the individual who makes the decision to join or increase participation mainly due to issues and events (contingencies). He explains contingency factors to include 'random meetings with missionaries, acutely felt crises, stressful situation, and other contingencies that bring individuals into the orbit of various religious groups. Pentecostals call this Providence ... or divine intervention.'³¹⁹ Since the individual does not live in isolation there may be influences from relatives, friends or members of the group. The institutional factor refers to how the group's organization, rules and practices appeal to the individual.

In as much as this model may seem convincing, Gooren rightly notes that the stages may not follow sequentially as he refers to it as dynamic.³²⁰ That is to say a person may move from the stage of affiliation or conversion to disaffiliation. More so one may not necessarily progress through the different stages to the peak of religious participation; depending on the individual and other factors, the situation might be different for different people. This model is however, used to analyse the different levels of participation of Rev. Rita, Apostle Lyanne and Deaconess Hannah before attaining their current positions.

All three women had some form of religious socialisation, in that they were all introduced to Christianity from childhood. However, Rev. Rita and Apostle Lyanne talk about conversion experiences while Deaconess Hannah could not give a

³¹⁸ Gooren, 'Towards a New Model of Conversion Careers' p. 155.

³¹⁹ Henri Gooren 'Convention Narratives' in Allan Anderson et al (eds.) *Studying Global Pentecostal; Theories and Methods*, (London: University of California Press Ltd, 2010), p. 94.

³²⁰ Gooren, 'Towards a New Model of Conversion Careers,' p. 154.

particular conversion experience. This may be attributed to Deaconess Hannah being primarily socialized into Pentecostalism, to be specific, the Church of Pentecost, a Classical Pentecostal Church, while the other two had their primary religious socialization into Catholicism and Methodism as pointed out earlier. Looking at their conversions to Pentecostalism and factors leading to increased participation in their respective churches, Gooren's model could be listed in varying degrees.

Narrating her conversion into her new faith, Rev. Rita was emphatic about the role of the man who was to be her husband and the location of her conversion; the Volta region of Ghana. Contingency and social factors influence this experience. Born a Catholic, it was in Zion Secondary School, Anloga, June 1982 that she became a 'born again' Christian and was introduced to Pentecostalism. In her words she says 'that is the part of the story I always want to add to it and thank the God of the Ewes.' To remind her of the place of her conversion, she decided to name³²¹ one of her children Mawuena; an Ewe name which means God gives. Notwithstanding the fact that her husband's mother is Ewe, a factor which could influence this name, she attributes it to her conversion experience. She also showed much gratitude to the man who took her to Zion Secondary School, as playing an important role in her conversion experience and leading to major turning points in her life and ministry.

She says 'he [Sam Korankye Ankrah] had then finished his advanced level in secondary education and he wanted to do something for God, so he toured the schools in the Volta region. He was in Mawuli School, Anloga Secondary School and he came

³²¹ Traditionally, among many peoples in Ghana, it is men who give names to children but women also influence the naming of the child.

to Zion Secondary School.³²² In Zion Secondary School, where she was rewriting her Ordinary Level examination, then Brother Sam Korankye Ankrah held a crusade and it was there she heard the sermon and became a ‘born again’ Christian. She narrates her experience as:

...I went to the service, he preached the Gospel. I was actually the first person who went forward with my hands lifted up and tears in my eyes and I said ‘Lord come into my life.’ And I remember so well that night after that experience, I went to the dormitory, people were laughing at me, they thought there was something wrong with me but I knew it as an encounter I had had... from the hours of 9pm and 5am, I was on my bed, weeping crying, praying telling God let these things be a reality, let this thing not be ‘a nine day wonder.’ ‘Let the cross forever be before me and the world be behind me. Let this thing be so real to me’ and I prayed and I cried.³²³

At the time of interview, this experience had been about 28 years and she said ‘there has never been a turning back’, though she did not remember what actually she heard that night that made her to make her decision for her new faith. According to her all the people who accepted Christ with her on that day had all backslidden from the faith.

It is clear that by Gooren’s model she was neither pre-affiliated nor affiliated before experiencing the ‘radical change’. It is also probable that she was in the state of disaffiliation with the Catholic Church because of some institutional factors, her bad encounter with some catholic leaders in her secondary school, which had caused her much pain and possibly the reason why she had to go to another school for remedial classes to rewrite her Ordinary level examinations, thus it was easier for her to have that radical change.

³²² Rev. Mrs. Rita Korankye Ankrah, Interviewed, January 17, 2010, Royalhouse Chapel.

³²³ Rev. Mrs. Rita Korankye Ankrah, Interviewed, January 17, 2010, Royalhouse Chapel.

The time of her conversion coincided with the popularity of non-denominational fellowships where ‘born again’ Christians especially in the mainline churches were expected to join these fellowships. They were, however, to maintain their membership with their respective churches because the idea was to be revived and send the ‘fire’ back to their respective churches.³²⁴

This obviously led to a rise of charismatic renewals in the mainline churches. It was also a means of maintaining the Pentecostal experiences that were encountered by many members of mainline churches at the time. In the case of Rev. Rita, she intimated that she was encouraged to join Sam Korankye Ankrah’s holiday fellowship which met on Tuesdays at Accra High School.³²⁵ Not belonging to any existing non-denominational Christian group and with the zeal and joy of her new found faith, she decided to join the Sam Korankye Ankrah’s fellowship. She thus remained a Catholic till she married. One would have expected that she should have joined the Catholic Charismatic Renewal as the group was established and spread throughout the city of Accra.³²⁶ She, however, found another avenue to continue to have her Pentecostal experiences. This could be explained either as an influence of Sam Korankye Ankrah who himself led her into her new faith or the encounters she had had which made her not to have an increased participation in the Catholic Church.

Explaining her journey as a Pentecostal Christian, she intimates that she had been zealous from the beginning. The first day she went for the Sam Korankye Ankrah’s

³²⁴ Cephas N. Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism: A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in Mainline Churches in Ghana*, (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum Publishing House, 2006), p.95.

³²⁵ Sam Korankye Ankrah, *The Rising of the Sun: Shining from Obscurity*, (Accra: Royalhouse Chapel International, 2010), p. 50.

³²⁶ Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, p.106.

fellowship meeting, she was there as early as 8a.m. and waited till 2p.m. the actual time set for the meeting. She was very active in the group, her personality being a key factor. After her conversion experience and before she married, she began engaging herself in a number of things, which she thinks has prepared her for her present position and work. She started bus-to-bus ministration, leaving the house in the morning, preaching in the buses from about 8a.m. to about 6p.m. She engaged in dawn broadcast in her neighbourhood Chorkor, a suburb of Accra. She also organised the children in her neighbourhood and began to teach them. Every Saturday she was holding children services and the children grew to about 250 in her house. Though a student then, she bought toffees, biscuits, drinks for them every Saturday.

She also held revivals in schools without any invitation from the schools; she recalls 'I would just walk to the school myself, walk to the Headmistress, and tell them God had sent me... I went to a lot of schools all on my own'.³²⁷ She cites a testimony from her evangelistic activities as she notes 'recently I was in University of Cape Coast and then I met one lady who was there doing her masters. She asked me if I remembered her, I said no, she said she was in OLA Secondary School when I came there. She became born again out of my ministration'.³²⁸ After marriage and with the commencement of her husband's ministry, she has been actively involved in the church's activities. Her active involvement has led to the current positions she has in the church.

³²⁷ Rev. Mrs. Rita Korankye Ankrah, Interviewed, January 17, 2010, Royalhouse Chapel.

³²⁸ Rev. Mrs. Rita Korankye Ankrah, Interviewed, January 17, 2010, Royalhouse Chapel.

Like Rev. Rita, Apostle Mrs. Lyanne Koffi's conversion was also another incidence of influences of contingencies. In Apostle Lyanne's case however, the major factor was her health condition, with other social and institutional factors. Narrating what influence her conversion she mentioned the following:

I got married ... our first baby died a still birth; ... At that time I was a nominal Christian. I was a Methodist, I used to go to church, but then it was more of a social kind of life, I used to go not for the spiritual purpose. I was born a Methodist, my grandmother was Methodist and it was the right thing to do... but I didn't have a relationship with Jesus... But when I lost that baby and the ... process, how my life was spared even though everybody was expecting the worse ... the baby had died two weeks in my womb... there was a word from a nurse in the delivery room, after I had the baby and the baby didn't cry and I was crying she said I shouldn't cry because God really loves me ... it touched my heart. Another thing that happened was that when I was in labour a cousin of mine and her husband came to pray over me and they prayed in tongues ... so that set me on a cause to seek for God, initially my purpose was that I wanted to pray in tongues.³²⁹

The loss of the baby had an impact on her but anytime she felt like crying she says 'I would hear the words 'God loves you' and so that set me on a cause to search for God'. Apostle Lyanne had a level of curiosity even though it was not high enough to be referred to as a religious seeker. She had a pre-affiliation with Pentecostal Christianity in the sense that because she had heard some people pray in tongues and she also wanted to do the same. The urge to speak in tongues however, may have caused a need which led to a path in Pentecostalism. In the university she met an old friend, a member of the Scripture Union through whom she became converted. However, in spite of this she went and accepted Christ again as her personal saviour publicly at a crusade in the Volta Hall of the University of Ghana.³³⁰

³²⁹ Apostle Lyanne Koffi, Interviewed, January 13, 2010, Cantoments, Accra.

³³⁰ Apostle Lyanne Koffi, Interviewed, January 13, 2010, Cantoments Accra. For some people a public confession confirms their conversion.

The health challenges that she had faced also led her into making a decision into a higher level of participation. She began as a leader of an intercessory prayer group, which developing into an interdenominational fellowship and eventually to a denominational church.

As noted earlier, the conversion experience of Deaconess Hannah is quite different from that of Rev. Rita and Apostle Lyanne. In her case, she had been a Pentecostal from childhood. Thus her involvement in Pentecostal activities could be said as her primary religious socialization. In an answer to how she converted into Pentecostalism she said, ‘as for me God has been gracious to me, Jesus called me from my childhood.’³³¹ However, her participation in Pentecostalism has been strongly influenced by personal, contingency and social factors. She revealed that she had always wanted to be in church and loved to be engaged in the church’s activities. That is to say she always had the desire to move to the stage of confession. It was out of this desire that she was noticed and trained to become a leader. However, to attain her current status there were some institutional issues.

As these women negotiate their path into positions of leadership, it is important to note how they prepared themselves for such positions of responsibility. That is the focus of the next section.

3.4 Steps to Leadership and Authority

Pentecostal and Charismatic Christians have general requirements for leadership including the Holy Spirit’s empowerment and theological formation. However, for

³³¹ Mrs. Hannah Barnes, Interviewed, January 14, 2010, Agyenkwa Prayer Centre, Kasoa.

women, the spirit's empowerment has been very crucial and it is used to legitimise their call to leadership.³³² This may be due to the negative views and attitudes towards women's leadership in the church. Thus, they usually have a convincing point of reference to show that God had called them. In spite of the importance of the Spirit's empowerment or baptism, they also attest to taking other steps. A common feature of Rev. Rita, Apostle Lyanne and Deaconess Hannah is that they were all married at the time they became leaders. Thus, we look at how their respective marriages impacted their assumption of leadership.

It has been argued that successful women leaders serve as encouragement and example to other women.³³³ This section thus also takes a brief look at those women who Rev. Rita, Apostle Lyanne and Deaconess Hannah look to as role models. One cannot deny the need for theological education in assuming official leadership roles in the church. Hence these women's access to formal theological education would also be looked at. The various experiences of these women intersected to influence their call to leadership.

The Call/Spirit Empowerment

As noted earlier, some Pentecostal women have call narratives, different from their conversion experiences, which they use to legitimize their position as leaders. To Harvey Cox, Pentecostals have given more access to women to attain leadership because even though the authority of the Bible is not compromised, they also 'believe

³³² Janet E. Powers, 'Your Daughters Shall Prophesy: Pentecostal Hermeneutics and Empowerment of Women' in M. W. Dempster et al (eds.), *The Globalization of Pentecostalism: A Religion Made to Travel*, (Akropong-Akuapem, Regnum Books Int., 1999), p. 319.

³³³ Soothill, *Gender, Social Change and Spiritual Power*, pp.154 – 167.

in direct revelation through visions.’³³⁴ Janet Powers also notes that ‘the most crucial aspect of the call narrative is the part that convinces the woman that it is indeed God who is calling her.’³³⁵ In the cases of the women under study much emphasis was placed on the Holy Spirit’s empowerment based on Joel 2:28 and Acts 2:16-17 as well as unity of the male and female in Christ in Galatians 3:28.

Apostle Lyanne believes that her journey to come into leadership started in 1987. After her conversion she had a number of experiences – both spiritual and physical or natural. However, she gives religious meanings to some natural occurrences. About a month after she became a born again Christian, she was found to have breast cancer and had to go through chemotherapy. The cancer had spread so she became very sick. The group of cancer patients she went for the chemotherapy with all died. Thus, amidst fear of death she made a covenant with God based on Hannah’s covenant in 1 Samuel 1:10 -11. In her case she said, if God would heal her from the cancer so that she would not die of the cancer then she would serve Him. According to her, two weeks after making the promise to God, on her way to a fellowship on the University campus, she heard the voice of God for the first time and God told her that her covenant had been accepted. In furtherance to that, she also heard that not only her nuclear family but the entire extended family would come and bow down to God.

After this experience, to the amazement of the doctors, the cancerous nodes in her breast, neck and armpit began to shrink. She has been cancer free since then (1987), 24 years at the time of the interview. Also the doctors said she would not be able to

³³⁴ Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven: the Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-First Century*, (Cambridge: Da Capo Press, 2001), p.131.

³³⁵ Powers, ‘Your Daughters Shall Prophesy,’ p.319.

have any children because of the chemotherapy but she has four children as against what the doctor had said would happen and she also counts that as one of the experiences that brought her into relationship with God.

From the time she heard God speak to her, she knew she had a covenant with God but she did not know when and how her service to God was going to be. On the verge of completing the university she heard again a word from God not to engage in any kind of secular work since He had work for her to do. Interestingly though she did not plan it, apart from her one year compulsory national service after university education, her health conditions did not allow her to be involved in any secular work until she started her own prayer meetings leading into a church. Alongside having children, she continued to have other health challenges, but she believes that every step of those life experiences brought her closer to God fulfilling the plan of God for her life.

It was one of those health challenges, diagnosed as lupus, which took her to London for treatment. While there she went into coma for two weeks and this also yielded another experience which influenced her to actually start working directly on the promise she had made and the voices she had heard earlier. Talking about her experience she said

In the coma my spirit left me but I went before the Lord. The first place I went to was like a stopover to hell and later on Jesus came and took me and I went before the Lord and He spoke to me and made known to me that there is the reality of heaven and hell which ... must be brought into the minds of people especially believers. People should believe this because believers are not taking those things... they were living for today... and He said I should come back and do his work, to fulfil the call; the covenant that we had made so I came back to my body and I was healed.³³⁶

³³⁶ Apostle Lyanne Koffi, Interviewed, January 13, 2010, Cantoments, Accra.

It is thus no wonder that the vision of the church is based on Isaiah 51:3 “For the LORD shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.” When she was miraculously healed she later started a prayer fellowship at Akosombo, which gradually metamorphosed into a church.

Deaconess Hannah does not link her call experiences to health issues or any covenant she made with God. She believes it was a result of her commitment. She claimed she was identified by the Prophetess, Maame Grace and served as her aide. She later had an independent experience, which for her confirmed her call into leadership. According to her she had a vision in which she saw a big palm tree with gold surrounding it. In the vision, God assured her that she was going to be used to do His work. She was encouraged not be afraid as God is the stem of the palm tree and cannot be uprooted. The gold around the palm tree meant riches, assuring her that she would not be hungry as she worked for God.³³⁷

After a while, still at the Edumfa Prayer Centre, she had the ‘Elijah handing over to Elisha’ kind of experience. Maame Grace took her into her car and they drove out of the Prayer Centre, toward the Abura Dunkwa road. At a point they got out of the car and Maame Grace prayed for her. Maame Grace removed her necklace and put it on her (Deaconess Hannah’s) neck and gave her a stool to sit on. Maame Grace also instructed her to obey and go wherever God would ask her go and to work for Him.

³³⁷ Mrs. Hannah Barnes, Interviewed, January 14, 2010, Agyenkwa Prayer Centre, Kasoa.

Deaconess Hannah indicates that everything she does is as a result of revelation, and it is her 'personal rapport with the divine'³³⁸ which influenced her current location as well as the name of the Prayer Centre. In consonance with previous experiences and encounters with her mentor, she moved to Kasoa, near Accra in obedience to a revelation she had in which God asked that she should come to Kasoa and He would show her where she should work. That event marked the beginning of her leadership roles. She believes that the promises that God gave to her through Maame Grace, her personal visions and dreams have all come to pass.

Unlike Apostle Lyanne and Deaconess Hannah, Rev. Rita could not point to a particular dramatic religious experience as she notes that her commitments were noted and the church promoted her accordingly. She narrates her progression as follows: 'I was first a deacon in the church, I became a pastor and after being a pastor when they found me fit and they thought I had worked really hard I was ordained as a Reverend.'³³⁹ However, before her ordination she went on a retreat to pray. A special prayer she made was for God to make her a Kathryn Kuhlman³⁴⁰ of her time and this was confirmed for her as the same prayers were offered for her on the day of her ordination.³⁴¹

The inspirational influence and/or spiritual preparation en route to leadership have been very strong as all three women link their position to a call. They all acknowledge total reliance on the Holy Spirit. The inspirational influence is much stronger in the

³³⁸ B. M. Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion: the Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches*, (Oxford: Lexington Books, 2006), p.74.

³³⁹ Rev. Mrs. Rita Korankye Ankrah, Interviewed, January 17, 2010, Royalhouse Chapel.

³⁴⁰ Kathryn Kuhlman (1907- 1976) was an American evangelist and preacher who was known for faith healing.

³⁴¹ Rev. Mrs. Rita Korankye Ankrah, Interviewed, January 17, 2010, Royalhouse Chapel.

case of Deaconess Hannah perhaps because she has had little formal education. She alludes to total reliance on Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

From the stories of these women, they did not refuse or resist the call to leadership, though it seems to be the case that some women and even men initially resist, as in the case of Deborah, Esther, Moses, Gideon and Jonah in the Bible. Cox argues that women especially resist the call initially because they are aware of the religious and cultural restrictions.³⁴² For Apostle Lyanne, Deaconess Hannah and Rev. Rita not to resist the call to leadership does not mean they were not aware of the cultural restrictions. In addition to their reliance on the Holy Spirit, these women seem to have been inspired by role models. They, thus, worked their way around those challenges because they had seen other women succeed as leaders.

Role Models

A major factor that influenced the leadership aspirations and skills of these women is the impact of role models. In the case of Rev. Rita, two women who inspired her to leadership were Rev. Christie Doe Tetteh and the ex-wife of Arch Bishop Duncan-Williams, Mama Francisca Duncan-Williams. Soothill, in referring to the role these two women played in the Charismatic movement in Ghana, gives them the 'big woman' status.³⁴³ This is mainly because a number of women pastors and pastors' wives looked up to them as role models. Concerning Rev. Christie Doe Tetteh, Rev. Rita says: 'There aren't too many women General Overseers but I looked at her at the

³⁴² Cox, *Fire from Heaven*, p. 132.

³⁴³ Soothill, J. E. 'Gender, Social Change and Spiritual Power in Ghana' in Paul Gifford (ed.) *Studies of Religion in Africa*, (Leiden: Brill, 2007), pp.150 – 179.

time from afar, starting a church, preaching, being invited to big platforms, I just looked at her from afar and told myself, I would get there'.³⁴⁴

At that time, Francisca Duncan-Williams had also accomplished a lot as a pastor's wife and leader as well as through her Pastors' Wives and Women in Ministry Association.³⁴⁵ As noted by Sackey, the main objective of the association was for networking among pastors' wives and women pastors. She notes that the association's objectives were to 'study the Scriptures and pray for one another, share Holy Communion and provide moral support to members.'³⁴⁶ However, the association earned Mama Francisca great respect and prestige, as Soothill observes,

Mama Francisca is treated as the so-called 'mother' of charismatic faith in Ghana. There are two elements to this: first, Mama Francisca acts a role model to other pastors' wives and second, as the head of a hierarchy of pastors' wives, she presents herself as someone who can 'make things happen' for other people.³⁴⁷

Soothill for instance cited Moha Amoako,³⁴⁸ for organising the women in her church along the lines of Mama Francisca.³⁴⁹ That is to say through association with Mama Francisca, the 'daughters' learn some things which they practise in their respective churches. As further asserted by Soothill, the rise of some pastors' wives in the Charismatic movement can be attributed to the influence Francisca Duncan-Williams. The case of Rev. Rita's rise may not be different. Indeed Francisca Duncan-Williams also regarded Rev. Rita as one of her 'daughters.'³⁵⁰

³⁴⁴ Rev. Mrs. Rita Korankye Ankrah, Interviewed, January 17, 2010, Royalhouse Chapel.

³⁴⁵ Soothill, 'Gender, Social Change and Spiritual Power,' p.159.

³⁴⁶ Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion*, p. 169.

³⁴⁷ Soothill, 'Gender, Social Change and Spiritual Power', p.159.

³⁴⁸ Mrs. Moha Amoako is the wife of Bishop Elisha Salifu Amoako, founder and Overseer of Alive Chapel International.

³⁴⁹ Soothill, 'Gender, Social Change and Spiritual Power,' p.159.

³⁵⁰ Soothill, 'Gender, Social Change and Spiritual Power', p.159.

She had been married before her husband started the church and had gone through some practical experiences with her husband. Being the ‘First Lady’, she is privy to some information on issues regarding leadership especially in the Royalhouse Chapel. It is no wonder when she notes her husband as one of her Mentors, having *watched* and *listened* to him carefully.³⁵¹

On the public or political scene, one woman she pointed to was Mrs Gifty Afenyi Dadzie.³⁵² In her view, Mrs Afenyi Dadzie ‘combines the secular and the spiritual’ in that on the secular platform, she still identifies herself as a woman of God. She admired her good leadership skills both in the society and the church and desired to become such a leader who would be versatile as Mrs. Afenyi Dadzie.

For Deaconess Barnes, she acknowledges the role Maame Grace Mensah, played in her rise to leadership. It was Maame Grace who identified her as having those gifts which she believes influenced her life. This should explain why a big portrait of Maame Grace Mensah stands in her living room. Not only that, her prayer centre is virtually patterned after the Edumfa Prayer Centre.

Apostle Lyanne did not point to any specific role model, but she was in agreement that the successes of other women leaders clearly became a motivation factor for her as it was for the other women under study. Learning from these role models becomes

³⁵¹ Rev. Mrs. Rita Korankye Ankrah, Interviewed, January 17, 2010, Royalhouse Chapel.

³⁵² As noted in Chapter one, Mrs Gifty Afenyi-Dadzie is the prayer leader of Women’s Aglow International (Ghana), whose monthly prayer meetings she leads. Mrs. Afenyi-Dadzie brings to the group her background, not only as a successful business woman but also a seasoned journalist who rose through the ranks to become the President of the Ghana Journalist Association.

very important in their quest to become leaders, as it is practical training for them. It also seems to take the place of formal training.

Formal Theological Formation

All the three women studied in this work did not have any formal theological training at the time of becoming leaders.³⁵³ Pentecostals in the past had frowned on formal theological and even secular education, which to them hindered the work of the Holy Spirit and promoted worldliness.³⁵⁴ Anderson notes that most of the successful Pentecostal and Charismatic leaders ‘...had little or no theological education’.³⁵⁵ He further observes that ‘a certain tension exists between academic integrity and spirituality, especially when education does not seem to further spirituality’.³⁵⁶ This has been because qualification for leadership had been placed more on spirituality than theological formation. Thus the mainline churches were described as engaging in ‘dead intellectualism,’ because they provided theological education for their leaders.³⁵⁷ Ogunewu cites some instances in Nigeria where ‘...educated members who declared for fulltime ministry would have their secular certificates burnt, because these were considered irrelevant to the work of the ministry.’ To many Pentecostalist

³⁵³ Generally women in the past could not assess major leadership roles in church and theological education was also limited to men. Mercy Amba Oduyoye, ‘Theological Education for Women in Africa: 1978-1996’ in Mercy Amba Oduyoye (ed.), *Transforming Power: Women in the Household of God*, (Accra: Sam-Woode, 1997), pp. 51-65; Lisa Meo, ‘Pacific Island Women & Theological Education’ in Mercy Amba Oduyoye (ed.), *Transforming Power: Women in the Household of God*, (Accra: Sam-Woode, 1997), pp.66-74.

³⁵⁴ Leke Ogunewu, ‘Charismatic Movements and Theological Education: Past, Present and Future’ in Moses Audi, (ed.), *Ogbomoso Journal of Theology*, Vol. 13(2), (Ogbomoso, Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary, 2008) p. 65-66.

³⁵⁵ Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity*, (NY: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 243.

³⁵⁶ Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, p. 244.

³⁵⁷ Cephas Omenyo, ‘The Spirit Filled Goes to School: Theological Education in African Pentecostalism’ in Moses Audi, (ed.), *Ogbomoso Journal of Theology*, Vol. 13(2), (Ogbomoso, Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary, 2008) p. 46; Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, p. 244.

Christians at the time, education ‘was to give in to worldliness at the expense of souls that were perishing.’³⁵⁸

By the time that these women were becoming leaders, however, the general Pentecostal perception on theological education had begun changing and as Omenyo points out, there was already ‘a growing desire for theological education’.³⁵⁹ This raises the paradox of whether their inability to access theological education before being established as leaders was due to the fact that they are women. Could they not have taken advantage of the many Pentecostal theological institutions and increasing opportunities for theological education³⁶⁰ which some women leaders in Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches had taken advantage of? Probing the reasons for which they had no formal theological training prior to assuming leadership roles, it is evident that there was an intersection of factors and each of them had their peculiar circumstances accounting for it.

In the absence of formal theological training, these women have had to learn on the job. Rev. Rita and Apostle Lyanne participate in seminars organised for pastors’ wives and women pastors. Deaconess Hannah on the other hand takes advantage of retreats held for lay officers in the Church of Pentecost. Besides, she constantly takes inspiration from Maame Grace, as she often travels to the Edumfa Prayer Centre. From these seminars, meetings and trips, these women have learnt many practical things regarding their work as leaders.

³⁵⁸ Ogunewu, ‘Charismatic Movements and Theological Education’, p.66.

³⁵⁹ Omenyo, ‘The Spirit Filled Goes to School’ p. 46.

³⁶⁰ Omenyo, ‘The Spirit Filled Goes to School’, pp. 46-51.

Apostle Lyanne however, has had some theological education after becoming a leader. According to Apostle Lyanne when she started the church, she did not have any formal training. It was something she learnt to do on her own. This is not very different from a number of Charismatic leaders, who start their own churches without any formal training. She however, gives credence to the Holy Spirit for leading her through till she got some form of training. She enrolled for a correspondence Bible course with the Assemblies of God, Berean College in America. A couple of factors determined the training she opted for, as she opines that ‘at that time I was a mother of three, doing the ministry and being a wife I couldn’t leave home so that helped me because I could study in my own home.’³⁶¹ There is no doubt that even though overseeing the infant church was a factor, it is also clear that being a mother and wife were the most compelling factors that made her choose the kind of training she underwent.

During the correspondence course, she did not learn much of gender roles but after that she has had to do some personal studies to be able to talk about her position as a woman minister. Indeed, she recalls the experience of being called at very short notices to speak on radio or in other fora on whether or not women should be bishops, pastors or leaders. During such fora, she sometimes turned out to be the only female debating with a number of men. She however, believes that the Bible speaks explicitly about gender roles in ministry. In her view;

With God there is neither male nor female... God does not see us according to our sexes but according to the Spirit He has given and put within us... Because if you go to the word of God you realise that there are many women that were used by God in key leadership positions – women like Deborah, Esther, Philip’s daughters seven of them who were all

³⁶¹ Apostle Lyanne Koffi, Interviewed, January 13, 2010, Cantoments, Accra.

prophetesses who prophesied, Dorcas, and Lydia were all women in ministry. I realised that God doesn't have a problem with women in ministry... and I also realise that it is about the Spirit of the person, not so much the gender.³⁶²

When asked whether she had received any training to become a pastor, this is what

Rev. Rita had to say:

Yes I would say I did. I didn't go to a Bible school *per se*, I didn't go to any seminary but I did what you would call on the job training, I met my husband on the job. What I did was to sit back and watch him, when he preaches I listen to him carefully, I make notes. I listen to other men of God and then I make notes so when I was ordained it was like I had received in-service training or on the job training though I didn't go out to train. Within the church I had been trained and I had been equipped.³⁶³

She had also spiritually equipped herself, taking steps such as going on a special retreat and prayed for God to help her function as a leader.

After she had been ordained, she enrolled in 2003 for her first degree at the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA), where she read entrepreneurship and management, and at the time of the interview she was pursuing her master's programme in leadership and governance at the same institution. She believes even though she had no formal theological education, her leadership skills have been positively impacted by the further secular education she received.

Women Leadership and Marriage

One feature about the women under study is that all three were married before they became leaders and were all married at the time of the research. It is thus vital to see

³⁶² Apostle Lyanne Koffi, Interviewed, January 13, 2010, Cantoments, Accra.

³⁶³ Rev. Mrs. Rita Korankye Ankrah, Interviewed, January, 17, 2010, Royalhouse Chapel.

how their marriages could have influenced their becoming leaders or otherwise. In the case of two of the women, Rev. Rita and Deaconess Hannah, their marriages have had a direct influence on the current leadership roles they play. However, Rev. Lyanne's marriage does not seem to have a direct bearing on her becoming a leader, though she had a great support from the husband. This ensuing discussion takes a look at how especially the first ladyship of Rev. Rita and the marriage clause for Deaconess Hannah respectively impacted their path to leadership.

The First Lady

Currently in Charismatic churches in Ghana, prominence is given to the wives of head pastors, general overseers and founders. In some cases it has been presumed that women access power through their relationship to men. Soothill maintains that Charismatic Churches in Ghana have patterned their leadership along the lines of modern Ghanaian politics emphasising conjugal relationships, influenced by gender politics of modern political system giving special places to the spouses of leaders.³⁶⁴ Though this may partly be the case of Rev. Rita, she also shows that she has become a leader in her own right, not necessarily clinging on the shoulders of her husband. She does not, however, deny the support of her husband to attain those personal successes. Her position as the First Lady however, brings to the fore the parallel and complimentary gender roles in the Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches but more essentially lends credence to the contributions of women in these churches.³⁶⁵

³⁶⁴ Soothill, 'Gender, Social Change and Spiritual Power', p.131.

³⁶⁵ Elizabeth Brusco, 'Gender and Power' in Allan Anderson et al (eds.) *Studying Global Pentecostal; Theories and Methods*, (London: University of California Press Ltd, 2010) p. 83.

Rev. Rita first got to know her husband as a freelance Evangelist through whom she became ‘born again’. She was a member of his fellowship and joined his non-denominational evangelistic ministry, the Lovers of Christ Evangelistic Ministry. They visited villages and schools and held revivals. She was an executive member of Showers of Blessing Incorporated another evangelistic ministry he established in 1984 after Lovers of Christ Ministry disintegrated.³⁶⁶ Showers of Blessing Incorporated had a two-fold vision; ‘firstly to evangelise to the youth through music, drama and preaching and secondly, to organise revival services in collaboration with other churches’.³⁶⁷

She got married on 6th September 1986, when she was 24 and her husband had just completed his University education. Her husband, though engaged in many evangelistic activities, was not an ordained minister at the time. A year after they got married, however, he was appointed as a minister in a Charismatic church, the Living Word Foundation in Accra, where he served as a pastor for three years. It was during that time that he was ordained. He later travelled to Holland for two years. It was on returning to Ghana in 1992 that he turned the Showers of Blessing Incorporated into a church, which now has the name Royalhouse Chapel International.³⁶⁸

Rev. Rita is recognised as the co-founder, in the sense that she was asked by her husband to start Sunday services with members of the Showers of Blessing

³⁶⁶ Sam Korankye Ankrah, *The Rising of the Sun: Shining from Obscurity*, (Accra: Royalhouse Chapel International, 2010), pp. 56 -57.

³⁶⁷ Korankye Ankrah, *The Rising of the Sun*, p. 56.

³⁶⁸ Sam Korankye Ankrah & Derek Amanor (eds.), *The Ministers’ Handbook: Royalhouse Chapel International*, (Accra, Royalhouse Chapel, 2009), pp. 5-7.

Incorporated prior to his return from Holland.³⁶⁹ In addition she believes that she prayed her husband into his current ministry. This is because during the time her husband had travelled to Holland, she spent her holidays and annual leaves praying for her husband, knowing that God had called him into ministry.³⁷⁰

She thus indicates that God had raised her as a ‘Deborah’ of her time as she discloses that ‘out of me Royalhouse Chapel was born.’ In referring to herself as a ‘Deborah’ of her time, she may be aligning herself to a certain Biblical female image. Deborah (Judges 4: 1 – 5: 31) was a judge and a prophetess in Israel. Thus, she ruled on cases and delivered God’s messages to the Israelites respectively. She was also an exceptional leader who kept to her boundaries. Of all the judges in Israel, Deborah was the only woman. This can be seen as a reflection of God’s ability to have exceptions. God did not allow her to go to battle as she was a female. He rather used Barak. This notwithstanding Deborah was ready to work in a team, complementing Barak’s efforts. Just like Deborah, Rev. Rita also complements the work of her husband.³⁷¹ She is also exceptional leader who is able to stand strong in the face of challenges.

Pioneering the church together with her husband, and in the time when women leadership was not very well accepted, she played the roles typical of pastors’ wives. She formed and headed a group with the name Christian Services. It comprised the ushering department, the Sunday school teachers, the protocol and security team. As

³⁶⁹ Korankye Ankrah & Amanor (eds.), *The Ministers’ Handbook*, p. 7; Korankye Ankrah, *The Rising of the Sun*, p.111.

³⁷⁰ Korankye Ankrah, *The Rising of the Sun*, p.97. She relates this claim to the prayers she offered which she believes made her husband to come back to Ghana to start a church.

³⁷¹ Rev. Rita notes that she resigned from secular work and joined her husband to do the work of God.

should be expected, she also started the Children's Ministry, training the Sunday school teachers in the church as well as establishing the Royal Ladies, which is the women's ministry of the church. According to her it was through the recognition of her work that she was commissioned as a pastor and later ordained as a Reverend Minister. However, as noted by Brusco about Pastor's wives, '...in many ways her influence can be equal to that of her husband.'³⁷²

Marriage Clause

As mentioned earlier, in the case of Deaconess Hannah, what may be called the 'marriage clause' was attached to her 'calling' package; thus it was part of the conditions for her access to leadership. At Edumfa when Maame Grace saw her and told her God's hand was on her and would use her, she added she would not let her go but would also find her husband. That is as if to say she wanted to be a beneficiary or have a personal link to her. This could be seen as a forced marriage in disguise. She agreed to marry her husband because of what Maame Grace said. She had the impression that the marriage proposal was an access to realise the revelation of God concerning her. In her words:

When he was introduced to me, I saw he was much older than me and he had married before so I really did not love him. But my brothers said because he is the son of the prophetess and the woman herself said she had found me as gift and the grace of God was on me... But the love of God that was in me was greater than the marriage.³⁷³

Even though her call came as a package, when she had the confirmation to start her own prayer camp she had to do that without the knowledge of her husband for fear of not having the permission to do so. This she says nearly led to divorce.³⁷⁴

³⁷² Brusco, 'Gender and Power', p. 84.

³⁷³ Mrs. Hannah Barnes, Interviewed, January 14, 2010, Agyenkwa Prayer Centre, Kasoa.

³⁷⁴ Mrs. Hannah Barnes, Interviewed, January 14, 2010.

3.5 Breaking the Status Quo

Though the incidence of women leadership is growing, it still does not reflect the norm. It is not generally accepted by the wider society. Indeed, as is reflected in the case of Deaconess Hannah, even though women are making great strides in leadership, with society accepting them more and more as leaders, they still face and have to deal with instances of resistance to their leadership.

Rev. Rita, for instance, noted that she prayed earnestly saying:

‘God give me acceptance.’ Why did I ask God to give me acceptance? I said this is a man’s world; this is a man’s territory. I was going to into a man’s territory, God must give me acceptance; acceptance before people because you could go somewhere, people would not accept you as a woman of God they won’t accept you as a preacher, they won’t accept you as somebody called of God, so I really prayed for acceptance. I said God ‘everywhere I go to minister everywhere I go to preach the word of God give me that acceptance.’ I really prayed.³⁷⁵

In breaking the status quo, these women have depended on the support of their family as well as from the general society. However, one challenge about women breaking the status quo is to provide evidence of their ability to occupy the position and work. Thus, the support is also dependent on the access of those family members or the society to a preview of their abilities. It seems as though they are not given the benefit of doubt or opportunities to grow as men do have.

Support from Family

For married women the support from the nuclear family is very crucial to their efforts in coming into leadership. If family, especially husband does not support the woman’s move into leadership the step can disturb and even cause a break in the marriage. Apostle Lyanne and Rev. Rita talk about the full support their nuclear family gave

³⁷⁵ Rev. Mrs. Rita Korankye Ankrah, Interviewed, January 17, 2010, Royalhouse Chapel.

them. In the case of Deaconess Hannah, because she was not sure of the support of her husband, she moved to another location to actually start her leadership roles without informing her husband.

According to Rev. Rita when she was engaged in freelance evangelism, her parents said she was a disgrace to the family. Perhaps she was seen as a disgrace because that was not dignified, more so, those were the beginnings and they might not have understood her. However, later as a pastor's wife when she declared her intentions of becoming a pastor they were not surprised because they knew she had an express desire to be a leader and they gave her their support. She had support from her extended family – uncles and aunties. The husband, the head of Royalhouse Chapel, was also a great support to her.

Apostle Mrs Lyanne mentioned particularly her husband as being of great support. In her case she believes that because her husband had been with her throughout her health challenges, he understood her circumstances and had been very supportive. Her parents, relatives and very close friends had also been witnesses to her challenges as well as her miraculous healing through which a lot of her friends had become Christians. Thus, they supported her move to become a pastor. She gave birth to her four children in the midst of her health challenges. Her children were relatively younger at the time she became a leader, and they may really have had no choice but to accept what their mother was engaged in.

Acceptance by Society

Acceptance by the Christian fraternity as well as the society at large is essential to the success of women leadership in the church. Thus traditions and attitudes of churches and societies have had great impact especially on emerging positions of women in church. These women were aware that as women, becoming leaders was mainly breaking into areas not popular for women. This in a way influenced the thoughts and perception of these women as they were becoming leaders. Rev. Rita reveals her perception as follows:

I think our culture does not help us. We live in a man's world where certain things or certain professions are left for men so once you try as a woman to move into the territory of a man certainly you get eyebrows being raised at you, you get people asking questions: 'Is this woman sure of what she is doing? Is she sure can do the work? So for me our society and our culture doesn't help us because we've been trained that certain things are men's and remember that the orthodox churches³⁷⁶ and then the old Pentecostal churches didn't help us... the old Pentecostal churches didn't accept women as pastors. So our culture, our society, the world in which we are doesn't help us as women coming out to preach the word of God.³⁷⁷

That is to say, in addition to the traditional societal norms, the practice especially in the classical Pentecostal did not support women into those leadership positions. As the neo-Pentecostal churches were learning many things from the classical Pentecostal churches, the nonexistence of high leadership positions for women posed a challenge to newer churches like the Royalhouse Chapel. Thus, being the first lady pastor to become ordained in Royalhouse Chapel, Rev. Rita also sensed that certain people had their doubts. For her, becoming a pastor was entering into a man's world so since at the time Royalhouse Chapel had never seen a lady pastor she thought people wondered, 'what is this woman coming to do as a pastor, would she be able to do

³⁷⁶ Catholic and Protestant churches are generally referred to as Orthodox churches in Ghana.

³⁷⁷ Rev. Mrs. Rita Korankye Ankrah, Interviewed, January 17, 2010, Royalhouse Chapel.

it?’³⁷⁸. However, being the president of the Royal Ladies, she had their support. To this end she says ‘everybody was happy for me and they encouraged me that I could do it’.³⁷⁹

Apostle Lyanne also sensed the scepticism of churches and the society, but for her it is the anointing of God and the character of a person that would change the perception of people. She also believes that to overcome the scepticism of women leadership, one needs to prove the results of her ministry. She cites instances of how churches warned their members not to attend and some even started similar programmes in their churches in response to her starting prayer meetings and crusades at Akosombo.³⁸⁰ However, she also noted that ‘Bible says that by their fruits, you shall know them and also the power of God will also speak whether this thing is of God and so we had a lot of opposition in terms of slander, malicious words but as the ministry started growing, people started appreciating the ministry and that’s when people started coming...’³⁸¹

3.6 Summary

It is clear that these women, Rev. Rita, Apostle Lyanne and Deaconess Hannah have had a number of factors intersecting, which influenced their becoming leaders. These factors include empowerment from the Holy Spirit, marriage and examples of successful women leaders in the Pentecostalist movement. With regards to the

³⁷⁸ Rev. Mrs. Rita Korankye Ankrah, Interviewed, January 17, 2010, Royalhouse Chapel.

³⁷⁹ Rev. Mrs. Rita Korankye Ankrah, Interviewed, January 17, 2010, Royalhouse Chapel.

³⁸⁰ Apostle Lyanne Koffi, Interviewed, January 13, 2010, Cantoments, Accra. This may particularly be due to the fear that churches have regarding ‘sheep stealing’ and not necessarily because of her being a woman.

³⁸¹ Apostle Lyanne Koffi, Interviewed, January 13, 2010, Cantoments, Accra.

circumstances of the women leaders under study, they can be classified as contemporary second generation women leaders in the Pentecostal and Charismatic scene. In this sense the contemporary first generation women leaders include Maame Grace Mensah of the Edumfa Prayer Centre, Rev. Christie Doe Tetteh and then Mama Francisca Duncan-Williams, the former wife of Archbishop Duncan-Williams. The successes of these women as leaders played a part in the assumption of leadership roles for the second generation.

In their quest to become leaders they encountered some questions and challenges, because the society has not fully come to terms with women's leadership. However, their experiences reveal a significant change in the Ghanaian attitude towards women leadership and this has positively influenced their positions. Powers indicates that the freedom women had to be ministers at the beginning of the contemporary Pentecostal movement was based on the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. She also observes that women's position was influenced 'by a cultural understanding that women had a separate and limited sphere of activity.'³⁸²

The next chapter examines the work of these women leaders, looking at the leadership roles, contributions they bring as women leaders and how possibly different they are from male leaders in the Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches. Their spheres of activities are evaluated to ascertain whether or not these women have a separate and limited sphere of activity and the reasons that account for that.

³⁸² Powers, 'Your Daughters Shall Prophesy', p. 321.

CHAPTER FOUR

LEADERSHIP ROLES AND CONTRIBUTIONS: THE THREE CASE STUDIES

4.1 Introduction

The preceding sections discussed some factors that have marked the incidence of women's leadership in the church and society. The previous chapter (Chapter Three) in particular examined the different circumstances under which the women whose leadership roles are being reviewed assumed leadership positions. It was also noted in Chapter Three that as women take up leadership positions, they are confronted with the added burden of proving their capabilities before they would be accepted by their faith communities.

This chapter focuses on the specific work of the three women leaders namely, Rev. Rita, Apostle Lyanne and Deaconess Hannah. In other words, the chapter discusses their distinctive contributions, successes and strides as women leaders in the Pentecostalist movement. In addition, the chapter will assess how these women's leadership roles vary from and/or complement those of male leaders in the Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches. It is hoped that as this variety and complementation are highlighted, the need for women to respond to the call to leadership in ministry would be appreciated on its own merits and not necessarily as a matter of gender equality.

4.2 Leadership and Administrative Roles

Each of the women who are the focus of this study was found to have diverse functions as a leader, especially within the peculiar environment in which she

operates. This section looks at how the said diverse functions contribute to the three women's achievement as leaders. Rev. Rita and Apostle Lyanne have no limits in relation to leadership and administrative roles. In terms of leadership and administrative role, as will be discussed in the subsequent sections, it will be realised that Rev. Rita has an additional duty of being in charge of the women in her church, Royalhouse Chapel International. Rev. Rita and Apostle Lyanne also perform all the sacraments. Deaconess Hannah, however, does not perform any sacrament because her church, the Church of Pentecost, does not allow women to perform any sacrament. The leadership and administrative roles of these women are discussed below.

The Pastor's Wife – Rev. Mrs. Rita Korankye Ankrah

Though a pastor's wife, Rev. Rita is a pastor and leader in her own right. She is accorded that right not just because she serves within the capacity as a pastor's wife. According to one pastor's wife, 'when the pastor ceases to exist, the wife also ceases to exist.'³⁸³ Perhaps Rev. Rita's role is an example that pastors' wives do not need to cling to their husbands to be accepted and/or serve as leaders.

As the wife of a head Pastor, Rev. Rita is much concerned with issues relating to women and this translates into the roles she plays. As a reflection of a woman's role, she in 1992 established the Christian Services department of her church. This department focuses on maintaining cleanliness at the place of worship as well as rendering services which make worshippers comfortable.³⁸⁴ Also in 1994 she established the Royal Ladies, (the name of the Women's Ministry) which she

³⁸³ Discussions with a Church of Pentecost pastor and wife, Ho. 21st April 2012.

³⁸⁴ Royalhouse Chapel, Christian Services:

<http://www.royalhousechapel.org/index.php/en/ministries/13-ministries>, [accessed April 24, 2012].

currently presides over as President General.³⁸⁵ The position of the President General implies she is both the national and international leader of the Women's Ministry of the Church.³⁸⁶ This position, like the position of her husband as the Apostle General³⁸⁷ of the Church is not for a term but possibly, a lifetime. The nature of her position has some similarities with the role of the queen mother in the traditional societies.

Though founders of Charismatic churches have been noted to lead their respective churches as a lifelong position, some founders of Charismatic churches in Ghana have stepped down as heads, though they are still in active service of those churches. Instances are Rev. Eastwood Anaba and Archbishop Duncan-William of Fountain Gate International and Action Chapel International respectively who recently stepped down as heads of the churches they founded. There is no indication as to how long Rev. Rita would continue in her position as the President General of the Royal Ladies.

The influence of the said founders of Charismatic churches cannot be underrated though they have stepped down. Thus, even if Rev. Rita should relinquish the position; her influence may still be strong. Questions that come in relation to succession if she should relinquish her position as the President General include whether the position of President General of Royal ladies will continue to exist. Another question has to do with what would happen to her role as President General

³⁸⁵ The position of the President General is likened to that of her husband who is the Apostle General. She is the President General of the Royal Ladies because she oversees the Women's Ministry in all branches of the church.

³⁸⁶ At the time of research, Royalhouse Chapel had 120 assemblies in Ghana and 17 branches in the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

³⁸⁷ Within the context of Royalhouse Chapel Rev. Sam Korankye Ankrah has the title Apostle General because he is overseeing the local and international branches of the church.

of Royal Ladies if she, as the co –founder, should assume the position of the Apostle General, in the event of the demise or stepping down of her husband as other Charismatic leaders have done.

Rev. Rita is also in charge of some general administrative duties in the church. She is the head of Social Services, though it was the initiative of her husband, Rev. Sam Korankye Ankrah. Under the Social Services are the scholarship foundation, the Aged, Women’s, Men’s, Youth and Children Ministries of the Church. Rev. Rita specifically formed the Children and Women’s Ministries. Under the Social Services are also the divisions committed to the issues of marriage and social outreach. In addition to these, she chairs a number of interviews for needy students and also sees to the processing of scholarships for successful applicants. She also endorses official documents of members of the church.

Based on the church’s administrative structure as well as her position as the head of the Social Services, she has the opportunity to head the Men’s Ministry. However, in practical terms, her attention is more on the Women’s Ministry, probably because of the predetermined roles as the wife of the head pastor, in this case the Apostle General. Her own interest in women could also be an indicator in the roles she plays. As the President General of the Royal Ladies, she is engaged in seeing to the day-to-day administrative affairs of the ministry. She has also established a scholarship scheme within the Women’s Ministry to supplement the general scheme of the church.

In terms of spirituality, her spiritual gifts are noted as operating in the revelation and prophetic gifts. These gifts are expressed through the word of knowledge,³⁸⁸ word of wisdom³⁸⁹ and in deliverance with healings and miracles. According to Rev. Rita, she comes to the church premises especially in the evening almost every day of the week unless she is engaged outside the church or out of the country. This is because she may have some administrative work to do, or a meeting on the church premise. Although she is required to do counselling every Monday evening, she practically does it each time she is in the church premises.

She has her counselling sessions in the evenings because since most of the church members are workers, they could only come for counselling in the evenings. Apart from the counselling sessions in the evening, she also attends the church's evening service on Tuesdays and prays with the 'Mighty Women.' The 'Mighty Women' is a group of women she is training as women of God. She also meets with the women's ministry of the church, 'the Royal Ladies' every fortnight on Saturdays.

Every last Thursday of every month, she meets with pastors' wives, lady pastors and ministers' wives of Royalhouse Chapel. It was discovered that other pastors' wives from churches other than Royalhouse Chapel join these meetings.³⁹⁰ From these meetings she exerts her influence on those pastors' wives. These are pastors' wives

³⁸⁸ Pentecostals regard Word of wisdom as a spiritual gift based on 1 Corinthians 12: 6 - 10. It is a revelation of God's will and purpose for people, events and things. The gift is connected to teaching. C. M. Robeck Jr., 'Word of Wisdom' in Stanley M. Burgess, Gary B. McGee et al (eds.) *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1988), pp. 890 – 892.

³⁸⁹ Word of wisdom is a spiritual gift based on 1 Corinthians 12: 6 – 10. Pentecostalist Christians regard it as the ability for a person to know what God is doing or intends to do in another person's life. F. Martin, 'Word of knowledge', Stanley M. Burgess, Gary B. McGee et al (eds.) *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1988), pp. 527 – 529.

³⁹⁰ Pastor Hannah, Interviewed, January 17, 2010, Royalhouse Chapel.

who have submitted to the authority of Rev. Rita, because their own husbands have also submitted to the Apostle General, Rev. Sam Korankye Ankrah. Interestingly, this meeting could itself be seen in the light of what Mama Francisca, Rev. Rita's mentor, was doing with her pastors' wives and Women in Ministry Association. Thus, the aim of the fellowship is to mentor and empower women leaders in the churches. Such outreach by Rev. Rita has the tendency to sustain the next generation of women leaders in Pentecostalism.

Rev. Rita is also a national as well as an international conference speaker. In Royalhouse Chapel, she organises two main conferences for women, one in Ghana and one in the Diaspora, usually in Virginia, United States of America. Outside Royalhouse Chapel, Rev. Rita also speaks at other Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches as well as Women's Aglow³⁹¹ and Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council Pastor's Wives Association. With the mainline churches, she mentioned that she has been invited once to a Methodist Church at Kaneshie. She is also a resource person at leadership and family life conferences both in Ghana and on the international level where she speaks mostly to girls and young adults in the senior high schools and universities.

The General Overseer – Apostle Mrs. Lyanne Koffi

As the founder and leader of The Lord's Garden Ministries, Apostle Lyanne's main duties are preaching and administrative duties. She preaches at any of the six branches of the church in the Eastern, Greater Accra and Central Regions of Ghana. After

³⁹¹ Aglow International, popularly known in Ghana as 'Women's Aglow' is an interdenominational Christian women's group. Aglow is present in 163 nations of the world. <http://www.aglowghana.org/links/aboutus.html>, [accessed June 2, 2012].

joining her husband in Accra she started a fellowship meeting on Mondays at M Plaza Hotel in Accra.³⁹² She then opened an additional branch of the Church which is named the Liberty Centre of the Lord's Garden Ministries. They meet at the Du Bois Centre at Cantoments. She also has a Christian counselling and deliverance centre at the Ashongman branch of the Church called the Prayer Place.

Apostle Lyanne led a solely non-denominational fellowship in Akosombo for about seven to eight years before starting a denominational church. Although she has started a church, the non-denominational fellowship in Akosombo continues to exist with an additional one in Accra. The Accra fellowship meets every Monday evening between 6p.m. and 7p.m. at M Plaza Hotel. It is quite unique how Apostle Lyanne has been able to continue leading the non-denominational fellowship in spite of the fact that she founded and leading a church. This mirrors a new trend of Charismatic pastors establishing personalised ministries apart from their established churches. Examples are Ampiah Kwofie Worldwide Evangelistic Ministries and Eastwood Anaba Ministries. These individual or personalised ministries are non-denominational in nature. Charismatic pastors have virtual followers who listen to their sermons and/or attend their revival meetings. There are also others who share in the vision of these Charismatic leaders. A majority of these categories of people are, however, not members of their respective churches. Through these personalised ministries, therefore, they maintain their contact as well as support. Such support groups are usually called 'partners' as they support these Charismatic pastors financially and spiritually.

³⁹² Holding the fellowship meeting at a Hotel, may be a strategic effort to attract a certain group of people. From observation the people who attend the fellowship are people working in corporate organisations.

Thus, for Apostle Lyanne running the fellowship alongside the church could be a way of maintaining links with people she started the fellowship with. As she intimated, one of her main sources of support for the thriving church is through partners who may not necessarily be members of the church.³⁹³ The fellowship then becomes one of the converging points for the partners.

Concerning her dual activities at the church and fellowship, usually on Sundays she either preaches or attends service at any of the branches. She preaches on Mondays at the Accra fellowship at M Plaza. On Tuesdays and Fridays from 10a.m. to 4p.m. she engages in Christian counselling and deliverance at the Prayer Place on the Ashongman Estates road.³⁹⁴ On Wednesday mornings, she attends a fellowship meeting at the Headquarters at Akosombo from 9a.m. to about 1p.m. She has devoted Thursdays and Saturdays as days of rest and for time with her family.

In addition to these, Apostle Lyanne has a monthly activity for the entire church, known as 'Believers Breakthrough Convention'. This is held on the last Wednesday, Thursday and Friday of every month at the headquarters at Akosombo. She also organises Easter conventions, midyear convention and 'Prayer Storm' in December, where prayers and projections are made into the coming year. She also indicates that at times she is invited to preach at other churches and conventions, both local and international, mainly in the United Kingdom and sometimes in the United States of America. She adds that even though she attends women's conventions where she ministers mainly to women and has a project such as the 'Sisters Keepers', her

³⁹³ Apostle Lyanne Koffi, Interviewed, January 13, 2010, Cantoments, Accra.

³⁹⁴ The venue is one of her houses that she has made a meeting place for the church.

ministry in general is not only to women.³⁹⁵ Her messages cannot be said to be skewed towards women, as they are general in nature.

Though women outnumber men in her fellowship and church, she does not run ‘a women’s church’. The sex distribution of her church is not influenced by the fact that she is a woman. Rather, it is a reflection of the general situation where more women than men attend church. In fact most of her administrative assistants are male. As at January 2010, though she had twenty pastors, there was no woman among them. She was surprised she had not given much thought to it. However, after a year, she had admitted one lady as a pastor in the church.

The Prayer Camp Leader – Deaconess Mrs. Hannah Barnes

As noted earlier, the Agyenkwa Prayer Centre is affiliated to the Church of Pentecost (CoP). The biblical foundation of the centre is based on Matt. 11:28, ‘come unto me... and I will give you rest’. As shown in fig.1, it is written on the front view of the temporary structure where they hold a majority of their meetings. Deaconess Hannah believes that the Lord will solve any problem brought to the centre. Hence, the name *Agyenkwa* (Akan word meaning Saviour or Salvation) reflects the biblical foundation of the centre. She also holds that the Agyenkwa Prayer Centre is modelled as though it were a ‘branch’ of the Edumfa Prayer Centre. Therefore she tries to operate just as it is done at the Edumfa Prayer Centre.

³⁹⁵ Apostle Lyanne Koffi, Interviewed, January 13, 2010, Cantoments, Accra.



Fig. 1: The front view of the meeting place at Agyenkwa Prayer Centre

The main activity at the prayer camp is prayer as true to the name of the centre. Although Thursdays are designated as ‘the great day of prayer’ for visitors at the centre, one observes that almost every day of the week, there is some sort of prayer going on at the centre, as people from all walks of life visit there mainly for prayers. For instance, on Mondays, there is the ‘Mondays Special’ where physical exercises such as brisk walking and jogging are added to prayers. Members are encouraged to physically exercise as it is believed to help the healing process. Tuesday mornings are for prayers. Wednesday mornings are dedicated to the Women’s Movement meeting. The Friday meeting is designated, ‘*nsamansaman*’ (Akan word literally meaning summoning).³⁹⁶ This is based on a traditional belief that one pays something to God in request for healing or to seek solution to a problem. The Friday prayer is called ‘*kokoase mpeabo*’ (Akan term literally meaning prayers under cocoa trees).³⁹⁷ On Sundays there are church services, done according to the Church of Pentecost order of

³⁹⁶ This practise is discussed later in the chapter.

³⁹⁷ This linked to the beginnings of the Church of Pentecost where members often went to Cocoa farms to pray. It is believed those prayers were very intense and were done with all seriousness.

services even though there is allowance for much more lengthy prayers, which will not be seen in a typical service of the Church of Pentecost.

Since the place is a residential camp, provision is made for people to stay at the centre. Inferring from 2 Kings 5:1–14, where the Prophet Elisha asked Naaman to wash himself in the Jordan seven times to be healed of leprosy, Deaconess Hannah has set the minimum number of days for person to stay at the centre as seven days. During these seven days one has to fast. The first three days of the fast is continuous and one is not expected to break it till the end of the third day. The subsequent next four days the fast is from 6a.m. to 6p.m. Anyone who would not be able to stay for the stipulated seven days would be expected to stay at least for three days, fasting throughout. It is believed that fasting may hasten the solutions to problems brought to the centre.³⁹⁸ Nonetheless, the required fasting period might be difficult for some to embark upon. There is also the possibility that fasting for that period could complicate the health status of some persons who go there.

In many cases, people stay beyond the stipulated number of days due to the complicated nature of their problems or until they find solution to their challenges. They, therefore, extend their stay to months and even years. A contributing factor for the extended stay at the camp may also be due to the belief that it is the Holy Spirit that discharges a person from the camp. For instance, during one of the researcher's visits to the centre, a woman testified that she had a vision in which her belongings

³⁹⁸ The biblical basis for this is in Mark 9: 14-29. Jesus told his disciples that certain problems can only be solved through prayer and fasting, when the disciples could not heal a boy.

were taken from her lodging place. It was interpreted as Jesus having healed and discharged her.³⁹⁹ At that point her healing was not physically manifest.

There are also some people who live permanently at the camp. This happens in cases where families may have given up on or abandoned especially sick relations at the camp. When such people are healed, it is interpreted to mean God had called them, thus they decide to stay at the camp to help others.⁴⁰⁰

Deaconess Hannah lives with her family and assistants at the centre where she has built structures made up of about forty rooms. Residential campers put their belongings and also rest during the day in those rooms. In the night however, except for nursing mothers, everyone who has come to the centre is expected to sleep in the meeting place, which is basically an open shed as shown in fig. 1. It is believed that as the campers sleep at the meeting place, God will reveal Himself to them and also heal their diseases, ultimately providing solution to the problems for which they came to the centre.⁴⁰¹ Sleeping in the open, however, could pose health challenges to campers who may already be having fragile health conditions. Quite apart from that, contagious diseases could easily spread.

Looking at the patronage for the centre, there was no difference from what Rita Acquah and Grace Sintim-Ofosuhene revealed in their work on prayer camps in the

³⁹⁹ She was thus leaving the centre. She had been at the centre for six months.

⁴⁰⁰ This has some parallels with the traditional religion where one of the indications of call into priesthood is that a person is attacked by some strange illness that would cause the person to be taken to the shrine. Kofi Asare Opoku, *West African Traditional Religion* (Accra: FEP International Private Limited, 1978), p. 76. John D. K., Ekem, *Priesthood in Context: A Study of Priesthood in Some Christian and Primal Communities of Ghana and its Relevance for Mother –Tongue Biblical Interpretation*, (Accra: Sonlife Press, 2009), p. 48.

⁴⁰¹ During the time of participant observation, Deaconess Hannah was not seen sleeping under the shed.

Church of Pentecost.⁴⁰² The ratio of women who go to prayer camps as compared to men is high.⁴⁰³ Some of the women who go there are either seeking help or as intercessors or caregivers and sometimes end up staying there for very long periods. Civil servants and students form only a small proportion of people who visit prayer camps.⁴⁰⁴ Current trends of prayer meetings, especially in the Charismatic churches tend to suit those who cannot visit prayer camps.

The introduction of weekly (and sometimes daily) prayer meetings of Charismatic Churches and in recent times by Neo-Prophetic Churches is non-residential in nature. These prayer times seem to fit the schedule of many government, public and corporate workers who may not have the opportunity to visit prayer camps. Examples of these prayer meetings include the Thursday Solution Centre of the International Central Gospel Church, the Thursday Jericho Hour of the Action Chapel and the Saturday Prayer Clinic of the Lighthouse Chapel. Prayer camps continue to function to meet the needs of people who may need to be resident at the camp and also for those who wish to retreat for a time.

The establishment of prayer camps in the Church of Pentecost has most of the time been out of an individual's exercise of spiritual gifts and initiative.⁴⁰⁵ The church's role in the establishment and administration of the prayer camp is more of a

⁴⁰² Rita Acquah 'Church of Pentecost Prayer Camps: A Study of the Macedonia, Paradise and Salvation Prayer Camps,' (University of Ghana, Unpublished Long Essay, 1997); Grace Sintim-Ofosuhen, 'The Proliferation of Prayer Camps: A Case Study Church of Pentecost Salvation Prayer Camp,' (University of Ghana, Unpublished M. Phil Thesis, 2000).

⁴⁰³ Acquah 'Church of Pentecost Prayer Camps,' p. 28; Sintim-Ofosuhen, 'The Proliferation of Prayer Camps,' p.63.

⁴⁰⁴ Acquah 'Church of Pentecost Prayer Camps,' p. 29; Sintim-Ofosuhen, 'The Proliferation of Prayer Camps,' p.64.

⁴⁰⁵ Acquah, 'Church of Pentecost Prayer Camp,' pp. 16 – 21.

supervisory one.⁴⁰⁶ As a classical Pentecostal Church, the Church of Pentecost allows individuals to exercise their spiritual gifts within the structures of the church. Larbi notes that initially the Church of Pentecost found it difficult to allow independent figures to have their freedom in exercising their gifts, because of the fear of the introduction of some practices that may not be in conformity with the doctrines of the church.⁴⁰⁷ To forestall this, the church has issued some guidelines for the operation of Prayer Centres in the Church of Pentecost. In the guidelines, the Church, among other things, forbids practises such as use of candles and florida water.⁴⁰⁸

Deaconess Hannah is thus not fully autonomous as her centre is affiliated to the Church of Pentecost. The centre even houses a local assembly of the Church of Pentecost, which recognises her as a deaconess. This limits her from playing certain roles which are reserved for officers of higher designation, all of who are men, as spelt out by the Church of Pentecost's polity.⁴⁰⁹

Although there is a prayer camp committee that manages the affairs of the camp, Deaconess Hannah, being the founder of the prayer centre is given due recognition and respect in the decision-making process. For the day-to-day running of the camp, she has a personal assistant and other workers including counsellors, ushers, chorus leaders and security personnel. Her personal assistant is a man – Elder Bedzo who serves as her visionary. Taking a personal assistant who is a man may have implications especially for her leadership as a woman.

⁴⁰⁶ The Head Office of the Church of Pentecost ensures that members who establish prayer camps adhere to the doctrines of the church.

⁴⁰⁷ Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, p.368

⁴⁰⁸ See Appendix for Church of Pentecost, 'Guidelines for Operating Prayer Centres in the Church of Pentecost', p. 2

⁴⁰⁹ Quist, 'Roles of Women', p. 81.

As in the case of some founders of African Independent Churches, she has become a ceremonial leader. On the other hand it may be a step in seeking acceptance in the church, taking into consideration the Church of Pentecost's position on the leadership roles of women. However, in the opinion of Deaconess Hannah, it was Elder Bedzo's spiritual gifts that made her to take him on as a personal assistant. According to her, the personal assistant helps her with specific directions from God as she prays for people. It does not mean she does not receive directions from God. Deaconess Hannah explains and adds that her assistant helps her seek clarification of visions she has received.

4.3 Spiritual Gifts, Area of Ministry and Appeal to the Supernatural

As noted in the previous chapter, all three women appeal to the supernatural in their quest to leadership and authority. When asked what influenced the kind of programme they run, Deaconess Hannah Barnes, Rev. Rita and Apostle Lyanne alluded to God as influencing their programmes. Apostle Lyanne for instance said,

I have to hear from God before I make any move. I have to understand that if I make any move of myself I am responsible for that move, I need to provide for that move, I need to make it work myself, and I'll struggle with it. But when it's from God, when I hear from God which is a vision from God, God's vision, there is God's provision.⁴¹⁰

Their appeal to the supernatural is also reflected in their activities. They all seem to be engaged in the healing and deliverance ministry, praying and delivering people from their challenges. They all cited a number of healings and miracles to their credit. In the case of Rev. Rita, she is particularly noted to operate in the revelation ministry.

⁴¹⁰ Apostle Lyanne Koffi, Interviewed, January 13, 2010.

She is specifically identified to have the word of knowledge, word of wisdom; in the area of deliverance – with healings and miracles.

Rev. Derek Amanor and Pastor Hannah⁴¹¹ testified that there had been many testimonies of healing received through the ministry of Rev. Rita. A majority of the testimonies are however, related to marital issues and challenges with childbirth. Specific examples were cited of Rev. Rita having given out her maternity dresses for childless women to wear. It is believed that with that intervention, the said women have had babies or given birth. The act of Rev. Rita's cloth being used as means of prayer is related to Acts 19.

Acts 19 gives an account of demons being casted out and people being healed just by using the handkerchiefs and aprons of Apostle Paul. Rev. Rita thus believes that when people take her clothes there is transference of anointing from her to them. This is reflected in the following testimony,

A lady in one of the branches of the church in USA took Mama Rita's clothes that she had worn to the laundry... She wore one of those dresses and said 'God let the favour upon Mama Rita come over my life. That same night she prayed she saw a figure in her room. Also a spirit that had been tormenting her came to the room and said 'remove the dress that you are wearing'. She said 'I won't remove it'. In the dream she realized she was wearing Mama Rita's dress. The lady had been courting for three years and the man hadn't even made up his mind to marry her. On the day following the dream encounter, the man called her and declared his readiness to marry her. They had their wedding within three months, later she got pregnant.⁴¹²

It is believed that the encounter and miracle she had had was because she had worn Rev. Rita's dress. That is to say that the power in the clothing of Rev. Rita helped her

⁴¹¹ Rev. Derek Amanor and Pastor Hannah are both pastors in Royalhouse Chapel. Rev. Amanor was a Senior Associate Pastor, while Pastor was the Personal Assistant to Rev. Rita at the time of research.

⁴¹² Pastor Hannah, Interviewed, January 17, 2010, Royalhouse Chapel.

to overcome the evil spirits that were tormenting her and preventing her from achieving her dream of marrying.

Rev. Amanor testified that he had his wife through the spiritual gifts of Rev. Rita. He said his current wife had vowed never to be married to a pastor, so he forgot about her and introduced another lady to Rev. Rita. He added that during the introduction, God spoke to Rev. Rita that the lady he was introducing to her was not his wife. That relationship, as Rev. Amanor lamented, did not work. Later, Rev. Rita revealed to him that the first lady whom he had forgotten about was the right one. He remarked that ‘if this one happens it would be a miracle.’⁴¹³ As at the time of this research, Rev. Amanor testified that he had been married to the lady for ten years and was still regarding it as a miracle. He also notes that: ‘I remember very well what she said; she said I was going to teach like Dr. Otobil,⁴¹⁴ at that time I was really wondering, I was just starting out in the ministry but today when you come to Royalhouse Chapel everybody would testify that I have that grace’.⁴¹⁵

Deaconess Hannah on the other hand also relates everything she does as a directive from Jesus: ‘...in all things it is Jesus who reveals himself to me.’⁴¹⁶ She is quick to acknowledge that it is Jesus who is the leader of the Centre performing all the miracles. For this she gives Jesus the attribute ‘Show Man’. She sees herself collaborating with Jesus to help people with their problems and challenges. She speaks about some conversations she had had with God. She narrates thus:

⁴¹³ Rev. Derek Amanor, Interviewed, January 17, 2010.

⁴¹⁴ Dr. Otobil is the founder and General Overseer of International Central Gospel Church. He is noted as a motivational speaker.

⁴¹⁵ Rev. Derek Amanor, Interviewed, January 17, 2010.

⁴¹⁶ Mrs. Hannah Barnes, Interviewed, January 14, 2010.

When God called me, the foundation that He gave to me is ‘come unto me... and I will give you rest. (Matt. 11:28.)⁴¹⁷ With the name of the camp, it was God who gave it to me. He asked me that what is the name of the clinic and I said ‘Papa I don’t know the name’. Then He said ‘call this place *Agyenkwa Prayer Centre*. Anyone who comes here I will save/ give life.’ And He has not failed us. No matter the gravity of the sickness, you will be saved. Then He also told me to make His picture and paste on the wall, so that everyone who comes here will see the one I am working with, the foundation upon which I am working... After that I knelt and prayed and told God ‘what you asked me to do I have done... this is the foundation... let your Spirit come and live in the painting.’ So truly His Spirit is in it so anyone who comes and only believes, will see Him.⁴¹⁸

During midnight prayers, people stand or kneel before the painting of Jesus, with the title ‘Show Man’ to pray. Deaconess Hannah’s dependence on the supernatural seems to be more pronounced in its expression.

Apostle Lyanne also shows her appeal to the supernatural by showing her total dependence on the Holy Spirit. Referring to the beginnings of the fellowship, she revealed that there was no liturgy or order of service; everything depended on the directives of Holy Spirit. She recalled: ‘when they come and we begin to do praise and worship and whatever the Holy Spirit says I should do... I should share the word, I’ll share and then there will be healing and deliverance’.⁴¹⁹ She continues: ‘I hear from God, I have to hear from God before I make any move. I have to understand that if I make any move of myself I am responsible for that move.’⁴²⁰ She thus attributes the commencement of official church services as a directive from God. She concludes: ‘we started Sunday service just about 4 or five years ago. That was when God said we should start.’⁴²¹ With spiritual gifts, she sees herself as operating mainly

⁴¹⁷ This was written on a short wall of the meeting place as shown in fig. 1.

⁴¹⁸ Mrs. Hannah Barnes, Interviewed, January 14, 2010.

⁴¹⁹ Apostle Lyanne Koffi, Interviewed, January 13, 2010, Cantoments, Accra.

⁴²⁰ Apostle Lyanne Koffi, Interviewed, January 13, 2010, Cantoments, Accra.

⁴²¹ Apostle Lyanne Koffi, Interviewed, January 13, 2010, Cantoments, Accra.

in the area of healing and deliverance; especially in deliverance which directly or indirectly manifests in healing.

It seems that the main medium through which all three women get connected to the supernatural is prayer, which is done privately and in leading other people. All three women noted that they have considerable times of prayer.

Leaders' Focus on Prayer

As noted in Chapter two, Akan religious beliefs and ideas permeate all facets of life and are sometimes used to explain events. These women find spiritual causes for the challenges of their followers. This is in line with what Kwame Gyekye noted that 'the African heritage is intensely religious... all actions and thoughts are inspired or influenced by a religious point of view'.⁴²² Patrick Twumasi is of the view that the factors that account for illness for instance 'are interactive, and illness is essentially disintegration at all levels, biological, psychological, social and spiritual'.⁴²³ They therefore have special meetings where they pray with and for people.

Larbi has noted that the Pentecostal prayer camps are 'readily available, tangible, affordable and generally acceptable and viable alternative source of healing'.⁴²⁴ People who go the prayer camps are not only prayed for but they are also expected to pray for themselves. At the Agyenkwa Prayer Centre, everyone is expected to pray by themselves for two hours between 11p.m. to 1a.m. During these hours, clients are

⁴²² Kwame Gyekye, *African Cultural Values: An Introduction*, (Accra: Sankofa Publishing Company, 2002), p. 3.

⁴²³ Patrick A. Twumasi, *Medical Systems in Ghana: A Study in Medical Sociology* (Accra, Assembly Press, 2005), p.28

⁴²⁴ Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, p. 402.

expected to pray before the painting of Jesus.⁴²⁵ She explained that during commissioning the painting she prayed for God's Spirit to inhabit it so that as people stand before it to pray, they would have their problems solved. This has some similarity with Solomon's prayer of dedication of the temple in 1 Kings 8: 22–53 as he pleaded with God to hear the prayer of the Israelites as they either pray in or towards the temple.

Imprecatory Prayer

All three women engage their followers in imprecatory prayer, which includes praying against those who may be responsible for their predicaments. This is influenced by their desire to free themselves and their followers from challenges and problems. They also believe that there are human agents for their problems.⁴²⁶ Apostle Lyanne and Rev. Rita call it 'back to the sender' while Deaconess Hannah calls it 'summoning the enemy.' In both instances the aim is to eliminate the enemy or the human agent who is responsible for their problems. Though there is the notion that calamities emanate from evil spirits, there is also the belief that it 'proceeds from human character, conscience, thoughts, and desires.'⁴²⁷

These 'back to the sender' and 'summoning the enemy' prayers could be said to be in line with traditional practices. In spite of the traditional influence, these leaders find biblical basis for it, mainly from the Old Testament. A few verses are taken from Psalm 35 as an illustration:

⁴²⁵ See picture in appendix.

⁴²⁶ J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, *Contemporary Pentecostal Christianity: Interpretations from an African Context*, (Oxford: Regnum Books International, 2013), pp. 53 – 54.

⁴²⁷ Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, p. 12.

¹Contend O Lord with those who contend with me; fight against those who fight against me. ²Take up shield and buckler; arise and come to my aid. ³Brandish spear and javelin against those who pursue me. Say to my soul 'I am your salvation.' ⁴May those who seek my life be disgraced and put to shame; may those who plot my ruin be turned back in dismay. ⁵May they be like chaff before the wind, with the angel of the Lord driving them away; ⁶may their path be dark and slippery with the angel of the Lord pursuing them.⁴²⁸

For these women, the influence of Akan traditional religio-cultural thoughts cannot be denied. It is believed that problems can be caused by human agents and that believing God is just, Akans for instance will say 'God will give due recompense.'⁴²⁹ Others will also pronounce curses on the persons responsible for their problems.

With this background, Ghanaian Christians in general and Akan Christians in particular believe the enemy '*otanfo*' could be the devil, close friend, relative or even a neighbour.⁴³⁰ These adversaries are believed to hinder the spiritual, physical and socio-economic progress of Christians. An example of such prayers is as follows:

In the name of Jesus
 The God of back of sender
 Arise on my behalf
 Trouble my trouble
 Destroy my destroyers
 Persecute my persecutors
 For you have given commandment over my life
 Saying: touch not my anointed and do my prophets no harm
 Lord I am your anointed
 Deliver me now
 In the name of Jesus⁴³¹

Thus, by such 'back to sender' prayers, they do not only create awareness of human causality of their suffering but they also seek solution in eliminating their adversaries

⁴²⁸ *The Holy Bible, New International Version*, Grand Rapids, Zondervan, Apostle Lyanne uses this scripture during her Breakthrough prayers.

⁴²⁹ Gyekye, K., *African Cultural Values*, p. 11.

⁴³⁰ David B. Stiles-Ocran, 'Prophetism in Ghana: A Case Study of Some Charismatic Churches,' (University of Ghana, Unpublished M. Phil Thesis, 2004), pp. 117-121.

⁴³¹ Apostle Lyanne Koffi, 'Pray Through into Breakthrough Series; Back to the Sender, Audio CD (Akosombo, the Lord's Garden Ministries: Media Ministries, 2009).

or inflicting same or greater afflictions on them. During such prayers biblical references such as the example stated above, mostly from the Old Testament are used as the basis. Apostle Lyanne for instance in her 'Pray Through into Breakthrough Series' uses biblical verses to lead the 'Back to Sender' prayers.

Another way some indigenous Ghanaians deal with their enemies – known or unknown is to summon them to spirits or a king.⁴³² Whereas Apostle Lyanne and Rev. Rita do not request monies or offerings as prerequisite for praying against enemies, the concept of summoning the enemy requires a worshipper to offer some money as means of dealing with the enemy. However, it was observed during the research that at prayer meetings led by Rev. Rita, people came forward to place offerings on the altar, kneel and pray for a few minutes before going back to their seats.⁴³³ This may be a kind of summoning as it involves the elements of summoning.

Larbi, in a brief discussion of the Edumfa Prayer Centre noted people giving offering as means of summoning their adversaries before God.⁴³⁴ This practice is duplicated at the Agyenkwa Prayer Camp and it is done usually on Thursdays. People come to give an offering as summons of their enemies before God. The question that arises from these vindictive prayers is whether it shows Christian love and whether it is consistent with God who seeks the repentance of wicked people as revealed in the story of Jonah and the people of Nineveh.

⁴³² Mark Anderson, 'New Lights in the Great Light Worship Centre? An Examination of the Teachings and Worship of Prophet Apea Live's Church,' (University of Ghana, Unpublished M. Phil Thesis, 2009), p. 48.

⁴³³ Observation at Royalhouse Chapel, March 2011.

⁴³⁴ Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, p. 385.

The influence of the indigenous culture cannot be overemphasised as this practice of prayer accompanied with giving money is not typical of Pentecostals and Charismatics globally. For instance in Mariz and Machado's study of Pentecostalism in Brazil, the attitude toward human agents of problems is different because of their concept and interpretation of the enemy. Thus for Pentecostals in Brazil, 'all evil things in the world ...have only one source, the devil... thus they do not blame others for their problems or expect them to solve those problems.'⁴³⁵ They would therefore conceive an evil act from a human agent as a possession of the devil and instead of hatred; it rather reinforces tolerance toward others. On the contrary in the Ghanaian context, if the thought was even influenced by evil spirits, the reaction of some might not be that of tolerance as reflected in the treatment of witches and wizards. Usually one who had evil spirit is also presumed to be evil.

Use of Traditional Medicine and Anointing Oil

An important aspect of their prayer activities and faith healing is their use of prayer aids. Rev. Rita and Apostle Lyanne make use of anointing oil, while Deaconess Hannah mainly uses traditional medicine. Apostle Lyanne and Rev. Rita, like other Pentecostalist churches, in the use of anointing oil, apply the olive oil among other things to heal the sick, to withstand the forces of evil spirits, empowerment for ministry and leadership and to reverse evil effects.⁴³⁶ Deaconess Hannah, in line with the Church of Pentecost does not use anointing oil.

⁴³⁵ Mariz & Machado, 'Pentecostalism and Women in Brazil,' pp. 47 – 48.

⁴³⁶ Asamoah-Gyadu, *Contemporary Pentecostal Christianity*, p. 123.

These women in addition to seeking divine healing and deliverance also encourage members to seek medical assistance from qualified medical practitioners.⁴³⁷ To reiterate this, Deaconess Hannah for instance says ‘we don’t believe that when you are sick we should only appeal to the spiritual, no!’⁴³⁸ Thus for her, when the situation needs medication, she asks her followers to use it. She, however, uses mainly herbal medicine which has religious underpinnings. The name of the medicine is ‘*Nyame ehyira do*’ literally meaning ‘God has blessed it’. It is a herbal preparation usually in powdered form, from the bark of a tree, *Nyame dua* (Alstonia or Cheesewood). The powder could be mixed with beverage or soup. It is also mixed into a paste and smeared on any affected/ailing part(s) of the body. It is important to note that this medicine is very popular at the Edumfa Prayer Centre. She ‘imports’ from Edumfa, the ‘*Nyame ehyira do*’. According to Dan Nyampong Asihene, Maame Grace Mensah asserts that God revealed this medicine to her to enable her heal the increasing number of people coming to her camp for prayers.⁴³⁹ The herbal preparation thus becomes a kind of panacea, said to cure all forms of diseases. In addition to the ‘imported medicine’ Deaconess Hannah also asserts God had revealed some herbal leaves for typhoid fever; the tree has been planted all over the compound, providing shade as well as being used to prepare medication for the sick. Deaconess Hannah maintains that the herbs must be bought from the camp because if it is acquired outside the camp, it loses its potency. This places the herbs in the realms of traditional religious systems where herbal medicines are seen to have spiritual potency.⁴⁴⁰

⁴³⁷ The Church of Pentecost, *Minister's Manual*, pp. 6 – 8; Korankye Ankrah & Amanor, (eds.), *The Ministers' Manual*, p. 4. Apostle Lyanne is also noted to have sought medical attention.

⁴³⁸ Mrs. Hannah Barnes, Interviewed, Jan. 14, 2010.

⁴³⁹ Dan Nyampong Asihene, ‘The Edumfa Prayer Camp: A City of Refuge,’ (University of Ghana, Unpublished M.A thesis, 2008), p. 48.

⁴⁴⁰ Twumasi, *Medical Systems in Ghana*, p. 26.

The use of *Nyame dua* could be a traditional influence as the tree among the Akan symbolises their dependence on God.⁴⁴¹ It is also believed to have cleansing and medicinal properties. These may have influenced her to use the herb though there is the claim of God's revelation. By the categorization of Twumasi,⁴⁴² it could be said that Deaconess Hannah is a faith healer.

Counselling

In praying for their followers for faith healing and for solutions to other challenges in life, counselling plays a very important role. These women are all engaged in counselling, even though they do not have any formal training in counselling. An interesting yet similar role they play is how they all make themselves available to their members after services for one on one counselling. One does not need an appointment to meet them on such occasions. They all have counselling and prayer for people by means of telephone especially for people they have already had contacts with or people who for one reason or other are outside the country. In spite of these they also have appointments to meet people and these sessions are usually longer than meetings held immediately after services.

Apostle Lyanne would usually stand behind her pulpit after services to welcome people who wish to greet her and share their problems with her. She prays for them and may, in addition, book appointments for those whose cases need some more time, attention and prayer.

⁴⁴¹ Asare Opoku, *West African Traditional Religion*, pp. 32-33. T.N.O. Quarcoopome, *West African Traditional Religion*, (Ibadan: African Universities Press, 1987), p.66.

⁴⁴² Twumasi, *Medical Systems in Ghana*, p. 25. He suggests that there are four main categories of traditional healers – traditional birth attendants, faith healers, spiritualist or diviners and traditional herbalist.

With Deaconess Hannah, when there is no meeting going on, she usually sits under a hut close to her apartment or in her living room depending on the type of guest visiting the centre. It is at this point that she listens to the issues of these people. She however, makes sure she consults with or counsels everyone who comes to the camp. Sometimes she does not wait for the services to end, in that after her ministration followed by offertory time, she leaves the meeting place to prepare to meet people.

In the case of Rev. Rita, she with her 'armour bearers'⁴⁴³ would be on the stage as an 'armour bearer' ushers those who want to meet with her. As noted she normally stays longer on the church premises because of counselling needs that may arise.

Rev. Amanor described Rev. Rita as a counsellor who engages in all forms of counselling. He noted some testimonies to show how through the counselling of Rev. Rita, people's lives, perceptions, attitudes have completely changed. Such people now believe that they can make it; they believe that they are going somewhere in life. Rev. Amanor also sees her as operating in what he calls the 'compassion ministry.' He explains '...this ministry is for people who are broken or downhearted, maybe because of a sin committed. Maybe you find yourself in a dire circumstances, economically and ... you meet with her, talk to her you think that there is no hope for you. But once you meet and talk to her and it looks as if the sky is your limit.'⁴⁴⁴

Though Rev. Rita does a lot of counselling in the evenings during the week, she also engages in counselling immediately after the first service on Sundays. This is because

⁴⁴³ As noted in Chapter Three, they the Armour Bearers are a group of young women whose duty is to pray for her.

⁴⁴⁴ Rev. Derek Amanor, Interviewed, January 17, 2010, Royalhouse Chapel.

for some people the only time they have is Sunday. This counselling time begins after the first service which ends around 9.30a.m., through the second service which ends by 11.00a.m. She sometimes continues counselling up to about 6p.m. There are instances, especially on weekdays, where she had to leave the church premises at 3a.m. Her joy however, is that through the work of the Holy Spirit, she is able to resuscitate some seemingly impossible situations, including marriages that were on the verge of collapsing.

4.4 Dealing with Women

One feature about women leadership is their concentration on matters related to women. The status quo seems to be that women are mostly interested in the affairs of their fellow women. This supports the idea that women are not capable of leading both men and women but only women. That is as women work their way to become leaders, they also try to encourage other women to become leaders or concentrate on issues affecting women. These are seen through women's meetings and conventions and efforts in mentoring.

One of the major roles of Rev. Rita in Royalhouse Chapel is her focus on the Royal Ladies, the women's wing of the church. At the headquarters where she fellowships, the Royal Ladies hold their meetings every other week. One of the major activities of the Royal Ladies is their annual International Women's Conference which is held in June every year. This is one meeting that brings together all the members in Ghana and neighbouring countries. From these meetings people have testified that their lives and businesses have experienced a lot of transformation.

Apostle Lyanne also has a special meeting for women which she calls ‘Sisters Keepers.’ It is non–denominational in nature and it is meant for women to support each other spiritually, emotionally, financially and economically. Rev. Rita has also taken initiative to institute the Royal Ladies Scholarship Foundation. This Foundation is especially dedicated to women in the church. With this the women’s ministry supports women who wish to learn trades like sewing or catering and also give soft loans for businesses. This comes in as support specifically for members of the Royal Ladies. It is a way to economically and financially empower women.

Working with Women and Men

While Rev. Rita works mainly with the women, Deaconess Hannah and Apostle Lyanne work with more men than women. This may disprove the notion that women leaders usually work with fellow women, as reflected for instance in Solid Rock Chapel where Rev. Christie Doe Tetteh has more female than male pastors.⁴⁴⁵ Though women may be interested in working with women as expressed by the women under study, certain factors influence or discourage such an inclination. In their particular instances the focus of the leaders’ activity may have accounted for the number of women they work with. Whereas Rev. Rita focuses mainly on the Royal Ladies, the women’s ministry in her church, Apostle Lyanne and Deaconess Hannah are the lead persons in their organisations.

Rev. Rita, being the President General of the Royal Ladies, has mainly women as her assistants, whom she calls her armour bearers. They work amongst others, as her personal assistants and/or secretaries. Apostle Lyanne’s focus on Church planting in

⁴⁴⁵ Soothill, *Gender, Social Change and Spiritual Power*, p. 4.

other surrounding towns and villages seems to have accounted for the male dominance in her leadership. There seems to be the perception that women do not have the ability to engage in the rigours of the pastors' work, especially in the rural areas.⁴⁴⁶

Deaconess Hannah's being the leader of a prayer camp may account for her working with more male as there are more males than females working as deliverance workers. Though being a woman should have encouraged more women to work with her during deliverance services, it is rather otherwise. It is paradoxical in that though she observes that women are more prone than men to spiritual gifts and those spiritual gifts could enable them to become deliverance leaders, yet she also remarks that 'only forceful men could practice it.'⁴⁴⁷

Though the focus of the activities of women leaders may influence whether they work with men or women, their individual differences and circumstances could also influence whom they work with. This is because though Rev. Christie Doe Tetteh leads a church like Deaconess Hannah and Apostle Lyanne, Rev. Christie works with more women pastors. Rev. Christie's peculiar circumstances as a first generation woman leader in contemporary Pentecostalist movement in Ghana may have influenced her having more women than men pastors. It cannot, however, be denied that as women are given opportunities to work with leaders, they are mentored to become leaders as well and in this case encouraged to be spiritually independent.

⁴⁴⁶ Ernestina Quist, 'Roles of Women in the Church of Pentecost', M. Phil thesis, (University of Ghana, Legon 2002), pp. 76-77.

⁴⁴⁷ Onyinah, Opoku, *Spiritual Warfare*, (Accra, Advocate Publishing Ltd. 2008), p. 20.

4.5 Mentoring Women

Eric Parsloe of the Oxford School of Coaching & Mentoring has defined mentoring to mean ‘support and encourage people to manage their own learning in order that they may maximise their potential, develop their skills, improve their performance and become the person they want to be.’⁴⁴⁸ Suzanne Faure has also defined mentoring as ‘a long term relationship that meets a development need, helps develop full potential, and benefits all partners, mentor, mentee and the organisation.’⁴⁴⁹ From these definitions, mentoring can be said to be a process of helping others to grow physically, emotionally and spiritually. It has empowering effects as it helps one to realise hidden resources that a person possesses.

It has been argued that women must redefine mentoring relationships to meet their unique needs.⁴⁵⁰ Thus, for Christian women leaders, mentoring other women is important in their effort of empowerment and development of the skills of women in the church. This would help other upcoming women leaders to overcome challenges such as a clash of their roles with culture, marriage as well as working with men. Through this kind of mentoring, other women would be encouraged to explore their potentials to achieve goals. It also complements formal training and development as it is a form of practical training.

⁴⁴⁸ MentorSET: <http://www.mentorset.org.uk/pages/mentoring.htm>, [accessed April 12, 2012].

⁴⁴⁹ Coaching Network: <http://www.coachingnetwork.org.uk/resourcecentre/articles/ViewArticle.asp?artId=54>, [accessed April 12, 2012].

⁴⁵⁰ Connie Vance, Roberta K. Olson (eds.), *The Mentor Connection in Nursing*, (New York: Springer Publishing Company, 1998), p. 35, http://books.google.com.gh/books?id=ZwIL0COFmU0C&dq=women+mentoring+women&source=gbs_navlinks_s, [accessed June 21, 2012].

Rev. Rita is outstanding amongst the three women as far as bringing other women along or working with women is concerned. It is imperative in the sense that being a pastor's wife, she already had focused on the women's ministry of the church as well as the services which more women are engaged in. She has many women as armour bearers and through her work has encouraged other women to become female leaders and pastors in her church as well as other churches. One of the female pastors in Royalhouse Chapel had this to say:

You should see how many female pastors we have now. She was the only female pastor but through her encouragement and the good leadership, example that she set for all of us many other female pastors have been raised in Royalhouse Chapel. It would also interest you to note that there are other women of God outside Royalhouse Chapel, who pastor their own churches or are wives of pastors of other churches who have all submitted to her ministry. They come to her occasionally and she has time that she meets with them and when you go to their churches, whatever happens in Royalhouse Ladies Ministry, in her ministry is duplicated there. Pastors' wives, because of the example and as role model for us and many other women of God, have been encouraged and of great benefit to their churches. People travel as far as from Togo, Italy and South Africa almost every year during our conferences just because of the impact she has made in their lives.⁴⁵¹

Another male pastor noted that 'every month she [Rev. Rita] meets with pastors wives, pastors and ministers wives and these are pastors of Royalhouse Chapel and in recent times, ...other pastors' wives have also been joining.'⁴⁵² The main forum that enables these women to mentor their fellow women is during women's meetings or conventions. As noted earlier in this chapter, such mentorship is very important in securing the future of women leaders in the Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches, in this case ensuring a third generation of women leaders.

⁴⁵¹ Pastor Hannah, Interviewed, January 17, 2010.

⁴⁵² Rev. Derek, Interviewed, January 17, 2010.

4.6 Service to the Communities

These women also seem to have a passion in imparting their societies, especially helping the less privileged members of the society. Service to the community comes mainly in the form of educational, medical and economical support. An interesting aspect of their services is that they are inclusive, in that they extend those services to people who are not members of their churches or affiliated to them in any way.

Rev. Rita together with her husband, Deaconess Hannah and Apostle Lyanne support the needy and orphans in different ways.⁴⁵³ While Apostle Lyanne and Rev. Rita support orphans and some identifiable needy people in the society, Deaconess Hannah has a school project to meet the schooling needs of the children at the centre and the surrounding community. Though it may be true that there are male pastors who are involved in providing services to the communities, sensitivity in issues of care and support can partially be attributed to gender. This is mainly because women are mostly socialised to provide care and support.⁴⁵⁴ The ensuing section discusses the different kind of support these women give to the society.

The Scholarship Foundation of Royalhouse Chapel

The Royalhouse Chapel Scholarship Foundation is for brilliant but needy students, but it is unique in that it is for both members and non-members. Non-members include both Christian and non-Christians. They have a quota of about 70% to members and 30% to non-members. Providing scholarships has in no small way contributed to the

⁴⁵³ Rev. Rita engages in the social action in conjunction with her husband, her influence however, cannot be underrated.

⁴⁵⁴ Emily Esplen, *Gender and Care: Overview Report*, (Bridge Development – Gender) pp. 32 -33. http://www.bridge.ids.as.uk/reports/cep_care_or.pdf [accessed March 22, 2013].

growth of the church as it is a way of maintaining members of the church and also making converts to Royalhouse Chapel.⁴⁵⁵ Rev. Rita recounted some instances of people who decided to join the church as a result of the help. During the interview she pointed to a framed wall hanging in her office with a 'thank you note'. The wall hanging was from a lady who was helped with her school fees through her Senior High School education. She also recalls an incident which happened just before the interview. She says:

somebody just said hello to me and I couldn't make him up and he said 'I came to you a couple of months ago, I was going to Legon[University of Ghana], I came to you and you paid my school fees, I am on holidays now and I have come to say hello to you.' He wasn't a member of the church, now he has just decided to be a member of the church.⁴⁵⁶

The Foundation's beneficiaries as at the time of the interview were about 500 students, ranging from the primary to the tertiary level. The Foundation mainly pays the schools fees of the beneficiaries.

In addition, Rev. Rita provides additional items that the students would need in school. She believes that providing the school fees alone as the Scholarship Foundation does may not be enough for students who have been admitted to boarding schools. She thus gives them some basic necessities such as provisions and refurbished trunks, chop boxes and mattresses. She appeals to members of the church to bring such items as of trunks, chop boxes and student mattresses, usually old ones they do not have a use for. She 'recycles' them and gives them to needy students.

⁴⁵⁵ During the interview there were a number of examples cited to show people who were initially not members of the church, yet have become members due to the help they got from the church even as non-members.

⁴⁵⁶ Rev. Rita Korankye Ankrah, Interviewed, January 7, 2010.

Being the Chairperson of the board of the Royalhouse Chapel Scholarship Foundation, she does both formal and informal interviews. The informal ones are usually emergency cases which she does alone. In such instances ‘...somebody comes and needs, to pay the school fees tomorrow, we need to take an immediate decision so those ones I do alone and others I call the board and we discuss.’⁴⁵⁷

As to how news spread about the scholarship foundation, she noted that they have been on radio just once inviting orphans to their Christmas party and they added that single and poor parents who could not pay their children’s school fees should contact them for help. She also believes that news spread so fast in Ghana especially through word of mouth or how issues are related to friends and relatives.

Support to Needy and Orphans

Rev. Rita and Apostle Lyanne are noted for the help they give especially to orphans and students in need of support. They do not have orphanages under their full care but they have carved out a way to support orphans. Rev. Rita is in charge of a special programme of the church called ‘feed the hungry,’ where they cook food and send to deprived neighbourhoods. During special seasons like Christmas, both Rev. Rita and Apostle Lyanne organise parties for the less privileged in the society. Rev. Rita invites orphans, street children and single mothers amongst others. At these parties she also gives them some used clothing and other basic items. Apostle Lyanne on the other hand organises her parties mainly for orphans.

⁴⁵⁷ Rev. Rita Korankye Ankrah, Interviewed, January 7, 2010.

Though the Royalhouse Chapel does not have an orphanage, it has adopted two orphanages - Love a Lot at Teshie in Accra and Deladem Orphanage in Logba in the Volta region. There was however, a problem with the Deladem orphanage with social welfare. They have therefore moved the children to Love a Lot. They pay the fees of these children as well as providing their needs.

Sometimes the Royalhouse Chapel responds to appeals for help from the media especially to pay medical bills of some challenged persons. Rev. Rita cited instances where the church decided to take care of abandoned children. Two cases of abandoned children she spoke of included one in which the mother allegedly locked a baby boy in a room and left. The baby was found and his plight brought to the attention of the church. The child who was named by the church as Gideon was put in an orphanage. In the second instance, a mother abandoned her baby girl on a refuse dump. The baby was found but she had a medical condition that needed surgery. Metro TV, using their medium made an appeal on behalf of the baby and the amount involved was about two thousand Ghana cedis (GHC 2000). The church intervened and paid for the medical bill of the child. The girl child was taken by the church and put in an orphanage. Although the girl was named after Rev. Rita, everyone call her 'Mama Rita', as church members call Rev. Rita.

Whereas Rev. Rita has adopted orphanages, Apostle Lyanne has identified orphans living within the communities whom she helps. Apostle Lyanne calls her orphan outreach 'The Precious Ones of God.' She regards it as an orphan outreach because she has not yet built homes to accommodate the orphans. Thus, most of them are with

their guardians and/or family members. She has identified about 180 orphans in the Asougayaman area in the Eastern Region of Ghana.

Apostle Lyanne observes that within the extended family systems in Ghana for instance, a majority of orphans are not in orphanages. She also thinks it may even be difficult to take some of them to an orphanage because there may be a family member, who might have been designated to take care of such a child. She however, agrees that the care given to the orphan may be a problem as some of the people who are taking care of orphans do not have enough resources even to take care of their own children. She fears that if these orphaned and needy children are not helped, some of them might become derelicts who would affect society negatively.

These children are identified through teachers, head teachers of their schools. Orphaned and poor children may also be identified by their appearance. For instance she notes some come to school without school uniforms, shoes, bags and books. She provided such needs to the children. They used to pay the school fees until the government introduced the free basic education programme. However, they help them with school fees at the Senior High School level. Identifying orphaned and needy children through schools may exclude some of them as they may be in such a great need that they may not even be in school.

Apart from the church's support to the needy, Apostle Lyanne personally supports some individuals in their educational pursuits. She is motivated to help children in school because one of her key passions is education. She says 'I really feel that every child should be entitled to good education as far as that child's brain would take him

or her...'⁴⁵⁸ She believes that there are many families that could easily support needy students. She suggests that one could stop buying a particular thing for a year and support somebody with the money to finish the university.⁴⁵⁹ She revealed she does not know some of the people she helps personally as they are as far as in Bolgatanga, hence they communicate through the telephone, and send them their school fees through the banks.

At Akosombo, the headquarters of the church, Apostle Lyanne has a lot of young people whom she is helping through education. Some of these are in the tertiary education – the universities, and polytechnics in the country. At the time of the interview, she had an adopted son staying with her. He had completed the University and was working in a bank. She had adopted him because the mother of the boy who used to sell fish died when he was 15 and in third year in Junior High School.

According to Apostle Lyanne God ministered to her in 2009 about supporting the poor. She gives a tithe of the church's income to the poor. This is used to buy grain and given to those in need every Sunday after church. Some of the money is also used as start-up capital for small-scale businesses for both men and women. She gave an imaginary example of supporting a woman who wishes to sell fried yam. She noted that such a person (male or female) may not need much capital and the church sets such people up with the aim of financially liberating them.

⁴⁵⁸ Apostle Lyanne Koffi, Interviewed, January 13, 2010, Cantoments, Accra.

⁴⁵⁹ Apostle Lyanne Koffi, Interviewed, January 13, 2010, Cantoments, Accra.

The School Project

Deaconess Hannah, as part of her service to the community has built a school in her prayer camp. Currently the school operates mainly at the lower primary classes. This is mainly to meet the needs of children of her followers. These are especially women, who come with children and stay longer at the centre. This means that if a woman comes to the centre with a child, the child might have to forego schooling for that period. To meet this need Deaconess Hannah built a three classroom block (as shown in fig. 2) with two teachers. According to the head teacher of the School, it has been registered with the Ghana Education Service.⁴⁶⁰ The school is also meant to serve the community free of charge. She also provides school uniforms for the children.



Fig.2: A view of the Agyenkwa Camp School Block

Though she aims at providing some formal education for children at the camp and the surrounding communities, it needs a lot of improvement. The building structure is not very good as the roof can come off during a rainstorm. Also, there are not enough desks for the children. Having only two teachers for the school does not help the children as they are usually put together to learn irrespective of their age and class.

⁴⁶⁰ Mr. Kingsley Awotwi, Interviewed, Agyenkwa camp school, Kasoa

Regardless of the challenges, the school project is a good initiative by Deaconess Hannah. On the other hand extending support to the aged is exceptional to Rev. Rita and the Royalhouse Chapel.

Aged Ministry of Royalhouse Chapel

The Aged Ministry of the Royalhouse Chapel is a special ministry managed by Rev. Rita. Churches usually care for the aged in various ways, such as visits to their homes and provision of some basic necessities to them. However, Royalhouse Chapel has an innovative way of caring for the aged. They bring together elderly people who are sixty years and above every Thursday and provide them with free meals, medical care and drugs.

With the communal nature of most African societies, care for the aged is a social responsibility. As Gyekye points out ‘the most outstanding responsibility that a child has to his or her parents is to take care of them in their old age.’⁴⁶¹ There are some popular proverbs to remind people of their responsibility towards the aged and Gyekye cites two of them as: ‘If someone looks after you to grow your teeth, you must also look after him [or her] to lose his [or her] teeth’ and ‘the old man [or woman] is dependent on his [or her] children’.⁴⁶²

Children and indeed the entire society have the duty of caring for and respecting the aged. The aged are respected because they are also believed to be the embodiment of

⁴⁶¹ Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, p. 88.

⁴⁶² Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, p. 89.

wisdom among other things.⁴⁶³ There is an Akan adage that says, ‘*ye ko bisa aberiwa*’ meaning ‘we are going to consult the old woman.’ Thus in times of difficulties the old woman is resorted to for solutions.

However, due to economic hardships and challenges especially with urban life, younger people turn to shirk their cultural responsibility of caring for the elderly, thus creating some tensions between them and the elderly. Another issue that leads to tensions with the elderly is some negative notions about the aged especially perceptions that lead to branding some elderly as having evil spirits or responsible for the calamities. These make younger relatives to abandon the elderly. Though Gyekye explains that the notion ‘retirement homes’ or ‘homes for elderly’ would be strange for Africans⁴⁶⁴ and by implication for the Akans for instance, because of communality, the Aged Ministry of the Royalhouse Chapel, though non-residential, is an adaptation of homes for the elderly.

The Aged Ministry also serves as an evangelistic tool for the church and a reconciliatory means for the aged and their families. Through these services to the elderly, a number of such people have been converted into Christianity and became members of the church.⁴⁶⁵ Some have also been counselled to be reconciled with their families.

From the foregoing, these women leaders are contributing to the development of their communities. Their services to the community focused on the needs of women,

⁴⁶³ Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, p. 143.

⁴⁶⁴ Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, p. 89.

⁴⁶⁵ Royalhouse Chapel, Aged Ministry: <http://www.royalhousechapel.org/index.php/en/ministries/13-ministries>, [accessed April 24, 2012].

children and the aged are very crucial to the development of the society. The help given to children through better education would contribute to the reduction of the illiteracy rate of the country. These changes would make a big difference in lives of these children through greater opportunities to have better economic status and would go a long way to help break the poverty cycle in the communities. In addition to the work of these women in their own churches and the society in general, their association with other churches locally and internationally is also relevant as it can affect their influence.

4.7 Ecumenical and International Links

In Ghana, there are ecumenical groups for different categories of churches. For Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches, two of such ecumenical group they could belong to is the Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches (GPCC) and the National Association of Charismatic and Christian Churches (NACCC). While both Rev. Rita and Deaconess Hannah through their respective churches are part of GPCC, Apostle Lyanne did not belong to any national ecumenical group as at the time of the interview. These women also have links with other churches in Ghana as well as outside the borders of Ghana.

Though Apostle Lyanne does not belong to any national ecumenical body she joined the Local Council of Churches in Akosombo, where the headquarters of the Lord's Garden Ministries is situated. She could not give a particular reason why she did not belong to any of the national Christian ecumenical groups. Perhaps it may be because her focus is much more on putting structures in place in her church, considering the fact that the church is not even ten years old yet. She is however, recognised by other

Charismatic leaders as she is invited to preach especially on platforms of Charismatic interdenominational programmes. This may be as a result of good relations with some Charismatic churches. She on the other hand invites some of those leaders to her church. For instance Rev. Eastwood Anaba was the main Speaker when the Liberty Centre of the Church celebrated its first anniversary in 2011.

Though belonging to national ecumenical bodies is important as it brings churches of similar faith and practice together, however, the local council of churches portrays ecumenism at the grassroots level and its nature brings together all Christian churches. Grassroots ecumenism is more likely to foster unity and understanding amongst churches.⁴⁶⁶ Apostle Lyanne believes that she has a message which goes beyond denominational lines. To achieve this, her ecumenical relations are crucial. For instance through her engagements in the local council of Churches in Akosombo, she preaches in Mainline and Charismatic churches, in addition to a few classical Pentecostal churches. She has established some links with churches outside Ghana, thus she gets invitations specifically to Nigeria, England and the United States of America. The recognition she has attained among the Charismatic circles and in Akosombo in particular reflects the impact she has made within a few years.

Rev. Sam Korankye Ankrah is the current first Vice Chairman of the Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council.⁴⁶⁷ This new position of Rev. Korankye Ankrah places Rev. Rita on the greater pedestal in the sense that she will get more opportunities on the Council's platforms. She like Apostle Lyanne speaks in different

⁴⁶⁶ Vida F. A. Asima, 'Ecumenical Activities in Ghana: A Case Study of Accra New Town Local Council of Ghana (1972 – 2006)', (University of Ghana, Unpublished M. Phil Thesis, July 2008), p. 52.

⁴⁶⁷ He with the other Executive were inducted into office in January 2012.

churches but most importantly, she speaks at the meetings of GPCC Pastors' Wives Association.

Apart from her local engagements, she also has international appointments which are mostly linked with branches of the church. It was interesting to note how Rev. Rita's international relations/links kept coming up during the interview. Most testimonies given to prove her spiritual gifts were those that happened in the Diaspora, specifically in the United States of America. It is not clear whether it was meant to show how powerful she is or that she has international recognition. Mainly her visits outside Ghana are to hold conferences for Royal Ladies in those international branches of the church. According to one of the assistants of Rev. Rita, it seems as though her prayer at the assumption of full time leadership roles to be like Kathryn Kuhlman is being reflected in her work.⁴⁶⁸

Unlike Apostle Lyanne and Rev. Rita, Deaconess Hannah has not yet had any appointment from the Diaspora. She wishes and hopes to receive an invitation to travel outside Ghana in the near future.⁴⁶⁹ She however, has telephone appointments with some people abroad whom she prays for. Some of those people visit her at the centre on their return to Ghana. Her ecumenical links cannot be accessed directly since she operates within the confines of a church. Though people from different backgrounds visit the camp, Deaconess Hannah has no personal links with churches

⁴⁶⁸ It was noted in Chapter Three that before she was ordained she prayed that she wanted to be a leader like Kathryn Kuhlman.

⁴⁶⁹ She expressed her desire to be invited for a programme outside the country, either to Europe or the United States of America. Some leaders of prayer camps have invitations to have programmes with international branches of the Church of Pentecost. For instance Asihene notes that Maame Grace of Edumfa Prayer Centre has travelled twice to both United States of America and Europe. Asihene, 'The Edumfa Prayer Camp,' p. 43.

other than the Church of Pentecost. She gets invitations mainly from some districts of the Church of Pentecost. Also the Church of Pentecost organises meetings for all leaders of prayer camps in the church and she takes advantage of that. There is also some form of collaboration with leaders of other camps. For instance certain cases are transferred from a closer prayer centre which is not residential to her centre.

Apostle Lyanne and the Christian Churches in Akosombo

Apostle Lyanne believes that she has imparted Christian churches especially in the Akosombo township. This is because of some Christian activities like prayer meetings, all-night services and crusades that she revived in the town. Because her meetings were non-denominational in nature, people came from different churches. Initially leaders of some churches in the town became alarmed, thinking that her group was going to take their members to start a new church. Most of the churches thus warned their members against her group.

Maintaining membership is a challenge for all churches as people move from one church to the other for various reasons. Some of the reasons include the messages preached, worship styles, healing and deliverance and crusades/evangelism. Margaret Adjei in her work identifies some of the factors leading to movement within churches as social, spiritual and conflict situations.⁴⁷⁰ The movement of members from churches affects them, nonetheless, not only in loss of membership, but also in the decrease in churches' finances as well as human resource.⁴⁷¹ Apostle Lyanne cites instances of how churches warned their members not to attend her prayer group and

⁴⁷⁰ Margaret Adjei, 'Mobility of Christians within churches in Accra: 1980-2009' (University of Ghana, Unpublished M. Phil Thesis, 2011), pp. 98-103.

⁴⁷¹ Adjei, 'Mobility of Christians,' p. 104.

some even started similar programmes in their churches in response to her starting prayer meetings and crusades which she named ‘Akosombo for Christ Crusades’. This may particularly be due to the fear that churches have regarding ‘sheep stealing.’⁴⁷²

However, for her these steps were in furtherance of the growth of Christianity in Akosombo. She knew she was to start a revival in the town, as other churches began to follow what she was doing. In her view, though the churches also started revival meetings in the spirit of maintaining their members, it had a positive impact on the Christianity in the town. Thus, the reaction of the churches did not matter because according to her, God spoke to her that he had brought her to Akosombo to bring a revival. She was to ‘run’ (that is, lead) and the other churches would follow. She noted that she started all-night services and other churches followed suit. She held the non-denominational meetings for eight years.

Explaining why she did not start Sunday services during those years she maintained: ‘the purpose was that God said to me that at that time what He wanted me to do was to light a fire that would be lighted in every church in the town.’⁴⁷³ Though the churches had their doubts, until she finally established a church, people who converted to Christianity as a result of her activities in the town were directed to join already established churches. She mentioned that many of the people who were with her at the beginning of her non-denominational group were holding key leadership positions in their respective churches by the time she established her own church.

⁴⁷² Sheep stealing is a term used to refer to churches or individuals who make efforts to let Christians worshipping in other churches to leave and join them.

⁴⁷³ Apostle Lyanne Koffi, Interviewed, January 13, 2010, Cantoments, Accra.

4.8 Summary

The women leaders under study have shown their relevance through their activities. It cannot be denied that they have brought different perspectives to leadership in the Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches. Their nature as women has reflected in the work such as the focus on issues of women and children. This is not peculiar to the women under study as many women leaders are associated with nurturing, caring and welfare,⁴⁷⁴ reflecting the nature of women.

As these women differ quite significantly from men, in their leadership styles, it can be argued that they play complementary roles. On that basis could it be said that both men and women need to work together to complement one another in the sense that both men and women have certain perspectives that they need one another to complete their task.

Looking at the roles that Rev. Rita plays in the Royalhouse Chapel, for instance, it is clear that Rev. Sam Korankye Ankrah and Rev. Rita play complementary roles. On the other hand in the case where women are fully at the forefront, they play added roles, thus filling in the gaps of male leadership, for instance the focus on women and children. In spite of these contributions, the problems and challenges of their roles as leaders also needs to be examined. The next chapter concentrates on this while examining their prospects for the future.

⁴⁷⁴ Bolaj Olukemi Bateye, 'Forging Identities: Women as Participants and Leaders in the Church among the Yoruba' in *Studies in World Christianity*, p.5 <http://muse.jhu.edu>, [accessed April 27, 2010].

CHAPTER FIVE

CHALLENGES OF PENTECOSTAL WOMEN LEADERS IN GHANA

5.1 Introduction

In spite of the fact that women in leadership positions in the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches have made and continue to make significant contributions to the growth of the church, they are faced with some challenges. Melanie Rosa argues that women leaders are confronted with more challenges than their male counterparts.⁴⁷⁵ Indeed Rev. Rita, Apostle Lyanne and Deaconess Hannah, in addition to facing similar challenges that their male colleagues grapple with, have peculiar challenges as women leaders. Their confidence is curtailed mainly by negative perceptions about them that have the tendency of making them feel threatened and unwelcome. In the face of challenges, however, these women do not give up. Taking a cue from women leaders who preceded them, they seem to have been strengthened to look into the future with greater hope.

Rev. Rita, Apostle Lyanne and Deaconess Hannah have all achieved some successes as discussed in the preceding chapters. Their achievements have however, been met with a lot of challenges, reflecting the struggles that confronted.⁴⁷⁶ This chapter focuses on the different dynamics of the problems and challenges of these women leaders. It also looks at empowering avenues that have enabled them to deal with

⁴⁷⁵ Melanie Rosa, 'Leading with Grace: Authentic Leadership in the Church' in Eunjoo Mary Kim & Deborah Beth Creamer, *Women, Church and Leadership; New Paradigms: Essays in Honor of Jean Miller Schmidt*, (Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2012), p. 113.

⁴⁷⁶ Musimbi R. A. Kanyoro, *Introducing Feminist Cultural Hermeneutics: An African Perspective*, (Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press, 2002), pp. 24 – 25.

those challenges, lessons they have learnt, coupled with the prospects and hopes they have as women leaders in the Pentecostal Charismatic churches in Ghana.

5.2 Overcoming Cultural Perceptions about Women Leaders

Leadership in the church had been a male preserve in the past; the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches are no exception. With the current situation of women assuming leadership roles, there is the tendency for such women to adopt leadership styles patterned along the traditional masculine style of leadership. Such patterns however, lead to the possibility of these women losing their feminine peculiarities, which are also essential for leadership. Sharing her leadership experience, Melanie Rosa notes:

My ministerial career has been characterised by a sustained effort to adapt to a fundamentally masculine system... I have worked hard to succeed with this system and to become more competent, capable and proficient... I have tried to be strong, decisive and visionary. I have deliberately exhibited more traditional leadership qualities so that my gender would not be an issue... while trying to 'lead like a man' I felt it necessary to deny my vulnerability and creativity. I did not believe that the spiritual leadership which naturally comes to me would be valued or effective.⁴⁷⁷

Thus, to gain acceptance in their leadership roles, some women leaders strive to 'become men'. However, as noted from Rosa's experience, such strives rather frustrates the women. In addition, the adaptation of male leadership strategies by these women leaders does not bring out the differences in male and female leadership. Rather, this conveys the idea that leadership should be seen from the perspective of males.

Dovlo argued that traditional societies allowing menopausal women to perform certain rituals, is an indication of their support for male leadership.⁴⁷⁸ This is because

⁴⁷⁷ Rosa, 'Leading with Grace', p. 114.

⁴⁷⁸ Dovlo, 'The Effects of Religion', p. 97.

it indirectly places women in the realm of men as the menopausal woman, like the man, does not have any experience with menstrual prohibitions. Women theologians and scholars⁴⁷⁹ have called for women leaders to rise up to the task – to lead as women.⁴⁸⁰ Looking at the work of these women, it is however, evident that their leadership roles have been patterned in accordance with their identities and experiences as women despite the temptation of adapting to the male leadership style.

Though women face the temptation to use the leadership styles of men, gaining acceptance into a male-dominated profession is a major challenge for women due to social expectations. As noted in chapter three, all the women under study faced some scepticism in their quest to become leaders in their respective faith communities. Although these women are aware of and continue to experience such scepticism in a work dominated by male, they have been able to negotiate within their spaces in order to operate as leaders. Rev. Rita and Apostle Lyanne, for instance, refer to the pastoral ministry as a ‘man’s world’.⁴⁸¹ In addition, these women leaders do not find anything in the Ghanaian culture that encourages women in leadership. Apostle Lyanne laments:

I believe that not only in the Ghanaian culture but the world itself is a man’s world. Men are more accepted in most professions and especially in the area of ministry. More so, especially in the Ghanaian culture when they say *osofa*⁴⁸² their mind first goes to a man... and so some people find it hard to accept a woman as a minister. I think that there is not too much encouragement from society and also not too much encouragement from the men in ministry.⁴⁸³

⁴⁷⁹ Cf. Musimbi Kanyoro, Mercy Amba Oduyoye, Kunbi Labeodan.

⁴⁸⁰ Kunbi Labeodan, ‘Are Women their own Enemies?’ in Oduyoye M. A. (ed.), *Women in Religion and Culture: Essays in Honour of Constance Buchanan*, (Ibadan: Sefer, 2007), 126-127.

⁴⁸¹ This thought was implied during the interview with them.

⁴⁸² *Osofo* is the Akan name for a pastor or reverend minister.

⁴⁸³ Apostle Lyanne Koffi, Interviewed, January 13, 2010.

Irrespective of such challenges, however, Deaconess Hannah seemed not to be affected by the negative perception about her as a woman engaged in the healing ministry. She remarks that anybody who has such thoughts only worries within themselves because she believes those perceptions cannot stop her from what she does. This is in line with what Apostle Lyanne noted earlier, about the need for women to prove their call to leadership. As noted in Apostle Lyanne's experience above, although in general few men may accept women leaders, most male pastors tolerate women leaders. This further point to the gendered roles in indigenous societies (as noted in Chapter Two) in that men and women are expected to maintain roles that are deemed appropriate for them.

The church accounts for this phenomenon, however, in quite different ways, quoting the Scriptures, a mannerism which has been called the 'theology of the Bible says'.⁴⁸⁴ Mercy Oduyoye observes that the Church in Africa continually uses Scriptures to reinforce indigenous norms thereby defining accepted norms for Christian women.⁴⁸⁵ Women need a lot of confidence and courage to step out of their traditional cultural moulds and expectations, as their actions in becoming leaders is not necessarily wrong.

The exclusion of women from some rituals in the indigenous societies seem to have some similarities with Judeo-Christian views as both border on thoughts of ritual purity or cleanliness. Ironically, it has been observed that aspects of indigenous religion and culture which support the inclusion of women have been largely ignored,

⁴⁸⁴ Mercy Oduyoye, *Beads and Strands: Reflections of an African Woman on Christianity in Africa*, (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2004), p. 91.

⁴⁸⁵ Oduyoye, *Beads and Strands*, p. 91.

especially by those against the increased participation of women in the church. Oduyoye concludes that ‘significant exceptions in African religious practices that validate the contributions of women have been overlooked because they do not confirm Judeo-Christian perspectives’.⁴⁸⁶

Besides the traditional reasons outlined above, the Church’s thoughts about the maleness of God/Jesus, coupled with the experiences of male leadership have been interpreted in such ways that make it difficult for the acceptance of women leaders.⁴⁸⁷ However, during the time of Jesus Christ on earth, he did not prevent women from expressing their faith in ways that were unique to those women. Though it may not relate directly to leadership, Jesus gave women opportunities to explore their acts of faith notwithstanding that it was against the cultural expectations at the time.⁴⁸⁸

The woman with the flow of blood in Matthew 9:18-22 and Mark 5:24-34, according to the Jewish culture norms was unclean, and thus expected to be isolated from society and not get close to a man.⁴⁸⁹ She dared to touch the hem of Jesus’ attire, believing she would be healed. Contrary to societal expectations, Jesus did not condemn her but rather confirmed her healing. Also Matthew 15: 21-28 and Mark 7: 24-30 recount the story of the Syro-Phoenician/Canaanite woman who was deemed a pagan and outcast and thus had no right to come close to Jesus, a Jew. Worst still, being a woman, she could not have theological discussions with Jesus. This woman

⁴⁸⁶ Oduyoye, *Beads and Strands*, p. 93.

⁴⁸⁷ Rachel E. Tetteh, ‘Women in the Church’ in M. A. Oduyoye & Musimbi Knayoro, *Talitha Qumi! Proceedings of the Convocation of African Women Theologians*, (Accra: Sam Woode Ltd., 2001), p. 172.

⁴⁸⁸ Akon E. Udo, ‘Women in God’s World: Some Biblical Affirmation’ in Elizabeth Amoah (ed.) *Where God Reigns: Reflections on Women in God’s World*, (Accra: Sam-Woode Ltd, 1997), p. 21.

⁴⁸⁹ Leviticus 15:25-27.

persisted even in the face of seeming discrimination in order to have her daughter cured. Jesus commended her action as a product of great faith.

The third example is the woman who anointed the feet of Jesus, as recorded in Mark 14:3-9 and John 12:1-8. The Gospel of John names this woman as Mary, the brother of Lazarus. It was not acceptable for her to anoint the feet of Jesus with the expensive perfume.⁴⁹⁰ However, her action was not disapproved of by Jesus; he rather demanded that the woman be left alone since she had done a “wonderful thing” which was symbolic in preparing his body for burial as the Jewish custom demanded.⁴⁹¹

From the experiences of these women, it can be noted that having confidence and courage is not enough to challenge the status quo, but the approval of the society is also needed for acceptance. For women leaders in the church today, approval usually comes on the wings of assessment of their work.

Women leaders such as Rev. Rita, Deaconess Hannah and Apostle Lyanne, amongst others, have had to prove themselves in their works in order to overcome some forms of scepticism towards their leadership and non-traditional roles in the church. Women are not given equal opportunities, platforms and considerations as compared to their male counterparts. Thus, before a woman is usually accepted as a leader, she needs to prove her worth to the community of faith.

⁴⁹⁰ Jessica K. Nakawombe, ‘Women in the Kingdom of God’ in Musimbi R. A. Kanyoro and Nyambura J. Njoroge (eds.), *Groaning in Faith: African Women in the Household of God*, (Nairobi: Acton Publishers, 1996), pp. 46-47.

⁴⁹¹ Craig A. Evans, ‘Jewish Burial Traditions and the Resurrection of Jesus,’ http://craigaeans.com/Burial_Traditions.pdf, [accessed, February 18, 2014].

Another reason Apostle Lyanne gives to the opposition that confronts female leadership is the excesses of some women, such as being too emotional. She noted that some women in ministry do not keep to the order of service. They especially emphasise the 'leading' of the Holy Spirit, making them to become insensitive to keeping to the order and length of their services. She however, believes that she is part of a new breed of women in ministry⁴⁹² who are more balanced in the sense that though she depends on the Holy Spirit, she keeps to the order of service. This assertion was more evident for Apostle Lyanne as the services that she led were more orderly as compared to those led by Rev. Rita and Deaconess Hannah.

In the face of these perceptions, one way these women maintain their leadership position is that they tend to operate within the acceptable norms of the church and society. Although they reject the societal perceptions about women's leadership, they respect and condone certain perceptions about women as well as some aspects of gender roles. This appears to be one way in which women leaders in the church have negotiated their spaces.⁴⁹³ For instance, Apostle Lyanne says 'I have had to put my mind above the challenges and the same time been mindful of certain things and really put myself in a way that I do not clash with the cultural norms too much so that it doesn't create unnecessary problems'.⁴⁹⁴

Citing specific examples, Apostle Lyanne adds that though most of her pastors are male, she gives the respect due them, as male. She revealed, for instance, that she does not allow any of them to help her with her bag. She declares: 'I know that in our

⁴⁹² This echoes the sense of a new generation, thus furthers the argument of a second generation of women in ministry.

⁴⁹³ Sackey, *New Direction in Gender and Religion*, pp. 66 – 67.

⁴⁹⁴ Apostle Lyanne Koffi, Interviewed, January 13, 2010.

culture it's not proper for a man to carry a woman's handbag and the fact that I am their leader doesn't give me the right to do [demand] that'.⁴⁹⁵ Regarding her relationship with her male senior associate pastor in charge of the church's headquarters in Akosombo, she says:

I give him the due respect. I'll never shout at him, I'll not insult him, never talk down at him... because he is a man. In our Ghanaian culture, a man would feel very slighted even if he made a mistake and a woman goes to correct him. So I bear that in mind, if he does something I go to him and suggest another option.⁴⁹⁶

Thus the actions of Apostle Lyanne are influenced to some extent by her recognition of certain aspects of the Ghanaian culture or tradition. From her assertions, she would treat and relate with female subordinates in quite a different way. These actions are not overcoming the status quo but simply negotiating it. Similarly, Deaconess Hannah also adheres to the traditions of the church within which she operates – the Church of Pentecost. In this church women do not usually rise above the position of deaconess. Also, women are not supposed to sit on the same stage or platform with (male) elders and pastors. She notes that although she sits with elders on stage, she becomes a bit uncomfortable especially when the wives of the pastors or apostles are present at the centre. Thus she has to sit among the deaconesses. She indicates: 'I am sitting on the platform and they are sitting with the deaconesses; it disturbs me a bit. It looks to me as though I am proud so I come to sit with the deaconesses'.⁴⁹⁷

This brings to the fore the leadership styles of women that are deemed appropriate. Usually they may not have challenges if they resort to nurturing roles as that which

⁴⁹⁵ Apostle Lyanne Koffi, Interviewed, January 13, 2010.

⁴⁹⁶ Apostle Lyanne Koffi, Interviewed, January 13, 2010.

⁴⁹⁷ Mrs. Hannah Barnes, Interviewed, January 14, 2010.

conforms to the natural roles of women as well as to socially constructed norms. The assertion of Bolaji Bateye that although female leaders of the Pentecostal churches in Nigeria teach about equality and liberation of women in the church, they do not regard themselves as feminist in the strict sense⁴⁹⁸ could be said to be true of these women.

5.3 Challenges of Working with Women and Men

It is clear from the preceding discussions that the cultural setting and the influence of cultural perceptions on these women affect their leadership styles and working relationships. The particular situations of these women have influenced whom they mostly work with. It is also reflected in their activities and messages. Deaconess Hannah and Apostle Lyanne lead both men and women; they, however, work closely with men. Rev. Rita, on the other hand is focused more on women.

There is an emerging difference from the first generation of women leaders in churches in Ghana as compared to the second generation. For instance, first generation Mama Christie of Solid Rock Chapel has more women pastors than men.⁴⁹⁹ However, Apostle Lyanne had no woman pastor at the time of the first interview in January 2010, about five years after establishing her church. A year later, in 2011, she had a lady pastor. A similar assertion can be made of Deaconess Hannah. She also has more men helping her than women. The issue emerging from this is how do these women successfully lead a team of men? Also has there been a change in the challenges experienced by women leaders?

⁴⁹⁸ Bateye, 'Forging Identities', p.5.

⁴⁹⁹ Soothill, *Gender, Social Change*, p. 4.

According to Apostle Lyanne, it is challenging for a woman to lead a male dominated pastoral team because she needs to be more conscious in order not to break any cultural rule. It is also likely that as women leaders become more acceptable in the society, they are able to extend their leadership and work with men as well. It could also be said that just as male leaders work with both men and women, the female leaders also need some efforts from men to succeed in their endeavour. The dynamism of the woman leader and her spiritual leadership still plays decisive roles in how she leads.⁵⁰⁰

It is common for and mostly expected of women leaders to work with and lead fellow women. Though limiting women to lead women does not give them the platform to harness their leadership potentials to the full, it empowers other women to also become leaders. There are, however, peculiar challenges with women working with women. Rev. Rita, being the President General of Royal Ladies, the women's ministry of the church, is positioned to lead more women than men. Though she enjoys working with women, her main challenge is the literacy level of these women. She maintains: 'I oversee women who are 60 percent illiterates'.⁵⁰¹ She notes that due to the low educational level of the women, it is sometimes difficult for them to understand her vision. For her, it is difficult even for those who are educated to grasp her vision. Particularly, she is disturbed when the women she desires for to be empowered behave otherwise.

⁵⁰⁰ Apostle Lyanne Koffi, Interviewed, January 13, 2010.

⁵⁰¹ Rev. Rita Korankye Ankrah, Interviewed, January 7, 2010.

Thus, it is clear that it is not only education that makes others to grasp the vision of leaders. On the other hand, the issue this raises is whether her vision is clear and realistic and how well it is communicated to the members. This notwithstanding women leaders working with fellow women may be interpreted as an avenue for empowering women.

Conversely, however, some women in working with women tend to practise some forms of hostility against their fellow women in ways that frustrate their leadership strides. This has led to the accusation of women being their own enemies. In assessing whether women are their own enemies, Kunbi Labeodan suggests it could be a ploy against women's empowerment and fight for equality. However, she is quick to assert that there are instances where actions of women against fellow women seem to suggest that they were their own enemies. She, for instance, considers the ordination of women as one of the points of disagreement among women.⁵⁰² Apostle Lyanne and Rev. Rita attested to facing issues of acceptance and lack of support from some women in their pursuit of leadership in the church.

This sometimes comes on the bedrock of some women internalising and accepting societal expectations that seem to work against women. These women usually accept the notion that 'men are the natural leaders of the family, church and nation.'⁵⁰³ Similarly, Oyeronke Olajubu believes that women are socialised to be dependent on men, a culture that was endorsed by the missionaries in that women were trained for

⁵⁰² Labeodan, 'Are Women their own Enemies?', pp. 112-127.

⁵⁰³ Susan D. Rose, 'Women Warriors: The Negotiation of Gender in a Charismatic Community,' in *Sociological Analysis*, 1987, 48, 3, p. 246. <http://socrel.oxfordjournals.org> [accessed July 20, 2010].

supportive and not leadership roles in the church.⁵⁰⁴ She continues: ‘consequently, women who aspire for leadership roles are perceived as deviants who refuse to conform to roles prescribed by the church structure’.⁵⁰⁵

It is interesting that some women in a bid to protect those accepted norms of the church and society may not be conscious of how they could be working against themselves as women.⁵⁰⁶ This has the tendency to lead to tensions between the philosophy and practise of women’s role in the church, especially if it is held that women and men must play different roles as a portrayal of God’s order in the church.⁵⁰⁷ It further negatively influences perceptions of women leadership in the church.

5.4 The Challenge of Being a Role Model

The positions and roles of these women make them assume the status of role models especially to younger women. As they aim at empowering other women, the question of how much initiative they should take becomes an issue. A person’s understanding may be influenced by a number of factors and it is important that these women do not negatively influence other women who look up to them.

For instance, Rev. Rita, being a pastor and a pastor’s wife, acknowledges that she has become a role model to many women. In as much she enjoys impacting their lives;

⁵⁰⁴ Oyeronke Olajubu, ‘Women and the Politics of Church Leadership,’ in Oduyoye M. A. (ed.), *Women in Religion and Culture: Essays in Honour of Constance Buchanan*, (Ibadan: Sefer, 2007), pp.136-137.

⁵⁰⁵ Olajubu, ‘Women and the Politics’, p. 138.

⁵⁰⁶ Labeodan, ‘Are Women their own Enemies?’ p. 118.

⁵⁰⁷ Rose, ‘Women Warriors,’ p.250-251.

she is careful how she does it. She is wary of sending the wrong signals to the people who look up to her. She remarks that she sometimes finds herself not living her life but living for people. She reflects as follows:

I know a lot of people are looking up to me; a lot of the young people are looking up to me. As much as I want, I want to be decent; I don't want to do anything that they will copy blindly so you can't live your life. If I want to cut my hair, I am thinking about the young people, I am thinking about the people looking at me. If I am wearing a dress, I am thinking about them, is it presentable enough, is it ok for them? If they have to copy what I am wearing, is it OK? Even in the training of my children, I am thinking of this one, if people must learn, are they learning the good thing? So it is a cycle, you don't think about yourself anymore, you don't live your life anymore, you are not comfortable anymore.⁵⁰⁸

As noted by Beauty Agbavor, the pastor's wife is seen as "a yardstick of good Christian conduct and behaviour. She lives up to expectation and for emulation, her shortcomings are unacceptable."⁵⁰⁹ The awareness of being a role model exerts some form of pressure on these women leaders since they endeavour to become good role models particularly for young women who wish to become leaders. More so, their current positions were influenced by the works of earlier women leaders such as Rev. Christie Doe Tetteh and then Rev. Mrs. Francisca Duncan-Williams. Mistakes in their efforts as leaders cannot be taken lightly because they can have a lasting negative impact not only on their leadership but also on the next generation of women leaders. Thus they are challenged to succeed in their leadership strides.

5.5 Role Conflicts of Christian Women Leaders

One question that these women are often asked is how they combine their public and private roles effectively. These women are expected to conform to their role as

⁵⁰⁸ Rev. Rita Korankye Ankrah, Interviewed, January 7, 2010.

⁵⁰⁹ Beauty Agbavor, 'The Pastor's wife in the Presbyterian Church of Ghana and the Church of Pentecost', (University of Ghana, Unpublished Long Essay, 2001), p. 47.

women, some of which may conflict with their leadership roles. Thus, if a woman insists on taking on a 'male role', she only adds it to her assigned female roles.

One major challenge with women leaders is the ability to balance (private) domestic and (public) leadership roles. In other words, how effectively women are able to combine their leadership roles with their traditional roles remains a challenge. The leader plays public roles outside the home and it clashes at times with his/her domestic roles. Due to these conflicting roles, it is normally perceived that it is difficult for women leaders to be married.

Others propose that a single woman would be more effective as a leader, as 'she would not be burdened with marital obligations and conflict of interest or harassment from the husband'.⁵¹⁰ Apostle Lyanne, for instance, indicates that the challenges associated with women leaders and marriage roles are one of the reasons some women do not go into pastoral ministry. Such women are also of the view that their involvement in ministerial work would render them single. That is it would not make men desire to marry them. She adds that is it also a challenge for those who are married to stay married.⁵¹¹

Though singleness or single parenthood may be an issue for some women leaders, the women under study were all married at the time of research. Therefore, the concern was to see how they were able to combine these different roles effectively. All three women acknowledge that combining their domestic duties as women with leadership

⁵¹⁰ Marie-Antoinette Sossou, 'We do not Enjoy Equal Political Rights: Ghanaian Women's Perception on Political participation in Ghana,' (Sage Open, May 16, 2011), <http://sgo.sagepub.com/content/early/2011/05/02/2158244011410715> [accessed May 30, 2011]

⁵¹¹ Apostle Lyanne Koffi, Interviewed, January 13, 2010.

roles in the church is a difficult task. However, they say they strive to maintain a good balance in order to play all roles to the best of their abilities. These women seem to conform to the Pentecostalist emphasis on family roles. As pointed out in Chapter Two, the Pentecostalist movement stresses the importance of marriage as well as the need for both men and women to be responsible in their marital homes.

In the case of Rev. Rita, the expectation of being a pastor, a pastor's wife, wife and mother gives her a myriad of duties. This seems to suggest that, in order to maintain a good balance between these roles, there is the need to manage one's time very well. Even though this may be the case, Rev. Rita thinks otherwise. For her, it is more about 'managing your life' rather than time management.⁵¹² In her view, the reason some people cannot multitask or do several things at a time is because they do not know how to manage their lives. She remarks that time management is more about the present while managing one's life is more futuristic in nature. She draws on women's ability to multitask.⁵¹³

Rev. Rita holds that what women do as wives and mothers over the years must be translated into their new positions in the church. That is to say they should bring those natural abilities to bear in maintaining a good balance between the home and church. To this end, she notes:

I know how to manage my life. It is just about life management, it is not about time management, it is about how to manage your life so I manage my life so well that I make sure that every place I make time for it and everyone who means well in my life must enjoy my life; my women enjoy

⁵¹² Rev. Rita Korankye Ankrah, Interviewed, January 7, 2010.

⁵¹³ She explains this as the woman's ability, to for instance, be taking care of the baby, washing, cooking, supervising children's homework and making phone calls at the same time.

my life, my children enjoy my life, my husband enjoys my life, my books enjoy my life.⁵¹⁴

In addition to managing her life, she is able to organise herself well; thus, she sees herself as a “good organiser”. She admits that she has time to perform her duties well because she translates her organising skills into managing her different roles such that she has time for exercise, prayer, to prepare sermons, and to take care of her children and husband. Similar to what Rev. Rita calls “managing of her life,” Apostle Lyanne believes that “life management” is also about setting the right priorities. To achieve this, she prays to God for the wisdom and ability to set her priorities right in order to maintain her balance. She declares: ‘I am a wife first, a mother second and pastor third. I have set my priorities in that order so I do not put the ministry above my husband or my children.’⁵¹⁵

She is of the conviction that if one has a strong ministry and yet his/her family life is nothing to write home about, such a person has no ministry. This is because one’s first ministry is the family of which the spouse is the first, then the children. The secret to maintaining a balance in her roles is her ability to set her priorities right. She puts it this way: ‘I do my wifely duties, I do motherly duties and do my pastoral duties without upsetting anybody’.⁵¹⁶ She further explains thus:

It is all a matter of knowing how to set your priorities right and balancing them well. Every one of those roles is equally demanding and ministry is very demanding; if you are a minister your life and time are not your own; if you don’t take care, if you are not careful, and conscientious, it would rub into your family life, you’ll not have time for your family, children, husband.⁵¹⁷

⁵¹⁴ Rev. Rita Korankye Ankrah, Interviewed, January 7, 2010. She was studying for a Master’s degree at the time of interview.

⁵¹⁵ Apostle Lyanne Koffi, Interviewed, January 13, 2010.

⁵¹⁶ Apostle Lyanne Koffi, Interviewed, January 13, 2010.

⁵¹⁷ Apostle Lyanne Koffi, Interviewed, January 13, 2010.

Apostle Lyanne revealed that if she is faced with a conflict of interests between the family and the ministry, she chooses the family over the ministry. She gives this example: ‘If I have an invitation to go and preach anywhere and my husband also has to travel at that time I won’t go, I’ll stay at home and take care of the children’.⁵¹⁸

Deaconess Hannah also subscribed to maintaining a good balance between one’s domestic and ministerial roles. This is because an improper balance between these roles leads most of the time to divorce. At the onset of her ministry, Deaconess Hannah maintained that she set her ministry above all other things. She did this because of the fear of not getting the needed support. However, in the course of her ministry, she learnt to maintain a balance between her ministerial and domestic roles in order to sustain her family.

As noted by these women, striking and maintaining a balance between leadership and traditional duties is very crucial, especially for women leaders. This suggests that, for married women to be successful with their leadership roles in the public sphere, their husbands must be understanding and supportive.⁵¹⁹ This may mean coming to terms with the demands of the work that their wives are engaged in. The most challenging is the demand on these women to spend more time outside their homes. The difficulty, however, is how many husbands can tolerate their wives coming home after midnight with the excuse of engaging in church activities.

⁵¹⁸ Apostle Lyanne Koffi, Interviewed, January 13, 2010.

⁵¹⁹ Mensah-Kutin & Akrofi-Quarcoo, *Women on the Wheels*, p. 9.

The success of these women leaders under study, nevertheless, can be attributed to the support from their husbands. This only indicates, among other things, that male support may be a crucial factor in creating and increasing opportunities for women in the church. In that vein, Apostle Lyanne notes:

I think my husband too has been very supportive and understanding and so that also makes it easier, so I always tell people that my case is easier yes because of how my husband is. For example if he comes and opens the door [of her office]⁵²⁰ and sees I am busy he would eat his food and go upstairs, he would not complain, he would never be angry. Sometime if I oversleep he would wake me up saying ‘*Osofo* [pastor] does not sleep like that, wake up and go and pray’ He encourages me, and that has helped a lot.⁵²¹

Perhaps the current trend of Pentecostal emphasis on family roles that calls on men to be considerate may help these women leaders to minimise the stress on them in that it would influence the cooperation of their husbands. For women leaders unlike their male counterparts, the home is important since it is seen as part of their primary responsibilities.

Although the husbands of women leaders may be considerate and supportive, they may not translate that into taking over or helping with the household chores. It is seen as the responsibility of the woman. However, in practical terms these women do delegate some of their duties both at home and in church, focusing on their main duties both as wives and leaders. This reflects Florence Dolphyne’s observation that professional women have had to delegate to their house helps or home managers to help in the basic chores in the home as well as hospitality issues.⁵²²

⁵²⁰ The garage of the house has been renovated into an office for her.

⁵²¹ Apostle Lyanne Koffi, Interviewed, January 13, 2010.

⁵²² Dolphyne, *The Emancipation of Women*, p 5.

Delegation of Duties

Delegation is also one of the ways these women leaders are able to maintain good balance between their domestic and ministerial roles. Rev. Rita, Apostle Lyanne and Deaconess Hannah agreed that irrespective of their ability to multitask, it is almost impossible to play both roles all by themselves. Thus, they need to delegate some of their duties, both in church and at home.

In an interview with Rev. Rita, she revealed that she learnt very early in her ministry that to be a good team leader, she needed to delegate. This, according to her, has contributed to her success as a leader. She delegates parts of her roles both at home and in church to other people whom she finds loyal. She believes that her delegates are loyal to her probably because of how she relates to them. She believes that her good interpersonal skills have for instance enabled her to live with her mother-in-law since 1994. Her mother-in-law visited when she gave birth to her third born with the intention of coming to help her for a month.⁵²³ She had been with her since, despite the generational gap and other challenges which make it difficult for some women to live with their mothers-in-law.

Another possible reason is the fact that she encourages her workers and helps to bring out the talents in them.⁵²⁴ She gave indications of some of the people who work with her and also instances that led to her working with them. She noted that she has very dedicated cooks, house helps, driver and gardener at home. For instance, her house manager, (who is over 70 years of age), who has been pensioned because of his age,

⁵²³ In Ghana, the social support system ensures that when a woman gives birth, close relations give her a helping hand as she recuperates.

⁵²⁴ Rev. Rita Korankye Ankrah, Interviewed, January 7, 2010.

continues to live in her house. Such dedication could also stem from the way she helps them out of their challenges. One of her security men qualified for university education. Together with her husband he was helped to gain admission to the University of Ghana. They were supporting him financially. He continued to serve as a security guard when on holidays. She also helped her houseboy to learn English so that he can communicate and also meet the standard of the people in the house as well as visitors. People who have been helped would more likely be dedicated in their service to her.

It may be seen as normal for working women, especially those in the urban areas, to employ the services of house helps or domestic workers to mitigate the challenges of combining their work with responsibilities at home.⁵²⁵ However, for one to have more than two people working for them at home at the same time may suggest some level of affluence. It must be noted that the position Rev. Rita holds in the church has the tendency to influence some people to work for her at home, with the impression that they are also working for God. Another reason may also be the possibility that she enjoys the loyalty of people because of the special interest she takes in the personal development of others. Such loyalty makes her long absence from home unproblematic. She also ensures that she supervises everything that goes on in the house. However, she noted that when she is at home she ensures that she spends quality time with her family so that her presence is felt to make up for the times she is absent.

⁵²⁵ Evelyn Benjamin-Sampson, 'Contributions and Challenges of Domestic Workers,' in *Daily Graphic*, Tuesday, April 9, 2013, p.10.

In church, Rev. Rita has many women who help her in her work as President General, overseeing the Royal Ladies both nationally and internationally. She acknowledged the executives of the 'Royal Ladies' as very loyal and committed. This has made it easy for her to delegate responsibilities to them. Thus her absence does not negatively affect the activities of the ministry. In this regard, she specifically made mention of Pastor Hannah Yawson, the General Secretary of the 'Royal Ladies' ministry. Pastor Yawson, as Rev. Rita note, is her personal assistant and a full-time paid worker of the church. Rev. Rita also noted some non-paid workers of the church who are very dedicated.

In the case of Apostle Lyanne, it was essential for her to delegate because though her church is headquartered at Akosombo in the Eastern region, at the time of the research she was living in Accra in the Greater Accra Region. Her relocation to Accra was necessitated by the transfer of her husband. Thus there was the need for her to delegate some of her pastors to lead the church in her absence. She noted that 'for years I was in Akosombo, my husband was posted to Accra two years ago (2008) so we moved, so the headquarters of the ministry is in Akosombo but I am not there permanently now. My [senior] associate pastor is there and the bulk of the pastors are there. He is with five pastors and they do the day to day running of the ministry.'⁵²⁶ She opines: 'If you become a micro manager in the whole thing you can't do it. You need to delegate and trust people to do what they are supposed to do, teach them to do and then trust them to be able to do it.'⁵²⁷

⁵²⁶ Apostle Lyanne Koffi, Interviewed, January 13, 2010.

⁵²⁷ Apostle Lyanne Koffi, Interviewed, January 13, 2010.

As noted above, one key element in delegation is trust. In the case of Apostle Lyanne, Deaconess Hannah and Rev. Rita, they had trusted their delegates and believed the delegates would not behave contrary to what was expected of them. For instance, Apostle Lyanne trusted that her delegates “will teach well and also handle the finances of the church very well”. This way, she believes that the delegates are undergoing a form of training. To ensure accountability and loyalty, Apostle Lyanne makes sure there are always two pastors at any branch of the church. With that she notes ‘they have the opportunity to grow and you also have your peace to also attend to your family but if you want to be a micro manager, you’ll put too much on your head, you can’t do it’.⁵²⁸

Deaconess Hannah on her part has delegated most of the administrative aspects of the prayer centre. The main reason for this is her low level of education, as will be discussed subsequently in this chapter. There are also people who are in charge of cleaning, cooking and other hospitality issues at the centre.

5.6 Financial Challenges

One main challenge facing these women is the raising of funds to support their work or the projects they engage in. In the case of Deaconess Hannah, the prayer centre depends on mainly donations that patrons/campers make to the centre. These donations may come in the form of ‘sowing seeds of faith’ with the hope that their requests will be answered. When patrons have their prayers answered or problems

⁵²⁸ Apostle Lyanne Koffi, Interviewed, January 13, 2010.

solved, some come back to give testimonies and also give thanksgiving offerings.⁵²⁹

As her assistants and helpers do not receive any regular remuneration, part of the offerings is shared among them and the rest kept for developmental projects at the centre.

The centre being an autonomous entity of the Church of Pentecost, there is no financial obligation on the church towards the development of the centre. However, because the centre houses a branch of the church, they are required to remit its tithes and some special offerings to the regional and head office of the church.

Consequently, sources of income for the centre are very limited. Though from time to time attendees with good economic backgrounds visit the centre, most patrons are low income earners with a majority of them coming from rural areas. More so, the majority of the campers who stay at the centre for long periods of time eventually lose their sources of income. This is because they do not engage in any income-generating ventures during their stay at the centre. Their focus is mainly on seeking a spiritual solution to their problems and challenges. Thus, a very long stay at the centre may lead to dismissal from one's place of work or a loss of capital. Such people cannot contribute to the physical development of the centre. The centre thus lacks basic facilities. The chapel is actually a shed; sleeping places do not have electricity. There is no reliable water supply. Toilet and bathroom facilities need major improvements and are not sufficient for the users. The break of an epidemic at the centre might have dire consequences for the campers.

⁵²⁹ Some make pledges, hence they go back to the centre to fulfil their pledges as in the case of Hannah in 1Samuel 1.

Rev. Rita echoes a similar concern. She notes that most of the projects undertaken by the church are dependent on the offerings and tithes of the congregation. She also notes that members of the church donate trunks and chop boxes (to be given to students going to Senior High Schools) their clothes, shoes, bags for the needy in the society. She lamented that sometimes they went beyond their budget for scholarships because of the nature of particular cases they encounter. She gave an incidence of a student whom she called Gabriel.⁵³⁰ In spite of the fact he was not a member of Royalhouse Chapel, he was still supported because of his peculiar situation though the budget for the scholarships had been exhausted at the time.

On the part of Apostle Lyanne, she noted that partners⁵³¹ for the ministry are the main financial support. She revealed that when she started the fellowship, she was initially not taking offerings. The members however, protested and as a result she began taking offerings.⁵³² Thus, apart from the financial support from the partners of the ministry, she depends also on the church offerings and the housekeeping monies given by her husband. Apart from the emotional support given by her husband, he has been noted as the greatest financial support of her ministry.⁵³³

Both Apostle Lyanne and Rev. Rita make use of modern technology, especially the Internet, as a means of raising funds for their project. They both have websites which

⁵³⁰ According to Rev. Rita, Gabriel was an intelligent student who had aggregate one in all the subjects written at the Basic Education Certificate Examinations. He got admission to Prempeh College but could not pay his school fees and was on the verge of losing the admission. The church through the instrumentality of Rev. Rita paid his fees and also gave him provisions. At the time of the interview he had finished his Senior High education. Rev. Rita Korankye Ankrah, Interviewed, January 7, 2010.

⁵³¹ These are individuals (members and non-members of her church) who support her ministry financially.

⁵³² She did not indicate when they started taking offering.

⁵³³ Rev. Hemans K. Donkor, Interviewed, 23rd April, 2011, Akosombo.

advertise the projects they are engaged in, thereby creating awareness and opportunity for people to support the work they are doing.

5.7 Specific Challenges

From interviews and personal observation of the work of these three women some specific challenges and problems were identified and have been outlined as follows:

Being a Pastor's Spouse – Rev. Rita

The role of the pastor's wife epitomizes complementarity roles in church. However, it is obvious that these roles are based on gender as the pastor's spouse is seen as a woman. Indeed there are more pastors' wives than pastor's husbands.⁵³⁴ The expectations of a pastor's spouse give them no opportunity to choose what they wish to do but are rather expected to fill in the blanks created by the leadership of men.⁵³⁵ As a pastor's wife, Rev. Rita's work seems to be predetermined in that she is in charge of women in the church as well as marital issues (both pre and post marital) and other welfare issues. This predetermined role, although she seems to be busy at, and enjoying it, is quite limited.

As Oduyoye has challenged, coercing women into accepting these roles does not allow women to attain a 'free and full expression of their humanity.'⁵³⁶ This seems to stem from patriarchy, where women are not expected to lead. However, in the case

⁵³⁴ At a meeting held for new pastors' spouses of the Global Evangelical Church in July 2012. It was observed that, apart from linking the roles of the pastor's spouse to the traditional roles of women, speaker after speaker used spouse interchangeably with wife. Meanwhile there was a male spouse present at the meeting. The discomfort of this male spouse could be felt, in that he eventually found excuses to absent himself from the sessions.

⁵³⁵ Oduyoye, *Beads and Strands*, p. 94.

⁵³⁶ Oduyoye, *Beads and Strands*, pp. 90 – 91.

that women lead only women, it may be argued that they have a limited opportunity to lead. It is argued that women are a force to reckon with and leading them is very crucial to the growth of the church.

In Rev. Rita's case, even though she may be seen combining her individual ministry with the roles of a pastor's wife, her roles are not different from what is expected of her as a pastor's wife. It must not be assumed, however, that every 'male' head pastor's wife should be in charge of women. There are indeed challenges of women leading fellow women, and it cannot be taken for granted that wives of head pastors must necessarily become leaders of the women's group in the church.

For most pastors' wives, as noted in Chapter Four, their work and ministry seem to be hinged on their husbands' work. This possible challenge at present does not seem to be a challenge for Rev. Rita as she has established a strong ministry for herself. However, whether or not her ministry hinges on that of her husband can only be left to posterity.

Relocation of Family – Apostle Lyanne

As noted earlier, Apostle Lyanne started the fellowship and subsequently the church at Akosombo. However, she had to move to Accra because her husband was transferred in his job. Relocating to Accra goes to prove Apostle Lyanne's priority setting: the family is her first priority. Relocating to Accra could have been one of the most challenging times for her because most Charismatic pastors oversee the headquarters or main branch of their churches.

Thus for her, to hand over the main branch can be seen as a sacrifice. This is a clear example of the challenge that women face as they harness their full potential. In most cases it is the women who have to relocate to join their husbands and not the other way round. In the case of Apostle Lyanne her relocation with the husband may be understood from the point of view that the supportive roles of her husband in her ministry made her to take up the challenge of relocating with him.

Low Education – Deaconess Hannah

Secular education and exposure have an impact on the performance of leadership roles.⁵³⁷ Though all three women pointed to some spiritual experience culminating in their leadership roles, education has been of key importance. Deaconess Hannah's low level of education compels her to leave certain administrative works of the centre to her assistants such as record keeping and attendance of meetings with the leadership of the church at regional and national levels.

Lack of formal education has affected especially Deaconess Hannah as she is forced to hand over administrative duties to the men who seem more capable because of their educational background. On the other hand, because Rev. Rita and Apostle Lyanne are more highly educated, they have acquired some administrative skills and are able to make use of modern means of communication, especially the use of the Internet. This includes having a web page and using e-mail and other social media.

⁵³⁷ Bateye, 'Forging Identities', p.6

Deaconess Hannah and Problematic issues at the Prayer Camp

Apart from the challenges which these women leaders go through in performing their duties, some other problems were identified especially with the work of Deaconess Hannah. These issues are neither peculiar to her as a woman leader nor to her prayer centre. There are some similarities with the practices of some prayer camps.

Issue of Property

The role of individual initiative in the establishment of prayer camps has implications for the future such as in the acquisition of properties. Just as Dan Asihene noted of the Edumfa Prayer Centre being established out of the resources of the leader,⁵³⁸ all the landed properties at the Agyenkwa camp at the time of research were in the name of Deaconess Hannah.

Sleeping in the 'Chapel'

The practice of sleeping in the chapel of the centre emanates from belief of the role of dreams in the healing and deliverance process. Pentecostals and Charismatics stress that God speaks through many avenues among which are dreams and visions. The 'chapel' is regarded as a holy place, where God 'communicates' with people. It is also held as a place where healing and deliverance can be experienced through dreams.

Campers and patrons of the centre are thus required to sleep in the chapel. It is likely that such a practice is based on the biblical account in Genesis 28:10 – 19, in which Jacob had a dream at a place he had stopped in his flight from his brother Esau. In the dream God renewed with Jacob, the covenant he had made with Abraham and Isaac

⁵³⁸ Dan Nyampong Asihene, 'The Edumfa Prayer Camp: A City of Refuge', (University of Ghana, Unpublished M.A. thesis, 2008), p. 37.

and also promised to protect him. He proclaimed that unknown to him God was in the place where he had slept, so he named the place Bethel.

Drawing from this experience, it is believed that God will communicate individually to people as they sleep in the 'sacred place' – the chapel. However, looking at the nature of the chapel, which is a shed, sleeping there is tantamount to sleeping in the open, given the exposure to mosquitoes and reptiles. During observation, people mounted mosquito nets to protect themselves from mosquito bites. It does not, however, protect from reptiles. Though it was not mentioned to have ever occurred, asking campers (both men and women) to sleep together in the chapel may also expose some people to sexual abuses.

Chaining of Mentally Challenged People

It was noted some mentally challenged persons were in chains at the centre. The chaining of the mentally challenged persons may not be part of the healing process. They could be chained to ensure they are calm and do not cause any havoc. This, however, raises questions of the human rights of these sick people as well. The Church of Pentecost, under which Deaconess Hannah operates, does not condone the practice of chaining people in the process of healing them. This has been clearly stated in the policy guidelines for prayer centres.⁵³⁹

There has been a public outcry in the media against the conditions under which the mentally ill, live especially in the prayer camps. This was heightened by the report of Human Rights Watch on abuses against the mentally ill which was released in

⁵³⁹ Church of Pentecost, 'Guidelines for Operating Prayer Centres in the Church of Pentecost', p.2.

October 2012.⁵⁴⁰ The report indicated that many of the mentally ill in the prayer camps are chained ‘inside fully built and semi-permanent structures or chained to a tree or concrete floor’.⁵⁴¹ Indeed at the Agyenkwa prayer centre two mentally ill were in chains at the time of the research. Their conditions were not different from what Human Right Watch reported – ‘There was no movement beyond the length of the chains – usually about two meters. People had to bathe, defecate, urinate, change sanitary towels, eat, and sleep on the spot where they were chained.’⁵⁴²

Apparently, the prayer centre does not have facilities or the qualified medical personnel to handle such people. However, people in such a state are likely to be taken to prayer centres because of the belief in spiritual causation, thus the seeking of spiritual solution. More so the personnel at the prayer centres as indicated by Deaconess Hannah and her assistants feel qualified to deal with such cases. This has the effect of perpetuating such inhuman acts in these centres.

5.8 The Way Forward

Though these women face a number of obstacles in their bid to achieve their goals, they look into the future with hope, trusting that they will be able to serve their purpose. For instance, Deaconess Hannah’s desire is that every problem brought to the centre would receive a solution. As is common with many Christian women leaders, these women have aspirations that are associated with nurturing, caring and

⁵⁴⁰ Human Rights Watch, ‘*Like a death Sentence:*’ *Abuses against persons with Mental Disabilities in Ghana*, October 2012, <http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/ghana1012webwcover.pdf> [accessed January 30, 2013].

⁵⁴¹ Human Rights Watch, ‘*Like a death Sentence,*’ p. 45.

⁵⁴² Human Rights Watch, ‘*Like a death Sentence,*’ p. 45.

welfare.⁵⁴³ Whereas Apostle Lyanne and Rev. Rita had anticipated efforts at empowering women as well as helping underprivileged children, Deaconess Hannah's focus was more on children. This section largely focuses on their gendered roles which are hopes at empowering their fellow women and improving the lives of children and the underprivileged in their respective churches and the society as a whole.

On the Empowerment of Women

As noted in Chapter Four, Apostle Lyanne's 'Sisters Keepers' is an avenue for women to support one another. After her maiden 'Sisters Keepers' conference in 2007, she encountered some challenges. She noticed that some women ended in psychiatric homes because they did not have anyone to lean on, pray with, or encourage them in their moments of crisis. This was thus an area she hoped to work at more. The forum is also a platform to garner the means to financially and/or economically empower other women.

She laments over young girls who because of poverty get into sexual relations with married men in particular. She acknowledges that some women who are in well-paid jobs can easily give a small proportion of their income to these young ones to prevent them from falling into the clutches of lecherous or lustful predators. She hopes that 'Sisters' Keepers' would raise the awareness for members to help, mentor somebody, help a sister out and be there for a sister. It would also be an avenue to teach women and girls how to manage their finances and life whether single or married.

⁵⁴³ Bateye, 'Forging Identities,' p. 5.

Similarly, Rev. Rita desires to be a woman of excellence that is ‘one of the very powerful women of God not only in Ghana but also in Africa’⁵⁴⁴ and an advocate for the vulnerable in the society – who are mostly women, youth and children. She perceives that she would empower especially women and girls. In her words, ‘I believe in Dr. Aggrey’s saying that when a woman is educated, a nation is educated; empower one woman and the whole community is empowered so I want to be able to influence women, so they in turn can also influence their children’.⁵⁴⁵

Rev. Rita has the vision to empower Ghanaian women and girls financially, materially, socially and spiritually. This vision extends beyond members of her church and Christian women though her mode of empowerment has its basis on Christian principles. It has been established that women have remained in abusive relationships, whether marital or otherwise, mainly because of their low economic status and the dependence on those relationships for survival. Rev. Rita asserts that women are mistreated, manhandled and their rights violated because they depend largely on the men, either their husbands or boyfriends. Thus when these women are empowered financially, socially and materially, they can stand on their own and take decisions that affect them.

This is, however, not an attempt to downplay the sanctity of marriage. For instance at the 2012 international conference of the Royal Ladies,⁵⁴⁶ she indicated that the church was building a dormitory for women so that if their husbands maltreated them they could have a place to run to. However, she added that if the woman misconducts

⁵⁴⁴ Rev. Rita Korankye Ankrah, Interviewed, January 7, 2010.

⁵⁴⁵ Rev. Rita Korankye Ankrah, Interviewed, January 7, 2010.

⁵⁴⁶ This was held at the Central Cafeteria, University of Ghana from 28th June 2012 to 1st July 2012 under the theme ‘My Name will be There’ (Esther 6:1).

herself and runs to the place, she (Rev. Rita) would give the woman a slap and send her back to the husband.⁵⁴⁷ At the same conference a woman delivered during the conference and had her child (girl) named after Rev. Rita. Apparently, this woman, a member of one of their branches, was thrown out of her matrimonial home with her children by the husband. Rev. Rita rented a place for them to stay.

Rev. Rita's vision is that by empowering these women, collectively, they can find solutions to some of their common problems. For her, a major step for empowerment is education, and as a role model, she explained that as she had taken the lead to empower herself through tertiary education for which she had not had the opportunity when she was much younger. Some other women in the church, who were thinking it had become impossible for them to have tertiary education, had also been encouraged to have university education.⁵⁴⁸

Rev. Rita also envisages empowering them spiritually. Women have personal, marital and family issues, as well as challenges with regard to their children for which they seek spiritual help. In the process of seeking help, either for themselves or their families, however, some women are abused. There are indeed reports in the print and electronic media of many pastors (mostly men) who take advantage of women supposedly in need of spiritual help. In its edition of Monday, August 15, 2011, the *Daily Graphic* newspaper bemoaned the negative activities of some pastors under the headline 'Clergy Come under Fire for Acts Unbecoming of Men of God'. In the said

⁵⁴⁷ Rev. Rita Korankye Ankrah, University of Ghana, June 30, 2012.

⁵⁴⁸ Rev. Rita Korankye Ankrah, Interviewed, January 7, 2010.

article, the paper cited examples of men of God who had sexually assaulted young women as well as defrauded others of huge sums of money.

There has, therefore, been a call by Christian leaders on women not to spiritually rely on their leaders. Women are encouraged to know their rights as well as the precepts of the Bible. These efforts could be summarised in the words of Rev. Dr. Fred Deegbe, General Secretary of the Christian Council of Ghana, that ‘being a Christian does not mean your brain should be disengaged’.⁵⁴⁹ With this background, Rev. Rita believes that if women are empowered spiritually, they can stand on their own with or without a pastor.

With a passion for successful marriages, Rev. Rita also has a vision for the couples in her church. Since she is against divorce, she thus intimates that it is her heart's desire that every ‘sick’ marriage would be healed or restored. She thus hopes to continue to spend time engaging in post-marital counselling to enrich marriages. For Rev. Rita, one way to achieve these visions is to put up a hostel for women. She has indeed already acquired the land for this, but the building project was yet to be commenced. The proposed hostel would specifically be for camp meetings, retreats and a place for new couples to celebrate their honeymoon as well as old couples to spend time together. She also noted that the hostel would serve as a shelter for battered women – ‘a place where women can run for shelter when they are maltreated in their homes’.⁵⁵⁰

⁵⁴⁹ Myjoyonline, Fondling of women unacceptable, <http://edition.myjoyonline.com/pages/news/200908/34319.php> [accessed October 15, 2011].

⁵⁵⁰ Rev. Rita Korankye Ankrah, Interviewed, January 7, 2010.

The hostel is also to meet the accommodation needs of members of the church who are outside the country who come to Ghana for holidays. She intimated that she continues to host such members. Therefore, the hostel would go a long way to meet such needs since some of those people who come to Ghana for holidays are neither able to afford a hotel nor stay with family members due to some inconveniences.

Following from her interest in women, Rev. Rita has a passion especially for young ladies. According to her she is very worried about young girls who for one reason or the other go into prostitution. She believes that it is mainly poverty that leads them into such vices. She hopes to empower young ladies to be economically independent, with the hope that they would not depend on “sugar daddies” or “boyfriends” for survival. Such dependence, she continues, has the tendency to destroy the future of these girls.

Centre for Vocational Training

Consequential to the Pentecostal emphasis on marriage, Rev. Rita is calling for equality of women in the church, but she also seems to emphasize traditional women roles. To this end, she plans to build a vocational centre to train young women in home management, dress-making and catering. This is a way of supporting them with a meaningful career, thereby becoming economically and financially independent.

However, in addition to helping some women to have sources of income, she also foresees this centre as a place to camp young ladies during their holidays in order to

train them in home management.⁵⁵¹ This vision, for her, is to curtail the challenge of young women's inability to play traditional roles. Relating her experience, Rev. Rita however, concedes that the demand of the current educational system is one of the factors that prevent young girls from learning skills of home management.

Apart from the long years they spend in school from basic through university education, the length of time spent in school in a day is also a factor. The curricula of most basic schools are such that children go to school early, return home late with a pile of homework. These children thus spend most of their time on academic work to the neglect of skills in home management. The trend continues to the secondary and university levels. She notes that young people are very intelligent and they speak so well. The kinds of things her children know she did not know when she was their age. For Rev. Rita this training is 'only brain-wise'. She finds that young people are missing out on something. She thus asks: 'When do we get time to train them especially our female children in the kitchen?'⁵⁵²

She recalls that when she was young, at about eight years, girls started going to the kitchen, to learn how to prepare local Ghanaian foods. From that age, girls also learnt to take care of babies. For Rev. Rita, the training in such skills equipped her for marriage. Recalling the days when she was young, she bemoans the fact that young girls in present times cannot do likewise. As evidence she cited the example of a lady who confided in her about her inability to cook. It was a worry because she was about to get married. For her this is a burden of most mothers and it may seem that they

⁵⁵¹ These may be young ladies in secondary schools or universities.

⁵⁵² Rev. Rita Korankye Ankrah, Interviewed, January 7, 2010.

have failed in the training of their daughters. This is because, culturally, mothers are expected to train their daughters well and prepare them for marriage. Thus, the integrity of a mother is at stake when her daughter marries.

To meet this need, Rev. Rita envisages the building of a kind of vocational centre to camp and train children, especially girls, between the ages of ten and eighteen. Training will mainly be in home management, cookery, washing, bathing babies and taking care of the home. Though this effort will help many young people, focusing on training only girls in home management has the tendency to protract and strengthen the already existing strict gender roles in the society. This may not only frustrate gender equality in the home but also quest for women leadership in the church.

Care for Children and the Underprivileged

As is common with women, Rev. Rita, Deaconess Hannah and Apostle Lyanne have shown their passion to ensure a better livelihood for children as discussed in Chapter Four. With regards to future prospects, Rev. Rita has a programme to shelter street children. It is a concept similar to what Apostle Lyanne is using with her ‘Sisters’ Keepers’.

Rev. Rita notes that if every economically average person would adopt a child, it could reduce the rate of armed robbery in Ghana. She believes that one of the factors leading to the increasing rate of armed robbery is that some of the robbers do not have homes. Thus they have learnt to sleep in the streets and at the lorry stations. Such people may perceive life as not being fair. As long as life is not fair, they may want to take what they think is theirs which others have taken ‘unrightfully.’

Apostle Lyanne, as part of her service to the society, hopes to build a home for less privileged children. She however, recognises that not everybody would want to release those children to come into the home because of societal perceptions. She would, thus, continue to periodically donate some basic needs particularly to needy teenage girls, especially those in the Asuogyaman district of the Eastern Region, where the headquarters of the church is located.

Improvements in Infrastructure

Being the founders of a church and prayer centre, Apostle Lyanne and Deaconess Hannah are faced directly with infrastructural developments. In addition to helping her followers with their spiritual problems, Deaconess Hannah has the hope of improving the physical structure at the centre. Specifically, she hopes to complete the chapel and the school building. To meet the perennial water shortage at the centre with its attendant challenges, she also plans on digging a borehole.

Apostle Lyanne was in the process of building the chapels at Ashongman in Accra and the headquarters in Akosombo. The chapel building in Akosombo is quite a big edifice and it is the venue of the monthly non-denominational breakthrough all-night prayer services that attract people from other churches and towns and villages. Thus completing this project would enhance the comfort of members of the church and patrons of her non-denominational programmes. It would also possibly attract new patrons as well as draw new members to her church.

5.9 Summary

From the preceding discussions, the influences of cultural and biblical injunctions affect and place some limitations on the roles of women leaders in Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches in Ghana. These women leaders are confronted with peculiar challenges that are socially and culturally encouraged.

Given that women are expected to perform their domestic roles, irrespective of the performance of any additional non-traditional roles, women leaders have had to put in more efforts than men in similar vocations.

Looking at the challenges of these women leaders, though their challenges may be similar to some women leaders ahead of them, the intensity may not be the same and it may further create greater opportunities for women leaders in the Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches. Though some of the prospects of these women may seem to be attempting to do new things, it is a reflection of a continuation of their work in the church and the society.

CHAPTER SIX

REFLECTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Overview of the Study

Women have served as leaders in various capacities in the Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches. Though at a point in the history of the movement, women were not part of some levels of leadership, they are, in recent times, regaining those positions, but with some limitations and challenges. The main thesis of this work has been that the changing status of women in the general society has an influence on women in the church.

Among other things, the increasing leadership opportunities for women in the society have had an influence on women in leadership positions in Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches in Ghana. Thus, the research sought to investigate the changing status of women in Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches in Ghana using the example of three selected women leaders. It also examined the ministries of the selected women leaders in the movement. The major questions that guided the study were why Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches are in recent times recognising women in leadership roles and whether the women leaders have newly defined roles or if they are integrated into the traditional roles that men had hitherto been playing.

The quest for equal status for men and women in the church has been influenced especially by changes that are occurring in the general society. Arguments for increased space for women in the society have also encouraged greater participation of women in the church. The women in the Pentecostalist movement seem to be more

visible in taking up significant leadership positions. Indeed in the history of the Pentecostalist movement in Ghana, there is already a group of women leaders who could be classified as first generation women leaders. These women include Rev. Christie Doe Tetteh, founder of Solid Rock Chapel, ex-wife of Archbishop Duncan-Williams, popularly known as Mama Francisca, Prophetess Grace Mensah of the Edumfa Prayer Centre. These first generation women leaders have been researched by scholars like Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, Jane Soothill and Brigid Sackey.⁵⁵³ There is, however, an emerging second generation of leaders. This study focused on the second generation of women leaders in the Pentecostalist movement. A study of the second generation of women leaders shows that there is continuity in women leadership in the church. An examination of the ministries of the second generation of women leaders in the Pentecostalist movement highlights the changes or differences in the experiences, contributions and challenges of women as they strive to be leaders.

The concept of intersectionality was used as the main theoretical basis for the discussions. The intersectionality theory holds that a number of factors intersect, influencing each other to affect the place of women, in that no single factor should be analysed in isolation but in relation to others. The work specifically discussed how gender, culture, socio-economic situations and the Pentecostalist position on the roles of women in the church influence and affect women's participation in the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches in Ghana.

⁵⁵³ See Soothill, J. E. 'Gender, Social Change and Spiritual Power in Ghana' in P. Gifford (ed.) *Studies of Religion in Africa*, (Brill: Leiden, 2007); Asamoah-Gyadu, J. K., *African Charismatics: Current Developments within Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana*, (Koninklijke Leiden: Brill NV, 2005); Sackey, B. M. *New Directions in Gender and Religion: the Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches*, (Oxford: Lexington Books, 2006).

As a background to the study, the work explored the leadership opportunities open to women both in the traditional Ghanaian society and in contemporary Ghana. The general phenomenon of women leadership in Ghanaian churches was also examined with the African Indigenous churches as a background. The influence of the changing gender perspectives which have generally affected the place of women in the society have, however been felt, especially in the mainline Protestant churches and the Pentecostalist movement. The Pentecostalist movement has had women taking up significant leadership positions.

To bring the ministry of women leaders in the Ghanaian Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches into perspective, three women leaders were used as case studies. These were Rev. Mrs. Rita Korankye Ankrah (Rev. Rita) Co-Founder of Royalhouse Chapel, Apostle Mrs. Lyanne Koffi (Apostle Lyanne) Founder and General Overseer of the Lord's Garden Ministries and Deaconess Mrs. Hannah Barnes (Deaconess Hannah) Founder and Leader of the Agyenkwa Prayer Centre affiliated to the Church of Pentecost. One deduction one can make after studying these women, is that there are increasing opportunities for women leadership in areas of ministry, such as becoming pastors, establishing their own churches and ministries as well as leading the churches and ministries established. In this way, upcoming women leaders can also be positively impacted.

Though the experiences of these women may reveal a significant change in the Ghanaian attitude towards women leadership, there are still some unique challenges that women face mainly because the society has not fully come to terms with it. For instance these women continuously face the question of acceptance because of certain

restrictions that arise from cultural and biblical beliefs. More so, societal expectations of women's role are inconsistent with the full experiences of women as leaders.

6.2 Summary of Major Findings

There are a number of factors that influence women to take up leadership positions in the church. For instance, the leadership status of the women in the Pentecostalist movement in Ghana is influenced mainly by socio-cultural and biblical frameworks. The socio-cultural framework includes marriage and expectations on girl-children and women such as nurturing, housekeeping and provision of services to the household and society. The Biblical framework includes various interpretations of women's place in the church. Whilst some versions are restrictive on the leadership and decision making roles of women, others seek to promote such roles.

It was established that these frameworks jointly influenced the decision of the women studied to become leaders. These factors include empowerment by the Holy Spirit, marriage and examples from earlier women leaders both in the church and the society, classified by this work as first generation women leaders in the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches.

It was, however, revealed that one main factor that influences women to embrace leadership is when they see fellow women venturing into it. They are thus encouraged and influenced by other successful women leaders to enter leadership. That is to say earlier women have paved the way for the current generation of women leaders. The Pentecostal and Charismatic traditions of Christianity are influencing a new pattern of gender and power relations which promises to give greater opportunities for women in

the church. They have provided some models of leadership such as mentoring women. These earlier women have also raised the level of acceptance for women to become and work as leaders. For instance, Rev. Christie Doe Tetteh who is a thriving woman leader has increased the inclination for the acceptance of women leaders, thus leading to many more women being encouraged to take up those positions. When women are given more opportunities, they can take on more roles of responsibility.

The study revealed that although the women studied had some informal training before assuming leadership positions, none of them had any formal theological training. Though, formal theological training may be an important component of preparation for significant leadership position in the church, the peculiar situations of these women prevented them from accessing it. Deaconess Hannah did not have the capacity to access formal theological education as a result of her low level of formal education. More so, those who had established Prayer Centres before her did not have any formal training to prepare them for the position. Rather, they learnt on the job, usually alluding to the Holy Spirit's guidance. For Rev. Rita, her position, experiences and role as the wife of the head pastor seemed to have prepared her. Apostle Lyanne on the other hand, noted that her leadership of the fellowship which became a church, coupled with her roles as a wife and mother prevented her from initially accessing formal theological training. Apostle Lyanne however, had to take a correspondence course after becoming a leader.

Secular education also plays a key role in the leadership status of women as the lack of that type of training leads to shifting some roles to others, in this case mostly men, as in the case of Deaconess Hannah. Due to her low level of education, she has to

depend heavily on her male assistants where administrative issues at the prayer centre are concerned.

An interesting twist to the women who were studied is that their marriages seem to have played an important role in their assumption of leadership. These women were all married prior to becoming leaders. Rev. Rita has had opportunities for leadership by virtue of her husband's ministry. Indeed, she had been part of his ministry prior to their marriage, specifically since her conversion, which was through the preaching of her would-be husband at the time. In the case of Deaconess Hannah, marriage was an aspect of her call package. Though she was not comfortable with the marriage proposal, she had to accept it. This affected her to the extent that when she finally commenced her ministry she did not inform her husband. The incidence almost resulted in a divorce but it was resolved and the husband has been part of her ministry since then. Apostle Lyanne could also not talk about her ministry without her husband. She maintained that she had had a lot of encouragement and financial support from her husband, whose support went a long way to help her to begin and sustain her ministry.

The findings show a distinction of women leaders; namely those whose ministries are seemingly dependent on spousal relationships and those whose roles are independent of their husbands. As in the case of Rev. Rita, women whose leadership roles are by virtue of their marriages are engaged in mainly gendered roles. In contrast, women whose ministries do not depend on marriage to pastors and thus independent of their husbands, as in the case of Apostle Lyanne and Deaconess Hannah, are breaking into major roles of leadership in the church. They are for instance establishing their own

churches and ministries and leading congregations, though they may also have some interests in gendered roles.

The experiences of these women indicate that women tend to focus on spiritual leadership and as long as they do not have clear opportunities for major leadership roles in the church, they will use inspirational means to assume leadership places in the church. This is because of the belief that the Holy Spirit does things which are beyond humanly acceptable standards.⁵⁵⁴ Apostle Lyanne for instance, stresses that her vow to God was accepted and later confirmed through another experience in which she was instructed to remind Christians about the reality of heaven and hell. She was also asked to fulfil her vow of serving the Lord. After that experience, she was miraculously healed and started a prayer fellowship on her return to Ghana which has developed into a church. Her experience is reflected in the vision of the church which is based on Isaiah 51:3.

Deaconess Hannah, in addition to the prophecies given by Maame Grace of the Edumfa Prayer Centre, also had an independent experience in which God endorsed her ministry and assured her of his sustenance. Rev. Rita on the other hand made a special prayer request before her ordination and this was confirmed during her ordination as a prophecy. In the absence of formal theological training, these experiences are very essential to these women as they serve as the confirmation that God has indeed called them and equipped them for leadership.⁵⁵⁵

⁵⁵⁴ Cox, *Fire from Heaven*, p. 132.

⁵⁵⁵ Powers, 'Your Daughters shall Prophecy', p. 319.

To show their direct spiritual guidance from God and total dependence on Him, Deaconess Hannah noted that Jesus reveals himself to her, while Apostle Lyanne said she hears from God. Rev. Rita operates through word of Knowledge. Their activities are thus based on those supernatural directives they have.

In their area of ministry, the work revealed that Rev. Rita and Apostle Lyanne performed all the sacraments. Deaconess Hannah, however, by virtue of her position in the Church of Pentecost as a deaconess does not perform any sacrament. All the women were nonetheless engaged in teaching, healing and deliverance. Rev. Rita's ministry seems to be more biased towards women. For instance, in her deliverance ministry, she focuses on marital issues and challenges with childbirth. Testimonies cited included her giving out her maternity dresses to some childless couples to wear, as a result of which they were able to conceive and have their own children.

The work revealed that all three women studied, in line with contemporary Pentecostal and Charismatic practices, have adopted some form of imprecatory prayers which focuses on destroying the enemy that is deemed responsible for one's calamities or challenges.⁵⁵⁶ This has been called by Deaconess Hannah as 'summoning the enemy', while Rev. Rita and Apostle Lyanne refer to it as 'back to the sender' prayers. In most cases, this kind of prayers make one to see the enemy as a human agent and has the possibility of making one not to accept responsibility for their actions. It also has the tendency to destroy human relationships as the enemy is mostly seen as a relative, a close friend or a neighbour. Unlike Rev. Rita and Apostle Lyanne, Deaconess Hannah does not use anointing oil. She however encourages her

⁵⁵⁶ Asamoah-Gyadu, *Contemporary Pentecostal Christianity*, pp. 53 – 54.

clients to use a herbal preparation used in similar ways as the anointing oil. It is believed that the traditional preparation if used by faith could cure any disease.

These women, as part of their leadership roles focus on empowering women and supporting children and the underprivileged in the church and society as a whole. The study illustrated ways in which these women are mentoring other women to take up leadership roles. Specifically, Rev. Rita, apart from being in charge of the 'Royal Ladies', (the women's ministry) takes steps to mentor other women into leadership. She prays regularly with the 'Mighty Women', a group she is mentoring to be leaders and also meets with Pastors' wives, lady pastors and wives of leaders in the Royalhouse Chapel and other churches. Apostle Lyanne also mentors younger women through her 'Sisters' Keepers'. The work also showed instances of how these women supported children and the needy through scholarships, the provision of basic needs to orphans, street children, single parents and the aged.

Women leaders negotiate within their religious and cultural spaces in order to perform their roles, while at the same time ensuring they do not disturb the norms. Thus, sometimes they question, and at other times conform to societal norms. They seem to conform to the aspects of societal norms that do not conflict with their leadership but will at the same time protect their position.

It is important to note, however, that these women have become leaders in circumstances where their legitimacy is not fully recognised. In that regard, their leadership can be understood as contributing to the transformation in women's leadership in the church. This is because women giving up leadership because of lack

of acceptance would be a major setback to the realisation of the dream of equality in the church. It is indeed the continuous struggles of women that have led to their increased inclusion in some aspects of society. These women could also be described as courageous, in that having seen the challenges other women had gone through ahead of them; they still braced the storm to dare to become leaders in the church.

The study found out that these women desired to become leaders and that this may have made them to overcome the scepticism that usually surrounds women leadership. Rev. Rita noted that she had desired to become a Catholic nun prior to having her born again experience. Becoming a Pentecostalist Christian, she still had the dream of working for God. Deaconess Hannah from her life story also showed her desire to work for God prior to being called. Apostle Lyanne had made a vow to God to serve him (even though she did not know in what capacity) if she was healed. The desire of these women was a catalyst to their work as leaders, as they accepted to serve in such positions when their desires were confirmed through the various experiences that they had.

The challenges that contemporary Pentecostalist women face in the churches on becoming leaders are not very different from those faced by the first generation of women leaders in the movement. For instance, women continue to face the question of acceptance in their quest to become leaders in the church. This is because they are presumed not to have the capacities to perform major leadership roles such as pastoral duties and leading congregations.

The study, however, revealed that women are expected to show that they are capable of leading in order to be accepted as leaders. This is problematic in the sense that it frustrates the efforts of women gaining opportunities in the church. Men are given the opportunity to learn on the job. Therefore, women should be given the same.

The gradual changes in the society on the perception about women and the example of some women who have broken the barriers to become leaders have influenced the acceptability of women leaders. From the study of the second generation of women leaders, the intensity of the challenge of acceptance is not as in earlier times. This has made them much more acceptable than in earlier times. Thus, a new generation of Pentecostalist women leaders are likely to meet less opposition than the preceding generation.

Another challenge that women face as leaders in the church is how to effectively combine their private and public roles. These different roles seem to conflict in such ways that one needs to put in a lot of effort to ensure a good balance. It came to light that these women delegate aspects of their roles to trusted assistants, while they focus on the more important aspects of their leadership. In overcoming the challenge of role conflicts, these women have had great support from their husbands to enable them make meaningful contributions.

These women have significantly brought roles associated with nurturing and caring to bear on their role as leaders in the Pentecostalist movement. This has made their leadership styles unique, in that they have upgraded the old roles of women in the church. These unique roles could be argued as pastoral gender roles, that is to say

women bring their distinctive feminine nature into leadership in the church. This leads to the assertion that women and men complement each other in the leadership of the church.

Overall, the objectives of this research have been met. Amongst other things, the research sought to investigate the changing status of women in the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches. It was found out that such women no longer owe their leadership status only to the relationship with their pastor or church founder husbands. Rather, they are able to take the initiative to lead in diverse ways as well as even mentor other women into leadership, as the case of the three women studied showed. Women whose leadership status could be traced to their marriage as in the case Rev. Rita, however, play more gendered roles than women whose ministries are independent of their husbands as the examples of Deaconess Hannah and Apostle Lyanne have shown.

The findings of this study have, to a large extent, answered questions that were posed. Recognition of women's leadership by Pentecostal and Charismatic churches has been mainly because women have shown that they have the capacity to lead. This has also been facilitated by the changing roles of women in the society and the significant roles of the first generation women leaders in Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity. The findings also showed that women leaders in taking up new roles are not necessarily integrating into the old moulds of male leaders. That is to say as women break into leadership positions in the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches; they bring in female performances within those new roles. This has some implications

for gender studies in religion in that though women are breaking into male-dominated areas, the changing roles may not be radical.

The findings of this study are quite different from earlier works on women leaders in Pentecostal and Charismatic churches, such as those by Jane Soothill and Brigid Sackey. Firstly, this work has focused on the second generation of women leaders in the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches. Secondly, the work showed that societal changes in the status of women have been one of the motivations that led the women studied to assume leadership positions. This is quite different from Sackey's assertion that the status of women in religious leadership influences the status of women in the society.⁵⁵⁷ This work has also shown that the reverse is true in that societal influences have led to some level of acceptance of women into leadership in the church.

Soothill argues that Charismatic women leaders such as Francisca Duncan-Williams and Christie Doe Tetteh 'create networks of patronage based on female clientalism'.⁵⁵⁸ In other words, she argues that both spouses of Charismatic church leaders and female heads of churches play similar leadership roles. This study, on the other hand has revealed that, in the case of the second generation of female heads of churches, women whose ministries are independent of their husbands are skewed towards general church leadership while that of spouses of church leaders are more gendered. There is thus an emerging difference in the roles of women leaders who are pastors' wives and those whose husbands are not pastors.

⁵⁵⁷ Sackey, *New Directions in Gender*, p. 201.

⁵⁵⁸ Soothill, 'Gender, Social Change', p. 228.

6.3 Recommendations

In light of the preceding discussions, the following suggestions and recommendations are made, to further enhance the participation of women in significant leadership positions in the church.

Families, the church and the society, in bringing up children (both male and female) should give them holistic and balanced training, formally and informally to be active in every task. If jobs and chores are not differentiated between male and female, they may be influenced in future to use their potentials to the full. It would also push them above questions of maleness or femaleness as a basis for qualification to take up leadership tasks. It would also lead to increased acceptance of women in leadership position in the church and society as a whole.

With the increasing number of Pentecostal and Charismatic churches, there is the need for a policy by agencies that give these churches the permission to operate to ensure that all these churches belong to ecumenical groups. This would ensure accountability and checks on their activities as well as create the opportunity for learning among churches. With Royalhouse Chapel being a member of the Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council, Rev. Rita has the opportunity to meet with other pastors' wives. Apostle Lyanne for her part does not belong to any ecumenical group. It is thus recommended that she joins an ecumenical group as this would create a greater opportunity for her to mentor more women to harness their potentials while she will also learn from individual heads of churches and benefit from the council leadership programmes. This will impart her ministry as well.

It is recommended for the Church of Pentecost to take a second and critical look at their stance regarding women leadership in the church. From the examples of Rev. Rita and Apostle Lyanne, it is clear that women can perform creditably as leaders when given the opportunity. This recommendation comes in the light of the church's becoming stricter on the establishment of prayer centres. The establishment of such centres was one major avenue through which women exhibited their spiritual gifts. The ban by curtailing the opportunities open to women is detrimental to the capacity of women to access leadership roles in the church.

Women leaders in the church should not give in to frustration and bitterness but rather have a positive attitude, using the example of these women as well as many other foremothers who survived worse treatments to safeguard the current forms of recognition that women have.⁵⁵⁹ To be able to stand in the face of challenges, it is important for women leaders to also surround themselves 'with supportive and encouraging family and friends'⁵⁶⁰ as in the case of the women studied. Women leaders who also work with more men need to be aware of the cultural setting in order to succeed in their leadership efforts.

Though spiritual preparation and enablement is important as a quality for leadership, formal theological education is also very necessary. Formal theological education will impact on women's leadership in the church in that they will have better theological basis for their work as leaders. It is thus important for women leaders to go through formal theological education as that would enable them to learn the rigours of

⁵⁵⁹ Rosa, 'Leading with Grace', p. 120-121.

⁵⁶⁰ Kunbi Labeodan, 'Are Women their own Enemies?' in Oduyoye M. A. (ed.), *Women in Religion and Culture: Essays in Honour of Constance Buchanan*, (Ibadan: Sefer, 2007), p.127.

leadership. To make formal theological education more accessible to women, theological institutions can design their programmes and times to meet the needs of women.

It is essential that women take concrete steps to encourage and empower other women into leadership. Rev. Rita, meeting with other pastors' wives would informally train them and guide them, since there is no organised forum for pastors' wives in the face of increasing number of Pentecostal and Charismatic churches across the country. Since women have not gained full acceptance to perform roles as leaders, women leaders need to make concrete efforts to train or mentor other women to take after them.

In this vein, these women leaders, heading institutions they either founded or co-founded need to have succession plans. This would give them the opportunity to mentor women who would be capable of taking over from them as this would also ensure continuity of women leaders in the history of Pentecostalism.

Indeed, because of the struggles of women in leadership position, it is important and expected that women who are in privileged positions help their fellow women. The absence of this has made some women to be accused of being selfish in the sense of achieving their selfish agenda. There is thus the need for women in leadership positions to be interested in promoting women's agenda in general.

With the second generation of women leaders in the church, women are redefining their ministry in the church. These women bring a new face and phase to the

leadership in the church. In spite of the challenges and impediments they face, these women leaders have contributed their quota to the growth of the church. It is hoped that the example of these women would create greater opportunities for future female leadership in the church. Women must thus focus on the space they have by making it an enabling environment for enhancing leadership potentials. The nature and style of male leadership should not be the standard for women as women leadership may not be the same as that of their male counterparts.

Some Pentecostal and Charismatic preachers have been advocating the need for men to be more supportive of their wives, especially in housekeeping. It is worth noting that the husbands of the women being studied have been supportive of these women though not necessarily in housekeeping. This has enabled the women to serve as leaders. It thus, needs to be investigated, whether the motivation for the said preachers' call for men to be more supportive in the home is influenced by modern trends or a response to gender awareness.

This research has shown that women are capable as leaders in the church and they have made unique contributions to the growth of the church. Even though there are different categories of women leaders in the church, this work was limited to the head pastor's wife, a woman founding her church and a founder and leader of a prayer centre. It is thus recommended that these different categories of leaders such as women pastors in the ministry of others, women pastors in couple ministry in the Pentecostalist movement be studied.

There is the need for men and women to work in partnership. The male pastor may have his strengths and the female pastor would have hers but there could be peculiar issues that a male or female leader would be in the best position to address, depending on the particular context. Thus, male and female leaders need to come together to work as a team as they can complement one another. It is hoped that this complementation would be appreciated on its own merit and not necessarily as a matter of gender equality.

Subsequently, a further study into ways in which women leaders in the Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches can be given further recognition to make them contribute even more, both to the church in Ghana and the wider Ghanaian society is highly recommended.

An important factor in the quest for the recognition of women leaders is the acceptance of their role by male pastors/clergy. It is therefore recommended that a study be carried out on the understanding of female ministry by their male counterparts. This would find co-efficiencies for the resolution of the issue of roles and gender specificity in the Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches.

A study of the third generation of women leaders would show continuity in women's leadership in the church. This would study whether there are changes in the experiences, roles and challenges of women leaders in the Pentecostalist movement. This would further contribute to a historical study of women in the Pentecostal and Charismatic traditions.

There have also been studies on women leaders in the mainline churches in Ghana. A comparative study of women in major leadership positions across denominations in Ghana is thus recommended. This would unearth whether the issues confronting these women leaders are common to them or are drawn along denominational lines.

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Kasoa.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Interview Guides

INTERVIEW GUIDE 1

For the Woman Pastor

Becoming a pastor:

Can you tell me about yourself before you became a pastor? (Church, Work etc)

When did you become a pastor?

What inspired you to become a pastor?

Where there any support systems? (Family, friends, associations, society etc)

Did you find any role models (political, society, church) who inspired you to become a pastor?

What personal steps did you take to become a pastor?

Did you receive any training in a seminary?

What was your experience there? Was there teaching on gender roles? Did you agree or disagree?

How did you feel at the time you became a pastor?

How do you feel now?

Did you face any obstacles or hindrances?

How did you cope with it?

In the ministry

When was your church/ministry established?

What are your engagements as a pastor/leader?

What/who informs/influences your programmes?

What has been the focus of your preaching/teaching?

Do you see yourself different from a male pastor/leader? Explain

Do you have any other engagements apart from being a pastor? What do you do in addition to being a pastor?

Membership

What is the membership trend over the years?

Male and female: which do you attract?

Does being a woman affect the membership in any way?

Projects

What social services are you engaged in?

Do you see your interests in projects different from the male pastors? Explain.
(Are you engaged in some traditional roles of women?)

Does your private business if any influence your projects?

How do these project influence development?

What is the impact of the projects having on the ministry?

Are there things you feel you are supposed to do?

Relationships

What associations or networks do you belong to?

How does your position influence your life in the society?

How do women (also men) in the church (society) relate to you?

How do male (female) pastors relate to you?

Do you see your relation male (female) problematic?

Are there things in the organization of the church that encourages/discourages
you as a woman leader?

Can you see any support systems in your home, society for women leadership?

How do you combine your role as a pastor, wife and mother?

Prospects and challenges

Are there things you wished you would have done but unable to do?

What do think about women leaders in the church in Ghana?

Would you advice other women to become women pastors? Why?

Others

Do you find anything in the Ghanaian culture that encourages or discourages
leadership position of women?

INTERVIEW GUIDE 2

The Pastor's Wife

Becoming a pastor's wife & pastor:

Can you tell me about yourself before you became a pastor wife and a pastor?
(Church, Work etc)

How long were you pastor's wife before becoming a pastor yourselves?

When did you become a pastor?

What inspired you to become a pastor?

Where there any support systems? (Family, friends, associations, society etc)

Did you find any role models (political, society, church) who inspired you to become a pastor?

What personal steps did you take to become a pastor?

Did you receive any training a seminary?

What was your experience there? Was there teaching on gender roles? Did you agree or disagree?

How did you feel at the time you became a pastor?

How do you feel now?

Did you face any obstacles or hindrances?

How did you cope with it?

In the ministry

What are your engagements/responsibilities as a pastor wife and a pastor?

What/who informs/influences your programmes?

What has been the focus of your preaching/teaching?

Is your focus different from your husband? Explain

Do you have any other engagements apart from being a pastor? What do you do?

Has your ordination changed or increased your responsibilities?

What contributions have you made or make to the ministry?

Projects

What social services are you engaged in?

Do you see your interests in projects different from the male pastors? Explain.
(Are you engaged in some traditional roles of women?)

Does your private business if any influence your projects?

How do these project influence development?

What is the impact of the projects having on the ministry?

Are there things you feel you are supposed to do?

Relationships

What associations or networks do you belong to?

How does your position influence your life in the society?

How do women (also men) in the church (society) relate to you?

How do male (female) pastors relate to you?

Do you see your relation male (female) problematic?

Are there things in the organization of the church that encourages/discourages you as a woman leader?

Can you see any support systems in your home, society for women leadership?

How do you combine your role with traditional roles of women?

Prospects and Challenges

Are there things you wished you would have done but unable to do?

What do think about women leaders in the church in Ghana?

Would you advice other women to become women pastors? Why?

Others

Do you find anything in the Ghanaian culture that encourages or discourages leadership position of women?

INTERVIEW GUIDE 3

Lay Leader (Leader of Prayer Camp)

Becoming a leader:

Can you tell me about yourself before you became a leader? (Church, Work etc)

When did you become a leader?

What inspired you to become a leader?

Where there any support systems? (Family, friends, associations, society etc)

Did you find any role models (political, society, church) who inspired you to become a pastor?

What personal steps did you take to become a leader of a prayer camp?

Did you receive any training?

What was your training experience? Was there teaching on gender roles? Did you agree or disagree?

How did you feel at the time you became a leader of the prayer camp?

How do you feel now?

Did you face any obstacles or hindrances?

How did you cope with it?

In the ministry

When was your prayer camp established?

What are your engagements as the leader of the prayer camp?

What/who informs/influences your programmes?

What has been the focus of your preaching/teaching?

Do you see yourself different from pastors in the church? Explain

Do you have any other engagements? What do you do?

Membership

How many people patronize the camp in a week?

Male and female: which do you attract?

Does being a woman affect kind of people who come to the camp in any way?

Projects

What social services are you engaged in?

Are there things you feel you are supposed to do?

Do you see your interests in projects different from the male pastors? Explain. (Are you engaged in some traditional roles of women?)

Does your private business if any influence your projects?

How do these project influence development?

What is the impact of the projects having on the ministry?

Relationships

What associations or networks do you belong to?

How does your position influence your life in the society?

How do women (also men) in the church (society) relate to you?

How do pastors in the church relate to you?

Do you see your relation male (female) problematic?

Are there things in the organization of the church that encourages/discourages you as a woman leader?

Can you see any support systems in your home, society for women leadership?

How do you combine your role with your traditional role as a woman?

Prospects and Challenges

What do think about women leaders in the church in Ghana?

What is your position on women pastors in the church?

Would you advice other women to become women pastors? Why?

Are there things you wished you would have done but unable to do?

Others

Do you find anything in the Ghanaian culture that encourages or discourages leadership position of women?

Appendix B: Pictures



Rev. Mrs. Rita Korankye Ankrah



2010 Christmas party by Royalhouse Chapel for the less privileged and street children.



Apostle Mrs. Lyanne Koffi, General Overseer of The Lord's Garden Ministries



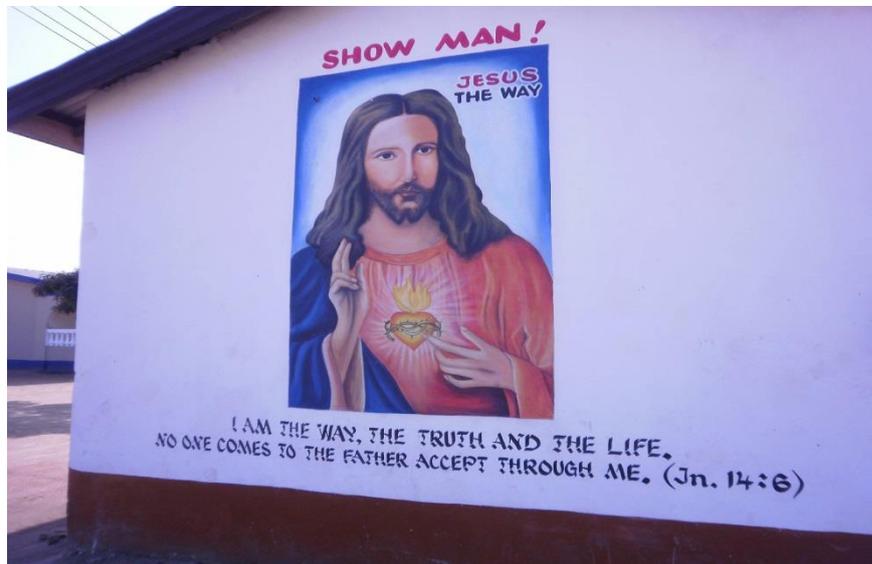
Inside view of The Lord's Garden Ministries' Headquarters at Akosombo, Eastern Region (Photo taken April 23, 2011)



Outside view of The Lord's Garden Ministries' Headquarters at Akosombo (Photo taken April 23, 2011)



Deaconess Mrs. Hannah Barnes, Founder and Leader of Agyenkwa Prayer Centre at Kasoa in the Central Region



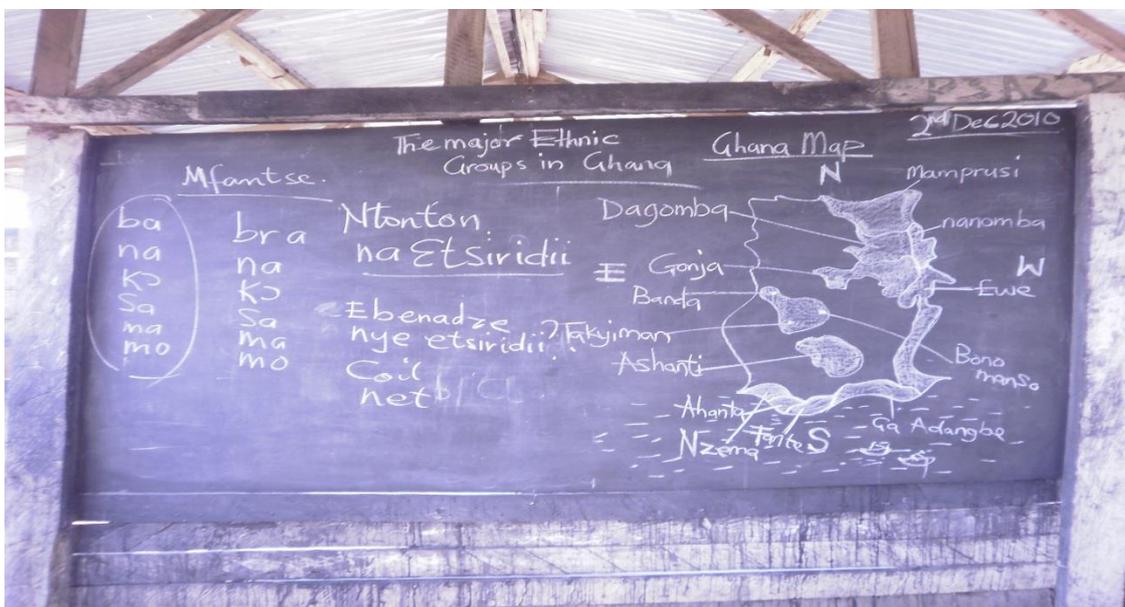
Painting Jesus done by divine instruction at Agyenkwa Prayer Centre. People stand or kneel before the picture to pray especially during the midnight hours



Some of the residential accomodation at Agyenkwa Prayer Centre



A view of the school block of Agyenkwa Prayer Centre



A board in one of the classrooms of the Agyenkwa Prayer centre school

Appendix C: Communiqué of Church of Pentecost

THE CHURCH OF PENTECOST - GENERAL HEADQUARTERS

COMMUNIQUE ISSUED BY APOSTLES, PROPHETS AND EVANGELISTS OF THE CHURCH OF PENTECOST AT THE END OF THEIR ANNUAL PRAYER MEETINGS HELD AT THE PENTECOST PENSION GUEST HOUSE, GBAWE, ACCRA, FROM JANUARY 19 – 21, 2010

We, members of the College of Apostles, Prophets and Evangelists of The Church of Pentecost, after deep reflections in the above-stated meeting, on trends in the contemporary Church globally, and in The Church of Pentecost, in particular, have collectively agreed on the following decisions to retain the Church's growing youth and adult membership as well as open the Church's doors to people of different socio-economic and cultural backgrounds to have unhindered access to the total gospel in its churches worldwide:

a. that, the issue of head covering, which has been the source of embarrassment to female visitors to the Church over the years, has no categorical biblical foundation as a requirement for salvation and should, as such, not be imposed on church members or visitors to the Church's worship services;

b. that, having fully examined the women head covering passage of 1 Corinthians 11:2-16, it has become obvious that what Paul wanted to put across is not clear;

c. that, a critical examination of the historical records, such as circulars of successive Chairmen of the Church from 1953 to 2007 revealed that the forefathers of the Church, particularly the Founder, Rev. James McKeown, did not discourage or encourage the covering of the head by women; but that he had rather admonished the Church through a circular letter of August 7, 1967, that the leaders should not meddle in the private affairs of church members by prescribing dress codes for them. He had taught that church members dress decently and modestly;

d. that, the practice of head covering might have crept into the Church's practices from the fact that it was traditionally required of women in Ghana to cover their head before speaking to their kings and this might have led foundational women of the Church to insist on appearing before the Lord, the King of kings, with their head covered;

e. that, it had been observed from a study of the socio-cultural situation in the country, that even though women in the country were traditionally expected to cover their head when they came of age, that practice is no longer tenable in the country.

The College of Apostles, Prophets and Evangelists, realising that many denominations in Ghana are also confronted with the same theological dilemma posed by the issue of head covering by women, therefore, directs:

- a. that, the entire membership of the Church consider the issue of the covering of head by women in the spirit of Christian maturity so as not to offend anybody with regard to this controversial matter, which appears to have defied theological and hermeneutical agreement;
- b. that, female visitors who attend church services without a head covering should be accepted as they are, without being either turned back or offered a head covering, since head covering does not subtract from a person's salvation;
- c. that, females in the Church who may or may not want to cover their head during church services should not be seen as sinners or being less spiritual;
- d. that, women should fashion their hairstyles in a decent, modest and appropriate manner to the glory of God;
- e. that, church members appreciate the progressive changes in the socio-cultural environment in which the gospel is preached in order to make the gospel relevant to its hearers;
- f. that, the wearing of seductive or sexually-provocative dress should be discouraged in the church;
- g. that, women must avoid the practice of cleavage (the partial exposure of breasts) as that does not glorify the Lord.

The College of Apostles, Prophets and Evangelists further directs that female visitors in decent trousers and Rastafarians or persons in dread locks be accepted in fellowship in the spirit of Christian love, while couples or families desiring to sit together at church be allowed to sit under the feet of Jesus to learn.

While the purpose of these directives is not to stop teaching of the genuine word of God or to correct people in righteousness, the College recognises the present culturally divergent nature of the Church and its mandate to disciple people of all nations and cultures.

The College believes that the early church, when confronted with culturally-motivated traditions, resolved the matter by appealing to Scripture and the Holy Spirit. It appreciates, also, that the Founder of the Church, Pastor James McKeown, like the apostle Paul, provided a biblical pattern for global church growth whereby teachings that are cardinal to salvation are to be kept (2 Thess. 2: 13-15), and others that were only religiously or culturally-based could be changed (Gal. 1:14).

The College hereby urges all church members to accommodate one another in love, unity and for the glory of God (1 Cor. 10:23-33), and joins Apostle Paul in stating: "Give no offence, either to the Jews, or to the Greeks or to the church of God (1 Cor. 10:32).

Opoku Onyinah (Apostle Dr)

Chairman

Appendix D: Circular Letters from CoP Headquarters

THE CHURCH OF PENTECOST GENERAL HEADQUARTERS

Founder: Rev. James McKeown

Office of the Chairman
P. O. Box 2194
Accra - Ghana

Our Ref: COP/CO/VL.25/0448/2011

May 7, 2011

**All Assemblies
The Church of Pentecost
Worldwide**

Dearly Beloved,

PROPAGATION OF FALSE TEACHINGS AND PRACTICES AT THE EDMUMFA PRAYER CENTRE

Members of the Church public are hereby informed that:

- ▶ The Church of Pentecost (Spiritual Revival and Healing Centre), Edumfa, led by Deaconess Grace Mensah (Auntie Grace) and her husband, Elder Mensah, has become the epicentre of the teaching of erroneous doctrines and the propagation of false practices both on radio and at the Prayer Centre by Mrs. Rebecca Bedford (daughter of Auntie Grace) and her husband, Emmanuel Bedford, (formerly Elder Bedford);
- ▶ The Church leadership in Cape Coast has been informed by the Bedfords that a new ministry, called the Edumfa Heavenly Ministry, has been registered at the Centre with the Registrar General's Department as a legal entity of its own. This is also evidenced by the signboard at the Centre;
- ▶ After several unsuccessful attempts to get the Bedfords to subscribe to sound biblical doctrines that The Church of Pentecost upholds, the leadership of the Church in the Cape Coast Area had Emmanuel and Rebecca Bedford suspended in 2008.
- ▶ The couple have since treated the suspension with utter disregard. They have continued actively with their ministry at the Centre without restraint and are still propagating their erroneous teachings.
- ▶ The following are some of the erroneous teachings going on at the Centre:

- a. They claim that Christians should abstain from eating beef, pork, octopus, tilapia, *kako*, canned fish, particularly *salmon sardine* (Queen of the Coast), and the non-alcoholic beverage, Malt. They teach that these and other edibles are the products of *Maame Water* and that those who consume them are hell-bound.

The Church of Pentecost disagrees with these teachings because the Bible teaches, 'In latter times, some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. Such teachings come through hypocritical liars... They forbid people to marry and order them to abstain from certain foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth. For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, because it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer' (1 Tim. 4:1-5; Col. 2:16-23).

- b. The Bedfords claim that dresses with 'joromi' designs are cursed and should not be worn by Christians. This we dispute with God's Word. The Bible says that 'this matter arose because some false brothers had infiltrated our ranks to spy out on the freedom we have in Christ Jesus and to make us slaves. We did not give in to them for a moment, so that the truth of the gospel might remain with you' (Gal. 2:4-5).
- c. They teach that women should refrain from *perming* their hair and the use of hair extensions (mesh, Rasta, etc.) because those hair-dos prevent the women from entering heaven.
- d. Furthermore, they claim that the use of earrings, necklaces and other forms of jewellery is an abomination to the Lord and anyone who wears them is kept under spiritual bondage and has a mark of the Beast and needs repentance for re-baptism.

The Church of Pentecost refutes this teaching because the mark of the Beast has no reference to hair plaiting, earrings, etc. Rather, the reference is to those 'who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name' (Rev. 14:11). It has to be noted, however, that the Lord expects Christians to be modest in their dressing or appearance. The Bible says, 'Your

beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewellery and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight' (1 Pet. 3:3-4). This does not mean that Christians are not to wear golden jewellery. Moderation is the key lesson here.

When the early church was confronted with false teachings similar to what is being propagated by the Bedfords, the Holy Spirit, through the Apostle Paul wrote, 'Therefore, do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. These are a shadow of the things that were to come: the reality, however, is found in Christ. Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you for the prize. Such a person goes into great detail about what he has seen, and his unspiritual mind puffs him up with idle notions. He has lost connection with the Head... Since you died with Christ to the basic principles of this world, why, as though you still belonged to it, do you submit to its rules: Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch! These are all destined to perish with use, because they are based on human commands and teachings. Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence' (Col. 2:16-23).

- e. The Bedfords claim that water baptism should be done in Jesus' name only. This is contrary to Jesus' own instructions in Matthew 28:19, which states, 'Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit'. The Church of Pentecost upholds and practices this command of the Lord.
- f. The Bedfords have been re-baptising Christians who have already been baptised in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Similarly, they have been re-baptising Christians who have eaten beef, pork, tilapia, octopus, *kako* and *salmon sardine* or consumed the non-alcoholic beverage, Malt. Christians who have used hair extensions, jewellery as well as those who have used 'joromi' designs are re-baptised by the Bedfords.

- ▶ The aforementioned and many such teachings are scripturally and doctrinally wrong and The Church of Pentecost does not subscribe to them. The Church of Pentecost upholds the doctrine that salvation is attained only by faith in Jesus Christ (Acts 4:12, Gal. 2: 16).
- ▶ The inability of Auntie Grace and her husband Papa Mensah to handle the case appeared as if they were in support of what has been going on. This was evidenced by the fact that they have provided the Bedfords ample space to propagate their false doctrines under the ambit of the Centre. They had permitted the Bedfords, who have been under suspension, to preach, give testimony, lead praises or worship publicly in the Church.
- ▶ Being concerned about the unfortunate teachings at the Edumfa Prayer Centre, the Executive Council sent a high-powered delegation to meet the leadership of the Prayer Centre on April 18, 2011. The pleas and solicitations of the delegation fell on deaf ears. The Bedfords made it categorically clear that their teachings are from God and that they 'ought to obey God rather than men'.
- ▶ In view of the above, the Executive Council has come to the conclusion that:
 - a. Emmanuel and Rebecca Bedford are not prepared to change their ways and refrain from propagating their erroneous doctrines and practices.
 - b. They would want to operate their own ministry and continue with the propagation of the erroneous teachings and practices.
 - c. Deaconess Grace Mensah and her husband, Elder Mensah, as leaders at the Centre, are not able to call the couple to order and have allowed the unwholesome teachings to prevail at the Centre.
- ▶ In the light of the dangers that such erroneous teachings and practices can have on church members, the Executive Council is left with no other option than to take the following painful decisions:
 - a. The Church of Pentecost shall maintain a normal local assembly at Edumfa outside the premises of the Prayer Centre. This is to publicly disassociate The Church of Pentecost from the strange teachings being propagated by the Edumfa Heavenly Ministry at the Centre;

- b. The Church is withdrawing its support and recognition of the Edumfa Spiritual Revival and Healing Centre with immediate effect;
- c. Mrs. Rebecca Bedford and her husband Mr. Emmanuel Bedford are excommunicated forthwith from The Church of Pentecost;
- d. All ordained officers and members in good standing at Edumfa are to worship at The Church of Pentecost's newly acquired land to be immediately developed.
- e. Pastors, pastors' wives, officers and members of The Church of Pentecost are strongly admonished not to patronise any prayer meeting organised at the Edumfa Prayer Centre or Edumfa Heavenly Ministry as those who patronise such meetings do so at their own risk. In addition, all church members are advised not to listen to any of the teachings of Rebecca and Emmanuel Bedford on radio, tapes or any other means.

Those who have ears must listen to what the Spirit says to the churches.

May the Lord God Almighty bless His Church.



Opoku Onyinah (Apostle Dr)

CHAIRMAN

Issued by the General Council of The Church of Pentecost on this 7th Day of May 2011.

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**THE CHURCH OF PENTECOST – HEADQUARTERS***(GENERAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE)*

Ref.: COP/GSO/348/2004

P O Box 2194

Accra

26th May 2004

ALL AREA HEADS
THE CHURCH OF PENTECOST
GHANA

Dear Sir,

PRAYER CENTRES

We wish to thank you for your cooperation with Headquarters as we seek to streamline activities of Prayer Centres operating under the name of The Church of Pentecost.

As discussed during the Heads' meeting preceding the 10th Extraordinary Council Meeting, Area Heads are to ensure that no new Prayer Centres are opened without approval from the Executive Council.

Heads are to ensure that prayers organised in the local assemblies and District levels are not turned into prayer camps.

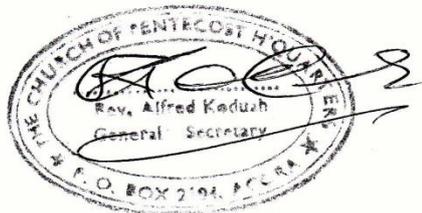
Furthermore, no one is to be trained as a prophet/prophets to open new camps. Other directives in the Prayer Centre guidelines are to be strictly adhered to.

We trust that if these decisions are implemented the church would be saved from degenerating into a state all of us will not wish to see.

Find attached Prayer Centre list currently on our file at the Head Office.

Thank you.

Yours in His Vineyard,



cc: The Chairman, COP HQ, Accra.
The IMD, COP HQ, Accra

Appendix E: Policy Guidelines on Prayer Camps

GUIDELINES FOR OPERATING PRAYER CENTRES IN THE CHURCH OF PENTECOST

- A. **NAME**
A Prayer "Camp" shall be called "PENTECOST PRAYER CENTRE" with the name of place of location indicated e.g. "PENTECOST PRAYER CENTRE, ABLEKUMA", "PENTECOST PRAYER CENTRE, ASAFO, etc.
- B. **RELATIONSHIP TO THE CHURCH**
1. Prayer Centres are accepted in the Church, to be led by Ordained Officers of the Church. Two types are recognised: Residential and Non-Residential.
 2. Regional/Area Heads should send Ministers to officially minister at these Centres. The Centre Leader and the Pastor should co-operate in leading the session. Presiding Elder (not necessarily Centre Leaders) shall preside in Assemblies where Centres are operated. Visiting Pastors to Prayer Centres must be accorded the recognition due them and allowed to play their ministerial roles.
 3. Centre Leaders are expected to attend all Church meetings including Presbytery Meetings, Conventions and Rallies in their respective Assemblies, Districts and Regions. Pastors may include Centre Leaders when drawing up their programmes.
 4. Centre Leaders be permitted to use their gifts when and where necessary at Church gatherings.
 5. The period of main prayer meeting at all Prayer Centres shall be regulated and a common prayer period adopted by all Prayer Centres. This is to eliminate the on-going practice of some members who move from one centre to another within the same month.
 6. Regular teaching Seminars shall be organised by Regional Heads/Pastors/National Prayer Camp Review Committee for Centre Leaders so that activities at the Centres are done along Biblical lines.
 7. The use of titles like Prophet, Prophetess, etc. is to be discouraged; Just maintain Elder, Deaconess, etc. Calling to office of Prophet/Prophetess is the prerogative of the Executive Council and would be considered on its merit.
- C. **PATTERN**
1. Normal Pentecostal Service and practices as accepted in the Church.
 2. Registration at the Centres should be without fees; offerings are to be taken to meet overhead costs – electricity, water, etc.
 3. Residential attendants must sign in and out.
 4. They should indicate whether healed, etc. when signing out.

5. Normal dressing, no specially prescribed ones, like white, red or whatever for leaders or attendants.
6. Restrictions on women in their menstrual period, use of shoes, handshakes, etc. are not acceptable. Kneeling before the Leader should be discouraged. Use of special stools/chairs by the leaders is not allowed.

D. **DOCTRINE**

1. Biblical methods of healing must be applied. Demon-possessed who are not insane shall not be chained. The insane may not be chained for a long period without written permission from relatives. Relatives who are attendants must be present to care for the sick. Care should be taken so that those chained are not injured in any way.
2. Gestures like 'shooting' of satan, etc. should not be practised.
3. No blessing of water, no use of candles, no florida water, etc.
4. Biblical teaching and instruction on fasting and prayers should be maintained. It is the leaders who should do more fasting. The sick should not be forced to fast. Leaders shall interview and examine counselee carefully before prescribing a period of fasting for him/her.
5. No sale, or supply of medicine/herbs by Centre Leaders to counselee as regular substitute or aid to divine healing.
6. Spiritist beliefs attached to things like water, and food items sold at Centres are not allowed.
7. Manifestation of ancestral spirits, spirits of the dead, etc. is not at all accepted. When demonic spirits manifest themselves they should not be encouraged to speak but rebuked instantly, (Mark 1:21ff).
8. Testimonies of atrocities taken from demon-possessed, written down and published is not allowed. It is unscriptural.
9. Medical cases should be referred to Practitioners where necessary. There must be vehicles at residential Centres to rush medical cases to hospital.
10. As the practice in the Church is, new converts are baptised by ministers only. Prayer Centre Leaders or their assigns who are not ministers of the Church are not to baptise new converts in the camps.

E. **GOVERNMENT**

1. There should be a Management Committee with the District Pastor as Chairman and the Regional Head, Ex-Officio member. It is the responsibility of the Committee to see to it that all guidelines for Prayer Centres are implemented.
2. Regular meetings of this Committee are to be held as regards the welfare of the Centre and Centre Leaders.

3. Regular termly reports are to be submitted by the Committee to the Area Head to be embodied in Area report to Chairman.
4. No one shall start a Prayer Centre without the prior knowledge and permission of the Executive Council.
5. Mushroom Centres springing up are to be discouraged; members with healing gifts should operate within the Church.

F. **ENVIRONMENT**

1. Proper accommodation, e.g. chalets, use of foam mattresses.
2. Good sanitation, place of convenience, environmental cleanliness.
3. Good drinking water and food where needed.
4. The counselee must be interviewed and segregated according to type of disease.
5. Without these facilities a residential Centre must be closed down. It can only operate as a non-residential Centre.
6. Management Committee shall ensure that the residential Centre gets these facilities.

G. **CONTROL AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

1. Books for recording accounts must be kept and made available for inspection in line with Church regulation.
2. The Management Committee shall assist to put in place a Finance Committee to streamline Income and Expenditure at each Centre. Normal Church service proceeds, Tithes and Missionary offering should go to the appropriate quarters.
3. Personal gifts to Centre Leaders are to be excluded from item 2.
4. Statements of account are to be attached to termly reports.
5. The Area and or District Executive are to visit the Centre to make sure that it is conforming to our pattern of worship, doctrine, and discipline.
6. The Church (through the Centre Management Committee, Area Executive) is to assist financially when and where necessary with projects at the Centre.
7. On no account should a centre that operates in the name of the Church be considered a personal possession.
8. With respect to property owned by Prayer Centre Leaders attempt shall be made to streamline the legal implications. All centres are to acquire property (especially land) in the name of the Church. Personal property of leaders must be clearly separated from the Centre's/Church's and registered as such.

9. Henceforth, all qualities required of an officer according to 1 Timothy 3:1-7 should be found in any one who aspires to become a Prayer Centre Leader. The Leader must have been baptised in the Holy Spirit. (Acts 6:3-4). And their assistants must be matured, spirit-filled.
10. No person should travel from one Area or District with the view to opening a Prayer Centre in another.
11. Centre Leaders **CANNOT** ordain others to qualify them to start their own Centres elsewhere.

H. **DISCIPLINE**

The Prayer Centre shall be subject to the Constitution, Rules and Conduct of The Church of Pentecost.

I. **RECOGNITION**

Prayer Centres that conform to the prescribed guidelines shall be issued with Certificate of Recognition by the Executive Council duly signed by Chairman and General Secretary. Similarly centres that persistently refuse to comply with the guidelines shall be blacklisted and may not be recognised by the Church.

Appendix F: Seminar Paper on Legal Implications of Prayer Camps

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS IN OPERATING PRAYER CAMPS

It gives me the greatest pleasure to be invited by the organizers of this programme to share these few thoughts with you. First of all I wish to thank the Lord for the travelling mercies and the opportunity to be with you this afternoon.

Secondly, I wish to thank the organizers of this meeting for the invitation to participate in this programme.

Thirdly, I wish to show appreciation to you the participants, for making yourselves available as vessels in the church who pray for healing, deliverance, salvation and for several other benefits that both members and non-members of the church derive from your ministry. I am a beneficiary of your ministry since; I know a number of you personally.

Having such important intercessory ministry it is necessary to show yourselves as workmen approved and rightly handling the word of truth so says the Good Old Book. The ministry that you have been called into is a noble one and you need to be

well informed not only of Biblical issues but also national as well as issues that affect our communities and our environment.

We need to be reminded as servants of the Lord and for that matter as Ghanaians that any vocation or profession we engage in must be regulated by the laws of this country. After all the Church of Pentecost was incorporated and operated under relevant laws of this country.

Your ministry cannot be an exception; we, i.e. all members of the church, need to be appraised of the laws of this country especially those laws, which have legal implications on our activities in the prayer camps.

In my opinion, the inclusion of this topic, which is the legal implications in operating a prayer camp, is very opportune. It is an indication that the Church of Pentecost is moving in a balanced direction i.e. both spiritually and physically.

Permit me at this juncture, to state that the operations of prayer camps relate to the following issues.

1. Human Rights
2. Criminality
3. Property Rights
4. Trial by ordeal
5. Libel, Defamation etc,
6. Environmental

The above mentioned legal and other related issues are the challenges that are likely to confront your ministry as operators of Prayer Camps. Some of you may consider the above examples far-fetched. You may be deceiving yourselves, to think that the above-mentioned issues are not likely to affect you because of the measures or controls you have put in place to regulate affairs in our various camps.

Let us at this stage; discuss the issues one after the other.

I would like to begin by stating that the 1992 Constitution gives us the freedom to practice any religion and to manifest such practices. This is provided for, in Article 21 (1) of the Constitution We however must recognize that, freedom places upon us a responsibility to uphold the constitution and laws,

which bestow upon us this freedom. It is also important, to state that until this responsibility is accepted, abuse of that freedom is inevitable.

In the light of this, I would like to elaborate further as follows.

Some of the practices that are engaged in, in some of the prayer camps such as chaining mentally disabled persons on stakes may be well intentioned.

However, the chaining may sometimes result in bruises, on the bodies of the patients. Such persons may not be able to bathe for sometime. At the same time, it may be necessary to ask them to fast in the hope that they may get well.

This act, I must say if it done under duress, infringes on the fundamental right in respect of human dignity, which is provided for by Article 15 (1) (b) of the Constitution.

Secondly, there are outright cases where certain persons are and labelled as witches. If there is no proof to the fact that such

a person is indeed a witch this allegation is termed defamation and has its penalties in the law.

Extraction of confessions from patrons of Prayer Camps could amount to obtaining the confessions by duress.

Thirdly, certain testimonies could also infringe on the rights of spouses. Especially those testimonies that expose the marriage institution's confidentiality to public ridicule. Married couples are entitled to some level of confidentiality except where there is danger of harm being caused or afflicted on one of the parties.

Fourthly there is need for the operators of Prayer Camps to keep records of activities that go on in the camps. Such records could provide evidence in defence in the face of litigation.

Fifthly, issues of security are taken for granted in some of the prayer camps. We often assume that the Lord is in control. Negligence at law is a serious offence. The law requires that the owner of a premises must exercise due diligence with regard to occupants of the premises.

In other words operators of prayers camp must provide for contingencies against any unforeseen events, which may endanger the life of persons who come on such premises. Failure to do this can lead to litigation and claims for punitive damages.

Sixthly, there are also cases, where certain items belonging to a supposed oppressed person, which are suspected to be the cause of the person's problem, are burned or destroyed. This sort of destruction should be with the express consent of the individual whose property it is. The destruction or damaging of property by fire is known as arson and is punishable under the law.

Furthermore, one area where most of the prayer camp operators falter is in the acquisition of both movable and immovable property. We need to be acquainted with the proper procedure for acquiring property.

It is of ultimate importance, that, in acquiring landed property, proper procedures, should be followed in order to have property, legitimately and therefore avoid litigation.

Operators of Prayer Camps must clearly differentiate their self-acquired property from properties that belong to the Prayer Camp. Especially where the Prayer Camp was set up in the name of the Church of Pentecost.

You need to clearly label properties that belong to the Prayer Camp. We must clearly differentiate properties that are acquired through the benevolence of beneficiaries of your ministry from property acquired through fund raising with the assistance of the members of the Church.

The foregoing issues may not be exhaustive. This presentation is awake-up call or an indication that we should not only be pre-occupied with the spiritual issues. We must also be mindful of the legal implications or consequences of the acts and decisions that we take in our various prayer camps.

May I, advise that as much as possible, operators of Prayer Camps seek the services of Christians with knowledge in the law to advise them on specific issues that relate to their operations

Finally, I wish to congratulate the organizers of the programme for including this topic in the discussions. It is my hope that the Church will organize more of such seminars where members of the church can be appraised of legal issues that affect them generally

Thank you.

PAPER PRESENTED BY ELDER B. K. BOSUMPRAH AT THE SEMINAR ORGANISED FOR OPERATORS OF PRAYER CAMPS AT THE PENTECOST UNIVERSITY COLLEGE AGOGO, ASHANTI FROM 14TH TO 17TH JUNE 2005.