

CHRISTIAN SERVICE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

**EXAMINE THE RECEPTION OF FEMALE CLERGY IN
CONTEMPORARY, MAINLINE CHURCHES: A CASE STUDY OF
THE METHODIST CHURCH, GHANA GLORIOUS SOCIETY
PANKRONO-KUMASI**

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DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY

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**A LONG ESSAY SUBMITTED TO CHRISTIAN SERVICE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE, IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF ARTS IN THEOLOGY
WITH ADMINISTRATION.**

DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY

JUNE, 2023

DECLARATION

We hereby declare that this project work report is the result of our own original research except for sections of which references have been duly made and to the best of our knowledge no part of it has been presented to this University College or any other institution for the award of a degree.

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DEDICATION

Glory and thanks to God for this great work accomplished. This work is dedicated to all our family members, friends and lecturers.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are grateful to God Almighty that he has made it possible for the successful completion of this work. We also acknowledge the effort of Rev. Godfred Baffour Awuah, our supervisor for his guidance, corrections and comments. We are thankful to Dr. Samuel Aduboffour, Rev. Emmanuel Twumasi-Ankrah, Apostle Paul Diboro and Rev. Joseph Gyanvi Blay for their kindness, assistance and support that enabled us to have the necessary information needed for the completion of this work.

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CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The position of congregation with regards to the acceptance and recognition of female clergies in the Methodist Church Ghana, specifically the local society spotlight concerns on the performance these cohorts in given their best to support movement of the Church. Perception and acknowledgement of these female clergies in the local society is still a concern as congregation have some level of different ideas about worshipping and working with their ordained ministers (female clergies). This chapter involves the background to the study on history and reception of Methodist female clergies, the statement of the problem, research questions, aim and objectives of the study, research methodology, scope and focus of the study, literature review, and significance of the study, definition of key words and ends with the organization of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Since the creation of the first female till date, women have played significant roles in the building of societies and churches around the globe. One major area that needs attention is the positions they have occupied in the Christian Church especially as ordained ministers. Clearly, the feminine group has battled their way into many traditional positions of men over the centuries even in the church as clergy.¹ The first ordinations of women took place in 1853 in the Congregationalist Church, in 1863 in the Universalists denomination, in 1865 in the Salvation Army and in 1866 in the Methodist Protestant Church.²

¹ David Masci, "The divide over ordaining women," *Pew Research Center* (September 2014) accessed June 16, 2023, <http://pewrsr.ch/1AtXSQq>

² Kati Niemelä, "Female Clergy as Agents of Religious Change?" *Religions* 2, no. 3 (August 2011): 358-371, accessed June 10, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel2030358>
<https://archives.gcah.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/fa765a7c-33d6-452b-b2ba-6fe2a3594ff3/content>.

The society is the local organisation of the Methodist Church, meeting as one congregation for public worship, and organised into Classes under the supervision of the Leaders' Meeting. The founder of Methodism, John Wesley described a Methodist Society as a company of men and women "having the form, and seeking the power, of Godliness; united in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation, and to watch over one another in love, that they may help each other to work out their salvation." The highest decision-making body at the Society level is the Leaders' Meeting.

Mostly in the Methodist Church, the male clergies normally occupy high positions and they are well recognized and accepted in societies, circuit level as well as diocesan level.

Unlike the female clergy, many societies under the Methodist portray low esteemed to female clergy with minimal acceptance than the male clergy. The gap between the male and female clergy is abysmal and therefore, the idea to measure the variability on reception of Female Clergy in contemporary mainline churches in the Methodist Church is emphatic in the study. According to Solomon O. Ademiluka,³ female clergy themselves are in key position to change the Church and that their role differs a lot in different churches. Moreover, these women, especially those in elite positions, have the potential to influence social change that benefits both the women's interests and the body of Christ. Subsequently, the ordination of women has become accepted in most Protestant churches. Generally, clergywomen are becoming more accepted with presence in many churches. However, despite formal acceptance, clergy women are faced with insubordination and discrimination in many Protestant denominations.⁴

³ Solomon O. Ademiluka, "1 Corinthians 14:33b–36 in Light of Women and Church Leadership in Nigeria" *Verbum Eccles* 38 no.1 (September, 2017) <https://doi.org/10.4102/ve.v38i1.1672>.

⁴ Niemelä, "Female Clergy as Agents of Religious Change?" 358-371.

Despite the challenges, many denominations which were acting as pioneers in ordaining women into the ministry already before the 20th century included many different denominations. With a liberal orientation, women continue to express the desire to step into ministerial calling as clergy observe that women remain more likely to be in associate pastor or assistant roles than men.⁵ According to Niemelä Kati, a clergywoman is the one who is ordained and holds a license to preach or who has been ordained and holds or has held a position in a church-related job.⁶ The popularity of the glass ceiling concept may stem from the rarity of women in major leadership posts, despite the presence of equality or near equality of the sexes on many other indicators.⁷ Although women have gained increased access to supervisory and middle management positions, they remain quite rare as elite leaders and top executives while some out of discrimination and prejudice in various environments, others prefer to stay in placement roles other than solo or senior positions.⁸ Moreover, many denominations have adopted female clergy and they have been serving legitimately for years. Due to the male dominance in Methodist Societies around the world it is required that the Church takes another look of good reception of female clergy in the various congregations to balance the male gender dominance in the church.

⁵ Terence Mupangwa and Sophia Chirongoma, "The challenges of being a female pastor: A case of the Apostolic Faith Mission in Zimbabwe" *HTS Theologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 76, no. 2 (September 2020): 1-10.

⁶ Niemelä, "Female Clergy as Agents of Religious Change?" *Religions* 2, no. 3, 358-371..

⁷ Alice H. Eagly and J. Karau Role, "Congruity Theory of Prejudice toward Female." *American Psychological Association, Inc.* 109, No. 3(2002): 573–598, accessed June 11, 2023.

⁸ Rita G. Burnett, "The Evolution of Women Pastors in Mainline Protestant Denominations" (PhD diss., Western Kentucky University, 2017), 119.

1.2 Problem Statement

According to David Crary, women have been elected heads of national governments on six continents.⁹ They have flown into space, served in elite combat units and won every category of Nobel Prize. Yet in most of the world's major religions, women remain relegated to a second-tier status. Crary further asserted that women in several faiths are still barred from ordination. Some are banned from praying alongside men and forbidden from stepping foot in some houses of worship altogether. Women dress often is limited, from headwear to the length of women skirts in church. However, women all over the world have been discovering new methods to break down decades of male-dominated customs and obstacles in recent times, with many of them empowered by the worldwide wave of social media activity.

In the Methodist Society, clergywomen have been part of Methodism since John Wesley licensed Sarah Crosby to preach in 1761.¹⁰ Clergywomen were ordained in the Methodist tradition as early as the late 1800s. However, it was the May 4, 1956 General Conference vote for full clergy rights that forever changed the face of ordained clergy. The United Methodist Church continues to declare its belief in the full equality of women and the importance of women in decision-making and leadership positions at all levels of the church.¹¹

Nevertheless, not all societies in the Methodist Church Ghana have full recognition and good reception for clergywomen. Major positions are occupied by men as women plays assistant roles in the service. In the history of the Methodist Church in Africa, only one clergywoman has emerged as Bishop for the movement and this was in Nigeria but not in

⁹ Crary, "Women Strive for Larger Roles in Male-Dominated Religions" *Religion News Service*.

¹⁰ Joy J Moore, "Commentary: Women in Ministry," *The United Methodist Church*, June 16, 2014, <https://www.umc.org/en/content/commentary-women-in-ministry>.

¹¹ Moore, "Commentary: Women in Ministry."

Ghana.¹² The fact is that the Methodist ministry in Ghana mostly recognized male clergies in respect to female clergies. This has created a huge gap between the position held at various levels. Reception of female clergies in various society and circuit level is of interest in the ministry but many have become adamant of their positions because of fear of intimidation and acceptance in the Methodist ministry. Although the minimum stay of a clergy in society churches is one year subject to recognition and acceptance from the society level and the circuit bishop, most female clergy last for only a year and are being transferred. This research, is to investigate the challenges associated with reception and recognition of women clergy in the Methodist Church, Ghana Old Tafo Circuit Glorious Society Pankrono, Kumasi in the Ashanti Region of Ghana.

1.3 Research Questions

1. What are the perception of congregation in society level on female clergies in the Methodist Church, Ghana?
2. What are the socio-cultural hindrance affecting the performance of female clergies in the Methodist Church Ghana?
3. What are the major challenges faced by the female clergy in the Methodist Church of Ghana?
4. What is the opinion of the congregation about the leadership of a woman clergy in the Methodist church?

1.4 Aim and Objectives of the Study

- 5 To assess the general perception of congregation on female clergies in the society level of the Methodist Church, Ghana.

¹² BBC News Pidgin, "Nkechi Nwosu: Profile of Nigeria First Female Methodist Bishop" *BBC News Pidgin*, <https://www.bbc.com/pidgin/articles/cx83j4v43ryo>.

- 6 To assess socio-cultural hindrance affecting the performance of female clergies in the Methodist Church, Ghana.
- 7 To examine the major challenges faced by the female clergy in the Methodist Church of Ghana.
- 8 To scrutinize the congregation's opinions on acceptance and reception of leadership of female clergy in the Methodist church, Ghana.

1.5 Scope and Focus of the Study

The study is limited to Methodist Church of Ghana (MCG). Although it well appreciates the fact that many denominations are struggling with the ministry of female clergy, the research opted for the MCG. Moreover, there are many societies under MCG but the study was focused on Glorious Society at Pankrono, Kumasi.

1.6 Research Methodology

According to Susan Zhang¹³, research methods are the strategies, processes or techniques utilized in the collection of data or evidence for analysis in order to uncover new information or create better understanding of a topic. The research employed qualitative approach for the entire study, which enables the researchers to explore in details the day-to-day experience of the congregation. Interview technique was employed using structured questionnaire to syphon in-depth responses from the participant.

1.6.1 Methods of Data Collection

According to Hamed Taherdoost¹⁵, data collection is the process of gathering and measuring information on variables of interest, in an established systematic fashion that enables one to answer stated research questions, test hypotheses, and evaluate outcomes. The study uses primary data source for the analysis. Primary data was gathered from

participant who were active as full members of the church. Structure questionnaire was deployed to full members of the church as the researcher supervised with keen interest to elicit information to merit the study objectives.

1.6.2 Primary Data Collection Methods

According to Maholtra and Birks, primary data originates from the researcher for specific purposes of addressing a particular problem. There are various ways of gathering primary data. These include, and are not limited to, observation, questionnaires, and semi-structured, in-depth and group interviews. This study adopted primary data collection methods as it was deemed essential in obtaining direct responses on church members' views on the female clergy.

1.6.3 Secondary Data Collection Methods

Secondary data consists of data gathered for other purposes than the current issue at hand. It refers to data that has already been collected by someone else. It is much more inexpensive and easier to collect than primary data. This study adopted secondary data collection methods.

1.6.4 Research Design

The case study research design was used for this study. A case study research design provides a detailed story of a case/problem. To sum up the fundamental nature of the case study research approach, Yin stresses that the goal of the design is to give as accurately as possible the fullest most complete description of the case.

1.6.5 Population of the Study

According to Suanders, population refers to those who stand a chance to be selected as a

part of the sample for the research study. Again, the population includes full members of the church that constitute. The entire population of the church is 1,553 memberships to which 1,211 are full members, 249 distance members and 93 cease to meet. The selected population was congregation of the Methodist Society of the Old Tafo Circuit of the Glorious Society at Pankrono in Kumasi. The selection of congregation was based on regular church members who plays major roles in the church service.

1.6.6 Sampling Procedure

On the side of Anthony M. Wanjohi and Peter Gichini ¹⁶, sampling procedure is a method that is used to select a sub-group from a population to participate in a study. For the study, the researcher used purposive sampling as the sampling procedure. Purposive sampling (also known as judgment, selective or subjective sampling) is a sampling technique in which the researcher relies on his or her judgment when choosing members of the population to participate in the study. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method and it occurs when “elements selected for the sample are chosen by the judgment of the researcher. The study employs a purposive sampling procedure for the selection of the sampling unit for the study.

1.6.7 Sample Size

Researchers may assume that they can achieve a representative sample by using their discretion, which could lead to cost and time savings. In this study, the sample size was estimated using the Taro Yamane method for sample size calculation. Limited sample size was estimated to 301 participants that is full members of the church. The study sample consisted of both male and female congregation Methodist Society of the Old Tafo Circuit of the Glorious Society at Pankrono in Kumasi. The sample included various church congregation from 18 years and above and less than 60 years and exclude above 60 years.

1.6.8 Data Analysis

Completeness of responses were checked before collecting the questionnaire, and sorting of the data questionnaires was done before the coding procedure followed. The researcher explored data compiled and analysed with the help of Excel to fasten the process. Most of the data was coded and analysed using Excel spread sheet. The study used descriptive analysis with frequencies to determine the factual information which describes the existing case.

1.7 Literature Review

This study scrutinizes some existing literature relevant to this research. The literature throw light on four categorized namely; congregation's stance, congregation's perception and barriers of female clergy and congregation's opinions on acceptance and reception of female clergy. These areas have received wide publications from different perspectives.

1.7.1 The Overview and Concept of Female Clergy

Methodist perspectives on women's ordination in the rite of holy orders differ. Historically, as in other Christian denominations, many Methodist churches did not typically allow women to preach or exercise authority over men. However, in the 18th century, Methodist founder John Wesley did authorize a number of women to preach, including Sarah Crosby.¹³ John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist movement, was the first within his movement to authorize a woman to preach. In 1761, he granted a license to Sarah Crosby to preach. Mary Bosanquet was responsible for Wesley formally allowing all women to preach.¹⁴ In the summer of 1771, Bosanquet wrote to John Wesley to defend

¹³ John C. English, "Dear Sister:" John Wesley and the women of early Methodism," *Methodist History*, 33:1 (October 1994), 32.

¹⁴ Vicki Tolar Burton, *Spiritual Literacy in John Wesley's Methodism* (Texas: Baylor University Press, 2020), 1-388.

hers and Crosby's work preaching at her orphanage, Cross Hall Bosanquet's letter to Wesley is considered to be the first full and true defence of women's preaching in Methodism.¹⁵ Her point of view was that women should be permitted to preach if they had an "extraordinary call" or if God gave them permission. Wesley accepted this idea, and formally began to allow women to preach in Methodism. Later, Wesley also licensed other women as preachers, including Grace Murray, Sarah Taft, Hannah Ball and Elizabeth Ritchie. Wesley's appreciation for the importance of women in the church has been credited to his mother, Susanna Wesley. It has been suggested that she taught in him and his brother Charles Wesley, who was a fellow preacher in the movement, a strong regard for women's intellectual and spiritual qualities. Susanna Wesley and other women in the early Methodist movement helped to evangelize and were active members in Methodist activities ranging from band classes to raising funds for the continuation of Methodism and managing educational institutions.¹⁶ The notion of women preaching began long ago, as articulated by Methodism's founder, but congregational acceptance and favourable reception of clergy women has grown challenging in current period.

The sharpest rise in women becoming clergy occurred within that time frame when numbers soared from 7,000 to 16,000.¹⁷ Representing one of the most male-dominated occupations in the US Stump, opines that women clergy increased from 4% in 1977 to 8% in 1986. However, by 1992 that number had increased again to roughly 10%, as noted by Hunter.¹⁸ According to Albert L. Winseman¹⁹ the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, the

¹⁵ Chilcote Paul Wesley, *She Offered Them Christ: The Legacy of Women Preachers in Early Methodism* (Oregon: Wipf and Stock, 1993), 78.

¹⁶ Lloyd Jennifer, *Women and the Shaping of British Methodism: Persistent Preachers* (London: Manchester University Press, 2009), 35.

¹⁷ Rhashell Hunter, "PC(USA) Celebrates 60 Years of Women Clergy," *Presbyterian Church USA*, May 24, 2016, accessed June 19, 2023, <https://www.pcusa.org/news/2016/5/24/pcusa-celebrates-60-years-womens-ordination/>

¹⁸ Burnett, "The Evolution of Women Pastors in Mainline Protestant Denominations," 119.

¹⁹ Albert L. Winseman, "Women in the Clergy: Perception and Reality" March 30, 2004, accessed June 18, 2023 <https://news.gallup.com/poll/11146/Women-Clergy-Perception-Reality.aspx>.

number rose slightly since 1992 to 13%. A survey conducted in 1987 suggested that women entering pastoral positions brought liberal commitments in religion, theological discussions, and cultural values to 17 their congregations, compared to 24% of men entering the ministry. Furthermore, major distinctions between men and women emerged in regards to the Bible's infallibility, morality, including sexual choice such as homosexuality, the worth of human life, hardships associated with capitalism, and references to God's wrath. According to the survey, women were not only more moderate than male pastors, but seven out of ten women believed they possessed more liberal beliefs than their congregants.

1.7.2 Congregation's stance of female Clergy

Although women have been allowed to become ordained ministers in The United Methodist Church for over forty years, this is not to say that there has not been past and present resistance in their ministries by both peers and congregations which they serve.²⁰ The acceptance of these females is different than male's clergy peers and their congregations. Society as a whole has become more focused on gender equality. Acceptance of female clergy varied among the congregations in the Methodist Church that every member has its own knowledge based on the scripture. Their acceptance changed over time based on the society and congregation they served. Historically noting that there is less acceptance in the beginnings of their ministry than at the present time, evidence of acceptance by congregation's results from their being female.²¹ Literature has conveyed that women pastors face a multitude of challenges in achieving acceptance. However, in United States many appear strangely unique to women due to gender roles as

²⁰ Clark M. Jennifer, "Giving Voice to Women of God: Uniting the Methodist Church" (PhD diss., Eastern Illinois University, 1997).

²¹ Ademiluka, "1 Corinthians 14:33b-36 in Light of Women and Church Leadership in Nigeria."

defined within one's culture; that is one female Methodist minister in rural Missouri reported feelings of isolation and limited income as challenging in fulfilling her God-given calling. Yet, despite hardship, she did not feel the difficulties impacted her experience with acceptance.²² In Ghana, with the Methodist Church, less is reported as many female clergies faces difficulties in their calling. Unlike the full freedom of expression exercised in United States, less is done in the Methodist Church, Ghana. Many Methodist female clergies in Ghana talk less with fear of transfer tag as some feels intimidated of not expressing or airing their challenges to the public.

1.7.3 Congregation's Perception and Barriers of Female Clergy

Years after many denominations first ordained women, there is still meagreness of women pastors, especially those serving at senior levels of leadership in the church.²³ This is true, in fact, in churches that espouse egalitarian theology and employ female pastors. Many churches have yet to proactively identify and address the barriers that women clergy still encounter. Today, the majority of mainline denominations, as well as some evangelical churches and denominations, ordain female clergy.²⁴ However, while many achieve success, many female clergy continue to struggle and confront what has been dubbed the "stained-glass ceiling." Women clergy frequently feel unsupported in their call to ministry and in their seminary study. They struggle to locate churches ready to hire them and provide them leadership chances.²⁵ They experience other inequalities in the workplace, such as lower pay, lack of preaching opportunities, and lack of opportunities to advance to the highest levels of leadership.

²² Burnett, "The Evolution of Women Pastors in Mainline Protestant Denominations" PhD diss.

²³ Heather Matthews, "Uncovering and Dismantling Barriers for Women Pastors" *CBE International*, February 3, 2022, accessed June 19, 2023, <https://www.cbeinternational.org/resource/uncovering-and-dismantling-barriers-women/>.

²⁴ Kate Bowler, *The Preachers Wife: The Precarious Power of Evangelical* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2019), 89.

²⁵ Mathews, "Uncovering and Dismantling Barriers for Women Pastors."

Free Methodist women clergy's faces opposition from local congregations who have not resolved objections to women ministers.²⁶ Many steps have been taken to ameliorate this problem, which is, to a significant degree, one of lack of education, exposure, and experience. Some congregation in Methodist Churches believe that woman should not teach because man was created before woman.

1.7.4 Congregation's Opinions on Acceptance and Reception Female Clergy

The issue of rhetorical consideration and subordination of the female clergy is a paradox, pain, and punishment which cannot be over emphasized in terms of understanding the office of the female clergy.²⁷ Speaking up in public or out of turn has traditionally resulted in marginalization, hate, humility, and criticism for the majority of female clergy. Such perplexing behaviours foster impressionable conceptions and belief systems about femininity.²⁸ Many clergywomen in Methodist Churches experience severe turbulence in their ministerial identity. Clergywomen are expected to be compassionate and caring and act as a maternal role model to their congregation. In addition, clergywomen are expected to deal with their emotions as well as those of their congregants, a role that is termed, emotional labor.²⁹ According to Grandey et al,³⁰ emotional labor is defined as the requirement to regulate personal emotions and manage the emotions of others as part of the job role. The effects of emotional labor can drain the clergywoman of her own peace

²⁶ Karen Strand Winslow, "Wesleyan Perspectives on Women in Ministry" (PhD diss., Azuza Pacific University, 2015)

²⁷ Gaye M. Bammert, "Narrating the church: Protestant women pastors challenge nostalgic desire," *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 26 no. 2, (2010): 153-174, <https://doi.org/10.2979/fsr.2010.26.2.153>.

²⁸ Burnett, "The Evolution of Women Pastors in Mainline Protestant Denominations" PhD diss.

²⁹ Mary Kathryn Danberry, "Serving God Under the stained-glass ceiling: A Phenomenological Study of female clergy experiences in the United Methodist Church in West Virginia" (PhD diss., Liberty University, 2017), 59.

³⁰ A. A. Grandey, & G. M. Sayre, "Emotional labor: Regulating emotions for a wage" *Sage Journal*, (January 2019):131–137, accessed June 13, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0963721418812771>.

and well-being. External factors may even investigate a clergywoman's feelings. Methodist clergy women experience significant job pressure due to daily encounters with not just personal and personnel concerns, but also clashes in the church and the emotional reality of others' suffering and even death. The acceptance and bad perception of some congregation drive their emotions to go on early transfer or retirement.

1.7.5 Sociocultural Challenges of Methodist Female Clergies in Ghana

In Ghana, the church of Pentecost and Presbyterians still does not ordain women as pastors based on biblical and cultural perspectives. Although, there are deaconesses and many prophetesses in the church, there appear to be a glass ceiling, well stained, to prevent women from looking any further in their quest to serve God and humanity. The position of women in the church so far, has been a fluid one. It has changed over time; but these changes could be linked to the desires and ambitions of powerful men. Ghana is culturally a masculine society. Gender roles socially appear clearly distinct in such societies. Intimidation and bullying of males have dominated over the years in our cultural practices which has penetrated through leaderships in churches. Sociocultural factors like classes, religious norms, wealth distribution, language, business and health practices, social values and attitude towards work has much influence in our day-to-day activities. The Methodist female clergies sometimes faces challenges of gender recognition and the fact that women are not to lead but to help male clergies in the line of pastoring. Society churches find it difficult to accept the leadership role of female clergies especially in the Methodist Church, Ghana even though they are ordained ministers. This has raised the bar of impossible nature of female clergy becoming bishop in the Methodist Church, Ghana.

1.7.6 Female Ministry from Biblical Perspective

In the Gospels we see the value Jesus places upon women. He often broke cultural norms by going out of His way to interact with women. He restored their dignity even amid detractors in a society that marginalized them. Mary Magdalene was the first person to see the risen Lord. She was alone at the empty tomb when Jesus appeared to her, and she initially mistook Him for the gardener.

Jesus told her to go and tell the other disciples about His future ascension. She told them “I have seen the Lord!” and also gave them His message (John 20:10-18). A woman was the first to witness and testify of the resurrected Christ. The other disciples first found out about His resurrection through her. It was only later that evening that Jesus appeared to His disciples. The New Testament letters are built on the foundation of Jesus’ teachings. The apostle Paul echoes Jesus’ endorsement for women in ministry. In Romans 16, Paul acknowledges several women by their ministry function by giving personal greetings. Galatians 3:28, the apostle Paul states that we are all united as the Body of Christ, regardless of race, gender or social status. Paul tells us the spiritual offices of the church are appointed by God (1 Cor. 12:28). Paul also tells us that five offices are gifts from Christ which He bestowed on the Church after His ascension to Heaven (Eph. 4:8, 11). In 1 Timothy 2:12, Paul seems to discourage women from teaching: I do not permit a woman to teach or to assume authority over a man; she must be quiet. However, this verse likely refers to a specific situation involving disruptive women in the church in Ephesus. In researching this verse, I have noticed that Paul uses uncommon Greek words here that only appear once in the New Testament. Also, notice there is no mention of “God” or “Christ” here as is the case in 1 Corinthians 12:28 and Ephesians 4:8-11. Therefore, I don’t believe this verse is discussing the permanent order of the church, but rather Paul is addressing a particular case of women who were disrupting this church in Ephesus.

Perhaps the second most cited passage used to oppose women in ministry is Paul's teachings in 1 Corinthians 11. However, in all his discussion about head coverings, Paul never prevents a woman from praying or prophesying in the church. Women cannot keep silent while praying and/or prophesying. According to Petre Tepner²⁰, Anna Howard Shaw, in 1880, was the first woman to be ordained in the Methodist Protestant Church, an American church which later merged with other denominations to form the United Methodist Church. In Britain, the Wesleyan Methodist Church ordained its first deaconess in 1890. But there are many Methodist denominations, some of which, like the Primitive Methodists, have always ordained women, and others, like the Southern Methodist Church, which still do not. According to Teisha Wilson²¹, Minister Jarena Lee was the first authorized female preacher in the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church. In 1807 Lee heard the voice of God commissioning her to preach the Gospel. She was initially reluctant to pursue ministry, given the male-dominated nature of the church. However, she decided to confide in Bishop Allen and revealed to him her call to preach. Allen told Lee that he could not grant her permission to preach because he was required to uphold the A.M.E. Church's ban against female ministers. In Ghana, history of the first ordained female Methodist clergy is limited to publication as the first Synod Secretary Very Reverend Mrs Doris Abena Saah profile is shown under literature. Recognition of female clergy in the Methodist Church, Ghana opens up to high spotlight which raises an eyebrow of acceptancy and biasness to such gender.

1.8 Significance of the Study

The study would provide vital information to churches that are already accommodating female clergy and to evaluate the acceptance of these clergies and to educate members accordingly. It would also be useful to scholars and researchers pursuing studies in this field as a basis for further investigations for a conclusive study on women leadership

related issues in the Church. The study would finally contribute to the body of knowledge by adding new knowledge as it relates to research in theology within the Ghanaian context.

1.9 Definition of Key Words

Church

The Church is an ecclesiological term often used by Christians to refer to the entire gathering of members, name for the place of gathering and a tag to a particular Christian denomination Rogers, Kara.

Clergy

It is name given to the body of persons ordained for religious duties, especially in the Christian Church, in simple terms, a pastor, minister in the church Britannica.

Contemporary

It implies an existing or a happening now, and therefore seeming modern or living and occurring at the same time, a person or thing living or existing at the same time as another. Also, it shows the use of organ and keyboards and guitars are in to praise God. "Praise songs" are sung instead of hymns. Some say it means using modern technology such as PowerPoint presentations and videos Merriam Webster.

Mainline Protestant

Mainline Protestant refers to a group of Protestant denominations that historically have been considered part of the mainstream or established Protestant churches in the United States.

²⁵ Rogers, Kara. "Church | Definition, History, & Types." Encyclopaedia Britannica, (November 2023). <https://www.britannica.com/topic/church-Christianity>.

²⁶ Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia. "Clergy." *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, December 19, 2023. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/clergy-Christianity>.

²⁷ Webster Merriam. "Definition of contemporary." Merriam-webster.com, 2019. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/contemporary>.

The term "mainline" was coined in the early 20th century to distinguish these denominations from more conservative or evangelical Protestant groups. Some of the mainline Protestant Churches are The Episcopal Church, The Presbyterian Church USA, The United Methodist Church, and The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America William McKinney.

1.10 Organization of the Study

The work was organized sequentially into five chapters. Chapter one deals with the introduction, the background to the study, problem statement, research questions, aims and objectives of the study, scope and focus of the study, research methodology, literature review, sociocultural believes of female clergy position, significance of the study, definition of key words limitation as well as the organization of the study. The chapter two deals with historical background related to the concepts of the research. The third chapter described the presentation of findings or data collected. The chapter four focused on the interpretation and analysis of data collected. Finally, chapter five concludes the case-study by providing the summary, conclusions and recommendations.

²⁸ McKinney William. "Mainline Protestantism | Encyclopedia.com." www.encyclopedia.com, December 2023. <https://www.encyclopedia.com/religion/legal-and-political-magazines/mainline-protestantism>.

CHAPTER TWO

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

This second chapter examines a historical background on the topic of this research along the following thematic areas: a) Historical Background of the Kumasi Diocese of the Methodist Ghana and b) Historical Background of the Glorious Methodist Society Pankrono, Kumasi.

2.2 Brief History of the Methodist Church of Ghana

The Methodist Church of Ghana was established through the collaboration of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society and a band of local Christians dedicated to the study of the Bible Joseph M. Y. Edusa-Eyison.³¹ At their request the first missionary arrived in 1835. He and many others died of malaria. All these pioneer missionaries are buried under the pulpit of Wesley Chapel at Cape Coast. The Methodist Church of Ghana, which used to be under the British Conference, became autonomous in 1961. Methodism has since spread throughout the country and beyond. The Methodist approach to evangelization in Ghana has always included formal education and other social services including medical care. The church has several hospitals and health care facilities in the country. It also has a school for the visually impaired, and two of the best secondary schools in the whole of West Africa. In addition, the foremost teacher training college in Ghana, Wesley College, is also a Methodist institution with more than 80 years of history behind it.

³¹ Edusa-Eyison, Joseph. "The history of the Methodist church Ghana historical development and legal status of the church," (June 2011). <https://archives.gcch.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/fa765a7c-33d6-452b-b2ba-6fe2a3594ff3/content>.

In 2000, the church established the Methodist University College Ghana that is accredited by the government to offer courses in business administration, economics and information technology.

In 1942 the church together with the Presbyterian and Evangelical Presbyterian churches of Ghana co-founded the Trinity Theological Seminary for the training of ministers Sarbah, Cosmas.³²³ Over the years it has expanded its team of sponsoring churches to include the Anglican Church and the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. It also accepts self-supporting candidates from other ecclesial communions like the Pentecostal/Charismatic churches into its programs. Methodist Church Ghana maintains fraternal links with the British Conference and United Methodist churches worldwide. Within the last decade Ghanaian Methodists in several cities in Western Europe and the USA have established "Ghanaian Methodist Churches" in order to provide a more relevant worship context for themselves in the diaspora. The church remains one of the strongest Christian communions in Ghana and indications are that it will continue to grow both in numbers and influence mediating God's kingdom among his people.

In 1999, the church adopted a "Biblical Pattern of Episcopacy" Siehe Mehr.³³ The head of the church was re-designated "presiding bishop" instead of "president" and the "district chairman" is now "diocesan bishop". The presiding bishop is assisted directly by a lay president and each diocesan bishop also has a lay chairperson as assistant. Through this system of church government, the Methodist Church Ghana has maintained its belief in

³² Cosmas E. Sarbah, "Contextualization of Christian Theological Formation in Ghana: Nature, Challenges, and Prospects." *Journal for the Study of Religion* 35, no. 1 (August 15, 2022): 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.17159/2413-3027/2022/v35n1a7>.

³³ Mehr Siehe, "Methodistische Kirche, Ghana | World Council of Churches." www.oikoumene.org, January 1, 1960. <https://www.oikoumene.org/de/member-churches/methodist-church-ghana?keywords=author&op=Suche>.

the teaching of John Wesley that sees the ministry as belonging to both the clergy and the laity. The expression "superintendent minister" has been maintained for ministers in charge of circuits, that is, groups of congregations around a specific geographical area constituting an administrative unit. The highest decision-making body of the church is the Conference, made up of equal numbers of lay and clergy representatives from the 17 dioceses in the country. The work of the church is facilitated through boards including the board of ministries, board of social responsibility and development, board of education and youth, and the board of administration.

2.3 Historical Background of the Kumasi Diocese and the Circuit

The Kumasi Diocese as it is now known was born out of the missionary activities by the Wesleyan Methodists in Ashanti, spearheaded by the Rev. Thomas Birch Freeman, in 1839 Sarah Nkansah.³⁴ Prior to this, Mr. James Hayford, a representative of the British Merchant Company Administration in Kumasi, had started a Methodist Fellowship of a sort in Kumasi. Due to his good relations; he on one occasion had the opportunity to conduct a divine service in the King's palace. Reports of these developments to the church in Cape Coast partly precipitated Rev. Freeman's missionary enterprise to Kumasi. The church mobilized an amount of sixty pounds to fund this mission project. Coupled with this was the interest in converting the then 'dark Ashanti' to the saving knowledge of Christ.

Rev. Thomas Birch Freeman encountered several obstacles on his first missionary trip to Kumasi. Notable among these was the long delay he faced in Kusa (his first stop in

³⁴ Sarah Nkansah, "History of Kumasi Diocese." www.methodistkumasidiocese.org. Accessed (December 25, 2023). <https://www.methodistkumasidiocese.org/history-of-kumasi-diocese>.

Ashanti) and Fomena due to the confused notions held concerning the nature of his mission enterprise Sarah Nkansah.³⁵

Rev. T. B. Freeman was eventually admitted by the King, Nana Kwaku Duah, into Kumasi on 1st April, 1839; after he had waited patiently in Kusa and Fomena for a total of 48 days. In Kumasi, as Rev. Freeman recounted in his journal, he and his entourage were warmly received by the Asantehene and his Court. The King allowed him to preach in the streets and he was again given the opportunity to conduct two divine services during his stay. At this stage the seed of Methodism in Ashanti and what was to become the Kumasi Diocese had just been sown. On April 15th 1839 Rev. T. B. Freeman returned to the Coast. He came back to Kumasi in December, 1841 bearing gifts for the Asantehene. These gifts comprised a carriage, a table, twelve chairs, a table linen, dinner, breakfast and tea set and a portrait of the Queen. He also returned with the two Asante Princes, John Owusu Ansah and William Owusu Kwantabisa, who had been sent to England to signify Asante's commitment to the 1831 Treaty.

By 1842 the Asantehene had permitted, on Rev. Freeman's request, the establishment of the first mission post in Kumasi Sarah Nkansah.³⁶ The King further provided the mission with land at Krobo Odumase (K.O.) with which they were to establish this post. Interestingly this land houses a number of properties of the Methodist Church Ghana. Significantly this includes the Nana Kwaku Duah I Methodist House which serves as the Diocesan Headquarters.

The historic attainment of Autonomy by the Methodist Church Ghana in July, 1961 saw the birth of five new Districts, with the Kumasi District inclusive.

³⁵ Thomas Birch Freeman, "Thomas Birch Freeman." Wikipedia, July 20, 2022.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Birch_Freeman.

³⁶ Nkansah, "History of Kumasi Diocese." www.methodistkumasidiocese.org, 2024.
<https://www.methodistkumasidiocese.org/history-of-kumasi-diocese>.

The Subsequent adoption of the biblical pattern of Episcopacy by the Methodist Church Ghana in 1999, transformed the Kumasi District into the Kumasi diocese as it is now known. With Rev. Brooking being the first Resident Minister to be stationed in Kumasi, many other missionaries and ministers have served in what has developed into the present-day Kumasi Diocese. The Kumasi Diocese currently holds ministerial staff strength of about 160 active ministers. In addition, a lay staff of 23 is to aid in the day-to-day administration of the Diocesan Head Office.

2.3.1 Brief Background of the Glorious Society

The genesis of the establishment of Glorious Methodist Church started in 1990. The idea to establish a Church was mooted by the Late Kwaku Owusu Achiaw-a Methodist resident at Atimatim but fellowshipping at Wesley Society-Old Tafo, together with others residing at Pankrono Estate Samuel E. Nketsia.³⁷ The group teamed up with the prayer tower at Wesley Society towards the realization of this vision. The vision was shared with the then Superintendent Minister at Old Tafo Very Rev. Emmanuel Akuamoah Boateng. He welcomed the idea and encouraged the members to work hard to bring the idea into reality- Prayer meetings and morning devotions were then started at the then Evangelist Isaac Kwadwo Yeboah (now Very Rev. Isaac Kwadwo Yeboah) house at Pankrono Estate 'A' line. In mid-1992 a crusade was organized at Estate 'A' Line, followed by house-to house evangelism by members Samuel E. Nketsia.

After the crusade, the members had to move from Evangelist Isaac Kwadwo Yeboah's house to Famous Tapass B double screen classroom with 17 (Seventeen) members. The morning devotions had to be held in two places-A line members met at Famous Tapass

³⁷ Benjamin Owusu Adjei, "New Tafo Circuit." [www.methodistkumasidiocese.org](http://www.methodistkumasidiocese.org/circuits/115-new-tafo-circuit). Accessed March 27, 2024. <http://www.methodistkumasidiocese.org/circuits/115-new-tafo-circuit>.

school and B' line members met at very Rev. Samuel Adjei Crowther's house. A grand crusade which became the turning point in the life of the church was started from Monday 24 February - Wednesday, 26 February, 1997. This was championed by the then Superintendent Minister, Very Rev. Benjamin Osae Addo at Pankronoo Estate 'B Line and led by Cecil Williamson Evangelism Team.³⁸

Our brother Frank Adjei was the interpreter at the crusade-several souls were won at the crusade. On the 1st Sunday of March 1997, members together with the new converts met at the double screen classroom of the then Boanwin School, now Faith international school to worship as a church. The guest preacher was Evangelist Michael Adu Poku of Ebenezer Methodist Church, Bantama. Members had to move to our Brother Samuel Adjei Crowther's house following eviction by a group calling themselves land Owners. The group resold the land which members bought and the then Rev. Minister now Rt. Rev. Bosomtwi Ayensu caused their arrest when they were released on bail, they evicted members from the school premises where we were worshipping. Rt Rev. Bosomtwi Ayensu provided wood for a temporary structure to be erected at our brother Very Rev. Adjei Crowther's house.³⁹

Members worshiped there for six (6) years before moving to this permanent building 19 years ago. Our brothers Nana Adu Poku and Daniel Ayittah together with Madam Comfort Boakye (Maame Broni) offered their houses for Choir practice, Sunday school meetings and Singing Band practice.

³⁸ E. Samuel Nketsia, "New Tafo Circuit." www.methodistkumasidiocese.org. Accessed (December, 2023). <https://www.methodistkumasidiocese.org/circuits/115-new-tafo-circuit>.

³⁹ Yaw Asamoah Akowuah, "Faith and culture: the Pentecost international worship Centre and the growth patterns of the church of Pentecost. by yaw Asamoah Akowuah bachelor of arts in religious studies department of religious studies in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of master of philosophy (religious studies)," 2013. <https://ir.knust.edu.gh/server/api/core/bitstreams/1fa928fd-aad4-4c0d-9629-8c37976b3ad2/content>.

2.3.2 History of the Female Clergy in the Methodist Church

On May 4, 1956, in Minneapolis, Minnesota, the Methodist Church's General Conference voted to grant women full clergy rights Gonlag, Mari.⁴⁰ Though Methodist women were already serving as local pastors and assigned supply, this legislation granted women the rite of ordination, a guaranteed appointment, and a pension plan. To many it seemed a radical move and the Methodist Church, the predecessor to The United Methodist Church, seemed to be putting itself at the forefront of promoting ecclesiastical gender equality. The day after the decisive vote, New York Times correspondent George Dugan wrote that during the debates, "several made it crystal clear that practical or not, women's rights were at stake." Women's rights were at stake, and while it initially appeared that the 1956 delegates to the Methodist Church's General Conference had taken a progressive and enlightened step toward equality, a nuanced examination of past and current conditions reveals a denomination still struggling with various aspects of the role of women as ordained clergy.

Mary Bosanquet Fletcher (1739-1815) was an early lay preacher credited with convincing John Wesley that some women should be allowed to preach. Women were ordained as ministers as early as the late 19th century Kenny Jahng.⁴¹

In 1866, Helenor M. Davisson was ordained a deacon in the Methodist Protestant Church. Anna Howard Shaw, after being refused ordination by the General Conference of the Methodist-Episcopal Church in 1880, that same year joined the Methodist Protestant Church and was ordained by its New York Annual Conference. Ella Niswonger was the first woman granted full clergy rights by the United Brethren Church in 1889. In 1956,

⁴⁰ Mari Gonlag, "Ordination of Women in Methodism." Wikipedia, (July, 2023).
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ordination_of_women_in_Methodism.

⁴¹ Mary Bosanquet Fletcher, "Mary Bosanquet Fletcher." ResourceUMC, 2024.
<https://www.resourceumc.org/en/partners/gcsw/home/content/mary-bosanquet-fletcher>.

The Methodist Church granted women full clergy rights. Maude Jensen became the first female full clergy member of the Central Pennsylvania Conference shortly after the 1956 General Conference met. Twenty-six additional women were received as full clergy members that year. Because of the centuries of tradition that it overturned, the strong opposition it faced, and the increasing numbers of female pastors and bishops, the Methodist Church's 1956 decision to grant women the rite of ordination may appear radical, but, in truth, it did not radically transform the church's understanding of gender or gender roles.

2.3.3 The History of Clergy Women in Glorious Society Pankrono

The society was officially inaugurated on 25th March, 2001 Stephen Kwaku Owusu.⁴² The officiating ministers for the grand occasion were the then Bishop of Kumasi Diocese of the Methodist Church Ghana, Rt. Rev. Kwaku Asamoah-Okyere assisted by Very Rev. Kofi Amponsah, the Synod Secretary Very Rev. J. M. Donkor, the then Superintendent Minister of Old Tafo Circuit, Rt. Rev. S. R. Bosomtwi-Ayensu, Very Rev. T.K. Anderson and Rev. S.A.S Boateng.

The circuit have engaged women clergy like Very Rev. (Mrs) Mary Hagan-2003-2004, Very Rev. Emma Sally Asmah-2004-2006, Very Rev. Helena Koduah-2009, Very Rev. Mrs. Esi Oduro-Asante-2018-202 and Rev. Mrs. Vera Simpson - 2022 – date. The circuit have received more clergy men than women since the in inauguration of the circuit. Match is not established under the literature of women clergy in the Pankrono circuit. The infant church attracted a number of children including Akwasi Agyekum, Sarah Nsiah, Fred Kyeremanteng, Kwabena Dwumfour who have all passed way. Others are Mary berkoh

⁴² Kenny Jahng, "Mary Bosanquet Fletcher." Resource UMC. Accessed (December 25, 2023). <https://www.resourceumc.org/en/partners/gcsr/home/content/mary-bosanquet-fletcher>.

and Opanin Osei Tutu who are still alive but bedridden.

In 1933, the church had a recession (thus many members left) mainly because there was no active leadership in place but visitations by students from Wesley College revitalized the Church back to life the following year Stephen Kwaku Owusu.⁴³ It was around this same time that members contributed money and other materials to commence with the building of the first chapel. It is worth mentioning that the plot of land was given by Opanin Yaw Opoku (of Dome) and the late Jacob Apraku appointed as the first caretaker. In the process of building the chapel, Opanin Yaw Opoku and Yaw Baafi were arrested and detained at the Kings Palace Court for destroying someone's orange farm but the two were later released after investigations were conducted by Nana Prempeh II officials and found out that the trees were felled to enable them put up a chapel. Unfortunately, Opanin Apraku, the first Caretaker left Pankrono for his hometown for good rendering the Church leaderless thereby affecting the membership. In 1948, a Catechist, who later became a Minister of the gospel by name Rev. Abraham Osei Asibey came to revive the Church and won back many members who had stopped coming due to the unstable leadership faced by the Church. Several new converts were also converted. One of the new converts, an Ex-police man by name Mr. John Kwasi Adu (of blessed memory) was also trained and appointed the Second Caretaker.

In 1955, a new chapel was built under the leadership of the late J.K. Adu. In fact, he purchased a van known in the local dialect as "Anwoana Patuo" which was used to convey building materials from Adwumakase kesse and its environs for the building project.⁴⁴ Once again members contributed freely in cash and kind and notable among them is

⁴³ Kwaku Stephen Owusu, "Pankrono Circuit." www.methodistkumasidiocese.org. Accessed December 25, 2023.

⁴⁴ Priscilla Wiredu, "The Story of Atwea Mountain: An Interview – Black Voice," 2024. <https://www.blackvoice.ca/2022/12/23/news/the-story-of-atwea-mountain-an-interview/>.

Captain Moses Kyeremanteng who donated pews Stephen Kwaku Owusu.⁴⁵ In June 1980, one Mr. Samuel Owusu (now evangelist) who had served as steward since 1970 became the caretaker with Mr. J.R. Akuoko serving as the society steward. It was in 1982 that the Pankrono Methodist Church was named Ebenezer Society with approval from Conference which was presided over by Most Rev. Samuel B. Essiamah. As at that time, Organisations in the Church included the Choir (led by Emmanuel Oware Boakye, Singing Band (led by Kwabena Wuo), Womens Fellowship (led by Sarah Nsiah), Men's Fellowship, Sunday school and the Evangelism Committee.

2.4 Conclusion

In all, Rev. James Osei took over from Rev. Peter Bakpanla and continued the god work commenced by his predecessor Stephen Kwaku Owusu.⁴⁶

He sought to the purchase of the Church's Bus and again thought it wise to honour those who have in many ways contributed immensely to the life of the Church. Among these include Opanin J.K. Adu, Opanin Kwadwo Achaempong, Agya Nimoh, Obaapanyin Agnes Serwaah all of blessed memory. The rest were Mr. Philip Osei Tutu, Mr. Obiri and Mad. Mary Berko. These were the ministers who contributed towards the building of the church; Rev. Kwaku Asare (2000-2003), he made plans for the building of the new chapel, Rev. Simon Adjei (2003-2005), he laid the foundation for the new chapel and completed the basement. Rev. Ofori Sampong (2005-2006), he managed to pay all debts owed by the Church, Rev. Owusu Agyemnag Prempeh (2006-2008), he moved the Church from the Old Chapel to the new one and Rev. Quophie Anochie-Ababio (2008- 2009), he helped

⁴⁵ J.R. Akuoko, "Pankrono Circuit." www.methodistkumasidiocese.org, 2024.
<https://www.methodistkumasidiocese.org/circuits/120-pankrono-circuit>.

⁴⁶ Akuoko, "Pankrono Circuit." www.methodistkumasidiocese.org, 2024.
<https://www.methodistkumasidiocese.org/circuits/120-pankrono-circuit>.

Pankrono Society to attain Circuit Status. These are all male clergies without any female clergies and this leads to the gap of population proportion of male clergies to female clergies in the ministry.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ Akuoko, "Pankrono Circuit." www.methodistkumasidiocese.org, 2024.
<https://www.methodistkumasidiocese.org/circuits/120-pankrono-circuit>.

CHAPTER THREE

THE ATTITUDE AND PERCEPTION TOWARDS THE FEMALE CLERGY IN THE METHODIST CHURCH, GHANA PANKRONO SOCIETY

3.1 Introduction

This study was concerned with the reception of Female Clergy in contemporary, mainline churches: A case Study of the Methodist Society, Old Tafo Circuit Glorious Society Pankrono Kumasi. The chapter elaborated on the collected response in relation to the research questions. Therefore, the views from respondents were gathered on the general perception of the Ghana Methodist church; The Church affirmation and commitment to the female clergy; The Challenges faced by the Female Clergy in the Methodist church.

3.2 General Perception of the Ghana Methodist Church on Female Clergy

The African culture and set up does not encourage female participation in leadership roles especially those ordinarily considered to be masculine. Ghana is not an exception to these stereotyping views and issues. Moreover, there is the vast opinion that a woman's prime role is to bring forth children, take care of the household and submit to the man. Conversely, in the community women are often not allowed to join the council of elders.⁴⁸ Even in some of the contemporary mainline churches, the representative of women on the church board for women are males. However, in the Methodist church full recognition has been given to the female in all positions including being part of the clergy. Due to the gender bias attitude, and the cultural practices of the African society sometimes the opinions of woman are not taken seriously by men, unless backed up by witnesses.

⁴⁸ C. Lyons, "Breaking through the extra-thick stained -glass ceiling: African American Baptist women in Ministry." *Review & Expositor* 110(1), (2013): 77-91.

However, the missionaries objected to most of these African cultural practices. Initially the church although other struggling minister were raised to believe that God does not call women to serve in the pulpit.⁴⁹ Therefore, the Methodist church with its formation, initially did not ordain women to be leaders in the church. Again, while speaking out on the realities in which women live in the community and in church claimed that in a male dominated society a woman is faced with countless structures of injustice, oppression and discrimination that causes suffering and that women's position in relation to men continues to be questionable in the society. A scholar observes that in all situations, women's submission and subordinate behaviour is demanded by the social norms⁴⁶. He argues that the elevation of men caused by the socio-cultural efforts to socialize men as superior as and more powerful in position than women. Hence, the male dominance is one of the main issues for women's low representation among the clergy and other leadership position in the church. Also, according to the findings of the study, the Methodist Church Ghana acknowledges and fully accept female clergy in the church.

3.3 The Church Affirmation and Commitment to the Female Clergy

The Ghana Methodist has developed a church policy that affirms and commits to support the female clergy and women in leadership. That the church shall develop a committed and devoted women fellowship membership in our churches through trainings laced with the gospel.⁵⁰ Also, to give women opportunities to engage in activities that are geared towards filling up the gaps. In the constitution with Synod leaders, women are encouraged to elect women leaders in the open church forums and in the community.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Charlotte B. Chinn, "CORE Scholar CORE Scholar.": <https://Corescholar.libraries.wright.edu/Humanities>, 2014. <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/36756346.pdf>.

⁵⁰ Garcia, Manon. *We Are Not Born Submissive: How Patriarchy Shapes Women's Lives*. JSTOR. Princeton University Press, 2021. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv16rdchd>.

⁵¹ Madeline Arthington, "The Role of Women in Healthy Church Formation." 9Marks, n.d. <https://www.9marks.org/article/the-role-of-women-in-healthy-church-formation/>.

Leaders of parish will be required to create and provide opportunities where women sense of church ownership is developed. The church strives to create conducive environment that allows women to contribute ideas and suggestions on various issues that affects them either directly or indirectly.⁵²

3.4 The Challenges Faced by the Female Clergy in the Methodist Church

In an interview with a female clergy on the challenges currently experienced as a female clergy they stated that the continuous transfer and relocation, as well as family responsibilities, career opportunities for advancement, declining congregations, and the bearing of multiple time-consuming activities posed as major challenges.

3.4.1 *Transfer and Relocation*

According to the findings many clergies suffer transfers at various station which makes them very uncomfortable in the ministry. Majority, lamented that they barely spend two years in every station and they are being transferred to another society. Some clergies raised concerns of finding new schools for their wards every two or less years which is affecting the academics of their wards. Majority were uncomfortable with the situations but could not speak more because of the stands. In view of this, some have accepted it in good faith as their profession demands in the circuit level.

3.4.2 *Sociocultural Factor as Barrier*

In terms of answers to views on age and gender it came out from the answer that some of the congregant felt strongly that a woman should not pastor or preach: “I don’t believe a woman should be a pastor, even though I love you, and I love your teachings, but cannot

⁵² Megan Rawlings, “Women’s Roles in the Church.” Christian Standard, July 1, 2021. <https://christianstandard.com/2021/07/womens-roles-in-the-church/>.

receive it from the pulpit.” Another mentioned struggle with perceptions over youthful female clergy. On the view concerning older female clergy seeking pastoral roles others are not fit for the job.

Hence, the present struggles remain real for female clergy regardless of age, gender, familial responsibilities and marital status. Gender bias was a challenge as majority of the selected congregation do not support their ministry. Furthermore, peer comparisons interview question five asked, how their experiences related to those of their peers and this showed that female clergies in the circuit and society level feels intimidated in leaders meeting as quarrels, misunderstanding and tensions are high at meetings.

The last of the questions relating to challenges, the particular objective was to gather perceptions of the church on the female clergy and the researcher discovered that there are bad perceptions to the acceptance of female clergies but majority were of respondents amidst all the challenges were willing to work with the female clergy.

3.4.3 Declining Congregations

According to the findings, majority indicated that attendance goes up whenever there are male clergies taken over the service and unlike female clergies. Some respondents made it clear that they actually do not appreciate teaching or preaching of female clergies and would rather stay at home rather attending church services. Others also said that female clergies delay church services especially in their preaching or teachings which makes the service boring and unappreciable.

CHAPTER FOUR

INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.1 Introduction

Chapter four presents the data analyzed from the field in connection to the subject of reception of clergy women. Various knowledge on the subject were gathered concerning the acceptance, perception and reception of women clergy at Pankrono Society. It combines both primary and secondary sources in an attempt to pursue an in-depth interpretation and analysis of the field report. Primary sources were gathered through well administered questionnaires and interview guides respectively.

4.2 Demographic Data of Respondents

After the 60 respondents (church leaders) purposively selected out of the total 96 leaders from the Glorious Methodist Church Pankrono Society, Kumasi in the distribution of paper questionnaires were return with a rate of one hundred percent which is normal for the research. Out of the sixty respondents selected, males were dominant group occupying certain positions like stewardship, organizational leadership and advisers of the clergy. There were forty-three males representing seventy-two percent out of sixty respondents. Findings indicated that age group between thirty-one and forty-one was more dominant followed by age group forty-two to fifty-two years and age group forty-three and sixty-three years. About fifty-five percent respondents were between thirty-one and forty-one while age group twenty to 30 years was twelve percent being the lowest among the age category. The highest educational qualification was Tertiary (Degree) representing sixty percent followed by Senior High school qualification representing twenty-eight percent. Majority, are married representing sixty-eight percent while thirty-two percent are unmarried. About seventy percent respondents are organizational leaders with two

stewards representing three-point-three percent while thirteen-point-three percent were church advisors and administrative staff. Findings indicated that sixty-eight percent respondents have served the church for more than ten years while thirty-two percent respondents have also served the church between seven to ten years.

Table 4.2 Demographic data of respondents

Variable in question	Variable	Frequency	Percent
What is your sex?	Male	43	71.7
	Female	17	28.3
Age group?	20 - 30 years	7	11.7
	31 - 41 years	33	55.0
	42 - 52 years	12	20.0
	53 - 63 years	8	13.3
	No education	3	5.0
What is your educational background?	JHS/Middle school	4	6.7
	SHS/Secondary	17	28.3
	Tertiary	36	60.0
Marital status?	Married	41	68.3
	Unmarried	19	31.7
What is your positions heled in church?	Organizational leaders	42	70.0
	Stewards	2	3.3
	Administrative staff	8	13.3
	Church advisory leaders	8	13.3
	7 – 10 years	41	68.3
What is your years of stay?	10 years and above	19	31.7

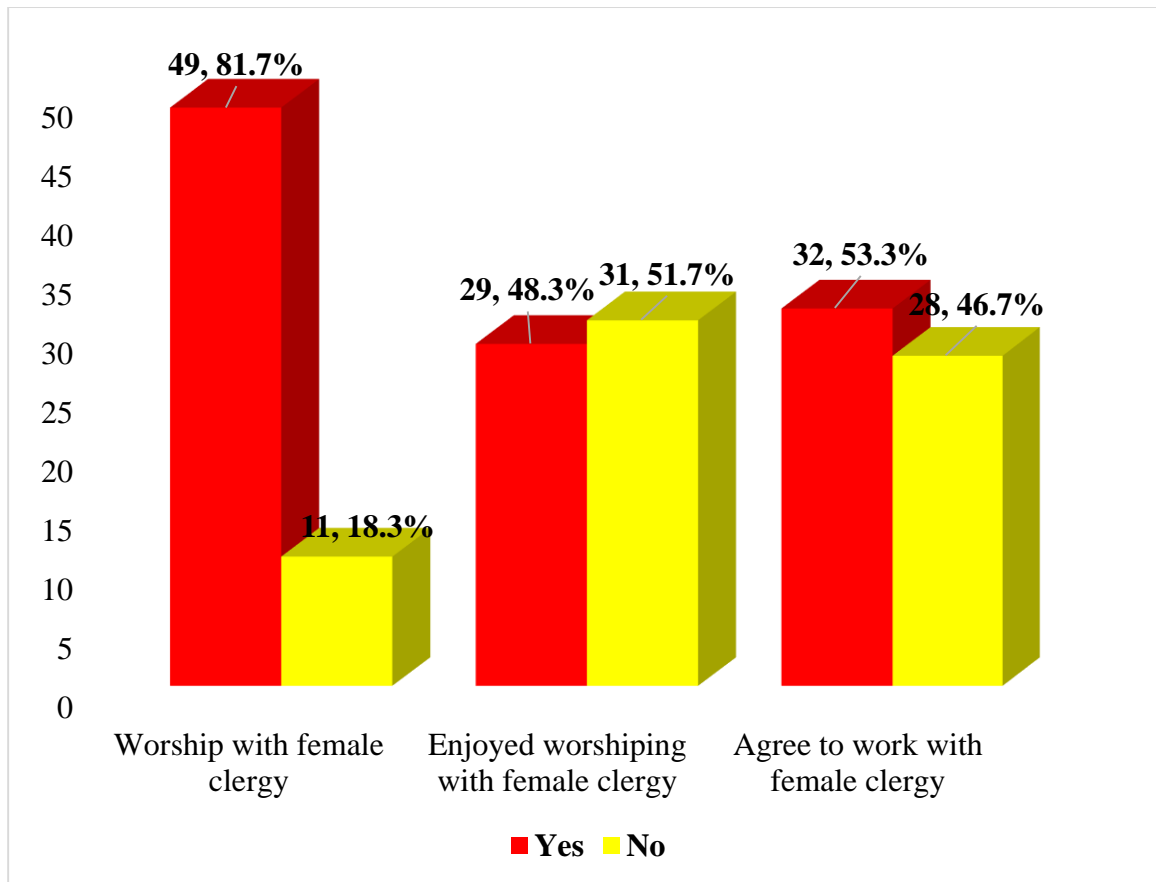
Source: Survey data, 2023

4.3 The Stance of Congregation on Female Clergy

On the stance of congregation on the reception of female clergy, forty-nine respondents have worshiped with female clergy before while eleven respondents have not. About twenty-nine respondents indicated that they enjoyed worshipping with female clergy while thirty-one respondents had not. Currently, thirty-two respondents would agree to work with full time female clergy ministers while twenty-eight respondents would not like to work with full time clergy woman or minister. In all, the stance of congregation on full time female clergy minister is somehow not encouraging as almost two-thirds of the congregation would not like to work with full time clergy female. On a qualitative study of Seventh-day Adventist Women Pastors according to Leslie indicated that the Adventist Church does not ordain women to pastoral ministry.⁵³ However, women clergy are not eligible to organize a church, unite churches, and ordain local elders and deacons (North American Division of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2003- 2004). And women pastors are denied ordination. Alternatively, they can be commissioned after demonstrating a call to ministry and having served at least 5 years as a licensed commissioned minister. This indicates the stance of some Protestants ministry on how far women clergy are considered in the service.

⁵³ Leslie Bumgardner, "Adventist Women Clergy: Their Call and Experience," *Journal of Applied Christian Leadership* 9, no. 2(2015): 45, accessed June 19, 2023, <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/jacl/vol9/iss2/4>

Congregation stance on female clergy



Source: Survey data, 2023

Figure 4.3: The stance of congregation on female clergy

4.4 Perception of the Congregation on the Performance of Female Clergy

Furthermore, twenty-two respondents agree that clergy women are supportive in ministry while twenty-six respondents disagree that clergy women are supportive in ministry but twelve respondents responded to 'I don't know'. Moreover, twenty-eight respondents agree that female clergy are difficult to work with while twenty-three respondents disagree. On the other hand, thirty-three respondents indicated that clergy women are competitive with another while forty-three respondents strongly agree that female clergy are boring with sermons. About forty-five respondents strongly disagree that female clergy have low prestige. There were twenty-eight respondents who strongly agree that female clergy should not be allowed to take top positions in the ministry. Others also agree

that female clergy are full with emotions in service and Methodist Church should not engaged more female clergy in the ministry as thirty-three respondents agree. On the account of perception on female clergy, Stewart-Thomas suggests that women are more likely to be accepted in the pastoral role if they perform this role in a stereotypically “female” way.⁵⁴ Even in congregations where women take the lead, they cannot help but run up against more conservative expectations: “...congregations are gendered organizations and as such they are gendered in their expectations of clergywomen to carry out their ministries differently from men, with women’s ministries often expected to be more service- and other-oriented.

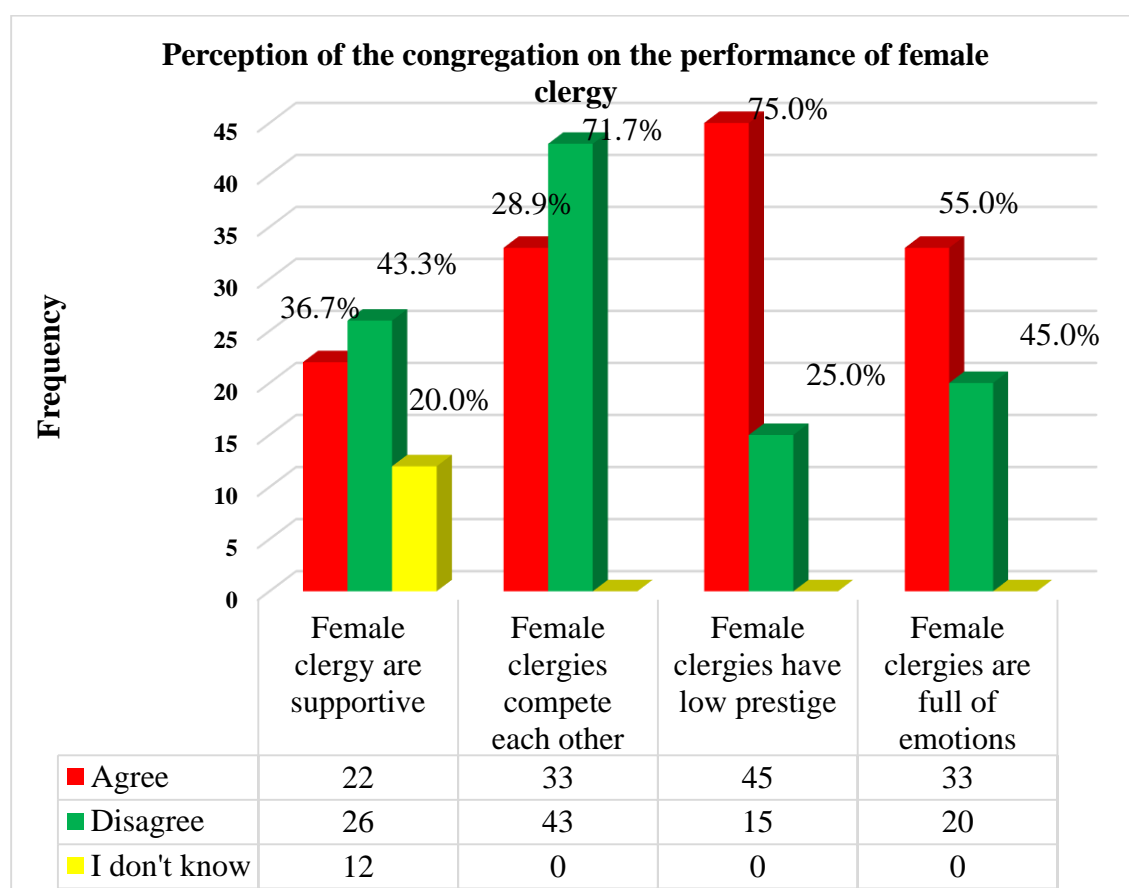
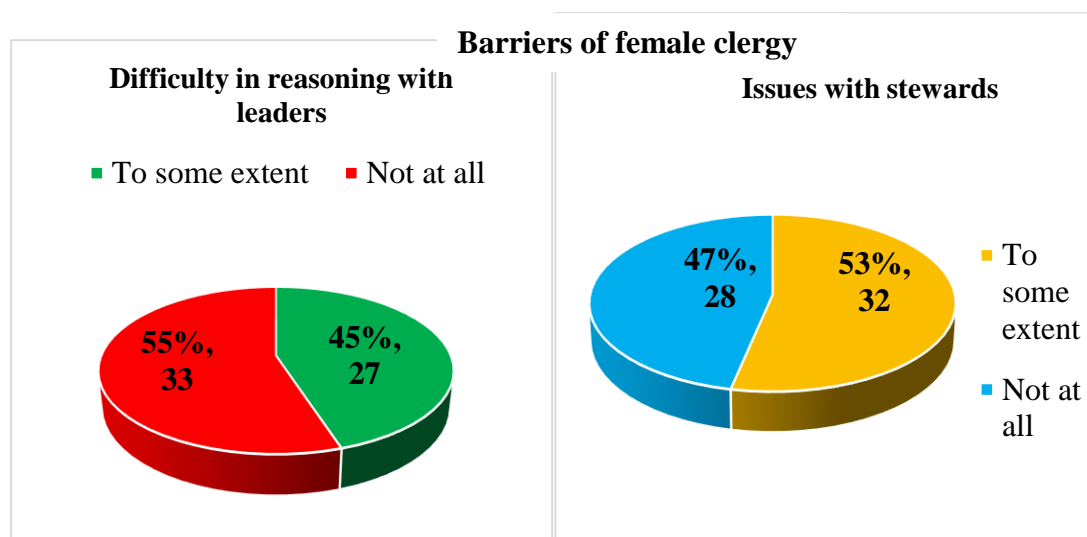


Figure 4.4: Perception of the congregation on the performance of female clergy

⁵⁴ Bumgardner, "Adventist Women Clergy: Their Call and Experience".

4.5 Barriers of Female Clergy

Some twenty-seven respondents with top leadership role indicated that to some extent female clergy are difficult in reasoning with male church leaders, while administratively some clergies faced challenges with male stewards. About thirty-two respondents agree to some extent that some female clergies have issues with male stewards. On the account of preconception about attributes or characteristics, or the roles that are or ought to be possessed by, or performed by, female clergy, to a larger extent forty-six respondents indicated that as a challenge as in some scenario tension from congregation arises. Sexual harassment to a larger extent does not contribute to barriers faced by female clergy as to a larger extent sixty respondents agree. According to Stewart-Thomas⁵⁵ on the account of the “lived experiences of women in ministry” indicated that that female clergy members find acceptance when they adhere to the appropriate gender stereotypes of nurturing and caring, and therefore they do so, because for one woman to lose face could incur a loss of power for many others. Stewart-Thomas perceives this situation to actually be a disadvantage for women in church leadership.⁵⁶



⁵⁵ Stewart-Thomas Michelle, “Gendered Congregations, Gendered Service: The Impact of Clergy Gender on Congregational Social Service Participation” *Gender, Work & Organization* 17, (2009): 406 – 432, accessed June 19, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0432.2009.00484.x>

⁵⁶ Michelle. “Gendered Congregations, Gendered Service”.

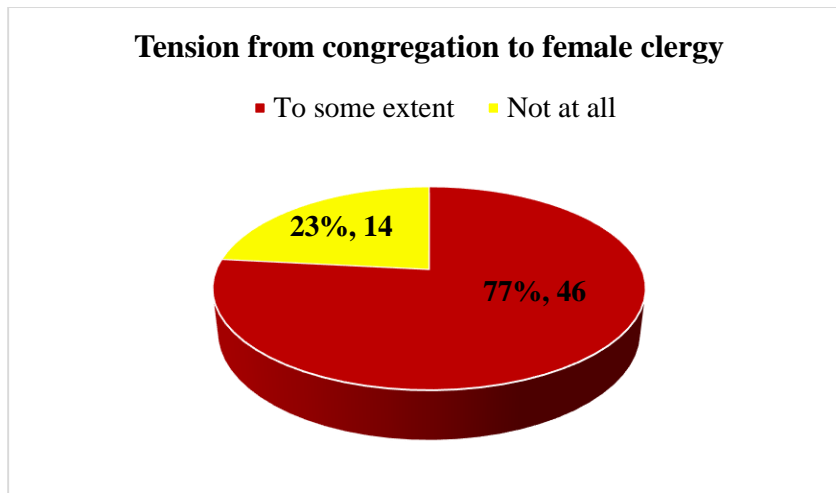
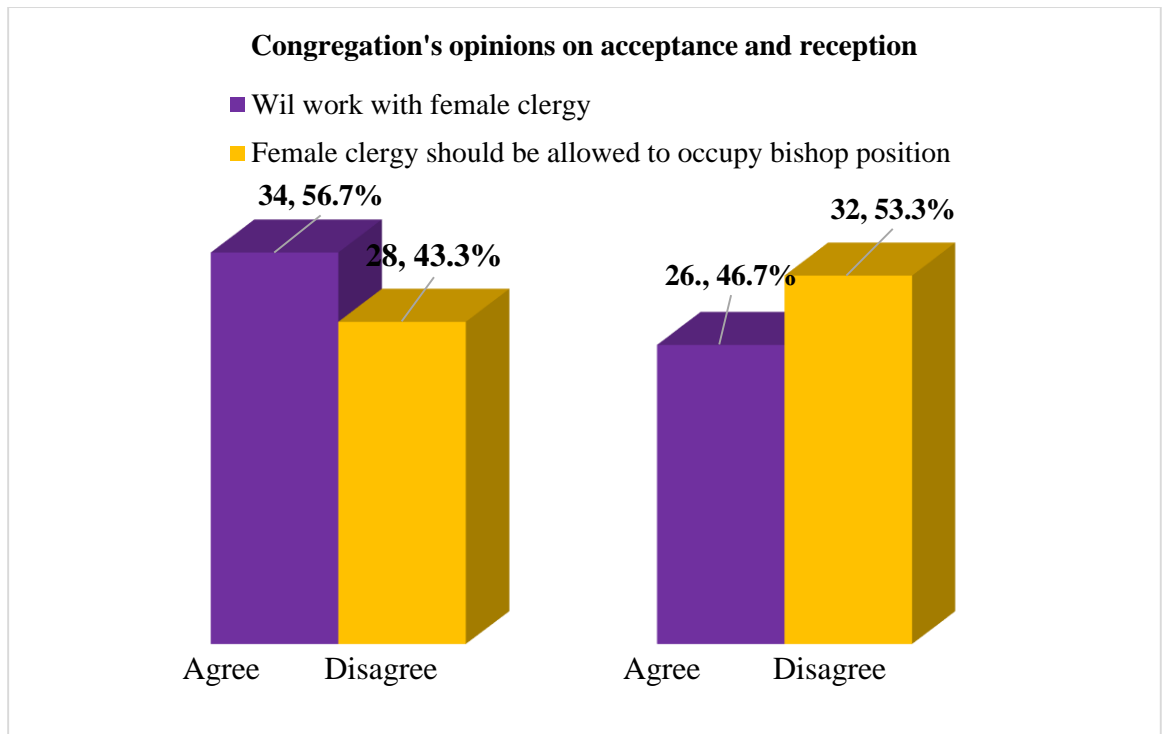


Figure 4.5: Barriers of female clergy

4.6 Congregation's Opinions on Acceptance and Reception

Not all respondents accepted to work with female clergy as indicated, thirty-four respondents were ready to work female clergy while twenty-six respondents were not ready to work with female clergy. Others also share their thought that female clergy should not be allowed to occupy Bishop's position while twenty-eight respondents to some extent agree that female clergy should not be allowed as full-time ministers. Some twenty-three respondents believes that female clergy are spiritual weak and have divided attention with family and ministry. The largest body of literature on women in ministry probes the experiences of being a female pastor with a focus on the inequalities and barriers women face in their pastoral roles, or, at times, when looking for a position.⁵⁷

⁵⁷ Kathleen Steeves, "The Lived Experiences of Women in Christian Ministry in Canada" (PhD diss., McMaster University 2017), 8.



Source: Survey data, 2023

Figure 4.6: Congregation's opinions on acceptance and reception

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter interpreted and evaluated the data findings derived from the Methodist considering the Old Tafo Circuit Kumasi in reference to chapter three. The chapter begins with general analysis of responses. It also critically assessed the meaning the acceptance and reception of female clergy and the performance of female clergy in the church with which indications show that many are not in line with full time female clergy as some indicated poor reception and acceptance of female clergy in the Methodist Church in Glorious Society Pankrono.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION, SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

In all, the study revealed that, stance of congregation on the reception of female clergy were somehow not encouraging as some respondents had some bad perception and opinions about female clergy. There were some challenges indicated as barriers affecting female clergy's ministry in terms of linkups with church stewards and some organizational leaders and male advisers of the church. Nevertheless, reception and acceptance were based on performance and relationship between church leaders, organizational leaders and church advisers. On the accounts gender stereotypes was one of the major challenge or barriers contributing to low performance of some female clergy.

5.2 Summary

The aim of the study was to find out the reception of female clergy in contemporary, mainline churches with a particular reference to the Methodist considering the Old Tafo Circuit Glorious Society Pankrono Kumasi. The study was concerned with what acceptance of congregation means and reception but was more confounded with barriers, perception and opinions of congregation persuading to the performance of female clergy. The research employed qualitative method for data collection, analysis and interpretation. Primary data was organised from the field through questionnaire interview. Secondary data consisted of scholarly works were reviewed. Brief background of the Methodist Church Ghana, Kumasi Diocese and Circuit Glorious Society Pankrono were reviewed under the literature aspect of the study. In all sixty respondents were used as sample sized with purposive sampling approach to siphon the necessary information from the field to yield results for the study.

5.3 Recommendations

On the crux of the observed analysis of the study the researchers have made the following recommendations indicating that;

Female clergy should be given the nod demonstrate fully their expertise and congregation not being judgmental on them as well as the church leaders. Good relationship between the Church and female clergy should be encouraged at all time to bring peace in worship. More seminars and good teachings should be encouraged to widen the spectrum of the functions of female clergy and the challenges they go through in their ministry to be appreciated. Organizational leaders from time to time should organized sessions like meeting the minister for more clarification and acceptance with good reception of the ministers. Good relation between church stewards and female clergy should mostly be encourage to soften the workflow between them. In all attitudes of acceptance on the side of female clergy should be encouraged no matter the difficulties faced by the congregation as the maximum stayed as a minister is always one year based on recommendation.

5.4 Limitation to the Study

The study sought to investigate and collect data from Old Tafo Circuit Glorious Society Pankrono Kumasi which could have been extended to all the circuit level and even dioceses but based on resource and academic time involved with submission, gap was created. The research was biased on the selection as purposive sampling approach was employed in the study instead of simple random sampling based the study design.

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APPENDIX I

EXAMINE THE RECEPTION OF FEMALE CLERGY IN CONTEMPORARY MAINLINE CHURCHES: A CASE STUDY OF THE METHODIST CHURCH GLORIOUS SOCIETY, PANKRONO, KUMASI.

CHRISTIAN SERVICE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE KUMASI.

DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY

Questionnaire for Respondents

This research is to examine “the reception of Female Clergy in contemporary, mainline churches with a particular reference to the Methodist considering the Old Tafo Circuit Glorious Society Pankrono Kumasi”.

I would be very pleased if you could spare some time and complete this questionnaire.

The information provided will be used for academic purposes and would be confidential.

Thank you.

The questionnaire is divided into four sections, A to D. Please complete each section according to the given instructions. Do not write your name or the name of your church to ensure complete confidentiality kindly respond to all the questions.

In all questions, please tick [☐] only unless otherwise indicated.

Section A: Demographic Information

1. Gender: Male [☐] Female [☐]
2. Age: 18 – 24 years [☐] 25 – 35 years [☐] 36 – 45 [☐] 46 – 55 [☐] 56 and Above [☐]
3. What is your highest educational qualification? Basic [☐] JHS [☐] SHS [☐] Degree [☐]
4. Position held in the Methodist Church. No Position [☐] Organizational Leader [☐] Church Leader [☐]

5. Number of years served/worshiped in the Church. 1 – 3 years [] 4 – 6 years [] 7
– 10 years [] 10 years and above []

Section B: The stance of congregation on female clergy.

6. Have you worshiped with a woman clergy before? Yes [] No []
7. Did you enjoyed her style of worship? Yes [] No []
8. Currently, would you agree to worship with full time clergy female minister? Yes []
No []
9. How best would you support the services of a clergy woman? Very best [] Best
[] Not at all [] Averagely []
10. Currently, to what extent would you agree to the services of a full time clergy
female?
Larger extent [] Large extent [] Some extent [] Not at all []

Section C: Perception of the congregation on the performance of female clergy

Based on your thoughts, please indicate the extent to which you agree (or disagree) with
the following statements. Guide: **Strongly Agree = SA, Agree = A, Disagree = D,**
Strongly Disagree = SD

No. 11/18	GUIDE	SA	A	D	SD	I don't know
	Clergy women are supportive in ministry	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Clergy women are difficult to work with	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Clergy women are competitive with another	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Preaching of Clergy women are boring	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Women clergy have low prestige	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Clergy women should not be allowed to take top positions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Clergy women are full with emotions in service					
	Methodist Church should not engaged more clergy women					

Section C: Barriers the female clergy

Question. To what extent are barriers relating to access to reception of female clergy?

Quest:	GUIDE	Not	To some	To a larger	very much
19/24		at all	extent	extent	extent
Difficulty in reasoning with male church		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
leaders		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Administrative challenges with male		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
stewards		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender stereotypes		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tension from congregation		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Exclusion from formal and informal		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
networks of male clergy					
Lack of mentoring and sponsorship					
Sexual harassment by leaders					

Section D: Congregation's opinions on acceptance and reception

Question. To what extent are congregation opinions affecting reception of female clergy?

Quest:	GUIDE	Not	To some	To a larger	very much
25/30		at all	extent	extent	extent
I do accept to work with female clergy		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am ready to receive any female clergy					
Female clergy should not be allowed to		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
occupy Bishop positions		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clergy women should not be allowed as					
full time ministers		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clergy women are spiritual weak					
Clergy women have divided attention					
with family and ministry					