

**THE GENESIS AND GROWTH OF THE METHODIST WOMEN'S  
TRAINING CENTRE KWADASO**

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**A long essay submitted to Christian Service University College, in partial  
fulfillment of the requirement for the award of the degree of Bachelor of Arts in  
Theology with Administration**

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## DECLARATION

I, Doris Akpene Sam, do hereby declare that this project work is the result of my own original research except for sections of which references have been duly made and to the best of my 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**

To the glory of God, this work is dedicated to my beloved husband Mr. Kwame Okyne Sam, my two children Obed Nhyira Sam and Keziah Ekua Nkunim Sam and my Dad Capt. A. K. Gokah (Rtd.) of blessed memory.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background to the Study**

In the epistle of Paul to Titus, we learn that older women were to train the younger women to be good wives and mothers in the home. In order to do this they needed to be people of reverent character, who fear God and abstain from every evil deed. (Titus 2:3-4). The admonition of Paul seeks to portray the fact that as the women grows older, they needed to use their acquired rich experience to nurture others. But we needed to understand that they cannot give what they do not have. Hence older women are to train the young ones; the question needs to be asked about what they are rephrased to be trained in to grow up into responsible women in the positions of housewives and mothers. From the text we can understand that the older women were to be spiritually matured so that they can bring to bear on the younger generation what it means to love and live for God. In doing so, they need to be people who are zealous for God, well behaved and upright in lifestyle.

The injunction in Proverbs 22:6 “train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it” presupposes that everyone needs some form of training in order to be a responsible person in life. It seems that there is a divinely instituted formula which ensures that those who have life’s experience that is, “gone ahead” in life direct and instruct and guide the younger ones so that they do not go “astray” from the right path. In the traditional society, it was often evident to see young children gather around older women to listen to stories and proverbs. This kind of traditional moral education ensured that the younger people grew up with knowledge of the norms of the society as well as to be ethically upright. Because the



older women are believed to be people of wisdom and experience, it was often the case that pregnant women were to be taken care of by elderly women.<sup>1</sup>

Among the Akan, the choice of an Obaapanin (queen mother) rested on this fact of wisdom and experience. She is to compliment the chief to govern the community in ways that are right. Mercy Amba Oduyoye believes that Akan women are at the centre of kinship unit and girls are brought up to feel the weight of this responsibility.

In her view, without women “a lineage is finished.”<sup>2</sup> For the Akan, family meetings included both women and men. Women’s concerns in the larger community were taken care of by decisions from the Ohemaa (queen mother). It is often said that “*yereko bisa aberewa*” meaning we are going to consult the old lady. Thus, they all look to the Ohemaa as their “mother” who is to ensure their welfare. It is this same sense that mothers were to take care of their girl children so that they will grow up to follow their steps. Younger women or girls are to learn the art of house-keeping including food preparation, washing of clothes, sweeping and also learn how to keep themselves neat and appear decent in public. Other important things that are taught younger girls include how to be good mothers and wives in the future.<sup>3</sup>

According to Larry Christianson, the Apostle Paul’s description of the church as the “Body of Christ” meant that each individual member has a unique place and function in the body. Every person comes into the world, and comes into the Body of Christ with a unique destiny to fulfill. He concludes that part of the calling of a parent

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<sup>1</sup> Mercy Amba Oduyoye, *Beads and Strands: Reflections of an African Woman on Christianity in Africa* (Yaoundé Cameroon: Regnum Africa, ), 71.

<sup>2</sup>Oduyoye, *Beads and Strands*, 71.

<sup>3</sup>Oduyoye, *Beads and Strands*, 71.

(including mothers) is to help the child discover what their God given purpose to be in life is all about and guide them towards it.<sup>4</sup>

In the church, there are many members, young and old. The younger members can learn a lot from the older members. Younger girls of the age of marriage can depend on the elderly women for advice and direction. Married women who face some challenges in the marriage life can also seek some counsel from the elderly women. Thus, just as each member of the church has some specific and unique role to play; so the women should be assisted to be usable in the church.

In the beginning of Christianity in Ghana, many factors prevented women from being actively involved in church activities. However, with time, some of these barriers began to fall and the presence and impact of women in the church became more prominent through the various groups which sprang up within the churches. The Methodist Women's Training Centre is one of such institutions that sprang up within the Methodist Church. It was set up originally to train the wives of ministers to render support to their husbands in the discharge of their duties. Today, it has become an established fact that women are affecting churches positively in greater dimensions. Ward Powers in his book, - "The Ministry of Women in the Church" – which way forward, discusses opportunities for ministry which have been opened up to women. According to him, women can perform effectively in the church, if given the encouragement.<sup>5</sup> The rate at which women's movements are springing up in many church denominations and even outside church circles is becoming amazing.

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<sup>4</sup> Larry Christianson, *The Christian family Minneapolis* (Minnesota: Fountain Trust, 1971), 64.

<sup>5</sup>Ward Powers, *The Ministry of Women in the Church – Which Way Forward* (Adelaide: SPCK, 1996), 21.

The impact of women in the church today is not by accident. Rather, it seems to have a strong biblical basis to support it. It is evident from the scriptures that women played active roles in ministry even though they seemed to be hindered by cultural and religious barriers.

It is significant to note that there is the need for a re-definition of the role of women in the church taking into account the significant contribution made by women such as Deborah, Esther, Phoebe and Priscilla in God's agenda for making the world a better place after the fall.

Just as women played significant roles in biblical times including the times of the first New Testament Church, women in the contemporary church are making significant contributions to the church. There are some women involved in leadership including the pastorate, teaching, music, counseling, prophetic and evangelism in many churches today.

This study is therefore set to investigate further the genesis and growth of the Methodist Women's Training Centre at Kwadaso with reference to their achievements over the years.

## **1.2 Statement of Problem**

It has been noted that women played significant roles in biblical times and in Christian history. The involvement of women at various levels in the things of God has been recognized. In the contemporary times women are asserting themselves at various levels of the church. Women are involved in administration and leadership including the pastorate, teaching, counseling and are also using their endowed spiritual gifts in the church.

The Methodist Women's Training Centre has made some significant mark in the growth of the Methodist Church at Kwadaso. Some achievements have been made in terms of training of the girl-child to maturity in terms of spirituality, as well as entrepreneurial skills. However, it is not enough to assess the institution in terms of what is being done today. Many are they who seem to have little or no knowledge about the beginnings of the Methodist Women's Training Centre and how it has fared over the years. Therefore, the study is intended to investigate the genesis of the Methodist Women's Training Centre as well as its growth, in order to offer sufficient information about its history, achievements as well as the challenges that have confronted it. This will enable the members of the church as well as the society to be informed of where the institution is coming from and how it had fared.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

The study intends to find answers to the following questions:

- What motivated the establishment of the Methodist Women's Training Centre?
- How and when was the institution established?
- What contributions have been made by the Methodist Women's Training Centre over the years?
- What challenges, if any, have confronted the institution over the years?
- How have these challenges been addressed or are being addressed?

### **1.4 Aim and Objectives of the Study**

The main aim of the study is to examine the genesis and growth of the Methodist Women's Training Centre. It will specifically

- Attempt to ascertain the beginnings of the Methodist Women's Training Centre.
- Investigate the growth patterns of the institution over the years.
- Ascertain some challenges that may have confronted the institution.
- Find out the measures that had been adopted or are being adopted to address those challenges.

## **1.5 Research Methodology**

The study is a qualitative one and therefore employs Qualitative methods in ascertaining the views and experiences of people regarding the issue at stake and to arrive at a fair conclusion.

### **1.5.1 Methods of Data Collection**

Two main sources were used in collecting data for the study. First the primary source involves the use of interviews with important personalities such as the leaders in the Methodist Women's Training Centre as well as other prominent women in the Methodist Church. Also, through personal experience and participant observation relevant data were sourced for the study.

Secondly, the study employed the secondary method of the use of publications such as books and journals, as well as unpublished works, which have a bearing on the issue being addressed.

### **1.5.2 Sampling Procedure**

The research was basically phenomenological in nature and employed primary sources of data collection. Purposive sampling approach was adopted and was based on a sample size of six (6) to ten (10) respondents, chosen at random. The respondents

were chosen from among the management of the Methodist Women's Training Centre, students and key leaders in the Bethel Methodist Society at Kwadaso.

### **1.6 Scope and Focus of the Study**

The study does not intend to examine every aspect of the Methodist Church. Rather it is limited to Methodist Women's Training Centre at Kwadaso to consider its genesis and growth.

The focus of this study examines the history of its formation and its contribution to the entire church as a whole with reference to its growth patterns. The assessment of the growth of the institution will be done based on its core values and how it has positively affected the lives of women in the Kwadaso area and the church in general.

### **1.7 Literature Review**

It is envisage that some scholars have carried out similar studies, and therefore their views would have to be considered so as to give a sense of direction to the study on hand. The views of some of these scholars are examined in the following discussion.

#### **1.7.1 Christian Women and Ministry**

According to Ward Powers, the depth of commitment of women to Jesus was great as that of men, including his twelve disciples. In his view; in his attitude to women; in his ministry to women; and in committing to women a share of the continuing ministry after his ascension. Jesus cut across the common attitudes of his day, and showed his (male) disciples that in his kingdom women had an equal and honoured

place.<sup>6</sup> There is the need for us to appreciate the fact that older women have what it takes to contribute meaningfully to the growth of the church.

In the view of Ruth B. Edwards, Jesus draws on women's activities in his parables. Luke recorded that he compared the kingdom of God first to a man sowing seed and then to women baking bread. The author maintains that the actions of the woman as well as the man are both analogies for God's action.<sup>7</sup> God created every individual with some activities and these needs to be utilized to the glory of God. Thus, older women can make a meaningful contribution to the church like what Paul told Titus.<sup>8</sup>

According to John Stott, it was only the birth of Jesus by a woman which restored to women that measure of dignity lost by the fall ... In addition to his apostles, who were all males, Jesus was accompanied on his travels by a group of women, whom he had healed and who now provided for him out of their means.<sup>9</sup> The commitment of women to the course of the gospel should be very much appreciated. In this sense, older women can be motivated to give of their best for the growth of the church.

To John Stott the fact that women are also called by God into ministry hardly needs any demonstration. For ministry is service and every Christian, male and female, young and old, is called to follow in the footsteps of him who said he had not come to be served, but to serve.<sup>10</sup> The concept of ministry involves every person in the church. For all who are saved by Christ are to exercise their potentials in the context of the church. Older women also have a role to play in the growth of the church today.

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<sup>6</sup> Ward Powers, *The Ministry of Women in the Church: Which Way Forward?* (Australia: SPCKA, 1996), 21.

<sup>7</sup>Ruth B. Edwards, *The Case for Women's Ministry* (London: SPCK, 1989), 47.

<sup>8</sup> Titus 2:1.

<sup>9</sup>John Stott, *Issues Facing Christians Today* (London: Marshall Pickering, 1990), 260.

<sup>10</sup>Stott, *Issues Christians Today*, 245.

### 1.7.2 The Church and Women

Bounidell Clouse and Robert Clouse are of the view that, because there was no precedent for women as priest in the Old Testament, they were not appointed to such positions within the Christian church. The major ceremonial functions of the church such as serving communion were to be performed only by the priests, and consequently women were not allowed to lead these services.<sup>11</sup> In the light of these assertions, it does not mean that women, including the elderly, have nothing to do in the church. There are equally other important areas where they can feature.

Deborah B. Hull observes that the contributions of early church women usually were not made through the traditional church organizational structure, to which women had only limited access. Rather, their efforts, born of personal conviction, were often nurtured in low-budget, grassroots organizations that existed apart from established church structures.<sup>12</sup> If women have limited access in traditional church structure, they can function in other areas for the growth of the church. All members of the church are key players and should be given equal access. Barbara Cook maintains that many women did teach in first century churches. These women preached publicly with no opposition from the Apostles unless they taught false doctrines. The Apostles opposed anyone, male or female, who dealt in false doctrine. Paul worked closely with women in the ministry. He took Priscilla and Aquila to Ephesus to teach in the church.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>David Jackman, *Understanding the Church* (Accra: Kingsway Publications, 1983), 118.

<sup>12</sup> Beverly Lattaye, *The New Spirit Controlled Woman* (Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 2005), 247.

<sup>13</sup> Barbara Cook, *Ordinary Women Extraordinary Strength: A Biblical Perspective of Feminine Potential* (Washington: Aglow Publications, 1988), 148.



### 1.7.3 The Bible and Women Ministry

According to Robert L. Sauay, one significant ministry of women involved the teaching of other women. While this is universally recognized, it is not frequently implemented in the contemporary church. But the author believes that beyond the specific ministry of teaching other women, the New Testament appears to teach the participation of women in a ministry related to the speaking of the Word that would involve men as well as women. The concept of a team ministry involving men and women points to the biblical teaching of the complementary nature of man and woman.<sup>14</sup> If the church is to grow, it requires the complementary efforts of all including older women members. No one is useless in the sight of God.

Leanne M. Dzubinski maintains that Jesus treatment of women during his time on earth shows that he never felt himself or women to be bound by cultural definitions of what women could or should do. Again, church history illustrates what Jesus and Paul taught, women have always played a vital role in the growth of the church and the spread of the Gospel.<sup>15</sup> It is important that the church gives equal opportunity to older women to exercise their God – given potentials.

According to Wesley S. Chiang, Jesus began his ministry by declaring that the kingdom of God was near and calling people to repentance. A danger of socio-political involvement is that of seeing oneself as righteous and attaching labels of evil to others.<sup>16</sup> In the view of the author, in the context of the church, no one (including

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<sup>14</sup> Robert L. Sauay, Women's Prohibition to Teach Men: An Investigation into its Meaning and Contemporary Application. *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* Vol. 37 No. 1, 1994.

<sup>15</sup> Leanne M. Dzubinski, Gender Diversity in Mission Work and Leadership: Moving Towards Kingdom Transformation. *Evangelical Review of Theology*. Vol 36, No. 4 October 2012, 340.

<sup>16</sup> Wesley S. Chiang, To What Extent does Jesus Teaching about the Kingdom of God provide a helpful basis for Christian Socio-political thinking today? *Evangelical Quarterly* Vol. Lxxxiii No. October 2011, 313.

older women) is to be considered as evil. Everyone has a place and a contribution to make. God's grace is available for all who trust in Him.

According to David Jackman, we need some radical biblical thinking when we come to consider ministry in the church, for there are biblical distinctive which must be applied if the church is to be true to her Head, her origin, and her purpose.<sup>17</sup> Thus, we need to get rid of the perception that keeps women out of ministry. Every member including the older women, has a place in the church, and should be assisted to make their mark.

Beverly Lattaye observes that if you can walk in the spirit in your mental and spiritual attitudes, you will walk in the spirit in your actions. This explains why walking in the spirit is based on the personal relationship we maintain with God. He concludes that relationship to Him is truly the key to how we get along with everyone else.<sup>18</sup>

### **1.8 Significance of the Study**

- The study will provide a relevant framework for other circuits of the Methodist Church and other church denominations in the formulation of relevant programmes for their women's ministry.
- It will be a source of information that will encourage women in the Methodist Church to join hands with the church and also continue to give off their best support for the establishment and enhancement of the training centre.
- Christian training institutions that offer courses for women and gender development issues will find this study useful.

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<sup>17</sup>Jackman, *Understanding the Church*, 118.

<sup>18</sup>Lattaye, *The New Spirit Controlled Woman*, 7.

- Finally, Christian non-governmental organizations that work among women will also find this study relevant in planning their programmes and to determine which group may warrant their assistance.

## **1.9 Organization and Content of the Study**

The study is divided into five chapters with subdivisions where necessary. The introductory chapter considers the general overview of the study and addresses the background to the study, the statement of problem, research questions, aim and objectives of the study, the methodology of the study, the scope and focus of the study, the literature review, significance of the study as well as the organization and content of the study.

Chapter two considers some background issues that relate to study. These include a brief history and structure of the Methodist Church, history of the Kwadaso Methodist Church as well as women and Christian ministry.

The third chapter considers the Methodist Women's Training Centre in the Kwadaso circuit. It addresses issues such as the history of the Methodist Women's Training Centre as the achievements and growth of the institution as well as the challenges of the institution.

Chapter four evaluates and analyzes the findings made in the study. Among the issues to be addressed are the description of data and summary of analysis based on Bible and women's ministry, the church and women empowerment, Christian women and contemporary society, as well as girl child education and nation building, the significant role of the church.

The fifth chapter concludes the study and considers the summary of the study, the conclusion of the study and some recommendations.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **BACKGROUND TO THE METHODIST WOMEN'S TRAINING CENTRE AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

In the previous chapter, an attempt was made to address the general introduction to the study which included the background to the study, the statement of problem, the research questions, aim and objectives of the study, the scope and focus of the study, the research methodology, literature review, significance of the study as well as the organization and content of the study. This chapter on the other hand examines the historical background relating to the study. Among these are a brief history of the Methodist Church, Ghana, history of the Kwadaso Methodist Church as well as women and ministry from biblical perspective.

#### **2.2 Brief History of the Methodist Church, Ghana**

The Methodist Church Ghana is one of the largest and oldest Protestant denominations in Ghana. It traces its roots back to the landing of Rev. Joseph Dunwell on 1 January, 1835 in Cape Coast, Ghana. Rev. Thomas Birch Freeman, another missionary, emerged as the father of Methodism in West Africa, taking the Christian message beyond Cape Coast to the Ashanti Kingdom, Nigeria, and other parts of the region.<sup>19</sup>

By 1854, the church was organized into circuits constituting a district with T.B. Freeman as chairman. Freeman was replaced in 1856 with William West to continue with the work as a chairman. The district was divided and extended to include areas in the then Gold Coast and Nigeria by the SYNOD in 1878, a move confirmed at the

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<sup>19</sup> F. L. Bartels, *The Roots of Ghana Methodism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), 28-72.

British Conference. The districts were Gold Coast (Ghana) District, with T. R. Picot as chairman and Yoruba, Popo Districts, with John Milum as chairman. Methodist evangelization of northern Ghana began in 1910.

The church reached a state of self-support higher than that of any other District in West Africa. Culminating with the appointment of Gaddiel Robert Acquah (Rev.) as the first African Chairman in 1948, the church was set on the path of self-governance, and in 1955, the British Conference directed the Missionary Committee to examine the request of the Methodist Missionary Society on the West Africa autonomy.<sup>20</sup>

The districts in Ghana had their own reservations and questioned the wisdom of establishing a conference for West Africa as a whole. Like Nigeria, there was no real enthusiasm on Ghana's part for it though no Synod explicitly rejected it. When Nigeria finally opted out of the proposed West Africa Conference for the church union in that country, which was never realized, the Ghana District revised her then current constitution to suit an autonomous District, and became the first autonomous Methodist Church in West Africa in 1961. In preparation for autonomous status, Francis Chapman Ferguson Grant (Rev.) was elected chairman of the Ghana District Synod in 1960.<sup>21</sup>

After serving as a district in the British Methodist Conference, the Methodist Church Ghana attained full independence on 28 July 1961. It adopted an Episcopal structure at the Koforidua Conference in August 1999. Currently, the Methodist Church Ghana has 15 dioceses headed by bishops. Between 2003 and March 2008, 406 new congregations were started and ministry was initiated in Burkina Faso.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> The Methodist Church Ghana (1835-2005): 170<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Souvenir Brochure, Accra, 2000.

<sup>21</sup> Bartels, *The Roots of Ghana Methodism*, 12-18.

<sup>22</sup> Bartels, *The Roots of Ghana Methodism*, 12-18

The current Presiding Bishop is the Rt. Rev. Titus Awotwe Pratte the fourth Presiding Bishop and the eleventh person to lead the Methodist Church Ghana. The administrative bishop is the Right Reverend Dr. Paul Boafo, and the Lay President is Bernard Clement Kwasi Botwe. Both the clergy and laity were very instrumental in the process towards autonomy. Names like G. Thackray Eddy, F.C.F. Grant, Charles Awotwe Pratt, T. W. Koomson (all ministers of the Methodist Church). However, A. E. Chinebuah, S. H. Amissah and L. A. Creedy (messers) are worth mentioning in this respect. In an address at the opening conference, F.C.F. Grant (Rev.) had indicated that the church did not lack human resource, saying:

Our church has always been blessed with laymen and ministers of character and ability, dedicated to our Lord Jesus Christ and loyal to His Church. As we welcome many delegates from all over Ghana who are members of this Foundation Conference, we rejoice that in our generation also the Church still has such men in its ranks.<sup>23</sup>

Names like the following stand out: Joseph de Graft Johnson, Joseph Wilson, F. E. Kwesi Ekuban, Charles Yamoah, J. Bart-Addison, Paul Adu, James Emmanuel Yarquah, S. B. Essumuah, K. A. Dickson, Joseph Yedu Bannerman (all ministers of Methodist Church) and the W. C. Cudjoe (Rev). Other outstanding laypersons were Paa Chinebuah, J. S. Annan (Dr), Crakye Denteh and Alex Quaison Sackey (Dr) who ensured that the autonomy was consolidated. The Deed of Foundation was signed at the inauguration of the Conference on Friday evening, 28<sup>th</sup> July 1961. The British representatives and signatories on behalf of their Conference were Rev Maldwyn L. Edwards (President of the British Conference), Mrs. Marjorie Lonsdale (Vice President), Rev. R. Wilfred Pile (General Secretary of the Methodist Missionary

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<sup>23</sup> Valedictory Service in Honor of Most Rev. Dr. Robert Aboagye-Mensah Booklet, 27 September 2009, Accra, Ghana.

Society), G. Thackray Eddy (Rev), T. Allan Beethan (Rev) and J. Kingsley Sanders (Rev).<sup>24</sup>

### **2.3 History of the Kwadaso Methodist Church**

The idea to establish a Methodist Church at Kwadaso came as a result of one P. D. K. Aning who had relocated to Kwadaso and needed a place of worship. There was no Methodist Church near him, so he then went to the Odikro and told him his vision and desire to start a church in Kwadaso.

Without any hesitation the Odikro offered him one store room in his residence as a place for worship. The Odikro himself became one of the founding members. As in fact, the exact date cannot be told but according to oral tradition it was around 1930s.

The people who started the church were five, later some people came to join them. But the history of the church cannot be told without mentioning the following people: P. K. D. Aning, first caretaker of the church, Nana Akwasi Addai-Kwadaso Odikro, Mr. Kwaku Nuako who later succeeded P. K. D. Aning as caretaker after Mr. Aning had left Kwadaso to the Western Region, Opanin Paul's farm land was where the first chapel building was erected. Mad. Comfort Cudjoe and Mad. Mercy Mensah were at the time young girls who fellowshiped with them.

When the church was growing Y. B. Arthur who worked with lands commission at the time advised them to get a parcel of land and Nana Akwasi Addai the Odikro gave the current place of worship and the Methodist Women Training Centre, shell filling station, Church of Pentecost land to them.

The first building was a bamboo structure before a brick building was put up as a permanent place of worship. When Kwadaso Township was growing and the land on

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<sup>24</sup> The Methodist Church Ghana (1835-2005): 170<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Souvenir Brochure, Accra, 2005.

which the chapel stands was being encroached, one James Atta Dwubeng used his own money to purchase wooden pole to protect the land.

All these while, the church was under Bantama circuit. In 1982 the society gained circuit status under Very Rev. S. F. Kusi Appiah. In 1988, 27<sup>th</sup> March, two point two million (GH¢2.2 million) circuit Manse was dedicated. Before the manse was built, the Ministers who have been posted to the society/section and their family lived in rented apartment. Those who supervised the building project were Messrs. S. K. Amankwah, Y. B. Arthur, and H. B. Asabere.<sup>25</sup> The first minister who worked in the society was Ebenezer Sey (Rev) whose tenure of office brought the idea of putting up a manse (a mission house). This became a reality.

Currently, the circuit and the society are headed by Moses Quayson (Rt Rev). The membership is 1,704. But the circuit current statistical return stands at 2,553 with 8 Ministers. Societies under the circuit are: Bethel society – Kwadaso, Trinity – Kwadaso Estate, Freeman – Kwadaso North, Aldersgate – Agric Junction, Ebenezer – Edwenase, and Ohwimase society. Two connexional projects in the circuit are Methodist Women Training Centre and Methodist Technical Institute.

Because of the church's strategic position and their activities it attracts all and sundry and can boast of one international school and mutual fund (financial institution).<sup>26</sup>

## **2.4 History of the Methodist Women's Training Centre**

### **2.4.1 Origins**

The Methodist Woman's Training Centre, a vocational Training Institution, was established in 1946 through the collaborative effort of the Women's Fellowship of the

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<sup>25</sup> Interview with Christian Takyi-Adjei, First Society President / Diocesan President, 18<sup>th</sup> November, 2017.

<sup>26</sup> Interview with Regina Quao, Diocesan Treasurer, 12<sup>th</sup> November, 2017.



Methodist Mission Society of Britain, the Gold Coast Mission under the Woman's Work Committee and the Methodist Church of Ghana, with immense support from Sir Agyemang Prempeh II, Asantehene, Nana Serwaa Nyarko, the then Asantehemaa who laid the foundation stone and she was supported by the Asanteman Council. The centre was officially opened on the 26<sup>th</sup> of June 1948 by Mrs. Butler the wife of the Chief Commission of Ashanti at the time. The centre was started in Effiduase and later moved to its current location which is Kwadaso.

The main aim of this centre was to organize women's activities in all the circuits, districts and at national levels to inculcate the growth of Christian virtues in the women and also to empower the women through vocational Training to become ideal women "mmaasima". The centre also trains spouses of Reverend Ministers.<sup>27</sup> This initiative was an idea that was brought up by the foreign missionaries in the Gold Coast.<sup>28</sup> The likes of Miss Kathleen A. White, Miss Gwendolen A. Ash, Miss G.B. Hares and other Africans women like Mrs. Afua Denteh, Miss Elizabeth Osei and Miss Rebecca Okyne as the key facilitators. The first principal of the centre was Miss Kathleen A. White who left in March 1951; she was succeeded by Miss Gwendolen A. Ash. The first African principal was Miss Rebecca Okyne, she took over from Miss Irene Morrow who was the last expatriate principal. The centre was financed by the then Common Wealth Trust fund, Women's Work Central Fund, the Women's Training Fund and the Gold Coast Methodist Church.

The Centre offers courses administered by the National Vocational Institute (NVTI) and the Technical Examination Unit (TEU) of the Ghana Education Service (GES), leading to the award of seven different certificates. The NVTI certificates include

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<sup>27</sup> Interview with Mrs. Aretha Ama Graham, 14<sup>th</sup> February, 2018.

<sup>28</sup> Bartels, *The Roots of Ghana Methodism*, 34.

proficiency I, proficiency II, Foundation Certificate I and -Foundation Certificate II. The TEU of GES on the other hand, awards the following certificate: Intermediate (stroke I) and Advance (stroke II).

In both the NVTI and TEU, three Elective Vocational programmes offered are Catering, Fashion Design and Hairdressing. In addition to the above, short course lasting for brief periods of one-two weeks and one-six months are provided within the three programmes mentioned. The Centre has been accredited by the Council for Technical and Vocational Education Training (COTVET).

### **Current Student Population**

The centre's enrolment over the years has reduced drastically due to the introduction of the free SHS policy of the government. The enrollment for the 2018 academic year is the lowest in the past 6 years. The population of the centre is the lowest for the past six (6) academic years.

#### **2.4.2 The Center's Vision, Mission Statement and Core Values**

The vision of the institution is to be the leading missionary school in Ghana offering Accessible Quality Vocational Education, Skill Training to the youth and adults in both the formal and informal sectors, regardless of their income or social positions, to benefit them in their career advancements.

#### **2.4.3 Mission Statement**

To provide high quality services to their clients through vocational skill training and education, and also partner with industries to meet their client's needs and to create the pathway for them to gain employment and advance in their careers.

#### **2.4.4 Core Values**

In carrying out their mission, they are guided by the following values:

Access and Equity- Services are available to everyone who needs them.

Quality- A Certificate which acknowledges that the person has received quality training.

Continuous improvement- strive to always look for ways to improve services to clients (trainees)

Respect for individuals- adept service to meet the needs of individual clients (trainees).

Integrity- committed to the highest standards of ethical behaviour

Community- building partnerships with people and organizations to share ideals together in order to achieve more for clients (trainees)

Service exists to serve our community and nation.

#### **2.5 Women and Ministry from Biblical Perspective**

The issue of women involvement in the ministry of the church has received diverse arguments. Many scholars seem divided over the role of women in the church. While some argue that women may have the gift and calling to perform some ministerial role in the church, others think otherwise, that women are not capable enough to play active role in the church. This situation has crippled many women, from performing any role in the church. But we need to be reminded of the role of women in biblical times so that we can give a fair recognition to women today.

### **2.5.1 Women in Old Testament Times**

In the Old Testament times women played significant roles in the nation Israel. There are godly women mentioned in scripture, namely Naomi, Esther, Sarah, Rebecca and many others. These were women of faith and of Godly character. Some of these women were gifted by God in special ministry functions. For instance, there were a number of women whom God called to be His mouthpiece and prophetesses with the prophetic word and the word of the Lord in their mouths. Examples of such women included Miriam, (Exod. 15:20), an inspired woman who sang the song of the Lord and led the women with timbels and dancing before all Israel. (Psalm 68:25, Numbers 12:1-10).

Another woman of prominence in the Old Testament times is Deborah, who was a judge, a prophetess and a mother in Israel for a period of forty years (Judges 4:4, 5:7 – 15). She was a prophetess, a revealer of God's will to Israel and was acknowledged and submitted to as in the cases of the male judges who succeeded her. She was also the military head of an army that defeated the Canaanites, when Israel entered the Promised Land.

### **2.5.2 Women and Ministry in the New Testament**

According to A.G. Daniells, women were among Christ's devoted followers in His ministry, and Paul also makes mention of certain women who were "helpers together" with him in the gospel. The elect lady of (2 John 1:1), is believed to be one of the unnamed women leaders of the New Testament Church who were helpers in the gospel work, a woman of good repute and wide influence.<sup>29</sup> She was a spiritual leader

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<sup>29</sup> Jerry Moon, *A Power that Exceeds that of Men" in Women Ministry* (USA: Andrews University Press, 1998), 190.

of prominence and authority as John charges her with the responsibility to guard the doctrinal integrity of herself and implication of the church.

Wayne House maintains that, in the pivotal biblical event of the incarnation, two women, Mary and Elizabeth, were primary characters in whom and through whom the drama unfolded. He further adds, each displayed an exemplary faith in the covenant promises of God, and each was privileged with the personal revelation of God.<sup>30</sup>

Against backdrop women helped the Lord (Jesus Christ) by uniting with Him in His work. This made the great Apostle Paul to write “I entreat thee also true yoke-fellow, help those women who labored with me in the gospel” (Philippians 4:3). This shows that women were not left out in the ministry they were included right from the beginning. That was why Ellen White’s counsel about women in ministry, states that:

“Neither men nor women can do the work alone, but for the equality of work that the two can do together. When a great and decisive work is to be done, God chooses men and women to do this work, and it will feel the loss if the talents of both are not combined as partners”<sup>31</sup>

Ellen White’s reiterated that the participation of women in the work of the gospel is not merely an option to be allowed in exceptional circumstance, but is an essential element for the highest success in preaching the gospel as “women can be instruments of righteousness, rendering holy service.”<sup>32</sup> She said, the refining, softening influence of Christian women are needed in the great work of preaching the truth and she

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<sup>30</sup> H. Wayne House, *The Role of Women in Ministry Today* (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1990), 69.

<sup>31</sup> Moon, *A Power that Exceeds that of men*” in *Women Ministry*, 190.

<sup>32</sup> Moon, *A Power that Exceeds that of a Men*” in *Women Ministry*, 190.

believed women to be indispensable in ministry, because they can minister in ways that men cannot.<sup>33</sup>

Ministry is the calling of all Christians to work for the salvation of others, both women and men. There were many women who devoted their time in doing the ministry of God. Phoebe functioned as Paul's emissary, as did Titus and Timothy.<sup>34</sup> She was a deaconess which is the same position as church leader. Paul recognizes her leadership and her sharing in ministry. He also mentioned Mary, Tryphaena, Tryphosa and Persis as having worked hard with him.<sup>35</sup> All these show that women were not left out in ministry in the early church. Priscilla (wife of Aquila), in Acts 18:2, 24-26, Romans 16:3 was found to be a profound teacher. Paul acknowledged her contribution in the instruction of Apollos.

Similarly Lois the grandmother of Timothy, who taught Eunice the mother of Timothy the word of God and both were engaged in ministry to mentor and taught Timothy to be God fearing (2 Timothy 1:5;14-15).

Dorcas a benevolent woman in ministry was serving and giving out to the poor in the society (Acts 9:36). Euodia and Synthyche were also mentioned by Paul as his loyal companion who struggled with him in the work of the gospel.<sup>36</sup> Paul urges these women to be of the same mind in the Lord for the smooth running of the ministry. Lydia who owns a purple-dye trade business in Philippi was also a church leader, and giving out to the poor in the society.<sup>37</sup> In Romans, Paul mentioned the name of Apelles as a sister indicating that she was a fellow worker with him in the ministry

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<sup>33</sup> Moon, *A Power that Exceeds that of men* in *Women Ministry*, 191.

<sup>34</sup> Jo Ann Davidson, *Women in Scripture: A Survey and Evaluation, Women in ministry Biblical and Historical Perspectives* (USA: Andrews University Press, 1998), 177.

<sup>35</sup> Davidson, *Women in Scripture: A Survey and Evaluation*, 177.

<sup>36</sup> Susan E. Smith, *Women as co-worker with Paul: Women in Mission from the New Testament to Today* (Michigan: Orbis Books, 2007), 13.

<sup>37</sup> Smith, *Women as co-worker with Paul: Women in Mission from the New Testament to Today*, 12.

(Romans 16:10a). The next woman was Junia. She was referred to as apostolos in (Romans 16:7), she is one who shares responsibility for preaching the good news with Paul.<sup>38</sup> Another woman who worked tirelessly with the husband in the ministry is Julia, she was more or less a missionary with the husband (Romans 16:15). Trypaena and Tryphosa are identified as missionaries of some prominence in the early church, and so Paul, wanting to present his own credentials to the Christians in Rome, establishes a connection between himself and the two women as “co-workers of the Lord” (Romans 16:12).<sup>39</sup>

Paul exhorted the old women to teach and to mentor the young women in the church (Titus 2:3-5). Mary and Martha were secret disciples of Jesus Christ in ministry. Philips four virgin daughters were prophetess, which indicates that they were engaged in the ministry (Acts 21:9).<sup>40</sup> Many women were co-workers with Paul as he said it in (Romans 16:8-15) “Greet Ampliatus, my beloved. Greet Apelles, the approved in Christ. Greet those who are of the household of Aristobulus. Greet Herodion, my kinsman. Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who were with them” emphasis added. There is a clear indication that women were workers and can be workers in ministry.

## **2.6 Conclusion**

The discussion in this chapter concerned the background of the Kwadaso Methodist Church and the Women’s Training Centre. It gives a brief history of the Methodist

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<sup>38</sup> Smith, *Women as co-worker with Paul: Women in Mission from the New Testament to Today*, 20.

<sup>39</sup> Smith, *Women as co-worker with Paul: Women in Mission from the New Testament to Today*, 20.

<sup>40</sup> Fredrick J. Long, *Gendered Members in Ministry in Acts and Paul: Women, Ministry and the Gospel, Exploring New Paradigms*, ed. Mark Husband Timothy Larsen (Downers Grove: Inter University Press, 2007), 105.

Church Ghana, history of the Kwadaso Methodist Church as well as women and Christian ministry.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **THE ACTIVITIES AND IMPACT OF THE METHODIST WOMEN'S TRAINING CENTER**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The discussion in the previous chapter covered some historical background study relating to the research work. These include a brief history of the Methodist church Ghana, history of the Kwadaso Methodist church, as well as the women and Christian ministry. This chapter discusses the activities and impact of the Methodist woman's Training center. The issues considered here include the origin of the Methodist woman's training centre, the nature of the activities and achievements of the centre as well as some challenges confronting the centre.

#### **3.2 The Nature of the Activities of the Centre**

The centre currently runs these main vocational courses: Catering, Fashion, Cosmetology, Bead making, Parazone and Liquid soup. The school employs sixteen (16) tutors and one hundred and twenty (120) students.

Methodist Woman's Training Centre is now officially registered with COTVET through Ghana National Vocational Training Institutes (GNAVTI) which has helped the Centre to be among one of the four schools which was selected from Ashanti Region to run the "The Deutsche Gesellschaft fur International Zusammenarbeit" (GIZ) programme. A German programme which focus on offering skills training for the informal sector in Fashion and Cosmetology.

### **3.3 The Impact of the Centre**

**Sport:** In terms of sporting activities, the centre participated in the 2017 Inter school and colleges sport competition and placed 18<sup>th</sup> out of 32 schools in the Ashanti Region. Methodist Woman's Training Centre is one of the leading missionary schools in Ghana offering accessible quality education and skill training to the youth and adult in both the formal and informal sector irrespective of the individual social health status. The centre also offers quality services and training for persons with disability to develop them and advance their careers.

The school exists to serve the community and nation, their doors are opened to all, including the 'special children' and those with 'Autism' because of their special need. They highly believe and accept the fact that 'DISABILITY IS NOT INABILITY'. So many special children and those with autism passed through the institution to develop themselves in order to advance in their careers.

Adwoa Pinamang, who was one of these special children has completed successfully. She came from Jamasi School for the Deaf and performed marvelously well in both curriculum and co-curricular activities, making an average score of grade C in all subjects. She was part of the Cadet Corps and most of their active groups such as chorography in the school. She is now working and married with a child.<sup>41</sup> However, the likes of Evangel Amponsah Acheampong, Kodjoe Sabina and Majorie Boateng are still with the school and their performance rises day in and day out.

### **3.4 Some Challenges of the Centre**

Though committed to provide the highest standards of ethical behavior and discipline by strategizing to improve performance of special children and those with autism, but

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<sup>41</sup> The Methodist Church Ghana, Kumasi Diocese, 56<sup>th</sup> Annual Synod Report (2017), 306.

they are also faced with numerous challenges. Some of these challenges are within their scope to solve but others are insurmountable. Major ones include;

- Lack of public address system
- Need for a bus that can transport students during outdoor educational activities, since the bus donated to the school by the PTA is broken down and now beyond repairs and out of use.
- The buildings are old and need some renovation
- Official vehicle for office use is not in good condition.

Among these challenges, the most urgent one are outlined below,

#### **3.4.1 Lack of special Facilitators and Counselors**

The institution lacks a special facilitator who will communicate effectively with the disable students. It becomes very difficult for communication to be smooth between facilitator and these students.

#### **3.4.2 Lack of Adequate Support**

The institution has no support from government, other Government and Non-governmental agencies and it possess challenge to the institution in providing adequate skills and training to those with autism and children with special needs.

In order for the institution to equip “special need children” and those with ‘autism’ they need skills training to enable them to be effective and efficient with current trends. They call on families to prioritize and make their relatives with disability in this institution their core responsibility.

### **3.4.3 Negligence**

A lot of these special children and those with Autism suffer rejection from family members. Family members hardly visit such children at school and this impact on their performance because they always feel rejected and ignored.

### **3.4.4 Financial Challenges**

The school is fully a mission school being funded entirely by the Methodist Church Ghana. The institution only charges moderate fees to enable easy access to the school irrespective of the income level of the parents of these children. Autism and “special children” hardly pay their fees and it widens the financial burden of the institution.<sup>42</sup>

### **3.4.5 Enrollment**

Due to the fact that Senior High Schools offer course in vocational skills, this has affected the enrollment at the centre. The reason for this is that those attending the SHS can easily gain admission to tertiary institution than their counterparts from vocation institutions. Students, who desire to pursue high education in vocational skills, would often choose to attend the SHS instead of the vocational school.

### **3.4.6 Admissions**

According to Aretha Ama Graham Addai, the current Principal, one major challenge facing the centre is the caliber of students they admit. Some of the students admitted performed below average whilst in the JHS they find it difficult to understand and express themselves in the English language. When admitted English language is the medium of Instruction at the centre. The language as a medium of instruction has become a hindrance especially to those at the proficiency level.

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<sup>42</sup> The Methodist Church Ghana, Kumasi Diocese, 56<sup>th</sup> Annual Synod Report (2017), 306.

Due to this problem, the centre often separates those writing the proficiency examination from those who will be writing the trade examination, because the proficiency examination demands more practical work. For lack of space, the centre has to combine both the proficiency and trade students.

#### **3.4.7 Textbooks**

The centre has no library for student reference purpose and private study. Again the students do not have enough relevant course textbook to facilitate their study. This eventually affects students performance and teachers research work.

#### **3.5 Conclusion**

The chapter discussed the activities and achievements of the Methodist Women's Training Centre at Kwadaso. It also addressed some of the challenges which confront the centre in the discharge of its core mandate.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

#### **THE METHODIST WOMEN'S TRAINING CENTRE AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT**

##### **4.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter examined the Methodist Women's Training Centre with reference to its programmes and nature of its activities as well as the impact of its programmes. This chapter is an evaluation and analysis of the findings made from a theoretical perspective. It considers issues such as the Bible and women empowerment Christian women and the contemporary society, as well as the church and women empowerment.

##### **4.2 Data Analysis**

###### **4.2.1 Data Description**

Data collection for this study was targeted for twenty (20) respondents who were selected based on their ability to respond to the questions in the interview session. The respondents were made up of the rector of the Methodist Women's Training Centre, officials of the Methodist Education Unit, as well as some students of the Methodist Womens Training Centre. The analysis of the data is presented in chart 1 below.

## Personal data

**Chart 1: Age Distribution**

Age Range	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
41-60	3	15
31-40	4	20
18-30	9	45
14-17	4	20
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>

## Interpretation

The age range of the interviewees were stated from fourteen (14) to sixty (60). The researcher chose this age range because they can all undergo training at that time. Most of the respondents fell within the age range of eighteen (18) to thirty (30). It is obvious that this age group is characterized with learning of a trade or schooling because every individual prepares himself or herself for the future. Other age range covered those who were either instructors or beneficiaries of the training centers. All the views are relevant to this study. The age range is 14 to 60. Three (3) of the respondent were within the ages of 41-60 which is fifteen percent (15%). Four (4) of the respondents were within the ages of 31-40 which is twenty percentage (20%). The majority of the respondents were teenagers within the ages of 18-30 which formed forty-five percent (45%) of the total respondents. This indicate that, majority of the respondents were within the ages of 18 to 30 years.

**Chart 2: Gender Distribution**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>No of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Male	1	5
Female	19	95
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>

**Interpretation**

Out of the twenty respondents nineteenth (19) of them were females representing ninety-five percent (95%) and one (1) male respondent representing five percent (5%). The male respondent interviewed was an official of Methodist Education unit. Both genders were engaged during the interview, even though the majority of the interviewees were females. Nineteen (19) females were interviewed which represents ninety-five percent (95%). This was because the facility is purposely for women.

**Chart 3: Motivation for Women's Training**

<b>Basis of Motivation</b>	<b>No of Respondents in Interview</b>	<b>Positive Responses</b>		<b>Negative Responses</b>	
Biblical Examples	20	16	80%	4	20%
Achievers in the Society	20	9	45%	11	55%
Recognition in the Church	20	5	25%	15	50%
Self-Motivation	20	5	25%	15	75%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20</b>				



### **Motivation for Women's Training**

The interpretation of responses is as follows: positive response (PR) and negative response (NR).

Research interview question one (1)

The respondents were interviewed on the motivation for the training of women. Sixteen (16) out of the twenty (20) respondents said they were motivated by biblical examples of women who rose up in their time. This is eighty-percent (80%) of the total number interviewed. Nine (9) respondents said they were motivated by some women achievers in the society, who have become role models for them. This number represents forty-five percent (45%) of the total number interviewed. Five (5) respondents said they took their motivation from the church where some of them have been recognized and given opportunity to showcase their gifts and talents, thus making a contribution to the church's growth. This number represents twenty-five percent (25%). However, fifteen (15) respondents said, they find themselves in church situations where women have been relegated to the background, by their male counterparts who only see them as "weaker vessels." This respondent represents seventy five percent (75%) of the total number of people interviewed. Finally five (5) respondents said their motivation comes from themselves, in the sense that they are confident that they can make it in life without relying on anybody, hence the reason for their training. This represents twenty-five percent (25%) of the total number of people interviewed.

### **Interpretation**

The statement about the biblical examples that motivated the women were purposely meant to bring out how some of the women ended up in the school. Sixteen (16) out of the twenty (20) said they were motivated by their biblical examples.

The statement that concerns their achievement in the society, was meant to find out the impact of the training centre in the Kwadaso municipality. From the analysis above it can be said that the impact of the school in the community in terms of achievement is low. The statement concerning recognition by the church majority of the respondents gave a negative response which means that the church does not have much interest in the training centre. In terms of self motivation, it was observed that majority of the people were not self-motivated in undergoing such training.

### **Summary of the Analysis**

From the analysis of the basis for motivation, it could be said that, the biblical example is very positive in the life of the people. This represents eighty percent (80%) of the people interviewed. However, other areas like achievers in the society, recognition in the church, self-motivation is not encouraging in the school. The leadership should devise a strategy to improve on these areas as the study has revealed.

### **Impact of the Methodist Women's Training Centre**

<b>Nature of Impact</b>	<b>No of Respondents</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
Institutional Achievement	3	Participation in sports competitions
Skills Development	20	Programmes designed to train student to develop employable skills.
Sense of Womanhood	18	Institution inculcates into the students the sense of womanhood to range their self confidence.
Academic Advancement	4	Some students are able to pursue further studies upon completing their studies at the centre.

## **Evaluation of student statistics for the past six years**

### **Total student (Full and part time) by course**

Course	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/14	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017	Total
Catering	137	129	110	95	80	106	657
Dressmaking	94	80	64	48	48	63	397
Cosmetology	26	25	16	9	7	18	101
Total	257	234	190	152	135	187	1104

For the past 6 years until the current administration, the centre has enrolled 1104 students. Out of this number 17% are students who are still under training, 25% has gained admission into various universities offering Diploma courses. 30% has also gained admission into polytechnic institutions 10% engaging in entrepreneurial skills.

The current principal of the centre is Aretha Ama Graham. Before then, the centre had been headed by Afriyie Amankwah (Mrs) and Grace Ampofo (Very Rev). Mrs. Amankwah was the longest serving principal since the inception of the centre.

## **4.3 Summary of Findings**

### **4.3.1 The Bible and Women Empowerment**

The situation at the Methodist Women's Training Centre shows that the women have what it takes to do ministry. According to history, women are serving in their small ways and this has contributed significantly to the growth of their churches. Out of the twenty (20) respondents that were interviewed, sixteen (16) of them strongly agreed that women have a place in the church and should be given the opportunity and encouragement to train in order to acquire skills. Do women have a place in the

church's ministry? The work of the Methodist Women's Training Centre supports the fact that women have the potential to serve God with their talents in the church. The issue about women ministry in the church has received varying responses and debates. Scholars are divided over the ministry of women in the church, while others think otherwise saying women are only to play supportive roles in the church and not involved in any ministry functions. This situation has persisted over the years making some women think they have nothing to do in the church. However, it can be noted that some women have risen up and taking the task of ministry more seriously. For such women they believe women played active roles in biblical times especially in the first century church and even in the ministry of Jesus, and therefore it is not out of place for them to get involved in ministry.

The argument against the involvement of women in the ministry of the church is often borne out of the patriarchal mentality of our culture as Africans. The African culture places women in the domestic roles, as wives and mothers and supporting the men. But how long can women remain in the subordinate and supportive roles? But we need to understand that at the time of Jesus, the Jewish culture placed women in secondary positions. They were considered as people with nothing to contribute. For Jews, women were considered as second grade humans. However, it is important to note that Jesus never bought into this Jewish mentality. According to Ward Powers, in Jesus' ministry, his attitude to women was committing to them a share of the work in the ministry and continues to view women in that aspect after his ascension. Jesus cut across the common attitudes of his day; furthermore he showed his disciples that in his kingdom women had an equal and honoured place.<sup>43</sup> Robert Saucy agrees with

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<sup>43</sup> Ward Powers, *The Ministry of Women in the Church: Which Way Forward?* (Adelaide, Australia: SPACK, 1996), 21.

this position by saying that scripture reveals a significant ministry of Women among God's people especially in the New Testament Church.<sup>44</sup>

Even though this patriarchal mentality that seeks to limit women still persist in some churches today, the work of the Methodist Women Training Centre shows what women can do if properly trained. Here women have been given the opportunity to train in various disciplines. In the view of Grace Marfo, a past student, she is very proud of being a past student of the Methodist Training Centre. She sees her position as an opportunity to serve God and His people. According to her, she is self-employed and takes active role in helping to develop the younger ones towards their future roles.<sup>45</sup>

The work of the centre is in line with biblical norms that enjoin the church to develop its members both spiritually and physically in acquiring the necessary skills. (1 Peter 4:10)

The Bible also shows that women rose up to leadership roles. Examples include Esther (Esther 1-11), Deborah (Judges 4:4, 5:7-15), Huldah the Prophetess (2 Kings 22:12-20).

#### **4.3.2 Christian Women and the Contemporary Society**

The training offered by the Methodist Women's Training Centre is intended to inculcate into the ladies, first, the sense of self confidence. It is this self confidence that enables them to pursue career development. As the women graduate from the centre, they do not only go out with employable skills but also the sense of

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<sup>44</sup> Robert Saucy, "Women Prohibition to Teach Men: An Investigation into its Meaning and Contemporary Application." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* Vol. 37, No. 1, (1994): 79.

<sup>45</sup> Interview with Grace Marfo, Past Student, Methodist Women's Training Centre, Kwadaso Kumasi, 12<sup>th</sup> April, 2018.

womanhood, well prepared to take active roles in the society in terms of marriage and home.

It is important to note that some women often do not complete high levels of education because they have children at young ages, and need to earn some income to support their children. The Methodist Women's Training Centre gives opportunity to such young women to train to acquire employable skills. This action by the church to establish the centre is a step in the right direction and is a contribution to the development of the society.

Irene Odotei has also observed that the power and status of women in traditional governance in Africa have received considerable attention in the past few years. She concludes that the corridors of power cannot be seen as exclusive male preserves. They are open to both men and women. There are evidences to show that women have broken the frontiers and occupied these top positions.<sup>46</sup>

In Ghana mention can be made of Mrs. Theodora Wood, a member of the Assemblies of God Church, who became a chief justice in Ghana.

There are enough grounds to support the fact that Christian women can make substantial contribution to society in various capacities, if they are given the right motivation, and trained just as is given to men. The work of the Methodist Women's Training Centre testifies to the fact that Christian women can make a right mark in the society. As they acquire employable skills, they become income earners to support their families and the nation at large. Thus, Christian women can rise above mediocrity, laziness, inferior complex and develop self-confidence to rise to the top. Christian women of today are required to continue in the paths of other Christian

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<sup>46</sup> Irene K. Odotei and Albert K. Awedoba, *Chieftancy in Ghana: Cultural, Governance and Development* (Accra: Sub-Saharan Publishers, 2006), 81.

women who have contributed to society in the past which resulted in society/nation building and should be encouraged.

#### **4.3.3 The Church and Women Empowerment**

It has been noted that women can make significant contributions to the church and society. Even though some women have climbed to significant positions in the church and society, that has not been without problems. In traditional society women are seen performing important political roles, even to the point of making decisions. In the church, some women are into ministry. Women who are house wives give off their best in terms of housekeeping or home management. They act as support for their husbands in bringing up the children.

Despite the various achievements of women at all levels in the church and the society, it is important to note that they can do more if the church put in measures to empower them both spiritually and physically. They also need to be empowered emotionally by encouraging and motivating them. If women activities do not receive support and opportunities are denied them, how do we achieve this? How can the women raise their self-esteem and confidence in the church and society? The role of the church in lifting the image of women in the midst of patriarchal mentality of the society is very much critical. Women empowerment goes beyond what they do. It involves given them the opportunity to develop themselves, adding value to themselves and making them usable in the church and society.

In today's church and society, there are some forms of limitations on women. For instance in terms of leadership women are sometimes discriminated against and denied opportunity. This denial is not usually based on competence. But should women be denied opportunity of involvement in ministry on the basis of competence

or for the fact that they are women? In some situations, there is no motivation for women to aspire for ministry and where there is, it is usually insufficient. Again support for women activities seems inadequate as budgets for programmes are either slashed or cancelled entirely and women activities are less patronized due to poor or insufficient publicity.

Despite all the challenges that confront women in the ministry of the church, some women are doing their best in their various areas. A lot needs to be done to raise the image of women through support and motivation. If women were involved in the ministry of the early church and were highly recognized, women of today should also be given the opportunity and motivated to go higher in ministry.

In the Book of Acts we read of Dorcas, Phoebe, Priscilla and other women who in various ways supported the ministry of the early church. In terms of ministry women also have what it takes to support the growth of the church. We are yet to see women taken over as administrative heads of churches. Women are competent and are capable of handling all forms of ministry in the church today.

#### **4.4 Girl-Child Education and Nation Building – The Critical Role of the Church**

It has once been reported that Kwegyir Aggrey had said that “if we educate a man we educate one person, but if we educate a women, we educate a nation.” From this assertion, it is significant to note that girls can make positive impact on the nation’s developmental agenda if they are given education: Education is intended to help people not only to acquire knowledge, but also skills. The nation thus stands to gain if its educational policies reflect the quest to develop all aspects of its citizens.



Much as we offer formal education to people, we should address the informal sector which involves vocational and technical skills development. The nation should prioritize the education of girls and put measures in place to advance their course. Others, who do not have the requisite qualification to pursue higher academic levels, should be given access to vocational and technical education. This in a way will help reduce the high incidence of child marriage, and teenage pregnancy in the country.

Religious bodies, including the church have gained much success in the education of the girl child, but much remains to be done. It is important to note that in the society, not all girls get the opportunity to pursue high education in terms of achievements. Again some will attempt but fall out on the way. Still there may be other girls who do not even get the opportunity to pursue academic excellence, due to early marriage, divorce of their parents, death of parents, early motherhood through child birth and some other factors. Against this background it will be prudent to commend the Methodist Church, Ghana for setting up the Methodist Women's Training Centre. The objective behind the establishment of the centre is very much commendable and need to be emulated by all churches and other religious bodies. It is important that the church should go beyond its emphasis on spirituality and help develop the total personality of its members.

The training of the girl child will help address problems such as early marriages, unemployment, prostitution and other anti-social problems. When the girl child is given quality education, and the opportunity to develop her skills and God-given talents, the nation stands to gain tremendously. It is a matter of significance for the church and society to realize that education should not be limited only to the academic, but also the acquisition of employable skills, the act of home keeping and management and the development of self image and confidence as human persons.

## **4.5 Conclusion**

The chapter evaluated data on the findings made in the study. It analyzed the data by considering the data description, summary of the analysis including girl child education and nation building, the significant role of the church.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Summary of the Study**

The study was designed to examine the genesis and growth of the Methodist Women's Training Centre at Kwadaso. The report of the study was divided into five chapters. The introductory chapter considered the general introduction to the study, statement of problem, research questions, aim and objectives of the study, scope and focus of the study, research methodology, literature review, significance of the study, as well as the organization and content of the study.

The study also examined some background issues which include a brief history of the Methodist Church, Ghana, history of the Kwadaso Methodist Church, history of the Methodist Women's Training Centre as well as women and ministry from biblical perspective. Furthermore, the study examined the Methodist Women's Training Centre with reference to where it is coming from and where it is now. Among the issues addressed are an overview of the centre, the nature of its activities, the impact of the centre over the years, as well as some challenges which confront the centre in its activities.

Moreover, the study evaluated and analyzed data on the findings so far made from a theological perspective. It considered issues such as description of the data, analysis with a summary including the education of the girl child, the role of the church. The study concludes with a summary, conclusion and makes some recommendations.

## **5.2 Conclusion of the Study**

It can be noted from biblical history that Christianity emerged from Judaism and the Graeco-Roman culture, both of which were patriarchal societies that placed men in places of prominence and authority. In terms of marriage, society and governance, it was evident that women were relegated to the periphery and women issues were never considered as important. Today and as it has ever been, African societies are not different in their attitude towards women and women matters in general. With the emergence of the church in Africa, it was expected that the situation could change as was ministered alongside the men. But that has received little consideration in African Churches. Even though some women are into ministry, their numbers seem to be smaller as compared to the men.

In the traditional societies, some women function as queen mothers and play critical roles when it comes to decision making in the state. However, women have been perceived as house wives, raising up children and playing supportive roles to their husbands. This negative perception and attitude towards women need to be reversed and the role of the church in this regard is very much critical.

The example of the Methodist Church, Ghana, in setting up the Methodist Women's Training Centre at Kwadaso needs to be commended as a step in the right direction. The impact of the activities of the centre clearly demonstrates that the church can play a critical role in positioning women in the society by raising their sense of womanhood, and developing their God-given talents. Against the background of the perception that women have nothing to offer, the Methodist Women's Training Centre has proved that women, when given the opportunity, encouragement and motivation, can rise above all seeming limitations and contribute their quota to nation building. The development of girls through vocational and technical education is prerequisite to

national development if we are to see a reduction, if not total elimination of such vices as prostitution, drug abuse as well as women unemployment, early marriages and early motherhood. A self-employed women is very confident in herself and is a mentor and role model for up and coming girls in the society.

Therefore, girl child education especially through vocational and technical skills development should be considered as a matter of priority and urgency by the church and nation as a whole.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

In the light of the findings of the research, the followings measures are being put forward.

#### **5.3.1 Creation of Vocational and Technical Training Fund**

Against the background that many girls do not get the opportunity to pursue higher academic education, the pursuance of vocational and technical training becomes a significant option. This also requires that much attention is given to skills development in the development of the girls. It is recommended that churches set up vocational and technical training fund which can be used to support the training or less unfortunate girls, who for one reason or the other, has not had the opportunity to pursue academic education or have fallen out for lack of support. Such a fund is necessary in complementing the efforts of government in its human resource development initiatives.

### **5.3.2 Women Empowerment Conferences and Seminars**

In the light of the little or lack of relevant information on women empowerment initiatives, and the championing of women issues, it is recommended that churches and other women organizations should organize women empowerment conferences and seminars to show case women issues and initiatives. Such fora can offer the opportunity for young girls to aspire to greater heights even in the midst of their limitations, by receiving information on what women can do. Again such fora can help reduce or eradicate the negative perceptions about women which tend to push them to the background. Such conferences and seminars can offer some women achievers in the society and church circles to demonstrate their achievements, to serve as motivation for young girls to aspire to greater heights in life.

### **5.3.3 Women Issues as Part of the Curricular of Church Schools**

It has been noted that the church has a critical role to play in the education and development of the girl child. In order to realize its dream, it is recommended that churches place women issues higher on the curricular of its schools. Those churches without their own schools should also consider the possibility of setting up schools to train their members in their own values and principles. In doing so, the church can become an important partner of government in the provision of quality and unbiased education to all citizens of the nation. Again, seminars and theological studies departments of universities should also consider women issues as part of their programmes of study in order to sensitize their students on the need to develop positive mindset on women issues based on biblical position on women.

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## **PERSONALITIES INTERVIEWED**

Christian Takyi-Adjei, Society Steward and President of Bethel Methodist Society Kwadaso, 18<sup>th</sup> November, 2017.

Grace Marfo, Past Student, Methodist Womens Training Centre, Kwadaso Kumasi, 12<sup>th</sup> April, 2018.

Regina Quao, Diocesan Treasurer, 12<sup>th</sup> November, 2017.

Mrs. Aretha Ama Graham, 14<sup>th</sup> February, 2018.

## **APPENDIX I**

### **INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. What motivated the Methodist Church to establish the Methodist Women's Training Centre?
2. How did the centre begin?
3. What activities take place at the centre?
4. What has been the success story of the centre since its inception?
5. What challenges, if any, have confronted the centre in the discharge of its activities, since its existence?
6. What measures can be put in place to sustain the training of women in Ghana?
7. What role can the church play in the development of women?

**APPENDIX II**

**RELEVANT PICTURES**



**Methodist Community School at Kwadaso**



**The Cosmetology Department**





**Class Session at Methodist Women's Training Center**





**Catering Department**