

NAIROBI EVANGELICAL GRADUATE  
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

AN EXPLORATION OF THE EXPERIENCES OF  
FEMALE SEMINARY GRADUATES AS THEY SEEK TO  
INTEGRATE INTO LOCAL CHURCH MINISTRIES

By  
ELIZABETH A. OBAT

A Thesis submitted to the Graduate School  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree  
Master of Divinity Christian Education

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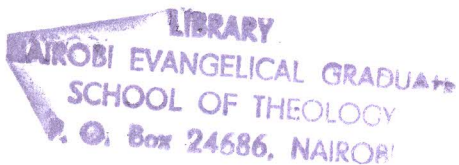
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**July, 2002**

**Student's Declaration**

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INTO LOCAL CHURCH MINISTRIES**

**I declare that this is my original work and has not been  
Submitted to any other College or University for academic credit**

**The views presented herein are not necessarily those of the Nairobi Evangelical  
Graduate School of Theology or of the examiners**

**(Signed) \_\_\_\_\_  
Elizabeth A. Obat**

**July, 2002**

### ABSTRACT

This study explores the experiences of female seminary graduates as they seek to integrate into local church ministries. Data was collected through face to face semi-structured interviews, which were recorded and transcribed.

The findings revealed that, if a female seminary graduate desires a successful integration into the local church ministries, then they must be sent by their churches. This must happen in the light of three key factors. First the church leadership should be the ones to recognize the gifting in the women and find a place for the expression of those gifts, Secondly, the church community should have had prior experience with women in significant roles hence be agreeable to women in ministry. Thirdly, the women should have an assurance of the personal divine calling. It is these factors that will enhance integration success.

If the seminary graduate was not sent by the church and therefore has one or more of the above missing, the female seminary graduate will experience integration difficulties.

Based on the findings the seminary needs to be in dialogue with the church to ensure integration success of the women they are training. The key question for them becomes, '...is it ethically responsible to accept tuition dollars from the women when the seminary leadership recognizes that their gender will hamper these women as they travel the pathway to ministry?' (Grenz 1995, 24).

To

My loving husband who has had the courage to allow me to explore my potential and  
become all that I can be for the sake of the kingdom of God.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

In a good number of African communities, the females were second-class citizens. They were considered “less than” in comparison to the male gender. In fact, it was a very sad day if a female child were born. Some communities even considered it a curse and did not treat the child with the necessary care. A female child could easily be abandoned or killed. From infancy to adulthood her role was clearly defined; it was within the home, where she engaged in backbreaking tasks. The statement “beast of burden” fits the description of her roles. It was not expected that she assume a public role. Out of the home she had meaning only behind the cover of her husband who spoke for her and represented her in all important affairs. Her voice was never to be heard in public. She was never to be exposed to any form of education or schooling. Her whole up-bringing was tied to being at the service of her husband. Interestingly in the religious arena women played a very active role. They were the priestesses who conducted the worship of ancestors. In Mozambique more women than men played the most important roles in all rituals and rites that were religiously related. In fact, for a long time women were the custodians and propagators of religion in society. African society therefore presents a paradoxical picture of the place of women within the society. It appears that in all public areas the woman was in the background, but in the religious arena she was in forefront. However, in recent decades this scenario has changed drastically, especially with the advent of Christianity in some of these cultures. The theological arena has become male-dominated.

The pre-colonial African society was, for the most part, hierarchical, male dominated and negative towards women. They were regarded as being inferior to men. Consequently, theology in Africa has been mainly regarded as a man's preoccupation. Christianity with its traditional theology that is built on patriarchal culture seems to be a man's religion. Women are denied the opportunity to minister even as catechists or agents in parishes. The church in Africa has been extremely slow in providing opportunities for women to be actively involved in theological education (Kemdirim 1999, 45).

Currently relatively few women attend theological schools. The reception of these women in church ministries has become my area of interest. The theological seminary exists primarily for the Church. It is, therefore, expected that everyone who receives a theological seminary education needs to have a place of expression in the Church. However, as the first Methodist woman bishop from South Africa declares in the *Challenge* magazine 58, "the church in the new millennium is to rid itself of three evils, namely sexism, denominationalism and the disempowerment of women." (Mdhlela 2000, 2). She seems to be affirming the existence of negative attitudes towards the legitimacy of women participating in the Church. Interestingly, despite the midst of such attitudes, some women have found access to training that prepares them primarily for ministry in the Church context.

### **Statement of the Problem**

An increasing number of women in Kenya are receiving a seminary education. Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology and Nairobi International School of Theology, two graduate level seminaries, are seeing this increase. Some of the women graduates of these and other seminaries in Africa are entering local church ministry. Others have opted for non-church ministries. Others still have not entered full-time Christian service. I am interested in discovering and exploring the experiences of

seminary graduate women as they integrate into local churches, whether as vocational Christian workers or as lay persons.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this grounded theory study was to discover and explore female seminary graduates' perceptions of their integration experiences into local church ministries. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews with six participants from four local churches.

### **The Grand Tour Question and Subquestions**

The Grand Tour question is, "What are the experiences of women seminary graduates in three local churches in Nairobi.

### **Subquestions**

The study will be guided by the following research questions:

1. What are some of the experiences of the women graduates as they integrate into local church ministries?
2. How would the women graduates assess their acceptance into local church ministry?
3. What strategies are the women using to integrate into local church ministries?
4. How does their present experience concur with their expectation upon entering seminary?

### **Delimitation**

This study was confined to six female seminary graduates who faithfully attend a local church and have an interest in church ministry.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study seeks to give voice to the pioneer women who have a seminary education as they seek to make a contribution to African society. The study will be of significance to both church leaders and seminary teachers who work with and teach women in the African context helping them to understand the experiences of women in this context.

## CHAPTER TWO

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

Qualitative research methods find expression in several designs; for example, ethnographies, grounded theory, case studies and phenomenological studies. For the purposes of doing this study, the researcher used the grounded theory design. Grounded theory has two primary characteristics; namely, the constant comparison of data with emerging categories and theoretical sampling of different groups to maximize the similarities and the differences of information (Creswell 1994, 12). It is believed that theories give the most systematic way of building, synthesizing and integrating scientific knowledge. Grounded theory is formed when data is conceptualized and the concepts are related to form a theoretical rendition of reality, from the informants' perspective. The theoretical formulation that results is used to explain that reality to provide a framework for action (Strauss & Corbin 1990, 22).

#### Assumptions and Rationale for a Qualitative Design

Qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The researcher builds complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting (Creswell 1998, 15).

This study examined significant factors that affect the integration of seminary-trained women into local church ministries. The researcher was interested in understanding intricate details from the women's personal experiences. As we enter the new millennium, issues of methodology still

play a prominent role. I see story telling as a mode of empowerment of women that must continue. It gives women the power to tell their experiences in a way that defines who they are and how they understand their role in the community. It gives them the opportunity to interpret their experiences and how God reveals himself to them, as only women can. This methodology makes sense in the African context, which is also an oral society (Phiri 2000, 52).

The research demanded that the researcher interact very closely with those involved in the study, asking open ended questions and allowing the participants to explore the areas they consider relevant.

My rationale for this design rested on the following factors:

- The nature of the research question is such that it involves the stories from peoples' lives.
- It is the researcher's conviction that the experiences of seminary educated women have not been adequately researched, especially within the researcher's context.
- There is need to present a detailed view of this topic because it involves a small grouping of people.
- The researcher is interested in writing in literary style, engaging a story-telling narration, as it were, from the horse's mouth (Creswell 1988, 17).

### Entry

This study was heavily dependent on individual participants' narrations; therefore, the question of entry addressed them directly. The researcher developed an

informed consent form requesting their participation (see Appendix A). The form gave the participant an opportunity to commit herself willingly to in-depth

### **Sampling**

I engaged in theoretical sampling which "means sampling on the basis of concepts that have proven theoretical relevance to the evolving theory" (Strauss & Corbin 1990, 177). Because my interest was based in the experiences of the female seminary graduates, I used theoretical sampling, which lends itself best to collecting qualitative data. This is data about human experiences, which are complex and intricate. One highlight of theoretical sampling is discriminate sampling, which is normally "very directed and deliberate, with conscious choices made about who and what to sample in order to obtain the needed data" (Strauss & Corbin 1990, 187). I consciously choose six female seminary graduates to participate in the research. This sample is what was manageable for me, putting in perspective the time and resources available. I sought to "maximize opportunities for verifying the story line, relationships between categories and for filling in poorly developed categories" (Strauss & Corbin 1990, 187). These women were interviewed and the interviews were recorded on audiotapes. The aim was to capture, accurately, the story line of these women in relation to the subject of the research. The recorded interviews were transcribed word for word and printed on hard paper. It was this hard data that was analyzed line by line to reveal emerging categories.

### **Role of Literature in Grounded Theory**

Qualitative studies often are exploratory. Therefore, the researcher used an inductive approach that allowed the participants to tell their stories. Literature is used



the research. Whenever the interviewer sensed that a certain response needed to be elaborated, she requested the respondent to further elaborate. The important factor here was to ensure that the interviewer understood what the respondent was saying.

We can learn also through interviewing, about people's interior experiences. We can learn what people perceived and how they interpreted their perception; we can learn the meanings to them of their relationships, their families, their work and their selves. We can learn about all the experiences, from joy through grief, that together constitutes the human condition (Weiss 1994, 1).

### **Data Analysis Procedures**

Grounded theory analysis involves immersing one's self in the data received from the interviews. The interviews were transcribed and analyzed beginning with open coding; that is, data was broken into pieces so as to identify categories that were then given labels. The categories were compared and contrasted to produce increasingly complex categories. The researcher developed the categories by examining data; she noted her personal reactions to the participants' narratives. These analytic memos helped form theoretical categories. Nine themes or categories emerged through grounded theory data analysis. These themes explained the experiences of female seminary graduates as they sought to integrate in local churches. They were competence, cultural context, integration success, integration difficulties, scope of ministry, duty, alternatives and challenges, experienced in seeking to integrate in the church.

Relationships were explored through axial coding. A paradigm model was developed showing the interrelationships of the axial coding categories by using the headings: causal conditions, phenomenon, context, intervening conditions, strategies and consequences (See Fig. 1). Finally, selective coding was done by selecting the core category that emerged from the data and relating it to other categories. The

differently in this research approach. The grounded theory approach favors interaction with relevant literature at the conclusion of the study so that the literature acts as a basis for comparing and contrasting discoveries.

There is no need to review all the literature in the field beforehand, as is frequently done by analysis using other research approaches. It is impossible to know prior to the investigation what the salient problems will be or what theoretical concepts will emerge. Also, the researcher does not want to be so steeped in the literature that he or she is constrained and even stifled by it (Creswell 1998, 49).

In case literature is used in the beginning, it serves the purpose of framing the topic of study.

In qualitative research, the literature should be used in a manner consistent with the methodological assumptions; namely, it should be used inductively so that it does not direct the questions asked by the researcher (Creswell 1994, 20).

### **Role of the Researcher**

Qualitative research is undertaken in a natural setting in which the researcher is the principal instrument of data collection. She gathers words or pictures, analyzes them inductively, focuses on the meaning of the participants and describes a process that is expressive and persuasive in language (Creswell 1998, 14). Therefore, the researcher engaged fully in data collection by being physically present to conduct the interviews using an interview guide, which is available in Appendix B. The interviews were recorded on audiotape and transcribed verbatim. Data analysis was based primarily on the transcriptions of the interviews.

### **Data Collection Procedure**

Data for the study was collected through semi-structured interviews with participants in four churches. The style of interviews was one in which the participant was the dominant speaker. The interviewer guided the interview into areas relevant to

process of codes and categories continued until all the data had been considered and no new categories emerged. Selective coding enabled the emergence of a theory, which is represented by pie charts with an explanation (See Fig.3).

### **Method of Verification**

The participants were themselves primary source of verification. The researcher gave them the opportunity to interact with the emerging theory allowing them to participate in an active search for disconfirming evidence and to affirm the results of the analysis.

### CHAPTER THREE

#### RESEARCH FINDINGS

These findings are the result of the data collection and analysis process. In depth interviews were conducted with six women. The interviews were transcribed verbatim and used as basis for data analysis. The analysis followed grounded theory procedures, which entailed, open coding, axial coding, and selective coding.

Qualitative research findings are often reported in the form of stories. The researcher lays out the story from the lives of the participants and allows them to speak for themselves. “Researcher uses an engaging style of narrative, may use first-person pronoun, and employs the language of qualitative research” (Creswell 1998, 75).

#### **The Stories from the female graduates**

Joanna was 31 years old. She was married and had two children. She stayed in Nairobi and attended a large church. After graduating from her undergraduate studies in Mathematics, she chose to go full time with a Christian organization, which was committed to evangelism. She said that she sensed a very strong calling to Christian work. She served with the Christian organization for about two years on volunteer basis. Towards the end of the second year she felt a strong need for training. So about six years she enrolled for seminary education. Joanna had a strong drive for this training because she said she was changing her career to Christian ministry. She put behind her training in Mathematics and wanted to excel in “teaching the word of the Lord.” Her husband, who happened to be a Christian worker, supported her through

her seminary education. The church she attended was reluctant to get involved with her vision of going to seminary. “We invited them for fund raising and we did not see much response from the church.” One of the reasons Joanna gave for the lack of her church’s involvement was that she became a member of that church by virtue of her marriage to her husband. She went to seminary about one and a half years after their marriage. She admitted that she was a stranger in the church and had not created enough trust relationships. Yet, her desire was to be fully involved with the church after her graduation from seminary. She said, “I just thought that I would just get an opportunity.” When she finally graduated she said that though she had taken many years in her church, she was not yet involved in ministry there. She felt incapacitated because it appeared as though she was expected to initiate her involvement and yet she did not feel free doing that. She hoped that the leadership would of their own accord recognize her abilities but that did not happen. Joanna said,

I was not being given the opportunity and probably because I joined the church as a result of marriage, I didn’t know how to go about the whole thing. I had started losing hope of doing ministry in my church (Mbogo 2002).

At the point when Joanna struggled with the emotions expressed above she began thinking of other options, like, Para-church organizations. After about five years of being in her church, Joanna found herself involved with her church only through her husband who shared the opportunities he was given with her.

First of all my husband was given the responsibility of a new church and we went there, it was believed that the responsibility is being given to the couple, so from there it was seen as our ministry. Later when my husband was to be ordained, on the day of the ordination they asked me to be a part of it, though the ordination card had his name only (Mbogo 2002).

Joanna became involved in the church her husband pastored because he believed in her ministry and calling.

Magdalene was a 32 year old lady, who had been married for six years. She had two children and held a degree in agriculture, and a Masters in missions.

Magdalene resided in a suburb of Nairobi but attended a rural church not too far from Nairobi town. Her husband was committed to this church because it was in their home area. They traveled as often as possible to this church. Magdalene became a part of this church on account of her marriage, but she liked the church and was committed to it. Prior to going to seminary, she had been steeped in Christian work and had the feeling that she needed more equipping. She says,

I felt I wanted to serve God with my profession, but also in my local church. I really wanted to be involved in the ministry in the church and especially in the area of missions. I had felt I wanted to assist my husband who is actually involved in ministry in my local church (Mutua 2002).

Magdalene valued her profession as an agriculturalist and her desire was to do tent making, that is, use her secular and her theological skills to serve God, as a Christian agriculturalist. She carried with her such a passion for involvement in the church.

Going to seminary was Magdalene's own personal initiative. She informed her pastor who was agreeable to it. The church members were at a loss and did not even understand what she was engaging herself in. The only way they could understand was by saying that, "she is training like the pastor trained." Incidentally their pastor had seminary training.

Upon graduation, she went back to her church ready to serve. The response was not what she expected. She said,

I was rather disappointed; well I realized it was not easy to get into church ministry. In fact, I realized the leadership only saw me in the capacity of supporting my husband in terms of being a good wife, not in terms of being an independent minister (Mutua 2002).

According to her she felt that the pastor consented to her seminary training without having thought of the implications of her training for the church's ministry involvement. She also felt that her context played a significant role in denying her opportunity for involvement. She said,

My local church is also a very rural church, the traditional woman sits and listens to the men, the traditional woman is not very much in leadership in terms of structure. The traditional woman is not trained to the level of the pastor who has a masters, so it's like breaking the convention along the thinking of many people and may be that's why I wasn't accepted so readily (Mutua 2002).

Interestingly, the pastor gave her husband numerous opportunities for involvement in the church. As for her, every time she asked for an opportunity to be involved, the pastor made empty promises. None of his good intentions have ever materialized. With the reality of the scenario above, Magdalene chose to be involved with the church in an indirect manner. She became the consultant for her husband whenever he needed any advice that required seminary education input. She was still hopeful for better days ahead in the church when she could do more. In the meantime, she had chosen to put her energies in her family as well as teaching a course at a seminary institution.

Melany (a composite of two women interviewed for this study) was a 38 year old lady, who lived in the city of Nairobi. For the past ten years she had faithfully attended a fast growing church in Nairobi. The church leadership had seminary training and had attracted the educated elite of Nairobi. The church combined the congregational form of government together with the Presbyterian form, thus giving the congregation opportunity to participate in major church decisions. One of the major decisions they had dealt with is the one on the involvement of women in church ministries. They finally settled the issue by allowing women as much participation as available. For this church, seminary education was a necessity for effective ministry.

So they were very supportive of the women and totally behind them as far as seminary training was concerned.

Melany was a professional who had great success in the corporate world, but she said she experienced a very dramatic calling of God in her life. She resigned her job, and took a period of one year in the church internship ministry to gain a first hand experience of what serving God was like. While in the internship programme, she sensed the need for being equipped for effectiveness. Melany discussed the issue of the need for training with the church leadership who allowed her to go ahead and gave her all the needed support. She said,

I wanted to be more exposed to theological education and I had started to do some inter-terms and to discuss a lot with the leadership. At that time, the whole issue of leadership development was being discussed. So I talked to them and told them that I would like to be trained to know some issues concerning theology in depth (Mutinda 2002).

Melany therefore felt that her greatest supporter was her church because they stood beside her all the way through her training and even had a position ready for her and a job description to assure her of a place of ministry in the church.

Upon graduation, she went back to her church and assumed the post of youth pastor. She said,

Something I am grateful for is that God took me to our church. I feel affirmed there. I have never had someone come and ask me why I'm doing ministry. I feel like I'm part of the team and I will never be singled out (Mutinda, 2002).

Melany was enjoying her ministry involvement. She sat in the leadership team of pastors and participated in making key decisions for the church. Her struggles were basically personal. Sometimes she felt young in the midst of the older people and would want to be hesitant in counseling sessions, but her pastor had encouraged her to depend on the Holy Spirit and go ahead in ministry. Her pastor was on the forefront in giving freedom in ministry.



Tyren was a married lady with two children. She was a graduate teacher and a very committed Christian who boasted of having an outspoken personality. Her husband was also a committed Christian working with a Christian organization. As a couple they had been missionaries to one of the islands off the Kenyan coast. They stayed there for five years doing evangelistic ministry among the Muslims. Prior to that they had been faithful members of a large church in Nairobi. Prior to going for ministry among the Muslims, they recognized the need for seminary education. Both of them studied with financial support from a Christian organization, which had employed her husband and was committed to preparing them for missionary work. When they were ready to leave for the island, they went to their church that commissioned them to the field as missionaries. While out there Tyren's form of ministry was through the school where she taught Muslim girls and influenced them in many ways.

After the five years, it was time to return to Nairobi. Her husband went back to his organization. Tyren tried to seek placement as a teacher in Nairobi, but that did not work. At the time they appeared in their home church, the church had began a training programme for the church members called, School of Ministry. They needed someone to direct it. So,

they were very happy that we came back and after two months, the church leadership decided to hire me on a part time basis. I had an interview but not a formal one, they just talked to me. Since they know my vision for training, they know my heart for church, and they know me as a person. They also knew that I was qualified with what the programme needed. Soon they also requested me to run the ladies program and that made me come in on full-time basis (Mungai 2002).

Tyren became the director of the School of Ministry as well as the head of the ladies ministry. She felt fulfilled. Her job gave her the challenge she needed to keep going. In terms of her place as a woman, she said,

You know they really respect me and we sit together in the pastoral team. I'm in the decision making of the church. If it is an issue on training, they consult me. They call me to help them in area that they are not strong in. They don't look at me as a lady. They look at my qualification (Mungai 2002).

Tyren is happy to be involved with her church.

Josephine was a 50 year old lady, the wife of a pastor, and mother to three grown children who are following the faith and commitment of their parents. She had an undergraduate degree in Bible. She was a member of a church that had been training women for the ministry for a long time. After her first degree, she served in her church for three years doing pastoral duties, such as taking care of women, youth, Sunday school and ministry among the men. She said she worked very closely with the pastor, in this case, not her husband. What drove her to seminary graduate education was the need for expertise because they had made a decision to move to Nairobi city and do ministry there. Until then, they were doing ministry in the rural area. Her husband also took graduate studies at the same time with her because the plan was that she was going to do ministry alongside her husband in a church they were going to found. As a couple, they felt drawn to minister in a slum area. It took them about one hour fifteen minutes to reach their slum church from their home, but they were committed to make all the trips there whenever necessary. They went there and did all the groundwork necessary for church planting. Josephine said,

The church we are serving we are the founders. We planted this church with my husband. I began ministry there before there was any local church. I began to have Bible study with women within the slum estate before we even had a church. These members of the bible study ended up to be members of our church (Muthambi 2002).

After graduation, they embarked on their mission as has been stated above.

Josephine was enjoying her ministry in the church where she felt highly appreciated.

She described some of the areas she had been involved in are,

I train the elders of our church, which is unusual with most churches. I think that working with my husband as the pastor has given me the opportunity to do more than other women. I have the privilege of taking the elders through the Old Testament and I have seen the fruits of my work. The elders in my church have no problem with me teaching them. I have seen a lot of support from them. At first I was scared and even asked my husband if I would really be accepted. But after teaching them for a while, the Lord has helped me win their confidence and we are in good terms (Muthambi 2002).

Josephine was very excited about the access she has in ministry. She attributed this access to the fact that the people had accepted her and her husband as true friends. She said,

I think this is a favor of the Lord. We have given ourselves to this church unsparingly. We go there and sometimes do work under very difficult conditions. We've been there for these people when they needed us. We've gone to their homes. In fact, we have become part of them and that has played a big role in the way they have accepted us. So I won't say it is all my doing. There is more my husband has done in the church as a pastor that has created this environment (Muthambi 2002).

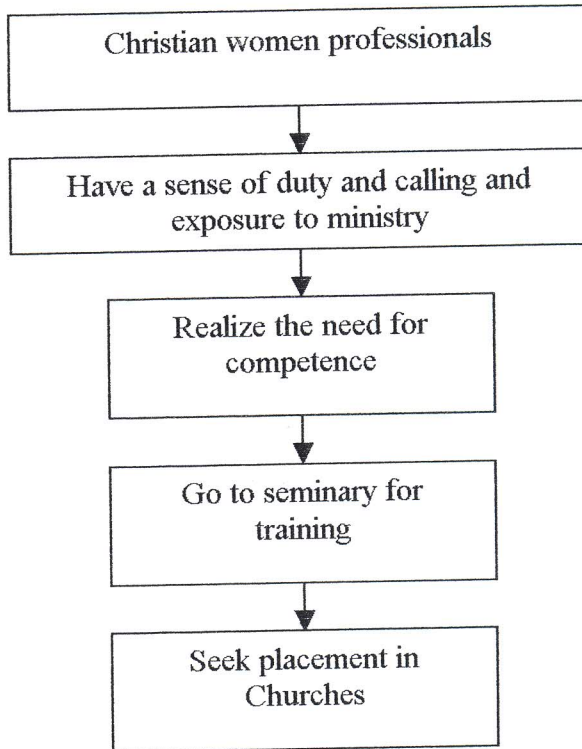
Josephine enjoyed the privilege of being in partnership with her husband.

### **The Commonalities among the women**

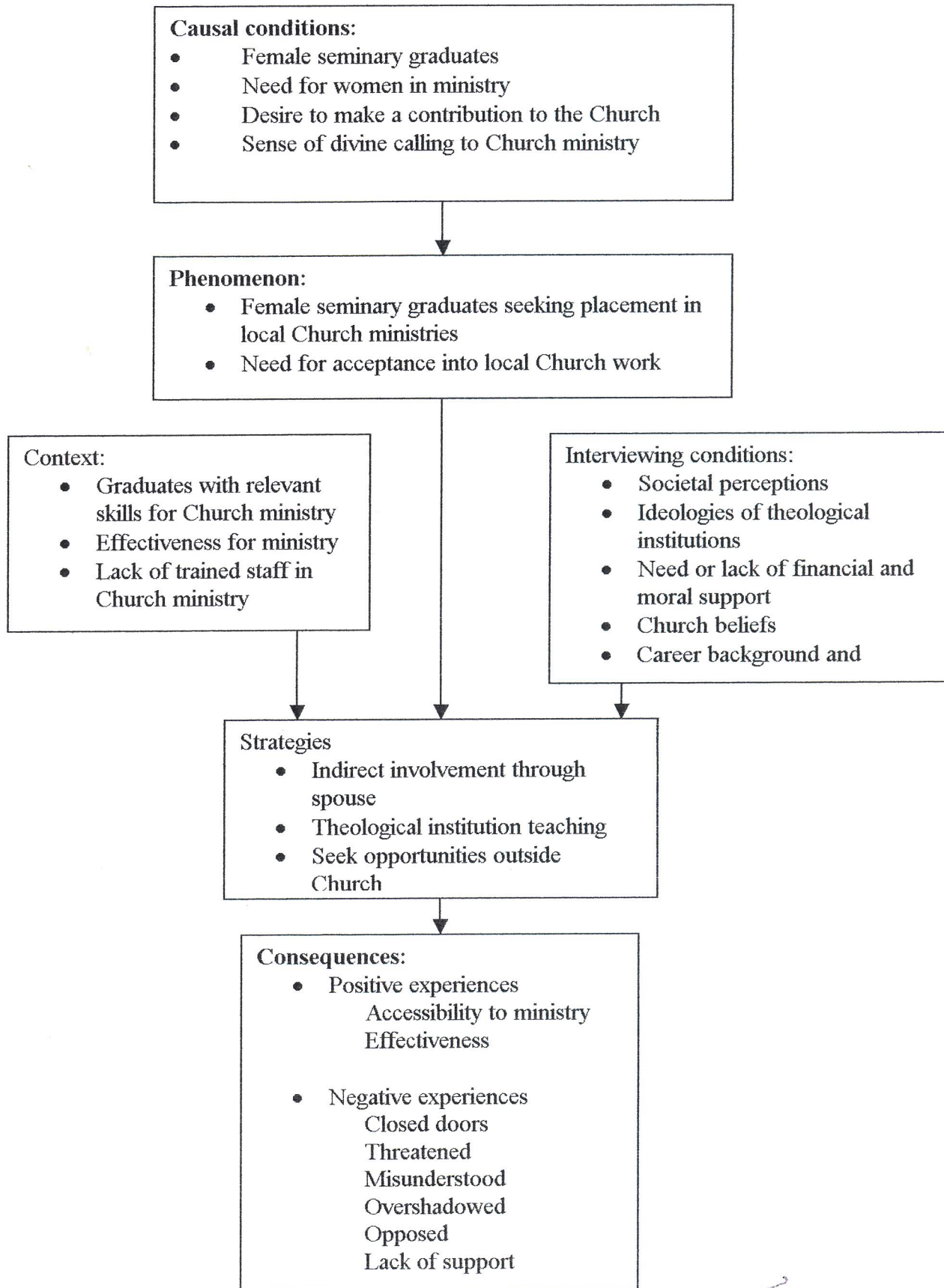
The participants described their experiences in the light of a background that they considered vital to their decision to attend seminary. First, all the women had a solid educational background with at least undergraduate training. They were all professionals in their own right. Second, all the female seminary graduates interviewed had a sense of duty towards their involvement in the churches. This sense of duty was directly tied to their Christian convictions and the desire to make a contribution to the work of the Church. Third, they had an exposure in Christian ministry, which served to reveal the inadequacy and incompetence that they all acknowledged. It is this feeling of incompetence that played a role in their attraction to seminary education. The choice to come to seminary assumed placement in local church ministries. Some of

them went to seminary independently of their churches while others sought the approval of their churches. It is this entry behavior that played a key role in the integration success. Figure 1 shows the sequence of events I have described.

**Fig. 1. Flow chart showing participants commonalities**



**Fig. 2. Showing the relationships between the factors responsible for integration experiences**



All the female graduates desired placement in local church ministries and acceptance into local church work. The reason behind this desire was four-fold.

- They had taken the initiative to prepare themselves for ministry and were graduates from seminary.
- They recognized the need for having women in ministry as part of the body of Christ.
- They had a desire to make a contribution to the Church of Christ as part of those who have enjoyed the benefits of redemption.
- They sensed a personal call of God in their lives and they wanted to be obedient to it.

These reasons become the source of the desire to dare seek seminary education and consequently, placement in the churches. There was a direct relationship between these causal conditions and the phenomenon, that is, the desire for placement and acceptance in local church ministries.

A look at the context reveals the properties of the phenomenon, that is, to display the relevance of the graduates to the task they desire. These graduates had the skills, which would make them effective for the placement they were seeking. They were convinced room could be created for trained staff in their churches.

On account of their relevance they were seeking ways of using their seminary education especially those whom the church had denied access to local church ministries. These appear as the strategies on the chart. Notice that these strategies have a direct relationship with the phenomenon because the phenomenon is the central piece that holds all these relationships. The intervening conditions are those factors that have hampered the achievement of the phenomenon. These are the forces that have worked against the women most of them being negative.

The consequences, then, reveal the experiences of the women. They have been two fold, namely, positive and negative. A closer look at the chart shows that there is a direct relationship between the causal conditions, in other words, the reason behind the phenomenon, which is the need of female seminary graduates for placement and acceptance in the local church ministries. The causal conditions are tied to their experiences, which appear as consequences. The consequences then determine the strategies.

### **Summary Statement of the Integration Experiences**

The fact that the female graduates had had an earlier exposure in Christian ministry, coupled with their desire to make a meaningful contribution to their churches, brought them to the realization that they needed seminary education. They assumed a seminary education would grant access to local church ministry. They did not think seriously about the question of integration. They enthusiastically prepared themselves academically to give the best to the churches. However when they were ready for placement in the churches some of them experienced a lot of integration difficulties. Others seemed to have great success. The extreme of the difficulties was closed doors to local church ministry, while the extreme of success was full access to local church ministry. The women developed integration strategies to cope with the challenges of integration into church ministry. Figure 2 on page 20, displays the relationships of different factors that led to the integration experiences of all the participants in a condensed form.

### Factors responsible for Integration Success and Integration Difficulty

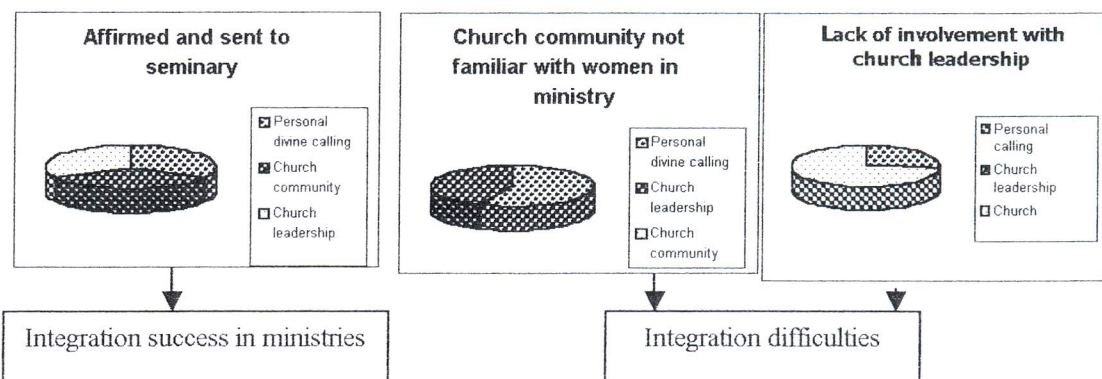
What emerged as the integration experiences of the female Seminary graduates could be summarized in two broad themes namely, positive integration experience and negative integration experience. These two themes are from now referred to as integration success and integration difficulty.

The female seminary graduates who experienced success attributed it to the following factors, namely, the sense of personal divine calling, the exposure of the church community to women involvement in ministry, the healthy relationship with the church community, and the role of the church leadership in recognizing their gifts and encouraging them to go to seminary for preparation.

Those who experienced integration difficulty attributed it to the fact that either the church community was not ready for them or they had not built healthy trust relationships, or the church leadership was not completely engaged in the whole process of preparing for church ministry with the implications of integrating into local church ministries.

The one constant for all the study participants was their sense of a strong calling to ministry, and that in obedience to this call they went to seminary to prepare themselves. The pie charts below represent the need for all the three factors.

**Fig. 3. Pie-Chart showing Integration Experiences**





Integration success demands the following three conditions:

- Personal divine calling was basic to the desire for involvement in ministry.
- Church leadership played the key roles of recognizing the women's gifts, recommending them for seminary training, and creating ministry opportunities for them.
- Church community was exposed to prior experience with women in roles of significance and be welcoming to the female seminary graduate. The community also had to do with the cultural environment; this speaks to the perceptions of the surrounding society. For example, if a seminary graduate was to return to a rural setting, which was still struggling with the conventional picture of a woman, as one who works only at home, then the integration difficulties were heightened. The same could be said of some urban settings. What was important was to ensure that the society was agreeable to the involvement of women in local church ministries and that they were willing to give their full support.

### **Statement of the Emerging Theory**

As I studied the experiences of the women and the factors that led to integration success or difficulty, I could see that the key to success or failure *was the function played by the church (leadership and community) as the sending agency to seminary with the realization that they would integrate the female graduates back into their sending churches.*

Out of this the following theory has emerged:

**If a seminary graduate woman was sent for theological training by a church, then the sending church facilitated her integration into church ministry. On the**

contrary, if a seminary graduate woman was not sent by a church, she experienced integration difficulties and consequently a lot of frustration because the church did not facilitate her integration process.

### Demonstration of theory from the lives of the female graduates

The following discussion seeks to confirm the emerging theory from the graduates' experiences. This section repeats some of the quotations already stated in the stories of the participants because of their significance in confirming the theory advanced above.

Joanna went to seminary on her own initiative. By that time she had already been exposed to Christian ministry. She had a commitment to spend her lifetime doing Christian service in the church. At the time she went in, she had just been married, and, consequently, joined her husband's church. That church did not send her to seminary. She admitted that she was a stranger in that church and yet she still hoped that she could participate in that local church because of her standing as a seminary graduate. This is what she reports in my conversation with her in answer to the question on what type of involvement she had in church.

I think out experience, now that I have taken so many years in my Church and I was not getting involvement and I knew I had to initiate that but in Church the set up is in such a way that I can't initiate, I have to wait for the leadership to recognize my gift and tell me to do this and that now that I was not being given the opportunity and probably because I joined the Church as a result of marriage, I didn't know how to go about the whole thing, I had now started losing hope of doing ministry in my Church (Mbogo 2002).

The above statement reveals the inaccessibility of ministry to one whom the church does not recognize their own. Joanna had been in the church for about five years while and yet ministry had been impenetrable for her to the point she has began

losing hope of ever penetrating. As time went by something interesting happened.

Joanna reported,

At the point that I began I was not involved so much although they knew I was in ministry but somehow even though we had made that clear to the Church leaders we were never given responsibility as such but then with time my husband would get invitation to speak to the youth and sometimes could extend that opportunity to me (Joanna 2002).

It is worth noting that despite the fact that as a couple they had informed the church that she was in seminary and had an interest in church ministry, she never got an opportunity to do ministry in church. It was only through her husband that she began to get opportunities to express her capability in the church. Joanna says the following concerning the church's attitude toward her,

I think men are really recognized in ministry than women, so when they called my husband who had been in ministry for a long time and husband extended that to me since he had been in ministry that's when they started recognizing that I was gifted (Joanna 2002).

Finally, it was only through her husband who was a male counterpart and had been a recognized member of the church that she got the opportunity to express her ministry gifts. Joanna's experiences illustrate the church's hesitancy to absorb seminary graduate women they do not know.

Another such case is Magdalene's story. She, too, went to seminary on her own initiative, but she cared at least to inform the church that she was going to seminary. Her church happened to be a rural-based church. The church did not send her. After graduation, Magdalene did not have a pleasant reception back. This is what she said,

I really wanted to be involved in the ministry in the church and especially in the area of missions. I had a foretaste when I was doing the Christian work with a Christian organization and I had felt because my husband is very much involved in the local Church I would also want to be involved and especially in training like in that area of missions (Mutua 2002).

Magdalene had planned to go back and be involved with her Church. After graduation things were different. She said,

I think I was rather disappointed, well I realized it was not easy to get into church ministry, in fact I realized the leadership only saw me in the light of supporting my husband in terms of being a good wife not in terms of being an independent minister.

I asked for an opportunity to do my homiletic practical, and the pastor kept saying he will give the chance which he never did and sometimes now I go through my husband and tell him that I can help in an area why don't you share with the pastor and it's like, oh the pastor says she can, she can, but not give the opportunity (Mutua 2002).

It is clear here that the pastor had not owned the training that Magdalene had as a gift to the church. Part of the reason is that the church did not send her to prepare to serve in their midst, but secondly, the church is in a rural setting where there is a struggle with the fact that Magdalene is a woman.

They, (the church community), are still wrestling with the issue of me being a woman. The fact that even preaching is done by men, rarely would you see a woman. I'm saying in terms of leadership it's still very much led by men and they still have that thinking pattern which has influenced acceptability of like a lady being involved. The traditional woman sits and listens to the men, the traditional woman is not very much in the leadership in terms of structure (Mutua 2002).

For Magdalene, the case was settled. She had two forces against her. First, the church leadership did not send her to get ready for the ministry; second, the rural image of a woman rendered her irrelevant. She had a lot of integration difficulties and settled for indirect involvement through the expertise contributions she made to her husband for the good of the Church.

On the contrary we have the stories of the likes of Melany who actually consulted with the church and was sent to seminary by the church. On her return from seminary she had great integration success. Melany was the youth pastor in her church. She said,

I think my greatest support was from my church and it begins more with the senior pastor, he believed in me. They have been very involved because I think our pastor has been very instrumental about my call. Just having their backup and believing in my decision and he liked to be involved financially (Mutinda 2002).

Melany's pastor supported her to pursue seminary education. The church was with her right from the beginning of her training. She was encouraged to forge ahead. After her graduation, she knew that she was going back to do ministry with the church. She was called in soon after graduation and was given her job description. About her return from seminary she said,

I read my job description. This was just last year after I graduated and they felt I was coming I should take the whole issue of women (Mutinda 2002).

Melany's experience reveals that the church owned her training project and prepared for her coming back. Her church was not surprised by the fact that she was a woman in ministry.

Josephine was another whose church actually trained women and absorbed them, giving them the opportunity to integrate into local church ministry. Josephine and her husband had a background at a church that had been involved in training women for local church ministries. At the time Josephine went to seminary she and her husband had plans to plant a local church in one of Nairobi's slum areas. In a sense, they had the mandate to direct the church, but that did not mean that they served without a team of elders. They had male elders who had the right to respond in any way towards her involvement in the church. Josephine says the following about her experience,

We are now serving in a local church setting in a slum area where I realized that my theological resources are really being used. Let me say for example one of the things I have done is to train the elders, which is unusual in most churches. I think that part of working with my husband as the pastor of the church, is sort of given the opportunity to be able to do more than other women would be able to do (Muthambi 2002).

In paying close attention to Josephine's experience again it is clear that the church recognized her seminary training. As a matter of fact she says that when the church leaders realized that Josephine and her husband would serve as a couple in the

city, they saw the need for seminary training. The church sent her to seminary and gave her the opportunity to do ministry in the local church even to the level of training the elders.

Tyren was known as a missionary by her church. She had taken up seminary training as a means of preparing for missionary work far out among the unreached people. In doing this she had the support of her church, which even released her with their blessings. After a period of five years she returned to her church and received a princely welcome. They took her on board and straightaway gave her ministry opportunities. She said,

When we came back they were very happy. The pastor had started this training program, and then in the pastorate they did not have anybody who was trained for this and that's why they decided to hire me. I had an interview but not a formal one, they just talked to me and having known my vision for training, known my heart for the Church, known me as a person, they found my qualification would be of purpose (Mungai 2002).

The fact that the church leadership knew Tyren personally seems to have won for her the battle of integration. Alongside that, she said that the leadership and the church community valued her contribution and presence in the office she holds in their church.

One thing I know is that they don't look at you as a lady, they look at your qualification, so if you are qualified they will take you, the other problem is that they can't hire a woman pastor because the constitution of the church doesn't allow that, but you can do the roles of a pastor, like for example if a pastor is counseling a woman, I'm like the lady pastor in the church because pastor refers the ladies to my office. I take up counseling, so I think I need them and they need me and it is very important to have a lady here, otherwise how do you discuss the inner issues of a woman, may be they don't want to tell a man (Mungai 2002).

Tyren felt wanted both by her church community and the church leadership.

This feeling of acceptance contributed greatly to her integration success.

It appears that it is imperative for women seminary graduates to have a good relationship with their churches in all the three dimensions highlighted by the pie charts (Fig. 3).

## CHAPTER FOUR

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Much of the literature on women in ministry addressed theological issues. For example, “God calls men to provide leadership or head-ship and he entrusts women with the role of assisting men.” (Grenz 1995, 180) In the past few decades people have wrestled with whether God is male or female. If he is male, then that presupposes headship and gives the male gender group superiority above the women. An even more interesting argument is the one that focuses on whether the atonement of Jesus was tied to his maleness. What these statements suggest is the place of a woman in the Church. The hottest debate has been fueled by certain Pauline writings such as 1Tim 2:8-15, 1Cor 14:33b-36 and 1Cor 11:2-16. These portions of Scripture are used as the basis to keep the women out of the roles in church. For centuries church-folk have debated about what these Scriptures mean. The pendulum has swung from one extreme of non-involvement to the other of total involvement. The question that has lingered on in the minds of people has been that of the place and the days of Paul. Some have dared to conclude that the instructions given in this Scripture portions were only relevant to Pauline times and should not be appropriated in our modern times.

R.T France summarizes the struggles of interpreting these texts by saying that,

It would be possible to conclude that Paul had no objection to the ministry of women but that it should not be exercised in our own situation today – or that Paul totally forbade it as a matter of principle but that his instructions apply only to his own context, not to our very different world. In other words, even if we could have solved the exegetical questions to the satisfaction of all concerned, the hermeneutical decisions, and with them the possibility of disagreement, still remain. (France 1995, 70)



Part of the reason for disagreement is the New Testament teaching on the priesthood of all believers. Since God has called all into his kingdom, both male and female, his gifts are available to all. 'For there is neither male nor female but we are all one in Christ.' Such Scriptures have given the female believers the confidence to know that God has bestowed his gifts of operation in the Church even upon women. They are, therefore, comforted in saying that all Scripture is God's truth and for any solid conclusions to be made about an issue, then the whole Bible should be put in perspective.

The women who have sensed the divine hand upon them have taken the challenge and gone to Seminary to prepare for the ministry in the Churches. Unfortunately, since this has been a male dominated area, some male students and faculty have not known how to relate to women in their new roles. Therefore the women have some challenges to face such as:

- Being unnoticed in class by teaching faculty
- Exclusion of women and their concerns from class content and presentation
- The influence of unconscious prejudices in grading female assignments.
- The need for consideration of women issues as part of the core program, for example, child raising.
- The lack of female faculty
- Conflict with the biases held by male students on the role of a woman in Church (Howe 1982, 169-174).

What the above reveals is that society is not comfortable with the transitions being made by women into an originally male-dominated sphere. What is interesting is that in carrying out this study, I realized that the primary issue as far as female involvement in the Kenyan church is concerned is not so much the doctrinal struggle

on what the Bible says about the place of a woman, rather it is the gender-stereotyped roles designated to men and women. This was expressed so well by one of the women I interviewed. She said, “my local church is also a very rural church where the traditional woman sits and listens to the men.” It is very clear that the roles played by the different sexes have found their way into our interpretation of Scriptures. Dewey affirms this by saying that,

The Bible on the whole reflects the andocentric mind-set and the patriarchal structures of the cultures in which it was composed. It has been used throughout history by dominant groups to legitimate the submission and oppression of slaves, women and colonial peoples. (Dewey 1989, 87-88)

In other words, Scripture clearly offers proof of being embedded in andocentric and patriarchal structures that have been oppressive to women. This discovery has led the women to come up with a varied number of responses in the face of the challenges being presented to them because of their involvement in the Church. One set of responses has been developed into **five hermeneutical responses** by Osiek as quoted by Dewey,

1. Rejectionist approach – this approach rejects the Bible as intrinsically patriarchal, even evil.
2. Loyalist approach – insists that the Bible has authority but as the word of God it cannot by definition be oppressive.
3. Revisionist approach – sees the patriachalism of the Bible as historical but not theologically determined. Message of the Bible can be separated from its patriarchal framework.
4. Sublimationist – Defines male and female as different but glorifies the feminine by stressing the Church as the bride of Christ.
5. Liberationist – Only that which is liberating for women and for all oppressed groups is revelatory and thus authoritative (Dewey, 88-89).

Responses such as the ones above display the complexity of the question of woman in the Church. It is my conviction that the era of the New Testament and the experience of Christ with the women in his days, speaks a different language to the modern woman. The confusion displayed by the hermeneutical options reveals the cry of the women for participation in the Body of Christ.

From my research findings, the women interviewed who had difficulty in integration, alluded to the fact that their struggle was more with the fact that women are not expected to be at high levels of education and in ministry with the church. Interestingly, husbands who had no seminary education were given access to ministry while their trained wives were denied opportunity. The participants also mentioned that their churches have not yet wrestled with the question of the place of women in the church. Consequently, there is no policy in operation. The default policy is maintenance of the status quo, which relegates women to the duties at home and denies them prominence in the church. In review in the literature I will attempt to do the following:

- Create the scenario of what is expected of a woman
- Show changing trends in education of the girl child and its implications
- Explain the Need for a response from the Church

As Radha Paul clearly summarizes the scenario,

From the womb to the tomb, the girl child seems to be experiencing rejection and devaluation that is expressed in different ways in different societies – a reality that defies all explanation, yet is supported and sustained by social, cultural and even religions attitudes deeply embedded in the human psyche (Radha 2000, 13).

Common knowledge in the African past history teaches that the birth of a female child was not been received as good news. There has always been preference for the birth of a male child. Once born the female child grew up with a mental

orientation that she is less than her male siblings. She grew up with a very low self-esteem that completely undermines her potential and kills her motivation to become a somebody in society. What society presents to her is images of women who are not even worthy of basic human rights. They are accustomed to less of everything e.g. less health care, less nutrition, less education, inferior tasks and responsibilities and all this is received with a non-protesting heart.

Some communities in Kenya such as the Masaai, and the tribes on the far northern part of Kenya, still hold onto their traditional values in view of the place of the woman. They have kept their women away from education because education is harmful to women and that it destroys morals and traditional values. Hence, the girl child remains illiterate, which later translates into women being relegated to the bottom cadres of the labor force and minimizes their involvement in other areas, such as, community life and even in the religious arena. Interestingly some findings from the World Bank reveal that the education of girls,

raises economic productivity, lowers maternal and infant mortality, reduces fertility rates and improves the health, well being and education prospects of the next generation, promotes sounder management of environmental resources and reduces poverty (Fellows 2000, 11).

With such findings there has been renewed interest and efforts to break the cycle of gender devaluation. The main access route being, education of women, which will greatly assist in the transformation of age-old convictions and attitudes towards the significance, and potential of the female gender in all arenas of life. In the recent past the situation of women and education has had a dramatic change despite the attitudes that are still prevailing on keeping them away from education. As Karani expresses it,

The traditional role of Kenyan women as mother and wife still holds, particularly in the rural areas where 87.5 percent of the women in Kenya live. But modernization as a consequence of economic, social, and cultural changes

initiated by colonialism and accelerated by independence has increased the scope and complexity of these responsibilities. (Karani 1987, 429-430)

The scope of things that a woman must do has increased on account of education. This increase produced other complications, like competing in the same job market with the male counterparts. It is this kind of complexity that has caused the difficulties in integration that educated women are encountering especially in sectors that are fully male dominated. One such area is the Church, where the decision to allow women to participate is solely in the hands of male leaders.

An exclusively male ministerial structure can hardly be said to constitute the fullness of the Church. An approach to ministry that takes into account African women's faithfulness to life and to God, as these are expressed by their lives, as qualities of the redemptive work of Christ truly reflects the Christian meaning of ministry as a sacrament of salvation through service and love. (Magesi 1996, 85)

In listening to the discussion of why the women have been excluded especially in the African context, what seems constantly emerge is the distortion that several of our cultures have created in the relationship between male and female. This relationship has defined the man as superior and the woman as inferior. We need to fully appreciate the fact that even the women folk in Church have some form of contribution to make.

Men and women were uniquely and differently created in order to fulfill the respective roles each gender has to play in life, for the benefit of the community. Unfortunately, women's role has been completely overshadowed and diminished in a male-dominated world. Men have always regarded themselves as superior to women and denied the latter equal opportunities in education and job security. Women have been grossly marginalized in society and in the Church. Years of oppression, suppression and isolation have left most women feeling inferior to men and being docile and submissive to their husbands and small sons. Even in the church, women have been relegated to second position in spite of their active participation in Church-related activities. To empower women, therefore the Church, especially in Africa, has to promote education for women and create job opportunities for them at all levels including the media. (Ishengoma 1996, 98)

The literature reflects that some women have been privileged to be pioneers in seminary education that is committed to preparing leaders for the African Church. As my study reveals, there are Churches that are still not ready for the women graduates, therefore the graduates are seeking other alternatives to ministry. This has developed some responses from these female Seminary graduates. I highlight two of them:

1. The emergence of feminist theology.
2. African women's theologies course.

One of the responses from the women is the emergence of feminist theologies. Feminist theologies are an outgrowth of recognition that women have received in the secular world through education and access to various areas of involvement in society. It gives special attention to women in the Church. "Feminist theology shapes Christian language about God and the world in and through all persons" (Chopp 1995, 81). Feminist theologians are critical of the patriarchy of Christian tradition and are seeking room for the contribution of women in the reinterpretation of theological symbols and doctrines. These theologians are calling for women thought forms in the theological arena under the premise that they are also God's creation with significant contribution.

A second note-worthy response from the female seminary graduates is the development of an African Women Theologies Course. The vision here is to equip African women with Theological grounding that enable them to assert their rightful place in the African Church and society. These are ecumenical seminars struggling with the issues that are a reality for women in the theological arena for example,

- Context of African women's theologies.
- African cultures as a source of African women's theologies.
- African women theologies and religion.
- Scripture as a source of African women's theologies.

The emergence of the women's theologies course is confirmation of the reality that women still have some difficulties to encounter before they can easily penetrate the Church arena to make their contribution. Such courses are a way of building their confidence and what is observable so far is the presence of women willing to subject themselves to abuses that go on in the midst of seeking roles in the Church and society. In South Africa, for example, the women have formed the Forum for Ecumenical Women Clergy (FEW) that is involved in empowering women clergy. They do this through seeking to engage in constructive dialogue with various stakeholders including the hierarchy of the male dominated Church, to explore methods and strategies that will empower trained women. (Mdhlela 2000, 18) The Center for Constructive Theology in South Africa has a Programme of Women in the Church and Society. Phiri quotes Musimbi Kanyoro, one of the leaders of the programme, who says that,

Together with other women globally, we are searching and trying out different possibilities to empower women and by so doing empower the Church. In our search, we enquire what kind of empowerment is needed for the liberation of women from particular oppression that defines them contextually. (Phiri 2000, 47)

Part of the solution towards the liberation of women in the Church is the change of attitudes by those in church leadership. Some men view women as possessing a low reasoning capacity and should not be allowed to penetrate certain domains.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

My findings revealed that there is need for a detailed form of discussion and relationship between the female seminary graduates and their churches. This will enhance the integration procedures by making it more successful. Female graduates who were sent by their churches experienced integration success on their return from seminary because the church had already acknowledged their gifting and recognized that the church had need of such gifts. In order to make them competent, the church had sent them to seminary fully aware and ready to use them on their return from seminary. For most of these women even their job description had already been written so were able to immediately fit into the church system. I, therefore, see that the future of female seminary graduates is deeply intertwined with the desires of the Church and its attitude towards graduate female involvement. It is vital that female graduates win the approval of their churches and patiently wait for the church to send them to seminary. They will have to ensure that they have a total backing from their churches even to the point of knowing what portfolio they are coming back to assume upon graduation. Perhaps the females who desire seminary education need to sit down and evaluate their standing with their Church. In doing this evaluation they are seeking to know if the church recognizes their potential and gifting. Only after affirming this can they take the step of getting into conversation about being seconded by the church for seminary education. From the onset, they must ensure that the church is agreeable to the idea of them going to seminary. If a church is not yet at the point of sending



women to seminary, some radical decisions may need to be taken if a woman strongly feels she is cut out for ministry in the church. She may need to seek out a church that is agreeable to graduate women participation so that after graduation she will easily integrate into the local church ministries.

Seminary institutions need to recognize the frustrations through which some of their female graduates go through. Some female graduates go through tremendous integration difficulties and even end up not putting to use such crucial training because they cannot work in the churches. In order to avoid this, seminary institutions need to partner with churches and encourage them to second and support women to seminary. By partnering the churches on behalf of the women, the seminary will ensure that the females coming into seminary have a church backing them and that the church is willing to employ them after graduation. If a female does not have the backing of a church admission can be processed if the female has a clearly laid out plan besides the church, for the use of her seminary education. Such an arrangement will go a long way in reducing the frustrations that some female graduates have experienced.

Churches need to be awakened to the reality of our day. That is, they need to realize that women have the potential to do ministry in the church setting. They are part of the body of Christ, with a strong sense of calling, and they have a desire to make a contribution to the church of Christ.

I recognized that for the graduates who had the most integration difficulty, the primary reason was the attitude society has towards the place of women. A typical African home sees the woman behind the scenes, at home, and never taking up the more public role of leadership. Yet the secular scene has gone ahead to affirm that women have capabilities that can be useful. We now have women lawyers and doctors just to mention a few. My challenge to the church is that they think through the

question of, “What are we going to do with the promising group of women who are emerging in the churches and have an interest in participating in the local church ministries?”

I sense that it is time the churches wrestled with the issue of the place of the woman. This will definitely stir up the doctrinal debate that goes along the woman question. As it is there is a more primary attitude with which we need to deal with. Are we ready and willing to support women as they seek to minister in churches? If the answer to this question is ‘yes’, then the churches should throw in all the affirmation they can muster, support the women in seminary and prepare to employ them.

We need to deal with the attitudes surrounding the women in our context propagated by some male leaders. It is time to encourage male churches leaders to think through the question of women involvement in their churches. Women ought to be accorded the necessary support to ensure that the contribution of women is received by society. If this does not happen, then society will suffer an imbalance of resources.

It is important to note that for many women who have already been exposed to rejection by society because of their gender, they have resorted to keeping the back seat as far as making their contribution goes. The women fear rejection and condemnation from a prejudiced society. For many of them have chosen to stop the fight with men and rather allow them to run the show in Church. The women themselves need to be awakened to building their confidence so that they can make their contribution.

### **Further Study**

A research study should be done to discover the experiences of female seminary graduates who experience integration success to reveal their experiences in ministry.

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#### **REFERENCE LIST FOR INTERVIEWS**

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- Mungai, Tyren, Christian Education graduate. 2002. Interview by author, 4 March, Nairobi. Tape recording. Nairobi.
- Muthambi, Josephine, Christian Education graduate. 2002. Interview by author, 15 March, Thika. Tape recording. Thika.
- Mutinda, J. & Wathome, J. (Melany), M.Div & M.A. graduates. 2002. Interview by author, 26 February, Karen. Tape recording. Karen.
- Mutua, Magdalene, Missions graduate. 2002. Interview by author, 20 February, Karinde. Tape recording. Karen.

## APPENDIX A

### LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT

To: \_\_\_\_\_

I have read the description of the research that is to be undertaken for Elizabeth Obat as part of the requirements for the Master's Degree in Divinity (Christian Education emphasis) at Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology, and I agree to participate by taking part in interviews she is required to conduct. It is clear to me that I am able to withdraw my consent at any time, provided that I make this known verbally or in writing.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Description of the Research for Potential Participants**

My research is interested in female seminary graduates. I intend to interview a number of women who are graduates from seminary. I am interested in discovering their experiences as they seek to integrate into local church ministries.

I believe that this research will give voice to the graduate women to express themselves. It will also give the church an opportunity to re-examine some of its positions on the legitimacy of women's involvement in church. Thirdly, this information will also be useful to theological seminary teachers who will be able to offer encouragement, affirmation and support to these graduate women.

I am hoping that you will be able to give me helpful information and any other assistance in the process of this research.

Thank you in advance for your willingness to assist me.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Obat.



## APPENDIX B

### INTERVIEW QUESTIONS GUIDE

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_

Year of Graduation \_\_\_\_\_

Field of Training \_\_\_\_\_

1. At what point in your life did you decide to go for theological seminary education?
2. What were the circumstances surrounding your decision?
3. Did you have any support?
  - a. From whom?
  - b. Was there a difference in support between men and women?
4. What role did your church have in all of this?
5. What were your plans after seminary?
6. Have you ever sought church involvement?
  - a. If no, why?
  - b. If yes, why?
7. What has been the church's response towards you?
8. a. Can you give an example from personal experience when you did feel church support?
  - b. When you did not?
9. In what are you currently involved?

10. How do you perceive your relevance for church ministry?

11. Do you have any strategies towards church involvement?

## VITA

### PERSONAL DATA

Name: Elizabeth Aoko Obat  
Date of Birth: 1 May 1971  
Gender: Female  
Marital Status: Married  
Nationality: Kenyan

### EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

NEGST	Master of Divinity (C.E) Candidate	1999 - 2002
Kenyatta University	Bachelor of Education (Arts)	1990 - 1994
Loreto High School, Limuru	Kenya Advanced Certificate of Education	1988 - 1989
Precious Blood, Riruta.	Kenya Certificate of Education	1984 - 1987

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Teacher	Ruiru High School	1996 - 1999
Campus Staff	Fellowship of Christian Unions (FOCUS)	1994 - 1995
Researcher	Oasis Counselling Centre	1994
Teacher	Mwangea Secondary School, Voi.	1993
National Students Secretary	Fellowship of Christian Unions, Kenya.	1992 - 1993
Secretary-Christian Union	Kenyatta University	1992 - 1994