FACTORS INFLUENCING WOMEN'S NON PARTICIPATION IN CHURCH ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP IN THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF EAST AFRICA, MILIMANI PRESBYTERY, NAIROBI COUNTY; 1908-2012

By

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DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University, or award.

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DEDICATION
This thesis is dedicated to my dad Samson Mwaura and my mother Irene Wangari who opened the doors for my schooling. To my dear husband, George Wainaina and my two daughters, Elizabeth Mumbi and Irene Nduta for their understanding and support during the time I worked late on weekends to beat deadlines and thereby complete the study. Their patience gave me the will to succeed. I owe my success to their support.
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I am humbled as I thank God for bringing me this far in my academic ladder. Indeed God is Ebenezer, for this far He has helped me. May honour and glory be to Him alone for this great achievement. My appreciation goes to all parties whose diverse contributions enabled me complete this work successfully. I am particularly grateful to my supervisors, Dr. Ruth Muthei and Dr. Josephine Gitome of Kenyatta University Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, for their valuable guidance and support. Their encouragement and patience through the process of developing this thesis kept me hopeful even when the journey seemed too hard.

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OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Administrative Leadership: The executive arm of the Milimani presbytery comprising of the moderator, clerk, deputy clerk, treasurer and finance chairperson.

Category A: This is one of the categories in the presbytery. It comprises all church ministers within a presbytery and a corresponding number of elders in the Presbyterian Church of East Africa. Among other functions, it deals with the elections of the administrative leadership in the presbytery and the General Assembly.

Church Minister: A trained and ordained person in the PCEA who is charged with administration of church sacraments (Baptism and Lord’s Supper), preaching, teaching and administration of church business. Church Minister is also referred to as a teaching elder, a term highlighting his/her teaching role in the church.

Church Structure: The organization of the church courts in a hierarchical order.

Courts: A government by elected elders, meeting in representative assemblies in ascending order in the PCEA. The Church has three courts, namely; the parish session (Kirk session), the presbytery and the General Assembly.

Deacon/Deaconess: Full PCEA members, elected lay officials who offer assistance to the elders and the church ministers.

District: A geographical area in which part of the membership of the parish reside. The elder takes charge over it and is assisted by deacons/deaconesses. The district is divided into zones and each deacon/deaconess is in charge of a zone.

Elder: A lay person in the PCEA appointed from among PCEA full members and ordained for life by the Parish session with authority from the presbytery category “A.” The elder assists the church minister in the administration of the church business and oversees spiritual work in a district.

Evangelist: A person appointed from among PCEA full members by the parish session to teach bible classes, catechism and to preach without necessarily receiving training and ordination.

Full Member: A baptized PCEA member, who has undergone catechism classes and partakes the Holy Communion.
**General Administration Committee:** One of the main committees of the General Assembly. It meets every year when there is no General Assembly and like the General Assembly it has two categories. The first category is made up of ministers drawn from presbyteries and a corresponding number of elders. They are also known as commissioners. The second category is made up of the commissioners and a section of group leaders known as Delegates. Its office bearers are the officials of the General Assembly.

**General Assembly:** The supreme policy-making body of the PCEA and the highest court of appeal for any disputes originating from the lower courts. It is made up of all the presbyteries. It has two categories. The first category is made up of ministers drawn from presbyteries and a corresponding number of elders. They are also known as commissioners. The second category is made up of the commissioners and a section of group leaders known as Delegates.

**Kirk Session:** The lowest court of the Presbyterian courts which comprises of the church minister and the elders within a parish. Its role includes administration and pastoral care. Every elder, takes charge over a designated geographical area in which the membership of the parish reside.

**Parish:** A geographical area covering one or several congregations in the PCEA. Each parish is served by a Kirk session.

**Presbytery:** A geographical area covered by eleven parishes under Milimani presbytery. The presbytery oversees both the spiritual and administrative growth of the parishes within its jurisdictions. Its composition has two categories; category A, and the full presbytery. Full presbytery is made up of members of category A along with presbyterial group leaders.

**Woman’s Guild:** Fellowship of women in the PCEA, whose main objective is to bring together PCEA women to Christian fellowship.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>CMS</td>
<td>Church Missionary Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSM</td>
<td>Church of Scotland Mission</td>
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<tr>
<td>EASM</td>
<td>East African Scottish Mission</td>
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<tr>
<td>GA</td>
<td>General Assembly</td>
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<tr>
<td>GAC</td>
<td>General Administrative Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>GP</td>
<td>Gender Parity</td>
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<td>LCC</td>
<td>Local Church Committee</td>
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<td>NT</td>
<td>New Testament</td>
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<tr>
<td>OT</td>
<td>Old Testament</td>
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<tr>
<td>PCA</td>
<td>Presbyterian Church in America</td>
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<td>PCEA</td>
<td>Presbyterian Church of East Africa</td>
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<tr>
<td>PCMF</td>
<td>Presbyterian Church Men’s Fellowship</td>
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<tr>
<td>PP</td>
<td>Practice and Procedure</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNCSW</td>
<td>United Nations Commission on the Status of Women</td>
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<tr>
<td>WG</td>
<td>Woman’s Guild</td>
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ABSTRACT
The study set out to investigate factors that influence women’s low participation in church administrative leadership in the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA) Milimani Presbytery. Globally, women are underrepresented in many sectors of the society, and the church is no exception. Even though there are no policies, which specifically bar women’s leadership, barriers exist beneath the surface. Women’s underrepresentation in church administrative leadership is also widely seen across churches. In the PCEA men dominate the upper echelons of leadership, a phenomenon that is currently creating considerable concern within the church circles. Despite the fact that the PCEA constitution gives opportunity to both men and women to be eligible in administrative church leadership, a low number of women have managed to enter into administrative church leadership positions. The low participation of women in administrative Church leadership reflects great disparity. The study explored how women’s low participation in administrative church leadership emanates from their place and role in society, church structure, culture and the missionary’s education influence. The theoretical framework used in this study explored patriarchal ideology by Iglitzin and Ross and gender role ideology by Peterson and Runyan as the main root of low participation of women in church administrative leadership. In total the sampled population was 150. The researcher employed descriptive survey design and data analysis used descriptive statistics, narratives and verbatim citations. The target population included members of PCEA Milimani Presbytery. The target groups comprised of the Parish Ministers, Elders, Church Group Leaders, General Assembly Officials and departmental heads and the lay women/men members. The respondents within the target groups were selected purposively based on their position in church, gender and age. Four research methods were used namely observation, questionnaire, oral interviews and document analysis. While women were found to be involved in church activities, most of them continued to hold minimal responsibility in the administrative decision-making process. It was clear from the study that, women are hardly visible in the highest courts, which is even exemplified by the historical fact that, no woman has ever been elected to the General Assembly office since the church was founded in the East Africa region in 1891. Nonetheless, majority of women dominate the church leadership service at the congregation level. To cater to the unique needs of women and men, it is incumbent upon the church to review its gender inclusiveness. The researcher recommended that; PCEA members be conscientized on women’s participation, in order to impress the importance of women in administrative leadership positions; men and women should jointly raise the issue of women’s underrepresentation and advocate on how women will hold this administrative positions; women should challenge oppressive culture that men are superior while women inferior with liberating power of Gospel and PCEA should encourage adoption of mandatory percentage electoral quota in administrative church leadership.
CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter entails the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose and significance of the study. It also presents the research questions and objectives, as well as the significance of the study. It also focuses on the scope, assumptions and limitations of the study. The chapter delves into literature and past studies done on women and church leadership. It also explores the theoretical framework that guided the study. Finally, the chapter presents a brief description of the research design, the target population, the sample and sampling procedure. It also presents the instruments used for data collection, their reliability and validity. The procedure, method of data analysis and ethical considerations are further discussed.

1.1 Background to the Study

Women face unique challenges today as they attempt to ascend to leadership positions in organizations and especially in the political arena. The explanation of this from a global context elicits varied reasons. Wambura (2006: 2-3), for instance, cites cultural and societal impediments as factors which limit women from full participation in leadership processes. Oduyoye (1995:167) points out that in Africa, low-public attitude towards women’s role in society remains the chief obstacle to effective participation in leadership. In a patriarchal society, women’s search for an enhanced status is subjected to the dynamics of power, authority, different influences, and social expectations that tend to undermine equality. As the church in Africa operates in the patriarchal domain, the low-rating perception of women as leaders tends to filter into the church. The expression of the challenges is seen with
institutionalized and individual discrimination of women across all public sectors. Major responsibility for the family life is perceived as the station of women, while men take roles in the public. Low confidence among women compared to that of men as this study establishes, is also a factor that impact leadership and its expectations in the church.

A Christian woman in Africa today finds it difficult to ascend to senior positions in leadership. She is surrounded by traditional, cultural, social, economic, and political barriers as well as a history of church enforcing patriarchal values (Gathogo, 2008: 2). Today women dominate the pews in the churches although they are conspicuously absent from the power structures (Mwaura, 2005:411). Women representation in Church administrative leadership is clearly an issue that cannot be ignored.

Mbiti (1969: 69-82) observes that some African myths speak about an original mother of humankind, from whom all people originated. For example, the Akposso of Togo tell that when UwoLOWU (God) made men, He first made a woman on earth and bore with her the first child, the first human being. The Ibibio of Nigeria say that human beings came from the divinity (Obumo) which was the son of the mother-divinity Eka-Abassi. The main idea is to link human life directly with God through the woman who is created by God, and in turn becomes the instrument of human life. Through the myth of origin we get the picture of a woman as someone placed by God in a special position and shares with Him the creative process of life.
In African Traditional Religion (ATR), women are valuable in the sight of the society. They not only bear life, but also nurture it (Mbiti, 1969: 69-82; Mbiti, 1975: 156) further notes that in the traditional African life, women played a significant role in the religious activities as they offered prayers for their families in particular and their communities in general. The women were trained by priests or diviners and they would learn to communicate with the living dead and spirits. Akiiki (1994:37) observes that mediums that were important in traditional medical practice are found in most African societies mainly in western Africa, such as among the Yoruba of Nigeria, Asante and Ewe of Ghana and in Kenya mediums were found among the Akamba. When Christian missionaries came to Africa, they found the Africans practicing their African religious traditions that were inclusive of women and men. The missionaries failed to recognize the significant roles played by women in African religious tradition, where women were found in religious leadership such as being mediums, seers, ritual elders and priests (Mbiti, 1975:32).

In the context of the early Church, a mixture of attitudes towards women characterized the period following the death and resurrection of Jesus. Torjesen (1993:12), points out that these differing strands were often influenced by the social setting of the time. On one hand, women played prominent roles including leadership in Church. On the other hand, they were made to feel that their place was in the home and that having leadership in the Church was inappropriate for them.

The Acts of Apostles point out some of the roles played by women. They included: forming of the first congregation (Acts 17: 4); holding the office of the evangelist
(Acts 18: 2-3); being prophetess (Acts 21: 9) and holding other leadership positions.

In Philippians 4:2 women labored and struggled with Paul in his work. Among the persons mentioned in Romans 16, six are women, and they are all said to have participated in the building up of the Christian communities. Phoebe is an example of a woman whom Paul commends to the recipients of the letter. She was a deaconess, minister and a helper in the early Church in Cenchrea (Rom.16:1). Phoebe was highly regarded by the Church as a leader and she played a major role in Paul’s ministry. A critical analysis of the New Testament creates a scenario which shows that women were not excluded from fulfilling the Great Commission.

The historical origin of Presbyterianism is that it has its roots in the Reformed tradition of John Calvin and later developments under John Knox. John Knox, a student of John Calvin, gained experience and knowledge of Reformed theology and Presbyterian polity. He created a new order of service, which was eventually adopted by the Free Church of Scotland (Mc Intosh, 1969: 91-163).

The Presbyterian churches have been established throughout the world by the missionary movement of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The Presbyterian Church of East Africa is about 123 years old. The church was started in 1891 as an effort of Scottish Presbyterian missionaries from Scotland and American Baptist missionaries from Connecticut, United States of America (U.S.A). The Presbyterian stream appeared first as a private venture, directed towards Kibwezi (Macpherson, 1970: 21). In 1889, Sir William Mackinnon (chairperson of the Imperial British East
Africa Company) and Alexander Low Bruce (director of the same company), conceived the idea of setting a private Christian mission in the heart of the territory their company was administering on behalf of the British government. This mission was to be called the East African Scottish Mission (EASM) and by its constitution, was to be directed towards religious, educational, medical and industrial ends (Macpherson, 1970: 21).

The American Baptist originated from Moody and Sankey revival campaigns in the United States in the 1870’s and 1880’s and it drew a lot of support from Baptist churches in America and revival groups in the states, situated mostly in the North (Macpherson, 84:1970; Muita, 2003:13). It was set up for the reclamation of men from the power of evil by faith in Christ, using the techniques of evangelistic preaching and gospel hymn –singing (Macpherson, 84:1970). In 1885 a party of missionaries from United States of America arrived in East Africa and among them was Peter Cameroon Scott, the founder of the African Inland Mission (AIM) and the Rev. and Mrs. T.N.Kreiger representing the Gospel Missionary Society (GMS). The Gospel Missionary Society maintained close links with the AIM and worked under its general direction until sometimes between 1911 and 1913 when it became an independent body. The Gospel Missionary Society was a small mission and at the point of winding up in 1946 it merged with the Church of Scotland Mission (CSM) which was to become the Presbyterian church of East Africa. (Muita, 2003:13-14).

Phiri (1997:43) notes that when Christianity came to Africa, it came as a male dominated religion, which was a contradiction to the African Traditional Religion
(ATR) practices where women played a major role in three areas, mythology, proverbs and prayers. It is from this development that missionary Christianity introduced to Africa a new concept of priesthood. This priesthood was contrary to the African traditional religious cultures in which priesthood was shared by both men and women (Njoku, 2005:242). The missionary policies in dealing with local people’s culture depended on what the home mission policies were aimed at.

The missionaries who came between 1906 and the early 1940’s limited the role of women to what were traditionally regarded as feminine roles in their own societies. Phiri (1997:43) notes that selective appropriation of the traditional culture today is based on the theology of early missionaries with regard to women issues and the Church has not come up with a different position from the one introduced by the early missionaries. The PCEA in Kenya had several ordained African ministers by 1936 though Church administrative leadership was still held by foreign missionaries (Wanyoike, 1974: 140).

In the PCEA structures, the missionaries planned and administered work through mission councils. They were the planners and administrators while the African followers implemented the mission organizations among their people. The first African to hold the position of the moderator of the General Assembly was Rev Charles Kareri in 1961 and since then the position has been male dominated (PCEA, Report of the 18th and 19th General Assembly, 2012). According to the PCEA constitution (1969, 1985, 1998, and 2001) women are entitled to equal participation
with men. However, they have not assumed major roles in higher hierarchies, except in the Woman’s Guild.

Women administrative leadership is strongly established in the Woman’s Guild, where they hold position from the congregational to the national level. If this was followed in practice, it would imply that women and men in PCEA would be given equal opportunities and responsibilities. This however has not been the case since the majorities in administrative church leadership are men. It is against this background this study undertook to explore the underlying causes of low participation of women in administrative leadership in the PCEA Milimani Presbytery Nairobi County.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The PCEA organizational structure has remained patriarchal to the extent that church leadership is synonymous with male representation (PCEA Diary, 2013:3). This is despite the fact that according to the PCEA Constitution (1998:100) both men and women are eligible to hold the Church office. While a limited number of women in Milimani Presbytery have managed to enter into administrative leadership positions of the presbytery clerk and the deputy clerk the positions have mainly remained male dominated (Kangara, 2007:7-8). Studies have shown that advancing to the top rung for women is like a camel passing through the eye of a needle (Wood, 2006:277-293; Meyerson & Tompkins, 2007: 303-322). This is evidenced by the fact that over the last one hundred years since the inception of PCEA in Kenya, there has been no woman in the highest executive position in the General Assembly where vital decisions are made (PCEA Diary, 2013:3).
Several studies including Njoroge (2000); Muita (2003:133); Kangara, (2007) indicate that to date the situation remains unchanged as women are still very few in administrative church leadership in PCEA. The underrepresentation of women in administrative church leadership shows that women’s issues in leadership are not adequately addressed. The cited studies scarcely give evidence on issues that lead to women’s under representation in PCEA Milimani administrative church leadership. This knowledge gap motivated the researcher to carry out a detailed systematic study on factors that influence women’s under representation in PCEA Milimani administrative church leadership. To what extent are women participating in administrative church leadership in Milimani presbytery?. This study was considered crucial in sensitizing the PCEA Milimani presbytery on how women can be involved in administrative church leadership.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The study was guided by the following objectives:

a) Investigate the place and role of women in the PCEA Milimani presbytery.

b) Assess how traditional African culture influences the participation of women in the administrative leadership of the PCEA Milimani presbytery.

c) Establish the impact of missionary education on the place and role of women in the PCEA Milimani presbytery.

d) Examine the influence of the PCEA structures on women participation in the PCEA Milimani presbytery.
1.4 Research Premises

The following premises guided the study:

a) Women are not represented in church administrative leadership in the PCEA Milimani presbytery.

b) The participation of women in church administrative leadership in PCEA Milimani presbytery has been influenced by the traditional African culture.

c) Missionary education has contributed to the low participation of women in PCEA Milimani presbytery administrative church leadership.

d) The PCEA structures have influenced women’s participation in PCEA Milimani presbytery administrative church leadership positions.

1.5 Research Questions

This study was guided by the following research questions:

a) What is the place and role of women in the PCEA Milimani presbytery?

b) Does traditional African culture contribute to women’s low participation in Milimani presbytery church administrative leadership?

c) To what extent did the missionaries’ education influence women’s participation in PCEA Milimani presbytery church administrative leadership?

d) To what extent do the PCEA structures influence women participation in Milimani presbytery Church administrative leadership?
1.6 Justification and Significance of the Study

Women’s under-representation in church leadership raises concern. This is because the church is a very important institution in the society with the ability to influence the welfare of women in the church and in the society. Given that the PCEA is a dominant mainstream church in Kenya with a large proportion of women, it is imperative that equal opportunities for participation to both genders be provided. Therefore, there is need to elucidate the multiple reasons inhibiting women’s participation in administrative leadership as well as recommend ways and strategies for improving their participation.

The choice of the study area is based on the following factors: First, Milimani Presbytery is located within the PCEA St Andrews where the first Presbyterian missionaries in Kenya established their work in 1908. This gives PCEA Milimani Presbytery a historical background of more than a hundred years since the coming of missionaries and the setting of Church structures. Second, the PCEA headquarters are located in Milimani presbytery. This enabled the researcher to access the Church documents easily. In addition, Milimani Presbytery has a representation of the various categories of parishes found in other presbyteries, namely; urban, semi-urban and rural parishes. This gave a balanced picture of factors hindering participation of women in Milimani presbytery administrative church leadership in urban, semi urban and rural parishes in the PCEA.

The cited studies vaguely dealt with factors hindering women participation in administrative Church leadership in PCEA. This knowledge gap motivated the
researcher to carry out a detailed search on factors influencing women’s underrepresentation in administrative Church leadership in PCEA Milimani presbytery.

It is hoped that this study will generate empirical data that can be used by, among others, the PCEA in policy making for the inclusiveness of all stakeholders. Secondly, data obtained may be used by government and any other relevant ministries in formulating policies towards uplifting women in the general area of leadership. Further, it is hoped that findings from the study will contribute to the current debate on Christian teachings on gender and give insights that can enable the church to respond adequately to challenges facing women in the church leadership. It is also hoped that the research will make a contribution towards the achievement of the third Millennium Development Goal that addresses gender equality.

1.7 Scope and Limitations of the Study
The study covered the period between 1908 and 2012. The year 1908 is notable as the year the Church of Scotland Mission opened a mission centre in St Andrews, Nairobi. The year 2008 is also important for it coincided with the first centennial celebration of the establishment of the St Andrews mission by the Church of Scotland Mission. The year 2012 also, marks twenty years after the first woman was ordained in PCEA. Thus one hundred years was deemed a good time frame to examine the participation of women in administrative church leadership in Milimani presbytery. However, the study being historical, that is to say from 1908 to 2012, so to find respondents who had ready data to cover the period the St Andrews station was opened and its formative years was not easy and yet the researcher had to find
the data to make the study relevant. Therefore, the research had to depend on archival materials for instance, journals and historical books to countercheck information from the field.

Due to limitation of time and resources, the research focused on women’s participation in administrative church leadership. There is a possibility that specific areas of their participation when considered separately may yield different findings. Although the Nairobi County covers Nairobi North, Nairobi East, Central, Ngong Hills and Milimani Presbyteries, the study focused only on Milimani Presbytery. This delimitation was done because of the limitation of time and finances allocated to the project.

1.8 Literature Review

The literature reviewed focused on four broad themes: the place and role of women in the church; traditional African culture and its influence in the participation of women in administrative leadership of the PCEA; the impact of missionary education on the place and role of women in the PCEA and the influence of PCEA structures on women participation in the PCEA Milimani church administrative leadership. This information was relevant to this study particularly in assessing factors that influence women participation in PCEA Milimani church administration. This literature review indicated the knowledge gaps that exist in the literature in relation to the research.
1.8.1 The Place and Role of Women in the Church

Leander (1985:22-25) observes that during the remote period of human social organizations, there was fairly high degree of gender equality. There was no aggression by one sex against the other and men and women functioned in different spheres according to their biological abilities and their limits were imposed by nature. The roles of women changed with the transition to a sedentary life in the period of tribal societies and with the beginning of agriculture. He further notes that in the hierarchal pyramid women usually occupy the lower positions and very few manage to rise to the top because the top positions are dominated by men. The same thought is shared by Oduyoye, (1995:127); James, (2003:324). According to these scholars, the role of women in the church mirrors their role in society in which the church finds itself. This partly explains the underrepresentation of women in church administrative leadership.

Nasimiyu-Wasike (1990: 57-69), Kanyoro (1996: 61), James (2003: 77), and Okemwa (2007: 319) indicate that a number of factors influence the role of women in the church. These include patriarchal organizations of society, traditions of specific churches as well as the religious role of women in African indigenous religions. Oduyoye (1995:127); Okemwa (2007:13) notes that in some churches women participation is restricted as a result of levitical restrictions on women due to their uncleanliness during menstruation.

Okemwa (2007: 319) further noted that the place and role of women on the mainline or missionary churches had been influenced by colonialism and the one sided ecclesiology introduced by the missionaries. These roles were further reinforced by
religious developments of the nineteenth century and as such, many women would not get administrative roles in the church. Nevertheless the work they were assigned for was that which required them to work from behind the scenes. The fact that the study was not specifically conducted in Milimani Presbytery created a gap in knowledge with regard to the underrepresentation of women in administrative church leadership.

The white missionary women supported the local congregations and participated in local benevolence efforts. They embraced charitable activities because "it was assumed that prayer, Bible study, soul-winning, and doing good deeds were normal parts of a Christian life." Roles for women in the church, however, were primarily nurturing roles. Teaching, taking care of children, preparing meals, cleaning and decorating the church, singing in the church choir, were the major duties of these early sisters. Women seemed to have been allocated supportive duties (James, 1993:108-110; Muriithi, 2008:9). James (2003:77) points out that when critically analyzed these roles seem to indicate that women’s work is confined to the marginal levels of the church. The researcher agrees with the observations made by James, and further notes that proper duties are generally defined as anything that does not require exercising authority in the church. "Women’s' work" is expected to be done in silence; decorum prevented them over men or doing anything that might conflict with men's primary responsibility of providing Church administrative leadership.

Okemwa (2007:319) observes that although the Protestant churches including the Methodist and PCEA have allowed the ordination of women, there is still more to be done to make this move beneficial to women. They point out that those allocating
duties to women seem to presuppose that women should be allocated supportive duties. Hence although women comprise the majority in the Church and they are also the sustaining force in most congregations, their responsibilities are reproductive. The women have very little power within the structures of the Church. Men are the leaders, making decisions on both policy and doctrine. James (2003:324) confirms this stating that this gender role division implies that women are relegated to a secondary position in comparison to men. Although the above studies indicate women have little power within the structures, the study established that women in PCEA are given equal opportunities with men during the church elections since PCEA constitution allows women to participate in leadership at all levels yet they are underrepresented. This situation raised a concern to the researcher on whether the PCEA elections adequately address women’s participation to give women fair representation in administrative church leadership.

Oduyoye (2001:3-5) points out that women and power are like oil and water in patriarchal societies. She attributes this to traditional mindsets and attitudes going back to generations. She suggests that in the African culture, the voice of the ancestors and the voice of the elders reflect patriarchal concerns. In addition Oduyoye points that men are faced with numerous challenges such as fears, anxiety, and apprehension that power will get into the hands of women.

Based on this perpetuated negative attitude women interested in administrative church leadership are discouraged .This negative attitude towards women is an issue of concern in this study as it is likely to hamper women participation in
administrative church leadership. This tendency has to be shifted, because “Regardless of whether women have a positive or negative impact, they like men, have right to participation in administrative church leadership. In line with this women therefore do have a lot to do with the church. It is important to note regardless of all the roles women play in church they should be a part of the decision making process because “in addition to the potential for women to contribute to successful leadership outcomes, their participation should also be encouraged on the basis of fairness and justice” Women account for more than 50% of the church membership and a successful leadership process cannot ignore more than half of their membership.

Swindler (1979:14-20) observes that in all the gospels, nowhere does Jesus treat women as inferior. He argues that Jesus clearly felt especially sent to the typical classes of “inferior beings,” such as the poor, the lame, sinners and women to call them to freedom and equality in the reign of God. Further, Swindler observes that Jesus attitude towards women is expressed by the Gospel language. Jesus uses women in his stories and sayings, something most unusual for his culture. PCEA constitution that is based on Biblical teaching does not contradict with this teaching. Despite of this, women are underrepresented in administrative church leadership. This indicates there is an urgent need for a concerted effort among PCEA Milimani presbytery members to involve more women in administrative church leadership.

PCEA women have shown their concern in their church administrative roles. In 1963, the Woman’s Guild passed a resolution requesting the GA to discuss the ordination of women elders and ministers (Njoroge, 2000:62). This is because for
one to qualify to be in the administrative church leadership in the Church, one has to be an elder. Njoroge (2000:62-64) observes that the Church resolved to ordain women as elders but not as ministers. Later, women were ordained as ministers but this has not improved the position of women in the church administrative leadership. Njoroge (1992:3-4) reveals that PCEA women have realized having women ordained as elders and ministers does not resolve entirely the problem of under representation of women from administrative church leadership. However, Njoroge does not suggest factors hindering women in church administrative leadership. This study focused more on the underrepresentation of women in administrative church leadership in PCEA Milimani presbytery.

1.8.2 Women in Traditional African Society

James (2003:312) addressing the realities in which women live in the community and in church noted that in patriarchal society a women is faced with a myriad of structures of injustice, oppression and discrimination that causes suffering. She points out that the position of women in relation to men in society is questionable. Oduoye (1995:168) shares the same view and observes that whatever the situation, social cultural norms demand on women submissive and subordinate behavior. The above scholars have dealt with the elevation of men as a result of social-cultural efforts to socialize men as superior as and more powerful in position than women.

From the foregoing discussion, it is evident that patriarchy is one of the central issues for women’s underrepresentation in PCEA Milimani presbytery administrative leadership.
Oduyoye (1995:110) indicates that religion is regarded as one aspect of culture in Africa. Women are valuable in the sight of the society in African Traditional Religion. In the traditional African life women played a significant role in the religious activities as they offered prayers for their families in particular and their communities in general. There were women priestesses almost everywhere in Africa, women mediums, women seers, women ritual elders, and women rain makers. Mbiti (1969: 169-189, 1988: 69-82); Akiiki (1994:37-38) and Mwaura (2005: 412) asserts this and maintains that a dominant male ideology has ensured that women continue being clients in the churches just as they were in the shrines of traditional African society. Mwaura (2005: 412) further observes that women were clients in the traditional shrines thus their roles were subordinate. Although the above studies provided instructive information on women’s role in the religious activities in traditional African society, they do not concern themselves with the Christian era in Africa. It therefore follows that a study showing women participation in administrative leadership in PCEA Milimani presbytery was of paramount importance within the Christian church. Out of this study the knowledge gap dealing with women participation in administrative church leadership was filled following the results obtained from the research.

Phiri (1997:15) notes that rather than being faithful to the gospel, the African Church has too often been dominated and guided by sexist African and Christian attitudes. These have been reinforced by clericalism in the Church which, together with feminism and women’s movements has exposed patriarchy as an oppressive system that conferred unearned privilege on some and denied access to opportunity.
to others. The ramification of women underrepresentation necessitated the research so as to find out why there is women underrepresentation in women church administration.

### 1.8.3 Influence of Christian Missionaries Education

Rotberg (1965: vii) points out that the activities of Christian missionaries are outstanding in the emergence of modern tropical Africa. He further notes that the missionaries exercised, individually and collectively, a powerful influence, both directly and indirectly, over scattered villages and, in time, whole communities. They prepared young Africans to appreciate the advantages of Western life and encouraged them to benefit from the temporal and spiritual concepts that were part of its foundation. Wanyoike (1974:37) shares the same thought and points out that the missionary stations subsequently became the training grounds of indigenous leadership and formal learning was wholly the initiative of Christian missionaries. Despite the fact that the study has already been done, the study did not show a particular geographical locality neither did it show how it affected the role of women in church administrative leadership.

McIntosh (1969:239) points out that the years, 1907 to 1924, were for the Church Mission Society (CMS) and other missions a time of foundation laying in education and of ascendancy in influence over Africans. He notes that early attempts to establish educational systems were opposed by chiefs and headmen, by parents and young people themselves. Parents had no objection to taking the wages of girls employed at a mission as laborers or as laundry assistants. McIntosh (1969: 244) and Baur (2000: 413) points out that the parents were however not pleased when the
missionaries suggested that a girl might receive a little training in domestic science because the value of such a girl in marriage market was lowered. As a result, the socialization of the girls was a very slow process, as parents, caught in their traditional views of the female role in society, would tenaciously oppose their girls’ European education. McIntosh (1969:244) points out that the African men had little liking for a girl whose head was filled with European ideas. The twin factors of domestic science training to the girls and the perceived European influence would make men relegate women to roles that were non administrative. The “European influence” at a time when the Africans were starting to realize that the Europeans were bent on colonizing them would make any man view with suspicion any woman who was thought to be Europeanised. The consequences of such views would later influence how women would be involved in administrative leadership both in the secular arena and in the church. This makes the observations of McIntosh and Baur important in the study.

McIntosh (1969:245), Wanyoike, (1974:32-33) and Njoroge (1992:3-6) observe that education for women was a major concern of the missionary women. When the first boarding school for boys opened in Kikuyu in 1904, Minnie Watson sent three girls as day scholars. From 1907 McIntosh (1969:244) points out that with the arrival at the mission of Marion Scott Stevenson, girls work was redirected into a more specific training of prospective wives for Christian male Africans. The purpose of the school was mainly to protect girls against unwelcome marriages to heathen husbands, mostly polygamists. Further, it was to prepare suitable wives for the mission boys. This kind of education did not equip women for leadership.
Marion Stevenson was responsible for the first attempt at Kikuyu to establish a girl’s boarding school in 1907. James (2003: 75) argues that this move had a negative impact on girls since some indigenous parents felt that boarding schools would alienate their daughters from their culture and society. Wamahiu (1988:210) shares the same thought noting that these sentiments were in line with the indigenous cultural belief that girls needed to always be under the control of parents’. In such cases, a girl could only attend the village schools that were not well equipped like the boarding ones. This in itself could hamper women’s participation in any type of leadership since they were not well equipped.

(Ayandele, 1966: 490) postulated that Africa owes the foundation of its modern western education, industrial economy and medical, scientific and vernacular literature developments were attributed to the missionaries. Baur (2000: 413) observes that schools were important institutions and the mission schools were the only ones until 1920. James (2003:74) points out that this education had distinct curriculum for male and female. While all were taught catechism as a condition for baptism the curriculum for boys included commerce, dispensing medicine, carpentry and mechanics in addition to reading and writing. For the women’s education, the missionaries emphasized simple reading, writing, elementary arithmetic, hygiene and mother craft in order to modernize the women’s role as homemakers and enable them to be better wives. It is important to note that missionary education prepared the girls for the home based-social roles. This education did not enhance women’s opportunities of leadership. This can partly explain why there has been underrepresentation of women in church administrative leadership.
Muriithi (2008:9) maintains that missionary teaching used suggestive biblical passages to domesticate women’s minds. In agreement Oduyoye (1995) and Phiri (1997) argue that missionary Christian teaching was patriarchal and it collaborated with patriarchal African culture to oppress women. James (2003: 110-111) and Muriithi (2008:9) share the same view that the women who became Christians were taught how to make tea, gardening, cleaning and nursing the children of the whites as ayahs.

This domesticating education was extended in the church as cleaning the church buildings, making tea, arranging flowers and other care services by women. This domestication of women duties in the church seems to have developed from traditional indigenous African society. The same would continue at the time the missionaries were beginning to set base in Africa. The above scholar’s points out that the social position of women was not improved during the missionary period. (Baur, 2000: 413) refutes this and points out that the school was a stepping stone in the emancipation of women as it gave the girls a new self-consciousness and prepared them to earn their own living.

Njoroge (2000: 14-19) observes that the missionary women worked hard to include Kenyan women in the shaping of the church in Africa. She notes that Marion Stevenson looked for every opportunity to reach women. Further she notes that as early as 1920s, women were asking the mission church to train them as evangelists. Despite the industry and commitment of women to the life of the church, church administrative leadership was a man’s domain. Although the PCEA Church opened
the way for women to be commissioned as deaconesses in 1946, this was as far as they had been allowed to move into the Church hierarchy. As deaconesses, they could only take part in decisions concerning the local congregation. The commissioning and ordination of women does not solve the problem of their subordination in the Church hierarchy. Despite the fact that the missionary women attempted to incorporate African women to shape the church in Africa, the role of women was limited. The election of the first deaconesses in 1946 was not a full representation of women in PCEA administrative leadership. The historical significance of this development warrants a deeper enquiry into the reasons why there is underrepresentation of women in church administrative leadership hence making the study relevant.

1.8.4 Structure and Women Participation in Administrative Church Leadership in the PCEA.

The entire Presbyterian Church globally, has a concept of governing bodies with four levels of government and administration. These levels are Parish Session, Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly. These bodies are composed of presbyters, both elders and ministers of the word and sacrament. Each governing body has particular responsibilities and powers PCEA constitution (2001). Both men and women are eligible for position of leadership apart from the Presbyterian Church of America (PCA). The PCEA scenario gives glaring evidence that women are not full participants in administrative church leadership. Women continue to be excluded from church administrative According to the PCEA constitution (2001) positions of the Church where key decisions are made.
Women like men have an equal participation chance. Women can perform all duties in the church administration provided they qualify. Women like men are full members with the same rights, duties and roles. Membership is very important and women comprise the majority in church pews. James (1992: 119) points out that women who comprise the majority in the church membership and are the sustaining force in most congregations, have very little power within the structures of the church. The above observation by James makes it important for a study to be undertaken which will unravel underlying factors that make women to be underrepresented in administrative leadership.

According to the PCEA constitution (2001) the administrative leadership in the church courts is elected from the church membership in an ascending order. The district is the smallest unit in the PCEA and it is made up of at least thirteen families living in the same neighborhood. The leadership of the districts comprises of the deacons, who are elected by the members. Each deacon is in charge of a deacon zone. The elder is the overall in charge of a district. Several districts make up a congregation. At the parish level, the elders normally elect the session administrative office from the members of the parish session and the parish moderator is the chairperson. A careful analysis of the constitution would show that women ought to be well represented in church administrative leadership, however the reality on the ground gives a contradicting scenario. Women are underrepresented and therefore it is important to interrogate reasons as to why it is like so.
In the PCEA women have formed a group called the Woman’s Guild. Njoroge (1992: 1-3) observes that as the PCEA was growing rapidly in the 1930s and 1940s women were busy establishing the Guild. The Guild was organized to parallel the structure of the Church, namely; local congregation, parish, presbytery and General Assembly. Phiri (1997:99-104) notes that this women group is a form of a self-expression, an opportunity to do something, but even more to be involved. It gives women a feeling of belonging within a male dominated Church and in many ways it provides scope for leadership talents to develop among women. Njoroge (2000:62) adds that majority of the first women elders ordained in 1965 were Guild members who had demonstrated leadership qualities for a long time. Further the Guild remains the major avenue for the Presbyterian woman to express their faith in word and action, and to share their experiences and perspectives in the church Njoroge (2000:63). The researcher observes that, despite the fact that the women’s guild has a large representation of women and their financial muscle is felt they do not constitute a large number in church administrative leadership. This therefore makes the study relevant as the research attempts to unravel the disheartening phenomena of women underrepresentation in administrative church leadership.

1.8.5 Summary

In conclusion, three observations have emerged from the reviewed literature. First, while women in the PCEA Church constitution (1969, 1985, and 2001) have achieved equality and have been given significant responsibilities in both lay and clergy roles, they are still marginalized. This impact negatively on Presbyterian
women and has kept her away from decision making in administrative church leadership.

Second, it is evident that African discriminatory traditions are still strong in the attitudes of the Church policy-makers. In the traditional African context, the roles of women are influenced by the patriarchal ideology. It must be noted that many Presbyterian women tend to take leadership positions that conform more to their cultural image than their potential abilities.

Third, the coming of the missionaries did not create a favorable environment for the female administrative Church leadership. In addition, the coming of the missionaries quashed even those African cultures where women played significant religious roles. The missionaries ignored such a rich heritage and opted to cast their Westernized Christian church leadership to the African mindset. The Church today has not come up with a different position from the one introduced by the early missionaries.

The foregoing review of literature showed that not much has been done concerning women in the administrative church leadership positions in the PCEA. This is a gap in knowledge that this study hoped to fill. It is the view of the researcher that the study findings would pave way for participation of women in church administrative leadership. The study will create awareness on women participation in church administrative leadership and make recommendations for improvement of the same in order to overcome biblical and cultural obstacles affecting women in leadership.
This may awaken the consciousness of the church leadership to the fact that both female and male attributes are a prerequisite to the proper functioning of the church.

1.9 Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by two theories, namely; patriarchal ideology by Iglitzin & Ross (1976) and gender role ideology by Peterson & Runyan (1993). In reviewing each one of them, efforts were made to show their relevance in illuminating the factors influencing women’s participation in church administrative leadership. Iglitzin & Ross (1976) patriarchal ideology postulates that within patriarchal societies the roles of women and men are influenced by patriarchal ideology. According to Fiorenza (1983: 84-92) the patriarchal social structure is characterized by a sharp distinction between the public and the private spheres of life.

More specifically, the theory emphasizes that the public sphere refers to politics, economics, religion and anything that is done outside the home is man’s domain. On the other hand, the private sphere refers to the home and is the domain of women. As a result, this made women more dependent and more exploited. This being the case then, Iglitzin & Ross (1976) patriarchal ideology set the frame of reference for understanding women’s leadership in the PCEA Milimani presbytery. In understanding women’s participation in administrative church leadership, Iglitzin & Ross Patriarchal ideology gave insight on how women are affected by environments they are born into.

According to Iglitzin religion is one source of patriarchal ideology. He observes that tenets of all major world religions including Christianity reflect the attitudes and
moral values of the male priests and scribes who enunciated them. Daly (1973) shares the same view and sees the Christian church as a strong oppressive patriarchal structure. This ideology results in an androcentric society, which explains why PCEA Milimani administrative leadership roles are occupied by men rather than women. This means that societal and organizational cultural influences influence the kind of leadership found to be acceptable and effective by people within that culture.

Although Iglitzin & Ross (1976) theory could explain why women continue in service giving positions within the public spheres, it is not exhaustive on the reason as to why the roles of women are often limited primarily to nurturing roles. Peterson & Runyan (1993) explore gender role ideology as a means to elucidate why women occupy subordinate roles in various spheres of life. They argue that gender socialization, situational constraints and structural obstacles interact and contribute towards the discrimination of women as candidates for, and effective holders of any public office.

Peterson & Runyan’s (1993) theory concurs with Bem’s (1993) theory ‘‘Lenses of Gender’’. Bem (1993:3) developed three concepts. The first lens is androcentrism (male-centeredness); it defines males and male experience as a standard or norm and females and female experience as a deviation from that norm (Bem, 1993:41). This perception creates a belief in male superiority and a masculine system in which female values, experiences, and behaviors are viewed as inferior. This leads to a patriarchal system that has resulted in an androcentric world where men and not
women occupy a majority of administrative church leadership. This lens marginalizes women, making the female experience of administrative leadership invisible and locating women on the margins of the human society (Bem, 1993:4). Ruether in Parsons (2002:3) challenges the patriarchal gender paradigms where male are associated with superiority and dominance and females with inferiority and subordinance. This lens acts to justify women’s participation in subordinate roles of the Church while administrative positions are male preserved.

The second lens, gender polarization, superimposes male-female differences on virtually every aspect of human experience, from mode of dressing and social roles to ways of expressing emotion and sexual desire. Further, Bem's idea that ‘‘hidden assumptions about sex and gender remain embedded in cultural discourses, social institutions, and individual psyches’’ is borne out in experiences in the church, reflected in the idea that polarization shapes how people perceive church leadership.

Oduyoye (2001:30-31) concurs that we are born male and female but we become who we are according to cultural socialization. This kind of socialization is continued and becomes reinforced in the church during its various programmes and church group’s formation and in particular in Sunday school and the bible. This lens is portrayed in the women’s struggle to access administrative church leadership. The concept of gender polarization seems to encourage, the roles of men and women as distinct in the church, with the men in administrative positions and women in service giving roles.
The third lens, biological essentialism, rationalizes and legitimizes the other two lenses by treating them as the inevitable consequences of the intrinsic biological natures of women and men (Bem, 1993:3). Bem further outlined the process by which the culturally embedded gender lenses are internalized by the individuals and thus predispose them to construct consistent identities. The assumption that there is something genetically inherent in men that makes them naturary the dominant sex, and the trait is not in women, justify women’s low participation in administrative church leadership.

These authors’ further blame the set of power relations within social cultural institutions, which determine what women and men should do. This theory was useful to this study since it addressed itself to PCEA structures and the traditional African culture which has influenced women’s participation in administrative Church leadership positions. This means that societal and organizational cultural influences the kind of leadership found to be acceptable and effective by people within that cult.

For both theories; Iglitzin & Ross (1976) and Peterson & Runyan (1963) theory complemented by Bems, (1993) theory ‘‘Lenses of Gender’’, there is an interaction of patriarchal ideology and its influence on the roles of women and men. This shapes women’s participation in church administrative leadership. Women issues may thus be viewed from an environmental and cultural viewpoint. The traditional teaching of the missionaries was patriarchal and collaborated with patriarchal African culture thus limiting women participating in church leadership. Consequently, factors
determining women participation in Church leadership may be interactive and include: the roles of women, the church structures, the African culture, and Christian missionaries’ education. This being the case, the study sought to examine factors that influence women’s participation in PCEA Milimani administrative leaderships need to be examined and issues that affect their involvement be addressed.

1.10 Research Methodology

This section presents the research design and methodology used in this study. It discusses research design, site of the study, target population, sampling techniques and sample size, research instruments, data collection techniques, data analysis procedures, data management and ethical considerations.

1.10.1 Research Design

A research design is the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data. It constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement and analysis of data (Kothari, 2007: 31). This study employed descriptive survey design. Kothari (2007: 31) describes descriptive survey research design as “a systematic inquiry in which the researcher does not have direct control of independent variables because their manifestations have already occurred or because they are inherently not manipulated. Inferences about relations among variables are made without direct intervention from concomitant variation of independent variables”.

Descriptive because it collected and analyzed data concerning the existing position of women in PCEA Milimani presbytery church administrative leadership. It also described the nature of current position, as it existed at the time of study. The
descriptive survey research design was highly favored because it enabled the researcher to study women’s participation in Church administrative leadership comprehensively, to draw a deeper elaboration of the researcher’s observation, and thus explore the reasons of women underrepresentation in PCEA Milimani presbytery in order to formulate conclusions. The data collection was guided by the objectives of the research study. The research was supplemented by the views of qualitative data in the form of selected respondents’ opinions, comments and judgments on the various themes the study had raised and also using descriptive statistical methods to analyze and present quantitative data.

1.10.2 The Study Area

The study was carried out in PCEA Milimani Presbytery, Nairobi County, Kenya. Milimani Presbytery is one of 47 Presbyteries that form the PCEA Church. It is made up of 11 parishes. Owing to the fact that PCEA is a fairly big denomination and has many presbyteries, it was considered appropriate to purposively select one presbytery and concentrate on it. The choice of Milimani was because of various reasons. First, Milimani Presbytery is located within the area where the Church of Scotland mission (CSM) operating in Kenya established their work in 1908. This gave PCEA Milimani Presbytery a historical background of more than a hundred years since the coming of the missionaries and, the setting of church structures. Second, the PCEA headquarters are housed in Milimani presbytery. It was assumed that this would enable the researcher to access the Church documents easily. Third, Milimani Presbytery has a representation of the various categories of parishes found
in other presbyteries, namely; urban, semi-urban and rural parishes. The researcher hoped that this would offer an excellent field laboratory for the study.

1.10.3 Target Population

The target population for this study was approximately 16,500 ordinary members including youth and children. PCEA Milimani presbytery has a total of 23 Ministers in the membership rolls of 11 parishes that form Milimani Presbytery and 10 General Assembly Officers and Heads of Departments.

1.10.4 Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

Purposive sampling was used to assess the specified groups. Purposive sampling method was favoured because the study required a specific data that could only be provided by interviewing trusted key informants. Respondents were selected on several criteria such as gender, age, education level, and status and membership period in the PCEA church. It was assumed that these variables have influenced the attitude of the members towards women’s participation in administrative church leadership. The researcher was also aware of the difference of socio-economic status of the residential areas in which the parishes are located. This was used to enable the researcher sample the parishes and congregations to cater for different categories of social economic status of the target population. All the participants considered as having information relevant to the study were approached in the Church, either on a Sunday service or occasionally on a weekday fellowship. One hundred and fifty informants were selected from the whole study area.
1.10.5 Parishes

The purposive sampling method was used. The total number of parishes in PCEA Milimani Presbytery was eleven. The researcher decided to use all the 11 parishes so as to get a variety of information. The respondents were selected from each of the eleven parishes. This was used to enable the researcher cater for different categories of the target population.

1.10.6 Congregation

Purposive and simple random sampling methods were used to get the congregations. Purposive sampling method was used for the single parish congregations which included St Andrews, Karen, Langata, Riruta, and Evergreen congregations’. For the parishes with more than one congregation, simple random sampling method was used. Each name of the congregation was written on a piece of paper and dropped into a container. The pieces of papers were mixed well and one congregation from each parish was picked. These were, Kangemi, Waithaka, Dagoretti, Loresho, Nairobi West and Kibera. Secondly, the congregations selected within these parishes were divided into three categories, congregations in the rural, semi-urban, slum and the urban. This was because the scope of this study was also guided by the socio-economic status of the residential area the church is located. Kibera (in a slum area) and St Andrews congregations (in an affluent area) were chosen purposively out of eleven congregations that form Milimani presbytery to cater for different categories of social-economic status and to represent the slums and urban categories within urban respondents. This was to avoid bias in selection of respondents from the target population. Four congregations Waithaka, Dagoretti (rural) Riruta, and Kangemi (semi- and urban) were selected using simple random sampling method from their
parishes. The eleven congregations had a membership of approximately 4524 recorded in their registers. Thus, this study was carried in these purposive and randomly selected congregations.

1.10.7 Lay Members

Purposive sampling was used to assess the specified groups. Purposive sampling method was favoured because the study required a specific data that could only be provided by trusted key informants. All the participants considered as having information relevant to the study were approached in the Church, either on a Sunday service or occasionally on a weekday fellowship. One hundred and twenty one informants were given questionnaires from the whole study area.

The first category included women. A total of 11 Woman’s Guild chairladies, 11 active lady elders, and 11 retired lady elders’ respondents participated. It was assumed these were resourceful women with rich historical information about the growth of the Church in PCEA Milimani presbytery. The choice of the 11 in the latter was based on the fact that Milimani Presbytery had 11 parishes. In addition, 5 ministers wives whose husbands had served more than 30 years. The women were knowledgeable about the changes that have come with time given the long experience in partnership with their spouses. The other 36 were lay Christian women indentified from the parish registers were selected using simple random sampling. All the 74 filled in the questionnaires.

The second category included forty seven men who were sampled purposively. 22 male elders were be sampled as follows, 11 serving elders and 11 retired male elders.
The choice of the 11 was based on the number of parishes within Milimani Presbytery. The retired elders were included because it was assumed that they are knowledgeable on the PCEA history. The other 25 were lay Christian men. To select, the researcher employed stratified and simple random sampling in order to include different parishes since the parishes were not equally the same in status.

1.10.8 Church Ministers

Purposive sampling was used to target the 19 ministers. This method was used in selecting the actual sample for the study based on the sample size and gender representation. The criterion of the selection was that they had served with the church for more than 5 years and were able to articulate their views and the approach of the PCEA Church regarding women’s participation in administrative church leadership. Information from the Ministers was crucial for this study, because it helped to clarify the factors that lead to underrepresentation of women in administrative leadership in Milimani presbytery.

1.10.9 General Assembly Officers and Heads of Departments

This researcher interviewed 4 current officials of the General Assembly. They are the custodians and implementers of the Church policy and resolutions. These GA current officials of the General Assembly officials are also involved in the administration of the Church and are in the top decision-making organ of the Church. They are also the custodians and implementers of the resolutions of the GA and General Administrative committee (GAC). 6 departmental heads (3 male and 3 female) were sampled using simple random sampling. Information from General
Assembly and departmental heads was vital to this study since it helped to clarify the church policy and structures in Milimani presbytery.
Table 1.1: Sample size to the study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PARISH</th>
<th>MINISTERS</th>
<th>WOMEN</th>
<th>MEN</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>St. Andrews</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ever-Green</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kangemi</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riruta</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dagoretti</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Langata</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nairobi West</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waithaka</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kibera</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loresho</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karen</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GA Officers /</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Departmental heads</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>19</strong></td>
<td><strong>74</strong></td>
<td><strong>47</strong></td>
<td><strong>150</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.10.10 Methods of Data Collection

Data for this study was collected through primary and secondary sources. Required data for this study was obtained from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data was collected through in-depth interviews that were recorded, questionnaires and participant observation. The secondary source entailed research in the library and Church archives. This included review of published and unpublished materials, dissertations, theses, journals, minutes, resolutions of church leaders meetings, resolutions and minutes from women gatherings and from other relevant institutions and resource centers.

1.10.11 Research Instruments

The research instruments used in this study were self administering questionnaires, interview schedule, Participant observation and document analysis.
1.10.12 Questionnaires

There were separate questions for the lay members and Ministers. This was because the different groups play different roles in the church and society. Data was collected by use of self-administered questionnaires from lay church members who formed the largest group of all categories. The questionnaires were open (for qualitative data) and closed-ended (for quantitative data). According to Roberts (2004) blending of qualitative and quantitative approaches allows greater depth of understanding and insight than what is possible with just one approach. It also helps to overcome biases contained in each method. The questionnaires were hand delivered to the respondents by the researcher. The introductory part of the questionnaire informed the respondents the purpose of the questionnaire and the reason for the research, and it also gave instructions on how to answer the questions. The respondents found the instrument short and they were able to fill in the questionnaire and return it to the researcher after two weeks. Out of the 140 questionnaires distributed 129 were returned, giving response rate of 86%, which was acceptable.

1.10.13 Interviews

The interview guide was used to clarify issues that were not clearly established through questionnaires. The interview sought to solicit status of women in administrative church leadership, attitude towards women in administrative church leadership position by Ministers, lay men and women. Respondents’ permission to tape record the interview conversation was sought. Informal discussions were employed to create a more relaxed atmosphere in order to encourage more complete
and spontaneous responses from the interviewee. The purpose of the interviews was to clarify issues that may not have been clearly established through questionnaires, participant observation and document analysis. It was also a form of methodological triangulation of the data obtained through the other research instruments.

1.10.14 Participant Observation

The researcher also managed to participate in Sunday services, weekly and monthly revival fellowships and a one yearly convention. It is in the Sunday worship, and presbytery meetings that the researcher observed sitting arrangements, number of men and women, record events, activities, tasks and duties performed by both men and women in the Church services, functions and meetings. Observation of live meetings helped to ascertain the roles of women in church. Since it was not possible to observe and record everything that transpired in the worship service, the researcher devised a coding system through a self-prepared observation record sheet and guidelines with a list of all the aspects to be observed in order to be able to check and comment on women’s participation in the worship service.

1.10.15 Document Analysis Guide

This section focused on documents that recorded participation of men and women in PCEA Milimani Presbytery. Since a great deal of interaction between presbytery, parish and congregation was in written form, the researcher used schedule for document analysis to clarify such interactions. Such records included leadership charts, minutes on meetings, dockets and resolutions of GA and GAC, preaching programmes, Church register and daily activities and data of important institutional events.
1.10.16 Secondary Data

Four main libraries were particularly useful because they had rich books, journals, newspapers, magazines and current periodicals for the study. These were: Kenyatta University, Daystar University, Hekima College and St. Paul’s University libraries. In relation, St. Paul’s University library was a one stop library for information on women in church leadership, men and women theological studies and contemporary theological books, journals, and other equally relevant material.

1.10.17 Data Collection Procedures

In each parish, a brief explanation of the study, stating the objectives, purposes and the significance of the study were given to the parish administration and respondents. Using Local Church Committee (LCC), the questionnaires were given for completion to all respondents in one church at the same time to avoid discussions with those who may have responded earlier. On completion, the researcher collected the questionnaires to ensure high completion and return rates. On in-depth interviews, the researcher planned with the respondents the date, time and the venue of the interviews. Interviews were on a one-to-one basis and follow-ups; where there was, need to do so. All the interviews were in audiotape recorders and the researcher transcribed. Service and meeting observations were made. The researcher analyzed each function observed in order to determine the roles taken by women. Secondary data was derived from various libraries: Kenyatta University, University of Nairobi, Catholic University of Eastern Africa, and Presbyterian University of East Africa, St Pauls University and Hekima College.
1.10.18 Data Processing and Analysis

Data was analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively to address the objectives. Quantitative data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics of frequencies and percentages were used to describe and present the analyzed data. Tables, pie-charts, and bar charts were used to present results. Qualitative analysis enabled the researcher to analyze the respondent’s perceptions, views and opinions in a meaningful and useful way. Qualitative data was transcribed to enable the researcher to capture fully all the information gathered. Similarly, in this study qualitative data was finally synthesized thematically according to the objectives of the study. The main findings, suggestions and recommendations on the topic under study were presented.

1.10.19 Problems Related to the Study

The researcher encountered the following problems in the course of the study. First, there was the challenge of getting in touch with and penetrating the parishes. It was easy to do sampling and other paper work but not to penetrate some parishes. Some parishes had easy systems and their penetration was easy. Others had stiff and strict administration and they cost the study in terms of time and resources. As a result of few stiff administrators there was the challenge of getting the necessary contacts for the participants. This as well affected the convening of the respondents to the actual meeting. In actual sense the major challenge was making the people meet on the planned dates and times. In one Church the interview had to be postponed because of insufficient quorum. In due course, however the meetings took place after a fortnight and it was worth the waiting. Secondly, the distance covered
in the process of distributing questionnaires and conducting interviews in different churches within Nairobi County demanded a lot of travelling and this was very expensive due to prolonged hours in the jam. This led to the challenge of a strained study’s budget and other funds had to be sought in order to cover for all the costs that were to be met during the study. Third, ministers and G.A officials could not disclose information that may appear to criticize the church structure and policy for fear of exposing the church. Others expected me as a Minister to understand why there is underrepresentation of women in administrative church leadership. These suspicions and fear wasted a lot of time for the researcher. This challenge was overcome by clear explanations of the intentions of the study and adequate data was collected.

1.10.20 Data Management and Ethical Consideration

Before the research activities convened, the researcher sought permission from all Graduate school to be involved in the research. In addition, due to the sensitive and personal nature of the information being sought, the consent of the respondents was sought. Their participation was voluntary. In each parish a brief explanation of the study, stating the objectives, purposes and the significance of the study was given to the parish administration and respondents. Respondents were assured that all data was sought based on anonymity and confidentiality and would be used specifically for the purpose of the researcher’s MA thesis. In addition, the interviewees were explained that their church leaders would not have the access to the tapes or transcripts of the interviews. Finally, it was explained to all the interviewees that the researcher would use pseudonymous names and not their names in this study except permission was granted.
CHAPTER TWO

2.0 THE PLACE AND ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF EAST AFRICA

2.1 Introduction

The chapter examines origins of the PCEA and its record of women involvement in church and their roles and status. It analyses representation of women compared to men in PCEA, taking into consideration the progress the church has made today in leading the world towards the better life situation where all people are treated equally. The limited information the researcher managed to access reveals numerous roles of women which appear to have a historical bases emanating from the patriarchal organizations of society, traditions of specific churches as well as the religious role of women in African indigenous religions. The analysis is based on the premise that women are not well represented in administrative church leadership.

2.2 The Origin of the PCEA

The expansion of the Christian Church among the Agĩkũyũ came in the wake of Christian Missionary expansion into the interior of Kenya in 1890s. The PCEA has its commencement in the work of Sir William Mackinnon and Sir Alexander Low Bruce, directors of the Imperial British East Africa Company (IBEAC) (Macpherson, 1970:21). The campaign against slave trade motivated Mackinnon to invite missionaries to introduce Christianity to the interior which he believed would help discourage the practice of slavery. Mackinnon, being Scottish, approached the Free Church of Scotland in 1889 to begin a private mission station (Njoroge, 2000:5-10). Dr Stewart mission team, arrived in Kenya in 1891. On arrival, the team left Mombasa on September 19, 1891, with instructions to set up the mission at
Dagoretti. Dagoretti by then was one of the key posts that the IBEAC was administering and was considered to be a strategic location to both the IBEAC and the new missionary society for reaching the Agĩkũyũ and the Maasai (Muita, 2003:5).

Stewart left for the interior in September 1891 with a party of seven Missionaries and 273 porters. However, he abandoned the suggestion of opening a station at Dagoretti but rather, set up a Mission station at Kibwezi, due a tumultuous situation between Agĩkũyũ and IBEAC officials at Dagoretti. The mission work at Kibwezi was a cropper, for it bumped into numerous misfortunes. Not only were the mission team decimated by malaria but a number of missionaries died of famine and raids. It was decided that the Mission be shifted to Kikuyu under the leadership of and Rev. Thomas Watson (Njoroge, 2000:7).

The CSM established Christianity, education, medical and industrial training. By 1920s the CSM had built three major stations at Thogoto, Tumutumu and Chogoria each with a church, school and hospital. In 1920 the first church elders were ordained, twenty eight Gikuyu men from Thogoto and seventeen men from Tumutumu. In 1926 other eight Gikuyu men were ordained. It was not until 1965 when the first PCEA women were ordained as elders that women were involved in the governing of the church. Before then the church was governed only by men, exhibiting the same patriarchal patterns as political institutions in both the West and in Africa (Njoroge, 2000:8). This explains the basis for the existence of women underrepresentation in administrative church leadership in PCEA.
The presence of women missionaries and spouses contributed greatly to the conversion of Gikuyu women to Christianity (Njoroge, 2000:8). While it is not possible in this section to look at the achievements of all the CSM Women in PCEA, we can at least look at the role played by two women namely, Minnie Cumming Watson and Marion Stevenson. Through their work we can see the role played by women missionaries in the establishment of the PCEA.

The work of CSM and women has its genesis in the life and role of Minnie Watson the first woman missionary of the East Africa Scottish Mission (EASM). Minnie Cumming arrived in Mombasa in 1889 and got married to Watson the same year. After one year Watson suddenly died of pneumonia on 4th December 1900 leaving his young widow to continue with the mission work at Thogoto (Macpherson, 1970:21; Muita, 2003:7). Minnie Watson who was nicknamed ‘‘Bibi wa Ngambi’’ the wife of Ngambi (Mr Watson), pioneered education work among the Agikuyu people. She established a system of Christian schools that became the model for primary education in the colony. Minnie was actively involved in the evangelism work of the mission, and was especially instrumental in promoting the education and welfare of Agikuyu girls and women. Through the thirty one years of her life among the Agikuyu she laid the foundation of motherhood and the love and care of little children (Njoroge, 2000:12-13 ; Muita, 2003:7).

Marion Stevenson joined Watson in 1907. She was a Scottish missionary with the CSM in British East Africa from 1907 until 1929. Stevenson nicknamed Nyaruta, "the one with much saliva who speaks a great deal". She was also known as Nyamacaki or Namachecki, "one who possesses many “cheques” or "the one who
lost a cheque-book" (McIntosh, 1969:243 ; Njoroge ,2000:12 ) worked at first for the church's mission at Thogoto. In 1912, Marion Stevenson moved to Tumutumu to work with girls. She personally went around the villages looking for the girls. She established and ran a girls' school, which became Tumutumu girls’ High school, taught sewing, knitting and hygiene, worked in the hospital, trained teachers and helped to translate the Kikuyu Bible (Njoroge, 2000:12).

Other women missionaries followed but Watson and Stevenson are commonly associated with the moulding of Agikuyu pioneer Christian womanhood. The Missionaries women enforced programs that were replicas of the Church of Scotland geared toward producing local Christian women modeled in European Christianity and culture. They trained and organized girls for the development of leadership skills. They trained women as nurses, midwives and evangelists. By 1927 women were trained as teachers .However these professions reinforced the women’s role of nurturing and teaching the young in the community (Njoroge, 2000:12). These diverse educational institutions all emphasized domesticity. Thus, the missionaries succeeded in marginalizing African women from the public sector.

A review of the church most senior leadership found that to date, no woman has ever risen to the four elective administrative positions in the PCEA, namely; Moderator of the General Assembly, Secretary General, Deputy Secretary General and Honorary Treasurer. This goes all the way back since PCEA started in East Africa over a period of hundred years now. Skewed representation has been reflected in other courts of the church, even in very recent time. In the 19th GA
Business committee (2009-2012), there were 61 members, out of which only four (4) were women. Out of the representation of 48 presbyteries that formed the church then; only three (3) women were elected to be members of the business committee during this GA. Whenever there was an opportunity for co-option, only one (1) woman was co-opted out of the four (4) possible candidates. Yet, this is a crucial committee since the Business Committee is the arm of the GA which meets at intervals of three years, before another GA is constituted.

Earlier, in the proceeding of 18th General Assembly, (2007-2009) out of 59 members who were involved, only two (2) were women and there was no single lady minister. At the cooption level, out of the five (5) co-opted, none was a woman. The Figure 2.1 below shows Men and Women Representation in PCEA as indicated in Business Committee in the last two terms of the General Assembly.

Figure 2.1: Men and Women Representation in PCEA Business Committee

These results show that women are underrepresented in the administrative positions of the church. This finding agrees with Mwaura’s assertion that: Western Christianity, whose tradition, mainline Christianity in Africa adopted, provided women with no leadership roles in their church structures (Mwaura, 2005:421). Nthamburi (1991:86) makes an observation that while women are the most faithful members of the bible study groups and prayer fellowships, the church has not accorded them the rightful place as prominent church leaders.

Esther a minister, (O.I. 24.11.2011), indicated that ‘‘women often find themselves excluded from decision making positions even in issues that directly affects them’’. Historically, leadership has carried the notion of masculinity and the belief that men make better leaders than women which is still common today. This practice would be interpreted as discriminating against the women.

2.2.1 Lay Men and Women Views on Women Representation in Milimani Presbytery

The research findings of this study indicate that ‘‘women were often the first converts and have been the pillars of the congregations, taking care of worship in the local church and their contribution to the growth of the church cannot be opposed’’ (Waithira, O.I. 22.11.2011).

Asked on who are more involved, the Figure 2.2 below shows lay men and women response on involvement of men and women in Church administrative leadership.
Figure 2.2: Lay men and women responses on women representation in church administrative leadership positions

Women representation in church administrative positions was high at the lower church hierarchy. According to majority of the respondents 55 out of 96 (57.3%), women were represented as Clerks, while 47 out of 96 (49.0%) indicated that women were represented as treasurers and 38 out of 96 (39.6%) indicated that women were serving as deputy clerks and a few 26 out of 96 (27.1%) indicated that women also served as church moderators. This finding may be interpreted to mean that the church has not accorded women their rightful place as prominent church leaders. This is in line with the premise that women are not well represented in administrative church leadership.
It was also revealed that although women continue to be devoted to the church, representation in church administrative leadership positions was high at the lower church hierarchy. According to majority of the respondents women appear invisible in top church hierarchy. Nancy (O.I. 18.11.2011) one of the women elders observed that “Patriarchy has defined women in church as inferior this leading to male dominance and women subservience in the church”. Consequently, women continue to face discouragement and discrimination as they climb to the higher courts of the church. The majority of the respondents who admitted men are more involved attributed this scenario to “Cultural (traditions) belief that women should be under men” while others said “men are born leaders”. However, some of the respondents felt that at the onset of Christianity men dominated.

Agnes (O.I. 5.11.2011), a women elder indicated that “the number of women in administrative church leadership is often named as an afterthought”, She further said, “severally I have been appointed in administrative church leadership in the name of gender balance and not because of my capacity to administrate”. Since the church preaches liberation, it is critically important for a balanced representation. Fiorenza (1985; 140), shares the view that it is the church that needs to be liberated from the institutionalized nature since this has led to the subordination of women. It was also discovered that women “shy away from showing interest in church administrative positions” (Christopher O.I. 22.11.2011).

The research findings of this study are in line with Peterson & Runyan (1993) who explored gender role ideology as a means to expound why women occupy
subordinate roles in various spheres of life. They argue that gender socialization, situational constraints and structural obstacles interact and contribute towards the discrimination of women as candidates for, and effective holders of any public office. The authors’ main argument here is that women have the potential to perform administrative duties and it is therefore important to develop self worth and dignity among African women.

The ministers were asked who are more involved in church administrative leadership. They gave their response in Figure 2.3

![Figure 2.3: Ministers views on women participation in Milimani presbytery](image)

From the Figure 2.3 above, it can be seen that majority of the ministers in the Presbytery (99.5 %) agreed that, men were generally more involved in church leadership representation. According to Edward (O.I. 11.11.2011), “…the church favors good leadership not gender leadership”. This is an indication that, while the
church does not set any discriminative rule, the underlying male belief system is strong enough to allow for wide gender disparity over the years.

Decision-making is a male prerogative and women always have to go along with what the males decided even against their will. Ruth (O.I. 25.11.2011) one of the women ministers observes that “women’s concerns are not addressed since most decisions are made by men”, Women are implementers and men are the decision makers’. This concept is coupled with patriarchal influence that dictates a woman’s place as the domestic sphere. This is obviously affecting the church in that the women’s voice has fundamentally remained inaudible. Overall Ministers’ respondents agreed that majority of women serve in the lower church hierarchy. These results may indicate that there is need to put more emphasis on having more women in administrative church leadership.

2.2.2 The Women’s Participation as Church Leaders

It is already clear, from the above argument that women are involved in leadership in the church but usually at the lower hierarchies. The patriarchal structures influence on women’s participation in administrative church leadership is at play, and could be exemplified by responses from the informants of this study. Hezekiah (O.I.9.11.2011 ) points out “that the language in PCEA constitution is not gender sensitive with a clause that states that not more than a third of women should be ordained as elders in a parish”. It is evident, from the foregoing that men were found to have phenomenal influence of control and power in the church. They are the main leaders, making decisions on both church policy and doctrine while majority of
women’s role are important but do not have significant influence at high levels of the church due to low participation at the administrative leadership levels. This study found that although women are free to participate to elect and be elected at all the levels of church leadership positions, qualifying as a candidate does not give an automatic chance for one to be elected.

In Milimani Presbytery, between 1995 and 2005, only one woman became a member of the executive (presbytery clerk) who comprises: moderator, Presbytery clerk, treasurer, finance chairperson and deputy clerk, (Kanagara, 2007). After 2007, only two have risen to administrative levels but only as deputy clerks (PCEA, Milimani Presbytery Report of the 19 and 20th General Assembly, 2009/2012), which agrees with the study premise that women are underrepresented.

The GA and departmental heads were interviewed on different dates carried on O.I. 8.11.2011, O.I.9.11.2011, O.I.10.11.2011 on whether women participated in elections of church administrative positions at all levels. Results indicated that majority agreed that women participated at all levels. One departmental leader Kenneth, (O.I. 9.11.2011) pointed out that whenever women hold leadership position in committees, there is a tendency of men not appreciating their competence. Carol (O.I. 9.11.2011) further pointed out there has been instances where women in church administrative leadership have gone out of their way to support women and women’s issues. However they are often suppressed by both men and women as they are viewed as a threat to the status quo. The author’s
argument here is that women have the potential to mobilize more women to become involved in administrative church leadership and take charge of their own issues.

The researcher was interested in finding out from respondents of GA Office and departmental head’s whether men had confidence on women in administrative church leadership, where confidence was considered as trust with responsibilities. Their responses are presented in the following Figure 2.4

![Figure 2.4: Men Confidence in Women Church Administrative Leadership by GA officers and Departmental Heads](image)

Among the GA officers and Departmental Heads respondents, majority 7 (70 %) indicated that men were confident with women as church administrative leaders, but this does not match with the real representation in senior positions. Oduyoye (1990:19), “an African woman theologian concludes that, ‘‘the church seems to have an unspoken norm that a woman should not hold authority over a man. The
churches keep professing that women can hold any position that befits them only in principle but not in practice”. Oduoye’s observation seems to fit within the PCEA.

2.2.3 Ministers’ Response on Men Confidence in Women in Church Administrative Leadership

In PCEA Milimani presbytery, most ministers 16 (out of 19) are men and ministers are not eligible to vote at the local and parish levels. Usually, the local church and Parish levels are the basis for leaders’ identifications, which are then forwarded to higher courts. Ministers’ response on men confidence level in women as leaders was found to be above average with 63.2% agreeing that men were confident in having women as church administrative leaders. The reason being they have succeeded as deacons and group leaders.

Moreover it was also found that some men participate in electing women in administrative leadership positions, which could be based on the trust that women just like men, can lead. Jane (O.I.25.11.2011) one of the women ministers argued that the fact that some women are already in various church administrative levels as leaders was a clear indication that the church was convinced of their capability.

The study sought to find out from the ministers ‘‘whether women are confident in women as church administrative leadership. Figure 2.5, shows the results.
Figure 2.5: Ministers response on women confidence in fellow women as church administrators

The results in Figure 2.5 indicate that (63.3%) of respondents indicated that women do not have confidence in fellow women while (36.8%) indicated they do. According to responses from ministers, there are several factors which contribute to the confidence level given to women by their fellow women as administrative leaders. When asked to give reasons for their answers, majority of ministers indicated women in the church today have proved that they are capable to lead.

James, (O.I.6.11.2011) indicated that “...the women’s leadership in the woman’s Guild has proved them capable’. Patrick (O.I.11.11.2011) noted “...that women who are firm, visionary and exemplary, have thumbs up from fellow women”. They pointed out that women are the majority in church, which means they would have the mass power to influence leadership in the church greatly. It was attested that many held leadership in various groups.
Even so, they argued that there is lack of trust among fellow women this being attributed to the fact that they “always feel insecure and jealous, and tend to compete with each other” Godffrey (O.I. 9.11.2011). While this type of argument may have merit, it suggests that women distrust for leadership is within the women fraternity and remains a challenge. The conclusion from this data is that, this misconception has a negative implication in that it reinforces the stereotype that women are their own enemies. Once women are in power, women are not able to cope with their fellow women, which in itself may spell doom to the Women participation in administrative church leadership. It also appears that the Ministers do not create adequately awareness on the issue of equal participation for both men and women.

The other reasons which they felt continue to influence women participation in church administrative leadership includes; cultural biases, the preference to be led by men, which is based on the stereotype and historical beliefs that men are better leaders than women. Godffrey (O.I. 9.11.2011)”…argues that psychosocial education at the traditional level put the woman below the man. So women are more reserved to be administered by other women.” The church tradition and the Bible also reflect men to be the heads while women are supposed to be submissive, though women who played important roles also existed in the Bible.

When the GA and departmental heads were interviewed Hellen (O.I. 09.11.2011), Godffrey (O.I. 09.11.2011), and Johnson (O.I. 09.11.2011) on the same majority 60% indicated women have confidence in fellow women. Hellen (O.I. 09.11.2011) pointed that “…women have confidence in fellow women, however they are limited by the structures which are very patriarchal”. Johnson (O.I. 09.11.2011) points out
that…currently, women have started to be confident in fellow women but, previously they were not”. These findings confirm earlier studies by (Mwaura, 2005:439) who attributes this to attitudes that should be seen in the light of wider social-cultural norms. These results indicate that Ministers, GA and Departmental Heads need to be conscientized on women administrative church leadership.

2.2.4 Lay Men and Women Confidence Level on Women

The study sought to find out from the lay men and women their confidence level in women church administration. Figure 2.6 shows the results;

![Figure 2.6: Men confidence in women in church administrative leadership](image)

**Figure 2.6: Men confidence in women in church administrative leadership**

The lay men and women comprise of the church members, elders and group leaders. This group organizes the affairs of the congregation, which includes; planning, organizing, financing and the pastoral oversight. When asked on whether men are confident with women as administrative church leaders, (49 out of 96) 51.0% responded in the affirmative. It means that lay men and women have the least confidence level in women compared to the higher confidence levels shown by
Ministers (63.2%) and the GA and Departmental Heads (70 %). Nevertheless, the membership in the Local Church Committee (LCC) is dominated by women mostly, yet the administrative leadership is held by men. Although the majority of women are in the position to elect one of their own, they end up having very few taking positions in the administrative church leadership.

From the results, the GA/departmental heads, 7 (70 %) indicated men were confident with women as church administrative leaders, while 3 (30 %) indicated they were not confident with women as church administrative leaders. In the Ministers’ category, 12 (63.2 %) agreed men were confident having women as church administrative leaders. However, 7 (36.8%) said men were not confident having women as church administrative leaders. On the other hand, 49 (51.0%) of the lay people claimed men were confident in women as church administrative leaders, while 47 (49.0%) indicated men were not confident in women as church administrative leaders.

The study findings revealed that the confidence levels of the church on women is above average, but the growth of women in administrative church leadership is not commensurate to their church attendance. The present situation is partly rooted in the missionaries’ history that had a great influence. Okemwa (1993: 90) observes that the missionaries, who came between 1906 and the early 1940s, gave women service delivery roles similar to the same roles in traditional African societies. The roles that the white women played were; teaching children, cleaning and decorating the church building.
According to Radnich (2007:2), one of the early PCEA missionary women, Minnie Watson maintained her reputation as "Lady of the Camps" by organizing camping trips for students. She also frequently took a small tent camp to the villages, where she went from house to house teaching young mothers sewing, knitting, and other domestic skills. She also taught evangelized, and tried to convince parents to send their children to the mission school. Another missionary was Marion Scott, who is also known to have redirected girls work into a more specific training to be useful as prospective wives for Christian male Africans (McIntosh, 1969:245).

In tandem with these traditions, women have generally been allocated supportive duties in the church today. Most common duties include: cleaning and decorating the church, singing in the church choir, setting the priest table and washing the clerical vestments, leading praise in worship, cooking and serving food during church functions; teaching Sunday school and preaching (James, 1993:108-110; Muriithi, 2008:9). James (2003:77) points out that when critically analyzed, these roles seem to indicate that women work is confined to the marginal levels of the church. The long marginalization, may have affected women’s self-esteem so that today, while the church allows them to vote, the tendency has continued to favour men than women.

This study shows that men are still perceived as the natural leaders and consequently befitting for senior church positions. Women undertake functions which are service giving and match traditional gender roles. The church is part and parcel of the wider community and it is influenced by the society’s lifestyles. 47 (49.0%) of the lay men and women respondents indicated that men were not confident in women as
church administrative leaders; which represent an average number in view of the equality emphasized in the church. In the Bible, Galatians (3: 2) emphasizes the equality of all people. The church does not directly demonstrate lack of equality in its policies, but the situation where women are largely underrepresented implies an inherent lack of confidence.

The current situation in the Milimani presbytery may not be strange, as seen from the perspective of patriarchy. This is so given that patriarchal ideology postulates that within patriarchal societies, the roles of women and men are influenced by patriarchal ideology (Iglitzin & Ross, 1976). It has also been shown that religion based on patriarchal ideology set the framework of reference for understanding women’s leadership in the Church, Fiorenza (1984: 84-92). The findings of this study show the continuing struggle of the church where women like men are free to fully participate in the church and in the leadership (PCEA constitution 1969, 1985, 2001). However, the patriarchal influences remain underneath, and without a direct confrontation with the church, silently, remain a reference in decision making process and behavior.

Although officially women in PCEA Milimani presbytery are not prohibited to participate in leadership at equal status with men, nevertheless, the study clearly shows that prejudice occurs unconsciously, based on stereotypes either derived from the church history or African traditional context. This is generally taken as normal in the church, even though it is harmful as it does not critically examine the basis of prejudice and positive recourse. The continuity of stereotypical practices where
women settle for the lower ranks in the church will remain an approved behavior as long as it is not challenged.

Without clear conscience of this situation, the role of women and that of men in the church might never be equal, even though indicated as equal in policies.

### 2.3.1 Women as Ministers

The researcher sought to determine whether women are represented in administrative position of the moderator (ministers). When lay men and women were asked, 26 out of 96 (27.1%) said women are well represented while 70 out of 96 (72.9%) said they are not represented. Generally, the ministers were aware that the number of ordained men and women ministers was not equal. This can concretely be confirmed by the existing records which show that out of the 550 Ministers ordained by the PCEA since 1926; only 58 are women. Below is figure 2.7 showing gender of the ordained ministers since first ordination in 1926-2012?

![Gender of the ordained ministers since first ordination in 1926-2012](image)

**Figure 2.7: Gender of the ordained ministers since first ordination in 1926-2012**
The findings in Figure 2.7 indicate that the participation of women as ministers is still very low. Therefore, the church must find ways and means of improving the situation.

The participation of women as ministers remained in an indeterminate state, before an interpretation was made by the church in 1976—fifty years after the first ordination of the African male ministers. The General Assembly resolved in its judgment that there was no biblical or theological reason why a woman could not be ordained into the ministry of word and sacrament provided that she satisfied the laid down requirements set by the committee of training and personnel development of the church.

The study also sought to establish from the Ministers whether women should participate as church moderators. The results are presented in Table 2.1 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Frequency (N=19)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results in Table 2.1 indicate that Church leadership knows that women should participate as presbytery and GA moderators.
In PCEA women, ministers have an equal role with their male counterparts since the church constitution accords them same right without discrimination. Considering that PCEA has a clear policy on gender relations as all are children of God, and the PCEA Constitution is clear on the right of women to participate in all leadership positions, this raises one key question: Why are women underrepresented in administrative church leadership? Adoyo (1991, cited in James 2003; 98) points out that some male clergy find it difficult to accept that a woman can attain the same rank as they. She further points, that the main problem that faces the male clergy is recognition where they tend to feel they should be more recognized than the women.

Similarly, the findings in this study indicate that the cultural perception of the status of women and men tend to have influence in the church, which contributes to exclusion. Usually, consciously or unconsciously, as practiced so far in the church tradition, the moderator’s position is influenced by consideration of personal giftedness, but also by sex of the candidate which has covert effect. Cultural arguments that were advanced held that women were never leaders in the traditional societies and even those who were involved in the religious affairs were always beyond menopause Godffrey (O.I. 9.11.2011). This means that on the whole, women’s participation is highly influenced by the prevailing myths of the Agĩkũyũ culture. While it is virtually important for a balanced participation of women in church administrative leadership, this study reveals that the unequal social status that women and men used to acquire mirrors in the church. Hence women who comprise the majority in membership have very little power in administrative church leadership.
An analysis of the situation in Milimani Presbytery of 2008 and 2011 shows changes in the women representation but still very low level. Figure 2.8 below show a representation of Ministers in Milimani presbytery during the period of 2008-2012.

**Figure 2.8: Ministers representation in Milimani 2008-2012**


The results in Figure 2.8 reveal that in 2008, there were only three women ministers out of a total of 29 ministers’ according to the January 2009, *Milimani Presbytery Report to the Ninetieth Genera Assembly*. None of the women ministers in Milimani was a moderator of a Kirk Session. It seems the three were under a male moderator.

One of the women; Esther (O.I. 04.01.2011) faced discrimination from the parish moderator. She argues that the moderator’s (male) main problem was “to be more recognized than her”. Two titles were used thus; moderator for the male clergy and parish minister for her.” Such practice could influence the congregation to regard the moderator as more senior. Esther (O.I. 04.01.2011) further says that the moderator received more allowances than her because of his title. Given such an
experience we could make an observation that the church tends to reinforce societal emphasis on the subordination of women.

According to the January 2012, *Milimani Presbytery Report to the Twentieth General Assembly, which was reporting on the previous year 2011*, Milimani Presbytery, had 32 Ministers out of which only five were women. Further, the situation slightly changed by 2011 and out of the five women, only one was a moderator of the Kirk Session. Among the five female Ministers; one was a missionary from the United States, one a lecturer at St. Paul’s University and the other two were second (assistant Minister) ministers. Out of these, only one of the female Ministers was involved in an administrative position in the Parish, which gave highly skewed representation with the men continuing to take up most of the administrative responsibilities. For example, in PCEA Kibera Parish, only one woman has been attached as a Minister out of the 22 Ministers since 1952 (Kang’ara, 2007). The findings reveal that women Ministers were few and the small numbers could influence their low participation in administrative church leadership. Some of the major reasons that the study adduced to explain the low-level representation were cultural bias Ann :( O.1. 29.11.2011), lack of time due to domestic responsibilities (Jack: O.1.29.11.2012) and women shying away from leadership (Virginia: O.1.31.11.2011). In the light of the foregoing, culture stands out as a factor that militates against the participation of women in administrative church leadership. Further, this concept is coupled with cultural influence that dictates a woman’s place as the domestic sphere.
2.3.2 Women as Elders

The researcher was interested in finding out whether women were represented in administrative position of the elder. By 2011, out of the 214 elders, 144 (67.2%) were male and 70 (32.7%) were female. The data suggests that there are more male elders than female elders in Milimani. Elders are appointed from among “full members” as designated in the church procedures. Women elders are to assist the Minister like the fellow male elders. During ordination they “are set apart for life” a lifelong office in the particular congregation in which one is ordained. According to the PCEA constitution (1998; 61-65), the elders oversee spiritual work in the parish together with the Minister. They sit in the parish session and in other courts of the church if required. Each elder is assigned a district for the purpose of effective pastoral care to members of the congregation.

There have been few women elders in Milimani Presbytery to date, just like other presbyteries in Kenya. Data gathered from the field indicated that “Men have dominated the eldership positions of the church and this has nothing to do with spiritual endowment but tradition.’’(Naomi, O.I. 13.12.2011), ‘Women shy away because the position of the elder is very much involving’ (Edward, O.I. 12.11.2011). Data gathered from the field also revealed that eldership recruitment process, cultural reasons, and domestic responsibility could likely affect the women’s participation in church administrative leadership (Isaac, O.I. 11.11.2011). In the light of the foregoing, male dominance stands out as a factor that militates against the access of women to eldership. Women on their part have been socialized to be,
submitive, docile, service givers and that decision-making and administrative leadership is viewed as a masculine domain (Højgaard, 2002:1-17).

2.3.3 Women as Deaconess

Deacons are elected annually by the PCEA full members within their district. Deacons assist the minister and elders in the district and the church. They manage the affairs of the church finances and properties. Their duties also include helping elders in district pastoral duties, keeping congregational church attendance records, caring for the poor and assisting elders and ministers in the spiritual life of the congregation (Mungiriria, 1996: 94). The study established deaconesses form the majority among deacons of Milimani presbytery. This implies that women tend to take the lower tasks that focus on service delivery. When critically assessed; this indicates that women work at the background of the church. The attitude by the congregation towards the deaconesses is that they are lower than the elders, and therefore a more suitable position for women (Patrick, O.I. 11.11.2011). These attitudes act in favour of having more women in the office of the deacon. This finding is in line with Bem’s (1994; 41) Second Lens; the concept of gender polarization which superimposes male-female differences on virtually every aspect of human experience, from modes of dressing and social roles to ways of expressing emotion and sexual desire. This kind of socialization is continued and reinforced in the church. This seems to encourage the roles of men and women as distinct in the church, with the men in administrative positions and women in service giving roles.
2.3.4 Women as Evangelists

The study sought to know how many women served as evangelists. By 2011-2012, there were 14 evangelists out of which 1 (7.2%) was female and 13 (92.8%) male. Evangelists played an indispensable part in the building of the church in Kenya during its early stages (Muita, 2003:221). According to the PCEA Constitution (1998: 113-114) these are men and women who have a call to preach the word of God but who for some reason have not entered upon training for the ordained ministry. The evangelists assist the minister with Sunday services catechumen’s classes, bible studies, Sunday schools and in visiting members of the congregation. They may also conduct funerals. Today, the church is making effort to give them Theological Education by Extension while others undertake certificate and diploma course. The research findings of this study indicate that women evangelists are more scrutinized during admission to training to an extent of being asked to produce a pregnancy test. “…all ladies should produce a pregnancy test results alongside the medical result” (Mutahi, 2014: 2). The reason for this was basically due to the short time the course takes and therefore pregnant evangelists will not be efficient in the programme. As a result, women who are not comfortable with this requirement will shy from applying. Therefore, the church ought to use another approach of admitting in her certificate and diploma courses At this juncture one is prompted to ask why women are asked for the pregnancy test. The author’s main argument here is that women Evangelists are discriminated and their privacy interfered with. This is a barrier to women who have potential and may not stand such an interview. These
results revealed that female participation in the office of evangelist is low. There is therefore need for the church to recruit more women evangelists.

2.3.5 Woman’s Guild and their Roles

The Woman’s Guild is one of the church groups, where women are involved from the local church levels to the national level. In 1922, Mrs. Minnie Watson started the women’s Guild as the Girls’ Guild. There was need to begin a fellowship of girls (Girl's Guild) for those girls who were in boarding schools; then referred to as “Mambere” in Thogoto and Tumutumu. Those who were to belong to the fellowship were to be of high moral standards, faithful, hardworking, temperate, and girls of integrity. These girls were taught by Mrs. Watson (Bibi Wakambi) and Mrs. Isabel Brown in the evening after finishing with the school assignments (Njoroge, 2000:58-77; Muita, 2003: 60)

In 1923, the girls were commissioned by Rev. Arthur and later given badges by Mrs. Watson after they proved to be faithful to the calling of the Guild. After some time, some of the girls got married, others left “Mambere” and the missionaries went back home. This brought a lapse of the Girl's Guild for nine years until it was revived at Tumu Tumu by Rev Charles Muhoro and renamed the PCEA Women’s Guild.

Rev. Charles Muhoro Kareri, one of the first men to be trained to serve at the church in the 1930s was very instrumental in encouraging the establishment of the women Guild after he returned to Kenya from South Africa in 1939, where he had been studying. He shared with the Christian women what he had seen from the women
abroad who had a movement they called Woman’s Guild, and indicated that he was interested in the women empowerment and involvement in the church. As a result the Girl Guild, which existed in the 1920s, developed further in the late 1930s into the Woman’s Guild. The introduction of the Woman’s Guild gave the African woman a status in the church which they did not have before. Phiri (1997: 99-97) points out that women saw themselves as co-workers with the Lord Jesus.

Women received news on Woman’s Guild and they followed the example of their counterparts in other parts of the world. Later, many of them were commissioned to become members of the Woman’s Guild at Tumutumu mission. By 1959, the Woman’s Guild work was still being led by missionaries from Scotland and the church saw the need to elect an African woman to take up the leadership (Njoroge, 2000:60; Muita, 2003: 61). Though women have not had as much access to the higher echelons of the church’s hierarchy compared to men, the Woman’s Guild has been a good opportunity to exercise power and influence in the church through their prophetic gifts. They are able to command respect and to influence the church women within the structures in the Woman’s Guild, as well as contribute to a holistic growth of the church. PCEA to date provides women with structures in the Woman’s Guild in the church through which they may acquire and exercise responsibility.

While the women have grown in the Woman’s Guild leadership, they have not been found to grow in other structures of the church, like participating in administrative church leadership, especially in the higher hierarchy of the church. This is likely because Woman’s Guild leadership is not pegged on eldership or theological
education. This is despite the fact that since the 1930s, when the Woman’s Guild was established woman’s leadership has been proven. Women of the PCEA understand the structures of the Woman’s Guild and are very organized indicating that they could lead as well in other church structures.

Their financial contributions to the running of their church projects also distinguish Woman’s Guild Women. In addition to the Sunday offerings and monthly pledges, which every Christian is obligated to give to the Church; through the Women’s Guild the women pay money for the general cleanliness of the church, money to help the needy, and money used for erecting new churches and other structures. Women do more in terms of development in the church and financial contributions, both at congregation and presbytery levels.

Women are involved in leading intercessory gatherings, bible study, praise and worship, prayer and even preaching. The study revealed that most common duties that women are found performing includes hospitality, cleaning the church and doing decorations in weddings or conferences, counseling the youth, ushering, singing in the church choir, leading in praise and worship, preparing the priest’s table, managing children homes, cooking and serving food when there are church functions

In PCEA, women’s roles are confined to the charismatic domain while administrative functions are restricted to men. However, women may preach and have administrative roles among women and within the Woman’s Guild. To many
faithful church women, the Woman’s Guild is a form of self expression and an opportunity to serve. Phiri (1997: 99-97) shares the same view that Woman’s Guild gives women a place and space in the church. Further, it gives women a feeling of belonging within a male dominated church and in many ways provides scope for leadership talents to develop among women. Although women spiritual powers are recognized in this church, they nevertheless experience restriction and they have to contend with negative attitudes. The Woman’s Guild organization continues to carry on traditional roles which are not adequate to carve an “independent space.”

This study further revealed that the Woman’s Guild constitution bar women above fifty-five years to join the Woman’s Guild which is not the case with the Presbyterian men’s fellowship (PCMF), which has no limits. This is a form of different treatment, which is a clear form of denial of equal status in the church ministry as well as an expression of discrimination, and contradicts the Church constitution which embraces equality for all. It was further established that most women in the Woman’s Guild leadership were not ready to change the constitution with the national organizer stating, “The members of the woman’s Guild would even prefer to have the years reduced to fifty.” This finding agreed with Maina’s (1995:11) assertion that the church has continuously been accused of supporting and perpetuating the unjust social institution customs and myths which the church itself should eradicate. One finds that she (the Church) is more rigid than the secular society in her approach to gender issues. For instance, the society has opened up avenues for women to participate in any sphere of the society leadership regardless of age while the church has denied women above fifty five admission to a woman’s
church group, reason being the woman did not join the Woman’s Guild when she was “young and strong”.

To this end, Business Committee, Woman’s Guild and other stakeholder should engage in a serious multifaceted theological debate on the issues affecting PCEA women to join the Woman’s Guild with a view to resolve the challenge in order to create an opportunity for all women who are willing to join the Woman’s Guild to join at the time of their choice. This would emancipate the PCEA woman through encouraging her to participate in diverse ways in the church.

2.4 Woman’s Guild in Milimani


Woman’s Guild has developed various projects such as house project like Akila House, Faith House, Hossana Trinity and Unity 45 Plots, which show their competence in resource mobilization. They do an outstanding service to the church through the various projects they sponsor. The women raise funds through fundraisings, planned dinners as well as personal donations. A Committee is formed from the Woman’s Guild under the chaplaincy of the moderator (who have been men) to manage the projects. In addition, some of the churches in the presbytery
like St. Andrews have other projects such as Tumaini Home which takes care of the needy and the HIV-Infected (Presbyterian Council of the Woman’s Guild in PCEA Milimani Presbytery G.A Report, 2012, 237-238). The study established that Woman’s Guild has also been involved in social and spiritual work. This includes capacity building for fellow women, sponsoring students to institutions of learning, distributing food, clothing and medical care to the sick.

In Milimani, the Woman’s Guild continues to contribute to the church in worship, fellowship and church development. Kawale (2001:213) emphasizes that it is the responsibility of the church to look after those who have spiritual, physical and psychological problems. Women make a major contribution by visiting and counselling the sick, comforting the bereaved and giving assistance to the poor (Kawale 2001:213). This is an important area of service which the presbytery is expected to render. The women, therefore, complement the presbytery’s efforts. Today, many women deacons and elders in the church grow into leadership through the Woman’s Guild.

Oduyoye (1990:19) points out that most churches keep professing that women can hold any position (in the church) that befit them only in principal but not in practice. Oduyoye’s observation seems to fit within the PCEA Constitution (1998:100) where both men and women are eligible to hold Church office without any limitations. The study established that women outnumber men in local church committees yet this is not reflected in the administrative church leadership. If this is not arrested, women
will continue to act as supporters. There is need to bring women into the mainstream of church leadership.

While women are finding freedom in the male-dominated church through their involvement with Women’s Guild, Phiri (1997:91-95) observes that the women’s Guild is regarded with suspicion by the Presbytery which feels that it should be rigidly controlled for fear that it might turn out to be a church within a church. This is reflected by the moderator (mostly a man) being the chaplain at all levels. Such a practice seems to imply that women cannot successfully work independent of church hierarchy. Even where there are lady Ministers and male Ministers takes the moderators position they automatically take chaplaincy of the Guild Women. The study has established that in Milimani Presbytery, there were four lady Ministers and none of them was assigned the Woman’s Guild chaplaincy between 2008-2012.

Women hold leadership positions in various church groups such as, chair persons, secretaries and treasurers. These groups include the youth, church school, boys and girls’ brigade, Christian education, health board, justice peace and reconciliation and development committee. Other duties that women are found performing in the churches include cleaning the church and decorating, ushering, singing in the church choir, preparing the priest table, leading in praise and worship, cooking and serving food, counseling the youth and taking care of the sick (James, 1993:108-109; Mutambuki & Omondi, 1998:25-40).

The researcher sought to know from the laymen and women who participate more in Milimani administrative church leadership. The results are presented in Figure 2.9.
Figure 2.9 indicates that majority, 96% said men are, more involved in administrative church leadership than the woman. Some of the respondents pointed out that “the number of men outnumbers that of women…” (Ann, O.I.29.11.2011) “Men have dominated the leadership of the church and this has nothing to do with spiritual endowment but tradition” (Waithira, O.I.22.11.2011). The superiority of men over women is unquestionable. Women always play subordinate roles at home, in politics and to some extent in religion (Orebiyi, 2001:73). When critically assessed, it is possible to conclude that the PCEA woman is active and ready to carry forth the Church’s mission. Further the PCEA has failed to fully receive and respond to women's gift, and to admit them to key areas in church administrative leadership. Yet women are still the majority in most congregations and participate strongly in the spiritual and liturgical life of the Church.

2.5 Summary

This chapter has discussed the place and role of women in the PCEA. Based on the study findings, it was evident that women play a key role in church, although their representation in administrative positions is still very low. The chapter has clearly
indicated that women are usually involved in service delivery. These are the same responsibilities that take place in homes, giving an implication of, “home transferred to the church.” It has been established that, what women do in the church is part of their everyday routines. While the same women in the church, would be found serving in cooperate world at senior administrative leadership levels, the leadership participation in the church tends to be at the lower levels of the church hierarchies. From the above results, it is clear that the church has not responded seriously to the involvement of women in administrative church leadership. It is in this light probably that the men are considered as dominant in the administrative leadership. Therefore, the PCEA ought to address the underrepresentation of women in administrative church leadership. The next chapter examines how traditional African culture influences the participation of women in the administrative leadership in the church.
CHAPTER THREE

3.0 AFRICAN TRADITIONAL CULTURAL INFLUENCE ON WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN ADMINISTRATIVE CHURCH LEADERSHIP

3.1 Introduction

This chapter examines how the African traditional culture has influenced women’s participation in the church administrative leadership. It explores African culture and religion among the Agikuyu and how it has impacted on the access of women to administrative positions in the PCEA. The chapter discusses Gikuyu religion and culture showing the role of women in Gikuyu religion and how their religious and charismatic roles were disrupted and obliterated by missionary Christianity and colonialism thereby reflecting the missionaries’ perception of women’s roles in the PCEA. The chapter is based on the premise that, the participation of women in the Church has been influenced by the traditional African culture.

3.2 Agikuyu religion and Cultural Influence on PCEA in Kenya

The Agĩkũyũ, are part of the Bantu-speaking, people of North Eastern Equatorial Africa. Their ancestral home comprises of five counties namely, Kiambu, Nyandarua, Murang’a, Nyeri and Kirinyaga, even though they are scattered all over Kenya (Macpherson 1970). Traditional institutions among the Agikuyu held woman to an inferior status compared to man. Women for instance had no legal rights to rule, neither were their views sought in all decision-making councils in the socio-political organization starting with the family, clan, village and district council. Women agricultural autonomy was also less significant because they neither had rights to own land nor had they any say to its disposal (Kenyatta, 1938:31).
The Agikuyu traditionally worship one God whom they call *Ngai* (the greatest divider and provider). (Mbiti, 2012:455) points out that they also referred to Him as *Ngai Mumbi* (God the creator Fashioner, Maker, Moulder, Potter), *Mwathani* (the final authority and overlord of the society), *Ngai Baba* (God the father), *Murungu* (to suggest the uniqueness, anonymity, supremacy, and mercy of God all combined), *Nyene* (the great owner) and *Mwene Nyaga* (the owner or possessor of brightness), conceiving Him as the holiest and purest over and above his creation giver of all things and a great Elder. The Agikuyu believe that God (*Ngai*) created the universe with human beings, the animate and inanimate objects. They thought *Ngai* lives in the sky but has temporary homes on earth, situated on the mountains. For instance the Gikuyu believe that Mt. Kenya is *Ngai’s* resting-place. When the cloud was on the mountain, *Ngai* was said to live there. They also believe that God lives in huge trees like the *Mutamayo* (Olive) and *Mukuyu* (Fig), which are regarded as the sacred dwelling places of *Ngai* (Mbiti, 2012:497).

According to Agikuyu myth of origin, Agikuyu are a lineage oriented community that traces its origins from a common ancestor called *Gikuyu* and his wife *Mumbi*. The two had nine daughters, but no sons. The nine daughters took husbands and bore children. Each daughter came to head her own clan and are regarded as the ancestors of the nine main Agikuyu clans. It is no doubt significant that in this tradition it was the women who took husbands, and not the men who took wives (Leakey, 2007: 48). From the myth, Agikuyu people trace their origin from a God who is a creator. The Agikuyu people believe that *Ngai* has no origin or gender.
Ngai is a far-away being who is not seen with ordinary mortal eyes and is both transcendent and immanent. They Thought Ngai takes little interests in individuals in their daily walks of life but during the rites of passage (birth, initiation and marriage) which is a critical moment in life Ngai is invariably called upon to give spiritual assistance. We may point out that according to Agikuyu myth of origin, the first woman Mumbi is pictured as someone placed by God in a very special position. She was allowed to share with God the secrets and anonymity of life through the creative process of birth. Mumbi gave birth to nine daughters and through these daughters we have the whole Gikuyu tribe (Leakey, 2007:48). Consequently, women's participation with the mysteries of life's beginning is believed to be extremely valuable in the Gikuyu culture. Because of this, life was perceived as sacred and directly linked with God through the woman.

The myth continues that in time the kinship system changed from a matrilineal to a patrilineal one. It is believed this happened because the women became excessive in their domination over men. As a result, men met secretly to craft a coup that brought women down. And in this meeting, they conspired to impregnate all their wives. This was to ensure that they were all weak as men staged a coup de tat against their dictatorial tendencies, both at the family and the governance level. From there, as men celebrated their victory, they vowed that never shall they allow a woman to lead the Kikuyu Community (Kenyatta, 1938:2). In view of the foregoing, we deduce that this myth was used to socialize school going children of the danger of giving leadership to women as they are prone to abusing it.
Agikuyu women articulated their religiosity through many ways. (Hobley, 1967:61) notes that periodically, Gikuyu women were initiated into a mysterious religiosity that involved sporadic and authentic spirit possession. They would serve as, diviners, mediums and seers. The women benefited the entire society by bringing messages from the super-natural beings. Occasionally, the manifestation of the spirit in these women occurred when they were seized with frenzy and thrown into a state of ecstasy for several days. (Hobley, 1967:61) further observes that women prophetesses and seers determined to a great extent the site of the Gikuyu shrines. For example;

"In a particular locality death would occur of a women prophetess or seer, whose prophecy always came true. After a time the spirit of such a woman would seize another woman in that village. In a state of exaltation she would speak in the name of the prophetess saying, "I cannot stay here, I am called by Ngai, and I go to live at a certain tree" (which of course would be specified). According to Gikuyu beliefs, the tree thus designated in such circumstances acquired sanctity. A sacrifice would then be offered with eight elders (four men and four women ) saying "we have brought you to the place you so desire". "(Hobley, 1967:61)

At this point a small hut would be built on the spot. Agikuyu women employed rituals to bring desired ends like fertility in the time of barrenness, and protection and favour from the ancestors especially during the time of misfortune. These rituals could be in form of a chant uttered when preparing a meal, a cleansing ceremony prior to visiting a sacred place, a charm won by the victim, or specified behaviors undertaken to ensure agricultural productivity. The Agikuyu people believed that women's activities controlled some aspects of the supernatural Hobley, 1967:61-62).

Edith (O.I, 6.112011) pointed out that traditionally Agikuyu women played vital roles in religion and contributed to the community worship life. This finding concurs with Edet &Ekeya (1996:6) that, in African religion women professionals occur who
can be equated to ministers, pastors and priests in the Christian churches. Therefore, traditionally then women had liturgical roles just like men depending on their calling.

The PCEA was established among Agikuyu community at a time when the community traditions had clear view and practices on worship and a leadership system that defined the place of women and men. The Scottish missionaries came from a society, which was patriarchal. As a result, the Scottish Missionaries worked at suppressing the women’s participation instead of equipping her to participate in church leadership. The Scottish missionaries used men as the first adherents to spread the gospel to the rest of the country. Such pioneers like Petro Mugo and Daniel Wachira, went to Tumu Tumu while Daudi Makumi, Priscilla Njeri Makumi and Samsoni Maingi went to Chogoria (Macpherson, 1970: 147). Priscilla Njeri Makumi was wife to Daudi Makumi. Women were not looked upon as missionaries themselves. "Missionary work was clearly perceived as a task performed by men that women merely supplemented. Missionary was a male noun; it denoted a male actor, male action, and male spheres of service?" (Bowie 1993: 1).

These indigenous personnel to the mission included interpreters, catechists, teachers and domestic hands. They knew the local language, culture, customs and traditional religious heritage and were better suited to know how best to convey the message of the Christian missionaries to their own people. In the course of evangelism, David (OI. 12.11.2011) points out that the pioneers carried their cultural practices, which are still found in the various communities where the church is established today. Although each community has its specific cultural practices, some of the practices of
the church and bible translation were basically borrowed from the Agikuyu community. Much of the Agikuyu culture permeated the church and also remained influential to date. We could make an observation that the pioneers were mostly men and there was a likelihood of reinforcing societal emphasis on the subordination of women.

The missionaries came with their liturgy books which were translated to the Agikuyu language. The Presbyterian liturgy book in East Africa was prepared in Agikuyu language in 1926 for the ordination of the first eight Kenyan ministers, who were themselves, members of the Agikuyu community. Further, a second part of the Presbyterian liturgy book in East Africa for ministers with thirteen services was printed in 1929 in Agikuyu language. Later in 1950, part of this was reprinted as a service book for all who had to lead worship (later known as Mahoya). In 1972 a tentative revision of twelve services duplicated in kikuyu and English had been prepared by Macpherson (Mahoya 2) (Foreword PCEA Church service book 2000: iii). Language as a medium of communication is known all over the world to be a critical depository of cultural habits, carrying the power to influence. This could have had a tremendous impact on the status of women’s participation in church administrative leadership since through language; culture is transmitted in both visible and invisible form.

Many of the services were originally prepared in Agikuyu language. Barlow, a Scottish Missionary in Agikuyu land translated the Bible to Agikuyu language as well as hymns and many reading materials (Muita, 167:2003). The use of the early Christian books in Agikuyu language carried many aspects of their cultural practices
into the church. Therefore, as the girls were brought up, the early learning within the family was that in the church there is sitting arrangement where men and women sit in opposite sides where men’s side seems more superior. It is in this socialization that the woman finds her identity and receives the set cultural instructions that enable her to take church administrative leadership.

Other aspects like the title *athuri* (elders), which usually designate men, were also to be applied to women to date. This means the Agikuyu language was imported into the church with several of its cultural practices including how men and women were regarded in the Agikuyu culture. Culture transmitted through language therefore, stands out as a factor that militates against the participation of women in administrative church leadership.

In several occasions, Agikuyu made sacrifices and offerings to *Ngai*. Their traditional religion involved sacrifices, offerings and prayers in periods of crisis like famine, drought and epidemic; seasonal opportunities like planting and harvesting time and at major ceremonies like birth, initiation, marriage and death Kenyatta (1938:243). The sacrifices were offered under designated sacred *mugumo* (fig tree) (Mbiti,2012:195). Even today, the *mugumo* tree holds this place of honor as a sign of the sacred. Local or regional elders conducted communal ceremonies at the sacred grooves. For minor family needs, the eldest male member made offerings and sacrifices to the living dead. In times of trouble, or in an annual special service, a family or village leader would take his family to the "high place" and pray for this family, ask forgiveness of sins and request help in drought or other needs. However,
as in many other African societies, Agikuyu women of the childbearing age were not permitted in sacrificial ceremonies conducted in sacred places like shrines, and trees. This is because they were thought to be unclean and people who would easily defile the sacrifice. This thought is closely linked with the menstrual periods and also the inferior status of women in the patriarchal society.

The Agikuyu have always had a family-oriented government where the men led in leadership just as they have remained in PCEA today. They never had chiefs, but had a council of elders drawn from the senior elder age-set, who mainly comprised of men and this was matched well with the Christian elder systems. According to Mcintosh (1969:196), Scott, one of the Scottish missionaries was greatly impressed by the power of logic, oratory and the keen sense of justice displayed by Agikuyu people. A spokesman would be chosen by consensus, but he would be removed if he was not cooperative.

At the family set up, it was the men who were in charge of governance, and it has been natural, that even in the church they assume similar status as in the tradition of the Agikuyu. Every household head, the man of the house acted as the first instance in disputes arising around his homestead. If there was a big dispute, then he called on heads of the family within his family unit. If this failed then it was time to move to the highest court of the land, but without any much reference to women as arbitrators.
Disputes in PCEA are referred to the higher courts which are largely dominated by men. “…In case a dispute is referred to the office of the GA it will purely be solved by men since women are not represented” (Waithira, O.I.22.11.2011). This is in line with Bem’s (1993) theory, “first lens androcentrism which defines males and male experience as a standard or norm and females and female experience as a deviation from that norm This leads to a patriarchal system that has resulted in an androcentric world where men and not women occupy a majority of administrative church leadership. This lens marginalizes women, making the female experience of church administrative leadership invisible and locating women to the margins of the church administrative leadership.

In the Agikuyu legal systems, the highest court of the land consisted of the elders of three stages, junior elders called *kiama kĩa kamatimo*, who were mainly there as trainees of law and had such functions as to fetch firewood and water and light fires. They could not yet judge a case. The next council of elders’ *kiama kĩa mataathi* were the main judges. Other than that, there was a council of elders called *kiama kĩa maturanguru* who were the eldest and most experienced and were called upon to assist in intricate parts of the law and these were mostly men outfits. A man entered this council when practically all his children were circumcised and his wife or wives were past child bearing age. Cases brought before the council of elders were heard in the meeting space also known as *kĩhaaro*. The elders heard from both parties (Wanjohi, 1997: 210-214).

In making a case the concerned parties would use twigs given to the elders after each concrete complaint was made. After the arguments were made, an open session
followed in which elders expressed their opinions for or against either party. At the end of this a special committee (*ndundu*), was formed that would deliver judgment. This retired to a place where no one could hear their deliberations and only came out when a decision was reached. An appeal was possible if one of the parties didn’t agree with the ruling. From this, it was clear that the Agikuyu were men led community, and this was a practice that to some extent translated into the church administrative leadership (Wanjohi, 1997: 210-214). This is androcentrism and (Ruether in parsons 2002:3) challenges the patriarchal gender paradigms where male are associated with superiority and dominance and females with inferiority and subordination. These justify women’s participation in subordinate roles of the Church while leadership administrative positions are male preserved.

The Agikuyu Council of elders hereafter referred to as the council was (is) a council of wisdom-keepers selected by their own people to carry the ancient knowledge and traditional way of life of their peoples. For over 500 years, they have carried oral history, healing wisdom, spiritual practices, accumulated knowledge and experience of their natural environment, stewardship of their sacred lands and an amazing knowledge of the cosmos among so many other things. People appointed elders are those with impeccable character and wisdom and they help keep the order and procedure of the PCEA, just in related manner they served their community (Wanjohi, 1997: 210-214). Among the Agikuyu, elders were the custodians of the law and it is the same case with the elders in the PCEA today since they are the custodians of PCEA practice and procedures.
Agikuyu Council of elders systems has had a major influence in the church. Probably, as it was dominated by men, it may have had an influence since the elders in the church are largely formed of men. This is in line with Bem’s idea that ‘“hidden assumptions about sex and gender remain embedded in cultural discourses social institutions, and individual psyches”’ is borne out in experiences in the church, reflected in the idea that polarization shapes how people perceive church leadership.

In the Agikuyu community the responsibility of making laws belonged to the council of elders and the council of warriors, each in its own right and in collaboration. The council of elders concerned itself with the day-to-day affairs of running the society, just as the Kirk Session do today. The aim of membership in the highest grade of eldership was to dedicate one to the service of God and the welfare of the community (Wanjohi, 1997: 213). From the foregoing we can deduce that the council of elders was one of the strategies that Church of Scotland Mission (CSM) used to evangelize the Agĩkũyũ in order to win them to Christian faith since it was not a new concept to them.

Today’s Kirk Session which is not an open court fit well with these traditions of the Agikuyu customary laws. The obvious factor is that in both men were the majorities. Agikuyu Council of elders, were also equated with wisdom, and as women were not included, it negated their wisdom and a similar problem persist where women are underrepresented in the eldership in PCEA today. It could be concluded here that the concept of gender polarization seems to encourage, the roles of men and women as distinct in the church and society, with the men in
administrative positions and women in service giving roles. Such a practice seems to depict the women’s struggle to access administrative church leadership.

During the period the church was established in Milimani, the men were in full charge of authority. Over time, the community traditions shows ancestors were honored as intercessors with God and spiritual powers. They were honored in the naming system, and people often explained the traditional belief that the actual spirit of the grandparent on other ancestor comes into the new child named after them, but a lot more the ancestors were believed to be men, and hardly are the women highlighted. This notion has had a major effect on the world view of men and women as some of the male elders in the society were the ones who mainly related with these ancestors, through sacrifices and this gave them unique role in the spiritual activities compared to women.

The research findings of this study shows little mention of the roles played by the missionary women as well as the first African women converts who were actively involved in evangelism work. Jacinta (O.I.14.11.2011), one of the lay woman maintained that “… women have actively participated in church planting, yet we don’t hear her story” Hence women who comprise the majority find themselves underrepresented. One of the women, Sarah (O.I.04.01.2011) noted that the socialization of women in the church occurs within a system of power and inequality and such systems tend to reproduce various forms of inequality. This practice would be interpreted as discriminating against the women. These findings are very illustrative of the social cost of leadership for women in church administrative leadership.
When critically assessed, Agikuyu elder tradition matched with the Presbyterian leadership procedure, which recognizes the role of elders. Equally, the PCEA Kirk Session plays a similar role in the pastoral session as that of the Agikuyu, in terms of dispute resolution. The selection of the elders, just as it was with the missionaries’ tradition has largely remained a preserve of men. When women are appointed to join the kirksession as elders, they soon realize that they are expected to conform or assimilate to the established culture. After all, how can one be admitted to eldership, and then contradict the church practice? (Sarah, O.I.04.01.2011). Because of their appointment there is the perception that one was ‘let in,’ and even the most capable women are viewed with suspicion. Such practices always influence church members’ attitude towards women and their participation in administrative church leadership.

The findings of this study indicate that in the PCEA liturgy book (2000:79) the language used in elder’s ordination is patriarchal, for example, “...in order to ordain these men to the eldership.” The author’s main argument here is that there has been an assumption that probably only men are church elders. PCEA elders are both men and women and these calls for inclusive, non-gendered language. This kind of socialization is continued and reinforced in the church creating a concept that “Eldership is the domain of men” thus influencing women’s participation in church administrative leadership.

As the Agikuyu traditions were handed down in history, they carried a rich heritage including healing wisdom, spiritual practices, accumulated knowledge and
experience of their natural environment, stewardship of their sacred land, and an amazing knowledge of the cosmos among so many other things. The councils were responsible for maintaining the integrity of ancient wisdom and passing it on to subsequent generations. Although women were not so much involved in the foregoing leadership discussion, they were critical in other community aspect.

Women played a central role as they offered public prayers especially as rainmakers, got together in order to decide on the day to make the sacrifice of rain. The ceremony required the presence of a boy and a girl both to be under eight years of age. On the day of the ceremony, the two children led the procession starting from the home of the chief elder, the boy carrying the calabash containing the milk and the girl the calabash with beer. The presence of the girl indicated the presence of women in the sacrifice (Wanjohi, 1997:185-187). When Christianity was introduced they could not resist women completely, but their participation in leadership was scanty.

In view of the above findings on the influence of the Agikuyu culture on PCEA in Kenya, there is no doubt that the Agikuyu culture has influence on PCEA women participation in Church administrative leadership. This study therefore argues that, there is urgent need to revisit gender composition in Church administrative leadership with a view to improved women participation. This would not only influence women’s participation in church administration leadership, it would also ensure that women participation in church administrative leadership receives serious attention in PCEA.
3.3 African Cultural and Religious Influence on Christianity

Since the beginning of Christianity the relationship between Christianity and culture is a recurrent and complex issue. African culture had its own wisdom, insights and values that informed the lives of Africans. The mainline churches were influenced by the traditions, wisdom, art and way of life of worship that the African practiced before the advent of Christianity, especially in songs, prayers and sermons. Mbiti (quoted in Muita 2001; 43) puts it that traditional African religious conceptualization has deeply influenced the religious thinking of the African independent churches that were growing in numbers all over Kenya and elsewhere in Africa. Further there has been a deep feeling expressed by Africans who view the Christianization of Africa from a different framework that conforms to African reality.

In the African context, traditional beliefs and cultural attitudes regarding the role and status of women in society are still prevalent and many women are part of this system finding it difficult to dislocate from this culture and tradition lest they be ostracized. Gbenga, (2012:262) argues that cultural values, traditional beliefs, norms and superstitions have been the major obstacles in the realization of women’s aspiration to spiritual leadership positions in the church. Despite women’s education and entry into the job market, the woman’s role is typically one of homemaker. The man, on the other hand, is the breadwinner, head of household and has a right to public life (Sadie, 2005). According to Højgaard (2002:1), the societal conventions regarding gender and leadership traditionally exclude women, and top leadership is viewed as a masculine domain. In African societies, it is believed that men lead and

Further, Hellen, (O.I.11.11.2011) pointed out that one of the reasons there are few women in church administrative leadership “…is a lack of unity among women themselves”. The explanation she gave was that, since women vie for limited positions, they tend to see other women as a threat and are jealous of one another. She went on to say that “… women have the potential to bring about change, but they lack organization due to lack of time, given their multiple roles as bread winners, wives and mothers”. The researcher found that the foregoing has greatly influenced women’s participation in church administrative leadership. These findings are in line with the premise that the participation of women in church has been influenced by the traditional African culture.

When ministers were asked whether African culture has influence on women’s participation in administrative leadership majority of them (75%) said yes while (25%) said no as shown in the Figure 3.1 below.

![Figure 3.1: Ministers response on African culture influence on women's participation in administrative church leadership](image_url)
From the findings (75%) of the ministers admitted that Agikuyu culture has influence on Christianity, pointing out that women still face challenges in taking leadership positions, including the barriers related to culture and cultural expectations where leadership and decision making are male domains. It is also said that the woman’s place is the home, giving birth to and rearing children (Phiri 1992:201). Sarah (O.I. 01.11.2011) one of the women Ministers noted that historically, leadership has carried the notion of masculinity and the belief that men make better leaders than women is still common today. Further, the societal conventions regarding gender and leadership traditionally exclude women, and top leadership is viewed as a masculine domain (James, O.I. 06.11.2011) points out that…“African culture does not allow women to lead or stand before men”. “…cultural attitude and domestic chores limit women participation” (Patrick, O.I.11.11.2011). Given such responses we could make an observation that the church tends to reinforce societal emphasis on the subordination of women. However, (Samuel, O.I.28.11.2011) doubted that, cultural belief in church is significant “…there is nothing cultural against women”. Other reasons such as prejudice, church tradition and conservative theology may have influenced low participation of women.

It is certainly important to acknowledge Oduyoye’s (1995: 181) observation that “women’s voice should be listened to”. The African church needs to empower women not only to speak for themselves and manage their “women’s affairs, ‘but to be fully present in decisions and operations that affect the whole church, including the forming of its theology. The women have to be nurtured and developed throughout the society and the church.
Christianity came to Africa when traditional cultural practices were in many ways defining the roles of various members of the society. The traditions put men in position of high leadership, and were responsible for various decisions. Phiri (1997: 99) points out that, the identity of womanhood as defined by patriarchy is one of the central issues for feminist theologians globally and particularly in Africa because it has influenced the image and roles that women play in the African Church and society. This was affirmed by the patriarchal ideology perpetuated with or without explicit intentions. Besha (2005:1) notes the history of the Church has been one of reinforcing the patriarchal values in society and calls these discriminatory traditions. Naturally, men were largely in charge of political, social and economic roles while women played supportive roles. Men were largely responsible for leadership in the public sector and there were institutions like councils of elders and shrines of worship where they discharged their duties.

The roles that the adults assumed evolved over a long process since childhood, where specific duties related to gender were emphasized (Phiri, 1997: 99). The acceptance of this cultural norm in the church can be seen as a product of gender arrogance on the part of men to maintain the traditional status quo and the seeming total submissiveness on the part of women. This postulation agrees with Baur’s (1994:481) position: Men strive to dominate and are reluctant to listen and accept; while women are too ready to submit, thus neglecting initiative and leadership. In the pastoral work of the church, these attitudes would be enhanced by the priestly-hierarchical mentality that sees women as only fit to receive and obey. When laymen and women were asked whether Agikuyu culture has influenced women in
administrative church leadership, majority (68.8%) said yes. The frequency and percentages of the responses is presented in Figure 3.2.

Figure 3.3: Laymen and women response on African culture influence on women's participation in administrative church leadership

Jacinta (O.I.14.11.2011), one of the lay woman maintained that the missionaries reinforced patriarchal systems and compounded the woes of the African women by augmenting their ordinary burdens with those of their western sisters. George, (O.I.28.11.2011) views the limited women’s participation in administrative church leadership as a product of the patriarchal tendencies in Agikuyu culture which has enthroned or institutionalized male domination in virtually all facets of the people’s life.

Mugambi (2005:542) asserts that while African Christians accepted the basic Christian teachings almost without debate, they did not necessarily abandon their traditional values and ideas. Oduyoye (1995:168) shares the same view and observes that whatever the situation, social cultural norms demand on women submissive and
subordinate behavior. The idea that there were duties, which were considered masculine, and others feminine also emerged in the study and these tended to define the status of women and men at domestic and public stations.

Jacinta (O.I.14.11.2011) argues that the socialization women receive as young girls mainly prepares them for domestic roles. As such, it is no wonder that many women are hesitant to take up positions of leadership because of the pressure involved. Waithira (O.I.22.11.2011) further pointed out that “…socialization that women receive make them objects of cultural preservation”

Other cultural arguments advanced held that women were never leaders in the traditional societies and even those who were involved in the religious affairs were always beyond menopause” (Christopher, O.I.22.11.2011). Mary (O.I.20.11.2011) argues that “…patriarchal society encourages men leadership”. This patriarchal practice defined women as inferior to men, thereby perpetuating their oppression in all sectors including religion and culture. The style of leadership as well as other social cultural traditions had critical influence in the early Christian mission in Africa and many practices were replicated within the church over time as a result of mere prejudices and stereotypes born by patriarchy.

Given that Christianity was introduced at a time when the African culture was highly developed with clear institutional definition of men and women, it was neither easy nor quick to extricate the Christian ministry from the normal life of the African people. Some of the African traditions such as polygamy were detested by
early missionaries in the name of being repugnant to higher ideals of morality and justice and were seen as part of a backward culture to fight and civilize; nevertheless, they proved to be sophisticated enough to survive (Girouard, 1910:239/10). From this response, it appears that African culture is deeply rooted in the life of the African Christians.

The researcher further sought to establish the position of the GA and the Heads of Departments on the same question as to whether African culture influence women’s participation in administrative church leadership. The results are presented in Figure 3.3.

![Figure 3.3: GA and heads of departments’ response on African culture influence on women's participation in administrative church leadership.](image)

All the respondents agreed that African culture affects women’s participation in administrative church leadership. In PCEA, women have been marginalized because men monopolize the decision making structures and are in the majority. One
underlying problem for women has been the difficulty in dealing with the inherent patriarchal structures that pervade the lives of church members. Further, women are still assigned a secondary place by the prevailing customs and culture. It could be concluded here that as Africans embraced Christianity, they carried their practices alongside into the church. This shows that Africans did not abandon the culture but integrated it into the Christian faith.

Some missions realized that inevitably, Christianity would have to reflect the culture of Africans for its manifestation and survival on the African continent. The African unique way of life was recognized by Pope Paul VI who in his visit to Uganda in 1969, stated that “the Africans must have an African Christianity since they possess human values and characteristic forms of culture which can rise up to be capable of a richness of expression of its own and genuinely African” (Pastoral letter, 7 (1969), 50-51). Further, Gbenga (2012: 263) asserts that traditional cultural influence in religion feature prominently in various churches in Africa; shaping worship styles. The African music and rhythm, the sitting arrangement, dressing code, language, cultural values, traditional beliefs, norms and superstitions, were integrated and partly reflected treatment of women in characteristic traditional where men generally led and women followed.

In this study, the rich diversity of the African culture, was affected but not destroyed by the Colonial education. The Christian teaching enhanced the idea of equality, but still some of the stereotype traditional culture aspects treating men and women have not yet achieved parity. It is therefore, unfortunate that cultural inhibition, lead to under representation of women in the administrative office in the church. It means
that women’s aspiration to ascend to administrative leadership is still limited, largely as a result of cultural perception of men as leaders in society. Such attitude could influence the lay men and women to regard women as assistants and not church administrative church leadership. In this case, it could be said culture greatly influences the congregation to have a low attitude towards women in church administrative leadership.

An earlier study by Phiri (1997:73) argues that, “African cultures do not allow women to lead men.” This type of thinking continues to affect consideration of women administrative leadership roles in the church. Today, there are dilemmas in the lives of Christians who have to choose between traditional values and Christian values. Nevertheless, these dilemmas reveal that African traditional culture remains as a powerful reality in the Christian lives today. Further, the fact that women are still sparsely represented in church administrative leadership positions is not only a theological question drawing from the history of the church; but also shows how African traditional culture is deeply ingrained in the church today.

Traditional culture was seen in dual characteristic; hostile on one hand and protective to women on another. When a girl was born in many African traditions, her value was considered mostly in light of a person to be married off later in life. In the husband’s family, she was considered a guest who came from outside Schmidt (2006:7). This tended to indicate that women were sojourners in their families, without a definite “home”. This socialization process made decision making a male
prerogative and women always had to go along with what the males decided regardless of any alternative thinking they may have had.

Characteristically, women became implementers and men decision makers and custodians of the systems and regulation to maintain that order. Some of the elements of that order type were found within the domestic setting where a woman could not make a decision without her husband’s consent, but hardly the vice-versa. Where major decision was to be taken and the husband was not available, the wives were to consult other male relatives to seek permission to do anything. At times, the woman even had to consult her own son for permission. This practice elevated men to status of leadership while at the same time produced women as subject to the same leadership, giving them a more docile status compared to men (Schmidt:2006:7).

The findings also show that although Christianity has challenged many of the factors inhibiting equality, authority for women and men differ. Christianity has found itself in closely related and intricate trappings with a tendency for men to assume the “husband” role model. In similar way men order life at the domestic levels, so do they tend to hold it in the church system, either knowingly or unconsciously. Just as the men regulate the family life, and essentially assume, leadership and influence the decision making processes, so do they tend to extend similar decision making process into the church.
Another aspect found was that the family related chores such as bringing up children and general home management constitute major responsibilities that tie women from engaging fully in church administrative leadership. African women have certain expected roles to play. They are expected to bear and nurture children, as well as manage the home. The issue of children, or family for that matter, is one that disturbs many women as they make the decision to take up a leadership position. Therefore, it is not surprising that some women are perceived as avoiding church administrative leadership in order to care for their families (David, O.I.12.11.2011).

Similarly, the GA officers and heads of department expressed culture has played a great role in influencing women’s participation in administrative church leadership. The results indicated “cultural reasons” (Festus, O.I.8.11.2011), difficulties in marriage and ‘blocked by men in high levels’ and ‘time factor’ (George, O.I. 9.11.2011). The reasons hindering women from taking administrative leadership are influenced by African culture and the findings are in agreement with Kindiki (2006:5) who asserts that the socialization of women and men roles has been transferred to the church since the same people in the public are the same in the church. Consequently, the church tends to cement these cultural norms, finding that men are generally valued and empowered by the church in many ways.

These findings suggest that Christianity is interwoven with the African traditions. This is because in the traditional setting, men had the right of control and typically concentrated in leadership work. The parallel in the African culture where women
were not allowed to speak in public, which also pertain to the Judeo-Christian traditions are still persistent.

3.4 African Cultural Influence on PCEA in Kenya

Colonial administrators and missionaries did not give much attention to the African culture. Traditional way of life was changed and challenged with the onslaught of evangelism, conversion and western education. The missionaries did not become conscious, for instance that African culture had its own wisdom, insights and values that informed the lives of Africans. At any rate, they aspired to civilize the Africans or to assimilate them into their culture. Africans were asked to give up their traditional religion, culture, identities and family relationships. At times, the intention was to keep them at bay (Barlow in McIntosh, 1969:196). Christianity took firm root in Africa, but it needed to reflect the culture and traditional religion of Africans. This also gave rise to the emergence of exclusively Independent African churches. It was this denial that compelled Africans to accept Christianity and yet cling to their own culture. The result produced the blending of cultural ideas in the spiritual realm that fits into African society (Mwaura, 2005: 420).

The PCEA in Kenya did not spread throughout the country during the missionary period. The Church of Scotland, which is the foundation of the PCEA entered the country through Kibwezi in 1892, and settled in three major ethnic communities, namely Kikuyu, Meru and Kamba (Muita, 2003:122). The Gospel Missionary Society (GMS), which was associated with the AIM before 1913, established Mission stations at Kambui and Ng’enda in Kiambu in 1902 and 1905 respectively, and Kihumbuini in Murang’a in 1913 (Githieya, 1997; Karanja, 1999). The study
limited itself to the cultures where the church was planted. Within the Kikuyu community, the missionaries settled in Nyeri, Kikuyu, and Tumu Tumu. As the church grew in the community, the local cultural structures continued to be noticed in the church; expressed in music, instruments, prayers rituals such and the honor given to men and women. In view of changing education, communication and modern practices, there are also changes affecting these practices, but forms of African practices are not yet gone.

The Imperial British East Africa (IBEA) was given a royal charter to work within the region that later became known as Kenya. The company opened up a chain of posts along the caravan route to Uganda and one such post was set up at Dagoretti in the Agĩkũyũ land in 1890. The fort was designed as a strategic post to serve caravans headed to Uganda. The proximity location of the Agĩkũyũ land, the availability of surplus food and other goods, made the company to establish formal contacts with the Agĩkũyũ. Nevertheless, it should be noted that, the relationship between the Agĩkũyũ and the occupants of the post was sometime tumultuous (Githieya, 1997, and Macpherson, 1970)

This notwithstanding, the contact had a direct bearing on the expansion of the Protestant Missionary activities. Sir William Mackinnon, the company’s director encouraged the Christian Missions to establish their work along the route where the company had set their posts for security reasons. Being a Scottish and a staunch member of the Free Church of Scotland, Mackinnon and other directors of the company were able to form the East African Scottish Mission (EASM) (Temu,
1972:94-95). EASM’s intention was to open Mission work in the territories IBEAC was administering on behalf of the British government. Through funds from wealthy merchants in Scotland, Mackinnon secured the services of Dr. James Steward, Livingstone’s successor in Scottish Lovedale Nyasaland (Malawi) as the first director. Dr. Stewart was instructed to open the first mission station at Dagoretti. Dagoretti by then was one of the key posts that the IBEAC was administering and was considered to be a strategic location to both the IBEAC and the new missionary society for reaching the Agĩkũyũ and the Maasai (Miano, 2008; Muita, 2003).

The settlers as well as the missionaries had to get a way of dealing with the African people. The government and the missionary societies working in the indigenous reserves were to have one and the same object in view and endeavored to work in raising the Africans to higher level (Mc Person, 1910:10). In the missions they were required to cast out the old traditions, with the result that they became detribalized (Temu, 1972:146). Further, as the Agikuyu had come more in touch with the white man and women and run a greater risk of becoming denationalized.

The Church Mission Society (CMS), African Inland Mission (AIM), and Church of Scotland Mission (CSM) developed a system of administering, the African people. It was agreed that the only humane method of dealing with such ethnic groups “who have not reached a high stage of civilization” was to develop them on their own lines and in accordance with their own ideas and customs, purified in so much as necessary. They were to strive in preserving and not destroying the African. All the
good in their government which made for manliness, self respect and honest dealings was to be retained (Mc Person, 1910:10). The missionaries decided to work from the known to the unknown.

The council of elders system in Africa helped the missionaries in setting up base for evangelism in Agikuyu and Meru area in Kenya. The elders in Africa are respected for many reasons. They are believed to be the teachers and directors of the young. Furthermore, the elders are taken to be the repository of communal wisdom and therefore they are conceded leadership in the affairs of the people. One of the reasons for this is the nearness of the elders to the ancestors (Mungiriria, 1996:220). Further Davidson (1969:200) points out that in the African concept, “Legitimate power lay in the office sanctioned by ancestral norms, not in the person; and the person lost his right to exact obedience once he abused that office”. The elders themselves respect authority, and often are committed to the demands of their office. Members who are elders are bound to exercise high discipline over the matter of secrecy.

The PCEA Kirk session court was therefore, able to take root in this environment. As colonial agents of civilization, the missionaries aimed at “civilizing” African culture more than they aimed at liberating women from patriarchy, but the African culture was also able to have an impact on Christianity. Women were generally absent in the power structures in the African culture and the same situation is found in the church, where women are poorly represented in the power structures of the Church. (Isichei, 1999: 190) emphasizes that women were often the first converts,
but they appear invisible. The missionaries kept women from ordination and only introduced them to supportive roles in the church and this was aligned with many Kenya’s community traditional practices of excluding women in critical leadership in traditional worship and public leadership.

3.5 Influence on Women’s Administrative Leadership in PCEA Milimani Presbytery
From The above response it appears that African culture is deeply rooted in the life of the African Christians. When the laymen and women were asked to give reasons for their answered some of them said “there were duties which were considered masculine and others feminine, and these tended to define the status of women and men at domestic and public stations”. This patriarchal practice defined women as inferior to men, thereby perpetuating their oppression in all sectors including religion and culture. Traditional gender roles cast men as rational, strong, protective and decisive; they cast women as emotional (irrational), weak, nurturing and submissive and generally incapable of holding offices of high stations.

Although the church policy does not show favoritism towards men and women, the view that lay people hold is important to explain the election patterns which continue to be skewed in favor of men. This is a clear indication that African culture has a significant influence on women’s participation in administrative church leadership. This can further be explained within the patriarchal ideology, which cleverly works to keep women and men in traditional gender roles.

There is however, an exceptional case in the St. Andrews church. This church was established as a place of worship for the colonial white Christians. English was the
main mode of communication. Apart from the Kikuyu cultural influence, the participation of the woman in the church was also affected by the missionary patriarchal traditions which were not necessarily a domain of Kikuyu. The cultural traditions present the man in well-regarded position. This was to have effects as the Christians could not fully extricate their lives with their traditions- including the fact that men were the principal leaders in the society.

The laymen and women did not agree with the Ministers on the extent to which culture influences the women participation in the church leadership. Out of the Ministers respondents 15 (75.0%) agreed that women participation in the church administrative leadership is affected by cultural attitudes. It was evident from the Ministers’ respondents that “African Culture discriminates women in major roles” (Hezekiah, O.I.9.11.2011). Further, “the social cultural factors tied with traditional beliefs and practices play a great role in determining women participation in administrative church leadership ” (Margret, O.I.6.11.2011). (Kingston, O.I.4.12.2011,) pointed out that “… the cultural influence in women access to church administrative leadership is evident. Our African culture does not attach much importance to women leadership”.

This was confirmed by some respondents who stated that “women are not supposed to be leaders of men (Mary, O.I. 25.11.2011). “…there is still a tendency of looking at women as incapable to hold administrative church leadership given they are seen to be weaker than men due to cultural beliefs. Further, culture sees a woman as lower than a man and advocates she should wait on her husband…” (Harriet, O.I.26.11.2011) while (John, O.I.4.11.2011) responded that “male domination in
leadership is a cultural attitude in most patriarchal societies” We could make an observation that the Christian community in Milimani Presbytery tend to reinforce societal emphasis on the subordination of women.

This shows that cultural traditions affects the church, and the Ministers who have the responsibility as teaching elders, are aware but it has not been possible to address the challenges fully. Such patriarchal arguments were based on ignorance of the fact that the Church in Africa inherited an already gender biased tradition. The argument fails to recognise that two wrongs do not make a right. There is need to have practical programmes in the church to address gender issues at all levels. The GA and Departmental Heads respondents agreed that the issue of culture remains the major purveyor of gender stereotypes and limits women participation in administrative church leadership. These are the custodians who are responsible of giving church guidance on policy and procedures.

Given the low level of women participation, culture continues to dictate men to positions of privileges as leaders, and without critical mind shift to redress this problem of the present male dominated systems, the unique role that equal participation in the church may bring would remain delayed. The traditions have been carried out in many forms, both formal and informal.

It is also clear that beliefs which restrict participation on equal footing, are in themselves a resistance to change, and undermines the church growth. This finding agreed with James (2003:312) finding which revealed that in patriarchal society, a woman is faced with a myriad of structures of injustice, oppression and
discrimination causing suffering. Just as patriarchy privileges men by promoting traditional gender roles, so does the church today tend to internalize the norms and values of patriarchy.

Other pertinent arguments that emerged from the study include, “women themselves don’t take women in leadership seriously and they see fellow women as weak, (Isaac, O.I.11.11.2011), family pressure, difficult marriages and education limit women’s participation. Moreover, during the women’s guild meetings and weddings the church has a tendency of relying on biblical notions that women should be submissive.

The PCEA church constitution encourages women to take any role in view of the present age and culture which accommodates women as leaders. Enlightening is vastly overtaking retrogressive culture, whereby the girl child, for example is given a chance in public affairs than before. The research findings of this study indicate that confidence in women should start at home in order for women to take part in leadership roles in other sectors including the church institution. This study is in agreement, with Mwaura, (2005: 412) assertion that a dominant male ideology has ensured that women continue being clients in the churches just as they were in the shrines of traditional society. It however, has brought in an interesting dimension showing a convergence of awareness among, lay men and women, Ministers and General Assembly and Departmental staff, thus, indeed culture is the single most challenging factor in women participation in administrative church leadership.
3.6 Summary

Traditional African culture still plays a key role on the extent to which the church structure incorporates women in the administrative church leadership positions. Given that culture is dynamic, it leaves a question, why has there been little change, even with this knowledge in the church? PCEA belongs to the reformed tradition and there have been many reforms, but why this is taking too long, is partly based on the patriarchal foundations which are still strong. Patriarchy insists a lofty but faulty logic view of women as modest, self-sacrificing and nurturing, who may not handle tough leadership issues. The PCEA is no exception in this challenge, which presents Christianity like other churches as an alternative superior to the existing cultures. These results may imply that the church leadership, like their counterpart the missionaries, continues to deny the reality of women’s participation in administrative leadership.

The extent to which women may articulate change from their position may also mean awareness of cultural trappings as well as confronting self censorship to leadership. To change the status quo, requires a conscientization of the whole church. This could be through making the church conscious that women have been in the periphery, thus bringing in the realization that sexism is a reality.

The next chapter will review the influence of missionary education on the women participation in administrative church leadership, and it is through education that the missionaries were able to evangelize.
CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 THE INFLUENCE OF MISSIONARY EDUCATION ON WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION IN ADMINISTRATIVE CHURCH LEADERSHIP

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter examined the influence of African traditional culture on women’s participation in church administrative leadership, and found that it has significant effect on women’s participation in administrative church leadership. This chapter extends the discussion, focusing on the Mission Education influence on women’s participation in administrative church leadership. This chapter explores the influence of the evangelistic and conversion approach to western education on women’s participation in administrative church leadership. The chapter undertakes a historical perspective in order to explore the traditional education before the advent of European, which enables the study to examine missionary education and its influence on women’s participation in administrative church leadership.

4.2 The Nature of African Education in the Pre-Colonial Period

Mazonde (2006:1) defines education as the transmission of values and the accumulated knowledge of society. Education is a key societal instrument for the expansion of human culture. The indigenous African education and knowledge has generally been understood as a simplistic process of socialization involving the preparation of children for work in the home, the village and within a select ethnic domain. Zulu (2008:36) observes that, indigenous African education and knowledge involves understanding education in many forms, “a means to an end; social responsibility; spiritual and moral values; praise; songs; story-telling; proverbs,
folktales; word games; puzzles; tongue-twisters; dance; music; plant biology, environmental education and other education centered activities that can be acknowledged and examined.”

Indigenous African education and knowledge does not derive its origins or standing from the individual but from the collective epistemological understanding and rationalization of community. It was about what local people knew and did and what local communities have known and done for generations. Semali (1999:307-308), argues that education is the ability to use community knowledge produced from local history. This concept formed important literacy skills critical to survival in an African context, and indeed integral to incorporate in the planning and implementation process of education.

In addition, and possibly most important theoretically Semali (1999:307-308), points out the idea of indigenous literacy as information communicated via local culture and languages that reflects local innovations and techniques in activities such as fishing, pest control (via Sudan and Egypt) to herbs and plant usage to manage local diseases (Semali, 1999:307-308), (Mbiti, 2012: 11-12).

In Traditional Africa, education was broad with values and traditional systems of societies. It was when East Africa was colonized that modern or western education was introduced. It undermined the traditional value system and created social classes that did not exist before its advent. Temu (1972:154) points out that the rule of the European powers in colonies represented an assault on established cultures. Western
values replaced traditional ones and in the process traditional African education was relegated to the margins, being associated with rural people who lost their socio-economic power with the onset of western values.

4.3 Gender Based Educational Training

Customary education in Africa was marked by limited specialized training. There was no distinct category of professional, fulltime teachers for purposes of general education. Instruction was in most cases imparted through oral communication. Religion, ethics and education were inextricably integrated. With hardly any scope for experimentation with new ideas and techniques, customary education in Africa was basically conservative in nature (Wanjohi, 1997:191-197). Both formal and informal processes were utilized for the transmission of knowledge, skills, ideas, attitudes and patterns of behavior. Thus, ancestral legends and proverbs were told and retold around the evening firesides, and through them much of the cultural heritage was kept alive and passed on to the children (Radnich, 2007:2). Oduyoye (1995:19-20) points out that “folk talk” were a heritage of all people. There were riddles to test children’s judgment, and myths to explain the origin of the tribe and the genesis of humanity. Such oral traditions were narrated with care and repetition. This constituted the African child’s training in what was often a complicated linguistic system without a script (Wanjohi 1997:38-54).

The training of children took note of sex-difference very early (Leakey, 2007:2). This was justified on the ground that boys and girls at a later age would be expected to perform different tasks, boys engaging mostly in farming, house-building, herding and hunting. Thus boys were ridiculed if they dabbled in something which was
supposed to be the preserve of girls, but were encouraged when they tried to take part in operations considered appropriate for boys. The girls learned agricultural work and to cook by helping their mothers. They learned to be mothers by taking care of their small brothers and sisters (Leakey, 2007:2-3).

Mazode (2006: 3) points out that boys learnt the names of trees, plants, animals and insects as well as the dangers and uses of each were learnt as they herded livestock or farmed land with their fathers. Girls helped their mothers in household work. Imitative play, too, formed an important part of informal education. Boys staged mock battles, and made model huts and cattle pens; girls made dolls, played husband and wife roles and cooked imaginary meals. The importance of play in customary education in Africa has been underlined by many observers and it prepared the children in roles they were to take when they grew up. Even in play we note boys were prepared for public life while the girls were prepared for domestic activities. A major part of the cultural heritage of African people was transmitted to children and adolescents through these informal activities. Additionally many societies had organized instructions (Leakey, 2007:2).

In the building process, boys did the work that was generally done by grown-up men during hut-building. They went to the bush and cut poles and constructed huts. The girls undertook women’s work, involving cutting grass for thatching the huts and preparing food for the men who worked. When the hut was complete, the boys pretended to herd cattle or hunt small birds to be cooked by girls. Usually, in such plays, older boys and girls paired up as husband and wife, while the smaller ones
took the role of their children. Children eagerly waited for the afternoon when their mothers would release them from helping with household chores.

Kenyatta (1978:99) analyses how, among the Kikuyu, education began at the time of birth and ended with death. The child had to pass various stages of age groupings with a system of education defined for every status in life. The parents took the responsibility of educating their children until they reached the stage of ethnic education. Formal education was imparted through succeeding stages of initiation, from status to status. The assumption of each status was accompanied by a sequence of rites, which organized instruction of one sort or another. Indeed, in many traditional societies of Africa, formal education strongly manifested itself in the initiation ceremony. This ceremony marked the transition from adolescence to adulthood and often consisted of circumcision for boys and clitoridectomy for girls (Mazonde, 2006:1; Wanjohi, 1997:38-54).

Girls’ education came to an end with puberty rites. These were organized when girls reached the age of fourteen or fifteen. A very important part of the puberty ceremony was the confinement of the girl into the house of close relatives. The period of confinement varied between six weeks and two months. During this period, girls attaining maturity were subjected to an intensive training given by senior women of the community. This part of girls’ education was entirely controlled by women. The puberty ceremony had scope for physiological, social and moral education Colson in (Wanjohi, 1997:38-54). Physiological education comprised the teaching of healthy sex habits and the knowledge of the procreation
process (Radnich, 2007:2). Women were being prepared more for reproductive roles in the society, giving birth and rearing children. This type of education did little preparation to women’s participation in leadership.

4.3.1 The Advent of the Nineteenth Century Christian Missionaries

According to Julian (2006: 7), while the missionary imperative was always an integral part of Christianity some periods have been more “Missionary” than others. Following Christ’s commission to his disciples to go to the whole world and evangelize all peoples (Mt 28:19), groups of his followers have always done so, hence the spread of Christianity through the Mediterranean world, Western Europe, and North America before its return to Africa which saw the coming of missionaries to East Africa (indeed all over sub-Saharan Africa) in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Julian, 2006: 7).

The missionary imperative was rekindled by the 18th century Evangelical Revival and jolted to action by Dr. David Livingstone’s passionate appeal to the British government to open up the interior of the “dark continent” through colonization, commerce, Christianity, and civilization (Krapf, 1968:1-5). Parallel to the political “scramble for Africa,” the Universities Mission to Central Africa (UMCA), the Church Missionary Society (CMS) and the Church of Scotland Mission (CSM) were offshoots of the new awakening among the Protestant churches. Roman Catholics also experienced a similar reawakening in this period following the founding of two missionary societies: The Congregation of the Holy Ghost Fathers (HGFs) and the Missionaries for Africa (MAfr.) popularly known as the White Fathers. Within the
space of three to four decades Africa was to be explored and conquered by Europeans and finally evangelized (Julian, 2006: 7).

Traditional African cultural practices paved way for foreign way of doing things. Western culture was regarded as frontline civilization. African ways of doing things became primitive, archaic and regrettably unacceptable in public domain. Not only were certain aspects of the material culture in the colonies lost or destroyed, colonial societies also lost the power and sense of cultural continuity, such that it became practically impossible to recover the ability to strive for cultural progress on their own terms. As argued by Mimiko (2010:641-42) “the African social fabric was completely devastated and a new culture of violence was implanted. Traditional African systems of conflict resolution were destroyed and, in their places, nothing was given”.

4.3.2. The Nature and Impact of the Colonial and Missionary Education

The years from 1906 to 1914, can be described as a time of foundation laying in education and of ascendancy by the missionaries to have influence over Africans. Wherever they went, the missionaries sought out the local chief, with whom they aligned themselves for land and good will. The next move was to recruit children, initially boys only, for kusoma, (the Kiswahili word for reading), which came to mean Christianity as well because the two were inseparable (Njoroge, 1999: 94 95). According to Njoroge (1999: 94-95), besides religion, literacy and numeracy were essential as the missionaries realized the crucial role lay readers and lay catechists were to play in evangelization. Western-style schools became major avenues for both evangelization and dissemination of Western culture.
Early attempts to establish the educational systems were opposed by chiefs and headmen, by parents and young people themselves. It is important to note that, there remained, however, in the early years a burden of parental and community opposition to missionary education which had to be borne by young people who were elected to join a mission school. Youths in many cases had to run away from their homes and were not reconciled with their parents for many months. Njoroge (1999: 95) points out that, the initial converts were also the socially marginalized who had lost social identity and easily found a new one in Christ. Conversely, there was never the same opposition for boys attending mission schools as there was in the case of girls (Mc Intosh, 1969: 244).

Soon, however, the terrain changed when the benefits of Western-style education began to bear discernible fruits and so the demand for it increased. By 1914 a great demand for education had arisen (Mc Intosh, 1969: 239). It did not take long before Christianity and schools began to be seen as a vehicle for advancement. The distinction between the kusoma Africans and the rest of the community was noticed as early as 1927, and so the church became associated with progress, with education and with prestige” (Njoroge, 1999: 77).

Hence the kusoma syndrome was spearheading a silent revolution and all the students became Christians and as expected by the missionaries, gave up (at least outwardly) traditional beliefs and rituals, acquired a biblical or European/Western name, and wore Western clothes. However, resistance to conversion was displayed by a few who only wanted Western education without Christianity. Some missionaries observed that the Africans had little regard for Christianity and were
only keen on getting a western literary education (Bogonko 1992: 22). On leaving school, the “mission boys” were recruited as teachers, catechists and readers by the missionaries; as clerks and messengers by the colonial government; as foremen, drivers and artisans by the settlers and traders thus entering the monetary economy and acquiring an enhanced socio-economic status (Sifuna, 1990:20-25).

From the foregoing it is clear that women were not given the same training with the boys. This was geared to make them good wives of male converts and serve as an example to non-believers McIntosh (1969:244). This type of education did not prepare women for administrative positions. Parents for instance, had no objection to taking the wages of girls employed at a mission as laborers or as laundry assistants, but were not pleased when missionaries suggested that a girl might receive a little training in domestic science because the value of such a girl in the society was lowered.

This was mainly because, the girl was seen in term of the dowry and African men had little liking for a girl “whose head was filled with European ideas,” as this was feared to cause problems in the traditional domestic roles that women were supposed to take (McIntosh 1969:244). The introduction of subjects like, domestic science to the girls at the onset of missionary education had an impact on the place of women in the Church; it prepared them to give service in the church and home and not to take leadership roles. There was unequal value assigned to both men and women on the basis of gender.

The African education which has been articulated was highly affected during the colonial period. In the early phase of colonial administration, some missionaries in
Africa believed that they were bringing education to entirely uneducated people. This assumption would have been valid if education was equated to literacy and formal schooling. In fact, detailed accounts of African people by anthropologists leave one in no doubt that African societies did possess a kind of customary education, a system which worked reasonably well, given limits imposed by the society within which it had to operate (Temu 1972:145-155).

Based on the assumption that Africans were uneducated and savage, the establishment of colonial rule and mission education was to civilize them, but still gave them low education. Education intended to civilize and transform the people into a more western thinking process. The direction had a great impact on the religious, political, social and economic lives of people (Brice, 2005: 6). The Milimani presbytery mainly occupied by the Kikuyu community was evangelized to Christianity by the Church of Scotland Mission. Traditional ways of life were changed and challenged with the onslaught of evangelism, conversion and Western education. Western Education was an instrument of evangelism. Missions were mainly concerned with spreading the Gospel and winning Africans for Christ. Nthamburi (1982:98) argues that the missionaries realized the need to create a literate African community who could read the Bible, teach other members of the community and act as interpreters for the missionaries in their effort to preach the Gospel.

The Western education introduced to East Africa by the Church of Scotland, fit within the framework of colonial rule and the colonial economy. It reflected the views of the mid-western evangelists as to the type of education that conversion
required. Africans were asked to give up their traditional religion, culture, identities and family relationships. Christianity took firm root in Africa, blending cultural ideas in the spiritual realm that fits into African society (Brice, 2005:4).

The missionaries believed that technical training was worthless unless it was based on sound Christian teaching. Further, a basic literary education was a prerequisite for Christian character and technical efficiency. The Scotland missionaries therefore, encouraged people to attend school in order to learn, read, write and put more emphasis on the teaching of the Bible. The former president of Kenya, Mzee Jomo Kenyatta confirmed this claim when he said that he went to school at Thogoto (Kikuyu) to discover the miracle of a talking Paper. Thus, “I must go to Thogoto to discover this miracle how it is that a paper can talk from one who wrote it to someone else” (Macpherson, 1970:39).

Missionaries further offered theological education so as to produce church leaders. However, the reluctance on the part of PCEA to send women for theological education limited women to rise in to church leadership hierarchies. One of the respondents argued that by “so-doing, up to the present, theological education is out of reach for the majority of African women.” This has influenced the women’s participation in administrative church leadership since theological education especially for ministers, was a requirement in church leadership.

According to (Bogonko 1992: 45) the Africans were interested in an education that would open them up to the new standards of life brought and lived by the Europeans. This was to enable them interact with the Europeans on a more equal
footing, and participate in the new emerging economic and social conditions of life. Because of this it did not take long before Christianity and schools began to be seen as a vehicle for advancement. As lightly put by Njoroge (1999, p. 77), the distinction between the *kusoma* Africans and the rest of the community was noticed as early as 1927.

The starting of early Missionary schools at Kikuyu, Tumutumu and Chogoria played a very key role in the development of PCEA leadership (Mungiriria 1996:65; Macpherson, 1970:39). Both enrollment and the school-age population grew rapidly. Mungiriria (1996: 65) points out that Missionary education produced the first African church leaders such as Rev. Jeremiah Gitau, Rev Charles Kareri, Rev Crispus Kiongo, Rev Dr. John Gatu, Rev. Dr. George Wanjau and Rev Bernard Muindi all who were men. This approach used by the missionaries to educate and to win converts to Christianity was very successful. Further, Mungiriria (1996:12) points out that although the missionaries educated Africans they did not help them develop their leadership skills but instead promoted colonialism and European leadership.

In the Presbyterian church of East Africa, sisterhood programme was introduced in 1989 and women studied in the same class with the male students and upon completion of the course, they would serve under the men or institutions managed by their male counterparts, sisterhood play a supportive role to the work of ordained clergy (Muita 2001:64). The duties performed by the sisters’ influence the congregation to regard them as assistants who have no contribution in church leadership. Women who keep on seeing women in subordinate roles would rarely be
critical of the leadership position their church puts them. According to Ann (O.I.12.11.2011) this ignorance on the part of the woman promotes the church interest since they are happier with women who are supportive, uncritical, hospitable and passive. Both men and women need to be freed from this so called divinely willed, subordinate state of women (Edet&Ekey, 1996:2).

4.3.3 The Influence of Missionary Education on Women’s Participation in Church Administrative Leadership

The development of educational in Kenya has gone through three major stages. Before 1910, the main problem was to establish schools and attract young Africans to them. Little thought was given to the aim of education, and a wide variety of method existed which drew its inspiration from the European backgrounds of individual missions. By 1910 the major missionary societies had agreed that the principal aim of their educational work should be to produce Christians, basically literate, artisans who would fill the lower ranks of life in the service of Europeans. The second stage was after the world war. This stage of development began to change as missionaries found themselves caught in the dilemma of preserving the Christian content of education while being unable to afford the expense of artisan training. The third stage of development began in 1923 with an attempt of basing African education on the idea of African culture (McIntosh, 1969: 406). Of importance to note is that at first, the leadership in the mission schools, hospitals and churches was by the missionaries. Most of the mission schools which were started at Thogoto, Tumutumu and Chogoria had African teachers but were managed by the missionaries.
The missionaries believed that technical training was worthless unless it was based on sound Christian teaching. Further, a basic literary education was a prerequisite for Christian character and technical efficiency. The Scotland missionaries therefore, encouraged people to attend school in order to learn, read, write and put more emphasis on the teaching of the Bible. The former president of Kenya, Mzee Jomo Kenyatta confirmed this claim when he said that he went to school at Thogoto (Kikuyu) to discover the miracle of a talking Paper. Thus, “I must go to Thogoto to discover this miracle how it is that a paper can talk from one who wrote it to someone else” (Macpherson, 1970:39). Further, Njoroge (2000:13) indicated that women missionaries believed that the natives would not be civilized unless the Gikuyu women were included in education.

GA officials and heads of departments were asked if Missionary Christian teaching and practices had influenced women in church administrative leadership. Eight out of eight (100%) said yes. The missionaries “educated men as well as women, teaching that both were created in God’s image and therefore were equal in the eyes of God” Edith (O.I. 01.11.2011). In the light of this, missionary education prepared both men and women giving them an equal opportunity. Festus (O.I. 8.11.2011) further notes …education is the basis of understanding and positive interpretation of events. This means missionary education positively influenced women’s understanding of the church.

George (O.I. 8.11.2011) argues that “missionary education influenced women negatively as the education prepared men to take leadership positions and women were not allowed to hold positions in the church at the onset of Christianity”, a problem which still remains since no woman has ever served in the GA offices in the
life of PCEA over one century. Women were given minor responsibilities compared to men who dominated the top church leadership. Further, (James, 1993:73) confirms this by observing out that women’s presence in leadership becomes visible where there is a woman’s ministry programme, headed and staffed entirely by women. The authors’ main argument here is that the challenge still remains for women to be included as equal partners in the church at the local and national levels and also in the mainstream of ecclesiastical affairs.

When ministers were asked whether missionary education influenced women’s participation in the church administrative leadership, 14 out of 19(73.6%) indicated missionary education influenced women’s participation in the church administrative leadership. Edward (O.I. 12.11.2011) one of the Ministers’ respondents noted that, the missionaries empowered women through education and enlightened them to know their roles based on gender prioritization whereby women were prepared as homemakers. Missionaries encouraged common education for both the boys and girls, but the emphasis was different. The sample of ministers agreed further that missionary education “taught biblical culture of men superiority,” and that “the missionaries did not at first allow women in the church” (Hellen, O.I. 8.11.2011). The author’s main argument here is that though the missionary education “taught biblical culture of men superiority,” “We should not look at women’s womanhood as incapacity to perform; rather men should give women an equal opportunity to prove themselves in different tasks”.
The study further sought to find out from lay men and women whether missionary education influenced women’s participation in the church administrative leadership. Their responses are shown in the Figure 4.1 below.

![Figure 4.1: Missionary's education influence on women’s participation in administrative church leadership](image)

Eighty two out of 96 (85.4%) of lay men and women agreed that missionary education influenced women participation in administrative church leadership. Monicah (O.I. 06.12.2011) points out that ‘…this missionary education made positive contribution since where the missionaries planted churches women are highly educated’. Edith (O.I. 6.11.2011) further argues that through this education women became enlightened and were able to understand their rights, read and write. Christopher (2.11.2011) indicated that, “women in church leadership didn’t aggressively counter the traditional biases against women education”. Muriithi (2008:9) observes that missionary teaching used suggestive biblical passages to domesticate women’s minds and this concurs with other studies (Oduyoye, 1995; Phiri, 1997) who argue that missionary Christian teachings were patriarchal and
related with patriarchal African culture, which also undermined women status. This in Scotts view was the only sensible system in a protectorate where the European interests would continue to be paramount.

In view of the above, it is evident that missionary education has greatly influenced women’s participation in administrative church leadership, and this affected their growth in administrative church leadership. This explains why women’s roles are characteristically lower than that of men. However most Euro-American missionaries were men but in rare cases there were also women. Women missionaries were not involved in decision making. In the Federal of Missionary Societies constitution of 1913 membership of Europeans “one male delegate… (Wives of missionaries not to be counted for purposes of representation) ” It is evident that no missionary woman was involved. This seems to indicate from the onset of the PCEA that women participation was low and this could have influenced their participation in administrative church leadership.

A good example is Minnie Cumming Watson; the first woman missionary of the East Africa Scottish Mission at Kikuyu. Mrs. Watson since 1899 had employed a few girls as laundry assistants and had taken in washing from nearby settlers and from other Europeans in Nairobi. The first four girls to be admitted were Emily Wambui who later was married to Samson Njoroge, Mariam Nyaguthii later married to Samuel Gitau, Lilian Wamucii later married to Musa Gitau one of the PCEA ministers ordained in 1926 and Priscilla Njeri later married to Daudi Mukami (Miringa,1:2006). Further to note is that from 1907, with the arrival of the mission
of Marion Stevenson, girls work was redirected into a more specific training of prospective wives for Christian male Africans (McIntosh, 1969: 245).

Hellen (O.I. 8.11.2011) indicated that the missionary education prepared women for minor responsibilities as compared to men in the churches. This means the missionary attitude to girl education was to make her a homemaker while some girls’ parents resisted the girl education to an extent of declaring their daughters as good as dead ((McIntosh, 1969: 245). Many of the early educated converts were severely persecuted by their families and communities. They were disowned, disinherited, cursed, beaten and girls were married off. Further, McIntosh points out that “one father cursed her daughter in public and performed a ceremony to disown her”, Elizabeth Nini wa Kingangi having escaped home for the missionary education was reported by the father to Dagoretti police station and was brought back home. She later escaped and upon being captured again she was tortured by being sprayed black safari ant on her body “In some cases girls’ fathers would arm themselves to remove their daughters by force from the school” and it was found necessary to hide this girls in senior missionaries houses called Bungalow (Banguru) (Miringa, 2:2006). This shows that, from the onset of missionary education, the women faced harsh treatment in attaining education.

The domestic science centres established throughout the colonial territory were a means through which European norms of hygiene and domesticity could be transferred to African women. This was the only sensible system in a protectorate where the European interests would continue to be paramount. According to Temu (1972:142), this school and others like it did not seek to encourage women's
participation in the public sphere. Nevertheless, some women were able to benefit from domestic science education. These initiatives enabled women to take on leadership roles such as, counselling to girls, nursing and teaching which could and often did, serve as stepping stones to broader involvement in public life.

Kathleen (1998:595-625) argues that domestic science education also provided some women with an economic livelihood as enterprising students used sewing and baking skills learned in these programs to earn an income or even open a small business. Consequently, information on hygiene and nutrition reduced infant mortality rates and responded to real needs. Some women became nurses, midwives, evangelists and trained teachers while others became active in many church activities. When critically assessed, it would be a mistake, therefore, to believe that the African women who participated in these domestic science groups and classes unquestioningly accepted the gendered discourses offered by European women. Thus, as the above results show, many Agĩkũyũ women were not prepared in administrative church leadership.

The idea behind educating Africans was to provide future leaders in the white colony (McIntosh 1969: 256). In no time, the women level, type of education and its purpose was defined through the new education systems and this would continue to influence the role they were assigned. A woman like Jemimah Wagikuyu was a nationalist and freedom fighter who advocated for the release of her husband and others in detention.
Stewart’s (1890:107) view was that “if the women are left uneducated and untrained” the missionaries feared that their influence would retard the general progress of the work among the men, and more frequently than not, throw them back again to a low level of life. It seems women were to be educated for the sake of men. The missionary education was a tool which was aimed at colonizing the African converts. This education was undermining the Africans in general compared to the Europeans, but made women more vulnerable than men.

This study concurs with Mwaura, (2005:421) that missionary teachings just like the mainline Christianity in Africa, provided women with little leadership roles in their church structures. Kanogo (1993; 20-30) argues that in Kenya, the missionary stance on women’s education slowed the pace at which women entered professional occupations. Further, as a group of career women who sought to combine domesticity with paid work within and outside marriage emerged, the missionaries were nonplussed and sought to control where the women went to work.

This study shows that despite many changes in the church where the women are free to participate in the leadership just like men, the mentalities of inferiority that the colonial and missionary education gave about men and women status continue to be felt. This is particularly so because in Africa, higher education has been instrumental in the nurturance and development of Black Nationalism and leadership in Africa.
4.4 Summary

This chapter has highlighted the colonial and missionaries’ education influence on church leadership to the present moment. It has shown that men still remain as the preferred leaders. This means that there has been a continuation of the missionary type of leadership in today’s church. The chapter establishes that, the nature of education in the colonial /missionary period differentiated the potential roles that women were to take. The articulated educational needs of African girls and women were not prioritized. Needless to say, the dominant missionary views of women as wives and mothers skewed women’s education towards domesticity, delaying African women’s entry into secondary and higher education. The glaring picture of a predominantly female dominated church with a male leadership raises questions about the efficacy of the church in education for women’s participation in the church administrative leadership and in shaping the form and content of the canon in various areas in Africa. Probably a look at the church structures, and their influence on church leadership could throw more light on how they influence women’s participation in the church administrative leadership.
CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 THE PCEA STRUCTURE AND ITS INFLUENCE ON WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION IN ADMINISTRATIVE CHURCH LEADERSHIP

5.1 Introduction

The chapter examines four main levels that constitute the PCEA structure. These levels include; Parish, Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly. The chapter begins with a historical background of the PCEA structures, which establishes evolution of the church structures. This chapter seeks to analyze the extent to which the PCEA structures influence women’s participation in administrative church leadership, basing it on the premise that indeed, these structures influence women’s participation in church administrative leadership.

5.2 Historical Background of PCEA Structures

In Kenya the PCEA church structures can be traced to the missionary period. The initial founders of the church in Kenya, like Dr. James Stewart based the church leadership on the Scottish traditional church structures, and the church leadership was heavily in the hands of the European Missionaries men (Macpherson, 1970: 21-32) a practice which has continued to date.

During the missionary period, SCM had two church courts, namely the synod comprising a group of four presbyteries composed of Africans and the GA which included a Scottish missionary. Before 1956, PCEA was made up of Church of Scotland Overseas Presbytery of Kenya and the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Africa as constituted in 1943 (which comprised Kiambu, Tumutumu, Chania
and Chogoria). For many years there were two constitutions in PCEA, one for the Synod for the Africans and the other one for the whites. (Macperson, 132:1970; Muita, 2003:51) notes that in 1956 the first General Assembly met in Nairobi and adopted the church constitution, which merged the two synods.

Macpherson (1970: 115-118); Njoroge (2000:8) asserts that 1926 marked the end of one era and the beginning of another in the history of CMS. Further, it brought to the young mission the first ordained ministers. The courts of the church which had been functioning under European Moderators for the previous five years, were hence forward to be led by African ministers on the local level, thus securing to the church the strategic position from which control by the Africans became inevitable. Nevertheless the Missionaries, particularly as a group acting through their mission council were to continue to dominate policy for some time. In view of this the missionaries’ powers were steadily to diminish while those of the church increased but the structures remained.

Since the missionary times in 1926, the church has sponsored more men than women for theological training, which has produced disproportionate levels of empowerment and representation. The first move by the missionaries towards recruiting Africans for higher leadership in the PCEA was in 1934, when two ministers were sent to South Africa for higher theological studies. The ministers who were sent were Rev. Stevenson Githii Gathanga and Rev. Charles Muhoro Kareri, the latter would later become the first African GA Moderator (1961-1967). When they returned from their studies they were opposed to the setting up of a separate
overseas presbytery for the whites. They wrote a constitution for an independent Presbyterian church among Africans. In September 1943 the constitution for an independent church was completed and accepted (Mungiriria, 1996: 22). This was a big step since it helped to prepare Africans for an independent church devoid of foreign domination, but at this time the roles of women in the church were not much highlighted.

Despite the steps towards the African freedom and the church growing in membership, it was not able to simultaneously grow the capacities of women at the same or close levels with men. Besides cultural defilement, with Christianity came androcentricism to African societies. Europeans and the Bible gave prominence to male authority over women. Patriarchal ideology governed socio-political interactions at all levels of the new Christian Africa. Unlike practices like polygamy, which, though in the Bible, were not part of European culture of the time, other gender imbalances remained uncriticised.

According to Ann (OI.29.11.2011), one of the lay women respondents, women are in various church levels today, but not at the same level of leadership with men. This concern is well expressed by Russell (1993:46-47) who hopes that as women move to position of leadership in church and society the leadership should be liberating and empowering. In view of this, women’s participation seems to have been in the periphery, and the church structure does not favor women’s participation in leadership. Below is a chart with a list of the first missionaries involved in mission work, most of whom were men.
Table 5.1: Pioneer Scottish Missionaries to Kenya

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mission Area</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kibwezi</td>
<td>Dr. James Stewart</td>
<td>1891-1892</td>
<td>Ordained minister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Robert Urwin Moffat</td>
<td>1891-1892</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thomas Watson</td>
<td>1891-1895</td>
<td>Evangelist /</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>James Linton</td>
<td>1891-1893</td>
<td>Carpenter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>George Wilson</td>
<td>1891-1892</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>James Greig</td>
<td>1891-1892</td>
<td>Engineer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kikuyu</td>
<td>Thomas Watson</td>
<td>1898-1900</td>
<td>Ordained minister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>John Peterson</td>
<td>1898-1903</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mathew Wilson</td>
<td>1898-1898</td>
<td>Medical doctor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Minnie Watson</td>
<td>1900-1931</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rev Dr Clement Scott</td>
<td>1901-1905</td>
<td>Superintendent of mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Henry Edwin Scott</td>
<td>1907-1911</td>
<td>Superintendent of mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tumu Tumu</td>
<td>Arthur Ruffel Barlow</td>
<td>1909-1940</td>
<td>Superintendent of mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chogoria</td>
<td>Rev Dr Archibald C Irvine</td>
<td>1922</td>
<td>Superintendent of mission/Medical doctor/Evangelist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chogoria</td>
<td>Margret Joyce Irvine</td>
<td>1922</td>
<td>Missionary wife</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


This Table 5.1 shows a summary of the pioneer Scottish Missionaries to Kenya. Majority of them were men while the women in the list above were wives of Thomas Watson (Minnie Watson) and Archibald Clive Irvine (Margret Joyce Irvine) (Macpherson, 1970: 147).

The background, culture and theology of the missionaries influenced their approach to mission and role of women. This is because in the beginning of the missionary era, in the nineteenth century, only men were sent out as missionaries to foreign lands. Their wives were expected to take care of domestic responsibilities as well as assist mission work. Kirkwood (1993: 25) points out four reasons why male missionaries were encouraged by the societies at home to carry their wives with them to the mission field: First, and foremost the missionary wives filled the traditional roles as provider of conjugal comfort and as homemakers. Secondly, their presence could be interpreted by the host society as an indicator of peaceful
intention and this would make the male missionaries to be received as friend’s. Thirdly, women missionaries were to serve as model of female behaviour, and with their husband demonstrate the merits and virtues of the monogamous family. Lastly, the presence of wives would reduce the risks of sexual temptation to which a single man might be subject." Byrne, (1991:32) confirms this by observing that a missionary’s wife was not given any official status by the mission boards and societies.

As mentioned earlier in chapter three, the society from which the women missionaries came was patriarchal. For instance, not until 1882 did married women obtain complete rights over their own property (Welboum 1965: 116). From the above we can deduce that the missionary approach may have affected the indigenous people leading to a church that was ministerially and structurally male-dominated since their desire was to transform African culture to fit their own values and role.

The current Presbyterian Church global structures comprise of the Parish, Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly. At the congregational level, the governing body is called the session, from the Latin word sessio, meaning "a sitting". The session is made up of elders and the parish minister who presides over the session as a moderator. The session oversees all church affairs such as management of church finance, infrastructure, personnel and all programs for spiritual life and mission. In addition, the session serves as an ecclesiastical court that consider disciplinary charges brought against church officers or members. Men and women are both considered as elders and they are all eligible for membership in
the session with the exception of Presbyterian Church of America (PCA) where only men are eligible as session members.

The session works closely with the deacons. The deacons/deaconesses are a ministry board but not a governing body. They are at the congregational-level. Their duties among others are; minister to those in need, the sick, friendless and manage church finances under the supervision of the elders. These are supportive duties and those allocating them presuppose that these duties are women oriented since they are the same duties women do at home. We find that majority of this group is made up of women.

The presbytery is the governing body that has jurisdiction over the sessions within its bounds. It is composed of all ministers of the Word and Sacrament who are paired by an elder and church group representative within a certain geographical jurisdiction.

The GA is the inclusive governing body in the Presbyterian Church. It is made up of equal numbers of ministers and elders elected by the presbyteries, and it also has a number of Advisory Delegates-such as Youth Advisory Delegates, Theological Seminary Advisory Delegates, Ecumenical Advisory Delegates, and Missionary Advisory Delegates who have a voice but not a vote on the floor of the Assembly. The General Assembly constitutes the bond of union, community, and mission among all its congregations and governing bodies.
The GA sets parameters for the mission of the entire church, determining priorities, developing objectives and strategies and providing resources to carry out the work of the whole church. The GA is responsible for mission to the whole world, coordinates the overall national and international mission program of the church. It also maintains relationships with partner denominations throughout the world, and coordinates work with them. Majority of the members are men and women are not included. It is therefore quite evident that men dominate the governance and management levels of higher courts of the church.

Consequently, men have the decision-making power and authority regarding strategic direction and theological interpretation. More disconcerting is the likelihood that women’s interests in the church may not be adequately taken care of, and that women have few or no role models and mentors, something that may have far reaching consequences in terms of developing future women administrative church leaders. It is certainly important to acknowledge that “women in church administrative leadership will not just appear out of nowhere”. They have to be nurtured and developed throughout. When critically assessed this relegates women work at the background of the church.

In western countries, there is also the Synod, which is not so much visible in Kenya but is now developing gradually and is expected to be fully functional by end of 20th GA of 2015 (Gathanj in GA Moderator’s report, 2: 2012). Men and women are eligible for positions of leadership in the church except the Presbyterian Church of America (PCA) where only men are eligible. The levels of participation for women
and men differ considerably throughout the world, with a general trend of men in key church positions as opposed to women. The elders and the ministers serve at all levels of the church structures.

When minister’s respondents were asked if the missionary structure continued to influence the place of women in church administrative leadership with reference to administrative structure, they gave the response in the Figure 5.1 below.

**Figure 5.1: Church ministers’ response on the influence of church structure**

63.0% (12 out of 19) said Yes, 27 % (7 out of 19) said No. From the results the majority 63 % agreed that missionary form of Christianity and worship continue to influence the place of women in church administrative leadership.

As (Patrick) O.I. 26.11.2013) explains “the missionaries did not at first allow women participation in the church and those women who trained as teachers would be sacked after marriage” while Godfrey (O.I. 9.11.2011) further points out that “the missionaries adopted the practice that favoured them ”. On closer examination
one is forced to conclude that this was because their desire was to transform the Africans to fit their own principles and role.

Through Missionary Christianity, worship and structures, many women in the church became formally dependent on “men in the church.” This persists to date and has very negative consequences for the participation of women in the church administrative positions. Women’s presence becomes visible where there are service giving roles such as serving tea, arranging flowers. This may be due to the fact that the church has not come up with a different position from the one introduced by the early missionaries. Therefore, the continued uses of the missionary structure, has greatly hampered the process of women participation in administrative church leadership.

Despite the steps towards the African freedom and the church growing in membership, it was not able to simultaneously grow the capacities of women at the same or close levels with men. Besides cultural defilement, with Christianity came androcentricism to African societies. Europeans and the Bible gave prominence to male authority over women. Patriarchal ideology governed socio-political interactions at all levels of the new Christian Africa. Unlike practices like polygamy, which, though in the Bible, were not part of European culture of the time, other gender imbalances and patriarchal culture remained uncriticised.
5.3 PCEA Administrative Structures

Presently, PCEA has an organizational structure that defines different levels of leadership. The PCEA structure begins with the local congregation and moves to the GA. Figure 5.2 below provides a visual description of the current structure of the PCEA.

![Figure 5.2: PCEA administrative leadership structures hierarchy](image)

The minister and the elder are represented throughout the structure of the church.

5.3.1 Deacons and Deaconess

According to the reformed tradition, the office of the deacon is rooted in the Book of Acts and is an office of service. (Acts 6: 2-3). This office emerged as a response to
the needs of the early church. The word deacon is derived from the Greek verb, 

diakonein, meaning, “To serve.” (Grudem, 1994: 944). The PCEA official church 
documents refer to persons who hold this office as “deacons and deaconess” 
referring to lay men and women appointed to this office. Deacons and deaconess are 
full members elected to this office annually by fellow full members, subject to the 
approval in the parish session.

After elections by members the officers are inducted into a one-year term of office 
in a parish gathering during Sunday worship. The office of deacons and deaconess is 
temporary and one can be removed as a serving deacon after an year. The deacons 
and deaconess manage the affairs of the church’s finances and properties. Their 
duties also include; helping elders in district pastoral duties; keeping congregational 
church attendance records; caring for the poor and assisting elders and ministers in 
the spiritual life of the congregation.

James (2004: 107-109) observes that women are more in service giving ministries 
than men. James further points out that when critically assessed women give service 
while the men take the higher leadership responsibilities. Women therefore seem to 
be assistants in their duties. In Mililani presbytery, most women are represented in 
church committees as deacons, chairpersons and members of various church groups 
committees. The women are left out in administrative positions and all this is a clear 
proof that most of the church members are very ignorant of the attributes of 
womanhood in church administration.
5.3.2 Elders

PCEA has a government by the elders, some of whom have authority not only over their local congregation, but also through the presbytery and the GA (Grudem, 1994: 926). Elders in PCEA are both male and female and are called “ruling elders” while the clergy are called “teaching elders.”

The word elder has been used to designate age in many languages. In Hebrew, it is Zagen (old), in Greek, Presbeteros (elder), in English presbyter and In Swahili; Mzee (elder or old). The Africans equate old age with matured wisdom and it is accorded great respect. Many communities in Africa had council of elders. Although women participated in spiritual leadership men were the main players (Mungiriria, 1996: 95). Mbiti, (1970: 229), further contends that the elders conducted prayers and were given a place of great respect in traditional African societies.”


The election of elders in CSM was in 1920 and all were men. It was until 1967 when there was a petition on ordination of women as elders.
“..And whereas a proposal that women be eligible for ordination to the office of the ruling elder has been transmitted to presbyteries and Kirk-session under the Barrier Act, and the presbyteries and Kirk-session has expressed their approval of the proposal:

“The GA, in exercise of the powers assumed under section 22 and 24 (b) of the constitution enact as follows: 1, women shall be eligible for ordination of the office of the ruling elder in the PCEA. 2, Until the GA shall enact otherwise, the number of women to be choosen for ordination to this office shall in no case exceed one fifth of the total active membership of the Kirk-session in which they are to hold office” (Minute 1106 of the GA 1967).

The ordination of women to ruling elders was a new beginning of establishing women leadership in the church. All through the PCEA women had remained dependent on male leadership. This patriarchal ordering of affairs in the Church led to underrepresentation of women in administrative church leadership.

The mode of election of elders in PCEA is by the Kirk-session and the officers are appointed from among full members whose spouses if married are Presbyterians and have their marriages blessed in church. To note is that one partner can qualify to be a full member without their marriage being solemnized in church. This qualifies the majority of women since this is not considered in the election of deacons. Elders are however appointed from those whose marriages have been solemnized and this disqualifies women deacons whose marriages are not yet solemnized. In view of this the majority of women whose sometime their husbands are not available are left out. This concurs with the research, that church structure influences the women participation in the church leadership.
The session composed of the minister and the existing elders meet and discuss the need for ordaining elders. The request is forwarded to the presbytery, which debates the issue and gives permission to the requesting session to proceed and appoint the qualified candidates for the office. Further while there is no fixed rule for deciding the number to be elected, in practice the number is determined by the number of elders, districts required in the parish for effective pastoral care and oversight (PCEA Constitution, 1969:66). The number is always fixed by the presbytery, and whenever an addition or deduction is thought necessary by the Kirksession, it must be sanctioned by the presbytery before the election is carried out.

When the session meets next after the presbytery grants the permission, the existing elders propose names and scrutinize every individual. The session clerk sends the individuals who qualify a letter with instructions to be read carefully. If one agrees with the proposal by the session, he or she is required to respond affirmatively. After the intended candidates return the letter, the session clerk writes to the presbytery to inform them of the candidate’s acceptance. The Presbytery grants permission to the session to go ahead and the minister sets a date when to train the candidate and ordain them (Mungiriria, 1996: 22).

The congregation is only involved during ordination when they are asked to forward objections to the Kirksession on the morning of ordination. This method of appointing elders has a great weakness since majority of them are men and would always support their own men. It is at this level that women are not given an equal opportunity in administrative church leadership. During ordination an elder in PCEA is ordained for life. The elders oversee spiritual work in the parish together with the
minister. It is from the session executive that the presbytery Category A (presbytery closed court comprising of the minister paired with an elder) is constituted.

From this procedure of appointing elders it is important to note that the majority in eldership are men and have a tendency of proposing fellow men. This is reflected by the fact that the majority of the deacons are women but when it comes to the role of elders the majority are men. Bryne (1993:32) maintains that because the place of women was seen as totally within the home, her role in any sort of public activity being outside the home was expected to be passive. Further, the study found out that those women were expected to keep out of the public eye and preferably not to leave the house at all. St. Andrews is one of the Parishes which have been in existence since the missionary period, but the participation of women has still remained low. The main weakness however, is that women’s leadership styles are not embraced fully in Milimani presbytery and there is need for understanding feminist styles in church administrative leadership.

The Table 5.2 below is a reflection of the PCEA Saint Andrews parish leadership, Milimani Presbytery in August 2011.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Church Elders</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Church Ministers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Church Deacons</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.2: PCEA Saint Andrews’ Parish Leadership (2010-2011)
This Table 5.2 shows a list of leaders as found from a sampled parish (PCEA St Andrews Parish) church leaders. The study finding indicates, the concentration of women leaders is at the deacon and deaconess levels, while they are lowest represented at as clergy followed by the elders. PCEA St. Andrew has had several ministers one of whom serving as the moderator. In the history of the parish there has never been as lady minister, as the moderator of the Kirksession.

5.4 The PCEA Minister

A minister in PCEA is trained and set apart by ordination to the ministry of Word and Sacrament. The office of the minister is more or less like that of an elder, except that the former is a teaching office and the latter a ruling office. A minister moderates church courts thus taking the lead in administration. The process to recruit a candidate for ordination observes all the hierarchies. First the PCEA training and personnel department declares there are vacancies for training in the theological colleges. The circular is posted to all PCEA presbytery clerks to dispatch to the parish ministers. Dates are set for the interviews by the session elders from the local congregation, to the parish, presbytery and the region. The candidates must be full members of the PCEA. They must be between twenty-five and forty-five years in age. They must be of good moral conduct and must have academic certificates from Kenyas Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE). The qualifications and procedure(s) used for recruitment of women to theological college are similar to those of men.
The candidates face the interviewing body of the session. The candidate must either be married or single. The candidate faces the local congregation panel and James (2004: 98) points out that some of these congregations have not been educated to move beyond the traditional roles of women when considering women candidates. James study further notes that some questions women encounter as they undergo the various interviews, including intrusion on private life such as on matters concerning their boyfriends or their plan for marriage may have a delimiting effects as women find that they have to defend their call as women. Hence, women who may not stand such embarrassing questions tend to opt to abandon their call. This limits their opportunity to access theological college and contributes to fewer women making it to the theological colleges.

The history of the PCEA clergy in the colonial period since 1926 to 1943 shows that women did not rise to the position of ministers. The foregoing paragraphs have indicated that women are virtually absent at this formative stage of the church in Kenya. In subsequent ordinations, the focus was mainly on men, until 1982, when Rev. Nyambura Njoroge was ordained as a church Minister in Bahati parish, Nairobi presbytery. Muita (2003: 159). At the time of this study, out of over 800 Ministers who have been ordained in the PCEA, only 54 are women, 6.75% representation of the total establishment since the church began in East Africa. Below is Table 5.3 showing ordination of women for the period 1982-2012 twenty years after the first woman was ordained. Other dates of women ordained after 2001 were not accessed in the archives.
Table 5.3: PCEA Ordained Lady Ministers 20 years from 1982 to 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name-Reverend</th>
<th>Year of ordination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jane Njoroge</td>
<td>1982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alphama Kanyuru Kinyua</td>
<td>1984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jane wairimu Kashorda</td>
<td>1988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margaret wambui Ngari</td>
<td>1991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jane wambui Muthui</td>
<td>1991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercy Wanjiru Maina</td>
<td>1991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruth Muthono Ngaari</td>
<td>1991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sicily Nduta Muriithi</td>
<td>1994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leah Wanjiku Ndegwa</td>
<td>1994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catheri Wairimu Waweru</td>
<td>1994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catherine kageni kihumba</td>
<td>1995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esther Wanjiru Muhoho</td>
<td>1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esther Njeri Wainana</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer Njeri Muchemi</td>
<td>2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monny Wamuyu Gitau</td>
<td>2001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source (Muita) 2002**

The results in Table 5.3 indicate that the first ordained lady minister was ordained in 1982. Other lady ministers have been ordained but at a slow rate. Even after the first ordination, it took another two years (1984) to ordain another one lady minister and another four year (1988) after the second ordination. As a result women seem to bear the brunt of men’s theological, spiritual decisions and actions. To take the church attendance situation, women are the majority. Further more they are the ones left to do supportive ministries. These results may imply that the church leadership, like their counterpart the missionaries, continued to deny the reality of women ordination.
Figure 5. 3: The number of men and women ordained within the same period, 1982-2001.

The research found out that (95%) of people who were ordain were men as compared to women who comprised only 5% in the period of 1982-2001.

5.4.1 Congregation

The congregation is formed by a group of persons together with their children, associated in a particular locality for Christian worship, instructions, fellowship and witness (PCEA constitution, 1969: 22). The leadership of the congregation is held by ordained elders, deacons and church group chair persons who form the Local Church Committee; the administrative body of a congregation. (Mungiriria, 1992) observes that the congregation plays a very central role because it supplies the church with the leaders, who serve in various capacities as pastors, elders’ deacons, deaconesses and group leaders. Today women dominate the pews in the churches although they are conspicuously absent from the power structures (Kalu, 2005: 411; Camba, 1996:1).
5.4.2 The Local Church Committee

According to the PCEA Constitution the Local Church Committee (LCC) is responsible for the evangelization of all who live within its bounds. It is constituted for effective administration and leadership. The person authorized to preside over this kind of a meeting is the parish minister who is moderator of the session. In the absence of a minister an elder presides. The LCC is constituted of the elders, deacons and LCC group chairpersons.

The LCC organizes the affairs of the congregation, which includes planning, building, finances and the pastoral oversight. Most of the membership in the LCC is dominated by women while the administrative leadership is held by men. As much as the majority are women and are in the position of electing one of their own they end up having very few taking positions in administrative church leadership. Bredt (1997; 2009) indicate that it is this inequality, inherited from the gender-insensitive political structures of the wider society as such, which has found its way into the church of God in Africa. For this reason the present patriarchal structures need to be transformed if the partnership of men and women is to be realized. Men and women participation need to be approached from the point of view of giftedness ability and interest rather than inferiority or superiority complexes.

5.5 Parish

The Parish comprises of one or several congregations and the membership is made up of the minister and the elders, who serve in the congregation within that parish. The leadership is by the kirk session, where the minister is the moderator and the elders assume the positions of session clerk, treasurer, finance chairperson and
deputy clerk. Normally, the administrative leadership is by men. There are more men elders in many congregations and as a result there is a tendency of the men electing their own, since they are the participants in church election to administrative positions.

5.6 Presbytery

Every minister paired by an elder and all presbyterial group chairperson’s form the presbytery court. The administrative leadership of the presbytery is determined through the annual election of a moderator, the clerk and the treasurer. At the presbytery level, one of the presbytery ministers is elected as the moderator; a clerk is elected from among the membership of the elders or ministers within the presbytery. For the finance office, a treasurer and a finance chairperson are elected from the elders within the presbytery.

The parish provides the leadership to the presbytery from their composition. Since the majorities are men in the sessions there is a tendency to have more male representation. Normally it is the session clerk who pairs the minister and the general trend has been that, it is the men who usually assume this position. From the data collected there are few women members of the Presbytery of Mililani, where only 3 were serving as session clerks out of the 11 parishes, and only one woman has ever served as a presbytery clerk for over a period of one hundred years. This type of evidence clearly demonstrates that women remain poorly represented and this is a serious issue of gender inequality and this would undermine the church growth if not redressed.
5.7 The General Administrative Committee (GAC)

The primary objective of the General Administrative Committee (GAC) is to carry the work of the church from one GA to the next. It meets every year when there is no GA. The GAC is responsible for discharging matters that would otherwise go to the GA. It has the authority to exercise all the powers of the GA, with the exception of the election of the GA officials. The GAC is elected at the conclusion of each GA, and has representation from all presbyteries with the moderator of the presbytery, the business member and presbyterial group’s chairpersons from every presbytery. The presence of women is minimal since this is affected by the way church elections are carried out at the grass root. According to the Very Rev. John Gatu, the GAC was created to lessen the burden and the expenses of the GA (Mungiriria, 1996:140-141).

5.7.1 Business Committee

It is from the presbytery membership that the membership of the business committee (BC) is constituted. Half of the PCEA presbyteries provide ordained ministers while the other half provides elders. This committee is the standing committee responsible for making arrangements when the GA is in progress. The BC meets in between the GAC and GA. Its office bearers are the officials of the GA and its life starts in one GA and expires at the end of that GA.

The BC serves as the GA nominating committee for GA officials, who comprise of the Moderator, Secretary General, Deputy Secretary General, and Honorary Treasurer. Majority members are men as noted earlier in chapter two. It is at their
discretion to appoint whoever they consider appropriate and this is a weak strategy since there are no strict guidelines followed (Practice and Procedure Manual 1998, 52-121: 207-369) and this may lead to favoritism. Sometimes they get their own extra qualifications outside the ones set by the Church (Nomination list of the GA officials, 2011:1-2).

5.8 The General Assembly
In PCEA, the General Assembly (GA) is the supreme court of the church and all decisions and matters concerning any undertaking in the church made by the GA are final. The membership of the GA is based on presbytery representation. Each presbytery elects an equal number of ministers and elders who become commissioners for a particular GA. The GA meets after every three years. Within the GA the administrative leadership has never had a woman. The Table 5.4 below shows the dates when the GA was held with the elected Moderators, Secretary Generals and Deputy Secretary Generals.
Table 5.4: PCEA List of elected moderators, secretary generals and deputy secretary general: 1956-2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>General Assembly</th>
<th>Moderator (Rev)</th>
<th>Sec. General (Rev)</th>
<th>Dep. Sec. General (Rev)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1956-1957</td>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Dr. Calderwood</td>
<td>Moderator &amp; Secretary General</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957-1961</td>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Robert Macpherson</td>
<td>Moderator &amp; Secretary General</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961-1967</td>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; &amp; 4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Charles M. Kareri</td>
<td>AD Lamont/ Dr. John Gatu</td>
<td>Dr. John Gatu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967-1973</td>
<td>5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; &amp; 6&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Crispus Kiongo</td>
<td>Dr. John Gatu</td>
<td>Benard Muindi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973-1979</td>
<td>7&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; &amp; 8&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Jeremiah Gitau</td>
<td>Dr. John Gatu</td>
<td>Benard Muindi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979-1985</td>
<td>9&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; &amp; 10&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Dr. John Gatu</td>
<td>Benard Muindi</td>
<td>Samuel W. Theuri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985-1991</td>
<td>11&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; &amp; 12&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Dr. George Wanjau</td>
<td>Dr. Lawson Kuria</td>
<td>Patrick Rukunya / Dr. Patrick Mungiriria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991-1997</td>
<td>13&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; &amp; 14&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Benard Muindi</td>
<td>Dr. Lawson Kuria</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997-2003</td>
<td>15&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; &amp; 16&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Dr. Jesse Kamau</td>
<td>Patrick Rukunya</td>
<td>Dr Charles Kibicho Kinyanjui</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003-2008</td>
<td>17&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; &amp; 18&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Dr. David Githii</td>
<td>Samuel Murigu</td>
<td>David Gathanjpu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-2015</td>
<td>19&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; &amp; 20&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>David Gathanjpu</td>
<td>Festus Gitonga</td>
<td>Francis Njoroge, Patrick T. Mutahi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


From the above Table 5.4 we note there are no women representatives in the top administrative church leadership. This study reveals that there are many factors which still remain in the church which shows that women continue being unrepresented in the church administrative leadership today, as the case of Milimani Presbytery shows.

The researcher sought to know if the church has gender parity. 7 out of 10 (75.0%) of the respondents of the General Assembly and department heads and 12 out of 19 (65%) Ministers agreed that the church had gender parity. These leaders were conversant with the constitution which they argued was also flexible and indeed did not condone any gender discrimination as men and women are free to participate in the church administrative leadership. However, the large proportion of men in
administrative leadership against very few women, in a church where the majority are women, describes serious structural problem.

Based on the evidence in this study, it can be argued that several factors can be deduced. Ordinarily, the study reveals that women are frightened by the patriarchal powers where only men hold high status positions and have decision making power which is integrated into the structure such as in the recruitment of the ministers, elders and general assembly officials. There is also outright acceptance seen in the way the church has lived with more men representation than women and this is normalized through time. In PCEA Lack of research on the subject and courage to point at these challenges and generate discussion for change may also have delayed transformation. Similar findings are documented by (Bredt, (1997:211) who urges “that we must cast ourselves a new before His saving grace and seek a renewing of our church structures in order for us to provide the best condition possible under which women and men alike may work together to fulfil the great commission that Jesus Christ ,the head of the church ,entrusted into our hands” Thus, the PCEA need a theology that engages with a balanced gender representation to suit the needs of women to give them wholistic Christian living.

The results indicate that note that hierarchical organized church’s leadership is held by the clergy. Further, the majorities most of whom are men are the key in decision making and influences both the leadership development.
Constitutions in the history of the church or public governance have never been a panacea for change, where the context is such as cultured political, or patriarchy drives people’s approach to leadership. Constitution may remain as reference to the way of order of things, but not as strong to overcome the belief which shape human decision. Whereupon contending factors of belief or practices of inequality persist, result for equal access to opportunity might be bypassed, even where a well meaning and progressive constitution exists. The church should address this phenomenon and instead of the church denying the situation, offer a solution to the underlying underrepresentation of women participation in administrative church leadership.

The fact that many church leaders still argued that there are not structural problem, where indeed serious structural problem exist as described above is the real problem. 75.0% General assembly and departmental head respondents agreed that church structures are giving women enough opportunity in church administrative leadership and only 25.0% indicated that church structures are not giving women enough opportunity in church administrative leadership. This shows that, the church leadership today sees women participation based on the provision for the constitution, which is fair to all. However, the subtle factors of exclusion based on belief, fear and self- censors, which denies women opportunity in the same structure despite a good constitution are hardly recognizable. The fact that many church leaders still do not recognize serious structural problem exist as described in the study above is one of the real problems.

Figure 5.4 shows the position of the General Assembly and departmental heads respondents on whether they consider the structure allowing women participation.
Figure 5.4: General assembly and departmental heads position on whether church structures give women enough opportunity in church administrative leadership

5.8.1 Ministers

Ministers play the role of teaching eldership and must embrace policies of inclusion, where gender forms a central part of this inclusion. When asked if women should participate in administrative leadership, "All Ministers 19 out of 19 were of the view that women in church should participate in church administrative leadership position such as church moderator, session clerk, deputy clerk and finance chairpersons. The table 5.6 below shows the Ministers response on whether women should take church administrative positions.

Table 5.4: Ministers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If indeed the ministers are the teaching elders, the church therefore ought to enforce policies that ensure parity in decision-making forums in all church levels.

5.9 Summary

The study shows that women participate within the PCEA structure and have a voice, but this has remained at the lower levels. Despite the growth of the church, the structure that exists today has not changed much from the colonial outfit. The recruitment process and procedure to the various church positions are fair as they allow equal rights for all people regardless of their gender as enshrined in the Constitution. However, the structure introduced by the missionaries has not been transformative as it has a tendency which has over the years allowed men to assume leadership at the high hierarchy while women remain mostly at the lower level.

The major discrepancy is that a church which has women as the majority in the pews and men as the majority in the hierarchy shows outright discrimination. This is despite of a church structure that filters leadership from the lowest to the highest level. That is from the LCC, parish, presbytery and the GA. In the church patriarchal setting the recognition of men as leaders and women as service deliverers has remained evident. This shows that church structure has remained a bottleneck and women have not risen beyond service delivery status. Therefore, the PCEA should address herself to gender issues with an intention to renew the church structures. This will help to overcome the underrepresentation of women in church administrative leadership and makes the women participate in all positions.
CHAPTER SIX

6.0 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of findings and the conclusions drawn from the findings. It also presents recommendations and suggestions for further areas of research.

6.2 Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this study was to establish factors influencing women’s non participation in church administrative leadership in the PCEA, Milimani Presbytery in Nairobi County. It was revealed that women are underrepresented in administrative church leadership despite of their large membership in the church. This is despite the fact that men continue to dominate the higher ranks of church leadership.

The importance of the study is based on the fact that, studies on women have ignored the factors that influence women’s underrepresentation in administrative church leadership in Milimani presbytery. An understanding of the root causes of these factors shed light to the present male-dominated systems in church administrative leadership.

The study contributes to the on-going struggle to overcome a male dominated system in the church, and embrace a system that will encourage women to maximize their potential in church administrative leadership. By so doing, the study has helped
to identify that women possess strengths that deserves to be respected, and shares a common worth. Such goal is only possible through, transformation of values, beliefs and attitude.

The study was guided by four research objectives, thus:

a) Investigate the place and role of women in the PCEA Milimani presbytery.

b) Assess how traditional African culture influences the participation of women in the administrative leadership of the PCEA Milimani presbytery.

c) Establish the impact of missionary education on the place and role of women in the PCEA Milimani presbytery.

d) Examine the influence of the PCEA structures on women participation in the PCEA Milimani presbytery.

The study was based on two theories; patriarchal ideology by Iglitzin & Ross (1976) and gender role ideology by Peterson & Runyan (1993). The theories were found appropriate, and consequently adapted. These theories were relevant in understanding the underrepresentation of women in church administrative leadership. The two theories supplemented each other and provided a theoretical framework for the whole study. The data for the study was obtained through the oral interviews, questionnaires, observation method and secondary sources. The data obtained was categorized and thematized to form the basis for analysis and interpretation.

6.3 Summary of the Main Findings

The summary of the study objectives were discussed as follows.
6.3.1 The Place and Role of Women in the PCEA Milimani Presbytery

The first objective was to investigate the place and role of women in the PCEA Milimani presbytery. Data revealed that Women’s roles are confined to the marginal levels of the church. Women are found in many local church levels and women’s presence in leadership becomes visible where there is a woman’s ministry program headed entirely by women. Further, the data indicated that more than half of the Ministers (52%) admitted that women are not given enough opportunity in church administrative leadership. This in the view of the researcher compromised the role of the Minister as a teaching elder. The study established that for the last one century no woman has ever held the administrative positions of General Assembly Moderator, Secretary General, Deputy Secretary and Honorary Treasurer.

To this end ministers, lay men and women, G.A officials and business committee should engage in a serious theological debate on the factors influencing women’s participation in administrative church leadership. This will help to solve challenges influencing women’s participation in church administrative leadership. The researcher saw the need for all church members to fully understand the participation of women in church administrative leadership in order to popularize it.

6.3.2 Traditional African Culture Influence on Women’s Participation

The second objective was to assess how traditional African culture influences the participation of women in the administrative leadership of the PCEA Milimani presbytery. From the data it was established that African cultural influence is still very strong and greatly influences women’s participation in church administrative leadership. It was established that Agikuyu men held positions of power in all-
important institutions both sacred and secular. The fact that men dominate the Church in administrative leadership is a clear indication that the all embracing Gikuyu worldview still plays a very important part in the minds of many Christians. Women still hold that men should lead and therefore being the majority voters elect them to leadership positions in the Church. With this patriarchal syndrome women are kept away from holding decision-making positions and instead are drawn to serve the cultural system and the ideology that upholds it. The study shows that patriarchal belief system has been persistent to date and continues to provide different threats towards women participation in administrative church leadership.

Other results showed that in the church patriarchal setting recognition of men as leaders and women as service deliverers has remained powerful, and the structure has remained a bottleneck and women have not much risen beyond service delivery status. Inequality in expectations for caretaking in the home for the women affects their participation. Women bear a far larger share of the responsibility for home and children cares as well as other forms of unpaid work than men do. This unequal division of labour makes it more difficult for women to thrive in church administrative leadership. This has created inequalities as obviously noted in a church where the majorities in the congregation are women yet they are the minority in church administrative leadership representation. The study shows that patriarchal belief system has been persistent to date and continues to provide different threats.
6.3.3 The Missionary Education Influence on Women’s Participation

The third objective was to establish the impact of missionary education on the place and role of women in the PCEA Milimani presbytery. It was established that the missionary education discriminated against women at the onset. This often reflects women’s disadvantages: boys were prepared in technical education while girls were prepared to be home makers. This in view of the researcher means that it is more of a historical problem where girls were not given equal opportunities as boys at the onset of Christianity and Mission education. This implies that, there is a possibility of women being more involved if only they were given technical education.

6.3.4 The PCEA Structures Influence on Women’s Participation

The fourth objective was to examine the influence of the PCEA structures on women participation in the PCEA Milimani presbytery. The study established that, the CSM imported their home administrative church structure as well as their homegrown liturgy and transplanted them extensively, in PCEA. The study shows that, the PCEA structure that exists today has not changed much from the missionary period. This structure has not been transformative as it has a tendency which has over the years allowed men to assume leadership at the high hierarchy while women remain mostly at the lower level. The study identified the need to change the present male-dominated systems, and tailor-make them to suit the needs of women. In this way, more women would participate in administrative church leadership.

The study revealed that gender representation in church administrative leadership in practice is not balanced. For instance, although the PCEA Constitution states that
women and men have an equal chance for participation, even in Local Church Committee (LCC) where women are the majority, men are dominant in administrative leadership. Results showed that, most administrative church leaders at the lower administrative church leadership structures were women. Nevertheless even in opportunities like in the PCEA business committee where women stood a chance to be co-opted, women were not preferred. Women should be co-opted when opportunities arises. In this way, a more balanced representation is achieved.

6.4 Recommendations

- In view of the various findings that emerged from this study, the following recommendations were made:

- The PCEA should conscientize its members on women participation in church administrative leadership. Seminars, retreats and workshops should be organized for ministers, elders and group leaders to impress on them the importance of women in administrative leadership positions. Experts in gender and theology studies should be engaged to facilitate these forums to make leaders understand, support and promote women administrative leadership in their churches. In addition, women should be empowered and developed to enhance their leadership capacity and have more women in administrative church leadership.

- Women’s experiences and concerns are different from men’s and need to be represented in discussions that result in policy-making and implementation. These different experiences and concerns mean that, the interests of men and women are different and even conflicting and therefore women are needed in representative institutions to articulate the interests of women. Moreover
there are some issues in which women can most effectively minister to each other. For example to effectively include women in church administrative leadership, it requires women to raise the issue of their small numbers in administrative church leadership. It is very hard for men to challenge the underrepresentation of women since men are the ones in church administrative positions and competing for these positions.

- Traditionally the Agikuyu people believed that men are leaders. Culturally they believed that men were superior and women inferior. This belief led to the development of a power structure where women followed as the men lead. This is clearly reflected in the PCEA where women are the majority in church pews and men takes administrative church leadership. Men and women have to create an alternative culture that will challenge the embedded traditions that dictate what women should or should not do or be, especially in the African setting. The PCEA must challenge the tenets of these traditions and oppressive cultures with the liberating power of the Gospel instead of tapping from them.

- The PCEA should employ equity policies and affirmative action. This would address historical injustices to women underrepresentation. The equal representation of women and men would enhance democratization of church governance in all levels. The most common mechanism for increasing women’s participation in administrative church leadership is *electoral quota*, which is defined as a mandatory percentage of women candidates for church administrative leadership at all levels. This would bring visibility to talented men and women.
6.5 Suggested Areas for Further Research

- The findings of this study focused primary on the factors that have led to underrepresentation of women in administrative church leadership. Women in PCEA, Milimani Presbytery continue to be underrepresented in administrative church leadership despite the PCEA being in this area for over a century. There are areas which were not covered by this study. Other issues came up and they could not be investigated further because they were not the focus of my study. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct further research on how women are performing vis-a-vis men, as well as whether people prefer women ministers to men. Such studies would form a baseline for generalization of the findings of this study.

- Secondly, further research should be carried out on the effectiveness of ordained women in administrative church leadership for the period between 1982 to date when the first woman was ordained in PCEA. Thus, continuous studies will provide the much-needed information that would be the main frame of reference in future in order to evaluate progress on women’s participation in church administrative leadership.

- Thirdly, further research should be carried out looking at the members preserve the population of women in the church and the roles they perform and how transformative they are in their roles.

- Fourthly, further research should be carried out on issues of liberating way of reading the scripture.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

(a) Published sources


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Oduyoye, M., (1990). “A Decade of Solidarity with Women Not an Idle Tale” In Church Women’s consultation on Economic Justice by A.A.C.C.


(b) Unpublished Sources


Dear Madam/Sir,
I am Esther Njeri; a Master’s student in the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies at Kenyatta University. I am undertaking this research as a fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree. My research is focused on establishing factors influencing women’s participation in administrative church leadership. Kindly, give your honest response to the following questions. The information you give will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will only be used for research purpose.
Thank you in advance for accepting to take part in this study.

Instructions:
1. Kindly respond to the following questions by placing a tick ☐ in front of the most appropriate response.
2. Where explanations are required, use the space below the items.
3. Answer all questions as briefly as possible.

Part A: Personal data
1. Name……………………………………………………………….. (Optional)
2. Gender   male ☐   Female ☐
   3. Age group  18-25 years ☐
   26-35 ☐
   36-45 ☐
   46-55 ☐
   56-65 ☐
   66 and above ☐
3. Marital status
   a) Married  
   b) Single  
   c) Separated  
   d) Divorced  
   e) Widowed

4. Highest education level attained;
   a) Primary  KCPE/CPE
   b) Secondary  i) KACE
      ii) KCSE
   c) College  i) Higher Diploma
      ii) Diploma
      iii) Certificate
   d) University:  i) PhD
      ii) Master
      iii) Bachelors Degree

5. Name of congregation/meeting.................................................................
6. Date..............................................................................................................

Part B

1. How long have you been a member of this church?  
   □ 1-5 years    □ 6-10 years    □ 11-15 years    □ other

2. Have you ever held any leadership position in the church?  a) Yes  □  b) No □
   If yes which one..........................................................................................
3. From your observation, are women represented in the following administrative positions of your Church:

i) Church Moderator       Yes ☐ No ☐

ii) Clerk,                 Yes ☐ No ☐

iii) Deputy Clerk          Yes ☐ No ☐

v) Treasurer               Yes ☐ No ☐

4. From your observation, who are more involved in the administrative leadership positions, stated in question 4 above?

i) Men ☐ ii) Women ☐

ii) Explain your answer

...........................................................................................................................................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................................................................................................................................

5. Mention four roles of women in your church ...........................................

6. Would you like to take up any leadership position in your church?

a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐

ii) If yes, what form of support would you suggest for the church leadership position

...........................................................................................................................................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................................................................................................................................

7. In your view how do the following church structures incorporate women in the administrative church leadership positions?

i Parish Session..........................

...........................................................................................................................................................................................................................................

ii Local Church Committee..................
8. Are the Church structures giving women enough opportunity in Church administrative leadership?  a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐

Explain your answer
........................................................................................................................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................

9). In your view, are men confident with women as Church administrative leaders?  
   a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐

Give reasons for your answer
........................................................................................................................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................

10.) What are the challenges faced by women in top church leadership positions? Explain each reason.
   i........................................................................................................................................................................................................................................
   ii........................................................................................................................................................................................................................................
   iii........................................................................................................................................................................................................................................

11. In your opinion do you think the African culture has influenced participation of women in administrative church leadership?  
   a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐

Explain your answer........................................................................................................................................................................................................................................

12. In your opinion do you think the missionary’s education could have influenced women’s participation in administrative church leadership?  
   a) Yes ☐ b) No ☐

Give reasons for your answer
........................................................................................................................................................................................................................................

13. In your view do women have administrative positions in your parish?  
   i) Church Moderator  Yes ☐ No ☐
   ii) Session Clerk,  Yes ☐ No ☐
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Explain your answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>iii) Deputy Clerk</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv) Finance Chairperson</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v) Treasurer</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thank you very much for your response
APPENDIX II

Questionnaire for Ministers

Dear Rev,

I am Esther Njeri; a Master’s student in the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies of Kenyatta University. I am undertaking this research as a fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree. My research is focused on establishing factors influencing women’s participation in administrative Church leadership. Kindly give your honest response to the following questions. The information you give will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will only be used for research purpose.

Thank you in advance for accepting to take part in this study.

Instructions:

1. Kindly respond to the following questions by placing a tick in front of the most appropriate response.
2. Where explanations are required, use the space below the items.
3. Answer all questions as briefly as possible.

Part A

1. Name……………………………………………………………….. (Optional)
2. Gender   Male □       Female □
3. Age group  18-25 years □
              26-35 □
              36-45 □
              46-55 □
              56-65 □
              66 and above □
4. Marital status  a) Married □
                  b) Single □
c) Separate ☐

d) Divorced ☐
e) Widowed ☐

5. Highest education level attained:

a) Primary ☐

b) Secondary
   i) KACE ☐
   ii) KCSE ☐

c) College
   i) Higher Diploma ☐
   ii) Diploma ☐
   iii) Certificate ☐

d) University:
   i) PhD ☐
   ii) Master ☐
   iii) Bachelors Degree ☐

6. Name of congregation/meeting..................................................

7. Date.................................................................

Part B

1. How long have you been an ordained Church Minister?
   ☐ 1-5 years    ☐ 6-10 years    ☐ 11-15 years    ☐ other

2. Indicate the leadership position that you have held in PCEA Milimani Presbytery.
   (Tick where applicable)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership Position</th>
<th>Current</th>
<th>Previously</th>
<th>How long</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moderator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy clerk</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Chaplain</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Committee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. In your view, are men confident with women as Church administrative leaders?
   a) Yes □ b) No □
   Give reasons for your answer
   ……………………………………………………………………………………………
   ……………………………………………………………………………………………
   ……………………………

4) In your view, are women confident with women as Church administrative leaders?
   a) Yes □ b) No □
   Give reasons for your answer
   ……………………………………………………………………………………………
   ……………………………………………………………………………………………
   ……………………………

5. In your view how do the following Church structures incorporate women in the administrative Church leadership positions?
   i) General Assembly …………………………………………
   ii) Parish Session…………………………………………
   iii) Local Church Committee………………………………

6. From your observation, who are more involved in the administrative leadership positions; stated in question 5 above?
   i) Men □ ii) Women □
   ii) In your opinion give reasons for this situation……………………………

7. In your view are the Church structures giving women enough opportunity in Church administrative leadership? a) Yes □ b) No □
   Explain your answer
   ……………………………………………………………………………………………
   ……………………………………………………………………………………………
   ……………………………

8. a) In your opinion what are the challenges facing women’s move to take leadership positions in Church?
9. In your opinion do you think the African culture has influenced participation of women in administrative church leadership?
   a) Yes ☐  b) No ☐
   Explain your answer.................................................................

10. In your opinion do you think the missionary’s formal education could have influenced women’s participation in administrative church leadership?
   a) Yes ☐  b) No ☐
   Give reasons for your answer
   ........................................................................................................

11. Has the missionary form of Christianity and worship continued to influence the place of women in Church administrative leadership with reference to:
   i) Administrative structures.................................................
       .................................................................................................
   iii) Teachings..............................................................................
       .................................................................................................

12. Are you conversant with the PCEA constitution?
   Yes ☐  No ☐
   i) In your view, does the constitution portray gender balance?
       Yes ☐  No ☐
   iii) Explain your answers..........................................................
       .................................................................................................
13. In your view should women in your Church participate in the following Church administrative leadership positions?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i) Church Moderator</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii) Session Clerk</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii) Deputy Clerk</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv) Finance Chairperson</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v) Treasurer</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Explain your response for each.

   i) .................................................................
       .................................................................
       .................................................................

   ii) .................................................................
        .................................................................

14. Among the following groups in your congregation indicate how many men and women are

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Church Elders</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Church Ministers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Church Deacons</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ii) Give reasons for this situation..............................................

Thank you for your response
APPENDIX III

Interview Schedule for the General Assembly Officers and Heads of Departments

Dear Madam/ Sir,

I am Esther Njeri; a Master’s student in the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies of Kenyatta University. I am undertaking this research as a fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree. My research is focused on establishing factors influencing women’s participation in administrative Church leadership. Kindly give your honest response to the following questions. The information you give will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will only be used for research purpose.

Thank you in advance for accepting to take part in this study.

Part A

1. Name……………………………………………………………….. (Optional)

2. Gender

   Male □    Female □

3. Age group

   26-35 □
   36-45 □
   46-55 □
   56-65 □
   66 and above □

4. Marital status

   a) Married □   b) Single □
   c) Separate □   D) Widowed □

5. Highest education level attained;

   a) Primary □
b) Secondary  
   i) KACE  
   ii) KCSE  

c) College  
   i) Higher Diploma  
   ii) Diploma  
   iii) Certificate  

d) University:  
   i) PhD  
   ii) Master  
   iii) Bachelor's Degree  

**Part B**

1. How long have you been a Minister of PCEA/Church worker?  
   □ 1-5 years  □ 6-10 years  □ 11-15 years  □ Other  
2. Do women participate in elections as candidates for administrative Church leadership positions at all levels?  
   a) Yes  □  b) No  □  
3. In your view, are men confident with women as Church administrative leaders?  
   a) Yes  □  b) No  □  
   Give reasons for your answer……………………………………………………………
4. In your view, are women confident with women as Church administrative leaders?  
   a) Yes □  b) No □  
   Give reasons for your answer……………………………………………………………
5. In your view how do the following Church structures incorporate women in the administrative Church leadership positions?  
   i) General Assembly .................................................................
   ii) Parish Session...........................................................................
iii) Local Church Committee

6. Are the Church structures giving women enough opportunity in Church administrative leadership?
   a) Yes □
   b) No □
   Explain your answer

7. a) In your opinion list 3 reasons that hinder women from taking administrative leadership positions in Church?
      Explain each reason ............................................

8. In your opinion do you think the African culture has influenced participation of women in administrative church leadership?
   a) Yes □
   b) No □
   Explain your answer............................................

9. In your opinion do you think the missionary’s education could have influenced women’s participation in administrative church leadership?
   a) Yes □
   b) No □
   Give reasons for your answer............................................

10. How has the missionary form of Christianity and worship continued to influence the place of women in Church administrative leadership with reference to:
     i) Administrative structures............................................
     iii) Teachings...........................................................

11. Are you conversant with the PCEA constitution? a)Yes □ b) No □
     i) In your view, does the constitution portray gender parity?
        a)Yes □
        b) No □
     iii) Explain your answers............................................

12. In your view, should women in Church participate in the following Church administrative leadership positions?
     i) Church Moderator Yes □
     ii) Session Clerk, Yes □
     iii) Deputy Clerk Yes □
     iv) Finance Chairperson Yes □
v) Treasurer  Yes ☐ No ☐

Explain your answer for each.

i) ..............................................................................................

ii) ................................................................................................

iii) ................................................................................................

13. Mention four roles of women in your church ..................................

14. In your opinion, do PCEA members appreciate women in Church administrative leadership?

15. How do social-cultural issues influence participation of women in Church administrative leadership?

16. At what level are PCEA women in church administrative leadership?

b) What are the factors influencing their participation negatively and positively?

17. How do religious leaders influence participation of women in church administrative leadership?
APPENDIX IV

Schedule for Document Analysis and Statistical Data

The current study purposed to critically analyze both past and present records of official documents, so as to provide supportive data. They entailed the following information pertaining to sampled congregations for the current study.

1. Presbytery, leadership in the last one hundred years since 1908.
2. Parish, leadership since the year of inception.
3. Local Church Committee leadership since the year of inception.
4. Parish training attendance documents.
5. Minutes of the presbytery and presbyterial groups.
6. Membership admission registers in the sampled congregations.
7. Records of both board of management and annual general meetings.
APPENDIX V
Map showing area of study

P.C.E.A Milimini Presbytery
Source: Google Map