

**UNIVERSITY OF GHANA**

**MASCULINITY, DECISION-MAKING AND GENDER IN  
THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GHANA**

**BY**

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**DECLARATION**

I, Eric Nii Noi Thompson declare that this thesis with the exception of materials quoted from other scholarly works which have been acknowledged fully, is my original production of research undertaken under the supervisions of Dr. Ben-Willie Golo and Dr. Ernestina Noviето of the Department for the Study of Religions, University of Ghana.

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## **DEDICATION**

First to the Glory of God Almighty, I dedicate this thesis.

Secondly not to any other persons than the delights of my success: wife Abena Abrefi and my children Alwyn, Reginald and Jeremy.



### **SPECIAL APPRECIATION**

I would like to show my greatest appreciation to my wife, Mrs. Elizabeth Abena Abrefi Thompson for her fantastic support in various ways; from agreeing to singularly take care of our children in every way possible whilst in school, and also ensuring the whole family's survival notwithstanding those domestic difficulties. She typed and printed all my work for me from assignments to the final printing of my thesis. Thank you my beloved.

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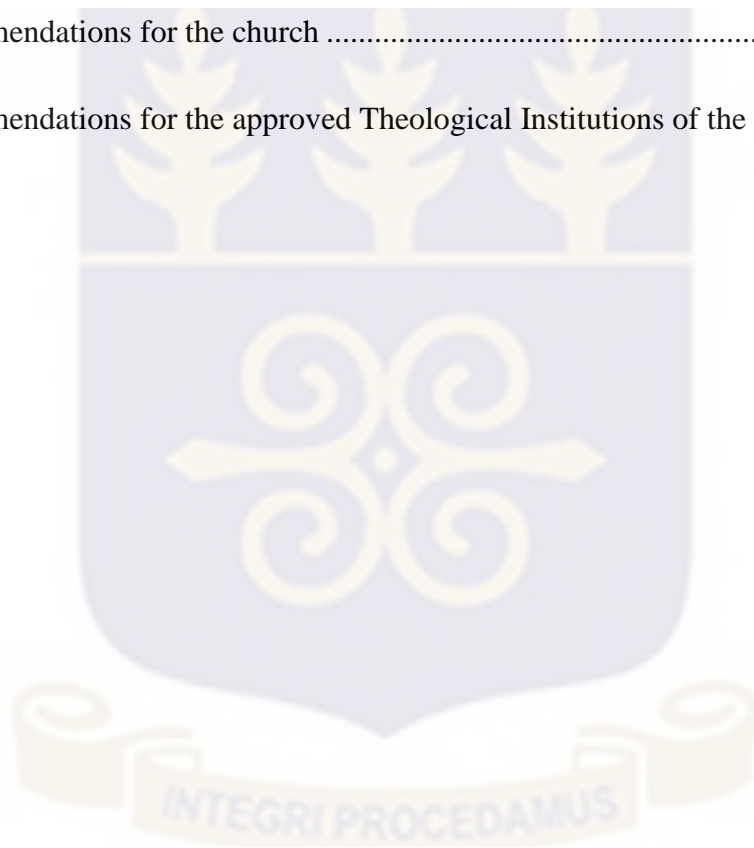


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## ABSTARCT

### Masculinity, Decision-Making and Gender in the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG)

Masculine dominance at the decision-making positions of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana may no longer be the case unlike the indigenous socio-cultural setting. This thesis joins the conversation in the religious-social sciences about masculinity, decision-making and gender roles in the church. The research explored some literary appraisals about the theories and concepts of masculinities and other stereotypical publications to come to terms with gender roles. The primary purpose of this study was to determine the underlying prevalence of dominating male persuasive norms at the decision-making positions and also discuss ways of dealing with such tendencies in the church. The thesis was conducted in the Ga Presbytery of the PCG in the Greater Accra region. Adopting a qualitative process, the data for the research was gathered through the administration of interview guide for the data collected. Twenty-two ministers comprising twelve males and ten females participated in the research. These data supported the view that patriarchal influential legacies in the church's decision-making positions still remain, yet the front of hegemonic masculinity has been broken. Ministerial roles are played interchangeably; female ministers are occupying roles as local session heads, district ministers, presbytery chairpersons, and presbytery clerks. This phenomenon is as a result of the church's constitutional orders and the ordination of females into the ministry though the female ministers suffer some forms of abuse from their male counterparts.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. Background to the Study

Only men have dominated the decision-making hierarchy of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, (PCG) since its establishment in 1828. In spite of this fact, the church has generally made some considerable gains in gender roles and relationships. Every generational grouping within the church constitutionally elects their leaders, to as it were, lead and take decisions on behalf of the belonging group. In the generational groups, either males or females could be elected except in the Men's and the Women's Fellowship groups that can only elect males and females respectively.

This phenomenon though embracing, to some extent, limits women in terms of decision making at the presbytery and national levels. Nantondo Hadibe argues that, though the roles of women and men in the church are visible, majority of the members are women and that the majority of the leaders are men. Gender equity in this regard is lop-sided. Decision making therefore resides in the domain of males simply because they dominate in the leadership. Hadibe therefore observes that, male dominance reflects in all aspects of church life, doctrine, practice and leadership.<sup>1</sup>

Abraham Nana Opare Kwakye holds that since the mid 1970's when the PCG accepted the ordination of women, thus, creating avenue for gender equity in practice and leadership, it provided a seemingly equal opportunity for both male and female to rise to the top of the

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<sup>1</sup>Nantondo Hadebe, "Gender, Gender Equality, and the Church, *Ecumenical Women at the United Nations*, accessed October 1, 2016. <http://ecumenicalwomen.org/theology/academic-articles/gender-gender-equaility-and-the-church-by-nantondo-hadebe/>

church hierarchy, but notes rather that the pastoral decision making body of the PCG has seen continuous male domination.<sup>2</sup>

Kwakye proves that, “the Moderator of the General Assembly, the Clerk of the Assembly, the Directors of the Assembly and all the Presbytery Chairpersons can collectively be termed as a ‘Men’s Fellowship’.”<sup>3</sup> It therefore suggests that, gender gains made by the PCG do not reflect a true picture since male dominance at the decision making levels remain unchanged.

It is however worth noting that, since the establishment of the PCG in 1828, it was only after 178 years that a female, Rev. Alice Kyei Anti attained the position of the Chairperson of the West Akyim Presbytery.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, in 2006 and 2010, Rev. Esther Abam Adjete<sup>5</sup> and Rev. Rose Abbey<sup>6</sup> were respectively elected to the office of the Presbytery Clerk of the Ga Presbytery. The Offices of the Presbytery Chairperson and the Presbytery Clerk are respectively the highest and the second highest office at all Presbytery levels of the PCG.

It however remains that there are still remnants of some male persuasive norms within the church. Again, it may be assumed that such visible masculine dominance may be a result of the traditional patriarchal influence and or the historical legacies of the Basel missionaries from the very beginning of their presence in Ghana. Stephan F. Miescher affirms that, during the formation stages of Presbyterianism, “teachers, catechists, and presbyters who struggled with Presbyterian norms and challenged corresponding ideas of masculinity were considered

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<sup>2</sup> Abraham Nana Opare Kwakye, “*Women’s Visibility, Voice and Space in the Church: The Role of the Presbyterian Women’s Centre*” (presentation, Memory of Rose Akua Ampofo, Abokobi Women’s Centre, Abokobi, Accra, August 20, 2016).

<sup>3</sup> Kwakye, “*Women’s Visibility*”

<sup>4</sup> Kwakye, “*Women’s Visibility*”.

<sup>5</sup> Ghana News Agency, “Presbyterian Church of Ghana inducts first Woman Minister,” accessed April 12, 2017, [www.ghananewsagency.org/social/presbyterian-church-of-ghana-inducts-first-woman-minister-1828](http://www.ghananewsagency.org/social/presbyterian-church-of-ghana-inducts-first-woman-minister-1828)

<sup>6</sup> Tema Joint Church, “Rose Teteki Abbey,” accessed April 12, 2017, [temajointchurch.org.gh/content/rev/rev-rose-teteki-abbey](http://temajointchurch.org.gh/content/rev/rev-rose-teteki-abbey)

‘backsliders’ and were subsequently reprimanded, demoted, or even dismissed from their positions.”<sup>7</sup>

The male persuasive norms of the colonizers could then be the pivot around which obedience and adherence was called. In an instance, Kwakye notes, “The 1918 Synod was a ‘Men’s Fellowship’ of 2 Scottish missionaries, 28 Ministers and 24 Presbyters that took decisions binding on all members including other Basel Missionaries, their wives and the entire membership of the church.”<sup>8</sup> Indeed Pamela Abbott’s assertions affirm the notion that, masculine control is the dominance of power over women<sup>9</sup> and other male subordinates.

This research examines the male dominating political practices in the PCG. In other words, it is to unravel the influences underlying such male persuasive dominations in the decision-making of the PCG irrespective of the gender equity opportunities created by the church.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

Women are scarcely part of the decision-making hierarchy of the PCG. Features, structures and culture that determine the church’s decision-making process show prevalence of masculine domination. In spite of the gender gains made by the church, it is the men, who set the agenda, discuss issues, formulate ideals and determine its obeisance by all members of the faith; women, children and other men.

## **1.3. Aims of the study**

The aims of the study include the following:

1. To explore the concept of masculinity and its implication for the socio-cultural construction of gender roles in the Ga Presbytery.

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<sup>7</sup>Stephan F. Miescher, “The Challenges of Presbyterian Masculinity in Colonial Ghana” in *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, New Series, No. 9 (Accra: Historical Society of Ghana, 2005), 93.

<sup>8</sup> Kwakye, “*Women’s Visibility*”

<sup>9</sup>Pamela Abbott, “Masculinity” in *Routledge International Encyclopaedia of Women: Global Women’s Issues and Knowledge*. Eds., Cheri Kramarae and Dale Spencer (New York: Routledge 2000), 1312.

2. To examine some of the masculine remnants which are still prevalent in the decision-making structure of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana.
3. To discuss ways of dealing with masculine tendencies and culture within the decision-making process of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana.

#### **1.4. Research Questions**

The research will therefore seek responses to the following questions;

1. How does the concept of masculine hegemony help to understand gender roles?
2. What are some of the remnants of masculinity that are still dominant in the decision-making structure of the PCG?
3. How can the masculine dominating tendencies and norms be overturned in the decision-making of the church?

#### **1.5. Scope of the Study**

The study is intended to cover specifically the Ga Presbytery of the PCG. The Ga Presbytery happens to be located in one of the foremost regions where the “Swiss/German Basel Mission founded their stations”<sup>10</sup> for Christian missionary works that saw the beginnings of the PCG. The Ga Presbytery is also one of the foremost divisions of the PCG’s original five Presbyteries since 1922,<sup>11</sup> and it has the largest representation of membership.<sup>12</sup> Significantly, its membership is one of the most ethnically diverse drawn from across the country.<sup>13</sup>

More so various local dialects are used in praise, worship and all other activities in the Ga Presbytery. Indeed, it was from Osu, the foremost host town of the colonialists that the

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<sup>10</sup>Miescher, “The Challenges of Presbyterian Masculinity,” 75.

<sup>11</sup>Ga Presbytery, “*Ga Prebytery*,” accessed March 15, 2017, [gapresbytery.org](http://gapresbytery.org)

<sup>12</sup> See The Presbyterian Church of Ghana, 2015 Statistics for the 16<sup>th</sup> General Assembly 2016, 7.

<sup>13</sup>Morden Ghana News, “Ga Presbytery is 90 years,” accessed February 2, 2017. [www.modernghana.com/news/379241/1/ga-presbytery-is-90-years.html](http://www.modernghana.com/news/379241/1/ga-presbytery-is-90-years.html) assessed

“Christian Missionaries attempted to learn the indigenous Ga dialect and subsequently reduced it to writing; Johannes Zimmerman in 1866 had completed translating the whole Bible into Ga”<sup>14</sup>

The Ga Presbytery constitutes the scope of the study given its location, Osu, within the heart of Accra, the capital of Ghana. Additionally the PCG and the Ga Presbytery head offices are within the same location. It is obviously an appropriate choice for such a study, giving its multifaceted ethnical membership of which their views can represent various communities in the church.

### **1.6. Conceptual Framework**

Male persuasive and dominating tendencies have characterized the decision-making of the PCG since its inception.<sup>15</sup> These tendencies are therefore presumed to be grounded in the patriarchal theological legacies of the missionaries. There is therefore the need to explore the concept of masculine hegemony as the main philosophical framework since it may help situate and understand the presence of masculine tendencies in the decision-making processes of the PCG.

The concept of masculine hegemony has been discussed extensively by R.W. Connell and James W. Messerschmidt. In their approach to the concept, a firm understanding would better be appreciated through their proposed trace of its origin, formulation and application of the concept. Challenges underlying the concept that brought about its review and reformulation are also discussed.

Connell and Messerschmidt assert that the formulation of masculine hegemony was analogous of a dominant group and therefore was comprehended to be the practical pattern in

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<sup>14</sup>Razor Planet, “Presbyterian Church of Ghana,” accessed March 14, 2017, [app.razorplanet.com/acct/43730-2333/tmpl/index.php?S=au&nid=152908](http://app.razorplanet.com/acct/43730-2333/tmpl/index.php?S=au&nid=152908)

<sup>15</sup> Kwakye, “*Women’s Visibility*”

the continual practice of dominating men over women.<sup>16</sup> They maintain that though the practice of hegemonic masculinity is normative, its exclusivity lies in the fact that it embodied the most honoured way of being a man. Hegemonic masculinity was therefore equated to a legitimized global subordination of women and other unprivileged men.<sup>17</sup>

Connell and Messerschmidt have argued that ‘men who received the benefits of patriarchy without enacting strong versions of it could be regarded as showing complicit masculinity.’ It may therefore suggest that, in the backdrop of the formation of hegemonic masculinity underlies certain coercive tendencies and strict adherence to the requirements of its rigidity. Connell and Messerschmidt however contend that though hegemonic masculinity did not mean violence, it could be forcibly supported, meaning that ascendancy is achieved through culture, institution and persuasion.<sup>18</sup>

Considering the above claim, it suggests hegemonic masculinity provided opportunity for only few people to exercise that power dominance under the influence of patriarchal succession plans although such power may be lost competitively. Connell and Messerschmidt highlight the critical fact that the concepts were abstract and rather were defined in terms of logic of patriarchal gender system hence subject to changes and displacements by new ones.<sup>19</sup>

Connell and Messerschmidt observe that in order to find its significance, to understand, study and theorize its appropriateness, the concept of hegemonic masculinity was used to measure the associations amongst masculinities in education, criminology, sports and organizations amongst others.<sup>20</sup> For instance, the concept was used in the classroom situation to understand the general behaviour of male students in the classroom. Similarly the use of the concept in

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<sup>16</sup> R. W. Connell and James W. Messerschmidt, “*Hegemonic Masculinity*,” accessed March 3, 2017, [journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0891243205278639.832](http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0891243205278639.832).

<sup>17</sup> Connell and Messerschmidt, “*Hegemonic Masculinity*,” 832.

<sup>18</sup> Connell and Messerschmidt, “*Hegemonic Masculinity*,” 832.

<sup>19</sup> Connell and Messerschmidt, “*Hegemonic Masculinity*,” 832-833.

<sup>20</sup> Connell and Messerschmidt, “*Hegemonic Masculinity*,” 832.

criminology revealed high tendencies in men and boys to perpetrating more serious conventional crimes than women and girls.

Equally in confrontational sports the application of hegemonic masculinity has brought to the fore, knowledge in understanding violence and homophobia in sporting milieus.<sup>21</sup> Accordingly, the concept was applied to in order to come to terms with men's exposure to risk and their difficulty in responding to invalidity. Again it was also to understand men's role in organizational decision making and other professional practices.<sup>22</sup>

Connell and Messerschmidt claim that, the research effort that was invested into the understanding of the concept tended out to expand the concept itself.<sup>23</sup> The outcome of the application of the concept summarily revealed the “mechanisms of hegemony that characterized both high visibility and invisibility; the confirmation that gender orders construct multiple masculinities; masculinities are different and subject to change; and the fact that the conceptual model for masculinity is now being employed as a framework for research and debates about men and masculinities.”<sup>24</sup>

The criticisms levelled against the concept of hegemonic masculinity consciously determined those critiques that must be upheld, rejected or reformulated. There have been five major critiques of masculinity; “the underlying concept, ambiguity and overlap, the problem of reification, the masculine subject and the pattern of gender relations.”<sup>25</sup>

According to Connell and Messerschmidt, in the views of the realist and poststructuralist the understanding of the concept of masculinity is indistinct and shrouded in an uncertainty that

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<sup>21</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, “*Hegemonic Masculinity*”, 833.

<sup>22</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, “*Hegemonic Masculinity*”, 834.

<sup>23</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, “*Hegemonic Masculinity*”, 834.

<sup>24</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, “*Hegemonic Masculinity*,” 834- 835.

<sup>25</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, “*Hegemonic Masculinity*,” 836-845.

tends to deemphasize issues of power and domination.<sup>26</sup> The critiques argue that while the concept essentializes the character of men, it laid categorical emphasizes on men, thus, it looked at only men and relations amongst men in the analysis of masculinities. A further argument that weakens the concept is its failure to consider relational approach to gender.<sup>27</sup> As it were, there was a problem of gender inappropriateness; for instance, the critics argue that, there is a tendency in the men's studies field to presume "separate spheres", to proceed as if women were not a relevant part of the analyses.<sup>28</sup>

Pointing out the ambiguities and overlaps within the concept, critics challenged hegemonic masculinity by questioning who actually represents masculinity in the possibility that not all men who wield social power embody an ideal masculinity. The critics again identify inconsistencies in the application of the concept in time and place making references to a fixed type of masculinity and whatever type is dominant on other occasions. It contends the 'who' as in the hegemonically masculine man.<sup>29</sup>

However, Connell and Messerschmidt have affirmative and contradictive responses; they agree with the critics and think that the usage of hegemonic masculinity as a fixed, transhistorical model violates the historicity of gender and ignores the massive evidence of change in social definitions of masculinity.<sup>30</sup> Contrary to the ambiguous challenge, Connell and Messerschmidt argue that various masculine models express widespread ideals and desires so that masculinities can be constructed that do not correspond closely to lives of any actual men.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, "*Hegemonic Masculinity*," 836.

<sup>27</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, "*Hegemonic Masculinity*," 836.

<sup>28</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, "*Hegemonic Masculinity*," 837.

<sup>29</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, "*Hegemonic Masculinity*," 838.

<sup>30</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, "*Hegemonic Masculinity*," 838.

<sup>31</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, "*Hegemonic Masculinity*," 838.

The concept of hegemonic masculinity has been challenged to showing more abstractness than something concrete. The postulants affirm Holter's view that the concept constructs masculine power from the direct experience of women rather than from structural basis of women's subordination.<sup>32</sup> It suggests therefore that the concept is more dependent on the experience of women to thrive than the uniqueness of its claim. Connell and Messerschmidt think that, if it as Holter claims, then gender inequalities, the role of cultural constructions and the interplay of gender dynamics with race, class and religion must be factored in.<sup>33</sup>

A similar criticism opined by Collier suggests two problems; a crucial defect in the concept that excludes 'positive' behaviour on the part of men in the case of going beyond the rigid traits of theory of personality; and the thoughts of the concept as accounting for violence and crime.<sup>34</sup> He thinks that the negative characterizing features of hegemonic masculinity seen in criminal behaviours depict men as unemotional, independent, non-nurturing, aggressive and dispassionate. The other side of hegemonic masculinity include such 'positive' actions and behaviours of which Connell and Messerschmidt write,

Because the concept of hegemonic masculinity is based on practice that permits men's collective dominance over women to continue, it is not surprising that in some contexts, hegemonic masculinity actually does refer to men's engaging in toxic practices-including physical violence-that stabilize gender dominance in a particular setting. However, violence and other noxious practices are not always the defining characteristics, since hegemony has numerous configurations.<sup>35</sup>

Connell and Messerschmidt agree with Wetherel and Edley's critique on the masculine subject from the standpoint of discursive psychology. Wetherel and Edley think that hegemonic masculinity cannot be understood as the settled character structure of any group of men and question how men conform to an ideal and turn themselves into complicit or resistant types, without anyone ever managing to exactly embody that ideal.<sup>36</sup> In a response to

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<sup>32</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, "*Hegemonic Masculinity*," 839.

<sup>33</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, "*Hegemonic Masculinity*," 839.

<sup>34</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, "*Hegemonic Masculinity*," 839.

<sup>35</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, "*Hegemonic Masculinity*," 840.

<sup>36</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, "*Hegemonic Masculinity*," 832.

the critique, Connell and Messerschmidt posit that ‘masculinity’ represents not a certain type of man but, rather, a way that men position themselves through discursive practices.<sup>37</sup>

Similarly, Whitehead thinks that the concept fails to specify how and why some heterosexual men legitimate, reproduce, and generate their dominance and do so as a social minority vis-a-vis women and other men. He suggests therefore that, it is preferable to concentrate on discourse as the means by which men come to know themselves, to practice ‘identity work,’ and to exercise gender power and resistance.<sup>38</sup> Connell and Messerschmidt in their response are of the view that discursive perspectives emphasize the symbolic dimension whereas concept of hegemonic masculinity was formulated within a multidimensional understanding of gender. More so the concept homogenizes the subject only if it is reduced to a single dimension of gender relations (usually the symbolic) and if it is treated as the specification of a norm.<sup>39</sup>

Hawkesworth evenly challenges the pattern of gender relations and thinks that the concept is seen as self-contained and self-producing system that explains every element in terms of its function in reproducing the whole.<sup>40</sup> In response to Hawkesworth’s critique, Connell and Messerschmidt say that; “hegemonic masculinity is not a self-reproducing form, whether through habitus or any other mechanism. To sustain a given pattern of hegemony requires the policing of men as well as the exclusion or discrediting of women.”<sup>41</sup>

Equally, others have criticised the concept in relation to its tendency to often point to the singular use of hegemonic masculinity, but Meuser and Behnke suggest that “... every ethnography discovers a distinct gender culture, every life-history study uncovers unique trajectories of men’s lives, and every structural analysis defines new intersections of race,

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<sup>37</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, “*Hegemonic Masculinity*,” 841.

<sup>38</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, “*Hegemonic Masculinity*,” 842-843.

<sup>39</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, “*Hegemonic Masculinity*,” 42-843.

<sup>40</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, “*Hegemonic Masculinity*,” 844.

<sup>41</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, “*Hegemonic Masculinity*,” 844.

class, gender and generation, it is logically possible to define ‘a thousand and one’ variations of masculinity.”<sup>42</sup>

Connell and Messerschmidt however acknowledge that, within the pros and cons of the concept of hegemonic masculinity, it required that certain features within should be retained and others rejected, hence the concept’s review and reformation.

They maintain that plurality and hierarchy of masculinities must be retained within the concept because while they form its fundamental features, the idea of masculinity plurality and hierarchy has never been abandoned by researchers over two decades or more.<sup>43</sup> They state, “The concept of hegemonic masculinity presumes the subordination of non-hegemonic masculinities, and this is a process that has now been documented in many settings, internationally.”<sup>44</sup> It therefore suggests that, the idea of masculinity plurality and hierarchy has become a globally accepted norm and a focus for discussing masculine hegemony, patriarchy and gender among related others.

Similarly, a call for the retention of the concept is comparatively the fact that hegemony works through the production of exemplars of masculinity symbols that have authority irrespective of the fact that most boys and men do not fully live up to them, other than the fact that, hegemonic masculinity need not to be the commonest pattern in everyday lives of boys and men.<sup>45</sup> It also maintains that since there is the possibility of change in gender relations, the dominant part of masculinity is also open to challenge, thus, from women’s resistance to patriarchy, and from men as bearers of alternative masculinity.<sup>46</sup> It therefore concludes that the concept in relation to its dominant pattern is alterable and if that is so, then it will be less difficult for a feature of the concept to lose its potency and originality.

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<sup>42</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, “*Hegemonic Masculinity*,” 845.

<sup>43</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, “*Hegemonic Masculinity*,” 845.

<sup>44</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, “*Hegemonic Masculinity*,” 846.

<sup>45</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, “*Hegemonic Masculinity*,” 846.

<sup>46</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, “*Hegemonic Masculinity*,” 846.

Connell and Messerschmidt explain that the too-simple model of the social relations that locates all masculinities (and all femininities) in terms of; single patterns of power and the ‘global dominance’ of men over women must be rejected for a reason that, better ways of understanding gender hierarchy are required.<sup>47</sup> It points to the fact that, there are strong definitive versions of the concept that has clear and detailed understanding and for which matter can be further deconstructed.

Connell and Messerschmidt equally explain that, the trait approach to gender must be discarded because it positions the concept of hegemonic masculinity as fix character type that has given trouble of which attracts criticisms in recent psychological writings.<sup>48</sup> In a nutshell it suggests that, the concept has some flexibility (detached from trouble) and can be more understood in a multiplicity of ways in spite of its criticisms in other fields of research studies.

Connell and Messerschmidt suggest that the concept of hegemonic masculinity needs a reformation in the areas of gender hierarchy, geographical masculine configurations, social embodiment process, and the dynamics of masculinities.<sup>49</sup> They think in relation to gender hierarchy that, the motivation towards specific hegemonic versions and the incorporation of same that exist at the various local levels may serve as tactical alternatives.<sup>50</sup> Accordingly, hegemony may be accomplished by integrating nonhegemonic patterns of masculinity and other subordinated groups into a functioning gender order.<sup>51</sup>

They suggest that, by so doing it may represent well-crafted responses to ethnic marginalization, physical disability, class inequality, or stigmatized sexuality.<sup>52</sup> Equally, such

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<sup>47</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, “*Hegemonic Masculinity*,” 847.

<sup>48</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, “*Hegemonic Masculinity*,” 847.

<sup>49</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, “*Hegemonic Masculinity*,” 847.

<sup>50</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, “*Hegemonic Masculinity*,” 848.

<sup>51</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, “*Hegemonic Masculinity*,” 848.

<sup>52</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, “*Hegemonic Masculinity*,” 848.

incorporations will emphasise the relevance of gender dynamics to the problems being explored in other fields of social science. For instance the resultant effects on globalization to issues of violence and peacekeeping.<sup>53</sup>

According to Connell and Messerschmidt, local, regional and global hegemonic masculinities can be analyzed empirically. They explained that, local hegemonic masculinities are constructed in the arenas of face-to-face interaction of families, organizations, and immediate communities, as typically found in ethnographic and life-history research;<sup>54</sup> Regional hegemonic masculinities are constructed at the level of the culture or the nation state, as typically found in discursive, political, and demographic research; and Global hegemonic masculinities are constructed in transitional arenas such as world politics and transnational business and media, as studied in the emerging research on masculinities and globalization.<sup>55</sup>

Reformulating the geography of masculinities, Hooper and Connell think about globalizing masculinities and therefore respectively proposed the deployment of hegemonic and other masculinities in the arenas of international relations, and a model of ‘transactional business masculinity’ among corporate executives connected with neoliberal agendas of globalization.<sup>56</sup> Further, Pease and Pringle argue for a continuous focus on understanding masculinities regionally and comparatively since they are shaped by the articulation of these gender systems with global processes.<sup>57</sup>

In this regard, Connell and Messerschmidt state, “Global institutions pressure regional and local gender orders; while regional gender orders provide cultural materials adopted or reworked in arenas and provide models of masculinity that may be important in local gender

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<sup>53</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, “*Hegemonic Masculinity*,” 848.

<sup>54</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, “*Hegemonic Masculinity*,” 849.

<sup>55</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, “*Hegemonic Masculinity*,” 849.

<sup>56</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, “*Hegemonic Masculinity*,” 849.

<sup>57</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, “*Hegemonic Masculinity*,” 849.

dynamics.”<sup>58</sup> In effect the assimilation of the geography of masculinities has the potential to influence gender relations and also accelerate growth in gender dynamics and as well allows for recognition on the “importance of place without falling into nomadic world of totally independent cultures or discourses.”<sup>59</sup>

Connell and Messerschmidt’s stake on social embodiment suggest the involvement of bodily activities for identity and behaviour. For instance, they claim that body practices such as eating meat and taking risks on the road result in health promotion strategies that work by contesting hegemonic masculinity or moving men in a more androgynous direction. The body then becomes a participant in generating social practice.<sup>60</sup> Connell indicates that, to understand embodiment and hegemony is to understand that, bodies are both objects and agents of social practice.<sup>61</sup> Connell and Messerschmidt propose that linking bodily processes and social structures can be illustrated by thinking about the gender patterns in health, illness, and medical treatment.<sup>62</sup>

The dynamics of masculinities represent changes of masculinities through life-history research and patterns of internal division and emotional conflict. Precisely, Connell and Messerschmidt think that the careful analyses of life-history may detect contradictory commitments and institutional transitions that reflect different hegemonic masculinities and also hold seeds of change.<sup>63</sup> On the other hand, associations with gendered power with internal division and emotional conflicts, for instance relationships with fathers, may push the agenda for acceptance or rejection for gender equality. Additionally when tensions and contestations occur continually, for example, through efforts of women’s movement at the

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<sup>58</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, “*Hegemonic Masculinity*,” 849.

<sup>59</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, “*Hegemonic Masculinity*,” 850.

<sup>60</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, “*Hegemonic Masculinity*,” 851.

<sup>61</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, “*Hegemonic Masculinity*,” 851.

<sup>62</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, “*Hegemonic Masculinity*,” 852.

<sup>63</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, “*Hegemonic Masculinity*,” 853.

local, regional and global levels or among generations in immigrant communities, there is the tendency for it to stabilize patriarchal power or reconstitute it in new conditions.<sup>64</sup>

Having discussed the concept of masculinity, it would offer firm grounds to base the researcher's understanding of the pervading masculinity tendencies and the gender roles in the Presbyterian Church of Ghana. Similarly the concept will guide the researcher to unveil the influential and or the disadvantageous effects on women with its corresponding male dominance in the decision-making processes of the church.

### **1.7 Methodology**

The dual methodology of the qualitative research approach was adopted in this study considering the nature of the research. The dual methodology approach is the dependence on primary sources and secondary sources for the researcher's data collection. The primary sources were basically some male and female ministers from the Ga Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana. They constituted the targeted audience for the research. The secondary sources which the researcher depended on for the data collection include official statistics, web information, historical studies, published and unpublished documents. They form the basis for the literature review.

According to a school of thought, the qualitative approach uses in-depth studies of small groups of people to guide and support the construction of hypotheses.<sup>65</sup> It additionally stresses that the results of qualitative research are descriptive rather than predictive.<sup>66</sup> Accordingly, this approach is highly effective because it basically provides an understanding to a given research problem from the perspectives of the specific target audience.<sup>67</sup> As it were, it is expected to provide information about the 'human' side of the issue; that is, the

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<sup>64</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, "*Hegemonic Masculinity*," 853.

<sup>65</sup> QRSCA, "Qualitative Research" accessed April 13, 2017, <http://www.qrca.org/?page=whatisqualresearch>

<sup>66</sup> QRSCA, "Qualitative Research." (Qualitative Research Consultants Association 1983)

<sup>67</sup>QRSCA, "Qualitative Research."

often contradictory behaviours, beliefs, opinions, emotions and relationships of individuals.<sup>68</sup>

Collectively this approach produces findings; those that were not determined in advance as well as those that are applicable beyond the immediate boundaries of the study.<sup>69</sup>

Norman Blaikie affirms that qualitative research allows the researcher to explain the results of the research in scientific words as could better be understood by the target audience.<sup>70</sup> He says that, “it equally provides the opportunity to the researcher to grasp primary information pertaining to the area of research and helps him to develop concepts and as well give readers a sufficient account of the context to enable them to evaluate the conclusions drawn.”<sup>71</sup>

In essence such qualitative approach will give answers to questions about why people behave the way they do and how opinions and attitudes are formed as well as how and why cultures have developed in the way they are, among other questions as these.<sup>72</sup> In spite of the numerous advantages pertaining to the use of qualitative method, it is extremely time consuming and expensive in nature with regards to large amounts of data gathering.<sup>73</sup>

Relatively, the dual methodology approach is the use of both primary data and secondary sources of which research findings are based and confirmed.<sup>74</sup> The primary source for the research is the conduct of qualitative interviews.<sup>75</sup> Secondary sources may include previous

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<sup>68</sup> *Northeastern University*, “Qualitative Research,” accessed April 12, 2017.

[www.ccs.neu.edu/resources/qualmethods.pdf](http://www.ccs.neu.edu/resources/qualmethods.pdf)

<sup>69</sup> QRSCA, “Qualitative Research.”

<sup>70</sup> Norman Blaikie, *Designing Social Research: The Logic of Anticipation* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000), 224.

<sup>71</sup> Blaikie, *Designing Social Research*, 224. (Blaikie 2000)

<sup>72</sup> Leicester, “The Nature of Qualitative Research: Introduction to Research,” *Leicester*, accessed October 1, 2016.

[http://libweb.surrey.ac.uk/library/skills/Introduction%20to%20Research%20and%20Managing%20Information%20Leicester/page\\_54.htm](http://libweb.surrey.ac.uk/library/skills/Introduction%20to%20Research%20and%20Managing%20Information%20Leicester/page_54.htm)

<sup>73</sup> Leicester, “The Nature of Qualitative Research.”

<sup>74</sup> Leicester, “The Nature of Qualitative Research.”

<sup>75</sup> Leicester, “The Nature of Qualitative Research.”

research and information or could be expanded to consist of data that has already been produced, contemporary or historical and either qualitative or quantitative.<sup>76</sup>

### ***1.7.1 Methods of Data Collection***

The researcher basically used the interview method whilst it dwelt on question guides. In this regard, the respondents, thus members of the clergy in the Ga Presbytery who constituted the targeted audience granted a face-to-face interview with the researcher. In the case of the secondary data collection, both published and unpublished books, statistical information, web information amongst other documents were referred in relation to the area of the study.

According to a school of thought, the employment of primary source approach results in very high degree of accuracy since the primary data are original and relevant. It also constitutes high reliability since data will be collected by the researcher himself.<sup>77</sup> Demetrius Madrigal and Bryan McClain suggests that, “the rule of thumb is that hearing a statement from just one participant is an anecdote; from two, coincidence; and hearing it from three makes it a trend; and so therefore the trend that is identified may provide a guide for other developments.”<sup>78</sup> For instance, an identified trend of responses in this research can provide the lead to the researcher to delve into other similar areas for further developments. However, the researcher is aware that, a possible disadvantage for employing this approach may see some respondents giving fake, socially acceptable and sweet answers and try to cover up the realities.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Leicester, “The Nature of Qualitative Research.”

<sup>77</sup> Leicester, “The Nature of Qualitative Research.”

<sup>78</sup> *UX Matters* “Strengths and Weaknesses of Quantitative and Qualitative Research,” accessed April 12, 2017. [www.uxmatters.com/mt/archives/2012/09/strengths-and-weaknesses-of-quantitative-and-qualitative-research.php](http://www.uxmatters.com/mt/archives/2012/09/strengths-and-weaknesses-of-quantitative-and-qualitative-research.php)

<sup>79</sup> University of Leicester, “Introduction to Research,”

### ***1.7.3 Instruments for Data Collection***

The researcher employed the use of “in-depth interview, observation methods and document review to, as it were, “explore the views, experiences, beliefs and motivations of respondents.”<sup>80</sup> In the process, the researcher employed the use of field notes and a voice recording device. The interview approach was the semi structured. It offered the opportunity to seek information in greater detail. To this end, there were no chances of non-response as the interviewer personally collected the data.

### ***1.7.4 Limitations***

The limitation however was the fact that the interviews conducted consumed time and money especially when the researcher had to move from one congregational station to the other across the geographical locations of the congregations. For instance, on few occasions some respondents had to reschedule interview times leading to the disruption of the interviewer’s time table.

## **1.8 Literature Review**

The literature reviewed explored the significant issues of patriarchy; masculinity and gender; church and gender stereotypes; as well as gender, masculinity and the church in Africa. Various literature have been produced in this area. Significantly, among other referencing authors who have contributed in this area was discussed in detail. R.W. Connell, Stephan F. Miescher and Egodi Uchendu have contributed literature in the area of masculinity and its related subjects. Among other egalitarians discussed are Rosemary Radford Reuther, Letty Russell, Mercy Amba Oduyoye and Teresia HInga. Similarly other contributing literatures produced by some schools of thought were also reviewed.

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<sup>80</sup> Gill, P, K. Stewart, E. Treasure and B, Chadwick. "Methods of Data Collection in Qualitative Research: Interviews and Focus Groups." *British Dental Journal* 204, (2008): 291-295, doi: 10.1038/bdj.2008.192.

### 1.8.1. Patriarchy

A school of thought holds that, patriarchy which in other words means ‘rule of the fathers’ implies the institution of male rule and privilege, and entails female subordination. Critically, it is a social system in which the male is the primary authority, and control of property, and where fathers hold authority over women and children.<sup>81</sup> Accordingly, many patriarchal societies are patrilineal where property and title are inherited by the male lineage.<sup>82</sup>

Patriarchy is a term that implies ‘male domination’, ‘male prejudice’ (against women) or more simply ‘male power’.<sup>83</sup> Gupta claims that patriarchy in its deconstructive form points out the different ways in which women are discriminated against by society. He holds that, the patriarchal system offers control over women’s productive or labour power so as to benefit men materially; exerts control over women’s sexuality outside marriage while male promiscuity is often condoned.<sup>84</sup>

Other patriarchal control over women’s sexuality is where women are forced into prostitution, rape and threats of rape.<sup>85</sup> James Ogala Onyango for instance affirms that in Kenya, the overwhelming number of rape cases are perpetrated by men (involving fathers, brothers, cousins, schoolmates, teachers, policemen, top government officials amongst others) over women and considers it as rooted in societal power and ideological structures that are related to hegemonic masculinity.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>81</sup>D.A.T.T Material, “Patriarchy and Gender,” accessed April 20, 2017, <http://decolonizeallthethings.com/teaching-tools/patriarchy-gender-lesson-plan>

<sup>82</sup>D.A.T.T Material, “Patriarchy and Gender”

<sup>83</sup>Suyash Gupta, “Basic Concepts: Sex and Gender, Masculinity and Feminist, Patriarchy,” accessed September 12, 2016, [http://www.cica-denmia.edu/8331160/BASIC\\_CONCEPTS-SEX-AND-GENDER-MASCULINITY-AND-FEMINITY-PATRIARCHY-Unit-Structure](http://www.cica-denmia.edu/8331160/BASIC_CONCEPTS-SEX-AND-GENDER-MASCULINITY-AND-FEMINITY-PATRIARCHY-Unit-Structure).

<sup>84</sup> Gupta, “Basic Concepts” (Onyango 2008) (Kandirikirira 2002)

<sup>85</sup> Gupta, “Basic Concepts”

<sup>86</sup>James Ogola Onyango, “The Masculine Discursive Construction of Rape in the Kenyan Press.” in *Masculinities in Contemporary Africa*, ed. Egodi Uchendu, 54-72. (Dakar: Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa, 2008), 55.

Similarly, in South Africa for instance, studies on the impact of apartheid ideology as indicated by Miki Kandirikirira reveals the suppressive tendencies of men over women in exaggerated masculinity and domestic violence. He indicates that;

Men escaped the oppressive environment of the work place and headed home to re-take patriarchal advantage in order to legitimize them as real men focusing on the aggressive and controlling aspects, and becoming sexually unaccountable. Accordingly, they unleashed those associative violence and abuse in their homes on their wives and families. They intimidated women into never questioning their behaviour or movements and became unaccountable. Accusations of women's infidelity, disobedience and consequent bashing were dominant features that became normal and culturally acceptable.<sup>87</sup>

These instances however throw light on the effects of class formations and its subsequent dominating organizational structural effects on women and other men.

Another school of thought argues with a more deconstructive notion that, patriarchy is a term which means, "The absolute rule of the father or the oldest male member over his family,"<sup>88</sup> and in effect, the father's rule over all women in the family and also over younger socially and economically subordinate males.<sup>89</sup> Patriarchy therefore suggests a system of rule created by man for man to dominate every member of the family, their possessions and all other properties worth considering. For instance, "When a man raises his voice in the course of an argument and insists on his point of view, without letting others, especially women to utter a single word, his actions are likely to be described as "aggressively patriarchal".<sup>90</sup> It may also suggest that the man is the ultimate decision taker and maker for which demands adherence. In other words he may listen to the opinions of others under his rule but his will is the final.

Accordingly, in the 1970s when women agitated for their rights, patriarchy emerged as a way of describing and explaining the world; thus, adding categorical analysis to its descriptive nature. Patriarchy since has then been used critically to explain the main components of

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<sup>87</sup>Niki Kandirikirira, "Deconstructing Domination: Gender Disempowerment and the legacy of Colonialism and Apartheid in Omanheke, Namibia" in *Masculinities Matter: Men, Gender and Development*, ed. Francis Clever (London: Zed Books Ltd., 2002), 118-120.

<sup>88</sup> (Mumbai University n.d.) (Blackstone 2003) (Vlaci 1996) Mumbai University, "Basic Concepts: Sex and Gender, Masculinity and Femininity, Patriarchy," accessed April 9, 2017, Text. [archive.mu.ac.in/myweb\\_test/TYBA%20study%20material/Gender%20&%20Soc..pdf](http://archive.mu.ac.in/myweb_test/TYBA%20study%20material/Gender%20&%20Soc..pdf). (8)

<sup>89</sup> Mumbai University, "Basic Concepts: Sex and Gender", 9.

<sup>90</sup> Mumbai University, "Basic Concepts: Sex and Gender", 9.

authority and power in any social system, thus, in a patriarchal society, women have to struggle to be educated, to have property or to make choices regarding marriage and other aspects of life.<sup>91</sup> In this connection, different areas of women's lives; productive power, reproduction, their sexuality, mobility, property and other economic resources are said to be under patriarchal control.<sup>92</sup>

Similarly, within the patriarchal system other men who are not powerful are affected. For example, younger men in the family, the lower class and unprivileged men are exploited by powerful men and are denied access to resources of the society as well as their own masculine identity.<sup>93</sup>

### ***1.8.2. Gender and Masculinity***

According to a school of thought, gender is an analytical category that is socially constructed which explains the differences between men and women in social terms as men, and as what a man can do; as 'woman', and what a woman can or cannot do.<sup>94</sup> Amy Blackstone affirms that gender is a social construction because humans create the concept of gender socially.<sup>95</sup> It therefore suggests that the meaning of gender is subjected to role plays of men and women or an identity of required responsibilities within a given space.

Ann Oakley explains what pertains in the Western culture of role play in relation to the biological, "women play the role of the 'housewife' and 'mother' because biologically they are made to play these roles."<sup>96</sup> She expresses that, such roles of men and women help to

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<sup>91</sup> Mumbai University, "Basic Concepts: Sex and Gender", 8.

<sup>92</sup> Mumbai University, "Basic Concepts: Sex and Gender", 11-12.

<sup>93</sup> Mumbai University, "Basic Concepts: Sex and Gender", 10.

<sup>94</sup> Mumbai University, "Basic Concepts: Sex and Gender", 4.

<sup>95</sup> Amy Blackstone, 'Gender Roles and Society' in *Human Ecology: An Encyclopedia of Children, Families, Communities, and Environments*, eds. Julia R. Miller, Richard M. Lerner, and Lawrence B. Schiamberg (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2003), 335.

<sup>96</sup> Mumbai University, "Basic Concepts: Sex and Gender", 4.

support and maintain the patriarchal society.<sup>97</sup> Oakley adds that, “the various role plays are embedded in the social fabric of society and for that matter any attempt to break the traditional roles of men and women will cause damage to the society.”<sup>98</sup> Similarly, another school of thought holds that social roles are closely related to the value system of the society which forms it. It explains that the expected role plays of the social value system is characterised by ‘prescription’ and ‘output’, thus, behaviour and actions, and performance respectively.<sup>99</sup>

J. Filadelfiova and L. Kobova recognize that there may be differences in individual performance and the ideal role. They emphasize required behaviour; “holder of the role behaves as he/she must; desirable behaviour, thus, holder of the role behaves as he/she should; acceptable behaviour, thus, holder of the behaviour behaves as he/she can; and unacceptable behaviour as in holder of the role behaving as he/she may not.”<sup>100</sup> It is therefore presumed that analytical gender categories may be based on individual’s identity.

Similarly, in her notes, Blackstone explains gender roles as the product of the interactions between individuals and their environments, and they give individuals cue about what sort of behaviour is believed to be appropriate for what sex.<sup>101</sup> She adds that appropriate gender roles are determined according to a society’s beliefs about differences between the sexes;

One way that a woman might engage in the traditional feminine gender role would be to nurture her family by working full time within the home rather than taking employment outside the home. Men, on the other hand, are presumed by traditional views of gender roles to be leaders. The traditional view of the masculine gender roles, therefore, suggests that men should be the heads of their household by providing financially for the family and making important family decisions.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Mumbai University, “*Basic Concepts: Sex and Gender*”, 4.

<sup>98</sup> Mumbai University, “*Basic Concepts: Sex and Gender*”, 4.

<sup>99</sup> Frantisek Vlácil (Jill K. Conway 1987) (Burke 2000) “*Gender Roles and Norms*,” accessed April 19, 2017. [www.monda.eu](http://www.monda.eu)

<sup>100</sup> Blackstone, “*Gender Roles and Society*,” 335.

<sup>101</sup> Blackstone, “*Gender Roles and Society*,” 335-336.

<sup>102</sup> Blackstone, “*Gender Roles and Society*,” 335-336.

Similarly Jill Conway, Susan Borque and Joan Scott cited Pearson's idea of modernization that has brought rationalization in role allocation. Pearson shares equal sentiments with Blackstone and accepts that, the basic division of male instrumental behaviour and female expressive behaviour transcends class and national cultures.<sup>103</sup> He therefore states: "In the picture of modern world, marriage and the family created by marriage functioned on mutually supportive economic and affectional bonds in which the male's capacity for instrumental work was complemented by the female's ability to manage the expressive aspect of family life and the rearing of children'<sup>104</sup>

Related to the concept of gender are gender identity and gender attitudes. Burke, Stets and Pirog-Good and Spence conclude that gender identity is the degree to which persons see themselves as masculine or feminine given what it means to be a man or woman in society. Accordingly, femininity and masculinity are more of one's gender than one's sex.<sup>105</sup> They say that, gender identity in the tenets of being masculine or feminine is determined by the gender response for being dominant or passive, brave or emotional.<sup>106</sup>

A school of thought maintains that; "pink and blue are gendered colours, former regarded as "feminine" and the latter as "masculine." To be "strong" and "tough is masculine, and being "weak" and "soft" are associated with feminine character"<sup>107</sup> On the other hand Gilligan suggests for an instance that, gender attitudes are the situations related with one's gender; men thinking in terms of justice and women thinking in terms of care.<sup>108</sup> Katz; Spence; and Sawin assert that, although gender roles and gender attitudes influence one's identity, they

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<sup>103</sup>Jill K. Conway, Susan C. Bourque and Joan W. Scott "Introduction: The Concept of Gender" Daedalus, 116, no. 4, *Learning about Women: Gender, Politics, and Power*, 1987. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20025120>

<sup>104</sup>Conway, Bourque and Scott "Introduction: The Concept of Gender"

<sup>105</sup>Jan E. Stets and Peter J. Burke "Femininity and Masculinity" in *Encyclopedia of Sociology*, eds. Edgar F. Borgatta and Rhonda J.V. Montgomery. (New York: Macmillan, 2000), 997-1005.

<sup>106</sup>.Stets and Burke, "Femininity and Masculinity", 997.

<sup>107</sup> Mumbai University, "Basic Concepts: Sex and Gender", 7. (Uchendu 2008) (R. N. Messerschmidt 2005) (Donaldson 1993)

<sup>108</sup>Stets and Burke, "Femininity and Masculinity", 997.

are not the same as gender identity; the embodiment of gender identity is therefore the individual's response of the self as masculine or feminine.<sup>109</sup>

Egodi Uchendu asserts that many cultural traits are identified in African societies as evidence of masculinity; those traits can be considered on the basis of accounts from different African societies in different regions of the continent and within specific historical periods.<sup>110</sup> In an instance, Uchendu insists that intelligence in all spheres was marked feature of Egyptian men from 3100 until 110 BC.<sup>111</sup> She agrees that a mark for African masculinity lies in the ability to exhibit eloquence in arguments and winning it convincingly. Other dominant features of African masculinity include hard work,<sup>112</sup> which means, eschewing laziness. She cites marital prowess, loyalty, aggression, domination, courage, self-reliance, athleticism and absence of emotions as other features of masculinity.<sup>113</sup>

Uchendu's characterizing ideals of masculinity seems to conform to Connell and Messerschmidt's view of gender politics of local hegemonic masculinities.<sup>114</sup> In other words, it suggests an existence of fixed, typical, original and all other non-interfering ethnic cultures of gender roles. Uchendu acknowledges that, colonial masculinities as introduced led to the suppression of pre-existing masculine forms.<sup>115</sup>

The actions of the colonial masters placed the pre-existing gender forms in a subordinating position. Hitherto, the new constructs contributed to the emergence of multiple masculinities with the manifestations of domineering ones. Those new identities and traits are eventually embedded and become dominant features while pre-existing masculine hegemonic tendencies

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<sup>109</sup>Stets and Burke, "*Femininity and Masculinity*", 997.

<sup>110</sup>Egodi Uchendu, *Masculinities in Contemporary Africa* (Dakar: Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa, 2008), 4.

<sup>111</sup>Uchendu, *Contemporary Africa*, 5-11.

<sup>112</sup>Uchendu, *Contemporary Africa*, 5-11.

<sup>113</sup>Uchendu, *Contemporary Africa*, 5-11.

<sup>114</sup>Connell R. N. and James W. Messerschmidt, "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept," *Sage Journals* 19, no. 6 (2005): 829-859, accessed July 6, 2016, doi: 10.1177/0891243205278639.

<sup>115</sup>Uchendu, *Contemporary Africa*, 9.

are disengaged with.<sup>116</sup> Uchendu indicates that, the contextualization of those foreign cultures may have taken place due to some external and internal forces; technological and economic changes that demand a shift to a ‘modern’ male role for men or from the ‘real self’ that protests against the artificial restrictions of constraining sex roles respectively.<sup>117</sup>

Correspondingly Morrell and Swart hold that African masculinity was based on a father’s and husband’s dignity reflecting in respect of juniors in his family, his wives and most importantly, his own self-restraint.<sup>118</sup> They proposed that, masculinity was visible around the male head that took decisions and controlled wealth and at the same time performed sacrifices to the ancestors and whose good will to a large extent controlled the health and fertility of the whole family.<sup>119</sup>

Additionally, Morrell and Swart identify certain dominant values of masculinity that pertained; “‘what a respected and good man was’ suggesting care of the family and bearing the cost of the children’s education; a ‘respected and good man’ marries many wives and gets many children and again, his wife is expected to be stable; not to roam about.”<sup>120</sup> Connell and Messerschmidt equally explain that, a “‘respected and good man’<sup>121</sup> must be friendly and show respect toward his people, assisting them when they have problems; he must show traits of good counsel, generosity and must not quarrel.”<sup>122</sup> Contrary to the assertions of a ‘respected and good man’ Pamela Abbott argues that such value is the centrality of

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<sup>116</sup>Uchendu, *Contemporary Africa*, 9.

<sup>117</sup> Mike Donaldson, “What is Hegemonic Masculinity, in *Masculinities*” *Theory and Society*, 22, no. 5 (1993): 643-657, accessed July 6, 2016, 644. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/657988>.

<sup>118</sup> Morrel Robert and Sandra Swart, “*Men in the Third World: Postcolonial Perspectives on Masculinity*,” Corwin, accessed July 6, 2017, <http://us.corwin.corwin.com/sites/default/files/upm-binaries/5178-kimmel-chapter-6.pdf>

<sup>119</sup>Morrel and Swart, “*Men in the Third World*”

<sup>120</sup> Connell and Messerschmidt, *Hegemonic Masculinity*.

<sup>121</sup> Mensah, Adinkrah, “Suicide in Ghanaian Men” in *Suicide in Men: How men differ from Women in Expressing their Distress*, eds. David Lester, John F. Gunn and Paul Quinnett (Springfield: Charles C. Thomas Publishers Ltd., 2014), 187-265.

<sup>122</sup> Connell and Messerschmidt, *Hegemonic Masculinity*.

masculinity and masculine identity that implied a process of acting out power over women and controlling their sexuality.<sup>123</sup>

On the other hand Mensah Adinkrah asserts that in many African cultures masculinity is conceived in physical strength and ability; strength to do all sorts of hard work; and physical ability to indulge in violence.<sup>124</sup> Adinkrah's assertions suggest that every strenuous physical task which requires strength and ability is masculine. Affirming Adinkrah's assertions, within the *Gaman*, Ga community the dialect used is *Ga*, for which, '*nuu feemɔ*' means masculinity. '*Nuu feemɔ*' is expressed in terms of '*hewalɛ kɛ nyemɔ*,' strength and ability. In this instance, '*lai gbamɔ*,' log felling is identified with the masculine. Therefore, if inferred of Adinkrah's assertions, a female who takes up that masculine identity is classified as '*yoo nuu*,' 'man-woman'. Conclusively, either a male or female could take up the identity of masculine giving the circumstances of the time.

Nerdlove disputes Adinkrah's position that, "masculinity in gender relations is perceived to be the successful exercise of authority and control in the household, and despite the heightening of women's financial contributions to the marital household, and the fact that the wife's earnings are more than the husband's earnings, the man is still regarded as the primary economic provider"<sup>125</sup> Nedlove challenges that, "masculine tag as 'the provider' 'reduces manhood and masculinity into an external factor, something that can be taken or destroyed. Thus, if a man is defined by being always 'the provider' rather than 'a provider', then he is perpetually at a risk from his employers of losing his manliness in an economic down turn; a situation that the average man can hardly avoid."<sup>126</sup>

<sup>123</sup> Abbott, "Masculinity," 1312.

<sup>124</sup> Adinkrah, *Suicide in Ghanaian Men*, 187-265.

<sup>125</sup> Adinkrah, "Suicide in Ghanaian Men", 187-265.

<sup>126</sup> Nerdlove, "When Masculinity Fails Men", *The Bridges We Burn*, Last modified October 25, 2013, accessed April 12, 2017, <http://www.doctoredlove.com/2013/10/masculinity-fails-men/>

Miescher accepts that among the Akans of Southern Ghana, masculinity is significant in some three notable areas; adult masculinity signified by marriage, senior masculinity reflected in the figure of an elder, and the status of the big man.<sup>127</sup> He holds that adult masculinity is maintained in the tasks of taking responsibility of one's wife and children by providing for all the needs of the family including shelter, clothing and the offer of assistance to the wife in her farming activities.<sup>128</sup> Miescher adds that in the acceptable honour of senior masculinity, the onus rests on the father to assume responsibility over the children until they reach marital age where the father is rightly tasked to find suitable partners for them. In the case of divorce, the father could demand from the children to work for him. Invariably the man is also expected to take responsibility of the welfare of his extended family.<sup>129</sup>

Accordingly, senior masculinity in the Ghanaian frame of things disqualifies age and materialism. It is identified with the number of spouses or concubines one may have; it is indeed, embedded in the persons character, attributes and skills. Again senior masculinity is confined in the person's comportment, reputation and gentle eloquence as well as the skilful ability to finding amicable and peaceful solutions in the art of mediating in conflicts.<sup>130</sup> Masculinity therefore preserves the ability to speak and the conduct of one's self towards all his kith and kin and the entire community. It must also be evident in the respect and honour as well as opinions that others have for the masculine identity.

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<sup>127</sup>Stephan F. Miescher. Called to Work for the Kingdom of God: The Challenges of Presbyterian Masculinity in Colonial Ghana, in *Readings in Gender in Africa*, ed. Andrea Cornwall, (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2005), 187-195 (Miescher, Called to Work for the Kingdom of God: The Challenges of Presbyterian Masculinity in Colonial Ghana 2005).

<sup>128</sup> Miescher. Called to Work for the Kingdom of God, 187.

<sup>129</sup> Miescher. Called to Work for the Kingdom of God, 187.

<sup>130</sup> Miescher. Called to Work for the Kingdom of God, 187.

Miescher's description of *Obirimpon*, (Twi dialect) 'big man' identity connotes aristocracy;<sup>131</sup> one with many acres of farmland (farms and other cash crop plantations); one who occupies chiefly position (Chief Executive, Chief, Managing Director and or owner of institution or company).<sup>132</sup> Miescher adds that, the big man must fulfil the expectations of sharing wealth behaving like the pre-colonial.<sup>133</sup>

Affirming Miescher's claims, Emmanuel Akyeampong further qualifies 'big man' among the people of Southern Ghana with wealth, life style and materialism.<sup>134</sup> The status of 'big man' in Akyeampong's view connotes generosity, use of foreign alcoholic beverages, rich cloths (both kente and foreign quality materials), gold ornaments, and a large number of wives (concubines may be included) and other dependants (that may include members of the extended family and relations of friends from the outside of the family).<sup>135</sup>

Miescher confirms that, Ghanaian masculinity is a symbolism of 'elder' identified with comportment and accomplishment, adding that, the symbolism becomes a point of enculturation for children within their families.<sup>136</sup> He cites for an instance;

Elders who acted as '*Opayin*' (Elder) within a paramountcy where children accompany them to the palaces, or where children serve their uncles whiles observing them as '*abusuapanyin*' (family head) or assisting others in their trade and farming, nonetheless the children learn about the expectations of senior masculinity. Even when these do not take after such occupations, the significance of masculinity would not be lost.<sup>137</sup>

Miescher's claim may be the perceived ideal situation where masculinity formation could be designed with or without formal education.

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<sup>131</sup> Stephen F. Miescher, "The Making of Presbyterian Teachers: Masculinity and Programs of Education in Colonial Ghana" in *Men and Masculinities in Modern Africa*, eds. Lisa A Lindsay and Stephen F. Miescher (Portsmouth: Heinemann, 2003), 89 (Akyeampong 1996)

<sup>132</sup> Miescher, *The Making of Presbyterian Teachers*, 89

<sup>133</sup> Miescher, *Called to Work for the Kingdom of God*, 187.

<sup>134</sup> Emmanuel Akyeampong, *Drink, Power, and Cultural Change: A Social History of Alcohol in Ghana, c. 1800 to Recent Times* (Portsmouth: Heinemann, 1996), 26-27.

<sup>135</sup> Akyeampong, *Drink, Power, and Culture*, 26-29.

<sup>136</sup> Miescher, *The Making of Presbyterian Teachers*, 93

<sup>137</sup> Miescher, *The Making of Presbyterian Teachers*, 93.

Miescher holds that the Christian masculine identity of a ‘strong man’ who ‘could fight’ denotes; husband and wife living together with their children; sharing meals; worshipping together; and planning their children’s education.<sup>138</sup> He proposes that the husband must express good habits and character and must abstain from public drinking.<sup>139</sup>

Akyeampong’s assertions on drink within the indigenous African religion differ from Miescher’s claim. He argues that, within Ashanti masculinity, alcohol symbolized royal power, patronage, generosity, accessibility and uneasiness.<sup>140</sup> Presumably, the similarity between Christian religious masculinity and African indigenous masculinity pertaining to ‘drink’ is that; either the former abstains or indulge in it privately or the later does that both in private and public.

Adinkra attempts to deconstruct Miescher’s insistence about the Christian religious masculine identity in the perception of the ‘real man’ as the one who exercises authority and control on the household with the ability to have children.<sup>141</sup> He thinks that, Ghanaian masculinity means action oriented, resolute, confident and non-timorous.<sup>142</sup> Emphatically, Adinkra is pointing at potency and the ability to procreate. However it may be presumed that the ability to have children could also mean the ‘real man’ can take care of other non-biological children through the appropriate means of adoption.

Kimmel and Bridges postulate that masculinities are produced and reproduced through the course of our daily interactions and activities within the larger institutions and even smaller societies.<sup>143</sup> The understanding is that, out of experiences, new forms of masculine identities

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<sup>138</sup> Miescher. *The Making of Presbyterian Teachers*, 92-97.

<sup>139</sup> Miescher, *The Making of Presbyterian Teachers*, 92-97.

<sup>140</sup> Adinkrah, “Suicide in Ghanaian Men,” 187-265.

<sup>141</sup> Akyeampong, *Drink, Power, and Cultural Change*, 6.

<sup>142</sup> Akyeampong, *Drink, Power, and Cultural Change*, 6.

<sup>143</sup> Kimmel and Bridges. “What is Masculinity”

are being added to existing ones. Presumably those that are added either strengthen the traditional concepts or alter it in forms that may render the existing forms dysfunctional.

### ***1.8.3. Church and Gender Stereotypes***

Blackstone asserts that the understandings and differences between males and females are termed gender stereotypes.<sup>144</sup> She argues that gender stereotypes tend to include exaggerated or erroneous assertions about nature.<sup>145</sup> It suggests for instance that though it is a norm, whether social or religious, to associate ‘bread winning’ with males and ‘domestic management’ with females, it may be an oversimplification. These gender stereotypes are ‘important to feminist and non-feminist philosophy alike for providing a critical understanding of various religious concepts, beliefs, and rituals as well as of religion as a cultural institution that defines, sanctions, and sometimes challenges gender roles and gender inflected representations.’<sup>146</sup>

Blackstone proposes two features of gender role orientation; the traditional and non-traditional orientation. She explained that traditional role orientation assumes that each sex has a natural affinity to particular behaviours whereas the non-traditional may have the tendency to believe that individual’s behaviour should not be determined by the sex.<sup>147</sup> She argued further that the non-traditional individual is inclined towards egalitarian relationship between men and women and in the power of individual human beings to determine what roles they wish to occupy and the extent to which those roles are or should be associated with

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<sup>144</sup>Blackstone, “Gender Roles and Society,” 337.

<sup>145</sup>Blackstone, “Gender Roles and Society,” 337.

<sup>146</sup> Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, “*Feminist Philosophy of Religion*,” last modified November 17, 2011, accessed April 12, 2017, (Oduyoye, Mercy Amba Oduyoye 1998)

<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminist-religion/>

<sup>147</sup>Blackstone, “Gender Roles and Society,” 337-338.

their sex.<sup>148</sup> Deducing from Blackstone's explanation, it could be suggested that masculine or feminine identity must not be based on the traditional notion of gender roles.

Blackstone identifies feminists and feminist movements amongst non-traditional groups who continue to work to deconstruct gender stereotypes and offer alternative visions of gender roles that emphasize equality between women and men.<sup>149</sup> In this regard, a school of thought affirms that because it a feminist ideology, it must promote the elimination of gender inequality and take into account the multiplicity of human bodies, desires, and differences that are mapped onto the site of religion.<sup>150</sup>

As mentioned earlier, Rosemary Radford Ruether, Mercy Amba Oduyoye and Teresia Hinga are amongst modern feminists who propose the Christian political doctrine of equal rights for both females and males. Others include Letty M. Russell, Dorothy Sollee, Isabella Phiri and Judith Kanakuze amongst others. Feminist movements include, Talitha Qumi, the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians<sup>151</sup> the Ecumenical Dialogue of Third World Theologians (EATWOT),<sup>152</sup> and Twese Hamne (Pro-Femmes)<sup>153</sup> amongst others.

Rosemary Radford Ruether, a feminist and radical reformist of the Christian doctrine provided a key to women's liberation in a theological paradigm shift that challenged the language, interpretation of sacred texts, symbols, and hierarchies which as it were, hid the political and sexist nature of theological discourse that underwrote women's subordination.<sup>154</sup>

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<sup>148</sup>Blackstone, "Gender Roles and Society," 337-338.

<sup>149</sup>Blackstone, "Gender Roles and Society," 337.

<sup>150</sup> Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, "Feminist Philosophy"

<sup>151</sup>Mercy Amba Oduyoye, Interview with Christiana Landman, Harare, December 11, 1998 (Salami 2013) (R. R. Ruether 2014)

<sup>152</sup> Oduyoye, *Hearing*, 8.

<sup>153</sup> Minna Salami, "African women are blazing a feminist trail- why don't we hear their voices," *The Guardian*, accessed April 25, 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/sep/23/african-women-rwanda-feminism>

<sup>154</sup> Rosemary Radford Ruether Blog. [percaritatem.com/2014/07/17/](http://percaritatem.com/2014/07/17/) accessed April 25, 2017, (Liberation Theologies 2014) liberation-theology-blog-series-part-i-rosemary-radford-ruether-and-women-as-the-first-and-final-proletariat

In Reuther's view points, 'Christianity is riddled by hierarchy and patriarchy' that undermines the existence of women. She posits that, modern societies have sought to change this situation, allowing women education, legal autonomy, paid employment and personal freedom, and suggests that the sexual morality of traditional puritanical patriarchal Christianity must be given a second thought.<sup>155</sup>

Similar to Western religious feminist ideologies, Mercy Amba Oduyoye's theological focus is contained in the re-reading of the Scriptures and interpreting it in African terms. Her theological concentration is on women and how she works the interpretations as the key to unlock and let out the suppressive tendencies of the oppressed woman of Africa.<sup>156</sup> Oduyoye advocates for the rights of women and their full participation in the life of the church while challenging the church to recognize the value of their presence and contributions to the Body of Christ; she says, "We seek justice for women, to dream 'bold dreams' for a new community, and to act both locally and globally for the conversion of church and society towards the recognition of the full humanity of women"<sup>157</sup>

Charting the path for the emancipation of women under the umbrella of Ecumenical Decade, Oduyoye further sought to eliminate the abuse of women, to attend to economic and political disparities, and to address the exclusion of women in leadership roles.<sup>158</sup>

### **1.9 Significance of the Study**

This research will bring to the fore, a new knowledge in the PCG with respect to the seeming changing trends in the decision-making hierarchies of the church. It offers a continuous platform for feminist theologians in their struggle to the realisation of the emancipation of

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<sup>155</sup>Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Liberation Theologies*, accessed April 25, 2017, [liberationtheology.org/people-organizations/rosemary-radford-ruether/](http://liberationtheology.org/people-organizations/rosemary-radford-ruether/)

<sup>156</sup>Mercy Amba Oduyoye, Interview, Harare.

<sup>157</sup>Yolanda Smith, "Mercy Amba Oduyoye," *Talbot School of Theology*, accessed May 23, 2016. [http://www.talbot.edu/ce20/educators/protestant/mercy\\_oduyoye/](http://www.talbot.edu/ce20/educators/protestant/mercy_oduyoye/)

<sup>158</sup>Smith, "Mercy Oduyoye"

women from cultural and patriarchal influences that ensure their invisibility in the church. It will further project the new understandings of gender roles vis-à-vis the changing face of patriarchal influences in the church in contemporary times. The importance of this research is its strength in charting new paths for similar study opportunities in similar religious institutions.

### **1.10 Structure of the Study**

The structure, based on the topic, Masculinity, Decision-Making and Gender in the Presbyterian Church of Ghana was organized into five chapters. The first chapter included the various introductory issues that set the base for the research. It comprised the following; Background to the Study, the Statement of the Problem and Aims and Objectives. Others also included the Research Questions, Scope of the Study, the Conceptual Framework and Methodology. The rest were Literature Review, the Significance of the Study and the Structure of the Study as well.

The second chapter looked extensively at the views on the following; Masculinity and Gender, Church and Gender Stereotypes as well as Masculinity and Church in Africa.

Chapter three addressed the Pre-colonial Masculinity and Missionary Theologies in Africa. The same examined the Challenges of Missionary Theologies in Africa and then, the Presbyterian Church of Ghana.

The penultimate chapter showed the analysis and discussions of the research questions. The last chapter comprised the Summary, Recommendations and Conclusions on the study.

## CHAPTER TWO

### MASCULINITY, GENDER AND THE CHURCH IN AFRICA

#### 2.1 Introduction

It has become common that issues of masculinity are raised when the issues of feminism are discussed. It is therefore obvious that feminist approaches to gender equality are gaining firmer grounds in most spheres of culture, social and economic life, and among the clergy. In the Christian religious setting, arguments pointing to religious facts for the equality of gender have been advanced through rereading and interpretation of the Bible. Samantha Gerstein argues; “Feminist biblical interpretation reclaims the Bible by reinterpretation and reminding readers of women- positive passages- passages that, in their very essence, have a positive view of women.”<sup>159</sup>

Angela Miles suggests that, “feminism as necessary cultural politics everywhere involves a challenge to patriarchal cultural forms – women, their work and lives devalourized in traditional, dominant and dominated, secular and religious settings.”<sup>160</sup> The devalourization of women in Africa has often led to the perception in some ethnographic circles to affirm that African women in relation to men generally lack recognized and culturally valued authority.<sup>161</sup> The attempts to fight such devalourizations and rescue detentions of dominance

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<sup>159</sup>Samantha Gerstein, *Feminist Biblical Interpretation* (Cincinnati: Capstone Project, 2012), accessed May 4, 2017, file:///C:/Users/User/AppData/Local/Temp/Capstone\_Final.pdf

<sup>160</sup>Angela Miles, Feminism: Cultural in (eds.) Cheri Kramarae and Dale Spender, *Routledge Internal Encyclopedia of Women: Global Women's Issues and Knowledge* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 745.

<sup>161</sup> Josephine Beoku-Betts, “Contested Representations: ‘Gender’ in Africa; Western Perceptions of African Women in the 19<sup>th</sup> and Early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries” in (ed.) Andrea Cornwall, *Readings in Africa* (R. R. Ruether, Sexism and God-Talk 1983) (London: The International African Institute School of Oriental & African Studies, 2005), 20.

have birthed feminine theology with a “critical principle of the promotion of the full humanity of women.”<sup>162</sup>

Rosemary Reuther suggests that, feminist theology is a departure from the redemptive norm for whatever denies, diminishes, or distorts the full humanity of women; in effect, whatever promotes the full humanity of women is of the Holy and a reflection of the true relation to the divine.<sup>163</sup> This claim therefore seemingly calls for gender equity of all humans, whom as it were, must receive equal treatment, equal respect and equal honour thereby dismantling the ‘Babel tower’ of masculine dominance that is visible in almost all traditional forms.

It implies that in the church women must be allowed the same equity with men thereby giving them the recognition in decision making processes in the church. In this regards, Reuther states that, “any principle of religion of society that marginalizes one group of persons as less fully human diminishes us all,”<sup>164</sup> so the breaking down of preventive structures are suggested by feminist theology.

This chapter looks at gender and gender roles, masculinities in general and masculine hegemony. Some Western and African Feminists’ theological ideals of gender and the understanding of gender roles will be discussed. General masculinity and one of its dominant versions; hegemonic masculinities by R. W. Connell is featured in this chapter. Contributions on same by James W. Messerschmidt, Stephan Miescher are also discussed. African masculinity forms by Egodu Uchendu, Mensah Adinkra amongst others are also considered.

## **2.2 Gender and Gender Roles**

The World Health Organization defines gender as socially constructed characteristics of women and men- such norms, roles and relationships of and between groups of women and

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<sup>162</sup>Rosemary Redford Reuther, *Sexism and God-Talk: Towards a Feminist Theology* (London: SCM Press Ltd. 1983), 18.

<sup>163</sup>Reuther. *Sexism and God-Talk*, 19.

<sup>164</sup>Reuther. *Sexism and God-Talk*, 20.

men.<sup>165</sup> Gupta also thinks that gender as concept helps to study the differences in behaviour between men and women and to analyse the basis of these differences as basically biological or as social constructions by the society.<sup>166</sup> Gupta's argument suggests that irrespective of biological differentiations, either male or female could exhibit man or woman tendencies by the cultural or social constructs as may pertain within a given situation.<sup>167</sup> For example, in a given cultural setting where males are trained to do house hold chores like meal preparation, it may be different in another society.

As though these definitions may be acceptable, both WHO and Gupta give a general view of gender but some Western feminists ideologies define gender differently with experiential examples that are embedded in the notions of inequalities. Same are the African womanists who may presumably see gender differently from the definitions of WHO and Gupta.

Gender from the feminist point of interest purposely argues against the 'universal devaluation of women'<sup>168</sup> In other words, struggling for an egalitarian society and fighting against the bias definitive forms of gender as "a constitutive element of social relationships based on perceived differences between the sexes"<sup>169</sup> that diminish the image of women as 'inferior' to men in various distinguishing ways. As it were, "feminists argue that philosophy of religion can hardly ignore questions of gender ideology when its very subject matter-religion-is riddled with misogamy and androcentrism."<sup>170</sup> King therefore perceives gender to seeking answers to the issues of violence that maims and dehumanizes women; and how such healing

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<sup>165</sup> World Health Organization, "Gender," accessed June 14, 2017, [www.who.int/gender-equity-rights/understanding/gender-definition/en/](http://www.who.int/gender-equity-rights/understanding/gender-definition/en/)

<sup>166</sup>Gupta, "Basic Concepts,"

<sup>167</sup>Gupta, "Basic Concepts"

<sup>168</sup>Ruether, *Sexism*, 72.

<sup>169</sup>Elizabeth A. Castelli, *Women, Gender, Religion: Troubling Categories and Transforming Knowledge* in *Women, Gender, Religion: A Reader*, ed. Elizabeth A. Castelli (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 3.

<sup>170</sup>Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. "Feminist Philosophy"

could be done; and how wholeness and health of mind, body, and spirit of the whole woman can be found.<sup>171</sup>

Letty Russell similarly considers gender to be a form of life that leads women to search for integrity and meaning into their constant struggle to resist dehumanization, thus, women on the margin, and all women in the patriarchal society.<sup>172</sup> She speaks to the fact that the many kinds of violence legitimized both by religions and by societies constitute both destruction and alienation of a culture by external domination of political, economic, familial, military, and religious forces, and internal reinforcement and legitimization of the domination of one group over another within a society.<sup>173</sup>

Reuther makes certain biblical claims to affirm Russell's position, and suggests that gender portrays women as the "property" of men; 'the dependent servant classes'<sup>174</sup> amongst the living. She further sees gender as; fathers characterizing and representing God; and women and children as the practical representation of the subservient lot, portraying negative identity of women especially.<sup>175</sup> Relatively, Russell seems to suggest that subservience enforces the women to consistently develop their spiritual resources for cultural resistance since they are faced with pain and contradictory situations of violence.<sup>176</sup>

King indicates further that, it is the dependence on the spiritual resources that sustains women, otherwise women may have been devastated by their experiences of physical, material and economic violence and oppressions that are structural and institutional.<sup>177</sup>

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<sup>171</sup>Ursula King, "Spirituality for Life" in *Women Resisting Violence Spirituality for Life*, eds. Mary John Mananzan, Mercy Amba Oduyoye, Elza Tamez, J. Shanon Clarkson, Mary c. Grey and Letty Russell (New York: Orbis Books, 1996), 151.

<sup>172</sup>Letty Russell, "Spirituality, Struggle, and Cultural Violence" in *Women Resisting Violence Spirituality for Life*, eds. Mary John Mananzan, Mercy Amba Oduyoye, Elza Tamez, J. Shanon Clarkson, Mary c. Grey and Letty Russell (New York: Orbis Books, 1996), 21.

<sup>173</sup>Russell, *Spirituality*, 21.

<sup>174</sup>Reuther, *Sexism*, 53.

<sup>175</sup>Reuther, *Sexism*, 53-54.

<sup>176</sup>Russell, *Spirituality*, 23.

<sup>177</sup>King, "Spirituality", 148-149.

King insists that, “For Christian women, there is also the oppression experienced in the church, in theological education and, at the deepest level, through the image and concept of God itself, transmitted by traditional theology and Christian preaching”<sup>178</sup>

Lucinda Peach though looks at the import of gender from the physical perspective shares similar views with Reuther insisting that, it is the roles of males that set the standard for which females are assessed. She suggests that these standard operatives perpetrate the stereotype that, women are out place in combatant activities because they lack the necessary physical strength to perform adequately; their capacity for pregnancy and childbearing make them inappropriate combatants and women’s participation in combatant units would reduce unit cohesion by disrupting male bonding and promoting sexual fraternization.<sup>179</sup>

Reuther like Margaret Conckey proposes that women are presumed to be domestic entities; “the mother’s world thus becomes the settled domestic circle of childbearing, lactation, early nurture, the transformation of raw into the cooked, the making of domestic implements, and so on”<sup>180</sup> From the archaeological view point, Conckey thinks that there is an undeniably strong correlation between domesticity and women; home oriented tasks; they are often exchanged as wives, the objects of art and image making, and symbols of fertility and sexuality.<sup>181</sup> Equally, Conckey is of the view that a possible result of gender description is the result of archaeological interpretative contortions to avoid suggesting that some prehistoric women were equally active as men; for instance, “if a spear thrower (atlatl) was found in a

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<sup>178</sup>King, “Spirituality”, 148.

<sup>179</sup>Lucinda J. Peach. “Gender and War: Are Women Tough enough for Military Combat?” in *Gender and Cross-Cultural Perspectives*, eds. Caroline B. Brettell and Caroline F. Sargent (New Jersey: Princeton Hall, Inc., 1993), 21

<sup>180</sup> Ruther, Sexism, 73.

<sup>181</sup>Margaret W. Conckey. “Men and Women in Prehistory: An Archaeological Challenge” in *Gender and Cross-Cultural Perspectives*, eds. Caroline B. Brettell and Caroline F. Sargent (New Jersey: Princeton Hall, Inc., 1993), 58-59

man's grave, it was because he had used it; if found in a woman's grave, it was a gift to her, or, the archaeologist speculated, there really were (female) 'Amazons' in this river valley"<sup>182</sup>

African feminists' definitive arguments about gender have basically been influenced by the feminists of the West, to, as it were, to be self-critical of their own traditional cultures.<sup>183</sup>

Oduyoye's description of gender from the African womanist perspective is that, the women in Africa experience various forms of violence for which those experiences are painful and destructive. For instance, women carry cultural burdens; the subordinating weights of indigenous customs and practices and the external dominations of patriarchal elements that diminish their person.<sup>184</sup> She states of a woman who could not describe her life as the "Happy One"<sup>185</sup>

She was designated as 'home daughter,'" a traditional patriarchal practice that enables a man to prevent his first daughter from leaving home. Such a woman remains unmarried; however, she can have children of her father. The daughter stays on in her father's compound until she is past child-bearing age and then she may be allowed to leave. Culture-bound to her father, her sexuality is his property.<sup>186</sup>

Ackerman affirms Oduyoye's proposals to her gender descriptions suggesting that, "the more often women's stories of suffering are told in the ever-growing outer circles of discourse and the more women struggle to find meaning in these tails of terror, the greater is the potential for healing for those who are scarred, beaten, and abused."<sup>187</sup> Oduyoye's gender course is based on the fact that African women are handicapped since they are restricted from sharing their experiences with the outside world; and which spells silence and anonymity.<sup>188</sup>

Other than the indigenous customs and practices that prevent African women from sharing equities with their male counterparts, Anyidoho and Ampofo place the blame on the colonial

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<sup>182</sup>Conckey. "Men and Women in Prehistory," 59.

<sup>183</sup>Russell, "Spirituality", 20.

<sup>184</sup>Mercy Amba Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa* (New York: Orbis Books, 1995), 80

<sup>185</sup>Oduyoye, *Anowa*, 80.

<sup>186</sup>Oduyoye, *Anowa*, 80.

<sup>187</sup>Denise M. Ackermann, "Gender Roles" eds. Mary John Mananzan, Mercy Amba Oduyoye, Elza Tamez, J. Shanon Clarkson, Mary c. Grey and Letty Russell (New York: Orbis Books, 1996), 146.

<sup>188</sup>Oduyoye, *Anowa*, 83.

period's discriminatory labour regulations that did not consider non-agrarian employment opportunities in public institutions and registered business enterprises. In this regard Anyidoho and Ampofo opine that women were prevented from formal work and public spaces in which most of the formal jobs were situated.<sup>189</sup> Their argument suggests an affirmation of the domesticity of women. Again, in their mind, discrimination against women in the public domain is traced from the colonialist's era; indeed, it affirms the possibility of imposition of foreign dominance over indigenous forms.

In spite of the fact that gender is considered to be social and cultural constructions other than biological forms, both the Western and African feminist forms of gender definitions have a thick thread that runs through; the issues of experiential violence and abuse of women and the search for a global egalitarian society.

Gender roles is a set of societal norms dictating what types of behaviours are generally considered acceptable, appropriate or desirable for a person based on their actual or perceived sex.<sup>190</sup> It therefore pursues an argument that, acceptable gender role play is dependent on the society in which it is acted. Further arguments projected indicate that, specifics, with regards to gendered expectations may vary among cultures while other characteristics may be common throughout a range of cultures.<sup>191</sup> Marini affirms Sanday and Friedl's position that, social roles and behaviour of males and females have differed in all known human societies. For gender differentiations in the division of labour, men have been in better position to

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<sup>189</sup>Nana Akua Anyidoho and Akosua Ampofo, "How Can I Come To Work on Saturdays When I Have a Family. Ghanaian Women and Bank Work in a Neoliberal Era" in *Transatlantic Feminisms: Women and Gender Studies in Africa and the Diaspora*, eds. Cheryl R. Rodriguez, Dzodzi Tsikata and Akosua Adomako Ampofo (Maryland: Littlefield Publishing Group, 2015), 299.

<sup>190</sup> Wikipedia "Gender Roles," accessed June 16, 2017, <https://www.jstor/topic/gender-roles/?refreqid=excelsior%3A5aee361efd1872f7f3abb36b76abc7>

<sup>191</sup> Wikipadia. "Gender Roles"

acquire and control the valuable resources of the societies.<sup>192</sup> Marini's submission shows an obvious state of inequalities in abilities and power between men and women.

Niara Suderkasa attempts to correct the perceptible notion of inequality that is underneath the idea of role play. She supports separate and non-hierarchically related complementary domain for women and men. She suggests of the domestic domain that, because power and authority is invested in the public domain per the occupation of men, and so associated with men, and the domestic domain with women, women had de facto lower status than men<sup>193</sup> Deducing from Suderkasa's arguments, one could further propose that domestic and public domains are still a social construct because within these spheres there could be an equal opportunity for women to reconstruct similar 'power notions' of themselves giving their ability to equal performance as men in society.

Feminist theologians have contrary ideas and positions to such assertions by employing some methodologies such as the constructionist approach that opens up many possibilities for women to reread the Bible for themselves and liberate themselves from those texts that have been incorrectly used to their disadvantage.<sup>194</sup>

### **2.3 General Masculinity**

Arguments and counter arguments of the concept of masculinity have brought to bear its varying ideals, perspectives and differences. According to R.W. Connell, a pioneer in masculine research, there are multiple forms of masculinities and the subject matter is common everywhere. He observes that different masculinity constructs exist depending on

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<sup>192</sup>Margaret Mooney Marini, "Sex and Gender: What Do We Know?" *Sociological Forum* 5, No. 1 (1990):95-120, accessed June 22, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/684583>.

<sup>193</sup>Niara Sudarkasa, "The Status of Women in Indigenous African Societies" in Andrea Cornwall (ed.) *Readings in Africa* (London: The International African, 2005), 26.

<sup>194</sup>Hadebe "Gender, Gender Equality,"

different cultures and different periods of history.<sup>195</sup> Joane Nagel affirms Connell's claims and posits that, for a fact that masculinities are constructed, it is possible that there are several of such trait constructs which 'vary by time and place'<sup>196</sup>

Connell, Uchendu and Miescher among others have discussed masculinity in good measure bringing to bear its various ideals, perspectives and differences. Joane Nagel affirms Connell's definition of masculinity other than Gilmore's essentialist approach of same. Nagel maintains that, Connell's definitional strategies of positivist, normative and semiotic masculinities place men in a more descriptive form within space and time,<sup>197</sup> suggesting an indication of a fact that masculinity forms are not static over time and space. It also suggests a notion that older ideals of past masculinities can be revived and or renewed depending on the situation and circumstances of time and space.

Accordingly, while the positivist masculine definition describes the ethnographies of manhood, the normative descriptions define manly ideals, thus sex role stereotypes, whereas the semiotic definitive forms of masculinities are respectively challenged by lack of generalization and researcher bias; cultural, historical and value assumptions, and limited emphasis on discourse and symbolism of the social constitution of gender meanings.<sup>198</sup> On the other hand, the essentialist notion of 'ubiquitous male' based on certain criteria performance, such as to be a man, one must impregnate women, protect dependants from danger, and provision for kith and kin are weakened by its arbitrariness and easy

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<sup>195</sup>R.W. Connell, "Teaching the Boys: New Research on Masculinity, and Gender Strategies for Schools" *Teachers College Record*: 98 (1996): 206-235.

<sup>196</sup>Joane Nagel. "Masculinity and Nationalism: Gender and Sexuality in the Making of Nations in Ethnic and Racial Studies" *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 21 (1998): 242-269.

<sup>197</sup>Nagel, "Masculinity and Nationalism", 245.

<sup>198</sup>Nagel, "Masculinity and Nationalism", 245.

falsifiability.<sup>199</sup> Alternatively masculinities have to do basically with sex roles and the peculiar descriptions of the abilities of man.

Assertions about general masculinity may have some geographical and situational connotations in relation to the fact that one's location and the prevailing situation determines the type and form of masculinity. For instance, in the pre-colonial Akan setting of Southern Ghana, Stephen F. Miescher identifies some notions of masculinity; *Opanyin*, 'senior masculinity' in the figure of an elder and *Obirempong*, the status of a 'big man'. *Opanyin* as the masculine form should provide his wife with shelter, food and cloth and assist her in the performance of heavy farm labour.<sup>200</sup>

The *Opanyin* was expected to look after his children and find them suitable marriage partners and should demand that they work for him, even after divorcing their mother.<sup>201</sup> Observations indicate that some of the masculine forms of the *Opanyin* still prevail whereas others do not. For example, taking care of the wife and children is contemporary, but for the *Opanyin* to look for suitable marriage partners for his children and the demand that the children will work for him even after divorcing their mother is now almost rarefied. The latter has been affected by the changing trends of masculine construct forms. In other words, the former expectations of *Opanyin* are maintained and improved upon.<sup>202</sup> Similarly, *Obirempong* as a masculine form indicates a notable cocoa farmer and considerably rich from trade gains.<sup>203</sup> Currently, the masculine status of *Obirempong* is revered in various forms as bank managers, political office holders, business owning executives and other successful entrepreneurial officials among others.

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<sup>199</sup>Nagel, "Masculinity and Nationalism,245.

<sup>200</sup>Miescher, "The Challenges of Presbyterian Masculinity," 75.

<sup>201</sup>Miescher, "The Challenges of Presbyterian Masculinity," 75.

<sup>202</sup>Miescher, "The Challenges of Presbyterian Masculinity," 76.

<sup>203</sup>Miescher, "The Challenges of Presbyterian Masculinity," 76.

Formerly, the training of the children was discriminatory – the training of children was more concentrated on boys than girls. For instance, in early childhood, boys were trained in line with military ideals whereas girls were given home science training. The military ideals involved self-development- both physical and mental abilities through ‘hardening’ and ‘quickenning’ processes. Boys were trained to develop physical strength through exercise and increasing the body’s capacity to endure physical pain and resistance to infliction.<sup>204</sup> Specifically the boys were given skills in leadership training. Today both boys and girls receive equal educational training.

There is also a strong correlation between masculine constructs and learning. Connell thinks that masculinities come into existence as people act it.<sup>205</sup> Miescher therefore holds that after 1918 various colonial institutions were expanded – scouting, government schools, the army, the police or the civil service to as it were train males with the mission society’s own codes of behaviour and notions of masculinity. However, such a missionary focus would often happen within certain constraints or expectations; at times forcing men to adapt and choose, at other times drawing them voluntarily into certain behavioural modes.<sup>206</sup> It was obvious then that missionary coercion was effective in this direction which may have resulted in conscious conflicts and explicit coping difficulties. Miescher affirms that frequent conflicts about proper male behaviour between church officials and local big men show that these norms remained contested.<sup>207</sup>

Uchendo similarly thinks that learning and practice take place through both informal and formal structures of the family through masculinity constructs. Affirmatively, he insists that Zulu masculine qualities of honesty, wisdom, bravery and respect for authority are learned

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<sup>204</sup> “Pre-Colonial East Africa: History, Culture and Physical Activity” *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 27:5 (2010) : 780-797

<sup>205</sup> Connell, “Teaching the Boys”, 210.

<sup>206</sup> Miescher, *Becoming a Man in Kwahu*, 9-10.

<sup>207</sup> Miescher, *Becoming a Man in Kwahu*, 13.

other than inborn. She alludes to the fact that the father and mother who constitute an important influence are key complimentary role plays in the transfer of such qualities.<sup>208</sup>

Uchendu, from a typically African perspective, identifies a masculine form associated with the inculcating of specific domestic skills. She insists that, this form of masculinity is purposely for personal survival that enables young warriors to face the rigours of military life. It holds that masculine domesticity was for moments when the individual was alone and with no female subject nearby. It is a period when such foundation is laid in childhood as boys were taught to clean the home and cook meals for their fathers.<sup>209</sup>

Such masculinity construct suggest full concentration and complete removal of distractive elements. It further implies that certain masculine ideals are structured in secrecy and which may obviously lead to some forms of gender inequality; a privilege to one gender group against the other. This notwithstanding, Uchendu insists that this masculine domesticity qualifies the African fathers to be despotic in their rulership over their households where orders must be implicitly obeyed. She holds that masculine domesticity is a deliberate act of a succession plan, a responsibility to produce strong, healthy, disciplined and civilized male offspring to replace them and to serve the land.<sup>210</sup>

For another masculinity form, Miescher holds that masculinities when constructed are similarly negotiated through language as well as through work and space. Accordingly, the expressions of masculinity are done through proverbs and local nomenclatures which are related to the gendered meaning of certain expressions. For instance, in Akan, a man who may have excelled on the battlefield is called *Jbarima* or *Jkaktakyie*, (valiant man or hero respectively) *Akrakyefo* is a masculine language that represents male school graduates who

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<sup>208</sup>Uchendo, *Contemporary Africa*, 7.

<sup>209</sup>Uchendo, *Contemporary Africa*, 8.

<sup>210</sup>Uchendo, *Contemporary Africa*, 8.

occupied work place of new social positions of clerks, teachers and church leaders redefining their masculine and professional identities.<sup>211</sup> Similarly, in the Ga society, masculinity form is expressed in a proverb, “*Kε ji tu fε ε , nuu tsitsi ema*”, the bullet goes into the chest of a man at the trigger of the gun. Thus, masculinity in this instance shows bravery, endurance and militarism.

Hadebe’s idea of masculine dominance is predominant in the public domain and also cuts across the domestic domain. The praxis of decision-making and leadership is an acceptable role of men and it is internalised in them.<sup>212</sup> Such tendencies turn out to dominate the world of other men, and women by virtue of social, cultural and religious constructs. These constructs are perceived to be normal and accepted as natural. For instance, Gupta holds the view that the difference between masculine and feminine is dominance by men.

Such dominance leads to the differential treatment of women where they are denied access to resources of the society and to positions of power and authority, both publicly and domestically.<sup>213</sup> He insists that, productive labour power of women, women’s sexuality and mobility as well as women’s property and other economic resources are controlled by patriarchal authority otherwise defined as masculine hegemony.<sup>214</sup>

### **2.3 Hegemonic Masculinity**

Having explained the concepts of general masculinity and masculinity dominance in the previous section, this section looks at the explanative definition of hegemonic masculinity and its characterizing features.

The originating definitive idea of ‘hegemony’ is a Gramscian term characterized by the attention given to class differences, and the re-occurrence of race biases in the concept of

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<sup>211</sup>Miescher, *Becoming a man in Kwahu*,9-12 &42.

<sup>212</sup> Hadebe, “*Gender, Gender Equality*”

<sup>213</sup>Gupta, “*Basic Concepts*”

<sup>214</sup>Gupta, “*Basic Concepts*”

power that seems to disfavour women and other men and concentrating it to a category of authority wielding men.<sup>215</sup> The concept of hegemony is an active and continuous process in which maintenance and or changes are carried out to firm up its structural ideals in perpetuating the actors' agenda.<sup>216</sup> Donaldson contests that hegemony is the winning and holding of power and the formation (and destruction) of social groups in that process.<sup>217</sup>

It therefore implies that hegemony is pursuit of power and authority. Power once attained leads to the establishment of supporting structures that endure social awareness and compliance to its dictates.<sup>218</sup> Donaldson affirms that the ruling class essentially establishes and maintains its domination by imposing a definition of the situation, setting the terms to understanding events and issues, formulating ideals and defining morality.<sup>219</sup>

Accordingly, hegemony involves persuasion of the greater part of the population through the media, and other organizations of social institutions in ways that appear 'natural', 'ordinary' and 'normal' of which non conformity to the wielders of power attract some forms of punitive measures.<sup>220</sup> Presumably hegemonic tendencies may have existed within the ideals of patriarchy. Connell and Messerschmidt however hold that, the concept of hegemonic masculinity has replaced categorical models of patriarchy.<sup>221</sup>

The formulation of hegemonic masculinity however evolves around certain norms as held by Connell and Messerschmidt. One of such norms includes a pattern of practice that allows men's continual dominance over women.<sup>222</sup> In this particular direction, Donaldson affirms that, the fundamental element of hegemonic masculinity is when women are perceived to

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<sup>215</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, "Hegemonic Masculinity"

<sup>216</sup>Donaldson, "What is Hegemonic Masculinity", 645.

<sup>217</sup>Donaldson, "What is Hegemonic Masculinity", 645.

<sup>218</sup>Donaldson, "What is Hegemonic Masculinity", 645.

<sup>219</sup>Donaldson, "What Is Masculine Hegemony", 645.

<sup>220</sup>Donaldson, "What Is Masculine Hegemony", 645.

<sup>221</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, "Hegemonic Masculinity"

<sup>222</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, "Hegemonic Masculinity," 831.

exist as potential sexual objects for men while men are negated as sexual objects for men.<sup>223</sup>

The assertions of Connell, Messerschmidt and Donaldson seemingly imply that it is chiefly and obviously a central fact that, “for the patriarchal mode of production, the control of women’s sexuality through social, cultural and religious codes of behaviour, the restrictions of women’s movement and the discouragement handed them through customary practices, social sanctions and emotional pressures”,<sup>224</sup> hegemonic masculinity was thought.

Another considerable element located within the concepts of hegemonic masculinity formations is distinction. In this process, hegemonic masculinity was distinguished from other masculinities especially subordinated masculinities.<sup>225</sup> Francis Cleaver postulates that the concept of hegemonic masculinity is an attempt to deal with masculinity relational issues pointing to the fact that not all men from the institutions of patriarchy have equal benefit. As such, some forms of masculinity are culturally elevated above others in certain times and places.<sup>226</sup> In other words, establishing masculine hegemony means drawing differences amongst the same men. Donaldson however holds that, hegemonic masculinity has paved the way and offered few men to deliver control of other men.<sup>227</sup>

Connell insists that, hegemonic masculinity signifies a position of cultural authority and leadership and argues that other forms of masculinity persist. Affirmatively, masculinity dominance is visible. She describes it as an equivalent to the expressions of a group of opportune men over women; on the other hand masculinities are defined collectively in the work place<sup>228</sup> where men dominate in the decision-making processes. In other words, hegemonic masculinities could mean that the men of which class formations they find

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<sup>223</sup>Donaldson, “Masculine Hegemony,” 645.

<sup>224</sup>Gupta, “Basic Concepts”

<sup>225</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, “Hegemonic Masculinity,” 831.

<sup>226</sup>Francis Cleaver, “Men and Masculinities: New Directions in Gender and Development” in *Masculinities Matter: Men, Gender and Development*. Francis Cleaver. (London: Zed Books Ltd., 2002), 7.

<sup>227</sup>Donaldson, “Masculine Hegemony,” 645.

<sup>228</sup>Connell, “Teaching the Boys,” 200.

themselves are protective of their positions from other men and women. As Donaldson may explain, “It is not necessarily what powerful men are, but it is what sustains their power, and what large numbers of men are motivated to support because it benefits them. He insist in this regard that, what most men support is not necessarily what they are.”<sup>229</sup>

Conclusively, further survey into hegemonic masculinity variously sums up some notable facts. Regarding this, Donaldson suggests that, “hegemonic masculinities can be analysed, distanced from, appropriated, negated, challenged, reproduced, separated from, renounced, given up, chosen, constructed with difficulty, confirmed, imposed, separated from, and modernized”.<sup>230</sup> Similarly, the consequential exercise of authority and leadership and decision-making within hegemonic masculinity, that is, ‘what it can do to men’, fascinate, undermine, appropriate (some men’s bodies), organize, impose, pass itself off as natural, deform, harm and deny men.<sup>231</sup> In other words, it suggests that the practice of hegemonic masculinity offers some interesting consequences, and to suggest, it may either be successful or could be challenged.

In spite of the fact that wide criticisms have been levelled against hegemonic masculinity, its central principle pertains; “hegemonic masculinity establishes and maintains its domination in ways that are considered ‘natural’, ‘ordinary’, and ‘normal.’”<sup>232</sup>

## **2.4 Feminist Theology**

Slee postulates that, “feminist theology has emerged as a challenge to the male bias in religion and society as a whole.”<sup>233</sup> May also asserts that, feminist theology which similarly is interpreted to mean feminist theologies that are committed to change, including advocacy on

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<sup>229</sup>Donaldson, “What Is Masculine Hegemony,” 646.

<sup>230</sup>Donaldson, “What Is Masculine Hegemony,” 646.

<sup>231</sup>Donaldson, “What Is Masculine Hegemony,” 646.

<sup>232</sup>Donaldson, “What Is Masculine Hegemony,” 645.

<sup>233</sup>Nicola Slee, “Faith and Feminism” in J. Leach, *An Introduction to Christian Feminist Theology* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 2003) 259-260.

behalf of women's personal and corporate well-being.<sup>234</sup> Indicating some concepts and claims of feminism, Slee states that, the human community is characterized by a basic structural injustice, a distorted rationality between sexes, such that men as a group have power over women as a group.<sup>235</sup>

Slee insists that, notwithstanding the fact that these inequalities are universal and enshrined in language, culture, social relations, mythology and religion, the most fundamental feature of this distorted relationality is a persuasive dualism which makes a sharp distinction between perceived male and female roles, characteristics and areas of responsibility, valuing those identified with the male as inherently superior to those identified with the female.<sup>236</sup>

Regarding the grounding of theology in women's experience, Slee further states that,

Most theology in the past has been done almost exclusively from the perspective of male experience; men have been those who have written, taught and preached about the meaning of faith. Nevertheless, theology has 'been blind': it did not recognize the partiality and bias of its pronouncements, but offered them as universally valid and applicable to all humanity.<sup>237</sup>

May asserts that the struggle for women's liberation by women have emerged from the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and had flourished since the 1960's. Prior to this period, it was believed to be egalitarian, women-centred communities that worshipped a female deity.<sup>238</sup> According to May, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Gage argue that, the church has been not merely the site of, but also the seabed of the suppression of women.<sup>239</sup> It suggests that, during the period in question the subordination of women continued and the church was the main pivot around which the understanding of such oppressive tendencies over women churned. Supposedly the

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<sup>234</sup> Melanie A. May, "Feminist Theology" in Erwin Fahlbusch, et al (eds.) *The Encyclopedia of Christianity* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2001), 304-305.

<sup>235</sup> Slee, "An Introduction"

<sup>236</sup> Slee, "An Introduction."

<sup>237</sup> Slee, "An Introduction."

<sup>238</sup> May, "Feminist Theology", 303.

<sup>239</sup> May, "Feminist Theology", 303.

church's scriptural speculations over the positions of women opened the women up to the disadvantage of both religious and secular oppressions.<sup>240</sup>

Tracing the roots of feminist theology from the United States of America,<sup>241</sup> in Reuther's presentation on the development of feminist theology, she states;

Feminism developed its theological expressions primarily in Protestant theological seminaries of liberal denominations, such as Congregationalists, Methodists, Presbyterians and Lutherans, as these churches began to ordain women in growing numbers. Feminist theology developed as a response as women claimed this new role and possibility. As more and more women began to demand to come to seminars, aware that they could now be ordained, they began to demand women faculty and a feminist revision of the curriculum to respond to women's needs in theological education and the church. A feminist rereading of theology, Biblical Studies, church history, ethics, pastoral psychology and ethics began to emerge in theological schools.<sup>242</sup>

May affirms that, the decades between the 1960's and 1980's saw the departure of many feminists from the church "often mourning shattered symbols of faith thereby rejecting the either/or option of patriarchal religion or no religion."<sup>243</sup> Though May pointed a phenomenon of disappointments in the consciences of the women concerning the authority of the church over their very existence and essence, she insists that, consequently, among the females there was growth and flourishing spiritually with a focus on women's experiences of life, birth, nurture and on the concept of the Goddess among others.<sup>244</sup>

Indeed, just as Zikmund affirms that, "feminist critical consciousnesses" keep increasing in the sense that, women's relationship to authority, especially religious authority has changed and keep changing as they have become more self-conscious about themselves and are developing new understandings of their place in religious communities and their relationship to scripture",<sup>245</sup> Ruther also establishes the fact that, "by the late 70s and 80s, one began to

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<sup>240</sup>Slee, "An Introduction"

<sup>241</sup> Rosemary Radford Reuther. "Feminist Theology," accessed June 27, 2017, file:///C:/User/Downloads/0966735012436915.pdf

<sup>242</sup> Ruether. "Feminist Theology"

<sup>243</sup> May. "Feminist Theology", 304.

<sup>244</sup> May. "Feminist Theology", 304.

<sup>245</sup> Barbara Brown Zikmund, in Letty M. Russell (ed.) *Feminist Interpretation of the Bible* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1985) Accessed on 2/12/2016 <http://www.womenpriests.org/classic/zikmund.asp>

see an international diversification of Christian feminist theologies in Latin America, Asia and Africa”<sup>246</sup>

Accordingly, those feminists who remained within the church charted alternative paths in the expression of their faith; the creation of Women-Church; re-defining their image with new rituals and new theologies which they stand in solidarity with all women who suffer oppression or the other.<sup>247</sup> May maintains that, even for women who were ordained within this era received low salaries and were faced with placement problems coupled with numerous issues as there was in the non-traditional settings.<sup>248</sup>

May asserts that women’s biblical studies most often than not seek to answer few pertinent questions about women being blamed for sin in the world; why women must keep silent in church; and why the compulsion on women to be obedient wives at home.<sup>249</sup> According to Ehrensperger, feminist theology therefore seeks ways to do their work from a feminist perspective, beyond the traditional male-dominated thought patterns, yet while struggling with the same or similar problems.<sup>250</sup> In this regard, feminist theologians devote attention and impart some degree of authority to classical Christian discourse about God. Accordingly, some of the feminist theologians are convinced there is a liberating tradition to be retrieved amid the androcentric character of classical theological discourse.<sup>251</sup>

Feminism in its generality is the struggle for gender equality that is thoughtfully established in the light of hegemonic masculinities that determine dominant control over women’s

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<sup>246</sup>Ruether. “*Feminist Theology*”

<sup>247</sup> May. “*Feminism*,” 304.

<sup>248</sup> May. “*Feminism*,” 304.

<sup>249</sup> May. “*Feminism*,” 304.

<sup>250</sup> Kathy Ehrensperger, “*That We May Be Mutually Encouraged: Feminism and the New Perspective*,” accessed June 27, 2017, <http://books.google.com.gh/books?isbn=056702640X>

<sup>251</sup> May. “*Feminist*”, 306-307.

domestic, religious and economic lives.<sup>252</sup> So then, feminism is the consciousness of women, of the fact that their subordination is not natural, but socially, culturally, and religiously determined by men. Therefore feminist women's determination is to create alternative ways to arrange societies and institutions so that an egalitarian future may become a reality.<sup>253</sup> It therefore suggests that feminism protest the toss which has constantly placed women in a subordinating position.

In other words, feminism may be pointing out how it is woefully wrong to perceive masculinity dominance as normal and natural as far as women's life in society is concerned.

Miles thinks that,

Feminism is necessarily a cultural politics; everywhere, it involves a challenge to patriarchal cultural forms. Its view is that, women and women's work and lives are to varying degrees and in more or less violent ways devalued, trivialized, and controlled in modern and traditional, dominant and dominated, secular and religious settings. Even indigenous cultures with holistic worldviews and balanced relations between males and females have been undermined and distorted by the hierarchical, dualistic, and androcentric impositions of colonizing powers.<sup>254</sup>

Cora Vellekoop Baldock on the other hand describes feminist theology than defines it; "A search for liberation from all forms of dehumanization by those who advocate full human personhood for all of every race, class, sex, sexual orientation, ability or age"<sup>255</sup> She suggests advocacy for existentiality of all humans and seems to think that feminist theology could be done by either gender forms, and maintains that, 'what holds all these theologies together is the commitment to advocate for the full humanity of women in a particular religious, social, cultural, and political context.'<sup>256</sup>

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<sup>252</sup>May. "Feminism", 304.

<sup>253</sup> May. "Feminism", 304.

<sup>254</sup>Miles, "Feminism: Cultural,"745.

<sup>255</sup>Cora Vellekoop Baldock, "Theologies: Feminist", in Cheris Kramarae and Dale Spender (eds.), *Routledge International Encyclopaedia of Women: Global Women's Issues and Knowledge* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 1940.

<sup>256</sup>Baldock, "Theologies: Feminist," 1941.

In the views of Rebekah Miles, feminist reflections are various and cut across scholarly disciplines which are held together and centred on ethical commitments to the wellbeing of women, as such criticisms of those ideas and structures that inhibit or fail to enhance the well-being of women.<sup>257</sup> She insists that though feminists ethicist cover a host of issues, its concentration is more on abortion, domestic violence, children and parenthood, sexuality and reproduction, household labour, gender discrimination in the work place, and sexual abuse.<sup>258</sup> In a nutshell, feminism works towards the dissolving and melting down of any form of restraints that constraint the freedom and liberation of women in all forms.

#### **2.4.1 Western Feminists Theologies**

The affirmation of the full humanity of women; thus, all the ways women have been defined as inferior, secondary and dependent on men since the rise of Patriarchy roughly six to ten thousand years ago are rejected. It means women are affirmed as fully human, not partly human or complementary to the male, but with all human attributes and capacities, in relationships of both autonomy and mutually with other humans, male and female as well as the ecosystem.<sup>259</sup>

Reuther is pointing to a fact that feminism is the call for a revolution and a fight back against such patriarchal influence, and subsequently for reinstatement of the status of women in society as equal humans as men.<sup>260</sup> Reuther's feminism revolves around arguments between two entities; God and man in relation to the individual's personal and community experiences. She asserts that experience is in relation to the divine and oneself in relationship to society and the world, in an interesting dialectic.<sup>261</sup>

Thus, going through, there is the need to interact and question those subjects that describe the position of women and finding knowledgeable ways to reshaping and uplifting the status of women. For her primary norm, "the full humanity of women", Reuther explains that, her

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<sup>257</sup>Rebekah Miles, "Feminist Ethics" in Joel B. Green (ed.) *Dictionary of Scripture and Ethics* (Michigan: Baker Publishing Group, 2011), 303.

<sup>258</sup>Miles, "Feminist Ethics," 303.

<sup>259</sup>Ruether, "What is Feminism and Why Should We Do It?"

<sup>260</sup>Ruether, "What is Feminism".

<sup>261</sup>Ruether, *Women Healing Earth*, 111.

norm is in keeping with what she claims is the key strand of Scripture; the “prophetic liberating tradition”<sup>262</sup> It is important to note however that, though feminism affirms the full humanity of women, it is not to deny the humanity of men, but a critique to that patriarchal system that distorts the humanity of both men and women.<sup>263</sup> Wilson observes that,

Patriarchy does not stand for the powerlessness or total depravity of the rights of women to access power and resources, rather the manifestation and institutionalization of male dominance over women and children in the family and the extension of male dominance over women in society in general, a seabed for economic exploitation and control of women’s unpaid household labour and underpaid wage work; an excuse for patriarchal emergence in the abuse of women, and patriarchal tactics to keep women subordinated in the home while making them uncomfortable in the public sphere.<sup>264</sup>

In spite of Ruether’s cardinal principle of feminist ideology, Rankka suggests that it is similarly needful to do both deconstruction and construction that will lead to the determination of full humanity of women.<sup>265</sup> Rankka therefore recommends that, to do deconstruction and construction, there is the need to include;

A critique of the tradition from feminist perspective, incorporating the use of secular feminist theories; the recovery of women’s contributions in Christian traditions, identifying women not as simply as passive victims, but as contributing agents in church history and theological reflection and as well, the development of ‘constructive theologies’ through the work of reshaping the church’s doctrine and teachings, in order to provide a renewed vision of Christianity that incorporates the plurality of women’s voices.<sup>266</sup>

Watson like Rankka proposes that the realisation of full humanity of women is based on feminist theology that is critical, contextual, constructive, and which involves creative re-reading and re-writing of Christian theology in relation to women’s bodies, perspectives, and experiences that are relevant to the Christian theologians’ agenda.<sup>267</sup>

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<sup>262</sup>Miles, “*Feminist Ethics*,” 306

<sup>263</sup>Rosemary Radford Ruether, “*What is Feminism*”

<sup>264</sup>Ara Wilson, “Patriarchy: Feminist Perceptions of Patriarchy” in Cheris Kramarae and Dale Spender (eds.) *Routledge International Encyclopedia of Women: Global Women’s Issues and Knowledge* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 1494-1495.

<sup>265</sup>Kristine M. Rankka, “*Women and the Value of Suffering: An Aw(e)ful Rowing Toward God*,” accessed June 25, 2017

<http://books.com.gh/books?id=g9wYfOSFVysC&pg=PA57&Ipg=PA57&dp=feminist+perspective+of+full+hum>

<sup>266</sup>Rankka, “*Women and the Value of Suffering*.”

<sup>267</sup>Natalie K. Watson, *Feminist Theology* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003), accessed June 27, 2017, [www.worldcat.org/wcpa/servlet/DCARead?standardNoType=1&excerpt=true](http://www.worldcat.org/wcpa/servlet/DCARead?standardNoType=1&excerpt=true)

Re-reading of the scripture from the perspective of feminism is to understand the text and interpret the “her perspective”.<sup>268</sup> For instance, Russell says of her self,

The Bible has authority in my life because it makes sense of my experience and speaks to me about the meaning and purpose of my humanity in Jesus Christ. In East Harlem the story of God’s concern for humanity showed us that ‘nobodies’ in the eyes of the dominant society could be ‘somebodies’. I still believe this, believe that in God’s sight I am not marginal but that, like my Black and Hispanic sisters and brothers in East Harlem, I came created by God and called by the biblical word of promise to become what God intends me to become: a partner in the mending of creation.<sup>269</sup>

Equally the purpose of the re-reading is to basically uncover the truth that is buried under the biblical texts since it is very important to know the context at which these documents were written,<sup>270</sup> and again, to raise radical questions about the oppressive ways that scripture and tradition have been used as well as about the unfaithfulness of church and synagogue as guardians of that tradition.<sup>271</sup> Similarly, Gerstein proposes two ways that feminism re-reading and subsequent interpretation of the Bible are employed to bring to knowledge the equal importance of the different roles of men and women; how the Bible worked in Israelite culture and how the Bible is applied in contemporary culture.<sup>272</sup>

Similarly, Fiorenza thinks that, feminist biblical interpretation is the women-church that seeks to gain women’s religious affirmation, power, and liberation from all patriarchal alienation, marginalization, and oppression. Relatively, she proposes that, it is not just in the constructional language that needs to be appropriated, but the roots of social, economic, and political system of graded subjugations and oppressions of women must be uprooted.<sup>273</sup> Reuther’s extensive rereading of Scripture leads her to prove that some portions of it hermeneutically present open doors that can liberate women from their oppressions and

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<sup>268</sup>Vinod, July 6, 2012, “*Re-Reading of the Bible and Feminist Hermeneutics*,” Vinod Blog, June 28, 2017, [svindoo.blogspot.com/2012/07/re-reading-of-bible-and-feminist.html](http://svindoo.blogspot.com/2012/07/re-reading-of-bible-and-feminist.html)

<sup>269</sup>Russell, *Authority and the Challenge*

<sup>270</sup>Vinod, “*Re-Reading*”

<sup>271</sup>Russell, *Authority and the Challenge*.

<sup>272</sup>Gerstein, *Feminist Biblical Interpretation*

<sup>273</sup>Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza, *The Will to Choose or Reject: Continuing Our Critical Work*, chp. 10, (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1985), accessed June 28, 2017, [www.womenpriests.org/classic/fiorenza.asp](http://www.womenpriests.org/classic/fiorenza.asp)

suppressions assumed to be wrongful in the feminist view, yet natural and normal in the patriarchal perception. She further insists that since ‘the Bible was shaped by males in patriarchal culture, so much of its revelatory experiences were interpreted by men from a patriarchal perspective.’<sup>274</sup>

Among others, Reuther’s approach leads to “possibly uncover the patriarchal biases and brings to light the Bible’s liberating message for women in the employment of a “hermeneutic suspicion”<sup>275</sup>

God is alive and with us. The Holy Spirit continues to speak. We are mandated to continue the dialogue. We do not do so in a cultural and historical vacuum. We recall the dominant memories of our ancestors, and also uncover repressed ones, the ones that come from women and marginalized men. But we must reconstruct meaning for ourselves today, not only in intellectual systems, but in the sparkling of primal stories that may spring up from our own experience, drawing upon a store house of symbols and images of our cultures<sup>276</sup>

Russell and Gerstein share the same view as Reuther’s ‘hermeneutic suspicion’, in that, the issues of re-reading and interpretations are to ‘challenge the patriarchal interpretations of the Bible’<sup>277</sup> and to ‘question biblical authority’<sup>278</sup> For instance, in Russell’s comments on ‘Interpretive framework’, she states;

The Bible is understood to be a ‘dangerous book’ that has often been used to teach slaves and women to be subservient to masters and to provide God’s blessing for warfare. We know that everything the Bible says is not equally helpful to us as women of faith and that there are false interpretations and misuses of the scriptures<sup>279</sup>

Reuther therefore proposes several understandings within the Christian tradition in relation to the liberation of women in the face of male dominated Christian theology. She notes that,

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<sup>274</sup>Ruether, *Women Healing Earth*, 116.

<sup>275</sup>Miles, “Feminist Ethics,” 306

<sup>276</sup>Reuther, *Sexism and God-Talk*, vii.

<sup>277</sup>Gerstien, *Feminist*.

<sup>278</sup>Russell, *Authority and the Challenge*.

<sup>279</sup>Russell, *Authority and the Challenge*.

“Not only have women, been excluded from shaping and interpreting the tradition from their own experience, but the tradition has been shaped and interpreted against them.”<sup>280</sup>

Reuther argues that the rereading and reinterpretation of the Bible reveals what authentically the liberating word of God is. She contends that such activities expose the wrong interpretations of the past and lays bare the sinful injustices and idolatry.<sup>281</sup> She seems to suggest therefore that patriarchal dominance in their interpretation and practicality of the Bible may then be inaccurate. Reuther acknowledges that since the biblical revelatory experiences were narrated by men, the Bible is identified as a patriarchy property that is used by both members of the patriarchy, women and children. She is of the view that since ‘the Bible would reveal only a demonic falsification of women’s being; it would not provide touchstones for a liberating alternative.’<sup>282</sup>

According to Reuther the androcentric setting places women at a greater disadvantage of which situation presents a fertile ground for action and reflection for feminist theology in order to bring out that ‘not fully known humanity of women’.<sup>283</sup> In this regard, Reuther points to the fact that, full humanity of women is that of the true nature of things, and that is exceptionally divine; “... the correlation of original and authentic human nature (imago dei/Christ) over against diminished, fallen humanity has traditionally provided the basic structure of classical Christian theology.”<sup>284</sup>

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<sup>280</sup>Reuther, *Women Healing Earth*, 112.

<sup>281</sup>Reuther, *Women Healing Earth*, 117.

<sup>282</sup>Reuther, *Women Healing Earth*, 117.

<sup>283</sup>Reuther, *Women Healing Earth*, 115.

<sup>284</sup>Reuther, *Women Healing Earth*, 115.

Fiorenza shares similar thoughts with Reuther in the sense that in a patriarchal religion all women are bound into a system of male privilege and domination and for which matter, women's liberation movements agitate for the realization of the total humanity of women.<sup>285</sup>

Reuther contends that the redemptive nature of the divine is not specifically for males but females as well. Her approach in part, determines an expansion of the definition of inclusive humanity or gender inclusiveness of all social groups and races. To this end, she suggests that, the success of her approach will largely depend on the rejection and disapproval of androcentric tendencies and all forms of chauvinism. In other words, dismissing males as norms for humanity and discarding all sorts of norm as a specification for belongingness.<sup>286</sup>

Stewart would argue that, this obviously has led to entire research programs being revamped; a move that often has as its aim a sort of equal representation of and investment in, the lives of women and men.<sup>287</sup>

Reuther believes that in order to expand the sensitivities of women, there is the need for the employment of dialogue between groups and movements established for the emancipation of women from all forms of violence, abuse, and maltreatment, both in economic and socio-cultural terms.<sup>288</sup> Egnell suggests that dialogue in the form of literature, interfaith conferences and network for women in theological research and pastoral work as well is yet to play great part in the development of feminist theology.<sup>289</sup>

The characteristics of such liberation movements by definition are actions, and endeavours of a body of persons with 'liberty or release from bondage' as their goal. As such their

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<sup>285</sup>Fiorenza, "*The will to Choose*"

<sup>286</sup>Reuther, *Women Healing Earth*, 116.

<sup>287</sup> Fiona Stewart 'Humanities and Social Sciences: Feminist Critiques' in Cheris Kramarae and Dale Spender (eds.) *Routledge International Encyclopaedia of women: Global Women's Issues and Knowledge* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 1084.

<sup>288</sup>Reuther, *Women Healing Earth*. 116.

<sup>289</sup> Viggo Montensen, ed., *Theology and the Religions: A dialogue* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003), accessed June 30, 2017, [j\\_D1ot-CVBo&hl=en&sa=0ahUKEwj445DxyuXUAhWKAaVAKHVx\\_Ds4Q6AEIOjAD#v=onepage&q=feminism and issues of dialogue&f=false](http://j_D1ot-CVBo&hl=en&sa=0ahUKEwj445DxyuXUAhWKAaVAKHVx_Ds4Q6AEIOjAD#v=onepage&q=feminism and issues of dialogue&f=false)

campaigns mainly include both revolutionary and nationalist contests for self-determination and struggles for recognition and rights by groups contained within independent communities.<sup>290</sup> Fiorenza indicates in one of her presentations that, the goals of women-church's liberation groups is determined in their struggle for the survival and self-determination for women under the following themes; 'Until every woman is free, no woman is free'; and 'Equality from below'<sup>291</sup> She specifies that, feminist religious movements without excuse criticize the myth and structures of a society and culture which keep women down; "Women are denied the full range of human potentiality; we are socialized to view ourselves as dependent, less intelligent, and derivative from men"<sup>292</sup>

The idealistic position of women within the Western tradition concerning the image of God is argued variously based on the fact that, "religion points to all the ways the signifier 'God' remains stubbornly gendered male in Western thought and subliminally envisioned as a male personage."<sup>293</sup> Suchoki argues that within androcentrism the concept of God has been skewed towards male which serves to define men and male roles, and to reinforce the inferior definition and roles of women.<sup>294</sup> She explains that,

Characteristics traditionally attributed to God, such as strength, wisdom, immutability, dependability, and righteousness, are similar to values stereotypically attributed to men, whereas the corollary values applied to humanity such as weakness, ignorance, vacillation, and sinfulness, are stereotypically applied to women<sup>295</sup>

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<sup>290</sup> Christine Bolt, "Liberation Movements" in Cheri Kramarae and Dale Spender (eds.) *Routledge International Encyclopedia of Women: Global Women's Issues and Knowledge* (New York: Routledge, 2000),130.

<sup>291</sup>Fiorenza, *The Will to Choose*.

<sup>292</sup>Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza, *Feminist Theology as a Critical Theology of Liberation*, accessed June 28, 2017, [cdn.theologicalstudies.net/36/36.4/36.4.2.pdf](http://cdn.theologicalstudies.net/36/36.4/36.4.2.pdf)

<sup>293</sup> Nancy Frankenberry, "Feminist Critique of Traditional Theism," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, first published March 14, 2005, last modified November 17, 2011, accessed June 28, 2017, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminist-religion/#3.1>

<sup>294</sup>Majorie Hewitt Suchocki, "The Idea of God in Feminist Philosophy," *Feminist Philosophy of Religion* 9, no. 4 (1994): 57-68, accessed June 28, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3810422>

<sup>295</sup>Suchocki, *The Idea of God*.

Suchocki signifies that, whereas the androcentric notion of the transcendence of God is rejected for the total immanence of God, the image of God is replaced with Goddess.<sup>296</sup> In this regard, Reuther's claim affirms the latter, noting that, the human concept and idea of the image of God was female, insisting that, at least until the urge of civilization of the ancient world, a widely diffused image of the Goddess without an accompanying male cult figure was found<sup>297</sup>

Reuther describes the female as that which wields the power of fruitfulness and fertility, as it were the possessor of the womb from which all things are birthed. They include 'Gods and humans, sky and earth, human and nonhuman beings.'<sup>298</sup> In Reuther's descriptive claim, the God or Goddess by its worshippers is considered humble and from whom favour is granted on petitioning. She describes the Goddess as a deliverer and a conqueror from nature's threat and other divinities. Upon one of her rejections to the androcentric notions of God, Daly suggests that since 'the masculine God' was held 'above sex', the 'vague identification of God with the male sex' that pervades theology must be discouraged since 'masculine' is then predicated to a Being with no sex.<sup>299</sup>

In the women's feminist theological arguments of Christology, various perceptions and conclusions have been drawn in the backdrop of the fact of on-going gender discrimination and the feminist aim of deconstructing patriarchy and its dualisms.<sup>300</sup> According to Bohache there are three distinct positions regarding women and their religious views of Jesus Christ;

Mary Daly's position is, 'We women are never wanted in the church; let's leave.'; Rosemary Radford Ruether's position is, 'We women are never wanted; but let's stay and change the reality by our

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<sup>296</sup>Suchocki, *The Idea of God*.

<sup>297</sup>Reuther, *Sexism and God-Talk*, 47.

<sup>298</sup>Reuther, *Sexism and God-Talk*, 48.

<sup>299</sup>Suchocki, *The Idea of God*.

<sup>300</sup>Thomas Bohache, *Christology from the Margins*, (United Kingdom: SCM Press, 2009), accessed June 30, 2017, <http://books.google.com.gh/books?isbn=0334040582>

activism.’; Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza’s position is, ‘We women were always present in the church and were wanted by Jesus; let’s stay and return the church to its earliest state.’<sup>301</sup>

Accordingly, Mary Daly dismisses entirely the significance of Christ’s person or work for the humanity of women.<sup>302</sup> For instance she notes that,

I am proposing that Christian idolatry concerning the person of Jesus is not likely to be overcome except through the revolution that is going on in women’s consciousness. It will, I think, become increasingly evident that exclusive masculine symbols for the ideal of ‘incarnation’ or for the ideal of human search for the fulfilment will not do. As a uniquely masculine image and language for divinity loses credibility, so also the idea of a single divine incarnation in a human being of the male sex may give way in the religious consciousness to an increased awareness of the power of Being in all persons.<sup>303</sup>

Daly therefore proposes that, universally, women cannot accept the unique form of male saviour. She concludes that Jesus is not a woman and subsequently encourages the disuse of particularization amongst others.<sup>304</sup> Accordingly, particularization is used to “escape Christological issues ‘by shifting the emphasis to a specific set of conditions and the refusal to see the universality of the conditioning process.’”<sup>305</sup>

Bohache reiterates that, Reuther considers Christianity’s historicity as a reason for embracing it and learning from its historical context in order to inform their own.<sup>306</sup> Reuther’s idea of Christology is traced from the roots of Ancient Near East that brings to the fore a dual thought; the revelation of the systemic universe and the divine wisdom that unites the human with the divine. She argues that the divine wisdom is considered in the various cultures of the Eastern Mediterranean as Goddess. She insists that, the idea of the divine wisdom as Goddess was so intense that, it was adopted within the Hellenistic form. On the other hand she draws a similarity between what pre-existed as identical to the description of the New Testament

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<sup>301</sup>Bohache, *Christology*.

<sup>302</sup>Bohache, *Christology*.

<sup>303</sup>Hannelie Wood, “Revisiting Mary Daly: Her views on the Trinity, Mariology and the Fall as post-Christian myths,” *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* 41, no. 1 (2015), accessed June 30, 2017, [www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci\\_arttext&pid=S1017-04992015000100010](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1017-04992015000100010)

<sup>304</sup>Wood, *Revisiting Mary Daly*.

<sup>305</sup>Wood, *Revisiting Mary Daly*.

<sup>306</sup>Bohache, *Christology*

Logos, or “Son” of God.<sup>307</sup> The divertive attention then becomes male displacing the female figure of the divine wisdom. Reuther’s assertion of the Hebraic Messiah is an imagined male relating it historically to the Judaic ideology of Davidic kingship.<sup>308</sup>

Reuther perceives that, the patriarchalization of Christology within the new Christian order insist on the male disclosure of a male God-Christ as the ‘Pantocrator’ (All-Ruler) and so regard women as humble members of the Christian body, yet, their inability to represent Christ. She insists that, the emergent male-dominant Christology has intensified the conservative reaction against women ordination considering males and dismissing females as bridegrooms of Christ.<sup>309</sup> Contrary to the claim of Reuther’s Christological masculinism that pertains to ordinations, some orthodoxy is ordaining women as priests within their institutions other than ‘the Vatican declaration in 1976 against women’s ordination’<sup>310</sup>

According to Bohache, Wilson-Kastner’s expression of Jesus is, “the agent of wholeness and reconciler of fragmentation in the world.”<sup>311</sup> For instance, Fiorenza argues that, “although the polemical rhetoric of Paul in I Corinthians misconstrues the arguments and belief of the Corinthian wo/men, it nevertheless indicates that the early Christian missionary movements in urban centres of the Greco-Roman world understood Jesus in terms of Sophia-Spirit.<sup>312</sup> Bohache concludes on the conservatives that, as it were, they do not take seriously, feminist concern with the maleness of Jesus though it is not a non-issue for feminist, and equally, they

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<sup>307</sup>Reuther, *Sexism and God-Talk* 116-117.

<sup>308</sup>Reuther, *Sexism and God-Talk*, 116-117.

<sup>309</sup>Reuther, *Sexism and God-Talk*, 122-126.

<sup>310</sup>Reuther, *Sexism and God-Talk*, 126.

<sup>311</sup>Bohache, *Christology*.

<sup>312</sup>Aidan O’Boyle, *Towards a Contemporary Wisdom Christology: Some Catholic Christologies in German, English and French 1965-1995* (Rome, Italy: Georgian University Press, 2001), accessed June30, 2017, <http://books.google.com.gh/books?isbn=8876529632>

employ the concept of Wisdom as hermeneutical clue for discovering who Jesus was and can be for women<sup>313</sup>

Reuther makes an analogy of nature as to a woman and observes that, men have devalued nature and subjected it to control. At puberty, males are separated from the females and are trained intently to become a full part of the male community identifying with its roles and functions-law makers, ritualists and cultural definers of society among others.<sup>314</sup> Contrary to this effect, the female counterparts are introduced to early child bearing and the accompanying constitutional roles. 'The mother's world thus becomes the settled domestic circle of childbearing, lactation, early child nurture, the transformation of the raw into the cooked, the making of domestic implements, and so on.'<sup>315</sup>

A male dominant structure is the reduction of women to silence and consciously perceive them to be objects rather than subjects.<sup>316</sup> Reuther explains that, the male transcendence is defined as flight from and warfare against the realm of the mother, the realm of body and nature, all that limits and confines rather than being controlled by the human male.<sup>317</sup> In this regard, Reuther is therefore suggesting that, her picturesque expression is the male employment of conscious effort to consistently and persistently subject females to 'bones without marrows' and power impotence. She argues that revelations from the thoughts of church fathers indicate their negative definition of nature that, it lies under a curse.<sup>318</sup>

Reuther suggests that within the analogous of nature as to a woman which is subjected to a man's domination, the woman can liberate herself to become male spirit "equal to the

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<sup>313</sup>Bohache, *Christology*.

<sup>314</sup>Reuther, *Sexism and God-Talk*,50.

<sup>315</sup>Reuther, *Sexism and God-Talk*,73.

<sup>316</sup>Reuther, *Sexism and God-Talk*, 73-74.

<sup>317</sup>Reuther, *Sexism and God-Talk*, 71.

<sup>318</sup>Reuther, *Sexism and God-Talk*, 80.

male”<sup>319</sup> if she deliberately shields off the descriptive damnations of a second class humanity. She challenges that, patriarchy never fully wins because each generation of girl children are able to rediscover their full humanity and creative capacities; at least, parents pass on to their daughters and sons memorable valuable human flourishing achievements of feminism that is worth emulating.<sup>320</sup>

In a nutshell, feminist theologies aim at the full recognition of the humanity of women. In spite of the fact that feminist theologians have been bracketed variously into revolutionist, revisionist and conservationist, feminisms’ goal is to do re-reading and give their own interpretations of the Bible, to as it were, come out with new meanings of which biblical history, biblical hermeneutics and humanity of women have been a patriarchal norm. As such the employment of dialogue among and between faith and interfaith communities respectively have led to literature publications, conferences and interactions amongst feminist theologians where experiences of women are shared to further challenge hegemonic masculinity that makes women invisible in the society at large.

#### ***2.4.2 African Feminists Perspective***

Various African feminist theologians have engaged in debates that seek to resolve the inequality issues against women in the socio-religious society. Western feminist theologies have birthed the engagement of the African woman to consider the experiences and act towards their liberation by re-reading of the Bible and subsequently interpreting it to their understanding. This is linked to the production of literature and other forms of actions to challenging the patriarchate and hegemonic masculinity norms.

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<sup>319</sup>Reuther, *Sexism and God-Talk*, 80.

<sup>320</sup>Zikmund, *Feminist Interpretation*.

Hinga brings into consolidation the divergent views of the case of the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians among other global partners. She determines to put to an end the ‘peculiar ways in which sexism impacts them in their particular social, political and historical locations’<sup>321</sup> To this end, African Women Theologians join voices with all other women elsewhere to rise against the invisibility of women and other descriptive experiential complaints of various subordinations exercised over them by men. They have been deprived of equal status with men in religion and public life.

Renzetti and Curran affirm Christian’s (1994) assertions that the fight against the subordination of women is a process of reconstructing gender and gender relations in society by encouraging men, to promote and engage in non-violent behaviour.<sup>322</sup> In other words, the ideological assumptions that, ‘what women do, think, or say is unimportant or uninteresting’<sup>323</sup> and so they must be subjected to all kinds of subordinations have brought forth an awakening for the women in the world, Africans included, to correct this notion. In this regard feminist theologians are making inroads in their fight for gender equity in all spheres of life.

Dialectics among African womanists and feminists similarly establish the liberation of women from an African perspective ‘without being pressed to apologize for the “otherness” of those voices’<sup>324</sup> It also suggests therefore that, religiously, masculine hegemonic tendencies

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<sup>321</sup> Teresia M. Hinga, “African Feminist Theologies, the Global Village, and the Imperative of Solidarity across Borders: The case of the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians” *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 18, no.1 (2002): 79-86, accessed March 30, 2017, [https://www.jstor.org/stable/25002427?seq=1#page\\_scan\\_tab\\_contents](https://www.jstor.org/stable/25002427?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents)

<sup>322</sup> Claire M. Renzetti and Curran Daniel J., *Women, Men, and Society*. (U.S.A: Pearson Education, Inc. 2003), 21.

<sup>323</sup> Renzetti and Curran, *Women, Men, and Society*, 9.

<sup>324</sup> Amnon Shapira, “On Women’s Equal Standing in the Bible – A sketch: A feminist Re-Reading of the Hebrew Bible: A Typological View in Hebrew Studies” *National Association of Professors of Hebrew (NAPH)*, 51, (2010):7-42, accessed April 10, 2017. [http://www.researchgate.net/.../236697992\\_On\\_Woman’s\\_Equal\\_Standing\\_in\\_the\\_Bible-A\\_Sketch\\_A\\_Feminist\\_Re-Reading\\_of\\_the\\_Hebrew\\_Bible](http://www.researchgate.net/.../236697992_On_Woman’s_Equal_Standing_in_the_Bible-A_Sketch_A_Feminist_Re-Reading_of_the_Hebrew_Bible)

have overshadowed the existence of women as co-equals to the extent that the world is masculine and everything thereof must exist under the considerations of masculinities.

Phiri re-echoes the voice of women in this matter arguing that women have made it known and keep hammering home the need to end the invisibility of women to the establishment of a more just society of men and women who seek the well-being of the other.<sup>325</sup> Phiri is however suggesting the liberation of women with this experiencing feature. Indeed Mercy Amba Oduyoye represents the struggle for human equality of the other African woman and her experience of God. She proposes that, 'God is experienced as the sole creator and sustainer of all things, who expects human beings to be to God as children and to each other as siblings and to respect the earth and other natural phenomenon'.<sup>326</sup>

Hinga's affirmations indicate a form of awareness on the part of women theologians about their deplorable status which hitherto was considered natural and normal. Women's understanding of life prior to their awareness was death to total patriarchal control giving women no chance in the affairs of authority and decision making among others.<sup>327</sup> For instance, Hazel O. Ayanga brings to the fore, some hurtful experiences of African women;

The world was waking up to the realisation that HIV and AIDs did in fact have a woman's face. In Africa in particular, women were often blamed for bringing the virus into families. The most ostracised and stigmatised members of society were women with HIV and AIDs. They would be thrown out of the marital homes when and if their spouses died of AIDs related complications. Women in Africa were often victims of negative cultural and religious beliefs. These often taught that HIV and AIDs were a result of sin, broken taboos and witch craft.<sup>328</sup>

Other hurtful experiences that are considered natural and normal include female genital mutilation, rape, murder, bashings, crude widowhood rites and similar others and their

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<sup>325</sup> Isabel Phiri, 'African Woman Theologies in the New Millennium Agenda: Empowering Women for Gender Equality,' *Religion and Spirituality*, 61(2004):16-24, accessed December 23, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4066593>

<sup>326</sup> Mercy Amba Oduyoye, 'The African Experience of God through the Eyes of the Akan Woman,' *Cross Currents* 47, no. 4 (1997/1998): 493-504, accessed December 23, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24460601>

<sup>327</sup> Hinga, "African Feminist Theologies"

<sup>328</sup> Hazel O. Ayang, "Voice of the voiceless: The legacy of the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians," *Verbum Eccles. (Online)* vol.37 n.2 Pretoria 2016, accessed May 16, 2018, <http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/ve.v37i2.1580>

accompanying health risks. In her publication, *Female Circumcision Controversy: An Anthropological Perspective*, Hellen Gruenbaum outlined a number of health risks attached to female genital mutilations in Africa. She explains that, the unhygienic circumcision operations are often carried out with the manual training of many circumcisers pose serious risks. Infections of the wound are a common phenomenon when unsterilized instruments are used. She insists that it could bring about hurtful experiences like uncontrolled bleeding due to deep cuts, occurrence of shock, blood poisoning, urine retention, swellings and adhesions of labial tissue obstruction. Others experiences may include vaginal stones, vaginal stenosis, infibulation and obstruction of menstrual flow.<sup>329</sup> In this regard, T. N. O. Quarcoome explains one such hurtful ritual meted out on women, "... the practice of female circumcision where an incision is made into the clitoris or the labia with a sharp instrument. To stop bleeding herbal mixtures, cow-dung, earth or ashes are rubbed into the open cut..." insisting that, such ritual is barbaric, cruel and dehumanising and calls for eradication despite the fact of the idea that, amongst others, female sexuality is controlled to enhance the moral life of the society.<sup>330</sup>

Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela, Jennifer Fish and Tamara Shefer narrated some painful experiences of some women;

One antiapartheid activist, who had been raped multiple times and tortured during detention, described her unbearable experiences, explaining that to shut out the pain and shame she would "remove" her soul from her body and put it in a corner so that the rape was only of her body. Appealing to the restorative possibilities embodied by the TRC commissioners presiding over a special women's hearing, she asked the commissioners to help her get her soul back.

A woman who was raped by twenty men during the brutal war in Sierra Leone described the manifold losses she suffered because of the rape, including losing the ability to observe Ramadan because of health-related problems. Asserting her right not to absolve her assailants, she testified that she would never forgive the men who raped her.

A South African woman, Nomonde Calata, the wife of an antiapartheid activist whose body was found burned by the security police, charred beyond recognition, confronted her husband's killers and told them that they had robbed her of a loving husband and her children of a loving father. At the end of her

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<sup>329</sup> Ellen Gruenbaum, *The Female Circumcision Controversy: An Anthropological Perspective* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 4

<sup>330</sup> T.N.O. Quarcoome, *West African Traditional Religion* (Ibadan: African Universities Press, 1987), 114.

testimony to the TRC, she let out a piercing scream that shattered the stillness of the large city hall where the hearing was held. Giving voice to her pain and refusing to be silenced, she “dared” to wail, conveying her years of pain and grief to the public space of the TRC hearing, reclaiming her right to bear her pain for the world to see.<sup>331</sup>

To the feminist theologians, rising from death to life means that ‘religion and culture that were pivotal in shaping women’s experiences for ill were being employed to encourage and empower the critical study of the practice of religion in Africa and to undertake research that unveils religio-cultural factors, beliefs, and myths that affect, influence, or hamper women’s development’<sup>332</sup> Since the practices of African religion are diverse, coupled with the diversifying experiences of women within different ethnic groups and cultures, it calls for distinct analysis and assessment of each situation in order to find faults and or offer appraisal towards the emancipation of the women’s lot without apologies.<sup>333</sup>

Oduyoye acknowledges that it is not easy to experience God as a woman in the church considering the fact of God as empowering and liberating. Without apology, she insists it is God then who sanctions their subordination and subservience.<sup>334</sup> Attempting to make a deconstruction of this statement would lead one to think of God as a purposeful creator; one who created women to be an unequal status to man. In other words, the place of women in society cannot change and therefore any attempt by the woman to rise to the level of decision-making is considered a nonstarter and therefore must be discouraged.

Oduyoye visualizes this picturesque situation and concludes that, since in the African Church, men and the clergy presume to speak for God and to demand the obedience of men, anything oppressive on the woman; sexism that denies women’s dignity, dehumanization of women in all forms are presumed to be from God, the source of all lives.<sup>335</sup> Phiri identifies that due to

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<sup>331</sup> Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela, Jennifer Fish and Tamara Shefer, “Gendered Violence: Continuities and Transformation in the Aftermath of Conflict in Africa,” *The University of Chicago Press Journals*, Vol.40 No. 1 (2014):81-89, accessed May 14, 2018, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/676979>

<sup>332</sup>Hinga, “African Feminist Theologies”

<sup>333</sup>Hinga, “African Feminist Theologies”

<sup>334</sup>Oduyoye, “Akan Woman”

<sup>335</sup>Oduyoye, “Akan Woman”

the diversities in race, culture, politics, economy and religion, so there are equally varying women experiences in Africa hence numerous women's theologians summarily seeking for a more just society of men and women.<sup>336</sup> Phiri almost agrees with Hinga regarding the fact that the variations in women's theologies allow the women in their fields to address issues that pertain to their experiences within their given cultures.<sup>337</sup> It is important however to note that all these theologies in their various approaches want to see the end of one thing, thus, discrimination against women. Phiri terms these struggles as 'protest theologies'<sup>338</sup>

Phiri recognizes that the originating cause of protests theologies as the term suggests is protest against the Gospel as a tool of colonialism, racism, sexism and exclusivism. She expresses that despite the colonial links to the resistance and protests against women subordinations, African cultures along the side also consider women as less important than men thereby making it uneasy for women to have valid relationships with self, others, creation and God.<sup>339</sup> It therefore proposes that protest theology in this regard is based on the Christian and cultural ideologies that pertain to the subordination of women. In other words, African women theologians protests are determined by the definitions given to the existence of women who have been made up by a specific cultural expectation on one side, and then on the other, by accommodating foreign religions with its encompassing characteristics.<sup>340</sup>

It suggests also that doing black theology requires two strengths; the need to understand the domineering features and characteristics of Christianity with an ability to do appropriate re-reading and interpretation of the Gospel; the other strength requires the theologian's ability to relook at the consequences of rejecting the indigenous cultural setting from where the theologian sets out and the ability to deconstruct without apology what she may

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<sup>336</sup>Phiri, "Empowering Women"

<sup>337</sup>Phiri, "Empowering Women"

<sup>338</sup>Phiri, "Empowering Women"

<sup>339</sup>Phiri, "Empowering Women"

<sup>340</sup>Phiri, "Empowering Women"

condemn.<sup>341</sup> Phiri therefore acknowledges the African women theologians call unto women and men in the religions of Africa and society to re-examine their cultures from a gender perspective. In this regard, Phiri thinks that such assessments must outdoor cultural practices that promote fullness of life for both men and women.<sup>342</sup> In her thoughts, those cultural practices that are hurtful should be abandoned.

Reiger on the re-reading of the Bible and its hermeneutical understanding observes it to be a global phenomenon. She thinks that, “after two thousand years of male biblical exegesis and male church history in the pulpit, it takes courage suddenly to interpret the texts without orthodox male supervision, equipped with a new self-consciousness and in search of a new female identity.”<sup>343</sup> She applauds the idea that women have felt that more can be drawn out of the texts than males have done and have enjoyed experiencing the biblical strikes in role-play and thereby coming to a new comprehension of them.<sup>344</sup>

Rieger reports that, the women theologians’ efforts at making a real life of equal identity with men in leadership and decision making in the church and society have been enacted by the new hermeneutical and other deconstructive approaches by the re-reading of the Bible. She thinks that such methodological approaches are done sans apologies to the “historical-critical or materialist exegesis.”<sup>345</sup> Walker confirms that, there is a more women-friendly tradition to be reclaimed giving the fact the early Christians lived in an egalitarian community where women held positions of leadership.<sup>346</sup>

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<sup>341</sup>Phiri, “Empowering Women”

<sup>342</sup>Phiri, “Empowering Women”

<sup>343</sup>Renate Reiger “Half of Heaven Belongs to Women, and They Must Win It for Themselves: An Attempt at a Feminist Theological Stock-Taking in the Federal Republic of Germany,” *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*, 1, no. 1, (1985): 133-144, accessed December 23, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25002010>

<sup>344</sup>Reiger, “Half of Heaven Belongs to Women”

<sup>345</sup> Reiger, “Half of Heaven Belongs to Women”

<sup>346</sup> Walker, “Development and Women’s Liberation,” 19.

She maintains the notion that Christian women have defined their own liberating models in the Bible; “Deborah the Judge and Esther the Queen in the Old Testament, and the women in the community around Jesus in the New Testament.”<sup>347</sup> She claims that there is a reversal of the establishment order of an impossible ideal of the woman as virgin and mother as the strong ‘female face’ of the faith.<sup>348</sup> Walker’s thoughts suggest a strong reclamation of faith that seems to share similar thoughts with Ofelia Ortega that, it exposes and damages the biblical revelation of its distortions.<sup>349</sup>

In this regard, Phiri therefore advocates that,

there must be a collaborative effort of dialogue between African women theologians and the African male theologians in their writings and in the theological curriculum since it constitutes an injustice to African women theologians that African male theologians continue writing theology as if African women’s theologies do not exist<sup>350</sup>and vice versa.

Suggestively, within the sensitive and insensitive areas of this life, in the public or domestic domains, in the sphere of lead and the led, whether authority or decision making, if it is hermeneutical approach or re-reading of Scripture, there is the call for equality amongst and between both men and women.

The Christological interest of the African feminists have been relayed to the experiences of the African woman of which she derives hope in certain biblical stories and for which matter, she is determined to question the inequalities in the human society of Africa. For this reason, Hinga reiterates Oduyoye’s thoughts on the assumptions of death of the African Woman and for which revival has come in relation of the biblical reference of the incident in the home of the synagogue ruler in Mark 5:41.<sup>351</sup> She analyses that, since Jesus summons the ruler’s daughter to arise from her apparent death, which she did to determine life regained, so the revival of the African woman is determined by her own self-naming and analysis of her own

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<sup>347</sup>Walker, “Development and Women’s Liberation,” 19

<sup>348</sup> Walker, “Development and Women’s Liberation,” 19.

<sup>349</sup> Walker “Development and Women’s Liberation,” 19.

<sup>350</sup> Phiri, “Empowering Women”

<sup>351</sup>Hinga, “African Feminist Theologies”

experiences other than women being discussed, analysed, and spoken about and on behalf of men.<sup>352</sup>

Similarly, Shapira agrees with Frymer–Kensky that, indeed Biblical stories present both women and men as having the same goals, the same capabilities, and the same strategies and more so, the Bible does not justify social inequality on the basis of an ideology of superiority or ‘otherness’.<sup>353</sup>

Oduyoye’s persuasions assume an insistence on her part that, the writings of African women theologians in relation to their experiences clearly indicate that it is inundated on them in the church by men using false reasons to justify their own actions of perpetuations from generations. She therefore argues that, “God is the source of women’s oppression, and Jesus, the author of women’s exclusion from sacramental roles in the church.”<sup>354</sup> In other words, women experience God as the helper of the oppressed and who endures in their suffering purported by men in the image of God. The church therefore, is described as the arena of patriarchal control with the pretext that, God says.<sup>355</sup>

Wilma Jakobsen finds common grounds with Oduyoye and proves that the cause for the negation of women as equal with men lies with patriarchal theology. She observes that the “theology undergirding the life and worship of most, if not all churches has everything to do with the hierarchical, rigid, authoritarian, traditional, male-dominated structures and praxis.”<sup>356</sup> It will be inconclusive to leave the matter of the patriarchal influence at that, rather, Oduyoye articulates the varying experiences woman have with God. She contends that many women experience God differently and cannot allow themselves to be subjected to

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<sup>352</sup> Hinga, “African Feminist Theologies”

<sup>353</sup> Shapira, “On Women’s Equal Standing in the Bible”

<sup>354</sup> Oduyoye, “Akan Woman”

<sup>355</sup> Oduyoye, “Akan Woman”

<sup>356</sup> Wilma Jakobsen, “Language Matters: Towards an Inclusive Community” *Journal for the Study of Religion*, 14, no. 2 (2001): 33-47, accessed December 23, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24764166>

cultural codes that mask the image of God in Women.<sup>357</sup> For this reason, she debunks and challenges the church's hierarchical dominance of men. She holds that,

Irrespective of the male dominated structures and practices of the church, women's resistance to their invisibility, subservience and dominance of any nature is linked to God empowering spirit as a result of experience. Women express their experience of God in affirming cultural beliefs and practices while they feel called by God to denounce and deconstruct oppressive ones.<sup>358</sup>

Oduyoye is of the view that the Christological inclination of the African women is firmed up in the theology of creation and the implications of the Christian affirmation that, 'God was in Christ', and so in the African women's notion, while Christ affirms the goodness of the sexuality of women, he is a friend and liberator who upholds the dignity of the humanity of women.<sup>359</sup> Oduyoye in this context therefore questions the love of God.

Oduyoye however explains that women also belong and are a part of the body of Christ. She notes, "God is experienced as the sole creator and sustainer of all things, who expects human beings to be to God as children and to each other as siblings and respect the earth and other natural phenomena."<sup>360</sup> Laying emphasis on "children and to each other as siblings,"<sup>361</sup> suggests that, Oduyoye is pointing to a fact of human equality before God, and supports that, "siblings are supposed to have same single source of parents, and that is God; men, women, children are considered of same blood relations."<sup>362</sup>

Phiri further explains that the base for African women's theologies is the liberating potential of the Bible, thus, the stories of women in the Bible and their life giving encounters with Jesus and his response to women in the Gospels. The Christology of women comes from the

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<sup>357</sup> Oduyoye, "Akan Woman"

<sup>358</sup> Oduyoye, "Akan Woman"

<sup>359</sup> Oduyoye, "Akan Woman"

<sup>360</sup> Oduyoye, "Akan Woman"

<sup>361</sup> Oduyoye, "Akan Woman"

<sup>362</sup> Oduyoye, "Akan Woman"

Gospel focusing on the relationships in the life and teaching of Jesus who reveals God's liberation for human kind from all forms of oppressions including patriarchy.<sup>363</sup>

Just as Oduyoye makes reference to the South African re-imagining of God, she demonstrates that liberation is liberation that includes the freedom of women from all forms of domination.<sup>364</sup> The basis of Oduyoye's African Christology in part is the human structures involved in building up the body of Christ. She explains that, to build up the Body of Christ everywhere requires building up human relations and seeing humanity as one family under God who is the source of the life of the human family.<sup>365</sup> As such this must be the response to the expectations and experiences of God in Africa and the world at large.

Oduyoye proposes that, the praxis in the church is to build up the Body of Christ if it acts to heal, strengthen, nourish and treat with dignity all of its members, and that means acting as God-in-Christ expects of the Church.<sup>366</sup> Phiri's terminology of protests theologies synchronizes well with Oduyoye's thoughts. In this manner; it identifies with the Gospel narratives of the New Testament in which outcasts are befriended and which presents a vision of a kingdom of justice and love.<sup>367</sup>

Relatively, factual arguments springing out of Hebraic studies show some seven categorical markers that explains an egalitarian nature in various areas; "physical creation in the Image, as an equal; Spiritual creation in the Image, as an equal; Equality at national covenants; Equality in special personal status; Equality-even superiority – in birth stories; Equality, if

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<sup>363</sup>Phiri, "Empowering Women"

<sup>364</sup>Oduyoye, "Akan Woman"

<sup>365</sup>Oduyoye, "Akan Woman"

<sup>366</sup>Oduyoye, "Akan Woman"

<sup>367</sup>Walker, "Development and Women's Liberation"

not superiority, in their initiative and independence; and, A sort of equality in the power of their weakness.<sup>368</sup>

Inclusive of the African feminist dialectics, the use of religious language in the church also received attention of the black theologians. There is a limited understanding of the divine human relationship giving the fact that the Bible offers a diversity of images of God from which the church has selected mainly masculine terms; father, warrior, king and Lord.<sup>369</sup> Phiri persuades that black theologies are committed to exposing the ideological base of that religion which affirms the oppression of women including the issue of sexist language, the Bible, theology and church liturgies. She indicates for instance that, it is erroneous within the liturgy that makes women say they are ‘the sons of God’.<sup>370</sup> For example, a feminist notes the language about God;

Masculine God-language devalues femininity by ignoring it. Women receive the subtle message about maleness, since it is used for references to God, is worthy of greater respect than femaleness. Such a message encourages women to look to men as authorities. Females who grow up with language that equates God and masculinity learn to sacrifice portions of their own identity for the approval of men.<sup>371</sup>

Growing realization of oneself as female and not male must also reflect the linguistic tones that revere feminine God all together;<sup>372</sup> for instance, in the *Ga* tradition is the notion of God as *Ataa Naa Nyɔ ɲmɔ* which stands for ‘Father – Mother God’. Literally, *Ataa* means father and its female counterpart is *Awo* which stands for mother. On another hand, *Nii* and *Naa* are both titles and prefixes to the male and female indigenous nomenclatures respectively. *Nii* stands for king and *Naa* stands for queen. Similarly, *Nii* and *Naa* portray a male and a female, but not actually a ‘father’ or a ‘mother’ respectively. Representing titles, every *Ga* traditional king or chief when to be addressed, could simply be referred to as *Nii*. Same applies to the queen-mother who is addressed as *Naa*. If *Awo* means mother, and *Ataa* represents father

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<sup>368</sup> Shapira, “On Women’s Equal Standing in the Bible”

<sup>369</sup> Walker, “Development and Women’s Liberation”

<sup>370</sup> Phiri, “Empowering Women”

<sup>371</sup> Jakobsen, “Language Matters”

<sup>372</sup> Jakobsen, “Language Matters”

which are perfect opposites, then the gendered name for God in this regard should be *Ataa-Awo Nyɔ ɲmɔ* or *Nii- Naa Nyɔ ɲmɔ*. One could then deduce a stronger patriarchal intone even in the gendered language of God.

Conclusively, Jakobson claims that patriarchal language renders women invisible or marginal.<sup>373</sup> Whiles she maintains that, linguistically, women appear as exceptions or problems, the English language has in the past used the words ‘man’, ‘men’ and ‘mankind’ to represent both man and woman, male or female persons, and humanity, such words can also refer to the male gender specifically, depending on the context.<sup>374</sup>

Feminist theological literature is organized as part of African women’s long-term struggle against unequal power relations. For instance, in a situation of seeming death of women, there is awakening and such revival is interconnected through the sharing of experiences by themselves, surveying the causes of death and finding everlasting remedies to sustaining the awareness and subsequently creating working tools to communicate the issues and processes that will consummate the struggle for gender equality.

Hinga observes that, employing religion and culture towards the development of women means, “the publication of theological literature authorized by African women with a focus on religion and culture.”<sup>375</sup> It is for this reason that African women theologians engage in research publications to affirm their humanity.<sup>376</sup> Few publishing companies have positioned themselves to produce and feature feminist theological idealism in journals and other

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<sup>373</sup>Jakobsen, “Language Matters”

<sup>374</sup> Jakobson, “Language Matters”

<sup>375</sup> Hinga, “African Feminist Theologies”

<sup>376</sup>Phiri, *African Woman*, 19.

Phiri cited these publications: “Cleaning our Foot Prints: South African Women Reflect on Context, Identity and Spirituality,” ed. Denise Ackermann et al.; “Women’s Spirituality in the ‘Transformation of South Africa,” ed. Azila Rosenberger; and “After the Locusts: Letters from a Landscape of Faith,” ed. Denise Ackermann.

readable materials. For instance, Taylor and Francis has been a major contributor to this effect.<sup>377</sup>

In the employment of religion and culture towards the reality of their awareness, women theologians were to build communication network among theologically trained women both in the academia and beyond and as well to promote a dialogic approach to religious and cultural tensions in Africa.<sup>378</sup> Hinga confirms that, it was also to strive toward the inclusion of women's studies in religion and culture in academia and research institutions in African. It is also empower African women to contribute to the cross-cultural discourse on women's issues through engagement in critical cultural hermeneutics.<sup>379</sup> Oduyoye has contributed in this regard.<sup>380</sup>

Hinga acknowledges that since numbers are of utmost importance and critical, and has the potential, increasing numbers of the female theologians present a greater opportunity to tackling the various women's issues that are prevalent locally and continentally. Equally, the increasing numbers will garner wealth of knowledge in the area of feminism for further reflections and references, and as well, quicken the process of the desire to end the invisibility of women. In this regard, the proposal is to affirm publicly, the women's

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<sup>377</sup> "Agenda: Empowering Women for Gender Equity" is a journal which has been featuring Feminist and Women studies since 1987, accessed July 5, 2017, <http://www.jstor/stable/i387111>. "Girlhood in South Africa," no. 79, (2009): 1-112, ed. Leverage Gething, (2008): 1-112, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27868939>; "Rape: Gender Based Violence Trilogy, 1,3," no. 74 (2007):1-160, eds. Lebo Moletsane and Asha Moodley, <http://www.jstor/stable/i27739331>; "Two Decades of African Feminist Publishing," no. 72 (2007): 1-204, ed. Kristin Palitza, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/i27739261>; "Women and Leadership," no. 65, (2005), 1-114, ed. Gil Harper, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/i386622>; "African Feminisms 2,2: Sexuality and Body Image," no. 63, (2005): 1-114, ed. Gil Harper, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/i385611>; "Women and the Aftermath," no. 43(2000):1-102, ed. Lou Haysom, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4066102>; "Land and Housing: Women Speak out," no. 42(1999):1-112, ed. Lou Haysom, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/i387016>

<sup>378</sup> Hinga, "African Feminist Theologies"

<sup>379</sup> Hinga, "African Feminist Theologies"

<sup>380</sup> Amba Oduyoye, "Christianity and African Culture," in *International Review Mission*, ed. Christopher Durasingh, 84, (1995):77-90, accessed July 5, 2017, [onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/irom.1995.84.issue-332-333/issuetoc](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/irom.1995.84.issue-332-333/issuetoc); "The Will to Arise: Women, Tradition, and the Church in Africa" (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1997); "Amba Oduyoye and African women's Theology" in Kwok Pui-Ian, *Journal of Feminist Studies*, 20, no.1, (USA: Indiana University Press, 2004), [TROVE.NLA.GOV.AU/WORK/77118973?q&versioned=90340796](http://TROVE.NLA.GOV.AU/WORK/77118973?q&versioned=90340796).

objectives towards the realization of overcoming 'violence; female circumcision, witchcraft accusations, rape and enslavement in the name of religion.'<sup>381</sup>

It is of utmost importance to note however that, the Cape Town Circle has unique membership comprising white and black: South Africans, Malawians, Swazis, and Sothos; African Traditionalist Christians, Jews and Muslims.<sup>382</sup> The significance of this mixed crop was going to bring diversified cultural experiences together. At any readership, a people may identify with one culture or the other or both to the application of the enhancement of life for men and women. In the fact of such a united front, "it depicts a spirit of solidarity, it builds resistance to injustice in the church and society and it documents acts or transformation."<sup>383</sup> In other words, taking action is the finality of the freedom of women from hurtful practices as well as the liberation from 'the causes of women's oppression, particularly a struggle against societal, cultural and religious patriarchy and the African culture that 'seem to favour men, and place women in oppressive positions'.<sup>384</sup>

Feminists and Womanist theologies conclusively frown on the male dominating tendencies either termed masculine hegemony or patriarchy in almost all its forms in decision making within the church and society. As Walker argues, in church life,

Men have dominated in most of the instances and the contemporary period is not different though a lot more churches have provided women with the opportunity to meet, discuss, organize and learn new skills. Global feminism in general denounces patriarchy and their activities that 'deprive women of autonomy over their own bodies that make them subordinated and second class citizens.'<sup>385</sup>

Walker indicates of the commended support to feminists theologians recommended by the World Council of Churches (WCC) in its publication, 'Living Letters' to its member churches. It sums up to retaining the feminists proposal of gender equality. The member churches are to consider and act on the following recommendations, that;

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<sup>381</sup> Hinga, "African Feminist Theologies"

<sup>382</sup> Phiri, "Empowering Women"

<sup>383</sup> Phiri, "Empowering Women"

<sup>384</sup> Phiri, "Empowering Women"

<sup>385</sup> Walker, "Development and Women's Liberation"

The church should; denounce violence against women, regardless of whether it is culturally sanctioned; recognize the links between sexism and racism, and combat them at the centre of church life; economic justice must also be practiced in the way churches are run, through equal opportunities and equal pay; and the re-examination of forms and substance of religious practice in the light of women's experience and perspective and their need for liberation.<sup>386</sup>

Hinga reiterates the fact that it was going to be an effective success when the outlined plan of work assumes an action oriented focus which is rooted in the self-understanding of African women's theology as an applied theology.<sup>387</sup> She insists that such an applied theology must demand the end to injustice mainly through practical actions and it implies the certificate of testimonies from supposed victims and their perpetrators. She describes such actors as moral agents capable of moral action for social transformation against the backdrop of divergent local contexts between the cumulative and multiplicative injustices on women.<sup>388</sup>

Concluding, in the expectation that the "multiple and intersecting evils of sexism, poverty, racism, classism and violence"<sup>389</sup> would belong to history, "the collective action and mutual support of all people of good will and of those concerned with injustices"<sup>390</sup> must show spirit of unstoppable actions to ending all violence based patriarchal influences.

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<sup>386</sup> Walker "Development and Women's Liberation"

<sup>387</sup> Hinga, "African Theologies"

<sup>388</sup> Hinga, "African Feminist Theologies"

<sup>389</sup> Hinga, "African Feminist Theologies"

<sup>390</sup> Hinga, "African Feminist Theologies"

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GHANA, DECISION-MAKING AND GENDER

#### 3.1 Introduction

In the notion that decision-making in the Presbyterian church of Ghana is done by “Men’s Fellowship”<sup>391</sup>, unearthing the influential cause of the masculine domination in the decision-making process in the church is the main focus of this chapter. Relatively, the chapter will look at decision-making and gender in the Ga Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana. Equally, the corresponding gendered opinions of ministers, both the male and females are looked at. In this regard, aspects of the church’s constitutional provisions for the selection and election of members to the decision-making hierarchy will be discussed.

Amongst others, this chapter similarly focused on some of the pre-existed indigenous religious and cultural life norms to the arrival of the Christian missionaries in Ghana. Relatively, Jacob K. Olupona appraises the African indigenous religious system and believes that, indigenous African religions contain a great deal of wisdom and insight on how human beings can best live within and interact with the environment.<sup>392</sup> Indeed, prior to the introduction of Christianity in West Africa, Noel Smith describes the ancestral ways of life as in fetish worship, polygamy and the powers of the chiefs to be the characterizing norm.<sup>393</sup>

Smith’s assertions also deconstruct and give meaning to an indigenous African proverb regarding the claim to the ancestral ways of life; “*Beni ayato Ajaɲmɔ teɛ, aduji ni yɔɔ jε mε yeɔ nii momo*”<sup>394</sup> This indigenous Ga proverb which literally means; “prior to the

<sup>391</sup>Kwakye, “Women’s Invisibility”

<sup>392</sup>Olupona Jacob K. “African Religions: A Very Short Introduction,” accessed December 12, 2016, <http://blog.oup.com/2014/05/15-facts-on-african-religions/>

<sup>393</sup>Noel Smith, *The Presbyterian Church of Ghana, 1835-1960* (Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 1968), 86-89.

<sup>394</sup>It is an old West African, Ghanaian proverb that indicates originality of form. Apart from the fact that the proverb can be used in other forms, it always connoted pre-existence.

discovery of “Ajanmɔ te,”<sup>395</sup> the apes thereof fed” suggests that there was life as in African indigenous religious culture before the introduction of other alien cultures as Christianity and Islam among others. Olupona therefore explains that the African indigenous religion deals with their cosmology, ritual practices, symbols, arts, society, and so on while he holds that, because religion is a way of life, it relates to culture and society as they affect the worldview of the African people.<sup>396</sup>

However, Smith reports that, the periods in-between 1883-1960, missionary’s literature of Africa have portrayed negativity of the African way of life.<sup>397</sup> For instance, Osu, a major town in Accra and the community that currently hosts both the Presbyterian Church of Ghana Head Office, the Ga Presbytery Head Office and other Presbyterian congregations was once described in 1850 by one of the missionaries as “worse” than at Akropong for which Smith explains; “The *abosom* worship and the villainous tyranny of the priest have produced a religion of fear and bestial ideas, and a ‘sensuality’ which has dulled body, soul and mind and engendered a frightful apathy towards spiritual matters.”<sup>398</sup>

The chapter equally discusses the history of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana on one hand, and on the other, some Christian missionary activities centring on the missionary strategies and guiding principles on the Presbyterian Church. This chapter discusses in addition some of the challenging issues between the Christian missionaries and their new converts in the formation and or the introduction of new masculinities based on the missionary ideological institution. For instance, Miescher reports of a conflicting notion of masculinity that ensued between Ramseyer, a missionary and Boama, a new Christian covert; “Ramseyer recalled a conversation with Boama that shows how different understandings of masculinity

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<sup>395</sup> *Adjanmortey* is a small hill of natural habitat which is dominated with apes and monkeys. It is located in the Ga West of the Greater Accra region of Ghana.

<sup>396</sup> Olupona, “African Religions”

<sup>397</sup> Smith, *Presbyterian Church of Ghana*, 86-89

<sup>398</sup> Smith, *Presbyterian Church of Ghana*, 86-89.

undergirded their conflict. When reminded of farm work, Boama responded that ‘here it was no custom that a man should toil on a farm, since this was a woman’s work.’<sup>399</sup> Miescher indicates that the missionary notion of masculine identity include; “alluding to modesty, sexual restraint, monogamous marriage, respect for authority as well as active embodiment of the Protestant work ethic.”<sup>400</sup>

### 3.2 The Pre-Christian African Way of Life

Isichei’s notes concerning the encounters between the missionaries and the groups in West, South, East and central Africa reveal certain common cultural characteristics that existed among Africans. According to her, the states of Africa had their forms of governance and central authority with strong internal unity of which values demanded obedience and loyalty to authority from its people.<sup>401</sup> Their system of governance was precisely done by councils of elders or by other kinships-or-age based institutions.<sup>402</sup>

W.E.F. Ward expresses deep satisfaction with the way Africans addressed issues at the hierarchy level. Ward holds that this characteristic of chieftainship is found in chiefs of all grades. He notes;

A tactful chief sits patiently and attentively listening while the elders sit around him are excitedly debating. To an outsider, it seems that the conflict of views is irreconcilable; but the chief has gauged the sense of the meeting. When he begins to speak, there is hush. His speech closes the discussions; it is received with quite approval, all excitement and opposition vanishes and the meeting passes to the next business,<sup>403</sup>

A school of thought affirmatively argues regarding Ward’s expressions that,

Even societies that had kings and more centralized political structures also used other political institutions and ways of organizing people. Importantly, they involved many people in decision-making and, in this respect were African forms of participatory democracy. Religious ideas generally supported

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<sup>399</sup>Miescher, “The Challenges”, 84.

<sup>400</sup>Miescher, “The Challenges”, 76.

<sup>401</sup> Isichei, *Christianity in West Africa*, 160.

<sup>402</sup>Understanding Slavery, “Africa Before Transatlantic Enslavement”,(2011), accessed July 10, 2017, [www.understandingslaevry.com](http://www.understandingslaevry.com)

<sup>403</sup>W.E.F. Ward, *A History of Ghana* (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1969), 99.

and underpinned these systems of government, most importantly giving people their own specific ways of understanding the world and the rules of their own society<sup>404</sup>

In relation to the African system of arbitration, Isichei also indicates that this kind of indigenous executive and legislative systems as well as the ways of arbitration proved a cause of difficulty for the missionaries to have Africans accepting their sacred texts.<sup>405</sup> Ward points out that the whole Gold Coast nation's political organization is excellently interlocked with religion; every family is united in its worship of the common ancestors.

Ward confirms that, every tribe is united by a similar common worship, either of some eponymous ancestors or of some tribal gods or other spiritual influences.<sup>406</sup> He expresses that the chief has priestly functions that centres especially in the ancestral stools.<sup>407</sup> According to a school of thought, "religious and philosophical beliefs concentrated on maintaining communication with ancestors who could intercede with gods on behalf of the living and ensure the smooth functioning of society"<sup>408</sup> Accordingly, for the African societies survival, farming and herding were their main stay while they produced enough from agriculture and exchanged it in local markets.<sup>409</sup>

The family system, *Abusua* or *Weku* as some tribes- respectively the Akans and the Ga people in West Africa refer, "include not only the living, but also the dead and the unborn."<sup>410</sup> Ward further holds that, the unit of society is the family, whether this is matrilineal or patrilineal. He confirms that family ties are very strong and are strengthened by the system of ancestor worship. He adds that, even so, it is much wider for everyday reckoning than the English family; and in spite of the impact of European commercialization it is so far holding together

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<sup>404</sup>Understanding Slavery, "Africa Before Transatlantic Enslavement"

<sup>405</sup> Elizabeth Isichei, *A History of Christianity in West Africa: From Antiquity to the Present* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1995) 156-157.

<sup>406</sup>Isichei, *Christianity in West Africa*, 156-157.

<sup>407</sup>Ward, *History of Ghana*, 101-102.

<sup>408</sup>Understanding Slavery, "Africa Before Transatlantic Enslavement"

<sup>409</sup>Understanding Slavery, "Africa Before Transatlantic Enslavement"

<sup>410</sup>Ward, *History of Ghana*, 101-102.

with admirable tenacity.<sup>411</sup>Ward's description of the African family system may suggest its uniqueness comparatively. Similarly, Olupona affirms that,

African indigenous religions provide strong linkages between the life of humans and the world of the ancestors. Humans are thus able to maintain constant and symbiotic relations with their ancestors who are understood to be intimately concerned and involved in their descendants' everyday affairs.<sup>412</sup>

In this regard Smith mentions that, rites and ceremonies about the life cycle of Africans; birth, naming the child, puberty, marriage, death and the veneration of the ancestors are seriously observed and preserved, hence its importance.<sup>413</sup>

Outlining other characteristics of the Africans, Isichei reiterates that polygamy prevailed.<sup>414</sup> Indeed polygamy was the ideal state of marriage among few African rich men and significantly, as Rotberg affirms, it marks importantly, a man's status and economic well-being.<sup>415</sup> Rotberg suggests that polygamous marriage was purposive since it brought abundance of food and the wives played religious roles in the traditional worship.<sup>416</sup> Though Smith affirms Rotberg's assertion, he thinks that, 'polygamous marriage may be an exception rather than the rule'<sup>417</sup> As such; Rotberg insists that one of the ways in which the missionaries fought this polygamous system was to deny polygamists and their wives church membership and baptism.<sup>418</sup>Such denials portray the fact that, the missionaries inundated the African converts with their own ideas about marriage.

Widowhood rites performance was a serious custom that could not be overlooked. For instance, in the case of Northern Rhodesia, associated with the performance of widowhood

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<sup>411</sup>Ward, *History of Ghana*, 99.

<sup>412</sup>Olupona, "African Religions"

<sup>413</sup>Smith, *Presbyterian Church of Ghana*, 66.

<sup>414</sup>Isichei, *Christianity in West Africa*, 160.

<sup>415</sup>Robert I. Rotberg, *Christian Missionaries and the creation of Northern Rhodesia 1880-1924* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), 127-128.

<sup>416</sup>Rotberg, *Christian Missionaries*, 127-128.

<sup>417</sup>Smith, *Presbyterian Church of Ghana*, 93.

<sup>418</sup>Rotberg, *Christian Missionaries*, 128.

rites was a sexual intercourse with the widow by the dead man's kinsman. The sexual act was to remove the contamination of the latter's death.<sup>419</sup>

Conclusively, the African way of life was expressed in their rules of arbitration, family systems, their form of worship and the varied ways in which they attach importance to their customs and traditional practices among others.

### 3.3 The Presbyterian Church of Ghana

The Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) owes its foundation and its ethos to the sacrificial endeavours of men and women sent out to the Gold Coast under the aegis of the Basel Missionary Society.<sup>420</sup> The PCG was founded on 18<sup>th</sup> December, 1828 by some missionaries of the Basel Evangelical Society from Basel in Switzerland. The Basel Missionaries arrived in the Gold Coast with the aim of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ<sup>421</sup> to, as it were, heathens. Noel Smith affirms that 'the Basel Mission showed a biblical, evangelical, ecumenical and international character which it has never lost. Grounding its life on the Bible as the sole Word of God, it asked only to be free to pursue the one all-absorbing Christian task, the conversion of the heathen and the spread of the kingdom of God on earth.'<sup>422</sup> This was the period around which slave trading was being abolished. Smith explains that,

Awakening interest in Africa and the desire among Protestant Christians to make restitution for the evils of the slave trade, turned the attention of the Society, in spite of tragic failure in Liberia, to the Gold Coast, in particular to that eastern section of its coastlands then controlled by Denmark. The Danish Government had prohibited the slave trade in 1792, to be followed by the British in 1807, so that there was the probability of evangelical work in that area in conditions of reasonable political stability.<sup>423</sup>

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<sup>419</sup>Rotberg, *Christian Missionaries*, 131.

<sup>420</sup> Smith, *Presbyterian Church of Ghana*, 19.

<sup>421</sup>Peace FM. "The Presbyterian Church of Ghana", accessed April 4, 2017, <http://www.peacefonline.com/pages/local/religion/201612/301304.php>

<sup>422</sup> Smith, *Presbyterian Church of Ghana*, 19.

<sup>423</sup>Smith, *Presbyterian Church of Ghana*, 21-22.

The first missionaries arrived at Osu.<sup>424</sup> However, not that all the missionaries survived this early mission, as all four missionaries, “Karl F. Salbach, Gottlieb Holzwarth, Johannes Henke and Johannes Gottlub Schmidt”<sup>425</sup> died before the end of the following year in 1829. Of significance is the impact they made during their short lived stay in Osu. They started learning the indigenous language while they made associations with the people. They attempted to start a school with the aim of bringing civilization amongst a people who would be beneficiaries of a foreign culture.<sup>426</sup>

It is documented that, Andreas Riis, one of the three missionaries that constituted the second batch into the Gold Coast in March 1832,<sup>427</sup> made inroads into Akropong. Two others, “Peter Peterson Jager and Christian Friedrich Heinze”<sup>428</sup> Riis arrived with suffered fate as of their predecessors. Accordingly, he also made exploratory moves into the Akyem areas among others. He stayed on till 1840 before returning to home base at Basel.<sup>429</sup>

Not until 1843, another face of evangelization work commenced. This particular period saw evangelically trained African descents from Jamaica; they were to assist in the evangelization processes with the simple message to the people of the Gold Coast that, the Christian religion was for Africans also other than Europeans only.<sup>430</sup> For instance, Smith holds that, “after Christian Jacob Protten had completed his studies at Copenhagen and Herrnhut, he was selected by the Moravians as a missionary to his own people.”<sup>431</sup> There was also a link between Pederson Svane and Jacob Protten with the Moravian attempt at evangelism on the Gold Coast.<sup>432</sup> Smith thinks that, these Africans were recruited based on the fact that they

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<sup>424</sup>“History of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana”

<sup>425</sup>Smith, *Presbyterian Church of Ghana*, 29.

<sup>426</sup>Peace FM. “Presbyterian Church”

<sup>427</sup>Smith, *Presbyterian Church of Ghana*, 30.

<sup>428</sup>Smith, *Presbyterian Church of Ghana*, 29.

<sup>429</sup>“History of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana”

<sup>430</sup>Smith, *Presbyterian Church of Ghana*, 25.

<sup>431</sup>Smith, *Presbyterian Church of Ghana*, 25.

<sup>432</sup>Smith, *Presbyterian Church of Ghana*, 25.

could withstand the tropical climate with its malaria prone tendencies unlike the European missionaries. It therefore set the grounds for progressive Christian mission in the Gold Coast.<sup>433</sup>

Twenty-six years into the founding of the PCG, it was firmly established in 1854.<sup>434</sup> The growth and consolidation of the Basel Mission presence occurred between 1850 and 1870, a period that saw the establishment of the first eight mission stations of the church, namely, Osu, Abokobi, Akropong, Aburi, Kibi, Odumase-Krobo, Anum and Ada.<sup>435</sup> One school of thought affirms that, in the 1940's, the church extended its work to the northern parts of the country which include 'places like Salaga, Kete Krachie, Kpandai and to Yendi'.<sup>436</sup>

Within the period of the church's firm establishment, in order to achieve significant gains amongst the Ashanti people, a seminary was founded of which Christaller ensured to commute the Twi language into writing.<sup>437</sup> The "Twi" version of the Bible was eventually produced in 1870. Prior to this feat, Johannes Zimmerman in 1866 had completed translating the whole Bible into Ga.<sup>438</sup>

In the terms of managing its own affairs, the PCG holds that,

It was from the beginning a church that produced local leadership who not only assisted the missionaries but also became missionaries to their compatriots. By the early 1850's the first products of the Akropong seminary had started coming out as trained teachers and catechists, and in no time were competent enough either to be put in charge of some of the stations or sent out to evangelize. By the end of the 1870's, African agents, including the Jamaicans, were working alongside the European missionaries.<sup>439</sup>

In between the war periods of 1914 and 1917, the Basel Missionaries became so helpless that the church called for help. It then received a positive response from the Church of Scotland

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<sup>433</sup> Peace FM, "Presbyterian Church"

<sup>434</sup> Peace FM, "Presbyterian Church"

<sup>435</sup> Peace FM, "Presbyterian Church"

<sup>436</sup> Peace FM, "Presbyterian Church"

<sup>437</sup> World Council of Churches. "History of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana," accessed April 4, 2017, <https://www.oikomena.org/en/member-churches/presbyterian-church-of-ghana>.

<sup>438</sup> WCC, "History of PCG"

<sup>439</sup> WCC, "History of the PCG"

and “this explains why the Reformed Church in Ghana adopted the Presbyterian organizational model. In 2000, the church adopted the general assembly system for its governance”<sup>440</sup>

In 2007, the Synod Committee sought a new direction for the church and took a decision to review the Regulations, Practice and Procedure which had been the basis of PCG’s structure and governance for many years.<sup>441</sup> This was the seventh time since 1918 that this document had been subjected to review. It was meant to keep the church in tune with developments both within and without its environment. It was also meant to provide a constitution that would enable the introduction of the General Assembly system into the church’s administration. The new constitution came into force in 2000 and synod was abolished and replaced with the General Assembly as the supreme court of the church.<sup>442</sup>

The church runs 1,907 schools and a University, 37 health institutions and 7 agricultural development programmes. Considerably, apart from some twenty congregations bearing the name of the PCG in Western Europe and North America<sup>443</sup>, the PCG has 21 Presbyteries and has grown to well over 5000 congregations and preaching points.<sup>444</sup> Current statistics of the PCG indicate a membership population of 846,222.<sup>445</sup>

The several reviews of the policy document of the PCG leaves one thing to be desired; though there is constitutional provision<sup>446</sup> that offers gender balance for which females could be elected or appointed, the decision-making hierarchy of the church is still male dominant.

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<sup>440</sup>Peace FM, “Presbyterian Church”

<sup>441</sup>WCC, “History of PCG”

<sup>442</sup> WCC, “History of PCG”

<sup>443</sup> WCC. “History of PCG”

<sup>444</sup> Peace FM, “The Presbyterian Church of Ghana is 188 years today,” accessed February 16, 2017,

<http://www.peacemonline.com/pages/local/religion/201612/301304.php>

<sup>445</sup> PCG Statistics. “2015 Statistics for the 16<sup>th</sup> General Assembly,” (2016), 2.

<sup>446</sup>PCG Constitution, 17.

This outcome may be influenced by the patriarchal legacy that continually reflects hegemonic masculinity in its decision-making hierarchy.

### ***3.3.1 Leadership and Decision-Making in the PCG***

The General Assembly is the Church's highest court covering the whole of the nation. It also deals with PCG congregations that are overseas. The General Assembly meets annually to receive reports from the Presbyteries. It also formulates policies for the entire church

The decisions of the Assembly are the decisions of the Church and all courts must ensure that these decisions are adhered to. Between Assemblies, the church is led by a General Assembly Council which meets every three months. The council also has a Standing Committee which meets monthly.

The Principal Officers of the General Assembly are the Moderator of the Assembly and the Clerk of the General Assembly. The Church runs an administrative structure that has seven departments. These are Administration and Human Resource Management, Church Life and Nurture, Ecumenical and Social Relations, Development and Social Services, Mission and Evangelism, Finance and finally, Education.

By constitutional provision, "The General Assembly shall be the highest Court of the Church and take final decisions in all matters affecting the church."<sup>447</sup> Within its decision-making mandates the General Assembly among other functions establish departments and appoint Directors to these Departments; appoint resource and assign to committees such functions as may be determined by the General Assembly. Conclusively, the Principal Officers are elected into office that subsequently functions as decision-makers, establishing and appointing departments and Directors as it deems fit.

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<sup>447</sup>PCG Constitution, 70.

### **3.4 Missionary Strategies on Christian Converts of the Presbyterian Church**

Numerous socio-cultural controls remained a notable ruling tool to the missionaries in the making of the Ghanaian Presbyterian. These controls were the expectations and prohibitions of Christian converts on the facts that, the converts were to deny association with the entire African indigenous religious forms and to adapt to the new rules and expectations in the acceptance of Christianity which demands certain norms without which there is no true repentance. For instance, there were the controls on converts not to worship other gods.

For a fact, the missionaries started their work from Osu of which *Ga* is the local dialect. The missionaries attempted to learn *Ga* and subsequently reduced it to writing. Smith asserts that, the “*Twi* and *Ga* tongues were reduced to writing”<sup>448</sup> and presumably they were the medium of instruction. Ward also indicates that, primarily the Basel and Bremen missions expanded their work within the Danish sphere of influence, working in the *Ga*, *Twi* and *Ewe* languages.<sup>449</sup> In the missionaries’ attempt to retain and maintain the focus of its converts, socio-cultural controls and prohibitions among other strategies dominated their communication and impartation of Christian virtues on African Christian converts.

#### ***3.4.1 The Missionary Guiding Theological Principles on the Presbyterian Church of Ghana***

Ward affirms that the Basel mission adopted a policy of separating their converts entirely from the old life for fear lest the social and artistic attractions of the old life should lead them to forget their new religion.<sup>450</sup> Synonymous to Ward’s affirmation, Smith holds that this “Salem” pattern was repeated wherever the Basel Mission was established, as it provided easy answer to the difficulty of trying to live a Christian life in a non-Christian environment.

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<sup>448</sup>Smith, *Presbyterian Church of Ghana*, 45.

<sup>449</sup>Ward, *History of Ghana*, 205.

<sup>450</sup>Ward, *History of Ghana*, 205-206.

He writes, “Life in the native town seemed to the missionaries to be the antithesis of ordered and discipline Christian community living.”<sup>451</sup>

According to Miescher, the camps were referred to as “Salems” or Christian quarters. They were established for delicateness and reconstruction of religious mentality in order to draw the missionaries’ followers closer to the Christian God. Specifically, it was to re-shape individual personhood by reconstructing local ideas about masculinity and femininity.<sup>452</sup>

Accordingly, missionaries’ re-shaping of individual personhood was based on the ‘Order for Congregations’<sup>453</sup> referred to as the Gemeindeordnung. Therefore, in order to keep converts from been contaminated with non-Christian practices and to internalize the new faith, the construction of ‘Salems’<sup>454</sup> was encouraged, and the ‘Gemeindeordnung’<sup>455</sup> was introduced.

The Gemeindeordnung was purported for congregational control to allow adequate scope for possible planned developments. The “order for congregations” contained sections as baptism, congregational offices, church life, civil life and church discipline. It speculated that Christians desist from taking part in the ‘pagan exercise of authority’, traditional festivals, important burial ceremonies or anything related to the worship of idols since they connoted “works of darkness”<sup>456</sup> Of this, Ustorf writes,

Zahn realized the marriages between heathens and Christians were fundamentally inadmissible but under the existing conditions were to be accepted as an ‘act’ of tolerance. In the question of polygamy, Zahn also strove for a temporary compromise, recommending the dissolution of polygamous marriages prior to baptism in so far as that could be done without causing qualms of conscience’: On the other hand, they must, in the traditional period, be tolerated as an evil that cannot be changed, if dissolution would entail a greater evil and fresh sins.<sup>457</sup>

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<sup>451</sup> Smith, *The Presbyterian Church of Ghana*, 49.

<sup>452</sup> Miescher, “The challenges of Presbyterian Masculinity,” 76

<sup>453</sup> Werner Ustorf, *Bremen Missionaries in Togo and Ghana: 1847-1900*, trans. James C.G. Greig, (Accra: Legon Theological Studies Series Project, 2002), 275.

<sup>454</sup> Miescher, “The challenges of Presbyterian Masculinity,” 76.

<sup>455</sup> Ustorf, *Bremen Missionaries*, 275.

<sup>456</sup> Ustorf, *Bremen Missionaries*, 275.

<sup>457</sup> Ustorf, *Bremen Missionaries*, 276-278.

Miescher affirms that the rules contained the formation processes with the understanding of masculine and feminine ideologies; thus, certain behavioural expectations on all fronts of the Christian life. Miescher expresses, ‘These rules outlined the gendered behaviour of male and female converts, their relations towards children, their work ethics, and their behaviour towards authorities’.<sup>458</sup>

Socio-cultural controls were emphasized and enforced amongst converts. For instance, men would not marry more than one wife. Miescher emphasizes that men were trained to become monogamous husbands and who must show primary allegiance to wife and children before any other extended family considerations.<sup>459</sup> Smith proves that, within Christian congregations, polygamy was forbidden and that, plural marriages which had been entered into were to be resolved before a man could be received into the church.<sup>460</sup> The other remaining wives as a resolution would receive compensation after the man chooses from the lot who would be his suitable help meet as a Christian.<sup>461</sup>

Converts were also discouraged in indulging in fetishism. Smith shares the idea that at a convert’s baptism he was called upon to renounce ‘the devil and all his works’.<sup>462</sup> Smith explains that, it was the commitment to the promise of no longer taking part in any ceremonies which has any “connection with *abosom* worship, ancestral rites, non-Christian funerals, dances or drumming. Facial marks, cutting the hair in a special way, amulets, soothsaying, magic and oath swearing were equally discouraged. Observance of favourable or unfavourable days was also to be eschewed”.<sup>463</sup> Miescher persuades that observing or

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<sup>458</sup>Miescher, “The challenges of Presbyterian Masculinity”, 76

<sup>459</sup>Miescher, “The challenges of Presbyterian Masculinity”, 76

<sup>460</sup>Smith, *Presbyterian Church of Ghana*, 94.

<sup>461</sup>Smith, *Presbyterian Church of Ghana*, 94.

<sup>462</sup>Smith, *Presbyterian Church of Ghana*, 94-100.

<sup>463</sup>Smith, *Presbyterian Church of Ghana*, 100.

participating in drumming and dancing was strictly forbidden for Christians.<sup>464</sup> It therefore suggests that the Basel missionaries considered all these indigenous activities non-Christian and negative works.

As Birgit Meyer puts it, the missionaries set down new rules of conduct for Christians which matched Pietistic lifestyle that differed considerably from the pre-existed indigenous way of life.<sup>465</sup> As such converts were to internalize the Christian life, as it were, obedience to God. Accordingly, the outward life in terms of behaviour was expected to be honourable, virtuous, simple, ordered and sober.<sup>466</sup>

The Basel missionaries also forbid converts not to drink alcoholic beverages. Miescher maintains that this order was also an essential part of the congregational rule. The demand for simple life style and moderate personal behaviour was expressed in the fact that Christians or new converts should “refrain from excessive eating, ‘carnal desires’, and abstain from alcoholic beverages.”<sup>467</sup>

Among other expectations, Miescher asserts that while men and women were to cover their bodies with clothing, they should avoid wearing fanny clothes or jewellery.<sup>468</sup> Meyer details out that, the congregational rule instructed Christian children not to go naked according to the heathen ways; rather a feeling of sense of shame and discipline should be awakened in and demanded from them. Meyer asserts that once one was baptized a new biblical Christian name is acquired. This was going to reject any ‘connection with idol worship’, to refrain from

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<sup>464</sup>Miescher, “The Challenges of Presbyterian Masculinity,” 77.

<sup>465</sup>Berit Meyer, *Translating the Devil*(Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999), 9-10.

<sup>466</sup>Meyer, *Translating the Devil*, 9-10.

<sup>467</sup>Miescher, “The Challenges of Presbyterian Masculinity,” 77.

<sup>468</sup>Miescher, “The Challenges of Presbyterian Masculinity,” 77.

participation in ‘heathen ceremonies’, and to take off all strings and amulets; that is, objects extremely popular as means of personal protection from ‘evil spirits’<sup>469</sup>

Smith further hints that domestic slavery was discouraged. He states,

At first, Christian converts possessing slaves had been accepted in the hope that in the course of time the problem would be solved, but as the number of slaves within the Christian community grew, it became clear that specific action was required. This involvement of Christian community with domestic slavery astounded the Home Committee in Basel which demanded vigorous action on the part of the missionaries in rooting it out. It was decreed that the possession of slaves or engaging in the practice of human trade would mean exclusion from the Christian fellowship; baptismal candidates must free their slaves as a condition of acceptance and existing slave owners should dismiss their slaves within two years.<sup>470</sup>

Thus, those converts who still involved themselves in the human trade and or kept slaves for hard labour were encouraged to stop it since the Christian expectation of behaviour in that direction had become a prohibition.

The Gemeindeordnung made provisions for penal codes that saw to it that both converts and their care takers who violated the rules repeatedly were corrected. Meyer insists, “The most severe punishment was the publicly announced, definitive exclusion from the congregation. This implied exclusion from Holy Communion and possible exclusion from the Salem. A person expelled was not to receive a Christian burial.”<sup>471</sup> Indeed Miescher affirms that, ‘if any of these rules were not observed a system of sanctions was established, ranging from admonition, temporary exclusion from Holy Communion, to expulsion.’<sup>472</sup> For instance, Smith affirms that converts who became a party to a plural marriage were excluded from the Lord’s Supper.<sup>473</sup> It suggests therefore that the Gemeindeordnung was established with certain accompanying threats so that converts were coerced to do the undesired. At this point, it could mean that converts accepted the coercive tendencies of the missionaries because in other ways, the Gemeindeordnung was beneficial.

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<sup>469</sup>Meyer, *Translating the Devil*, 10.

<sup>470</sup>Smith, *Presbyterian Church of Ghana*, 99.

<sup>471</sup>Meyer, *Translating the Devil*, 10.

<sup>472</sup>Miescher, “The Challenges of Presbyterian Masculinity,” 77.

<sup>473</sup>Smith, *Presbyterian Church of Ghana*, 96.

In spite of the supposed coercive tendencies of the order of congregation, Meyer insists that, “it was evident that Christians were the group able to profit most in colonial society”. Accordingly, Meyer, in assessing the convert’s acceptance to the Gemeinderdung, the converts had good medical health, they had Christian burial which was comparatively less expensive to the traditional burial, and they dressed in Christian clothes and the converts’ neglect of taboos of which they did not die from.<sup>474</sup> Meyer writes, “Christian religion was attractive because it offered the material means to achieve a prosperous and relatively high position in colonial society.”<sup>475</sup> Smith however thinks that ‘to become a Christian meant abandoning the tribal and family structure’.<sup>476</sup>

### ***3.4.2 The Missionary Legacies of Hegemonic Masculinity in Presbyterian Leadership and Decision-Making***

Miescher points out that, the mission of the church was to promote religious and social identities and to pursue avenues of social mobility.<sup>477</sup> In this regard, the missionaries set out to create new masculine and feminine identities through the application of the congregational order. The processes of the reconstruction were to enforce some new rules and guide lines on the lives of converts in their camps. This was accordingly done by the missionaries’ understanding and perception of male and female role plays.<sup>478</sup>

Miescher explains that, “an elaborated set of rules, the Gemeindeordnung, regulated every aspect of life within the Salem. The rules outlined gendered behaviour of male and female converts, their relation towards children, their work ethics, and their behaviour towards authorities.”<sup>479</sup> As such; men were trained to become monogamous husbands living together

<sup>474</sup>Meyer, *Translating the Devil*, 11.

<sup>475</sup>Meyer, *Translating the Devil*, 11.

<sup>476</sup>Smith, *Presbyterian Church of Ghana*, 95.

<sup>477</sup> Miescher, “Challenges of Presbyterian Masculinity,” 78.

<sup>478</sup>Miescher, “Challenges of Presbyterian Masculinity,” 76.

<sup>479</sup>Miescher, “Challenges of Presbyterian Masculinity,” 76.

as husband and wife and with their children while they together share meals, worship together and plan their children's education.<sup>480</sup> Miescher observes that; the missionaries insisted on inheritance that favoured wife and children; Mission schools, particularly boarding institutions, served as prime sites to reshape individual personhood by promoting the Presbyterian notion of masculine identity.<sup>481</sup>

Miescher further acknowledges that, personal behaviours of the converts were of equal importance. He notes;

The mission expected Christian converts to live 'simply' and to be 'moderate' in their behaviour. While men and women were to cover their bodies with clothing, they should not wear fancy clothes or jewellery. Christians should refrain from excessive eating, 'carnal desires,' and abstain from alcoholic beverages. The participation in or even observation of drumming and dance performances was strictly forbidden for Christians.<sup>482</sup>

Miescher however argues that, one form of masculinity that is dominant is "hegemonic," insisting that it is gained from patriarchy.<sup>483</sup> Miescher acknowledges that, despite the fact that, "within African societies, particularly in colonial situations with an imposition of outside gender norms and competing local values, it is not always obvious which notions of masculinity were dominant, since understandings of gender depended on specific contexts, power relations, and actor's subject positions"<sup>484</sup>

Miescher therefore may be suggesting from his expressions that, the missionary understandings of masculine and feminine identities may have patriarchal roots though. Miescher therefore concludes that, the church officials who were strictly males, thus elders, teachers, catechists, and pastors "operated within various social contexts dominated by missionaries, church superiors, lineage elders, local chiefs, and the colonial state."<sup>485</sup> It is also certain from Miescher discussions that the construction or reshaping of local identities

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<sup>480</sup>Miescher, "Challenges of Presbyterian Masculinity," 78.

<sup>481</sup>Miescher, "Challenges of Presbyterian Masculinity," 76.

<sup>482</sup>Miescher, "Challenges of Presbyterian Masculinity," 77.

<sup>483</sup>Miescher, "Challenges of Presbyterian Masculinity," 77-79.

<sup>484</sup>Miescher, "Challenges of Presbyterian Masculinity," 78.

<sup>485</sup>Miescher, "Challenges of Presbyterian Masculinity," 79.

centred on the males in leadership though the missionaries maintained a gendered division of labour.<sup>486</sup> In this regard, he states; “session could appoint as deaconesses God fearing women of irreproachable character, married or unmarried, attending the women of the congregation and for the care of the poor and the sick.”<sup>487</sup> It further suggests that females were either less important or were totally not accepted in the missionary ideological state of decision-making in the Presbyterian Church.

However, changing and transforming lives of new converts, though extensively successful, was not without challenges. The missionaries’ application of the church rules elicited some negative responses from some African converts.<sup>488</sup> Meyer’s observation to mission’s challenges points to the fact that whereas Christianity attracted many people at the same time, it lost a large number of them through the implementation of a harsh discipline. She insists that, for many, Christianity was an outward sign of ‘civilization’; whose ultimate demands were difficult to live up to and therefore they secretly sought to enjoy life and to solve their spiritual and material problems by behaviours qualified as non- Christian.<sup>489</sup>

Smith similarly affirms that, many would have liked to become a Christian, but the claims of ancestral duties and obligations were too strong, and therefore becoming a Christian meant abandoning the tribal structure and breaking up tribal unity.<sup>490</sup> Miescher also argues that in Abetifi, there were frequent struggles about authority and proper conduct between missionaries and local people. Additionally, there were also reports of conflicting notions of hegemonic masculinity.<sup>491</sup>

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<sup>486</sup>Miescher, “Challenges of Presbyterian Masculinity,” 86.

<sup>487</sup>Miescher, “Challenges of Presbyterian Masculinity,” 86.

<sup>488</sup>Miescher, “Challenges of Presbyterian Masculinity,” 78.

<sup>489</sup>Meyer, *Translating the Devil*, 52.

<sup>490</sup>Meyer, *Translating the Devil*, 52

<sup>491</sup>Miescher, “Challenges of Presbyterian Masculinity,” 79.

For instance, there were exchanges between one Boama (local convert) and Ramseyer, a missionary. Miescher reports that;

as Boama, the petitioner presented Ramseyer (who scolded him openly) as an authoritative missionary who lacked respect towards his congregation and an obstacle in spreading Christianity and which the congregational rule stipulated that missionaries should not laud it over the converts but rather pasture the flock in a Christ-like manner, Ramseyer threw back and described Boama's actions,

"... He 'liked to play the boss', was 'lazy' and addicted to alcohol."

After one year, Boama allegedly committed adultery in town and then entered a sexual relationship with a Christian woman. For these offences, he was excluded from the congregation though still living in the Salem. When he admitted, Boama conducted himself well until his 'indolence' and 'pride' resurfaced.<sup>492</sup>

The narration connotes a conflict of masculinities between the Christian norm and the indigenous masculine identity.

Miescher asserts that, the conflict was tensed up around the notion of masculinity; modesty, sexual restraint, monogamous marriage, respect for authorities as well as an active embodiment of the Protestant work ethic.<sup>493</sup> It therefore significantly points out that the missions' tools in the construction of masculinity was for the insistence of modesty to replace pride; sexual restraint to replace adultery; monogamy to replace polygamy and for hard labour to replace laziness.

Accordingly, session membership shaped masculinity constructs as it resembled the court of the Akan chief and his elders but without women. Its membership was old converts or practicing Christians. As Miescher relates, "elected presbyters of blameless character, ... married man over 30 years of age, and not new converts, assisted the Pastor and Catechist with an over-sight to maintain Christian order and discipline, administration of 'temporal affairs' and care for the poor. Session membership became a marker of senior masculinity."<sup>494</sup>

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<sup>492</sup>Miescher, "Challenges of Presbyterian Masculinity," 81-83.

<sup>493</sup>Miescher, "Challenges of Presbyterian Masculinity," 83

<sup>494</sup>Miescher, "Challenges of Presbyterian Masculinity," 86.

Regarding the above, it is interesting to note that, till date the PCG Constitution provides same procedural expectations for the selection of members into Session in all its local congregations; “A Presbyter shall not be less than twenty-five (25) years of age.”<sup>495</sup> The only clause that alters the age long order is the inclusion of women as indicated by the PCG Constitution as; “Other Presbyters up to twenty-five (25) men and women shall be elected according to the size of the congregation.”<sup>496</sup> Obviously, this clause in particular determines to a large extent a considerable measure of gender equity at the congregational level today.

In its finality however, the missionaries established a hierarchy of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana with a high patriarchal influence that reflects complete masculine domination in its leadership and decision making. Opare Kwakye proves that, “the early synods of the church followed the patriarchal nature of the Basel Mission church. The 1918 Synod was a Men’s Fellowship constituting 2 Scottish missionaries, 28 Ministers and 24 Presbyters.”<sup>497</sup> In other words, there was total invisibility of women in that regard. Men took decisions that were binding on women, other male members and children.

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<sup>495</sup>The Presbyterian Church of Ghana, Constitution (Accra: Waterville Publishing House, 2000), 27.

<sup>496</sup>PCG Constitution, 27.

<sup>497</sup> Opare Kwakye, *Woman’s Visibility*, 10.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

#### 4.1 Introduction

The general rationale of this chapter is to establish facts pertaining to the objectives and research questions as regards to how the concept of masculine hegemony helps to understand gender roles and whether there are some remnants of masculinity still dominant in the decision-making structure of the PCG. It is also to find the possible ways the PCG can overcome masculine dominating tendencies and norms in the decision-making of the church. In this view and in order for the researcher to pool and subsequently present satisfactory data analysis, face to face interviews were conducted administering questionnaires on the targeted respondents comprising both male and female ministers in the Ga Presbytery of the PCG. There were twenty-two respondents in all; twelve male ministers and ten female ministers.

Interviews were conducted in-between February and the later part of May, 2017. The researcher basically used the official English language. It was however interspersed with Ga, an indigenous local language common to the area of research. The researcher conducted most of the interviews at the respondents' local church offices at their own time and convenience. The others who were not available in their local offices were interviewed at the Presbyterian Women's Centre in Abokobi, Greater Accra region where the 2017 Ga Presbytery Session was held from 6<sup>th</sup>- 11<sup>th</sup>May, 2017.

Some of the male respondents include the Ga Presbytery Chairperson, Clerk of the Presbytery and a Senior lecturer at the Trinity Theological Seminary. All the respondents are current District Ministers except two; one retired minister who was once a district minister and the other who has also been in the ministry for more than fifteen years. Some of the female

ministers include a past Clerk of the Ga Presbytery, Directors of the Presbyterian Women Centre, District ministers and congregational ministers.

#### **4.2 The Ga Presbytery of the PCG**

The Ga Presbytery (GP) is one of the first five Presbyteries created by Synod in 1922. It was originally called the Ga-Adangme Presbytery until 1972 when for reasons of effective facilitation of evangelism and efficient administration, it was split into the Ga Presbytery and the Adangme Presbytery<sup>498</sup> Giving the unique characteristics of having a multi- ethnic mix with membership drawn from every region in Ghana, the Ga Presbytery has earned an accolade, the ‘Rainbow Presbytery’<sup>499</sup>

The Ga Presbytery location has become increasingly cosmopolitan since Ghana’s independence. This therefore makes the Ga Presbytery the most ethnically diverse in the Presbyterian Church of Ghana. The Ga Presbytery is located in the Greater Accra region stretching from Tema in the east to the fringes of the Central region in the west. It also stretches northwards ending its boundary at the foot of the Akwapim hills.<sup>500</sup>

In June 2016, eleven districts were severed off the Presbytery to form the Ga West Presbytery. This move explained the same reason for which the Ga-Adangme Presbytery experienced its first ever split.<sup>501</sup> Currently, the Ga Presbytery is made up of 25 districts with a membership population of 130,935. It has a total of one hundred and fifty (150) congregations and ninety-seven (97) preaching points.<sup>502</sup>

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<sup>498</sup>Ga Presbytery, “Ga Presbytery.”

<sup>499</sup>Modern News, “Ga Presbytery is 90 years.”

<sup>500</sup> Modern News, “Ga Presbytery is 90 years”

<sup>501</sup>The Daily Graphic, “Presbyterian Church of Ghana erects new Presbytery,” accessed February 16, 2017, [http://www.graphic.com.gh/news/general\\_news/presbyterian-church-of-ghana-erects-new-presbytery.html](http://www.graphic.com.gh/news/general_news/presbyterian-church-of-ghana-erects-new-presbytery.html)).

<sup>502</sup> The Presbyterian Church of Ghana, “Ga Presbytery Statistics Data Form P,”(2016)

The Ga Presbytery uses various local dialects per the ethnic representations within. As a matter of policy no congregation in the Presbytery was permitted to use only one language. It is exactly so because the church values and respects all the language groups since every member is important and has a place in the church. However, the Presbytery permits that only English must be used at the Presbyterian Worship Centre, Legon Congregation. In this regard the center of worship is a mission school of which the medium of instruction is the English language. It is interesting to also note that, the PG holds a French-speaking service at the Faith Congregation, Shiashi.<sup>503</sup>

Since 1990, the Presbytery has been operating special programs. For instance, the Northern Outreach Programme (NOP) is a Ministry that reaches out to migrants from the northern parts of the country that have relocated to the Presbytery's domain in Accra; the 'Dorcas Project' is meant to extend special ministry to commercial sex workers; and the Market Ministry of whose target groups are the fisher folks, garage operators and inmates of police cells. Accordingly, the Ga Presbytery has also established an operational retreat and prayer centre situated at Danfa, off the Aburi-Ayi Mensah road.<sup>504</sup>

The Ga Presbytery is composed of Principal Officers, District Ministers, Departmental Directors, Lay and Youth Representatives. The three Principal Officers (all males) are the Chairperson of the Presbytery, Clerk of Presbytery and a Lay Representative from the General Assembly Council. The District Ministers are 25 (24 Males and 1 Female).

The Departmental Directorates are seven made up of Ecumenical and Social Relations, Education, Church Life and Nurture, Human Resource Management, and Development and Social Services. Others include Mission and Evangelism as well as Finance. The Lay

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<sup>503</sup> WCC, "History of PCG"

<sup>504</sup> WCC, "History of PCG"

Representatives are 25 (20 Males and 5 Females). The Youth representatives are 3 (2 Males and 1 Female).<sup>505</sup>

The Ga Presbytery has one hundred and eighty-two (182) ministers that comprise both ordained ministers and Probationers. Article 6, Section (2, d) of the PCG Constitution stipulates that, ‘A Minister shall not be less than twenty-three (23) years and not more than fifty (50) years at the time of entry for training.’<sup>506</sup> Of the same constitution, Article 22, Section (3, a & b) provides that, ‘To qualify to be elected as Presbytery Chairperson, a person shall, (a) be an ordained Minister with not less than fifteen (15) years post-ordination experience’; and (b) ‘not less than forty (40) years and not more than sixty-five (65) years at the time of election.’<sup>507</sup>

The age qualification for the position of the Presbytery Clerk as provided in the constitution in Article 22, Section (10, a) indicates, ‘The Presbytery Clerk shall not be less than thirty-five (35) years and not more than sixty-six (66) years at the time of election’<sup>508</sup> It defines therefore that, all membership representations at the Presbytery, District and Congregational levels fall within the three generational groupings as described. The Ordained ministers are subdivided into Full-time ministers and Tent ministers. Similarly, the Probationers are also subdivided into Full-time and Tent probationers.<sup>509</sup> The table below gives analytical details of female/male ministers in their various categories. From the population of all generational groups membership of 130,935<sup>510</sup> as referenced, approximately 60% are females. The totality of female-male ratio is therefore 3 is to one. Of the total number of 63 members that make up

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<sup>505</sup>Ga Presbytery, “Gender Composition of the Ga Presbytery,” accessed March 3, 2017.

<sup>506</sup>PCG Constitution, 12.

<sup>507</sup>PCG Constitution, 61.

<sup>508</sup>PCG Constitution, 63.

<sup>509</sup> Statistics Data Form P (2016).

<sup>510</sup>“Statistics Data Form P (2016)

the Ga Presbytery Council, 54 are males and 9 are females representing a male dominance of 72%.

**4.2.1 Membership of the Ga Presbytery by Sex**

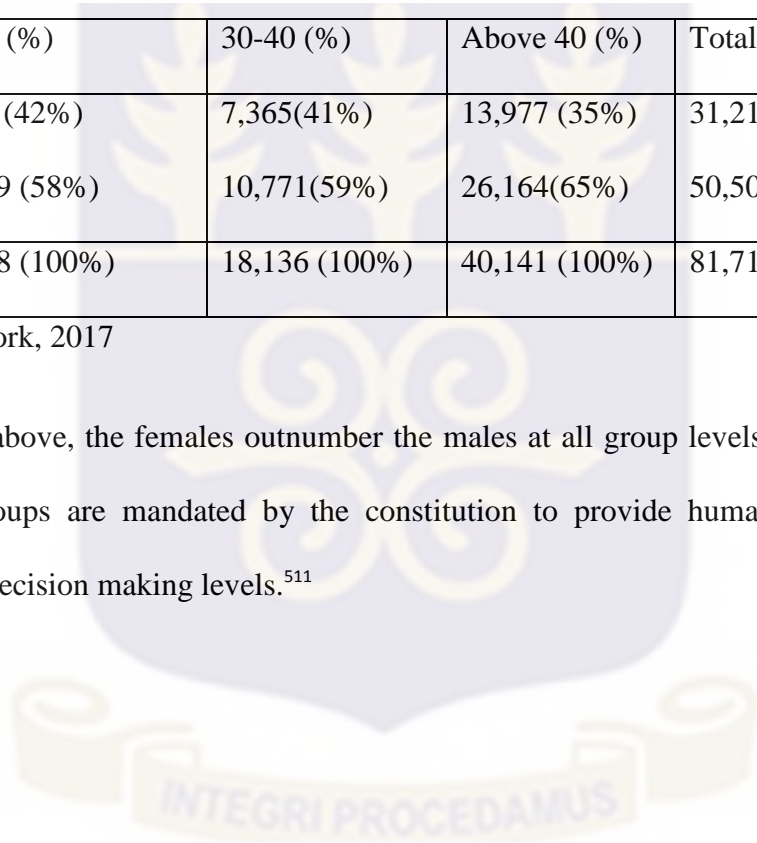
The table below shows the totality of membership by sex ranging from above 18 years to over 40 years plus. It consists of 3 generational groupings; 18 to under 30 years (Youth); 30 to 40 years (Young Adults); and 40+ years (Adults).

**Table 1: Membership by Sex of 3 Generational Groups**

Sex	18-30 (%)	30-40 (%)	Above 40 (%)	Total (%)
Male	9,869 (42%)	7,365(41%)	13,977 (35%)	31,211 (38%)
Female	13,569 (58%)	10,771(59%)	26,164(65%)	50,504 (62%)
Total	23,438 (100%)	18,136 (100%)	40,141 (100%)	81,715 (100%)

Source: Field work, 2017

From the table above, the females outnumber the males at all group levels by an average of 21%. These groups are mandated by the constitution to provide human resource at the leadership and decision making levels.<sup>511</sup>




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<sup>511</sup> PCG Constitution, 27.

**Table 2: Total Number of Ministers of the Ga Presbytery**

Ordained	Full-Time (%)	Tent Ministry (%)	Total	%
Male	68 (78%)	67 (84%)	135	81%
Female	19 (22%)	13 (16%)	32	19%
Probationers				
Male	3 (43%)	7 (88%)	10	67%
Female	4 (57%)	1 (12%)	5	23%
Evangelist	N/A	N/A		
Male	1 (100%)		1	100%
Female	-		-	
Total	95 (60%)	88 (40%)	183	100%

Source: Field work, 2017

A cursory look at Table 2 indicates there are 21% more females ministers than males ministers in the leadership and decision making categories. However, there is an overwhelming male dominance among the ministers. For instance, the ordained male ministers are 54% more than the female ordained ministers. Similarly, there is male dominance among the probationers with the male members recording 76% more than their female counterparts. Again, there are no women evangelists at all. It therefore suggests that though there are more women in the presbytery than men, the pastoral leadership is highly dominated by males. The situation may be reflecting Fiorenza's claim that women are denied the full range of human potentiality in society.<sup>512</sup> The scenario seems to follow the path

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<sup>512</sup>Fiorenza, Feminist Theology

already charted from the very inception of Presbyterianism in Ghana where the leadership has been “men’s fellowship.”<sup>513</sup>

Membership by sex analyses and the statistics of ministers in the Ga Presbytery as indicated above affirm Hadebe’s arguments that within the church, majority of the members are women and the majority of the leaders are men.<sup>514</sup> The gendered divisions of labour by the Basel Mission’s evangelical work and ideological programme where women’s role were to attend to the women of the congregation and for the care of the poor and the sick,<sup>515</sup> may have accounted for the low percentage of the female clergy.

#### 4.2 Presentation of Findings

In this section the researcher presents two different responses; questions that are similar to both male and female ministers on one hand and questions that are exact to either male or female ministers on the other hand. In order to attain specific responses in accordance with the objectives of the research, the researcher interviewed the respondents accordingly. The questionnaire was set around masculine dominance in decision-making, women sharing equities with men in the ministerial profession, the possibilities of women attaining decision-making positions among others.

**Table 3: Conditions and Processes of Qualification to Decision-Making positions**

Respondents	Constitutional	Non-constitutional	Total	%
Males	12	None	12	100%
Total	12	0	12	0%

Source: Field work, 2017

<sup>513</sup> Opare Kwakye, *Women’s Visibility*, 10

<sup>514</sup> Hadebe. “Gender, Gender Equity”

<sup>515</sup> Miescher, “Challenges of Presbyterian Masculinity”, 86.

Table 3 shows that, the required conditions and qualifications to the positions of decision-making in the church have been enshrined in the PCG Constitution, as such, all respondents representing 100% referred to the PCG Constitution.

**Table 4: Are the conditions of the qualifications fair?**

Respondents	Fair (%)	Not Fair (%)	Other Views (%)
Males	10 (84%)	None (0%)	2 (16%)
Total (%)	10 (84%)	None (0%)	2 (16%)

Source: Field work, 2017

As to whether the condition under which one qualifies for the position of decision-making body is fair or not, 10 respondents representing 84% responded in the affirmative whereas 2 respondents gave different opinions. None of the respondents think that it is not fair.

**Table 5: Gender Equity and Women Prohibition to Decision-Making**

Respondents	Gender Equity		Total (%)	Prohibition of Women		Total (%)
	(Yes %)	(No %)		(Yes %)	No (%)	
Males	10 (84%)	2 (16%)	12 (100%)	2(16%)	10 (84%)	12(100%)
Total (%)	10 (84%)	2 (16%)	12 (100%)	2(16%)	10 (84%)	12(100%)

Source: Field work, 2017

In the considerations as to whether it is natural for males to dominate fully at the decision-making level, 10 respondents representing 84% rejected the notion against its affirmation. The remaining 2 respondents representing 16% responded in the affirmative. Equally, 84% of the respondents think that, there are no prohibitive causes for women to the decision-making hierarchy. The 16% of the remaining respondents maintains that, there are prohibitive causes for the women.

**Table 6: Gender Equity in Capabilities.**

Respondents	Capable (%)	Non-Capable (%)	Total	%
Male	10 (84%)	2 (16%)	12	100%
Total	10 (84%)	2 (16%)	12	100%

Source: Field work, 2017

In the above table, 10 respondents representing 84% claim that, the church see men and women of equal capability, thus, ability to lead and take decisions in the church, whereas 2 other respondents representing 16% think that the church considers women as non-capable.

**Table: 7 Gender Equity in the opportunities to Decision-Making Positions**

Respondents	Yes (%)	No (%)	Total	%
Male	6 (50%)	6 (50%)	12	100%
Total (%)	6 (50%)	6 (50%)	12	100%

Source: Field work, 2017

From the table above, 6 respondents representing 50% are of the view that, the church sees both sexes as having equal opportunities to decision-making positions. Six others representing 50% disaffirm the notion.

**Table 8: Equality in Competence and Performance: Courage to Lead; Affirming of Authority**

Respondents	Courage to Lead		Total (%)	Affirming of Authority		Total (%)
	Can (%)	Cannot (%)		Can (%)	Cannot (%)	
Males	6 (50%)	6 (50%)	12 (100%)	8 (67%)	4 (33%)	12 (100%)
Total	6 (50%)	6 (50%)	12 (100%)	8 (67%)	4 (33%)	12 (100%)

Source: Field work, 2017

As the above table indicates regarding the possibility of equal competence and performance in terms of “courage to lead,” 6 respondents representing 50% say that women can equally perform. The other 6 respondents representing 50% say that women cannot. In affirming of authority, 8 respondents representing 67% think that, women can, whereas 4 other respondents representing 33% are of the opinion that women cannot affirm authority at the decision-making positions. The males who suggest that women neither have the courage to lead nor affirm authority may be harbouring the views that, traditional role plays defined by the actions of the Basel Missionaries did not position females in the public domain of leadership. The decisive actions of the session only employed women to attend to women, the poor and the sick.<sup>516</sup>

**Table 9: Equality in Competence and Performance: Competitiveness and Desire to Succeed**

Respondents	Can (%)	Cannot (%)	Total	%
Males	8 (67%)	4 (33%)	12	100%
Total	8 (67%)	4 (33%)	12	100%

Source: Field work, 2017

From the table above, 8 respondents representing 67% expressed the opinion that women can equally show competitiveness and desire to succeed as men. The rest of the 4 respondents representing 33% opined that women cannot show equal competitiveness and the desire to succeed.

<sup>516</sup> Miescher, “Challenges of Presbyterian Masculinity,” 86.

**Table 10: Equity in Competence and Performance: Daring and Demanding nature of the job**

Respondents	Can (%)	Cannot (%)	Indifferent (%)	Total	(%)
Males	7 (58%)	4 (34%)	1(8%)	12	100%
Total	7 (58%)	4 (34%)	1 (8%)	12	100%

Source: Field work, 2017

From the above table, 7 respondents representing 58% say that female ministers can count equality with male ministers when it comes to the daring nature of the job. 4 other respondents representing 34% think that female ministers cannot whereas one respondent representing 8% neither affirmed nor disconfirm.

**Table 11: Affirmative action for Women's Development and Encouragement**

Respondents	Yes (%)	No (%)	Total	%
Males	6 (50%)	6 (50%)	12	100%
Total	6 (50%)	6 (50%)	12	100%

Source: Field work, 2017

From the above table, 6 respondents representing 50% express the opinion that the church develops and further encourages women whereas the 6 other respondents representing 50% doubt that the church has an affirmative action on the development and encouragement of women to the decision-making hierarchies.

**Table 12: Is the PCG a man's church? (in terms of PCG ownership)**

Respondents	Yes (%)	No (%)	Indifferent (%)	Total	%
Males/Females	4(18%)	17(77%)	1(5%)	22	100%
Total (%)	4(18%)	17(77%)	1(5%)	22	100%

Source: Field work, 2017

From the above table, 4 respondents representing 18% acknowledges that the PCG is a man's church whereas 17 other respondents representing 77% maintains that the PCG is not a man's church. One respondent representing 5% thinks that it is neither here nor there.

#### 4.4 Female Ministers Responses

This section presents the findings on ten female ministers' views on the issues of gender roles and decision-making positions in the church. The responses have been categorized into segments so as to answer the research questions whilst meeting the objectives of the study.

**Table 13: Women in Ministry and Calling**

Calling	Respondents (%)	Total	%
All Round	1	1	10%
Women only	1	1	10%
Women and Youth	2	2	20%
Youth and Healing	1	1	10%
Counselling only	1	1	10%
Aged only	1		10%
Aged, Children and Teaching	1		10%
Children only	1	1	10%
Apostleship and Deprived	1	1	10%
Total	10	10	100%

Source: Field work, 2017

The above responses indicate specifically the female ministers' area per calling into the ministry. Two respondents representing 20% indicated women and youth ministry as their area of calling. Each of the respondents representing 10% and 80% respectively suggests; All

round ministry, Women, Youth and healing, Counselling, Aged, Children and teaching, and Apostleship and the deprived as their ministerial calls.

**Table 14: PCG and Women's Development**

Respondents	Yes (%)	No (%)	Yes and No (%)	Indifferent (%)	Total	%
Females	4 (40%)	3 (30%)	2 (20%)	1 (10%)	10	100
Total (%)	4 (40%)	3 (30%)	2 (20%)	1 (10%)	10	100

Source: Field work, 2017

The above table show responses as to whether the Church provides the space and encouragement for the female ministers to fully develop their area of ministry. Four respondents representing 40% acknowledge that the church offers them the opportunity whereas 3 respondents representing 30% say that the church does not. Two respondents representing 20% think that the response is either yes or no. The remaining respondent representing 10% was indifferent.

**Table 15: Domestic and Ministerial roles conflict**

Respondents	Yes (%)	No (%)	Total	%
Females	2 (20%)	8 (80%)	10	100%
Total (%)	2 (20%)	8 (80%)	10	100%

Source: Field work, 2017

The table above indicates that, 2 respondents representing 20% say that their dual roles as a domestic wives and church ministers conflict. The remaining 8 respondents representing 80% say that, they do not have conflicting roles.

**Table 16: Need for Male assistance**

Respondents	Yes (%)	No (%)	Indifferent (%)	Total	%
Females	3 (30%)	6 (60%)	1(10%)	10	100%
Total (%)	3 (30%)	6 (60%)	1 (10%)	10	100%

Source: Field work, 2017

From the table above, 3 respondents representing 30% respond ‘yes’ to the quest whether they need assistance of a male colleague in order to play their ministerial roles effectively. Six others representing 60% maintain that they do not need any assistance from their male colleagues whereas one respondent representing 10% was indifferent.

**Table 17: The Role of Men in the Church**

Respondents	To be leaders (%)	To complement women (%)	Indifferent (%)	Total	%
Females	5 (50%)	4 (40%)	1 (10%)	10	100%
Total	5 (50%)	4 (40%)	1 (10%)	10	100%

Source: Field work, 2017

The above table shows that, five respondents representing 50% acknowledge that the role of men in the church is leadership whereas other four respondents representing 40% think that men’s role in the church must be to play complementary roles for women. A respondent representing 10% was indifferent.

**Table 18: Women and Decision-Making Positions/ Timing**

Respondents	Decision-Making Position			Timing (10 years from now)		
	Yes (%)	No (%)	Total (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)	Total (%)
Females	10 (100%)	0 (0%)	10 (100%)	6 (60%)	4(40%)	10(100%)
Total	10 (100%)	0 (0%)	10 (100%)	6 (60%)	4 (40%)	10 (100%)

Source: Field work, 2017

From the above table which requests the highest decision-making position female ministers can attain in the PCG, 10 respondents representing 100% propose that female ministers can occupy the highest decision making hierarchy of the church. Finding out about how soon women could attain the highest hierarchy of the PCG, the above table subsequently reveals that 6 respondents representing 60% maintain that, it will be 10 years from now whereas the other four respondents representing 40% think that it would be after 10 years from now.

**Table 19: Language usage in Church-life and Worship**

Respondents	Yes (%)	No (%)	Total	%
Females	0 (0%)	10 (100%)	10	100%
Total	0 (0%)	10 (100%)	10	100%

Source: Field work, 2017

The above table shows that all the 10 respondents representing 100% maintain that they neither feel excluded nor invisible by the language usage in church that reflect the assumption that the 'male' is the norm.

**Table 20: Female Ministers and Biblical Images**

Biblical Images	Respondents	Total	%
Jezebel	1	1	6.75%
Mary Mother of Jesus	1	1	6.75%
Mary Magdalene	1	1	6.75%
Lydia	1	1	6.75%
The women who took care of Jesus' disciples	1	1	6.75%
Priscilla	1	1	6.75%
Judith	1	1	6.75%
Naomi, Ruth, Dorcas, Abigail, Rahab, The Samaritan Woman, Rachel, Hannah, Esther	2	2	13%
Deborah, Esther	5	5	33%
Hannah only	1	1	6.75%
Total (%)	10	10	100%

Source: Field work, 2017

The table above shows responses to what Bible stories the female ministers relate their experiences to. The respondents pointed at more than one biblical image. Five respondents representing 33% mentioned three or more biblical images. Four respondents each representing 13% mention two or more biblical images. Each respondent representing 6.75% mentions more than one biblical image.

**Table 21: Female Ministers and Hermeneutical Interpretations**

Respondents	Yes (%)	No (%)	Combination (%)	Total	%
Females	8 (80%)	1 (10%)	1 (10%)	10	100%
Total	8 (80%)	1 (10%)	1 (10%)	10	100%

Source: Field work, 2017

The table above indicate responses as to whether the female ministers give their own interpretations to the Bible in relation to their experiences. Eight respondents representing 80% give their own interpretations to the Bible in relation to their experiences whereas one respondent representing 10% does not do her own interpretations. The remaining respondent representing 10% makes a combination of her own interpretation and that of devotional materials.

**Table 22: Female Ministers, Biblical Meanings and Equity**

Respondents	Acceptance (%)	Rejection (%)	Total	%
Females	7 (70%)	3 (30%)	10 (%)	100%
Total (%)	7 (70%)	3 (30%)	10 (%)	100%

Source: Field work, 2017

The above table show responses of female ministers to the question, “Does reading the Bible give fresh meanings to life as a woman minister for which matter you can count equity with men?” Seven respondents representing 70% accepted the fact whereas 3 respondents representing 30% rejected the idea.

**Table 23: Abuse against women in the Church**

Respondents	Perception of abuse	Total	%
2	No perceived abuse	2	20%
2	Keeping women silent and inactive	2	20%
2	Denial of Decision-Making positions	2	20%
1	Non-acknowledgement of the capacity and personality of women	1	10%
1	Abuse of the dignity and rights of women/Treating women as unclean	1	10%
1	Imposition of male decisions	1	10%
1	Women despising the female minister	1	10%
Total (10)		10	100%

Source: Field work, 2017

For the question, “What are some of the abuses that are perpetuated against women in the church?” Responses from the above table indicate that 8 respondents representing 80% acknowledge that they experience abuses whereas 2 respondents representing 20% do not experience any abuse.

**Table 24: Dealing with Gender based Abuse in Leadership**

Respondents	Abuses that must be discouraged	Total	%
1	No buses perceived	1	10%
1	Conflicts between Male and Female ministers	1	10%
1	Traditional and cultural issues that demean women	1	10%
4	Discrimination against women to the decision-making positions	4	40%
3	Undermining and gossiping	3	30%
Total (10)		10	100%

Source: Field work, 2017

Responses from the above table indicate that nine respondents representing 90% had received abuses that need to be discouraged by the church. One respondent representing 10% does not perceive any abuse for which must be discouraged by the church.

**Table 25: Female Ministers, Experience of Abuse**

Respondents	Yes (%)	No (%)	Abstain (%)	Total	%
Females	6 (60%)	3 (30%)	1 (10%)	10	100%
Total	6 (60%)	3 (30%)	1 (10%)	10	100%

Source: Field work, 2017

Responses from the table above show that 6 respondents representing 60% have suffered some form of abuse from their male colleagues. Whiles 3 respondents representing 30% say that they have not suffered any form of personal abuse from their male colleagues; a respondent representing 10% abstained from answering the question.

**Table 26: Female Ministers; End to Abuse**

Respondents	Ways to end abuse of women	Total	%
6	Continuous discussions, advise and encouragement	6	60%
1	Breaking cultural barriers	1	10%
1	Independence to operate	1	10%
2	Scripture	2	20%
Total (10)		10	100)

Source: Field work, 2017

Responses from the above table to the question, “How can female ministers stop the abuse meted out on women in the church” indicate that 6 respondents representing 60% suggest continuous encouragement, one respondent representing 10% think that breaking cultural barriers can stop the abuses. Another respondent representing 10% think that women must be given the independence to operate whereas 2 respondents representing 20% suggests the use of Scripture.

#### **4.5 Discussions on Findings-Males**

From the data, it was obvious that the conditions and processes for the qualification of members to the decision-making positions in the PCG are made under constitutional provisions of the church. The conditions and processes are fair to all members of the clergy provided one meets the basic qualifications. For instance, Rev. Mrs Alice Kyei Anti, former West Akyem Presbytery Chairman in the 1970s, Rev. Esther Abbam Adjetey and Rev. Mrs Rose Abbey, both former Ga Presbytery Clerks as females have held high positions. Rev. GapQ holds that over the years the PCG has been patriarchal and still live in the patriarchal society, and culture which influence the way things are done. He notes that, these

notwithstanding things are changing and currently there are more women Senior Presbyters in the PCG, otherwise it does not happen.<sup>517</sup>

Rev. GapQ insists that, one therefore has to qualify on the schedule. These include post ordination age and the expectations of having satisfied all other conditions.<sup>518</sup> Rev. GapK points out that, the basic qualification is based on the first schedule of the constitution, thus, 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy, Chapter 3.<sup>519</sup> In addition to the first schedule of the constitution,<sup>520</sup> one's age, both in person and the clerical profession<sup>521</sup> among others are required.

Article 22; sub section 3, (a-d) makes provisions for the requirements of the qualification to the decision-making level. Another respondent agrees on the requirements and adherence to the constitution insisting there is more to it than appears. He thinks there are certain people who have all the qualification, character, charisma, the capacity and ability to hold on to leadership positions but lack the flair to become leaders. He adds that, leadership is an art and science.<sup>522</sup>

The idea of the qualification to the decision-making positions in the church is open to both male and female members in the church. Everybody stands an equal chance of being nominated and elected to the decision-making positions in the church.

Though the church has made it constitutional to follow the Electoral College processes in selecting members to the decision-making positions, another respondent says that there is still some politicking.<sup>523</sup> Rev. GapK is of the opinion that; 'even though the constitutional processes have been set; it is woefully not enough; though the provisions are made, you do

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<sup>517</sup>Rev. GapK, Interview.

<sup>518</sup>Rev. GapQ. Interview with Eric Thompson. Personal interview. Accra, March 22, 2017.

<sup>519</sup>Rev. GapK. Interview with Eric Thompson. Personal interview. Accra, May 10, 2017.

<sup>520</sup> PCG Constitution, 130.

<sup>521</sup> PCG Constitution, 61 and 85.

<sup>522</sup>Rev. GapO. Interview with Eric Thompson. Personal interview. Accra, May 10, 2017.

<sup>523</sup>Rev. GapS. Interview with Eric Thompson. Personal interview. Accra, April 27, 2017.

not find the women to put themselves to be elected; and the women are also not qualified sometimes.<sup>524</sup>

Though the constitutional provisions are generally accepted to be fair and the best so far, a respondent is the view that, the women tend to be glued to specialist areas, thus areas where men are deficient and they do not consider attractive. He adds that such positions must therefore be offered to the women by appointment other than through Electoral College system.<sup>525</sup> Another respondent adds that the new system has calmed down tensions and has drastically reduced frictions between ministers either vying for or supporting other ministers for positions.<sup>526</sup>

The constitution provides for women representation at the congregational session level. It stipulates that, at least a third of session members at all levels must be women.<sup>527</sup> The male respondents acknowledge that the female ministers share equities in the capabilities, performance and other opportunities to decision-making positions though the women have low fighting spirits comparatively.<sup>528</sup> The above opinions give an indication that, the PCG has adopted a democratic system of selecting members to its decision-making hierarchies. It also suggests that once these provisions are constitutional, both the female and male ministers stand equal chance for the process. In effect the PCG has opened up for gender balance at all levels.

As to whether it is natural for males to dominate the decision-making of the PCG, six respondents were of similar views that, times are changing and so therefore decision-making cannot be restricted to only male since the church universal is for both males and females.

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<sup>524</sup> Rev. GapK, Interview.

<sup>525</sup> Rev. GapA. Interview with Eric Thompson. Personal interview. Accra, April 27, 2017

<sup>526</sup> Rev GapO1. Interview with Eric Thompson. Personal interview, Accra, April 27, 2017.

<sup>527</sup> PCG Constitution, 27, 56 and 77.

<sup>528</sup> Rev. GapK. Interview.

Contrary to the rejection, a respondent thinks that since the inception of the church universal, decision-making has been a male dominated thing and its emphatically Bible based, with reference to the sons, not daughters of Jacob and the fact that those who betrayed Jesus were twelve men. Another respondent argues that the cultural understanding of leadership is masculine.

It therefore suggests a normative form of masculinity in the description of Nagel. In this regard, sex roles stereotypes.<sup>529</sup> The church from its very inception established the fact that men are the leaders of the church. It therefore became a cultural norm in church administration. Miescher insists that masculine hegemony was the norm of the missionaries; married men of blameless character, and not new converts were elected to assist the pastors and catechists with oversight responsibility to maintain Christian order and administrative discipline amongst others.<sup>530</sup> While the women were given other roles to play, it insisted more on gender roles other than decision-making members. The PCG in contemporary times has altered the old church order to include women as indicated by the PCG Constitution.<sup>531</sup>

Although there are neither many women at the decision-making hierarchy nor there are prohibitive causes towards women to same, Rev. GapA proposes that it may often be a problem of cultural mentality though within the same culture some women have excelled. He further cites instances in respect to Yaa Asantewaa, Margaret Thatcher, Angela Merkel as well as the two other former female Clerks of the Ga Presbytery.<sup>532</sup> Another respondent opines that women are not vocal and they feel inferior to men.<sup>533</sup>

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<sup>529</sup>Nagel, "Masculinity and Nationalism", 25

<sup>530</sup>Miescher. "The Challenges of Presbyterian Masculinity," 86.

<sup>531</sup>PCG Constitution, 27.

<sup>532</sup>Rev. GapA. Interview.

<sup>533</sup>Rev. GapQ. Interview

A respondent also suggests that though on paper women are accepted, the system rejects it. For example, Rev. GapK hints that, “a man could be at the Presbytery Conference for 5 days continuous but if a woman does that, there will be chaos in the home, and as such she would not offer herself”<sup>534</sup> Rev. GapD similarly points out that, “it is not the bona fide property of the men to hold on to decision-making positions”<sup>535</sup> Relatively, it supports the idea of the cultural perception of masculine behaviours where norms and behaviours that show distinct roles of leadership associated to men, and sustained in institutions.<sup>536</sup>

Finding out about the perception of gender capabilities amongst the male and female ministers, Rev. GapA answers that, “within the church, both sexes are considered as of similar equities in capabilities and there are no specific roles for males and females. He insists that roles are played interchangeably. He adds that capabilities are generally dependent on academic qualifications and abilities.”<sup>537</sup> Rev. GapA suggests that, “considering capabilities in certain areas of responsibilities, women can better organize than men though.”<sup>538</sup> Rev. GapD observes that women are summarily capable. He related his observations on Kwagyir Aggrey’s assertion that, “When you train a man, you train an individual, but when you train a woman you train a whole nation” He explains that, when men and women are given equal opportunity, they will both perform.<sup>539</sup>

Rev. GapQ maintains the notion that,

The church considers equity and equal opportunity for both men and women to decision-making positions. Even though the church gives equal opportunity to women and men, women show low ‘fighting spirits,’ and tend to shy away. Currently, a female minister, Esther Oduro is a District Minister. Women have served all positions except the position of a Moderator and Clerk of the General Assembly.<sup>540</sup>

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<sup>534</sup> Rev. GapK. Interview.

<sup>535</sup> Rev. GapD. Interview with Eric Thompson. Personal Interview. Accra, May 5, 2017.

<sup>536</sup> Miescher, *Becoming a man in Kwahu*, 8-9

<sup>537</sup> Rev. GapAO. Interview.

<sup>538</sup> Rev. GapA. Interview.

<sup>539</sup> Rev. GapD. Interview.

<sup>540</sup> Rev. GapQ, Interview.

Rev. GapAH acknowledges that, “for a fact that the church does not prevent women, and neither does it go out of its way to support and appoint women; membership of the church’s decision-making hierarchy is by elections of which the church does not have much doubt; men are sought outside because the issues at the decision-making levels are manly”<sup>541</sup>

Finding out respondents view as to whether the church considered gender equity in the opportunities to decision-making positions, Rev GapK explains that, “Normally, men have certain prejudices against giving women positions over them. However, on the official level you cannot complain”<sup>542</sup> Similarly, Rev. GapO opines that, “We should bear in mind that at no point in time would we have equality between men and women due to the physiological and psychological build of men and women. God did not make men and women equal though they are made to share equity for being together. God gave man and woman their full responsibilities; man’s performance should outweigh that of the woman.”<sup>543</sup>

Contrary to this notion, other respondents say, such differences should not be considered because it is performance and proven track record that matter, and for the fact that women are also being educated, it makes it easier for women also to hold decision-making positions. Rev. GapQ affirms that, “it is the people in the church who will make the assessment,”<sup>544</sup> and Rev. GapD also postulates that, “the differences in chemistry compositions of men and women notwithstanding, when the emotions of women are well managed, it can lead to good end.”<sup>545</sup> Rev. GapOA assumes that, “we have different gifts; women have certain gifts that men do not and therefore it is not a matter of gender, but ability and capability.”<sup>546</sup> “The church recognizes the equality of the sexes”, suggests Rev. GapAH.

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<sup>541</sup>Rev. GapAH. Interview with Eric Thompson, Accra, May 10, 2017.

<sup>542</sup>Rev, GapK. Interview.

<sup>543</sup>Rev. GapO, Interview.

<sup>544</sup>Rev. GapQ. Interview

<sup>545</sup>Rev. GapD, Interview.

<sup>546</sup>Rev. GapAO. Interview with Eric Thompson, Accra, March 23, 2017.

Equating leadership or decision-making to courage and aggressiveness, women may do little comparatively, however Women are now Senior Presbyters in more congregations than previous. A preventive measure for women at the decision-making positions in this regard is their natural cycle of life and as such men are capable of remaining in the field in most situations than women. One however needs to prove himself/herself for the task though the tendencies of the desire to succeed are more in women than in men. In spite of the above assertions men still dominate in the decision-making hierarchies because; other men and women nominate and elect them into office; and for cultural reasons too.

With regards to courage to lead, the male ministers think that the church is either in favour or otherwise. It favours equality between men and women in terms of the courage to lead. For instance Rev. GapD concludes that, “courage is acquired through growth and environmental situations, and so if both men and women are provided with an equal opportunity, both will come equal”<sup>547</sup> Rev. GapO1 and Rev. GapA on the other hand suggest that,

The women are more courageous than the men in church and civil society. For example, the Britain’s Prime Ministers- Margaret Thatcher and Theresa May as well as the Chief Justice of Ghana- Georgina Theodora Wood have shown great courage in their line of duties and as such, find no reason why women cannot perform courageously at any decision-making positions in the church.<sup>548</sup>

Rev. GapLD sees women having challenges at the local congregational level otherwise there are no problems looking at the decision-making positions.<sup>549</sup> Relatively Rev. GapK points out that, “the women can equally exhibit the courage to lead but whether they really do is what matters. It’s a man’s’ world so men also use it to say that the women are not capable, but one cannot lump all men together and vice versa. The person must prove himself.”<sup>550</sup>

Contrary to these assertions Rev. GapQ submits that women cannot be equally pegged with men in terms of courage to lead because ‘men are a little bit more aggressive, it’s the makeup

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<sup>547</sup> Rev. GapD. Interview.

<sup>548</sup> Rev. GapO1. Interview..

<sup>549</sup> Rev. GapLD

<sup>550</sup> Kpobi, Abokobi.

of women to always lay back.<sup>551</sup> It therefore suggests that courage in this situation is seen as a masculine trait for which cannot be identified with women. It affirms Uchendo and Connell's claim of such commonalities with masculinity beside culture and historical experiences.

Rev. GapAV thinks "it is 'no,' such considerations must not be made at all because men have different capabilities from that of women."<sup>552</sup> Rev. GapS cited culture as a mismeasure, "culture in terms of menstruations; where the place is indigenous, females cannot be amongst men. She cannot serve communion. Why should a woman lead us?"<sup>553</sup> Similarly the above views are pointing to the characteristic of cultural masculinity in relation to courageous performances. The views as portrayed insist on the preservation of patriarchal influences where consistent inundations of male power over women are unaltered.

With regards to affirmation of authority, a respondent is of the opinion that, though "men do better"<sup>554</sup> and the fact that, "women are not available at all times in field situations when there is something to be done; for instance, pregnancy and menstrual issues, women cannot affirm authority in decision-making positions in such considerations."<sup>555</sup> These opinions give an indication that, considering the cultural prohibitions of women from certain activities, the male ministers are insisting that women cannot work fully like them because of women's biological make ups. It therefore reasons to conclude that, there is patriarchal and cultural conservatism that make the women invisible in the church.

Sticking to the notion of gender roles, Rev. GapA suggests that specialist positions that women can best fit should be offered to them by appointment. For instance, the PCG Girls'

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<sup>551</sup> Rev GapQ, Interview.

<sup>552</sup> Rev. GapAV, Interview.

<sup>553</sup> Rev. GapS. Interview.

<sup>554</sup> Rev GapT. Interview with Eric Thompson. Personal interview. Accra, March 23, 2017.

<sup>555</sup> Rev. GapO, Interview.

training institutions such as Aburi Girls Senior High, Presbyterian Women’s Training College, and the Presbyterian Women’s Centre amongst others are better managed by women.<sup>556</sup>

On the issue of competitiveness and the desire to succeed, a respondent thinks that the church considers women’s ability to show competitiveness and the desire to succeed as men because “such tendencies are higher in women than in men.”<sup>557</sup> He adds that, “when women settle in decision-making positions or any positions of authority and for their performance people accuse them of being ruthless.”<sup>558</sup> A respondent adds that since a lot of women are learning, there is the tendency for them to cross those cultural barriers and any woman who has that desire rubs shoulders with the men, and in support, Rev. GapD says that ‘it is just like Ezenator Rawlings wrestling power from her male counterparts during the 2016 Parliamentary elections’.<sup>559</sup>

Rev. GapAH rather contests the above assertions and suggests that, “women cannot show competitiveness and the desire to succeed because they are caring and relaxed; men want to succeed because they are bread winners and always ambitious.”<sup>560</sup> It is obvious that the respondent is thinking in line with the descriptive norms of masculinity. Similarly Rev. GapO posits a challenge scripturally, “Jesus will tell the disciples, ‘don’t sleep; wake up’. The spirit is willing but the body is weak. People will have the willingness to do something but the desire alone does not make it able. With all the psyching when it comes to physical endurance the male is better and preferred; the woman’s capacity of making it is limited”<sup>561</sup>

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<sup>556</sup> Rev. GapA. Interview.

<sup>557</sup> Rev. GapA. Interview.

<sup>558</sup> Rev. GapA. Interview.

<sup>559</sup> Rev. GapD. Interview.

<sup>560</sup> Rev. GapAH. Interview with Eric Thompson. Personal interview, Accra, April 4, 2017.

<sup>561</sup> Rev. GapO. Interview.

This view equally suggests that male dominance is more acceptable at the decision-making hierarchy giving the competitive nature of the job. It suggests also a strong patriarchal influence at the decision-making hierarchies of the church. Associating care and calmness to women's nature, one can conclude therefore that, character differentials as in gender roles are considered serious cultural issues; an indigenous culture that exacts women as incompetent and less desirous to succeed, but which places men as the deservingly courageous lot.

There is equal divergence of reason giving the daring and demanding nature of the decision-making positions in the church. A respondent holds that women can either perform equally as the men or underperform unlike men.<sup>562</sup> An opinion shared by another respondent indicates that 'just as the women can do better with no or little distractions, in the church situation, more women in the ministry are single and they tend to be more committed. Other women who are not ordained ministers are up to it and are performing very well at similar positions at the congregational levels. For example, many more women are senior presbyters'<sup>563</sup>

On the contrary, Rev. GapS is of the view that 'women will not be able to live up to the task especially when they have young children'. Yet, another respondent suggests that there are times the women show weakness though performance may depend on the individual gift and talent as well as the application.

There are divided opinions as to whether the church has any policy of affirmative action for the enrolment of women into the decision-making positions. Whiles some respondents think that the structures of women's development exist, others think otherwise. Rev GapK and Rev. GapD assert that, "there is a constitutional provision that every lower Session at the local congregational level must ensure to have at least 30% of women representation"<sup>564</sup> and at

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<sup>562</sup> Rev. GapA. Interview.

<sup>563</sup> Rev. GapLD. Interview with Eric Thompson. Personal interview, Accra, April 25, 2017.

<sup>564</sup> Rev. GapK and Rev. GapD, Interview.

“the General Assembly, one of the two Youth Representatives is a female”.<sup>565</sup> A respondent suggests that it is the reason for the development of the department for Church Life and Nurture is to see to it that all generational groups stages of life in the church be fully developed including other activities.’<sup>566</sup>

A respondent notes that the general consensus on the issue of the development and encouragement of women by the church already exists as in one of the church’s generational groups, the Women’s Fellowship. He adds that there are spectrums of roles that women are playing in the church. He supports his response with the belief that women have the responsibility of extending the natural roles they play in the church towards nurturing the female membership of the church and keeping on with the service on the table as wives in the home.<sup>567</sup> Similarly, Rev. GapA thinks that, ‘the encouragement of the women already exists because they are recognized and so therefore, whether the women can see the recognition is up to them’<sup>568</sup>Rev. GapZ opines that the women are already being encouraged in the church while they are allowed to serve communion and perform other duties of the male minister.<sup>569</sup>

It therefore suggests that though the church has open opportunities for women to take advantage, it is not formalized. As it were, it is therefore presumed that the church has opened up to women to assume positions to the decision-making hierarchies. Rev. GapQ adds that, ‘there is the need for other development areas for women ministries as in the case of Ministry for Gender Children and Social Protection.’<sup>570</sup>Rev. GapAH supports Rev. GapQ’s assertion and proposes that, “the Department for Church Life and Nurture can easily ‘design’ something for women empowerment for the women to learn, explore and use their God given

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<sup>565</sup> Rev. GapO1. Interview.

<sup>566</sup> Rev. GapO, Interview.

<sup>567</sup> Rev. GapO. Interview.

<sup>568</sup> Rev GapA. Interview.

<sup>569</sup> Rev. GapZ. Interview with Eric Thompson. Personal interview, Accra, May 4, 2017.

<sup>570</sup> Rev. GapQ. Interview.

talents,”<sup>571</sup> while Rev. GapT suggests that, “it will be easier for the women to receive encouragement and further development through the instrumentality of the National Ministers Spouses Fellowship.”<sup>572</sup>

Consensually, there are no specific scheduled rights for either males or females; neither are there male roles nor female roles. Rev. GapO1 adds that, “the church’s constitution does not disadvantage women because of who they are”,<sup>573</sup> although “in the past years men frowned upon certain women’s positions but today, it is changing”.<sup>574</sup> Interestingly, a respondent insists that the church does not need to do anything to get women to the decision-making positions.<sup>575</sup>

It does not seem to the researcher that, the women are taking a deeper understanding of the belonging generational group to elevate women to the desired level. Indications are that the women’s group are more concerned with their roles as ‘mothers’ and not leaders in the church.

Furthermore, another respondent stresses that the women must educate themselves and accept their selves as they are, so that within their own understanding they try to develop, adding, the women themselves are their own enemies. Another respondent opines that the church must be willing to expose women to the challenges of accepting them to responsibilities. He adds that the church must let women see that God has a role for them.<sup>576</sup>

It therefore suggests that women must realise themselves that there is the need for them to increase awareness about their own experiences, empower each other through re-reading of

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<sup>571</sup> Rev. GapAH. Interview.

<sup>572</sup> Rev. GapT. Interview.

<sup>573</sup> Rev GapO1. Interview.

<sup>574</sup> Rev. GapLD. Interview.

<sup>575</sup> Rev. GapO. Interview.

<sup>576</sup> Rev. GapD. Interview.

scripture and find new understandings other than patriarchal understanding of stories and their hermeneutical interpretations.

There were divided opinions in seeking a response as to whether respondents perceived leadership and decision-making as belonging to the men, as it were, whether decision-making is skewed towards the men. Rev. GapK disaffirming the claim argues that, “the new church liturgy has changed from ‘he’ to ‘he/she’”<sup>577</sup> Rev. GapO1 and Rev. GapD share similar sentiments; “the church is more women dominated”<sup>578</sup>

Rev. GapAH and Rev. GapQ equally think that, “the church is for women and it is the women who elect men into the decision-making positions”<sup>579</sup> and again ‘without the female, the church will have no leg; we are flying with one wing, the other is needed.’<sup>580</sup> Rev. GapT concludes that, ‘It comes from cultural antecedence. Jesus feeding the 5000 men excluded women. The culture looked down on the women but currently the church does not segregate between men and women. Culture may do it, not the church.’<sup>581</sup>

In the response to disaffirming the fact that decision-making in the church is skewed towards male ministers, a respondent suggests that there is the need to educate the women in the church because there are more women in the church than men. She argues further that the women think that these positions are for men and even though women may be qualified, they do not project themselves. Another thinks that though decision-making are not skewed towards men the problem is in the fact that when women are given the privilege, they mess up. She adds that when the men think that women are capable they support them. In her case she explains that it is the men who encourage her to take up positions.

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<sup>577</sup> Rev. GapK. Interview.

<sup>578</sup> Rev. GapO1 and Rev. GapD, Interview.

<sup>579</sup> Rev. GapAH. Interview.

<sup>580</sup> Rev GapQ. Interview.

<sup>581</sup> Rev. GapT. Interview.

Other respondents share similar thoughts on the notion that the Presbytery has had two female Clerks of Presbytery, and that defeats the idea that decision-making is skewed towards men. One other assumes that, “one who has the ability to do the work is the one who God chooses, or if many like that person to do the work, the opportunity is offered.”<sup>582</sup> Another respondent thinks that though men outnumber women in the ministry, it is not natural. She indicates that, though male ministers look down upon their female counterparts, few women performed when given the opportunity. She suggests that women can perform if they are allowed.

Rev GapV however concludes that, “for our culture when you think about positions, the mind does not go on women. One day I asked myself if the position of the clerk could be occupied by a woman. It is culture that has crept into the church.”<sup>583</sup> Rev. GapO suggests that, “the church does not belong to either; it is for Jesus Christ. He calls all, whoever will, may come.”<sup>584</sup>

Contrary to the notion that the church is not a man’s church, Rev. GapLD insists that, “that is God’s problem. That is how the Bible is seen. It came from the Jewish concept of human beings; the Jews had no regard for women; everything centred on men and that has influenced us also.”<sup>585</sup> Rev GapZ supports the notion stating that, ‘in proverbial sense because you need people who are strong and who will stand for the truth and deliver despite the fact that the innate properties to deliver are in both men and women.’<sup>586</sup> In a similar regard, a respondent shares the view that decision-making positions are male dominated and therefore skewed towards men.

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<sup>582</sup> Rev. GapII. Interview.

<sup>583</sup> Rev. GapV. Interview

<sup>584</sup> Rev. GapO. Interview.

<sup>585</sup> Rev. GapLD. Interview.

<sup>586</sup> Rev. GapZ. Interview.

The female respondents do not think it is natural or normal, neither do they think it ordinary nor divine for the men to dominate the decision-making body of the church for which decisions binds everyone including women. It suggests therefore that the female ministers oppose the patriarchal influence of the church for which Kwakye defines as “men’s fellowship.”<sup>587</sup> It also affirms the divergent views of the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians and their determination to put an end to the invisibility of women in the church.<sup>588</sup> The “male power” factor of patriarchy has therefore triggered the women’s rejection of the system in which their visibility is blurred.

All female ministers disagree with the fact that the church is for ‘male’ because God is assumed to be male. In this regard a respondent insists that, “even though the women are many, yet the males dominate.”<sup>589</sup> She does not think that God did it like that. Another respondent point out that, the church is for women as well. She insists that women are surely better worshippers and more dependent on God comparatively. Again a respondent observes that the church is not only male’s church because during Jesus’ ministry the contributions of women were evident.

Other respondents unanimously express the thought that “‘man’ is a gendered term that comprises both male and female and so there is no discrimination in Christianity.”<sup>590</sup> Another suggests that, ‘God is a spirit; He is Spirit but more of woman than man. He is female dominant’.<sup>591</sup> The language use of the church has also seen some significant changes. It used to be a masculine dominated language. Now the church liturgy has departed from using “He” only to the use of “He/She” thereby giving it a gender balance.

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<sup>587</sup>Kwakye. “Women’s Invisibility”

<sup>588</sup>Hinga. “African Feminist Theologies”

<sup>589</sup>Rev. GapX, Interview.

<sup>590</sup>Rev. GapVIII. Interview.

<sup>591</sup>Rev. GapIV. Interview.

The church considers the fact that paradigms are changing and shifting and so therefore men are losing firm grasp of their dominance in decision-making. In other words it is inconsiderate to think that decision-making is the sole pride of men, hitherto, the church looked down on women due to cultural conservatism and adherence to patriarchal influences. Currently, it is not so and as Rev GapK states, “men feel uncomfortable to be led by women and this brings about certain prejudices and biases towards women though.”<sup>592</sup>

The Women’s Fellowship is amongst the church’s generational groupings and they are expected as a group to train and nurture its women to decision-making positions. The Department for Church Life and Nurture must see to the development of women and even when that is done, it is not possible for women dominate the PCG hierarchy neither in the shortest possible time nor in the long run. The assertions above open an understanding to the fact of some considerable measure of gender balance in the church, thus dismissing specific gender roles in the church to the recognition of equal opportunities for all, but for women dominance in decision-making positions.

#### **4.5 Discussions on Findings-Females**

From the data there were mixed responses to the question as to whether the church provides the space and encouragement for women ministers to fully develop the calls into the various ministries. A respondent holds that, throughout, she has had the privilege to do church Administration and had once become the Director of Human Resource with the Volta Presbytery.<sup>593</sup> Similarly, two other ministers who affirm the church’s provisions to develop the ministry of female priests insist that “the church sees its local mission schools as its basis to bringing the children together so as to introduce them to Christ;”<sup>594</sup> and ‘in both of my first

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<sup>592</sup>Kpobi, Abokobi

<sup>593</sup> Rev. GapVII. Interview with Eric Thompson. Personal interview. Accra, May 10, 2017.

<sup>594</sup> Rev. GapII. Interview with Eric Thompson. Personal interview. Accra, April 11, 2017.

and second stations, I was given full charge over children's ministry in addition to other general jobs'.<sup>595</sup>

One minister explains that, even though she is given the space to explore her calling, people criticize her and her reason for saying that the church does not give her space is that, "it depends on the Senior Minister; he will stop you from what you are doing based on the reports he gets from people"<sup>596</sup> Another respondent holds that to her surprise she has been receiving invitations from women to hold programs with them in line with her calling and so she believes that it is possible to develop, though the church does not provide the space.<sup>597</sup>

One minister who disaffirms that the church provides space for them to explore their calling maintains that, "on paper, 'yes', but frankly speaking, there are so many channels you have to go through."<sup>598</sup> Another thinks that, it depends on the individual whether the provision is there or not. She also thinks that without such provisions it still has to work. Yet again, a respondent thinks that there is nothing like a provision of space to develop one's calling once the church puts you in the position it desires. She insists, "When I was even a clerk there was no training"<sup>599</sup>

On the same issue as to whether the church provides the women ministers space to explore their ministry, Rev. GapX says that, "it is neither here nor there."<sup>600</sup> She says her personal problem is not about the church's provision of space, but with the Trinity Theological Seminary where ministers are trained. She compares Trinity's curriculum with that of the University of Ghana and the comparison she draws is that, at the University of Ghana, you choose an area of study in which you either major or minor. She insists that Trinity does not

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<sup>595</sup> Rev. GapI. Interview with Eric Thompson. Personal interview. Accra, April 25, 2017.

<sup>596</sup> Rev. GapIX. Interview with Eric Thompson. Personal interview. Accra, April 28, 2017.

<sup>597</sup> Rev. GapVI. Interview with Eric Thompson. Personal Interview, Accra, May 7, 2017.

<sup>598</sup> Rev. GapIII. Interview with Eric Thompson. Personal Interview. Accra, May 9, 2017.

<sup>599</sup> Rev. GapV. Interview with Eric Thompson. Personal interview. Accra, April 19, 2017.

<sup>600</sup> Rev. GapX. Interview.

have that schedule so trained people come out limited. She however suggests even though she has had the opportunity to work with women in her case, she wishes that Trinity could be structured so that one can realise the potential area other than the jacket training.<sup>601</sup> The various views from the females suggest that PCG does not consider one's ministerial calling; neither does it consider one's area of expertise and professional background before accepting candidates into their seminaries.

Given the role as a minister and whether there are conflicts between the official work and that of the domestic, some respondents who think that there are no conflicts say that they plan. Another respondent maintains that, "at the moment I am a widow so no conflicts"<sup>602</sup> and another also says, "my husband supports; there are others who are supportive at home"<sup>603</sup> For those who feel that there are conflicts between their official jobs as ministers and their domestic chores as wives, a respondent indicated that, "there is the need to have a dedicated spouse so one would be able to work full time as a minister, a wife and a mother."<sup>604</sup>

One respondent supports her claim adding that, "there are times when my child needs me for various reasons and at the same time there are activities in the church to perform. You need therefore to plan. The ultimate of the church is for you to do what they want you to. In the house, the husband goes to the kitchen"<sup>605</sup>

Though some of female ministers neither consider it a weakling nor find it demeaning in their profession to be attached or assisted by other male ministers to effectively deliver on the job, the female ministers can work independently. Thus, they do not require any assistance from their male colleagues to perform their duties as female ministers. A respondent argued that, if

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<sup>601</sup> Rev. GapX. Interview.

<sup>602</sup> Rev. GapVI. Interview.

<sup>603</sup> Rev. GapIX. Interview.

<sup>604</sup> Rev. GapIII. Interview.

<sup>605</sup> Rev GapIII. Interview.

they are trained and have what it takes to do the work, you do not need anyone like that. She adds that she has a background to the current work she has been assigned to.<sup>606</sup>

Another also affirms the response when she thinks that though it is necessary sometimes, there is no need for male colleague and more so, that is why they have spouses. One other respondent equally points out, “because I know it’s my calling I do it all alone, but I have worked with male ministers and it was good.”<sup>607</sup> Similarly, another respondent states that she is too independent to desire for the assistance of a male colleague since she receives encouragement from the new moderator.<sup>608</sup>

Contrary to the disaffirmation, one of them says that coupling is preferable since the work demands that. She suggests that the call is to lift the ministry up and one therefore needs to perform in the work well. In this regard, another opines that she is able to work with a male better whereas another believes that the work is done together. One respondent who thinks that, it is neither ‘yes’ nor ‘no’ says, “even when you are two, the work is being shared.”<sup>609</sup>

The responses to the need for a male colleague’s assistance for effective job delivery suggests two issues; either the female ministers are self-confident and independently work as professionals and for that matter they would not need male assistance or they are expressing lack of courage to deliver on the job. In this regard, it affirms Rev. GapQ’s assertions men are more aggressive in leadership than women, women cannot be pegged same level with men, therefore there is the need to couple some of the female ministers who lack the courage to lead with their male colleagues.

It also suggests those female ministers who are ‘single’ are in a better position to work independently without any male assistance. For instance, Rev. GapVII who doubles as

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<sup>606</sup> Rev. GapV. Interview.

<sup>607</sup> Rev. GapVIII. Interview.

<sup>608</sup> Rev. GapVI. Interview.

<sup>609</sup> Rev. GapX. Interview.

District Pastor indicated that her husband is not available and so she has all the time to work very well and independently. Similarly, a female respondent also says that, because she is a widow, she is delivering well on the job without assistance.

For what constitutes men's role in the church, five female respondents acknowledge that men play leadership roles. One respondent however adds that the reason is cultural. Another respondent is of the opinion that, "naturally men are leaders from the biblical point of view. Even in marriage counselling, the women are the help mates";<sup>610</sup> "men do all things in the church".<sup>611</sup> The opinion as suggested is rather an influence of patriarchal history where the norm is that, males are leaders, and women, children and other men are the led.

Thinking that the men should play supportive roles, Rev GapX and Rev. GapVII consequently argue that, "The men should encourage the women. In the church, if you are qualified and you are trained, they will vote for you. They need to project women at the local congregational levels. For instance, women do all the leg work so they must be brought on board;"<sup>612</sup> and, "Men are more supportive than the women. When I am present amongst my female colleagues, some of them feel insecure."<sup>613</sup> This opinion supports Rev GapK's insistence that men feel uncomfortable when women take decisions for them.

A respondent who is indifferent towards the role of men in the church says that, "Any role you give to a man, he can, but if he has to do it perfectly, a woman must be attached to him. If you see a man playing good roles then it signifies some kind of internal feminine abilities."<sup>614</sup> This may similarly suggest that there are certain roles that are best occupied by men and vice versa though the female ministers believe that roles are played interchangeably

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<sup>610</sup> Rev. GapIII. Interview.

<sup>611</sup> Rev. GapI, Interview.

<sup>612</sup> Rev. GapX. Interview.

<sup>613</sup> Rev. GapVII. Interview.

<sup>614</sup> Rev. GapIV. Interview.

in the church. Another respondent expresses the opinion that, “because of the patriarchal nature of the church.”<sup>615</sup>

All respondents unanimously believe that highest decision-making position that a female can attain in the church is the Moderator. A respondent states, “If only men will give women the chance”,<sup>616</sup> and states another, “That is the period the church will enjoy”<sup>617</sup> These statements show that the female ministers are aware of the patriarchal and cultural influences which have ‘packaged’ the minds of the men not give up their dominance though.

The female ministers however think that, “they are being counted amongst the PCG hierarchy already.”<sup>618</sup> Another respondent maintains that, “in the next ten years a woman will be the moderator.”<sup>619</sup> One respondent says, “We have once had a Presbytery Chairperson, the Presbytery Chairperson is the third highest position in the PCG. There is low percentage of female representation. There are also female District Ministers.”<sup>620</sup> Rev GapIX says that, “we are in the era, coming up gradually.”<sup>621</sup>

For some female ministers they believe that the time is not yet come. “The women are few; we cannot just pick a woman. They are not there yet and so we must not force it. When we get to the bridge we shall cross and the whole system will change,”<sup>622</sup> says Rev GapIV. Rev. GapVIII also thinks that, “Anytime from now depending on the years. When a woman is due, women will make it and do it perfectly well. As women we encourage ourselves to do more.”<sup>623</sup> Another respondent notes, “I am one of them. The immediate past Clerk of Presbytery was a woman. We are yet to see a female Presbytery Chairman, then a female

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<sup>615</sup> Rev. GapX. Interview.

<sup>616</sup> Rev. GapIX. Interview.

<sup>617</sup> Rev. GapVII. Interview.

<sup>618</sup> Rev. GapII. Interview.

<sup>619</sup> Rev. GapVI and Rev. GapV. Interview.

<sup>620</sup> Rev GapX. Interview.

<sup>621</sup> Rev. GapIX. Interview.

<sup>622</sup> Rev. GapIV. Interview.

<sup>623</sup> Rev. GapVIII. Interview.

Moderator of the General Assembly,<sup>624</sup>and yet another states, “Alice Kyei Anti would have been there but unfortunately, there was no continuity. We will get there; the will of God will be done.”<sup>625</sup>

Finding out whether women ministers feel excluded and invincible by the language used in the church; for instance, language that reflect the assumption that the male is the norm, that man means “person” and “person” means “man”, respondents collectively disaffirmed it. One respondent reveals that,“there are cultural influences to it; that, it is for the patriarchal background of those who wrote the Bible, but God is father-mother.”<sup>626</sup> Another respondent notes, “God is called *Ataa Naa Nyɔ ɲmɔ*, therefore God in my language is unisex. The pronoun “He” does not make any difference.”<sup>627</sup> Rev. GapX thinks that,

It is a wrong notion; you must put yourself first in everything when it comes to life and worship. Women are involved. It depends on how you deliver the message; whoever you are, God knows you. Education to our women should change the invisibility; those women must be made to understand how they are. The male picture is the one given to them.<sup>628</sup>

Rev GapVI explains that, ‘Those ‘He’ connotations will fade out. At the basic school level girls are performing better than boys.’<sup>629</sup> Rev. GapIV and Rev. GapI respectively think that, “There are women who are fathers because they play the roles of both father and mother,”<sup>630</sup> and “Women’s Fellowship has the church on their laps. At least in the three stations that I have worked, it is the women that are in the forefront.”<sup>631</sup>

In relation to the question to what some of the Bible stories are, which the female ministers relate their experiences to; they mentioned most women in the Bible, both from the Old and New Testaments. The stories of Esther and Deborah are the Bible stories female respondents

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<sup>624</sup> Rev. GapIII. Interview.

<sup>625</sup> Rev. GapVII. Interview.

<sup>626</sup> Rev. GapIX. Interview.

<sup>627</sup> Rev GapII. Interview.

<sup>628</sup> Rev. GapX, Interview.

<sup>629</sup> Rev. GapVI. Interview.

<sup>630</sup> Rev. GapIV, Interview.

<sup>631</sup> Rev. GapI. Interview.

relate their experiences to most in the Old Testament. The stories of the women that cared for Jesus Christ amongst others were also mentioned as those that the female ministers relate their experiences to.

Some of the women ministers give their own interpretation to the Bible stories that relate to their experiences other than which pertains to hermeneutical interpretations. A respondent indicates that it is one of the reasons they are getting a female Bible that will be feminist sensitive. Another respondent explains in support to their claim that they do their interpretations based upon their cultural background. “I spend time praying to find meanings to the passages to be used for the period. I am able to give interpretations on my own.”<sup>632</sup>

Another respondent is of the opinion that she only has to read the Bible and use biblical study books rather than to give her own interpretations to the Bible stories. She however adds that, one needs to base her facts on the happenings of the community, and then you relate to it. A respondent says that, she combines the Bible, current issues and experiences. The female ministers’ opinions and views seem to suggest that, most of them have realized that the Bible has patriarchal intones and so they are departing from that notion by giving their own meanings to the stories they read from the Bible in relation to their cultural experiences. An indication is the fact that, a respondent is eager to have a woman’s Bible which may probably stop patriarchal language usage in the Bible and other commentaries.

The question as to whether re-reading the Bible gives fresh meanings to life for which the female ministers can count equality with their male colleagues, a respondent expresses her opinion that, it is not only the Bible that produces that effect, but other commentaries and devotional books. Another respondent highlights the fact that though there were men, Deborah and Rahab made it. Rev. GapIV and Rev, GapII respectively are of the view that,

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<sup>632</sup> Rev. GapV. Interview.

With one's own wisdom and self as a vessel, you don't come out from somebody's shelf. The same passage can be preached with different meanings at different times",<sup>633</sup> and "God uses both female and male. Availing one's self is the problem. I am not afraid being amongst men. I do not take people's views and their interpretations much; I rather think of what the Bible wants me to do. In their time they did this, in my time, is it relevant? Is it possible?"<sup>634</sup>

There is an affirmation of Oduyoye's ideological claims of her Christology. That is to say, her experiences of the Christ is in relation to her re-reading of Scripture determines her perception of equity with men.

Rejecting the idea that re-reading the Bible give fresh meanings to life for which female ministers can count equity with their male colleagues, one female respondent suggests that, "Men are men; you cannot take it away from them. That respect for men is there. Though spiritually we are the same, there are differences"<sup>635</sup> "I am unique so I cannot count myself equal with men. God called me and so I am,"<sup>636</sup> comments another. A respondent also says, "We are not equal. We are distinctively made."<sup>637</sup> These statements as suggested by the female ministers mean that for them, the preservation of patriarchy is paramount and must not be altered.

For what is perceived to be abuse of women in the church, a respondent thinks that it is not something known, yet it is there in silence. She adds that some men for their background do not want to work with women because they think female ministers are unclean. For instance, she asks rhetorically why a female minister should administer communion. Another thinks that it is an abuse of women in the church when they are not given the platform to participate in church activities and also it constitutes oppression when statements like "women should keep quiet in church" are over emphasized. Another respondent is of the view that abuse of female ministers in the church is embedded in the decision-making positions adding in this

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<sup>633</sup> Rev. GapIV. Interview.

<sup>634</sup> Rev. GapII. Interview.

<sup>635</sup> Rev. GapVIII. Interview.

<sup>636</sup> Rev. GapIII. Interview.

<sup>637</sup> Rev. GapVII. Interview.

regard that, men take decisions for children, women and men. She argues in that regard that, at the decision-making positions, even women do better than men when taking decisions.

One of them informs me in response to the question of abuse of women that, women are considered by some people as nobodies for the fact that one is a woman and therefore can do anything they want. This she says constitutes a lot of violence. She adds that, it took a lot of efforts and negotiations for women to be ordained. Another respondent agrees with the previous and adds that, even sometimes when she is addressing session some presbyters refer to her as, “Papa.”

One other respondent considers it abuse of women ministers when the male minister’s attitude and demeanour signals the impression that a colleague female minister will leave work on him without even allowing the female minister to show her ability. Other respondents suggest that it is abuse against female ministers when congregants underrate them simply because they are female ministers. One cites for instance that if the church is to allocate a female minister with fuel, it is not fulfilled because they think the husband is there to do that for her. She adds that, they do not take female ministers serious. Contrary to the abuse of women ministers in the church, one respondent thinks that there is no any abuse against them otherwise there will not be women ministers in the church.

With the question, “What are some of the abuses perpetuated against women in the church,” respondents differed in their answers. One of them is that, despite the large numbers of women membership, women do not want women to lead them. Another response is that women struggle to be in the lime light but it is not possible. It adds for an instance that when they were at the seminary, sometimes you heard the male ministers shout, “Go home and look after your children”. Though others respond that they have neither experienced any abuse nor to the extent of effect, another respondent says that sometimes her boss, the District

Minister takes certain decisions just like that and imposes it on her. In response, one respondent mentions discrimination, but thinks that the women should not feel distracted by that since they women worship wholeheartedly.

Another form of abuse perpetuated against women in the church is the fact that women are looked down upon and they are prevented from doing certain things and more so they do not give recognition to the women even in situations where there is no man amongst them during a mission. In responding to the question, a respondent says that, sometimes she is prevented from preaching. She thinks that positions are meant for men while she is tagged with names and denied certain privileges. The experiences of women's abuses as shared define remnants of patriarchy; the institution of male rule and privilege entailing female subordination. The male colleagues exert power of domination over their female colleagues by their actions.

The researcher found out how female ministers could stop abuse of women from happening to other women. All respondents had a mixture of diverse and similar ideas, for instance one of them says that, one needs to get closer to the people, make follow-up calls ensuring that all is well. Another respondent says that, she would continually advise the women to be bold as they ensure to do the right thing always. She insists that, as a female minister she would advise married women to reject divorce especially when they have acquired a property together. She thinks that the men should rather go for it concluding that at the end of the day the woman will get what she wants in the aftermath of court settlement.

Another respondent thinks that it all depends on the individual; adding, some of the tribes do not give women the chance and so you see some female ministers carrying that cultural notion into the ministry. In a further expression, she says it fell in her ears that, sometimes during decision-making meetings some of the males will not listen to the females for the

single reason of being a female. Another respondent says that, “male ministers do not give their female colleagues free hands to operate, they dictate the pace.”

She says that during all female meetings they share their experiences amongst themselves, especially how they are being discriminated against by their fellow male ministers in their districts. She concludes that, if the individual will understand the calling of all male and female, there must be respect for females. Another explains that the only way she could stop abuse from happening to other women is the use of Scripture. She opines that when one talk about it, then it looks like she does not want to grow. Other respondents express the need to encourage the women, as it were, to educate themselves and prepare adequately for the ministry. They say that women have to be bold and firm. Another respondent thinks that, one should not stop talking against abuse of women though keeping silent is golden at times.

Respondents indicate that their experiences of abuse empower them to speak against the perpetrators without apology. One respondent notes, “I will do content analysis first, I am not afraid to do so.” Another respondent expresses that she could speak against it because one must know he does not have to behave towards female ministers like that. Whereas another says that in a recent group meeting she spoke on the issue and encouraged all the women, one other respondent also suggests that, “for the ego of men, there is the need to approach them tactically. I will do it silently believing my actions speak more.” Female ministers discuss abuse against female ministers and other women in the church when and wherever they get the opportunity to do so during sermons, general discussions, women’s programs, forums as well as funerals. One other thinks that she discusses abuse against women during personal conversations.

A respondent proposes that,

Abuse of women could be denounced through empowering women to get out fear since it is for fear that they do not want to speak against it; through the Word of God all people are expected to live peacefully. Every woman is a shepherd and as such, a shepherd will not strike a sheep for it to scatter. For the female ministers, their lives and attitudes should promote emulation by others.<sup>638</sup>

Additionally other respondents consider that discussions of women's grievances during congregational forums, through the Christian Messenger and amongst women representative meetings are other ways that could be useful. Rev. GapX however thinks that, "any platform given to women is an opportunity"<sup>639</sup> to speak against women's unwanted experiences. Another respondent insist that the two becoming one as Genesis 2:20 commands should be changed. She says that the church should allow divorce because of what women go through though sometimes it applies to men too. She concludes that when the church intervenes early in marital conflicts, there are possible solutions to abuse of women.

In response to the question, "What are some of the abuses of women ministers that must be discouraged by the church," A respondent suggests that the church must open up because both male and female are all created in the image of God. Another opines that it is the conflict between female and male ministers that must be discouraged. She explains for instance that, when female minister must respond to orders of the male minister without looking at the consequence. She adds that both female and males are all equal and so women must not be treated like thrash.

Another respondent notes, "It is the traditional and cultural issues that demean women in the church that must be discouraged."<sup>640</sup> The disproportionate female representation as regards discrimination in voting against women to as a respondent explains must be discouraged. She thinks in addition that every minister should consider the strength of the church before

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<sup>638</sup>Rev. GapX. Interview.

<sup>639</sup>Rev. GapX. Interview.

<sup>640</sup>Rev. GapIV. Interview.

voting. While the one sum up that the abuse that must be discouraged by the church is the unnecessary undermining and gossiping.

Answering the question as to whether respondents have personally suffered any form of abuse in the church and the effect it had, a respondent suggests that she does not consider certain actions as harmful and so she smiles over them. Another responds that as a female minister she was always considered a second minister. She said that it did not have any effect on her because she considers it as ignorance on the actor's part.

Another respondent explains that, with her current academic position when she went to meet a junior male minister at a new station she was posted to, she heard the following comments; "Head office has messed up. Why should they bring a female to underrate us", and she informs me that, that male minister and the others with him thought that it is an abuse against the male ministers. She said that, instead of the comments breaking her down, she was rather encouraged to pray more to prove them wrong. She explained that, later she heard comments like, "I think this woman is good."

Another says that she went through a divorce and that affected her spiritually, physically and psychologically. She adds that every aspect of her was demoralized. She was depressed and it changed her looks. A respondent further affirms that when she was being posted to another station, as soon as the resident catechist got to know that a female minister was coming to head that church, he went from house to house encouraging church members to stand up against her posting to that church. She says that, at another station, she was insulted for unearthing the unprofessional administrative practices that pertained there and subsequently correcting it. She says that sometimes such insults and derogatory remarks break her down. Another respondent answers with the explanation that, she started in a brand new congregation where there was virtually 'nothing', a low income area. She says that for 8

years she was soliciting for funds all over. She adds that when things got better there, then she was transferred to another place to restart all over again.

The female ministers dismissed the fact that decision-making positions are skewed towards men. Except from the cultural and biblical viewpoints for which men play leadership roles they are supposed to be playing supportive roles. It is therefore not natural or normal; neither is it ordinary nor divine for men to dominate the PCG decision-making body.

#### **4.6 Summary**

Satisfying the objectives of the study with regards to the investigations into the theoretical concept of masculinity and its implications for understanding gender roles in the church and also to examine some of the masculine remnants which are still prevalent in the decision-making structure of the PCG, as well as to discuss ways of dealing with masculine tendencies and culture within the decision-making process of the PCG, the researcher through the face-to-face interview method administered different questionnaire guides on both male and female ministers in the Ga Presbytery of the PCG. The questionnaires were set to solicit responses from interviewees that seek to answer the research questions under this study. In all, twenty-two ministers were interviewed; twelve male ministers and ten female ministers. The research was conducted from between February and June, 2017.

Decision-making in the PCG is neither vested in males only nor is it male dominated because, except the positions of the Moderator and the Clerk of the General Assembly, females have ever occupied all other positions in one way or the other from the congregational to the presbytery levels suggesting equity between male ministers and females ministers in that regard. The PCG has made constitutional provisions at all levels to the general clergy and others who wish to be part of the decision-making body in the church provided the constitutional demands are met.

The language that is used in the church that connoted masculinity is now gender balanced; in the new liturgy book it now reads “He/She” instead of “He” as in the previous. This notwithstanding, the female ministers suffer abuse from their male counterparts and other members of the church due to probable cultural preserve, traditional safeguards and patriarchal influences. Though the men affirm that it is less possible for women to attain the highest offices of the PCG, the female ministers have the conviction that in the coming decade, the face of decision-making in the church will change where a female may attain the highest office of the church.

Dealing with masculine dominating tendencies and culture within the decision-making process of the PCG, there is the need to look at certain clauses within the PCG that disallow women to be ordained. For instance, within the PCG a spouse of any ordained minister is not allowed to go into the ministry. In this case there are more wives who are spouses of pastors than men. Women have been at all the PCG highest positions except Moderator’s and the Clerk of Assembly’s positions. During their female ministers meetings they discuss their experiences and sensitize other women about the subtle imbalances. Through sensitization and awareness creation more women will eventually understand the situation. More so majority of their male colleagues testify that the women ministers have the capability to “man(ning)” the highest positions within the PCG hierarchy though.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Introduction

The main aim of this chapter is to present a summary of the thesis and conclusions drawn from the findings of analysis of the interviews and then give some recommendations. The preceding chapters saw amongst other things the general background of the thesis in relation to the problem statement and the aims and objectives. Various related literatures were reviewed, more specifically on Connell and Messerschmidt's concept of Hegemonic masculinity, the frame work of the thesis. It formed the basis for understanding gender relations and male dominance in the global society. Other feminist theologies of Reuther and Oduyoye amongst others were similarly reviewed.

#### 5.2 Summary

Women have hardly ever been part of the decision-making hierarchies of the PCG since 1828. Since the 1970s, the church has been ordaining women, yet still, decision-making is male dominant. In the quest to understand the issues of masculine hegemony in relation to gender roles and to equally unearth some of the remnants of masculinity dominance in the church, the researcher adapted the qualitative approach methodology. Similarly the approach was adapted so as to analyse ways to minimize the masculine dominating tendencies in the church.

Fulfilling the aims and objectives of the thesis, twenty-two male and female ministers were interviewed from the Ga Presbytery, the main focus of the study. They constituted the primary data for the analysis. It was noted that the sex ratio population in the Ga Presbytery membership affirmed Hadebe's assertions that, there are more females in the church than

males.<sup>641</sup> Same confirmed his arguments that, majority of the leaders in the church are men.<sup>642</sup> It determines strong patriarchal legacies in the church. Kwakye and Miescher prove that, from the very inception of the Presbyterian Church, decision-making has been “Men’s Fellowship”

The data was collected through the face-to-face interview approach. The researcher used an interview guide to collect his data. It was interesting to note that, majority of the male respondents, specifically 82%, rejected the notion that decision-making in the church is restricted to only men. The rest of the male respondents representing 18% maintained that, male dominance in decision-making is biblical. Similarly, 90% of the female respondents indicated that, decision-making is not skewed towards men. The female ministers perceive that, women can attain the highest position of Moderator in the church. It is therefore obvious that both the male and female ministers share similar thoughts of equity. However, observations made by the researcher during the interviews indicated that, per the males, it is constitutionally possible for female ministers to be counted among the decision-making hierarchies, but may not actualize.

The researcher’s observation suggests that there is prevalence of patriarchal influences and some male persuasive norms that have characterized decision-making positions in the church. These facts may be grounded in the claims of Connell and Messerschmidt’s concept of hegemonic masculinity based on the continuous practice that permits men’s collective dominance over women.<sup>643</sup> In fact, it is for these notions that feminist theologians like Ruether think that patriarchal influences undermine the existence of women.<sup>644</sup> In this regard feminist theologies keep agitating for a change to the situation that will allow women

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<sup>641</sup>Hadebe. “Gender, Gender Equality”

<sup>642</sup>Hadebe. “Gender, Gender Equality”

<sup>643</sup>Connell and Messerschmidt, “Hegemonic Masculinity,” 840.

<sup>644</sup>Ruether, “Liberation Theologies”

education, legal autonomy and personal freedom suggesting that, the sexual morality defined by traditional patriarchal Christianity be given a second thought.<sup>645</sup>

Among other interesting responses, though all the female ministers say that they do not feel excluded, and neither do they feel invisible by the ‘male language’ used in church life and worship, the researcher indicated in the preceding chapter that, a male minister said that, “the new church liturgy has changed from ‘he’ only to ‘he/she.’<sup>646</sup> However, in the spite of the seemingly gender balance in the language use, the practice of balanced gender relations among the clergy needs much to be desired. The female respondents, specifically 80% experience some kind of abuse from their male colleagues. As King relates to the issue of abuse of women by men, such abuses, in whatever way it is perpetuated dehumanizes women for which their wholeness and health of mind, body and spirit would need to be healed.<sup>647</sup>

### 5.3 Conclusion

In the spite of the fact that the PCG has made considerable gender gains, cultural and patriarchal influences ensure the prevalence of male dominance in the church’s decision-making hierarchies. For instance, Miescher narrates; “In the Presbyterian congregations, elected Presbyters of blameless character ... married men over 30 years of age, and not new converts assisted the pastor and catechist. Together they constituted the session.”<sup>648</sup> Conclusively, the situation can be referenced to the expressions of social practice of hegemonic masculinity, a historical legacy structured by hierarchy and power by the Basel missionaries.<sup>649</sup>

There are constitutional provisions to be followed by any member of the church to be nominated and elected to decision-making positions. However, if it is for academic

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<sup>645</sup>Ruether, “Liberation Theologies”

<sup>646</sup>Rev. GapK. Interview.

<sup>647</sup>King. “Spirituality for Life.”

<sup>648</sup>Miescher, “Challenges of Presbyterian Masculinity”, 86.

<sup>649</sup>Miescher, “Challenges of Presbyterian Masculinity”, 78.

considerations that positions are attained or struggled for, then it is less likely for women to dominate in the decision-making bodies. In relation to the missionary ideological reformations of masculinity and femininity, Miescher proves that, for the “reconstruction of local ideas about masculinity and femininity; with sons, schooling was compulsory, for daughters, it was optional.”<sup>650</sup>

It is conclusive therefore that, the male ministers will have advantage over their female colleagues because there are more male ministers than female ministers. In this regard there is much evidence of remnants of patriarchal and masculine dominance in the decision-making body of the church. The issue of masculine dominance could be made to become dysfunctional when the number of women enrolled into the ministry is increased to equal their male colleagues over a period of time.

The continual dominance of men and its experiencing effects on the females have charted a path for the female ministers to giving new interpretations to the stories in the Bible. They derive fresh meanings from re-reading the Bible and articulate it to their predicaments and or the need for them to rise above issues that confront them in their daily lives as clergy women and wives. The female ministers are dedicating themselves towards the attainment of sharing equities with their male colleagues.

Except the domestic and social indigenous cultural rules and roles, gender norms have almost become non-existent; roles are played interchangeably in the church. Openings of opportunities to positions of decision-making cannot be reversed by the church as is the global situation. It therefore concludes that, women may be visible at the decision-making hierarchies of the church if it becomes possible for them to increase their enrolment for ministry as their male colleagues. This move will more likely overturn the masculine

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<sup>650</sup>Miescher, “Challenges of Presbyterian Masculinity”, 75-76.

hegemonic tendencies in the PCG leadership and decision-making in the back drop of the fact that, it belongs to history now, when boys' education was compulsory and that of girls were optional.<sup>651</sup> In modern day, there is an open opportunity everyone to acquire education.

The introduction of gender balance in the church liturgy book points to a significant fact that the church is no longer a man's church. It belongs to God's people; the family of Christians that include father, mother, children, grandfather, grandmother and grandchildren among others. In relation to the fact that female ministers disregard the idea that the use of 'male language' that makes them invisible in church life and worship, "a more just society of men and women who seek the wellbeing of the other"<sup>652</sup> is desired.

Further conclusions drawn on same, is in relation to the fact that the PCG has shifted from the hegemonic masculinity domain into the recognition and importance of the family unit that include women and children. The paradigm shift in the church has conclusively broken the foundations of patriarchal influences. It will also redefine masculine hegemony in the church.

The female ministers' profession and that of their domestic chores as wives are subject to conflicts. Female ministers who are single or not married or are independent of domestic responsibilities are likely to perform better than those who are married, notwithstanding any exceptional qualities to deliver on the job. Female ministers in such challenging situations would need the assistance of other male colleagues to deliver expectantly.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

This section suggests some recommendations for further research as well as for the considerations of the church and its approved theological training institutions.

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<sup>651</sup> Miescher, "Challenges of Presbyterian Masculinity", 75-76.

<sup>652</sup> Phiri. "African Women Theologies"

#### ***5.4.1 Recommendation for further research***

It is recommended that a further comparative research is conducted based on the impacts and effects of the gendered policies in the PCG with other religious faiths.

Additionally, research could also be conducted on new masculinity and femininity formations given the contemporary notions of gender relations in the church.

During data collection from the female respondents, the issue of the production of “Female Bible” came up. It is therefore recommended that a research is conducted to ascertain the usefulness and impact a “Female Bible” will have on the church.

#### ***5.4.2 Recommendations for the church***

It is recommended that the PCG should assess the peculiar needs of full-time female ministers who are married before considering their postings so as to avoid the likely conflicting challenges between their professions as clergies and their domestic responsibilities as wives.

Since the women are 24% more than the population of male membership in the church, it is recommended that the PCG can further improve upon the church’s gender relations by further increasing women’s participation at the local and presbytery levels proportionate to its membership. It will expectantly encourage and develop the women into higher positions in the church.

#### ***5.4.3 Recommendations for the approved Theological Institutions of the church***

As the general findings reveal concerning the encouragement and education of women and how they could rise to levels of decision-making, it is relatively suggested that the church’s approved theological institution must provide additional female hostels to existing ones so as

to accommodate more female trainees as their male counterparts. Modern-day women are equally educating themselves in all fields as men.



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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1

#### Interview Guide

##### Male Ministers

My name is Eric Nii Noi Thompson. I am a student of the Department for the Study of Religions, University of Ghana. Through an introductory correspondence from my school and the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, Head Office, The Ga Presbytery has offered a kind opportunity to me to interview you on “Masculinity, Decision-Making and Gender Roles in the Presbyterian Church of Ghana.” Thank you for agreeing to be a respondent in this regard. Your honest and valuable responses on each question will be highly beneficial to the academic essence for which the thesis is written. A strict confidentiality on sensitive issues to be discussed is therefore assured. The interview should take approximately 40 minutes to complete.

1. Has the church any policy document on who qualifies to become a Chairman, Presbytery Clerk, Director, District Minister, etc.?
2. In your view, what are the conditions under which one qualifies to become a Chairperson, Presbytery Clerk, District Minister etc., ?
  - a. Do you think the conditions are favorable to everyone in terms of gender? Yes ..... No..... (Explain)
3. What processes does the church follow in selecting its members to the high office?
  - a. What is your stake on the processes?
  - b. In your view, do you think the processes are fair?
4. To what extent would you consider it natural for only males to lead the PGC/Ga Presbytery?
5. Are there some prohibitive causes for women to be accepted into the decision making processes?
  - a. (If yes) Please explain some of these causes.
5. If No: What in your view is the reason why women are not seen amongst the top hierarchy?
6. Is there any aspect of leadership role in the church that women cannot cope with?
7. Does the church consider the ability of women to performance at home as entirely different from their capacity to lead in the church?
8. Does the church see men and women of equal capability?
9. Does the church consider men and women sharing equities in the opportunity to leadership positions and decision making?

10. Do you see any positions in the church that you can consider better occupied by men?  
Yes/No

a. What explanation can you give to your answer?

11. Does the church consider the differences in the leadership capabilities and expectations of women comparable to that of men? Yes..... No..... (Please explain)

12. In the considerations of quality differentials, what are your views on the following?

a. In terms of courage to lead, can women and men do same? Yes..... No.....

b. In terms of affirming of authority, can women and men equally compete? Yes.... No.....

c. In terms of competitiveness and the desire to succeed, can women and men do same?  
Yes.... No ...

d. For the daring and demanding nature of the job, can women and men do same? Yes....  
No.....

13. Are there any set limits for the enrolment of women in the PCG approved theological institutions?

14. In your opinion, would you suggest that the church develops any program that will encourage women to see their roles in the church as equally important other than wives in the home?

15. Has the church got any policy on affirmative action for the enrolment of women into the leadership and decision making in the church?

16. In your view, will the church accept it a contemporary norm to allow women to take up male sex roles in the church?

17. In your opinion, what would you describe as the rights of women in the church?

a. Do you see these rights as different from the rights of men in the church? Yes..... No.....

b. (If yes) what are the bases for these rights?

b. (If No) what accounts for lack of females in the senior positions?

18. What can the church do to get women to the highest official positions in the church?

19. Do you think it is possible for women to dominate the hierarchy of the church in the shortest possible time? Yes.... No..... a. (If Yes) explain.

c. (If No) Will it ever be possible?

20. Is the church a man's church?

## Appendix 2

### Interview Guide

#### FEMALE MINISTERS

My name is Eric Nii Noi Thompson. I am a student of the Department for the Study of Religions, University of Ghana. Through an introductory correspondence from my school and the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, Head Office, The Ga Presbytery has offered a kind opportunity to me to interview you on “Masculinity, Decision-Making and Gender Roles in the Presbyterian Church of Ghana.” Thank you for agreeing to be a respondent in this regard. Your honest and valuable responses on each question will be highly beneficial to the academic essence for which the thesis is written. A strict confidentiality on sensitive issues to be discussed is therefore assured. The interview should take approximately 40 minutes to complete.

1. What do you consider to be your calling/ministry? For instance, healing, youth empowerment, women empowerment, teaching and preaching, etc.
2. Does the church provide the space and encouragement to fully develop that calling or ministry? Yes ... No .... (Any reasons)
3. Does your role as a Minister conflict with your work at home? Yes ..... No ..... (Any reasons)
4. Do you consider it necessary that you will be coupled with a man (especially a male Minister) to effectively deliver as a Minister? Yes ..... No ..... (Any reasons)
5. In your own view do you think the position of Chairperson, Presbytery Clerk, Directors are skewed towards men? Yes ..... No ..... (Any reasons)
6. Do you think it natural/ normal/ordinary/divine for the men to constitute the leadership and decision making body of the church that binds everyone including women? Yes ..... No ..... (Any reason)
7. What is the men’s role in the church?
  - a) Is it any different from their roles in the home? Yes .... No .....
8. Do you agree that the church is for “male” because God is assumed to be a male? Yes .... No ....
9. What are some of the feminist images of God?
10. What is the highest level of authority you think women can attain in the PCG?
11. Do you think women feel excluded and invincible in (life and worship) by the language that is used in the church; for instance, language that reflects the assumption that the male is the norm, that man means “person “and “person “means “man”?
12. What do you consider to be violence against women in the church?
13. Which of the following do you consider to best fit the meaning of violence?

- (1) Violence is “forceful action that intends to cause unwanted injury to another” ( )
- (2) Violence is an “action which causes destruction, pain, or suffering on one’s self or another” ( )
- a) What are some of the violence that is perpetuated against women in the church?
- b) What are some of the violence that women must absorb while they see it to be normal?
- c) What are some of the violence that must be discouraged by the church?
- d) What are some of the violence that the church can permit?
- e) Must the church sometimes command violence against women in the church?
14. Have you personally suffered any form of violence in the church? Yes ..... No ..... (If yes, explain)
- a) Did/ does it break you down spiritually, physically or psychologically?
- b) As a woman Minister how do you stop it from happening to other women?
- c) Are you willing to discuss your (or another’s) experience? Yes..... No .....
15. Do such experiences empower you to speak against the perpetrators without apology?
16. How often do you discuss violence against women in the church?
17. In what ways can women speak against such unwanted experiences?
18. What do you think the woman’s role in the church should be that is not?
19. Should women be allowed to play the role of men in the church? Yes .... No .... (Any reasons)
20. What are some of the Bible stories that women relate their experiences to?
21. As a woman theologian, do you give your own interpretation to the Bible stories that relate to your experiences other than the pertaining hermeneutical interpretations?
22. Does rereading the Bible give you fresh meanings to life as a woman minister for which matter you can count equality with men?
23. When do you think a woman or women may be counted amongst the PCG hierarchy?