

**The role and impact of women in worship, in the
Pentecostal churches of the Germiston District of Gauteng:
a ritual-liturgical exploration**

by

MOTSEPE LAWRENCE MOGOANE

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SUPERVISOR: Prof C WEPENER

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DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to the following:

- My wife Dabea, for her understanding, prayers and support in the completion of this project. May God's blessings abound in your life.
- Our four children Oneetswe, Gaadiege, Rorisang and Osenotswe, and our granddaughter Omphile. May you experience God's grace in your lives.

DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation, *The role and impact of women in worship, in the Pentecostal churches of the Germiston District of Gauteng: a ritual-liturgical exploration*, is my own work. All the sources that I have used or quoted have been acknowledged by means of complete references.

SIGNATURE

(M.L. MOGOANE)

DATE

ABSTRACT

The role and impact of women in worship, in the Pentecostal churches of the Germiston District of Gauteng: a ritual-liturgical exploration, is a qualitative study conducted in three township churches. The study seeks to answer the question “What are the factors promoting or hindering the role and impact of women in worship, in the Pentecostal churches (particularly in the AOG (BTG)) in the Germiston District of Gauteng?”

This study is premised on the assertion by Gabaitse (2015:2), that recent studies indicate that while the Pentecostal movement is potentially a liberating space, it still has ambivalent attitudes towards women; and that the church remains a space which subjugates women “even as it offers them a unique permission to speak.”

The theoretical framework of the study is Richard Osmer’s four core tasks of Practical Theological Interpretation, viz. The Descriptive task, the Interpretive task, the Normative task and the Pragmatic task.

The ritual-liturgical exploratory nature of the study demanded that the researcher should also deal with concepts such as worship, liturgy, ritual and women’s roles in the Old and New Testament worship. There was also a discussion of the concept of liturgy, which included liturgy as ritual, liturgy and tradition, and liturgical inculturation.

The data collection methods were qualitative focus group interviews with women, as well as semi-structured interviews with congregational leaders. Data from the focus group interviews was presented in narrative form and ‘emic’ view of the participants. Tesch’s descriptive method of open coding was adopted in presentation of the data, as well as the thematic structure of the focus group interview schedule.

The study revealed that the participants knew the roles played by men and women in worship. However, their roles were not significant in preaching in corporate services; as well as in congregational leadership positions, including being ordained pastors.

The study showed further that women’s commitment, unity, passion for children, cooperation and action-orientatedness were major factors in their success in most church activities. In contrast, some of the factors which accounted for their roles and impact being insignificant were, the culture of members of the church, church tradition and selective use of some texts of the Bible to bring women into submission.

Participants indicated that the pragmatic way-forward is to go back to proper study and interpretation of the Bible. While some participants proposed a top-down approach to change systemic issues of the church, others said in improving the situation the different leadership structures should consult with other church members in a bottom-up approach.

This study showed that while women are allowed to participate in some areas of worship in the AOG (BTG), the fundamental issues of patriarchy and gender equality with regard to preaching, ordination of pastors, as well as appointment into leadership positions of the whole church still need to be addressed.

KEY WORDS: Church, impact, gender, gender inequality, liturgy, patriarchy, pentecostalism, ritual, role, women and worship

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AOG	Assemblies of God
BTG	Back to God
BTG (TT)	Back to God Teaching Team
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Syndrome
NEC	National Executive Committee
NT	New Testament
OT	Old Testament
USA	United States of America

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Gender inequality is a differentiated phenomenon that affects various facets of human life, inter alia, spiritual, social and economic. Klingorová & Havlíček (2015:1) state that among the many important traits associated with the differentiation of gender inequality is religion, which itself is a fluid concept since it varies with respect to cultural and historical relations. They pose two questions with regard to religion and gender inequality. The first question is: How significant is the influence of world religions on gender inequality and the social status of women? The second question is: To what extent do religions determine the status of women and the level of gender inequality in religious societies?

This research study attempts to add to the responses already documented regarding these questions, albeit on a small scale since it focuses on Pentecostalism as a tradition in the Christian religion. Also, this study concentrates on Assemblies of God (Back to God) (AOG(BTG)) as a Pentecostal denomination among the many others. This study is not about gender inequality per se, but about the role and impact of women in worship in the above-mentioned church.

Research done on the role of women in religious institutions shows that while progress has been registered in this regard, it differs in various religious traditions. For instance, Attoh (2017:160), corroborated by Maskens (2015: 332) and Burchardt (2018:113), states that while Catholicism is steeped in orthodoxy and has not embraced the changing dynamics of gender roles, Pentecostalism has made some efforts in this regard by admitting women into the clergy e.g. as pastors and bishops. Bawa (2017:5) agrees by mentioning that the Pentecostal-charismatic movement has flourished by advocating a 'complete break' from the past, by allowing activists of women's rights to challenge orthodox interpretations of the Bible with their inherent subservience of women to men.

However, Gabaitse (2015:2), mentions that recent studies indicate that while the Pentecostal movement is potentially a liberating space, it still has ambivalent attitudes towards women. She asserts that the Pentecostal church remains a space which subjugates women "even as it offers them a unique permission to speak." I (hereafter referring to myself as 'the researcher') tend to agree with her with regard to the role of

women in the Assemblies of God (Back to God) church, which is the focus of this study. In this church, the role of women remains confined to, inter alia, activities such as women's services, children's ministry, participation in worship teams and other sub-committees of the church. Women are few in higher echelons of church leadership positions, as well as in the preaching or teaching ministry for the whole church. The researcher believes that this is linked to the role played by gender in religion, as stated by Klingorová & Havlíček (2015:3) that all world religions maintain male social dominance within societal structures. Hence my undertaking of this research study.

1.1.1 A brief history of the Assemblies of God (Back to God) church

Liphoko (2005:23-24) mentions that in 1908 Mr A.E. Turney and his wife started missionary work among the Pedi-speaking Africans and established a mission station in rural Doornkop, in Mpumalanga. This work was later known as Assemblies of God. While in the United States of America (USA), the Assemblies of God was formally established in 1914 in Hot Springs, Arkansas, it was registered with the South African government in 1917 by Mr Turney. In 1925, the Assemblies of God was registered as the South African District Council, to represent groups of American, British, and South African missionaries. Later, early missionaries were joined by other missionaries such as H C Phillips, (from England), John S. Richards (from USA) and C. Austin Chawner from Canada.

According to Mbamalu (2002:88-89), Nicholas Bhekinkosi Hepworth Bhengu, a son of a Lutheran pastor and a grandson of the Zulu chief, was "saved" in 1929 during a crusade conducted by an American evangelist from the Full Gospel Church. Later, he linked up with Mr H C Philips to work at the Emmanuel Mission in Nelspruit. Two years later, Mr Philips and the Emmanuel Mission, including Bhengu, became part of the Assemblies of God. In 1938, Bhengu was ordained as an evangelist of the Assemblies of God. Around 1939-40 as his ministry grew and became more effective, Bhengu, with a few Christian friends, started a movement which they called the South African Christian Campaign.

When Nicholas Bhengu, Alfred Gumede and Gideon Buthelezi perceived an anti-black development attitude from white leaders of the Assemblies of God, they confronted them at the 1945 Nelspruit conference. The segregation that ensued led to blacks, under the leadership of Bhengu, organising a young black Assemblies of God Church.

It was racism, rejection and political marginalisation which forced black South Africans to flock to the Back to God Ministry of Nicholas Bhengu. By 1950, when Bhengu's ministry gained popularity in Southern Africa, he adopted the name Back to God Movement (Mbamalu 2002:89).

At present the Assemblies of God (Back to God) [AOG (BTG)] church is about seventy years old and has a number of churches in Southern Africa. It is an affiliate of the Assemblies of God (AOG) worldwide. The Assemblies of God in South Africa is still somehow divided along the racial lines inherited from the Apartheid era. The predominantly Black section is called AOG (BTG), the mainly white churches fall under Assemblies of God (Group) while the mainly Coloured and Indian churches are called Assemblies of God (Association). So, the AOG (BTG) has a predominantly black membership.

In Gauteng Province, The AOG (BTG) has two major regions, namely Eastern Reef and Western Reef. The Western Reef region is made up of Soweto, West Rand, the Vaal area, as well as some areas in North West Province such as Potchefstroom and Orkney. The Eastern Reef region consists of three Districts, viz. Pretoria, Germiston and East Rand. This study was conducted in the Germiston District. This district has about twenty-six churches. Most of these churches are located in townships and very few in the cities. There are no rural churches.

1.2 FOCUS OF THE STUDY

1.2.1 Problem statement

The AOG (BTG), which was founded by the late Rev NBH Bhengu about 70 years ago, like most African churches of that time, was founded on a patriarchal tradition. In most cases, only men are appointed as ministers. Since members of the higher leadership structures, such as the National Executive Committee (NEC), are elected from ordained ministers, it follows that this committee also consist of men only. Local church elders and deacons are mainly elected from men. Furthermore, where the local church does not have elders and deacons, a church board or committee is elected, consisting mostly of men only, except where there are few spiritually matured men. Over and above church leadership positions, church worship services, including the sacraments such as the Holy Communion and water baptism are conducted by men only. This situation arose from the patriarchal cultural backgrounds of the members of

the church; as well as from a particular view and interpretation of the Scripture. For instance, the fact that the Levitical priesthood allowed only men to be ordained; and that Jesus Christ directly commissioned only men to make disciples, are some fundamental Scripture references used to perpetuate this view. As Klingorová & Havlíček (2015:2) state, the relationship between religion and culture is reciprocal, i.e. religious systems are locked in a circle of mutual influence with social norms and patterns of social organisation. They also conclude from their study, that the status of women in religion also reflects the status of women in society as a whole.

However, since the dawn of the democratic dispensation in South Africa with its concomitant values, among which are human rights, and racial and gender equality; together with the influence of other Pentecostal church denominations, this issue has been raised for consideration at different forums of the AOG church. While the section of the AOG (BTG) leadership concerned with doctrinal matters, i.e. the Back to God Teaching Team (BTG (TT)), has begun to address the situation, with the election of women deacons in some churches, the marginalization of women in leadership positions, preaching and teaching continues to be a matter of concern.

1.2.2 Research questions

1.2.2.1 Main Research question

What are the factors promoting or hindering the role and impact of women in worship, in the Pentecostal churches (particularly in the AOG (BTG)) in the Germiston District of Gauteng?

1.2.2.2 Sub-questions of the Research

- What are the current roles and impact of women in the in the AOG (BTG) churches in the Germiston District?
- What are the factors related to worship affecting the role and impact of women in the AOG (BTG) churches in the Germiston District?
- What are the causes of these factors that affect the role and impact of women in the AOG (BTG) churches in the Germiston District?
- What are the differences between the AOG (BTG) and other Pentecostal churches regarding the role and impact of women in worship?

- What ought to be done in order to enhance the role and impact of women in the AOG (BTG) churches in the Germiston District?

1.2.3 Rationale for the study

Gender equality and inequality, in general, have been widely documented from various perspectives. For instance, Inglehart and Norris (2005) in their book *“Rising Tide: Gender Equality and Cultural Change around the World”* set out to understand how modernization has changed cultural attitudes toward gender equality, and to analyse the political consequences of this process. Their core argument suggests that women’s and men’s lives have been altered in a two-stage modernization process consisting of (1) the shift from agrarian to industrialized societies and (2) the move from industrial to post-industrial societies.

From a religious perspective, gender inequality and the role of women in religion have been widely documented as evidenced by, among others, by Klingorová & Havlíček (2015), who confirm through the statistical analysis, that religion has a significant impact on the status of women in society. MacDonald (2006:135) states that while some areas of New Testament theology have been bracketed or deliberately avoided, this has not been the case with the study of women in early Christianity. She subsequently discusses how contemporary researchers especially feminist theologians, have investigated the roles of early Christian women.

Gabaitse (2015), Bawa (2017) and Attah (2017) recognise the shift made by Pentecostalism in improving women’s status and roles, when compared to other religious traditions, although they assert that much still needs to be done.

Regarding the AOG (BTG), research has been done about its founder Rev Nicholas BH Bhengu by among others Liphoko (2005) and Mbamalu (2002), while Mavuso, (2016) studied the social welfare role of the AOG (BTG) in Zululand. However, no research has been done about the role of women in the AOG (BTG) worship, especially in Gauteng. That is why the researcher saw it necessary to conduct this study.

It is anticipated that through this study, women will have an opportunity to speak about their roles in worship, and congregational leaders will be conscientized and informed about the perspectives of women regarding their roles in the church worship. This will

in turn enhance the understanding of congregational leaders on women participation in worship and other church activities as well as the challenges faced by women in this regard. Flowing from the findings and recommendations of this study, it is hoped that necessary improvements will be made so as to enhance the impact of women on various facets of church worship.

1.2.4 Purpose of the study

The purpose of a study entails the specific reasons for carrying out the research, depending on whether the research is basic, applied, formative, summative or action research (Osmer 2008:48). In this research study, the purpose is to explore the factors affecting the role and impact of women in worship services, in the Assemblies of God (Back to God) church. This is aimed at finding the root causes thereof and then explore ways in which the situation can be rectified. Consequently, this will maximise the participation of more members of the local church, because women account for greater numbers of the local church membership. This will eventually lead to stemming the negative influence of tradition on church worship and growth.

1.2.4.1 Aim

To investigate the factors affecting the roles and impact of women in worship, in the Pentecostal churches in the Germiston District of Gauteng.

1.2.4.2 Objectives

This research study will focus on the following objectives:

- To outline the historical and cultural origins of the AOG (BTG) worship that gave rise to the present situation regarding the role of women
- To describe the current roles and impact of women in the in the AOG (BTG) churches in the Germiston District.
- To investigate the significance of the role and impact of women in different church activities regarding worship, in the AOG (BTG) churches in the Germiston District.
- To examine the causes of factors that affect the role and impact of women in the AOG (BTG) churches in the Germiston District.
- To suggest ways of improving the role and impact of women in the AOG (BTG) churches in the Germiston District

1.3 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

1.3.1 Church

The term “church” in the New Testament, is from the Greek word “ekklesia” and refers to any assembly or local body of believers, or the universal body of believers. (Holman 2004, sv church). Citing Berkof, Lephoko (2005:7) makes a distinction between the visible church and the invisible church. The visible church may be defined as the company of the elect who are called by the Spirit of God, or as the communion of believers. The invisible church is a broader concept and may be defined as the community of those who profess the true religion.

However, in this study, the term church will be understood according to Scott (2017:33), citing Mannion & Mudge, to mean the visible community in which Christians come together for worship, prayer, communal sharing, instruction, reflection and mission. Therefore, the church can be viewed not only as one of the social institutions, but also as a shared form of life shaped by profound theological self-understandings. In explaining the essence and form of church, Scott (2017:35) mentions that the essence of the church is expressed by its permanent or unchanging factors, i.e. the people of God as “the one and only dwelling place of God”, which occurs through the Holy Spirit. The form of the church is understood by means of the changing and reformable factors and images of the church throughout its history.

1.3.2 Impact

Impact is a powerful effect that something has on a situation or person (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org>; accessed on 16/05/2018). In this study, impact of women refers to the effect or positive change that women can bring in the AOG (BTG) worship.

1.3.3 Gender

According to Parsons (2002:20), while the word “sex” represents biological differences between men and women, the word “gender” represents those qualities, activities, attributes, tendencies, social roles and virtues that are fabricated and made up in the midst of changing social practices and structures, which shape the lives of men and women within particular societies. Inglehart & Norris (2005:8) agree and refer to gender as socially constructed roles and learned behaviour of women and men

associated with the biological characteristics of females and males. They state further that in many societies, rigid gender roles determine the rights, resources, and powers of women and men, notably the division of labour in the home and workplace.

Ayanga (2012:85), posits that the term 'gender' evokes different emotions for men and women. For men it brings images of women who forcefully want to be like men, who want to take power from their rightful 'owners', while for some women it conjures images of fellow women who have lost direction and want to destroy their God-given status of submissiveness to their husbands. This then presents gender as one of the oldest power struggles in which people are involved in arguments and contests rather than in a discourse. In this study, depending on the context, the above definitions will apply.

1.3.4 Gender Inequality

According to Klingorová & Havlíček (2015:2), gender inequality is one of the most prevalent forms of social inequality and exists all over the world, with different effects in different regions. These differences are primarily due to cultural legacies, historical development, geographic location, and the religious norms predominant in society. Citing Ridgeway, they define gender inequality as culturally and socially created differences between men and women when both sexes do not have the same share in decision-making, and wealth of a society. Gender inequality is a disparity between individuals due to gender, an unfair treatment of individuals, unfair access to opportunities and unfair constraints based on their gender (Kajawo 2012:9). In this study it refers to unequal treatment and opportunities between men and women in worship.

1.3.5 Liturgy

According to Adam (1992:4-6), liturgy is a form or formulary according to which a public religious worship is conducted. It can also be defined as fixed or prescribed ceremonies, words and activities that are used during a public worship in a religion according to its particular beliefs, customs and traditions. However, this is a narrow sense of the term since liturgy can be defined as the joint action of Jesus Christ, the High Priest and his church for the salvation of human beings and the glorification of the Heavenly Father. He insists that it is incomplete or even mistaken to regard liturgy only in terms of what human beings can do to win divine favour, leaving out what God

does to the people in the whole phenomenon. Section 3.2 of this study discusses the meaning of liturgy, and its link to concepts such as ritual and tradition.

1.3.6 Patriarchy

According to Wood (2010:21), The word patriarchy derives from the Greek words — patēr (father) and archē (rule); and literally means the rule of the father in a male-dominated family. Patriarchy is a system in which women experience discrimination, subordination, violence, exploitation and oppression by men. In a patriarchal society, women are treated as inferior in all aspects of their lives; men control women's reproductive power, their sexuality, their mobility and even their economic resources. Attoh (2017:159) agrees and mentions that patriarchy is a broad network or system of hierarchical organization that cuts across political, economic, social, religious, cultural, industrial and financial spheres, under which the overwhelming number of upper positions in society are either occupied or controlled and dominated by men. Thus, any system that operationalizes an order that accords men undue advantage over women is considered patriarchal.

1.3.7 Pentecostalism

Asamoah-Gyadu (2013:1-2) describes Pentecostalism as the most globalised form of pneumatic Christianity, that belongs to a larger family of Protestant churches. It shares the traditional evangelical theological emphases on the authority of the Bible, the centrality of the cross, regeneration as a way to Christian salvation, and a call to holiness as the outflow of new relationship with Christ. By pneumatic Christianity he refers to any form of Christianity that values, affirms and consciously promotes the experiences of the Spirit as part of formal Christian life and worship. Pneumatic Christian churches include the many indigenous expressions of Christianity of non-western contexts, privileging the experiences of the Spirit even if they do not call themselves Pentecostal.

Ambrose (2012 :72-73) asserts that by nature, Pentecostalism is not monolithic. It has a variety of expressions and a range of theological positions. In this study, Pentecostal churches refer to churches affiliated to Assemblies of God, as well as other pneumatic Christian churches which ascribe to a Pentecostalism of western origins.

1.3.8 Ritual

According to White (2000:30), the term ritual can mean different things to different people. To some it can mean a rut of meaningless repetitions. However, liturgists use it to mean a book of rites or a manual of pastoral offices for baptisms, funerals, weddings and other official services of the church. Although the term “ritual” is used in such variety of ways, it has certain abiding characteristics. First, it is a behaviour, second it is repetitive and third, it is a purposeful social activity with a communal function.

Furthermore, Post (2015:4) states that a ritual is a more or less repeatable sequence of action units which take on a symbolic dimension through formalization, stylization, and their situation in place and time. While on one hand, individuals and groups express their ideas and ideals, their mentalities and identities through these rituals, on the other hand the ritual actions shape, and transform these ideas, mentalities and identities. Ritual makes use of ordinary physical material and events, but also of ordinary customs and traditions, based in culture and worldview in order to signify and point to spiritual realities, in general to the mystery of life. This is supported by Wepener & Müller (2013:3) who state that rituals are powerful “rites of passage”, pointing to a transition from the ordinary to the spiritual sphere, even from death to life, nourishing the day-to-day life of the individual and his or her community by acting on the different levels of being human.

Various kinds of rituals are important in the cohesive existence of human communities. For instance, while a birthday party can be referred to as a family ritual, Christian worship is also a ritual because it is a repetitive social behaviour which is purposeful in nature (White 2000:19).

1.3.9 Role

A role is a part played by a person/people in a particular social setting, influenced by their expectation of what is appropriate (Collins 1995. sv role). It can also be said to be a function or position that somebody has or is expected to have in an organisation, society or in a relationship (Oxford 2005, sv role). From a Developmental theory perspective, traditional societies are characterized by sharply differentiated gender roles that discourage women from working outside the home. However, the process of societal modernization has brought about profound transformation of sex roles. All

pre-industrial societies emphasized childbearing and child-rearing as the central goal for women, along with tasks like food production and preparation at home. In post-industrial societies, gender roles have increasingly converged because of a structural revolution in the paid labour force, in educational opportunities for women, and in the characteristics of modern families (Norris & Inglehart 2005: 29).

In this study, the role of women refers to the part played by women in the AOG (BTG) church worship.

1.3.10 Women

A woman (Singular form for women) is a female adult human being (Oxford 2005, sv woman). From a Biblical point of view the concept of woman came from the man Adam when he acknowledged the woman as his offshoot, having a nature like his but having her own unique existence. The Hebrew term for “man” as used in Genesis 2:23 is “*ish*” and is contrasted with the Hebrew for “woman”, which “*ishshah*” which means wombman, literally meaning man with a womb (Holman 2004, sv woman). This is a definition of ‘woman’ from a biological perspective, and contrasts with the definition of woman from a gender perspective.

Presenting the Biblical picture of ‘woman’, Heine (1987:17) asserts that a woman is the first and often only one to blame for the coming of sin into the world. She is covetous and easily led astray and constantly succumbs to temptation; she brings death to herself and spends her lifetime in subjection to a man.

For this study women will mean female adults twenty-one years of age and older

1.3.11 Worship

In simple terms, worship can be said to be human response to the self-revelation of the Triune God (Holman 2004, sv worship). However, worship is a difficult term to define, hence the researcher finds it appropriate to state how several people describe it, as cited by White (2000:22-25): Martin Luther says worship is a phenomenon whereby our Lord speaks to us through his word and we respond to him through prayer and songs of praise. That is, it is a duality of revelation and response, both of which are inspired by the Holy Spirit. John Calvin describes worship as consisting of a few ceremonies that unites us with God and show that Christ is present among us. These ceremonies are the preaching of God’s word, the sacraments, the holy assemblies

and the whole external government of the church. Thomas Cranmer mentions that worship is to be directed at God's glory and honour while it reduces people to the most perfect and godly living i.e. the glorification of God and sanctification of humanity. While incorporating the other views as stated above, this study will be more inclined to John Calvin's definition of worship.

1.4 LITERATURE REVIEW

1.4.1 Theoretical framework

This study explores the role and impact of women in the AOG (BTG) worship in the Germiston and district within the framework of Richard Osmer's four core tasks of practical theological interpretation. These tasks are: the descriptive, the interpretive, the normative and the pragmatic tasks. The rationale behind the choice of this framework is that it can guide our interpretation and response to situations that we encounter in a congregation.

Furthermore, this study is based on gender theories, viz. the three perspectives of the ethics of gender as mentioned by Ritzer (1992:317-342), i.e. gender difference, gender inequality and gender oppression.

1) Gender difference: From a gender difference perspective, feminist theorists attempt to answer the question of 'what about women' and how women's location in, and experience of, social situations differ from that of men. The central theme in gender-difference theories is that women's inner psychic life is different from men (Ritzer 1992:319).

2) Gender inequality: Gender inequality theories identify that, not only are women's location and experience of social structures different from those of men, but that they are also unequal to men (Ritzer 1992:319).

3) Gender oppression. Power is the key variable in the theory of gender oppression. Gender oppression theories argue that women are not equal to men and that women are actively oppressed, subordinated, and abused by men (Ritzer 1992:319).

Other literature concepts to be discussed will include women, patriarchy and religion. In this section the researcher discusses patriarchy in world religions, the role of women in major religions of the world (i.e. Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and

Christianity). Thereafter, the researcher focuses on women in Old Testament, and the New Testament worship.

Furthermore, this study deals with the equality of men and women, in prayer in prophesying and receiving God's revelations; as well as the role of women in teaching their children.

Since this is a ritual-liturgical exploratory study, the concept of liturgy is also dealt with, focusing on the meaning of liturgy, liturgy as ritual, liturgy and tradition, liturgical Inculturation, tradition and the process of liturgical inculturation, invention of tradition and the relationship between liturgy and tradition.

One of the concepts that feature extensively in this study is worship. So, the researcher considered it necessary that it be covered in its various components such as the meaning of worship and its evolution. Also, the worship styles and characteristics of churches with vital and faithful worship were considered.

To conclude the section on literature review the researcher discussed the history of worship in the AOG (BTG), women in the AOG (BTG) leadership positions and their roles in various activities of the church.

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.5.1 Research design

A research design is a plan or blue-print of how a researcher intends to carry out the research. Three principles can be used in classifying research designs: First, is that the design is either empirical or non-empirical. Second, is that either primary empirical data (i.e. the researcher collects new data through interviews or observations) or secondary empirical data sources (i.e. the researcher uses data that is already available) are used; and third is that the data source is either numeric or textual (Babbie & Mouton 2001:74). This is a qualitative empirical study that employs primary textual data because data collection was done through focus groups and individual semi-structured interviews.

1.5.2 Research setting

This study was conducted in three township churches located in Ekurhuleni Metropolitan municipality, one of the three metros in the Gauteng Province. According to the delimitations of the AOG (BTG), this area is called Germiston District because

of its proximity to this town. This district is part of the bigger region called Eastern Reef, which spans the greater part of Gauteng, and some parts of Mpumalanga, Northwest and Limpopo provinces. The researcher has chosen this area because he is a pastor in one its churches. Moreover, the researcher thought that his relationship with some church members in this district would enhance the smooth running of the study.

1.5.3 Data Collection Methods

Two techniques for data collection were employed to enhance triangulation viz. qualitative focus group interviews of women, and qualitative semi-structured interviews with key informants such as congregational leaders. The need for triangulation is for the researcher to gather evidence from multiple sources in order to address the research questions from multiple sources (Baker 1994:244). According to Patton (1987:60), this is called methodological triangulation since it employs multiple data collection methods to study a single problem. Furthermore, Patton (2002: 555) argues that the logic of triangulation is premised by the fact that no single method ever solves a problem with rival explanations.

1.5.4 Sampling Techniques

The researcher used purposive sampling to maximise the inference quality and transferability of the study. The sampling was purposive because the participants were selected on the basis of what the congregational leaders regarded as characteristics of a representative sample (Bless & Higson-Smith 2000:92). Furthermore, for qualitative semi-structured interviews, key informants were selected from members who are regarded as knowledgeable with regard to AOG (BTG) worship.

1.5.5 Data Analysis

In this study, a qualitative data analysis was employed. This entails methods of examining social research data without converting them into numerical format (Babbie 2005:387). The qualitative data from the focus group interviews and semi-structured interviews with congregational leaders was analysed using thematic data analysis techniques. In analysing data from the focus group interviews, Tesch's descriptive method of open coding (as discussed by Creswell (2009:185 -186)), was adopted.

1.5.6 Units of analysis

According to Baker (1988:483), units of analysis are those entities whose characteristics are the focus of the study. These may, inter alia, be individuals, groups, organizations and institutions. For this study, units of analysis are the whole group of 23 women participants in focus group interviews, and the three congregational leaders.

1.5.7 Criteria for measurement of quality

Trustworthiness and authenticity are the two criteria for measurement of quality applied in this study. Trustworthiness can be described as an approach by which a researcher can persuade his/her audiences that the findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to. It entails the notions of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 276-278). On the other hand, authenticity means giving a fair, honest and balanced account of social life from the viewpoint of someone who lives it every day (Neuman 2006:196).

1.5.8 Ethical considerations

Among the issues of ethical considerations in this study are voluntary participation, informed consent, as well as confidentiality and anonymity, as mentioned by Sieber (2009:110-111,123-124) and Babbie & Mouton (2001:521-524). Also, ethical clearance was obtained from the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Theology and Religion of the University of Pretoria. Regarding anonymity, only the names of the churches and names of participants are anonymous. However, the region and the district are known, as appearing in the title of this dissertation and letter of permission to conduct the study.

1.5.9 Delineation of the study

This study focuses on the role and impact of women in worship, in the Assemblies of God (Back to God) churches, in the Germiston District of Gauteng Province only, and can therefore not be generalized to other church denominations, districts or provinces.

1.6 OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1: As the introduction of the study, chapter one creates the context for the study. It lays the groundwork of what the study is about, regarding inter alia,

background information, focus of the study, rationale, purpose, key words, research design, ethical considerations and limitations. The literature review and research methodology in this chapter are only overviews. The details are in chapters 2 and 3, and chapter 4 respectively.

Chapter 2: Theoretical framework of the study: Richard Osmer' four tasks of Practical Theological interpretation as well as Gender theories

Chapter 3: Liturgy, worship, and the role and impact of women in Old and New Testament worship; the equality of men and women; history of worship in the AOG (BTG); and women in the AOG (BTG) leadership positions.

Chapter 4: Detailed discussion of the research methodology, including research instruments. Limitations of the study as well as ethical considerations.

Chapter 5: Presentation and analysis of data from the empirical study, as well as interpretation and discussion of the findings based on research question(s) and other empirical research themes.

CHAPTER 6: Summaries and conclusions of the findings of the study, as well as implications for future research and recommendations.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This section frames this study within Richard Osmer's four tasks of practical theological interpretation. Richard R. Osmer (2008) explores four questions that can guide our interpretation and response to situations that we encounter in a congregation. These questions are: First, what is going on? Second, why is this going on? Third, what ought to be going on? and fourth, how might we respond? These questions focus on the four core tasks of practical theological interpretation, namely the descriptive-empirical task, the interpretive task, the normative task and the pragmatic task respectively. This is partly in line with Don Browning's four steps of fundamental practical theology. Browning (1991:4), is of the view that the process of theological reflection unfolds in the following sequence: Firstly, when we encounter a crisis we begin to answer questions about our theory-laden practices. Secondly, we take time to describe our practices so as to understand the questions raised by the crisis. Thirdly, we take our questions to our normative Christian texts, and start a critical conversation between our practices and our traditions. Fourthly, we develop, defend and deploy new interpretations of our normative texts, and consequently affect our tradition and practices.

Pieterse (2017:37-42) states that Osmer's hermeneutical approach has a great influence on contemporary theologians, particularly in South Africa. Among these theologians he mentions, Schoeman of the Department of Practical Theology at the University of the Free State; Cas Wepener, Maake Masango and Johann Meylahn of the Department of Practical Theology at the University of Pretoria, as well other theologians at Unisa. According to Pieterse (2017:38), the advantage of using Osmer's method is that it bridges the sub-disciplines of academy and ministry, and the interpretation of the interconnectedness of ministry.

In this material the researcher discusses how this research titled "The role and impact of women in worship, in Pentecostal churches of the Germiston District of Gauteng: a ritual-liturgical exploration" could be positioned within the framework of the questions stated above. With regard to this research, descriptive task of practical theological interpretation considers the problem of the role and impact of women in the

Assemblies of God (AOG) Back to God (BTG) worship as well as the fundamental elements of the research design pertaining to this problem.

The interpretive task deals with the need for practical wisdom in dealing with the causes of non-optimal impact and role-playing of women in church worship. This section deals also with the elements of Symbolic Interactionism as one of the theories that could be considered in the Communicative Model of Rationality.

The next section entails the Normative task of practical theological interpretation. In this section, the notion of the need for spirituality of prophetic discernment, on the part of congregational leaders is discussed. Furthermore, other aspects considered are the ethical interpretation approach to the normative task; and an approach to normativity, which focuses on transforming practice.

Lastly the Pragmatic task of practical theological interpretation is discussed. In this section, the researcher reflects on the three types of leadership and thereafter suggests that transactional leadership would be more suited as an agency in how to go about addressing the issue of role and impact of women in the Assemblies of God Back to God worship.

To complete the theoretical framework of the study, gender theories are discussed. Then follows discussions on liturgy, liturgy and tradition, liturgical inculturation, worship, religion and gender inequality, women in the Old Testament worship and New Testament worship, history of worship in the AOG (BTG), as well as women in the AOG (BTG) leadership positions.

2.2 RICHARD OSMER'S FOUR CORE TASKS OF PRACTICAL THEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION

2.2.1 The descriptive empirical task (What is going on?)

The descriptive empirical task of practical theological interpretation involves gathering information that helps in discerning patterns and dynamics in particular episodes, situations and contexts. While it may be helpful to gather information about episodes and situations in an informal way, it is also useful to gather this information in a more systematic and disciplined manner. Such information may be about the congregation's culture, building a demographic profile of new members or families joining the church

or evaluating an adult education programme (Osmer 2008:4-6). In the case of my study, the descriptive task involves describing the problem of the perceived or actual marginalization of women in the Assemblies of God (Back to God) worship.

The descriptive empirical task of practical theological interpretation according to Osmer is in line with Browning's (1991:42) first step of fundamental practical theology, i.e. is Descriptive theology. This step entails the place of theology as part of the full task in description of situations, just as is the case with other secular disciplines such as psychology, sociology, economics or anthropology. The task of Descriptive theology is to "describe contemporary theory-laden practices that give rise to practical questions that generate all theological reflection" (Browning 1991:47). Descriptive theology aims at making thick (in-depth) descriptions of situations i.e. to describe a question in all its situated richness. This helps congregational leaders to have a good grasp of the situations and questions pertaining to their congregations and to be able to provide appropriate practical theological answers (Browning 1991:94-95).

Descriptive theology uses the hermeneutical methodology in that it entails a dialogue between the researcher and the subjects. The researcher brings his/her pre-understanding into dialogue with the actions, meanings and pre-understandings of the subjects. It can use all of the human and social sciences such as sociology, psychology, theology and cultural anthropology which, according to Browning (1991:110) is a combination of ethnography and literary symbolism. This is because their explanatory foci can add power to the insights of descriptive theology (Browning 1991:112). For example, Browning (1991: 47-48) asserts that descriptive theology would be close to sociology if sociology were conceived hermeneutically, i.e. if the sociological task is viewed as a dialogue or conversation between the researcher and the subjects being researched.

(a) Osmer's fundamental elements of research design

Osmer (2008:47-48) mentions that to be able to know what is going on, one might conduct a research for various reasons e.g. to evaluate programmes or plan new ones; to deepen understanding of a crisis in the life of an individual, church or community; to develop a better understanding of the culture or the local context of the congregation; and to enhance the understanding of the different age groups in the congregation. This study explores the culture and local context of the church [(AOG

(BTG)] in order to understand the role of women as a church group. To do this, Osmer further states that research projects have to be designed to consist of the following fundamental elements, viz. purpose of the project, strategy of inquiry, research plan and reflexivity.

Purpose of the project: This entails the specific reasons for carrying out the research, depending on whether the research is basic, applied, formative, summative or action research (Osmer 2008:48). In the case of this research, the purpose is to explore the role and impact of women in worship. This is born out of the need to increase the overall impact of the church, by enhancing the role and impact of women in church worship, since they constitute a larger section of the church.

Strategy of inquiry: The strategy of inquiry is about the particular methodology guiding the research project, such as case study, ethnographic research, grounded theory, and phenomenological research. These strategies fall under two broad categories, viz. quantitative and qualitative research paradigms. (Osmer 2008:48-49). The strategy that the researcher used in this study is a qualitative research paradigm. According to Patton (1987:20), this perspective attempts to picture the empirical social world (to explore the role and impact of women in worship in the AOG (BTG)) as it actually exists to those under investigation (women and congregational leaders), and not necessarily as the researcher might imagine it to be.

Research plan: This entails how the project will be carried out in a specific time frame, who will conduct the research, who will be investigated and methods of gathering data (Osmer 2008:53).

(i) Population and research setting: This research was conducted in three Assemblies of God township churches in the Germiston District. The participants were a total of 23 women. While the researcher had planned to have ten participants in each focus group, only six, eight and nine participants showed up for the interviews in the three churches respectively.

(ii) Research methods: The researcher conducted three focus group discussions with women; and three structured interviews with congregational leaders. Two were church elders and one a member of the youth committee. Flick (2006:150-169) mentions several types of interviews, viz. the focused interview, the semi-standardized (semi-

structured) interview, the problem-centered interview, the expert interview and the ethnographic interview. This research adopts a focus interview method with women, as well as semi-structured interviews with congregational leaders.

According to Osmer (2008:61-62), interviewing is an important part of data collection in qualitative research, and therefore needs a skilled interviewer. A good interviewer is a good listener who attends carefully to the verbal and non-verbal responses of the interviewee, being able to guide the conversation without controlling it.

(iii) Research team: In this research project the researcher was the facilitator in the interviews and the researcher's assistant helped with the organisation of the venue and recording of the proceedings. Since the research participants also helped the researcher in his endeavour of knowledge production, they also formed part of the research team.

(iv) Sequence of steps in executing the research plan:

- **Data collection:** The focus group interviews and the semi-structured interviews were tape-recorded and the proceedings of the interviews written down.
- **Data transcription:** The tape recordings were transcribed as soon as possible after the interviews so as to enhance remembering as much information as possible.
- **Data analysis and interpretation:** Analysis and interpretation of data were done with reference to reviewed literature and data that had been collected.
- **Performing research findings:** The findings were made by deducing from the analysis and interpretation of data compared with findings of other researchers according to reviewed literature.

Reflexivity: In empirical research there are challenges of representation (the problem of direct correspondence between a phenomenon and its scientific representation) and legitimisation (the use of classical experimental criteria such as validity, reliability and generalisability to judge the adequacy of scientific research). Therefore, social scientists have to be reflexive about the choices and assumptions guiding their work. That is, they have to reflect on and articulate for others, their own perspectives on issues such as the nature of reality (ontology), how reality is known (epistemology) and philosophy of science. Also, scientists have to reflect on the claims that science

can make and how they are justified; as well as the social values that science can serve. These are called meta-theoretical assumptions informing the project (Osmer 2008:57-64).

2.2.2 The interpretive task (Why is this going on?)

The interpretive task of practical theological interpretation involves drawing on the theories of the arts and sciences so as to better understand and explain why certain patterns and dynamics are happening in particular situations and contexts (Osmer 2008:4). Also, crucial to the question ‘why is this going on?’ is the notion of wise judgment (prudence or practical wisdom). This is the capacity to interpret episodes, situations and contexts by recognizing the relevant particulars of specific events and circumstances, discerning the moral ends at stake, and determining the most effective means to achieve these ends (Osmer 2008:84).

As Osmer (2008:100 -101) states, when faced with a situation as a researcher, one has to draw on a range of theories pertaining to the situation and then judge these theories with regard to their appropriateness and viability in the particular situation before choosing any of them to guide the research. This is termed the Communicative Model of Rationality. To do this, congregational leaders will need the spirituality of sagely wisdom. According to Osmer (2008:82-84), a spirituality of sagely wisdom is a quality of a person or a congregational leader to be able to guide others wisely such that they are able to make sense of their circumstances and their world. It is a continuum which spans thoughtfulness (the quality of being considerate in treating others and being insightful about matters of everyday life) on one extreme, to theoretical interpretation (the ability to draw on the theories of the disciplines so as to better understand and explain why certain patterns and dynamics are happening in particular situations and contexts) on the other extreme. Between these two extremes is wise judgement. Wise judgment is the capacity to interpret episodes, situations and contexts by (1) recognising the relevant particulars of specific events and circumstances, (2) discerning the moral ends at stake in the situation and (3) determining the most effective means to achieve the ends given the constraints and possibilities of the particular time and place. In this research project the researcher attempted to understand the causes of the present status and roles of women in the AOG (BTG) church worship in the Germiston District.

2.2.3 The Normative Task (What ought to be going on?)

Osmer (2008:4) states that in the normative task of practical theological interpretation, theological concepts are used to interpret particular episodes, situations and contexts, constructing ethical norms in order to guide our responses and learning from “good practice.”

Furthermore, in order to tell what ought to be going on, there will be a need for spirituality of prophetic discernment. Firstly, this entails drawing on specific theological traditions to critique popular and official theologies and the way of life justified by these theologies. Secondly, it involves interpreting specific social conditions, events and choices for the individual or community at a particular moment in time. Moreover, the spirituality of prophetic discernment will be evident when those dealing with the problem seek God’s guidance amidst the circumstances, events and decisions of life, weighing the evidence at hand before reaching a conclusion (Osmer 2008:135 -137). This should be done, as (Osmer 2008:130-132) mentions, by way of theological interpretation (a style of theological reflection that does not focus on the interpretation of biblical text and Dogmatics, but rather on the interpretation of present episodes, situations and contexts of human life); the use of ethical norms to reflect on and guide practice, as well as good practice (a model of practice from the past or present with which to reform present actions). This has a link with, Browning’s second step of Fundamental Practical Theology. According to Browning (1991:49), Historical theology is understood as putting the questions emerging from the theory-laden practices to the central texts and monuments of the Christian faith. Historical theology engages with the question: “What do the normative texts that are already part of our effective history really imply for our praxis when they are confronted as honestly as possible?” That is, in this step we consider the questions raised by our descriptive theology to the word of God and subsequently ask (in a way that is as open-minded, frank and honest as possible) what the scriptures really teach concerning our questions. This means that Historical theology is guided by the questions that emerge from descriptive theology.

In this step disciplines such as Biblical Studies, Church History and the History of Christian Thought are important because they assist in understanding our praxis and the theory behind it.

Furthermore, another aspect to be considered by congregational leaders is that congregants should understand moral life as best characterised in terms of responsibility rather than obedience to moral laws. This responsibility is composed of four elements informed by interdisciplinary dialogue with the sociological perspective of Symbolic Interactionism. These elements are:

- All our actions are responses to actions upon us
- Our responses are shaped by our interpretations of these actions.
- Our responses are temporal in nature, stretching backward to the history of prior interaction and anticipating future responses to our present actions.
- Our responses are shaped by the community of interpretation with which we identify (Osmer 2008:140).

Understanding responsibility in this way offers general guidelines to the Christian community to respond to events in ways that are fitting i.e. Since God is acting in all actions upon us, we have to respond to all actions upon us as if responding to God's actions (Osmer 2008:140).

There is also the ethical interpretation approach to the normative task. It is important to develop ethical principles, guidelines and rules in the normative task of practical theological interpretation, not as a way of importing ethics into problematic situations of present practice but because values and norms are inherent as part of present practice (Osmer 2008:149).

Furthermore, Osmer (2008:154) mentions an approach to normativity, which focuses on transforming practice. He states that sociologists have struggled to conceptualize the relationship between structure (the way social institutions - such as the church – shape people's lives) and agency (the active role that individuals and groups play in interpreting their experience and their freedom to respond to social institutions in a variety of ways). Therefore, in an attempt to overcome this challenge, practice can be conceptualized as mediating between structure and agency - as argued by sociologists Anthony Giddens and Pierre Bourdieu.

In this study the researcher compared the role of women in worship in the AOG (BTG), as mentioned by research participants, with literature regarding gender equality in

religion, roles played by women in major religions of the world, as well as women's roles in Old and New Testament worship.

2.2.4 The Pragmatic Task (How might we respond?)

The pragmatic task of practical theological interpretation, speaks to how we might respond in episodes, situations and contexts. It involves determining strategies of action that may influence situations in a desirable way. It also refers to ways of entering into a reflective conversation that comes as a result of the strategies being enacted (Osmer 2008:4).

In the pragmatic task, there is a need for models of leading change. In this regard, Osmer (2008:176-178) discusses three types of leadership viz, task competence, transactional leadership and transforming leadership. Task competence refers to the ability to excel in performing leadership roles in an organisation. Transactional leadership is the ability to influence others through a process of trade-offs, reciprocity and mutual exchange. Transforming leadership is the process of leading an organisation through "deep change" in its identity, mission, culture and operating procedures.

To perform the task as mentioned above, congregational leaders will need the spirituality of servant leadership. This refers to leadership that changes the congregation in ways that embody the servanthood of Christ more fully. It is a continuum consisting of the three aforementioned forms of leadership. This continuum ranges from task competence at one end of the continuum, through transactional leadership, to transforming leadership at the other extreme end (Osmer 2008:183 - 193).

Spirituality of servant leadership entails, inter alia, that congregations be characterized by relationships of mutual care and service, that the Christian community is not to reduplicate the hierarchies of power and social status found in the surrounding cultures (Osmer 2008:188 -190).

The pragmatic task of this study was to find ways of improving or changing where necessary, the practice of worship in the AOG (BTG) in the Germiston District, in order

to enhance the role and impact that women may have, and subsequently making the church more effective in its Christian witness.

2.3 GENDER INEQUALITY THEORIES

According to Attoh (2017:158) gender, simply defined, is the social construction of the expectations, behaviour, privileges and constraints associated with those identified as male or female. It is also significant in the understanding of development and social phenomena especially in developing nations in view of the inequitable participation of men and women in the social organization of society.

2.3.1 Some classifications of gender inequality theories

Agassi (1989:161-162) states that there are various ways in which gender inequality theories may be classified, e.g. as biological, property relations; family structure and household; social roles, especially occupational work roles; and sexuality. While theories in the first group are mainly economic, the theories in the second and third groups are psychological, anthropological, sociological, and economic. However, another method of classification of these theories would be as socialist, liberal, and radical feminist. Another way would be to group the theories according to their main themes, viz. production and economic, sociological, anthropological, psychological, and even biological. In the fourth and last group, the most conspicuous theories are psychoanalytic.

Production and property relations: Agassi (1989:162) argues that many theories concerning the status of women have originated within socialist thought. This thought attributes most of the society's ills to the existing material inequality in society. Socialists argue that it is possible to eliminate or reduce these material inequality, and with it, almost all the accompanying social inequalities, as well as status hierarchies. Implicit within this thought is the notion that the smaller the differences in standards of living or property in a society, the smaller also the differences in status between men and women. So, Marxism locates the origins of all inequality more specifically in the private ownership of the means of production by one class. It contends that in order to eliminate all inequalities, expropriation of privately owned means of production should be effected by the revolutionary proletariat and subsequently be administered by society for the benefit of all. Citing Engels, Agassi (1989:162) mentions further that the

cause of women's inferior status is class society and the forms of family organization it produces. If the class society is abolished, the patriarchal family will also disappear. He goes on to state that according to Engels, capitalism is also to blame for the current separation of the family home (place of reproductive work), from that of the factory (productive work), for making women's participation in social production more difficult and limited.

Family structure and household: In this regard, Agassi (1989:163-164), cites Engels's assumptions of this theory:

- The first assumption is that the private family household condemns women to household work and child care and thus to inequality. Women can become equal, then, only through the dissolution of the private family household by the socialization of domestic services and child raising.
- The second assumption deals with women's unequal status and financial dependence within marriage: According to Engels, only property-less proletarian marriage can be based on genuine free choice, and only in such a marriage can women be equal. Modern sociological feminist theory severely criticizes the conventional family household for burdening women with all or most of the unpaid domestic and child-care work; and of conventional marriage for causing women's economic dependence and limiting their autonomy. As a precondition for gender equality, this theory calls for extensive changes in both the marriage contract and the household division of labour.

Several theories are based on the assumption of the feasibility of gender-egalitarian family households and egalitarian, long-term, heterosexual partnerships in the future. These, it is predicted, will come about as a result of one or more of the following factors: the decline of women's economic dependence on men; the increase in women's control over reproduction; the improvement and greater availability of nondomestic child-care services; the reduction and greater flexibility of occupational working time; and men's gradual realization that a gender-egalitarian dual role of occupational and of family work is in their own long-term interest (Agassi 1989:164).

Social roles, especially occupational roles: According to Agassi (1989:164-165), modern liberal feminist theories of gender equality are based on the assumption that in order for women to achieve equal status, all stereotyped social roles for men and

women have to be abolished. Conventional women's work roles assign to them the major responsibility for unpaid domestic and especially child-care work, and thus handicap them in their occupational roles. Their inferior occupational roles also hinder their acquisition of economic and political power. The idea behind this theory is that as long as women are excluded from roles that provide access to means of exchange, they are devoid of prestige and political power. Similarly, as long as women are barred from significant political or ritual roles, there is no genuine gender equality.

On the other hand, Agassi (1989:166 -167), citing Tiger and Shepher, states that there are two gender-role theories claiming that gender equality is unfeasible. The first theory claims that gender roles are biologically given and thus unchangeable. According to this theory, during the millennia of the infancy of the human species, males and females had radically different experiences. These experiences have implanted in each individual a "biogrammar" that makes male humans better disposed to pursue action and adventure, while it makes female humans better disposed to pursue the domestic and maternal activities. Hence, all attempts to equalize gender roles will be in vain, since they will be opposed by biogrammar differences. These biogrammar differences form the foundation of the sexual division of labour. The second theory that shares the perspective of the inevitability of gender inequality is that of precultural motivational disposition. According to this theory, there is a gender difference in the degree of the need for initial parenting. The alleged cause is possibly the human biogrammar, human anatomy or possibly the difference in the psychological development of male and female infants.

However, Agassi (1989:167) continues to state that gender equality is both desirable and feasible, but its attainment depends on fundamental changes in human behaviour. One such behaviour is that babies of both sexes should be nurtured, from birth onward, equally by women and men.

Sexuality: One radical feminist theory of gender inequality condemns marriage and any other form of long-term heterosexual liaison as detrimental to women's equality. The theory claims that heterosexual relations result in the inevitability of emotional dependence of women on men. Another radical feminist theory of gender inequality is that of obligatory heterosexuality, which derives from Levi-Strauss and from Freud. According to Levi-Strauss, the basic form of male dominance is men's use of women as objects of exchange. Women are raised to internalize their inferior status by being

pushed from birth to see heterosexuality as obligatory. They are denied the choice of any form of sexuality except passive heterosexuality. Like the previous theory, this theory postulates the feasibility of gender equality, through equal nurturing for infants from birth by men and women Agassi (1989:167).

2.3.2 Gender Stratification

According to Wallace & Wolfe (2005:146), stratification by gender has been one of the most important tools that have been used to determine people's life chances, and in most cases, women have been marked inferior to men, such as in access to wealth, power and autonomy. They further cite Collins, who theorized about this situation, that it arises from human beings' strong sexual gratification and from the fact that mostly males are larger and stronger than women. However, this theory of men's strength being the root of women's lower status is refuted by some feminist theorists such as Janet Saltzman Chafetz and Rae Lesser Blumberg. Instead, they argue that it is women's biological role of child-bearing that is crucial in this regard.

Wallace & Wolfe (2005:147) state that according to Janet Saltzman Chafetz, the degree of gender inequality can be attributed to access to scarce and valued resources. Chafetz argues that only a small number of variables in women's biological role of child-bearing account for this situation. Among these variables are: distance between work and home, and the ideological /religious support for gender inequality. Wallace & Wolfe (2005:149) mention that while Rae Lesser Blumberg agrees with Collins's concerns, she differs with his key propositions. She argues that the most important factor influencing women's equality with men is economic; coupled with the internal organisation of households. That is, women's control of economic resources is important and not just their participation in economic activities, since participation only does not necessarily translate into economic power.

2.3.3 Feminism and the ethics of gender

Various forms of feminisms have demonstrated some ways of ethical thinking with gender since the time of enlightenment, out of which modern feminisms have developed three different ways of entering into ethics, namely, the ethic of equality, the ethic of difference and the ethic of liberation (Parsons 2002:25). The aim of this ethical reasoning is threefold: First, to recognize and expose the constructions of gender. Second, to dismantle these constructions of gender as fabrications of human

power; and third to have a place of effective spoken and acted protest in order to create new social realities (Parsons 2002:39).

Ethic of equality: Parsons (2002: 26-28) states that central to the feminist ethic of gender, is the requirement to realize in political, social and religious organizations, as well as in ways of thinking, the notion that there is no fundamental difference between women and men in qualities or capacities that pertain to basic human essence. The ethic of equality asserts that to be human is the highest calling of each individual, to become a person in one's own right regardless of sex. This central notion of full humanity implies the fundamental equality of human beings, men and women. This equality, liberal feminists believe, is grounded in the faculty of thinking, reasoning and understanding that all humans possess, and on which the distinctions of gender have no fundamental part to play. Therefore, it can be concluded that women have the capacity to reason the same way as men, and to also become responsible citizens as men. This is corroborated by Malone (2003:27), who cites the work of Desiderius Erasmus, a humanist who asserted that men and women are spiritual equals because they have been made in the image of God; and that women are as capable of intellectual development as men. Also, Desiderius insisted that it was not according to the laws of nature that women have been subordinated to men, but it was only that men are more aggressive than women.

For Christian feminists, the assertion by St. Paul that in Christ there is no male or female (Galatians 3:28), calls for a discipleship of equals in the church, in which gender difference does not matter. It is on this basis, and on many other reasons that liberal feminism challenges as unjust the texts that accept and reproduce the cultural contexts and historical situations out of which they were written, without regard to the rational formulations of principles for the enhancement of our common humanity. This norm of equality does not only have to extend throughout the public world, but it also has to govern the private space of the family, in seeking for gender justice (Parsons 2002: 29).

Furthermore, Parsons (2002:30) asserts that what women need to do is to take up the challenge of their full humanity, so as to be included and recognised as persons with the same freedom and dignity as men. This needs a reworking of the social institutions of all kinds to afford women with equality of opportunities, conditions, representation and freedoms. This has to be manifest in various religions such as Christianity, Islam

and Judaism, where the full involvement of women in all levels of responsibility and areas of work should be supported, in the affirmation of the full humanity of their adherents.

Ethic of difference: The ethic of difference, is presented by a feminism which lays positive claim to the difference of men and women. This feminism emphasizes the natural differences of women and men, and that emotions in personal life as well as involvement in natural world are resources for living a full human life. Fundamental to this notion, is the belief that humans are born different as either women or men, with gender written all over the fabric of their lives. Consequently, what is needed is a social order of roles and relationships in which these gendered identities of our humanness can become manifested (Parsons 2002:31-32).

Enlightenment thinking within this ethic locates the essence of our humanness within our embodied natures. This accounts for the goodness of our human being, being grounded in qualities that arise from our nature to express themselves in different ways in our reasoning and our choosing. These ways of reasoning and deciding manifest the different natures that belong to us as women and men. This means that our sexed bodies with different organs and hormones, different physical abilities and bodily construction make a difference in how the goodness of being human is experienced and expressed. Since the expressions of the good that is in our essential natures shapes our relationships and actions, there is a need in this ethic of being true to the gendered person one is. Theologically, this is termed 'the anthropology of complementarity', in which it is asserted that the sexes complete each other not only in reproduction, but also in a full range of activities of human existence (Parsons 2002:32). However, Oduyoye (1995:177) argues that the theory of complementarity plays a negative role for women in domestic organizations and in the church because in practice it is the men who choose what they want to be and do, and then expect women to do the remainder. In this way it is always the woman who complements the man and never vice versa. The woman never has any option in the matter.

Ethic of liberation: Parsons (2002:36-37) alludes that this form of feminist ethic is derived from the challenges of the politics of liberalism and the economics of capitalism particularly as found in Marxism. This ethical thinking with gender is about how men and women are constructed within the actual and practical contexts of their

daily lives. This ethic presumes that gender is a social construction that people are shaped into by means of language, norms and practices that characterise the society in which they live. Within this ethic, the conviction about what is true and good arise from historical conditions, material circumstances and social conditions. This, then requires of people to observe and analyse how the notion of what is good is constructed, and then understand the processes of social change that would bring conditions that are humanly fulfilling.

According to Parsons (2002:37-38), Harriet Martineau, a nineteenth century sociologist, observed that men and women were constructed into two different ways of living. Men were molded into certain roles by learning to work in institutions of production and exchange while women were trained for a social function in the institution of marriage and family. Therefore, while the different circumstances make different demands on men and women, there is nothing permanent about these gendered roles that humans take on. The situation described above, can be attributed to the system of power relations which has given men a socially constructed position of being powerful, while women's socially constructed position is that of being excluded and powerless outsiders to the system.

Parsons (2002:39), alluded to the Marxist philosophical view that the world is not to be understood, but to be changed. Therefore, it can be said that the engagement of the ethic of liberation is strategic consideration of effective actions for change, even if these actions may not fit neatly into the prevailing circumstances pertaining to men and women. It is necessary to find places of protest within, and against the "technologies of patriarchy" so that the women can reconstruct out of their present situation, communities of resistance and solidarity, so as to realize gender justice in the present.

2.3.4 Gender as a Social Structure

Risman (2004:436) presents the theory of gender as a social structure with an attempt of offering a scheme that organises the study of gender in a way that enhances the understanding of gender in all its complexity. Furthermore, this scheme tries to isolate the social processes that create gender in its various dimensions (i.e. individual, interactional and institutional dimensions).

Introducing the theory of gender as a social structure, Risman (2004: 430), mentions four distinct social scientific theoretical traditions which have developed to explain gender. While the first tradition focuses on how sex differences originate (whether biological or social in origin), the second tradition focuses on how social structure creates gendered behaviour. The third tradition is about “doing gender”, i.e. how social interaction and accountability to others creates and reproduces inequalities. The fourth tradition is integrative in approach and it treats gender as a socially constructed stratification system.

Developing on the fourth tradition, Risman (2004: 431) cites Lober’s work on gender as an institution that is embedded in all social processes of everyday life and social organisations. Accordingly, a social institution is said to fit the following criteria: (1) It is a characteristic of groups; (2) it persists over time and space; (3) it includes distinct social practices; (4) it constraints or facilitates behaviour/action; (5) includes expectation, rules/norms; (6) it is constituted and reconstituted by embodied agents; (7) it is internalized as identities and selves; (8) it includes a legitimizing ideology; (9) it is contradictory and rife with conflict; (10) it changes continually; (11) it is organised by, and permeated with power; and (12) it is mutually constituted at different levels of analysis. However, while Risman builds on this concept of social institution, she prefers to use the concept of social structure rather than social institution because this brings gender to the same plane as other social structures such as politics and economics.

While Silverman (2005:379) defines a social structure as a term used in sociology and anthropology to describe the institutional arrangements of a particular society or group (such as family and class structure), Risman (2004: 431- 432) states that no definition of the term “structure” is widely shared. However, she goes on to mention that structuralists agree that social structures exist outside individual desires or motives; and that they partially explain human behaviour. Structure is trivialised if it is viewed as norms and values within an individual. Rather, it is to be conceptualised as a force opposing individual motivation. Structure entails the constraint collective that life imposes on the individual. Furthermore, while constraint is an important function of structure, structure also imposes a clear dualism between constraint and action, with structure as a constraint and action as a choice. This explains that while men and women can be coerced into different social roles, they often choose their gendered

paths. Also, this confirms the structural theory of action, which suggests that actors compare themselves and their options to those in structurally similar positions. Therefore, actors become purposive in seeking their self-perceived well-being under social structural constraints. For instance, married women would do more than their equitable share of parenting rather than to have their children to suffer as a result of their husbands not doing enough of their parenting role.

(i) Advantages of conceptualising gender as a social structure

Risman (2004: 433-435) mentions the following advantages of conceptualising gender as a social structure: First, it imposes order in the research findings that have developed to explain gender inequality. Second, this approach has contributed to avoiding the modernist warfare version of science, wherein theories are pitted against one another, such that at the end there is a winner and a loser. In the past, much was done in finding a theory that best explains a phenomenon while other alternative theories were discarded. However, post-modern science seeks a more integrative approach in explaining phenomena (as shown by the theory of gender as a social structure).

Third, its multidimensional structural model (i.e. individual, interactional and institutional dimensions) allows researchers and theorists to investigate the direction and strength of causal relationships between gendered phenomena on each dimension. That is, conceptualising gender as a social structure helps in identifying under which conditions gender inequality is being produced and how it is produced, within each dimension.

Fourth, it is dynamic in the sense that in this schema, no single dimension determines the other. Change is fluid and happens throughout the structure. For example, while changing individual identities and moral accountability may change interactional expectations, a change in cultural expectations may also lead to individual identities being shaped differently. Fifth, as mentioned before, conceptualizing gender as a social structure brings gender to the same plane as other social structures such as politics and economics.

2.3.5 Gender, Religion and Patriarchy

According to Attoh (2017:158), religion and patriarchy are foundational social constructs that operate at the basis of social organisation. She further states that in

the Nigerian society these constructs are inter-woven both in the public and domestic spheres. The social conception of the roles, expectations, opportunities and privileges attached to being a male or female are so strong that it is possible to predict a child's life chances based on them. Gender inequality could be traced to a dualistic moral philosophy and deistic doctrine where the female is viewed as being unequal, inferior and subordinate to the male.

Attoh (2017:159), states that in Nigeria where Christianity and Islam are the two most powerful religions, religion is an instrument of female oppression and marginalization, despite the fact that many of the religious beliefs and traditions are derived from cultural beliefs. Religion supports patriarchy and has influenced the relationship between men and women for centuries in such a way that male domination was entrenched into the social structure of society. Many of the practices portrayed as part of culture or religion, such as monogamy, female infanticide through abortion, and preference for male children, are gender specific and preserve patriarchy at the expense of women's rights.

Klingorová & Havlíček (2015:3) assert that all world religions maintain male social dominance within societal structures. This is so, despite women being more inclined to participate in religious life. Also, religious norms and prejudices reflect patriarchal values, which characterise all societies of the world religions. For example, the role of God (a creator of a religion), is always taken by a male, and the woman is primarily valued as a mother, especially as a mother to a son. Her place is in the household, and less at religious ceremonies or in public positions. Although in some religions certain women have acquired significant posts, the real status of a woman in a religion is more complicated. In the histories of religions, the voice of women is rarely heard, due to the patriarchal dispositions of societies in which these religions emerged, and which eventually stifled some of the changes in the status of women.

While world religions agree on the respect for women and their crucial role in family life (especially with emphasis on women as mothers and wives), they do not, however, advocate women's emancipation in the sense of total equality with men (Klingorová & Havlíček 2015:3). This is supported by Inglehart & Norris (2005:3), who state that although there has been substantial progress toward gender equality in much of the world, great disparities persist, as systematic indicators demonstrate that in many places, most women's lives remain wretched.

Slusser (2009:29) states that most religions, with their patriarchal origins, present men's power and authority as appropriate. Men are in hierarchical positions as both God (male) and clergy. Citing Mary Daly, she further mentions that the hierarchal nature of religion makes it more difficult to see the patriarchal system as unjust. Hierarchal religion influences patriarchy within politics, the family, and gender relations. For example, the hierarchical relationship between God (male) and humans is seen reflected in the hierarchical relationship between men (powerful) and women (submissive). This is corroborated by Waltke (1995:10), who mentions that male authority in the home and in the church is founded on the order of creation and reinforced in the order of redemption. This assertion states that God established patriarchy as his ideal form of government by creating Adam first and the woman to help him.

2.3.6 The origins of patriarchy and the changing roles of women in the church

Without specifying the context, Yemisi & Dada (2015: 245) point out that from early period women's roles have been child-bearing, and child-rearing, as well as being responsible for other domestic chores. In most cases men were breadwinners, with women not contributing to the household income. This trend continued into the church because people cannot be completely dissociated from their cultures.

Yemisi & Dada (2015:245-246) point out that in the church, women's subordination to men has several roots. First, are the Old Testament teachings which did not give women any responsibility in worship. Second, are the teachings of the early church fathers which were limiting to women's roles. Third is that the writers and scholars of the thirteenth century were influenced by the early church fathers such as St. Augustine, who did not support the ordination of women in the church because he regarded them as less spiritual.

During Jesus' time, women's status was better than that in the Old Testament. Their presence in Jesus ministry showed that he recognised them. Jesus was always kind to them even if he faced opposition in that regard. This is supported by (Plaskow 2014: 26-27) who alludes to Leonard Swidler's 1970 article, *Jesus was a Feminist*. In this article Swidler argued that Jesus was in favour of women, and promoted their equality with men. Then came the time of the Apostle Paul. While Paul is considered controversial because of his writings about women, there is also a view that he might

not have limited women's status, but was writing according to the status of women in his time (Yemisi & Dada 2015:246).

In the contemporary church, women's roles have changed from those of subordinates to those of leadership. This is to some extent attributed to the advent of Pentecostalism. Furthermore, the reinterpretation of biblical passages dealing with the role of women has changed, and consequently led to the changing status of women in the church (Yemisi & Dada 2015:247; Gabaitse 2015:2-3).

2.3.7 The Scripture and Gender

In recent decades, there have been efforts to seriously interrogate gender and the practice of gender inequality as objectively as possible in various learning institutions. As such, gender studies and women studies have become popular course offerings in universities and theological institutions. In the teaching of these course offerings, the Bible has become an important resource (Ayanga 2012:85-86).

A cursory reading of the Bible shows that it contains both positive and negative messages about gender inequality. Waltke (1995:10) asserts that the Scripture sustains patriarchy, not democracy or matriarchy. God, who is over all, represents himself by masculine names and titles, not feminine. He identifies himself as Father, Son and Spirit, not Parent, Child and Spirit, or Mother, Daughter and Spirit. Jesus taught his Church to address God as "Father" and to baptize nations "in the name of Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19). God's titles, are King, not Queen; Lord, not Mistress. This assertion states that God, not mortals, has the right to name himself. Moreover, in contrast to male imagery, one cannot introduce feminine imagery without introducing sexual connotations. In Hebrew grammar the masculine form is inclusivistic (i.e. with reference to animate beings it can be used for male and female), but the feminine form represents only the female.

Arguing about the symbolism and imagery in the naming of God, Dreyer (2002:48) states that naming God as male has resulted in the structuring of society, law and the cultural symbolic system in a way that keeps women subordinate. Male imagery describing God, especially the powerful image of God as Father, has the effect of excluding women and female imagery as a way of symbolizing the divine. Therefore, a new naming of God will be a radically new symbolization and meaning-making process in order to stop maleness acquiring normative status for what was human,

and femaleness being seen as the “other than” norm. Also, this will prevent the continuing definition of femaleness relative to, in opposition to, or complementary to maleness. Migwi (2016:17) agrees by stating that the effects of theological language to women positions in church, through the predominant use of masculine terms in Christian theology in reference to God, negatively affects women self-understanding and self-esteem with regard to church positions. She advocates for scrutiny in the habit of biblical exegeses, ecclesiastical practice and tradition.

Dreyer (2002:52) posits the following with regard to the correlation between God-imagery and women’s identity and their possibility for authentic life before God: First, exclusive male speech about God deprives women of the opportunity of identifying with God as men can, and that affects their socialization and identity-formation. Second, some images used for God have become irrelevant because human experience has changed. Third, some images used for God have become problematic because of the negative connotations they have acquired in today’s society.

Resistance against the introduction of more inclusive imagery has resulted in the perpetuation of a system where women play supportive roles rather than become full partners in church and society. The question is, however, whether these mind-sets and systems that dictate women’s position in church and culture have been ordained by God or whether they are human constructs which serve human interests (Dreyer 2002:49)

2.3.8 Pentecostal ideology, Pentecostal hermeneutics and gender inequality

Migwi (2016:14-15) states that there are three broad categories of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity in Kenya, viz. Classical, Independent and the Charismatic/Neo-Pentecostal.

Classical Pentecostal churches: These are churches linked to early American and European Pentecostal churches, emphasizing faith healing, prophecy, exorcism, speaking in tongues as evidence of baptism by the Holy Spirit, spontaneous prayer, exuberant liturgical expressions as well as emphasis on dreams and visions. Examples of this category include Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM), Full Gospel Churches, Assemblies of God, and the Pentecostal Assemblies of God. The churches under this study fall under this category.

African Pentecostal Churches/ Indigenous/Independent Pentecostal churches:

These are the churches founded by Africans without any relationship with mission Pentecostal churches. They are largely locally founded, self-financing, self-governing and self-supporting. Examples include the Redeemed Gospel Church, Winners Chapel International and Christ Embassy. Their doctrinal emphasis is on perfection, strict personal ethics, biblical inerrancy, and a disdain for carnal pleasures which are viewed as sinful. They also emphasize personal salvation, baptism in the Holy Spirit, and speaking in tongues (Migwi 2016:15).

Charismatic/ Neo-Pentecostal Churches: This category generally refers to historically younger Pentecostal, independent and Para-church movements, some of which are found within non-Pentecostal denominations. They are characterized by their centrality and emphasis on spiritual rebirth, healing, deliverance and exuberant worship. They have their roots in the revival within the African Pentecostal Churches in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. They are influenced by American Pentecostals through literature and other telecommunications mediums (Migwi 2016:15-16).

2.3.8.1 Pentecostal Gender Ideology

Pentecostal gender ideology is based on the understanding of Pentecostal theology of democratization of charisma. This is based on the biblical accounts of the work of the Holy Spirit, especially what took place in the early church (on the day of Pentecost), where both men and women were filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke in other tongues. This is believed to be something that can now take place in the contemporary church. Pentecostal gender ideology is based on this non-discriminatory account of Pentecost. This liberative element that led to notions like universal priesthood and prophethood of all believers. Consequently, the only qualification needed to serve is the testimony of a call and an evidence of a spiritual gift. It was believed that the Holy Spirit had the absolute authority to choose anyone (Migwi 2016:16).

Pentecostals believed that if the Holy Spirit had anointed someone, there was no further endorsement that such a person needed. For Pentecostals, gender is not a parameter for qualification to serve in church. The researcher believes that the exclusion of women in some church activities, in the churches under study is therefore incongruent with some fundamental Pentecostal beliefs.

However, Gabaitse (2015:2-3) posits an argument regarding the ambivalence of Pentecostalism towards women. She mentions that Pentecostalism has been celebrated as a liberating space for women as it allows women to preach. However, Pentecostalism has not paid sufficient attention to the patriarchal tendencies in general, which support and uphold male power, and the oppressive interpretative practices purported to be biblical doctrine derived from texts such as Ephesians 5:22-6:4. Studies indicate that exclusion exist along gender lines within the Pentecostal movement in Africa, Asia, and in the West. Women and men do not occupy the same status in Pentecostal churches. The leadership model employed by Pentecostal churches has also been described as authoritarian and hierarchical, promoting male authority and hierarchical relationships with women and children at the bottom.

2.3.8.2 The Pentecostal hermeneutic and gender inequality

Gabaitse (2015:3-4) argues against the Pentecostal hermeneutics, which she states, has two forms: the articulated Pentecostal hermeneutic and the unarticulated Pentecostal hermeneutic. Articulated Pentecostal hermeneutics refers to an academic exercise of reading and interpreting the Bible. This hermeneutic arose because scholars of Pentecostalism such as Christopher Thomas were not satisfied with a system of interpretation that was heavily oriented towards rationalism and had little room for the role of Holy Spirit. Also, this hermeneutic takes the principles of critical scholarship and biblical interpretation seriously, such as the tridactic model of interpretation consisting of Scripture, Spirit and Community, as proposed by Christopher Thomas and Kenneth Archer. Although the hermeneutic is Pentecostal, the Bible is read and interpreted critically, taking into consideration the context in which it was produced and the culture of the time, among other things.

Unarticulated Pentecostal hermeneutic on the other hand is practiced, acted and performed in the churches as Pentecostal members are engaged in shaping and developing this hermeneutic. It consists of the often-unconscious hermeneutical strategies used by the community as they participate in activities such as preaching, prayers, Bible studies, hymns and testimonies. This hermeneutic is characterised by taking and understanding the Bible at face value since it is not concerned with the contexts in which the Bible was produced (Gabaitse 2015:4).

Gabaitse (2015:4-5) mentions three essential aspects of the Pentecostal hermeneutic that have bearing on the marginalisation of women. First is, literal interpretations of the Bible; second, proof-texting of the Bible, and third Pentecostal doctrine of the Trinity.

Literal Readings of the Bible: This is one of the most dominant models of biblical interpretation in Pentecostal churches. A literal reading of the Bible does not take the historical context of texts seriously. The Bible is read in the present to mean what it means. The effects of literalism can be dangerous, since scriptural directives that insist on women being silent in church are also taken literally, obeyed and enforced (Gabaitse 2015:5). Biblical literalism, as Smith & Tuttle (2011:698-706) state, encompasses a range of theological doctrines, among which are: First, Biblical authority. Since conservative protestants regard the Bible as the word of God, it has to be taken literally. Its authority deserves and commands unconditional obedience. Second, is Biblical inerrancy. This is the affirmation that the Bible is inerrant in its entirety, and it is free from all falsehood, fraud or deceit. Consequently, it has to be taken literally. These two concepts form the cornerstones of literalism as an aspect of Pentecostal hermeneutic.

Proof-Texting: This refers to the use and harmonising of a few biblical texts to support one argument, without considering how those texts relate to the Bible as a whole. As such, doctrines are supported, proven and disproven by using stand-alone biblical verses. The problem with proof-texting is that it ignores the principle of context which demands that the cultural contexts of the Bible be taken into consideration. According to the principle of context, the Bible should be read, understood and interpreted by taking into consideration that it was produced within a particular cultural context very different from contemporary contexts. Also, proof-texting ignores the fact that Bible stories are connected and can never be understood as stand-alone pieces (Gabaitse 2015:6).

Pentecostal Doctrine of the Trinity: Citing Cheryl Johns, Gabaitse (2015:8) states that most Pentecostals believe that God has established a chain of command which is visible even within the Trinity. They argue that within the Trinity, God the Son is seen to be subordinate to God the Father. The relationship of God the Father, God the Son and Holy Spirit is ordered hierarchically, with God the Father at the top of the hierarchy,

followed by Jesus and then the Holy Spirit. Therefore, since Jesus submits to God, this then sanctions and legitimises hierarchy between men and women as divinely ordained. Gabaitse argues further that Pentecostals who believe in the hierarchy within the Trinity advocate hierarchy between people, and specifically between men and women, where men occupy a high status followed by women and children. Furthermore, the adherents of this ideology, also use the physiological and biological differences between men and women to strengthen this belief and to advocate gender hierarchies and complementarity. Proponents of this theology argue that God made men and women physiologically different so that they should occupy different statuses and positions.

Arguing about the Trinity from an African perspective, as ancestral relationships Karkkainen (2014:358), in the work by Charles Nyamiti, states that ancestry is an important theological theme in the African theologies. Ancestral veneration is a central and basic traditional and contemporary form of cult. Ancestors represent a sense of community and corporate personality. The spirits of the ancestors are believed to use their power for the well-being of the community. While ancestors are lower than God, they are higher than humans.

According to Karkkainen (2014:361-367), the ancestral view of the Trinity entails God, Christ and the community of saints. According to this view, God is the Ancestor because he begot the Son and is the Prototype of the Son. Jesus Christ is an ancestor because of his role as a Mediator between God and humans. Not all the dead are ancestors, but only those who lived good lives and served as community leaders. While Nyamiti seems to support the hierarchical view of the Trinity, because he asserts that the Father (God) is the prototype of the Son, he is also aware of the danger of this hierarchy and subordination as stated in his view. Very few people would subscribe to this view because of their conviction in the deity of Christ.

From a feminist point of view, Karkkainen (2014:203) construes a Trinitarian theology that does not begin from the abstract concept of Deity in general, but rather from the experience of the Spirit as a gateway to the Trinity. This view seems to be in agreement with women's views and the human experience of salvation because before the incarnation of God into flesh, God's presence in the world was felt through the Spirit. Therefore, according to this view the "first" member of the Trinity is the Spirit (Spirit-

Sophia). The activities of the Spirit are creating, indwelling, sustaining, guiding, liberating, completing, and re-creating. The metaphors which have been widely used in theology which can be employed for the Spirit in a non-sexist discourse are “love and gift”, a favourite term for Augustine. Also, the feminine and personalist names used for Spirit Sophia such as “friend and sister” or “mother and grandmother” could be used.

2.3.9 Women’s liberation from the Pentecostal hermeneutic

According to Gabaitse (2015:9-10), the Pentecostal church can avoid marginalization of women through the Pentecostal hermeneutic if it allows the liberating power of the Holy Spirit to operate. The Holy Spirit critiques cultures and interpretations of the Bible that marginalise and oppress people. The Holy Spirit is central to Pentecostal living and existence and is perceived as a living power who is experienced by women and men, and directs individuals and the Pentecostal community. Also, the Holy Spirit is the power that calls individuals and communities into existence, so that without the Holy Spirit’s participation, there can be no authentic Pentecostal community. She continues to mention that Pentecostalism is not only text-centred, but also in a deep way Holy Spirit-centred. Therefore, there should not be any room for rigid and literal interpretations of the Bible that marginalise people, especially women.

Biblical texts that call women into submission towards men could be interpreted in new ways because the Holy Spirit gives new, life-giving and transformative interpretations of the Bible depending on context. For instance, the Holy Spirit overruled the Law about circumcision when some Jewish believers demanded that the Gentiles be circumcised in obedience to the Law of Moses. The Jerusalem Council concluded after much deliberation that “it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to impose on you no further burden than these essentials...” (Acts 15:28; Also refer to Acts 10:45; 11:15-17). By listening to the Holy Spirit, a community of believers was able to dismiss a culture of teaching non-Jews that they could not be saved unless they were circumcised according to the Law of Moses. The Holy Spirit was able to subvert, deny and deconstruct the Law of Moses in relation to circumcision so that Gentiles were not burdened and restricted because of their ethnicity. If the Holy Spirit was able to legitimise the acceptance of Gentiles as part of the Christian community, the same

Holy Spirit should be able to deconstruct the contemporary Pentecostal hermeneutic by eliminating life-denying and oppressive patriarchal cultures (Gabaitse 2015:10).

Furthermore, even if the Pentecostal church is not open to embrace women into the centre, the Holy Spirit will continue to critique, unsettle and act against the Pentecostal church for preaching equality between men and women, while in reality they marginalise women and elevate the status of men through an uncritical use and interpretation of the Bible (Gabaitse 2015:10).

2.4 FEMINISM AND BIBLICAL SCHOLARSHIP

While feminist biblical scholarship developed all over the world at different times, e.g. in Latin America and the Caribbean at the end of the 1970s and beginning of 1980s (Tamez 2014:35), this section briefly deals only with the development of feminist biblical scholarship in the USA, as one of the first places of development, and in Africa, as the overall context of this study.

2.4.1 Development of feminist biblical scholarship in the USA

During the 1960s and 1970s American women began to question roles ascribed to them by the family, society, politics, and religion. The connections women made between their experiences as individuals and collectives, and the institutional structures which constructed and shaped them, were a cause for them to name and challenge many structures which enforced gender-role socialization and male dominance. From a feminist point of view, the following were fundamental:

- Their biology as females is not their destiny
- Women's subordination to men was not inevitable, but was a product of social processes, and could therefore be questioned, challenged, resisted and changed (Plaskow 2014:21).

Since religious institutions, texts and systems were part of a creation and justification of male dominance, they also fell under feminists' critique. The subdued anger and frustration of women because of subordination and marginalization were captured in the two books written by Mary Daly at the end of the 1960s, viz. *The Church and The Second Sex*. In these books, a compelling indictment of the Roman Catholic Church and a call for change in the treatment of women were made. In 1971 a women's conference was held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA to explore the spiritual and

religious experiences of women. This conference became the seedbed in the development of feminist studies in religion (Plaskow 2014:22-23).

2.4.2 Development of feminist biblical scholarship in Africa

Mbuwayesango (2014:71) states that African women's interest in the Bible started as early as 1813 as evidenced in the exchange between Mmahutu (senior wife of chief Mthobi of the BaTlhaping people in South Africa and missionary John Campbell and his associates. She mentions that feminist biblical studies started with the establishment of Christian churches by missionaries and the indigenous people who established the African Indigenous Churches. Mbuwayesango argues that she considers these studies to be feminist because they were done in women's interests and to address problems that challenged women's existence and survival. Whereas these women were trained according to Western academies, they returned to read and reread the Bible with the focus on the context of the African woman.

Feminist biblical studies is intricately woven into the fabric of African feminist theology. In 1989 an organization called *The Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians* was formed. This organisation was spearheaded by Mercy Amba Oduyoye, and it marked the emergence of the hermeneutic of feminist biblical studies. African women theologians had become aware that as long as men and foreign researchers were authorities on culture, rituals and religion, African women will be spoken of without their contribution (Mbuwayesango 2014:72-73).

2.4.3 The centrality of the Bible in African feminist hermeneutic

Central to the formal and systematic African women's theology is the Bible as a major source of empowerment in search of liberation. While the malestream African liberation theology used the Bible as a witness against political and economic oppression, it ignored patriarchal oppression against women. As such, feminist hermeneutics used the Bible as a resource in the struggle against subordination and marginalization of women by contemporary church and society (Mbuwayesango 2014:74-75).

African women theologians were not only concerned about the absence of their voice in research, but there were also other pertinent issues of concern to them, such as the androcentric historical-critical modes of biblical interpretation developed in Western contexts. These interpretations resulted in marginalization of women from full

participation in societal and church life. Therefore, African women theologians sought not only to challenge these interpretations but also to engage in corrective reading and rereading of the ignored or misinterpreted Bible texts. These corrective readings of the Bible included:

- To distinguish in the Bible, the liberative elements from the divine, from the oppressive elements emanating from humans.
- To counter the negative portrayal of women by focusing on the texts that show the positive role of women in the history of salvation, and church life in general.
- To find a basic biblical orientation that can function as a guide to interpret both the negative and positive biblical texts about women.
- To seek to interpret the Bible from an African women's perspective (Mbuwayesango 2014:76 -77).

The nature of the Bible was another concern for African women theologians. While the Bible was seen as a source of inspiration, its interpretations and traditions were certainly oppressive to women because they were written from a patriarchal point of view. Also, the Christian interpretation of the Bible was a formidable tool in support of African traditions that were oppressive to women. Since culture was an important tool in women's subordination, women theologians thought cultural hermeneutics would be a viable solution for the liberation of the African women. Cultural hermeneutics is an approach utilized by African women theologians to examine the Bible, and to scrutinize the multicultural layers embedded in it (Mbuwayesango 2014:78 -80).

2.5 CONCLUSION

In this chapter the researcher provided the theoretical framework of the research study. For this purpose, Richard Osmer's four core tasks of practical theological interpretation, viz. the descriptive empirical task, the interpretive task, the normative task and the pragmatic task were adopted.

The descriptive empirical task of practical theological interpretation involves gathering information, in a more systematic and disciplined manner, to help in discerning patterns and dynamics in particular episodes. The interpretive task of practical theological interpretation involves drawing on the theories of the arts and sciences so as to better understand and explain why certain patterns and dynamics are happening

in particular situations and contexts. In the normative task of practical theological interpretation, theological concepts are used to interpret particular episodes, situations and contexts, constructing ethical norms in order to guide our responses and learning from “good practice.” Lastly, the pragmatic task of practical theological interpretation, speaks to how we might respond in episodes, situations and contexts. It involves determining strategies of action that may influence situations in a desirable way. It also refers to ways of entering into a reflective conversation that comes as a result of the strategies being enacted (Osmer 2008:4).

Since this study deals with the role of women in worship, it entails women’s activities in religion, a phenomenon traditionally dominated by males. This therefore, necessitated consideration of gender roles. Therefore, gender theories were also adopted in the framework of the study. In this regard, the researcher considered classification of gender theories according to their main themes, viz. production and property relations; family structure and household; social roles; and sexuality. Furthermore, the researcher discussed the three ways of entering into ethics of gender developed by modern feminisms, i.e. the ethic of equality, the ethic of difference and the ethic of liberation (Parsons 2002:25).

In addition to the above-mentioned sections, the researcher discussed, the origins of patriarchy and the changing roles of women in the church, Scripture and gender, Pentecostal ideology, Pentecostal hermeneutics and gender inequality, women’s liberation from the Pentecostal hermeneutic, as well as feminism and biblical scholarship.

Since this is a ritual-liturgical exploratory study focusing on women’s role and impact in worship, the main pertinent concepts of the study in this regard are worship, liturgy, ritual and women’s roles in the Old and New Testament worship. These concepts are dealt with in the next chapter

CHAPTER 3: LITURGY, WORSHIP AND THE ROLE AND IMPACT OF WOMEN

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Since this is a ritual-liturgical exploratory study, the researcher thinks it is prudent that the notions of liturgy and ritual be explored, albeit not extensively. In this section, the researcher discusses the meaning of liturgy, liturgy as ritual, acentricity and forms of liturgical ritual, liturgical inculturation, tradition and the process of liturgical inculturation, invention of tradition as well relationship between liturgy and tradition.

Also, this chapter will include a discussion on worship. While worship happens in various ways in different religions and religious traditions, this chapter focuses on the concept of worship from a biblical perspective. Also, included in this discussion about worship are worship as a liturgical ritual, evolution of worship, New Testament worship, worship styles and Bricolage liturgy.

Furthermore, the researcher briefly discusses the role of women as envisaged in the teachings of major religions of the world, i.e. Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Christianity. The aforementioned section does not deal with practices in these religions, but only teachings. Section 3.5 deals with women's roles in the Old and New Testament worship, while the section that follows it discusses equality of men and women in worship. The last part deals with women and leadership positions in the church in general, and in particular, in the AOG (BTG) worship.

3.2 LITURGY

3.2.1 The meaning of liturgy

The word "liturgy" is derived from the Greek word *leitourgia*, which has a literal translation "work of (or for) the people". In practice this referred the services performed for the good of the people by either affluent citizens or by whole cities. In the Septuagint, the concept was also used to refer to the services rendered by the Levites and priests in the Temple. While this is the meaning in some parts of the New Testament, in other parts it refers to the "worship of God" or the service of Christ as a Mediator and minister of the sanctuary. In the postapostolic period the term was used to refer to "the service of God to the community and the service of the community to God" (Adam 1992:3; Earey & Myers 2001:40; White 2000:26).

According to Adam (1992:4-6), liturgy is a form or formulary according to which a public religious worship is conducted. It can also be defined as fixed or prescribed ceremonies, words, etc. that are used during a public worship in a religion according to its particular beliefs, customs and traditions. However, this is a narrow sense of the term since liturgy can also be defined as the joint action of Jesus Christ, the High Priest and his church for the salvation of human beings and the glorification of the Heavenly Father. He insists that it is incomplete or even mistaken to regard liturgy only in terms of what human beings can do to win divine favour, leaving out what God does to the people in the whole phenomenon.

To rightly understand the nature of liturgy is to perceive it as the exercise of the priestly office of Jesus Christ. In liturgy the whole public worship is performed by the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, i.e. by the Head and his members. So then, liturgy is primarily the work of God which he accomplishes on people through Jesus Christ. However, since Christ passed on his work to those he sent, they were also expected to perform this mission through sacrifices and sacraments, which are the centre of all liturgical life (Adam 1992:4-5).

The foregoing paragraph, therefore makes it insufficient or even mistaken to regard liturgy merely as the outward or visible part of divine worship or the sum total of all ceremonies and rubrics for divine worship. Also defective is to view liturgy as only the honouring of God through praise and thanksgiving, signs and symbols, song and music as well as the diverse kinds of sacrificial rituals. This is defective because it concentrates only in what human beings can do to win divine favour, leaving out what God does to the people in the whole phenomenon (Adam 1992:6).

According to Adam (1992:8-9) liturgy has a wide variety of manifestations such as the Eucharist (which is the basis and fountainhead of all liturgy), baptism, confirmation, orders, marriage and preaching. However, this study focuses on what Adam (1992:9) refers to as liturgy in the broader sense of special gatherings for worship, which particular churches undertake according to customs or books lawfully approved.

Smith (2009: 25) asserts that liturgies whether secular or sacred, shape and constitute people's identities by forming their most fundamental desires and attuning them to the world. That is, liturgies make certain types of people aim their love to different ends by training the hearts through their bodies. Liturgies attune people to love and value

certain things, be involved together in certain projects, approach the world in certain ways, pursue certain dreams and aim at certain goals – constituting a pedagogy that teaches to be a certain type of a person. He further articulates that every liturgy is an education in which is embedded an implicit world-view (understanding of the world).

3.2.2 Liturgy as ritual

According to White (2000:30), the term ritual can mean different things to different people. To some it can mean a rut of meaningless repetitions, while liturgists use it to mean a book of rites or a manual of pastoral offices for baptisms, funerals, weddings and other official services of the church. Although the term “ritual” is used in such variety of ways, it has certain abiding characteristics. First, it is a behaviour, second it is repetitive and third, it is a purposeful social activity with a communal function. Various kinds of rituals are important in the cohesive existence of human communities. For instance, while a birthday party can be referred to as a family ritual, Christian worship is also a ritual because it is a repetitive social behaviour which is purposeful in nature (White 2000:19).

Citing Wepener and Van der Merwe, Pieterse (2017: 42), states that a ritual has basic elements such as sign (which has a plain, unmistakable meaning), symbol (which has a certain context, and plural meanings; speaking of itself and bringing the past and the present together in our interpretation), symbolic action (actions by human beings in bodily expression); and symbolic speech acts (which is ambiguous, and opens up new realities which are more than our rational understanding of reality).

Smith (2009: 86-87) distinguishes liturgies as rituals of ultimate concern, formative for identity and inculcating particular visions of the good life. Liturgies are the most loaded forms of ritual practice because they are after nothing except our heart, determining what we love above all. Liturgies determine what we pledge our allegiance to or that which we are devoted to in a way that overrules all other concerns and interests. Liturgies embody that which we worship, pedagogies of ultimate desire.

3.2.3 Acentricity and forms of liturgical ritual

Barnard, Cilliers & Wepener (2014:13-14) state that the landscape of liturgical ritual is a-centric in the sense that traditional liturgical forms performed by a constant congregation can be found along with emerging liturgical rituals practised by less

stable groups in a less defined space and time. This a-centricity of the liturgical ritual means that even if the liturgical ritual establishes an identity of the congregation, that identity is to be unstable and dynamic. The above-mentioned authors further assert that liturgical ritual may be positioned in a scale between connectedness and rootedness. That is, it is in the flow of permanent transformation while simultaneously being rooted in invented tradition.

There are various forms of liturgical rituals as exemplified by the research conducted by Barnard et al (2014:14-18). These include liturgical rituals in Protestant churches, Dutch Reformed Church, African Independent Church, Pentecostal and Charismatic churches in rural areas, suburbs, townships and cities in different parts of the world including South Africa. Barnard et al (2014:19-35) mention that these liturgical rituals are performed and shown in different ways and places. These liturgical rituals range from performance in multimedia and cyberspace, virtual memorials on the World Wide Web, in hospitals, in the streets, at events, during sacraments, in private, in nature as well as in culture and society.

3.2.4 Liturgy and tradition

3.2.4.1 Tradition

While Wepener (2008:316), states that tradition, among other things, refers to the general handing over of knowledge and practices from generation to generation, Jones (1999:67), contextualising it to religion, goes further to say tradition is a story of the experiences and reflections of those who have gone before in the faith. Like all good stories, it is the suitable and humble discussion to which churches and communities can appeal.

However, tradition should not be viewed as the monument of both the true faith and the Bible, but as a continuing narrative of God's relationship with his chosen people. Jones (1999:76) further asserts that tradition should not be considered as a closed book, to which nothing can be added or from which nothing can be taken away. It should not be something that should be protected because it is sacred, but rather it should be seen to be alive and therefore to be interpreted and developed. While tradition should be seen as the way in which great Christians of the past lived their lives (a character that has to be respected), it should also be seen as the way Christians live their lives today and will live it tomorrow.

In my view, this is an important aspect of understanding the development of liturgical practices in the AOG (BTG) worship, and how the youth and other sectors of the church relate to those practices. I think this is a view that continues to escape many congregational leaders and some elderly people in the AOG (BTG). The younger generation have a tendency to question tradition because they view it only as a way Christians of the past lived their lives, and not as something that informs how the present and the future have to be lived. This also relates to how the church views women's roles in worship, i.e. how women have always participated in worship.

Tradition is also a word used theologically to refer to the body of doctrines, creeds, catechisms, articles and definitions which have accumulated over a long period of orthodox Christianity. This "tradition", exerts a powerful influence over what one does, says or does not say about God (Jones 1999:75). This is also true as it applies to the AOG (BTG) liturgy because it is rooted in a history of about seventy years. So, whatever happens at present is to a large extent influenced by this history.

3.2.4.2 Invention of tradition

Wepener (2008:320) mentions with reference to the work of Eric Hobsbaw, that invented tradition is a set of practices normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition. For example, in the AOG (BTG), praying for rulers and all people is an overtly accepted rule that inculcates the values of patriotism, respect and cooperation with those who are in positions of power. Also, praying for all people reminds the church of God's transcendent love for all people, and that he expects the church to take the Gospel to the whole world. This is a tradition that is not only accepted because it is from God's word (2 Timothy 2:1-8), but also because it is clear to the church that the world needs supernatural intervention.

3.2.4.3 Relationship between liturgy and tradition

As Wepener (2008:323) articulates, living tradition with regard to liturgy should neither be a blind repetition of what went on before nor a reckless renewal/change thereof. Rather, it should be a new source conscious of inculturation (maintaining the viable and important and discarding the unnecessary), wary of invention and directed towards identity formation.

To the greater part, liturgy in the AOG (BTG) promotes more of self-identity rather than ecumenical cooperation. That is, it is more user-friendly to people who are used to it rather than visiting worshippers. In this sense the researcher thinks liturgy in the AOG (BTG) liturgy cannot be regarded as being in the forefront of ecumenical and reformed tradition, rather, it is somewhere along the continuum between the fixed and the free.

As Wepener (2008:331) states, reformed worship is always on the edge of tradition by being firmly rooted in Scripture and always open to new expression. The AOG (BTG) worship can be said to be on the edge of tradition because it is based on the tenets of the Christian faith and at the same time it is struggling to be open to new expression.

3.2.4 Liturgical Inculturation

Chupungco (1992:28-29) cites Shorter's definition of inculturation as the creative and dynamic relationship between the Christian message and culture (or cultures). Three characteristics of inculturation are notable: First, inculturation is a process and it is relevant to every country or region where the faith has been sown. Second, Christian faith exists in a cultural form and third, there should always be interaction and assimilation between Christian faith and culture.

From an African perspective, Nyamiti (1994:64-65) states that inculturation involves an effort to incarnate Christian teaching in African cultures on the level of theology and christology. Two approaches are mentioned in this regard: First, is the philosophical approach, where both the Bible and the Christian tradition are confronted with African traditional wisdom, problems and aspirations. Second, is the sociocultural and biblical approach, which emphasizes direct dialogue between the biblical message and African traditional teachings.

Two of the concepts related to liturgy are nearly the same, but are however different: These are inculturation and adaptation. While adaptation involves the taking up by Christianity of whatever it finds positive in all cultures, inculturation signifies an interior transformation of authentic cultural values through their integration into Christianity, and the rooting of Christianity into various human cultures. In other words, inculturation involves the interaction between Christianity and culture such that there is no mutual extinction. Rather, the interaction between the two should result in mutual enrichment

and progress, in which each interacting entity retains its essential features (Chupungco 1992:29).

According to Wepener & Meyer (2012:305), liturgical inculturation is the dynamic interaction between worship/liturgy/cult and the surrounding culture. In this dynamic interaction, a new form of worship comes into being. Liturgical inculturation is different from adaptation, which refers to the process in which Western theology is just transplanted, with a few superficial adaptations, into other cultures.

Together with adaptation, another important predecessor of inculturation is acculturation, which refers to contact between two groups from different cultures on a lasting and direct level. This leads to a change in the cultural patterns of both groups. Acculturation is about a kind of translation of the Gospel (and liturgy) with the realisation that a word-for-word or literal translation is inadequate. Several factors worked against processes such as adaptation and acculturation. These included the rise of nationalism in the Third World; the rise of anthropological thinking, which showed how contextually bound all cultures are; the maturing of the younger churches (amongst others) (Wepener & Meyer 2012:305).

The concept of liturgical inculturation entails a critical-reciprocal interaction or enrichment between cult/liturgy and culture in such a way that a whole new entity comes into being, namely an inculturated liturgy. It is a continuous process of critical interaction and assimilation between both culture and liturgy. It is a reciprocal integration which distinguishes inculturation from other concepts such as enculturation, indigenisation, adaptation and accommodation. The process of liturgical inculturation can be represented in terms of a mathematical comparison, namely that A (liturgy) + B (culture) = C (a new entity/inculturated liturgy), and not $A + B = AB$. In this process of liturgical inculturation the liturgy criticises or rejects some aspects of the culture and embraces others, and vice versa (Wepener & Meyer 2012:306- 307).

In his article *Liturgical inculturation or liberation? A qualitative exploration of major themes in liturgical reform in South Africa*, Wepener (2014:6) focuses on two statements made by the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), namely the 'Nairobi Statement on Worship and Culture: Contemporary Challenges and Opportunities' and the 'Chicago Statement on Worship and Culture: Baptism and Rites of Life Passage'.

According to Wepener, the dynamic relationship between worship and culture as explained in these documents may be summarised as follows:

- Worship is transcultural. (Worship has certain dynamics that are beyond culture).
- Worship is contextual. (Worship reflects local patterns of speech, dress and other cultural characteristics).
- Worship is counter-cultural. (Worship resists the idolatries of a given culture).
- Worship is cross-cultural. (Worship reflects the fact that the body of Christ transcends time and space).

Focusing on the contextual and counter-textual aspects of liturgical inculturation, Wepener (2014:6) states that over the past decades, it seemed that the two aspects were in a kind of tug of war in an on-going process of liturgical inculturation in the South African context. These aspects were understood as dimensions of inculturation whilst the others had to do with liberation. During the apartheid years, the emphasis was much more on the counter-cultural (liberational) language of worship, and in the post-1994 years, counter-cultural language was replaced with the language of contextualisation (inculturation).

Wepener & Meyer (2012:307) mention that recently the concept of liturgical inculturation has been challenged for various reasons. In this regard liturgists have made three suggestions viz. liturgical interculturalisation, re-inventing liturgy and the dynamics of cult and culture. First, preference for liturgical interculturalisation above liturgical inculturation is the impression that inculturation is static, i.e. the process of inculturation can be completed. The concept can mistakenly seem to imply one-way-traffic in which something is planted into a culture (inculturation), thus negating the reciprocal nature of inculturation. This also seems to promote an idea of culture as being a phenomenon which exists in the singular.

Second, the movement from liturgical inculturation to re-inventing liturgy is a sign that liturgy has moved beyond the Liturgical Movement, into new territory not confined to the parameters of inner ecclesial liturgical celebration, but has become much broader. Re-inventing liturgy is a concept that can also embrace liturgical rituals found in other spaces than traditional ecclesial spaces, such as in the open air or on the internet. Third, is the dynamics of cult and culture. This concept is closely related to re-inventing

liturgy in that it is also more open to embrace more ritualistic phenomena than what has traditionally been defined as liturgy. It also embraces the reciprocity between both cult and culture in which both cult and culture are changed by each other (Wepener & Meyer 2012:307-308).

Therefore, taking the above discussion into consideration, it can be said that the concept of liturgical inculturation involves:

- A reciprocity in which all involved in the process are teachable, not just those on the so-called receiving end.
- A departure from a culture-pessimistic stance to also embracing a culture-positive position without negating the counter-cultural dynamic inherent in the process.
- A movement beyond the parameters of exclusively inner ecclesial liturgy to incorporation of a wider range of liturgical rituals.
- A movement beyond an understanding of liturgy having an unchangeable essence and culture as an entity into which this essence is transplanted, to the acknowledgment of a dynamic reciprocity between liturgy and culture in which both are continuously formed and reshaped (Wepener & Meyer 2012:308).

The developments regarding the concept of liturgical inculturation as discussed above, enables the adoption of a broader approach to liturgy than just Sunday morning worship. It also includes the study of liturgical rituals that have traditionally not received sufficient attention from liturgists. Furthermore, this tempers the critical disposition (especially in Protestant theological circles) towards rituals, including African Independent Churches (AIC) liturgical rituals. Lastly, the way in which certain rituals can embrace different cultures, church denominations and even religions can now also be appreciated in a more positive light (Wepener & Meyer 2012:308).

From an African perspective, liturgical inculturation can be seen in Lumbala (1998:50-51), who writes about celebrating the eucharist with African food and drink. He commends Father Rene Jaouen, a missionary to Cameroon, who used African cereal for the eucharist because of its sacred character. Lumbala justifies Father Jaouen's action by stating that the bread we use today for the eucharist is not the same as that of Jesus' time. He states further that while Jesus used the unleavened bread because the eucharist was instituted at Passover (when the Jews used unleavened bread in their homes), early Christians did not necessarily use unleavened bread for this

celebration. For them what was important was the bread, and not its unleavened nature. Believers brought bread from their homes. It was only after the ninth century when the necessity to use unleavened bread was discussed. This shows that while the essential features of the eucharist were kept, the ritual was celebrated within the context of the people concerned.

3.2.6 Tradition and the process of liturgical inculturation

Since tradition, among other things, refers to the general handing over of knowledge and practices from one generation to another, within this process of handing over is inculturation. In inculturation, some aspects of liturgical tradition are accepted and preserved while others are not. According to Wepener (2008:318), some of the critical questions which have to be asked with regard to liturgical inculturation pertain to exactly who or what one looks back to when one looks to the past. These questions include:

- Which specific parts of history of the liturgy does one look back at?
- To which voices from the past do you listen and which one do you ignore?
- Which practices or rituals and symbols do you regard as central and important and should be preserved and which ones not?
- Which aspects of our tradition are deemed as the heart of it, without which we are not who we are any longer?
- Which aspects of our tradition are not really essential?

Jones (1999:75) agrees with Wepener by mentioning that tradition is concerned with the past and its meaningful interpretation with reference to the way in which people live their lives in the present.

The researcher believes that the questions stated above are indispensable in the AOG (BTG) in analysing what is going on regarding its liturgy and the role and impact of women in worship, with a view of addressing the pertinent challenges that arise as the church grows. This is because these questions attempt to appropriate the tradition of the church to its present and future situations.

3.3 WORSHIP

3.3.1 What is worship?

As stated in section 1.3.4, worship can be defined in many ways. Ray (2000:6) states that worship can be said to be a ritualized response of the Christian community to God's love through their hearts, minds and souls. Van de Laar (2000:209) mentions that worship is a means through which we can see, hear, smell, taste, feel, and come into contact with the infinite. He goes further to state that in worship we proclaim and enact God's mighty deeds in history and offer our prayer of praise and thanksgiving to the Creator and Redeemer of the world.

3.3.2 Worship as liturgical ritual

Barnard et al (2014:40-41) mention that while liturgy is a complex of Christian rites and symbols, which is also primarily a cultural phenomenon, a ritual is a composition of symbolic speech, symbolic acting and symbols. Therefore, Christian liturgy can be described as a ritual in which the people of God, individually or collectively reach out to the God whom they expect to come. They go further to typify liturgy as a play with the other [people] and the 'outer' or Other (meaning God), in which inspiration and revelation, symbol and sacrament, culture and worship, poetry and prayer, as well as art and religion are all connected by various routes, but also separated by certain borders.

Barnard et al (2014:40-41) state that worship can be defined as a liturgical ritual. The liturgical dimension refers to the theological perspective of worship, while the ritual dimension refers to the cultural-anthropological aspects of worship.

3.3.3 Evolution of worship

Basden (1999:19-23) states that worship is not static but dynamic. He traces the evolution of worship in the Bible from the time of Abraham's call and meeting with God, after which he built altars for the worship of God. Then followed the times of the Passover lamb in Egypt and the singing at the Red Sea led by Merriam. The scene led to Mount Sinai where God gave the Law of Moses and ordained three important feasts to be held: The Feast of the Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Tabernacles and the Harvest Festival. These feasts were accompanied by various sacrifices done by the Levitical priests as a way of Israel's worship of God. The tabernacle was then built, in which the worship of God continued. After some years David brought the Ark of the

Covenant (after it was captured and lost) back to Jerusalem, which became Israel's national centre of worship. He also organised the priests and Levites into ministers of Temple worship. David also contributed significantly to Israel's worship by writing several psalms which became the backbone of Israelite worship. When God became displeased with Israel's worship (which was not accompanied by a godly life), Israel and Judah were taken to exile. On return from the Babylonian captivity, worship focussed on the reading of the Torah and obeying the Law of God, the disobedience of which was seen as the reason for their captivity. The intertestamental period saw worship move to the synagogues. Praise marked the beginning of synagogue worship, followed by prayers and the recitation of the Shema (Deuteronomy 6:4).

Worship as the way of life in the Book of Deuteronomy: The book of Deuteronomy emphasizes two major areas regarding worship: the ritual-sacral issues and social-ethical-moral issues. The ritual-sacral issues are usually linked with the priestly circles while the social-ethical-moral issues are linked with the prophets and scribes (Ballentine 1999:183). The message of Deuteronomy entails *inter alia*, several issues such as Deuteronomic constitutionalism, relationship between Israel and God, the statutes and ordinances, social justice, and administrators of justice (Ballentine 1999:185).

Deuteronomy 12-26 entails the statutes and ordinances focusing on constitutional matters about the formation and legitimate administration of the structures of society by human authorities (Ballentine 1999:189 - 190). The statutes and ordinances also included important aspects such as worship, social justice and the administration of social justice. With regard to worship, the statutes and ordinances emphasized worship to God, and God alone. They admonished against the worship of other gods and against people who would seduce the Israelites to worship other gods. Over and above the worship of only one God, it is also the admonition to worshipping God at a central place that "The Lord your God would choose". Although tradition came to identify this place of worship with Jerusalem, Exodus and Deuteronomy did not emphasize a particular locale but rather the limitless freedom of God to choose the place of worship (Ballentine 1999:190 - 192).

Furthermore, the statutes and the ordinances did not leave the worship of God at a central place to be done casually and at will. That is why the admonition included even

the times of worship. Two important occasions are stipulated viz. the offering of the first fruits and the triennial tithes. The times for the festivals and ceremonies stipulated that they had to be done, for example, yearly, every third year, in the month of Abib, for seven days, on the seventh day, after seven weeks or three times a year, as per instruction for each festival or ceremony. These times reminded the Israelites that their devotion to God was to be constant and abiding. Therefore, the service of worship had three dimensions i.e. object, place and time (Ballentine 1999:190-194).

3.3.4 New Testament worship

Worship in the New Testament (NT) is characterised by several elements such as prayer, singing, scripture reading, preaching and teaching, offerings and celebrating the Lord's Supper. Five important themes emerge from examination of the NT worship, viz. First, the purpose of worship was to glorify God. Second the centrality of Christ pervaded all elements of worship. Third, the Holy Spirit inspired each of the practices of early Christian worship. Fourth, the result of worship was the edification of the church and fifth congregational participation was evident in all worship (Basden 1999:23-25). This is partly corroborated by Long (2001:4-5, 12-13), who traces the changes in the ways of worship to the 4th December 1963. On this day, during the Second Vatican Council, the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy called for vast changes in the way of worship of the Roman Catholic Church. This did not only affect the Roman Catholic Church but other churches as well. These churches began to review their ways of worship. These reforms were aimed at producing worship that was genuinely biblical, centred in Christ, fully congregational and truly freeing people to worship as God's people, worship in its true essence, as a recapitulation of the sacred narrative of God's interactions with human beings.

3.3.5 Worship styles

Worship shows a greater diversity today than in any other era in history. Worship styles differ from one denomination to another, from one tradition to another and from one church to another. This is so and has been so because even the New Testament does not endorse any worship style as divinely sanctioned. Several worship styles can be noticed, viz. liturgical worship, traditional worship, revivalist worship, praise and worship and seeker service worship (Basden 1999:36).

Liturgical worship is the most formal of the types mentioned above. It is practised amongst most mainline Protestant and Roman Catholic churches. This is a well-planned and completely structured type of worship which places premium on the majesty of and reverence to God. This style gets its biblical model from Isaiah 6, where the prophet Isaiah saw the glory of God. In the early church this style consisted of two main components, the preaching of the word and the Lord's Supper. However, it evolved through the years and at present the liturgical style consists of several parts such as music, scripture reading, offering, sermon, sacraments and services, as well as other elements such as the recitation of the Lord's prayer. Its strength lies in that it focuses the worshipper on God as the one to be worshiped. It also places premium on the scripture reading and the Lord's supper. However, this worship style presents God as Wholly Other and unapproachable, as opposed to the Good Shepherd who is shown in Jesus Christ (Basden 1999:41-54).

Traditional worship is less formal than liturgical worship but still follows a planned and structured order. It could be more correctly said to be semi-liturgical than non-liturgical. Its purpose is to lead the congregation to show gratitude to God for his goodness; and to hear his word. As such gratitude and God's word are its main characteristics. The biblical model of this style comes from Colossians 3:16 where Paul admonishes the church to have the word of God dwelling richly in them and that they should sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, showing gratitude to God in their hearts. The strength of the traditional style is that there is a fair balance between the transcendence and immanence of God. The God worshipped in this style is seen to be both great and good, holy and yet helpful. Furthermore, this style balances both the intellect and emotions of worshippers. However, some detractors are not happy that this style does not observe the Lord's supper as frequently as it is done in liturgical worship (Basden 1999:55-64). Worship in *The Dutch Reformed Mother Church in Stellenbosch*, South Africa, as described by Barnard et al (2014:15-16) can be given as an example.

Revivalist worship started at the beginning of the nineteenth century. It is characterised by exuberance, zeal and aggressive preaching with the aim of turning the lost souls to God. The main purpose of this style is evangelising the lost. It has its biblical model in Acts 2 when Peter preached on the day of Pentecost. Also, it hearkens to Paul's admonition to Timothy to preach the word and be prepared in

season and out of season (2Timothy 4:2). The current expressions of the revivalist worship are music, scripture reading and offering, sermon and observance of some ordinances. Music themes in the revivalist worship include revival, prayer and heaven. The strengths of this style are that its exuberance invites worshippers for participation, sermons challenge the will, and the style also places priority on the new birth. One of the downsides of this style is its imbalance between kerygma and didache. That is, there is more emphasis on proclaiming the Gospel than on teaching and grounding the worshippers in the faith (Basden 1999:66-75; Barnard et al 2014:26-27).

Praise and worship also loosely referred to as Pentecostal worship and presently known as Contemporary Praise and worship, describes an upbeat, loud informal service in which the congregants seek the immediate presence and manifestation of God. This style manifests overt charismatic tendencies such as speaking in tongues and exorcising demons. Its purpose is to lead the congregation to worship God based on the biblical model of Psalms 150. The main features of the Praise and worship style are music (sometimes led by the worship team), scripture reading and offering and sermon. Ordinances such as the Lord's supper are observed monthly or quarterly depending on each church's tradition. The strengths of this style are its celebratory mood, participation and intimacy with God. However, this style is criticised for its emotionalism which seems to lead to entertainment where zeal is not based on knowledge (Basden 1999:76-87). Barnard et al (2014:15) give *The Nigerian Redeemed Christian Church of God in Amsterdam*, Netherlands as an example of this type of worship.

Seeker service is a relatively new style of worship which gained popularity in the late 1980s, and started by pastor Bill Hybels of the Willow Creek Community Church in suburban Chicago. A seeker service is a toned down, upbeat evangelistic service for non-Christians who are seeking God but have not yet made a commitment to Christ. This style is not specifically designed for Christians. The biblical model is found in Acts 17 where Paul was preaching about the unknown God in Athens. It expresses itself currently through music, scripture reading and a sermon. There is neither baptism or the Lord's supper as the service is admittedly not for Christians. Its aim is the drive to reach unbelievers who are without hope and without God. However, the downsides include packaging the Gospel such that the unbelievers can understand it, which may lead to the compromising of the Gospel message (Basden 1999:88-95).

However, there are churches where various styles and traditions of worship are mixed in one worship service. While there are church liturgies that still conform to the classical Reformed or ecumenical Protestant traditions, these days various churches have worship services that do not fit this classical pattern. Rather, their worship services fit the template of 'Praise and Worship', which according to Barnard et al (2014:118), is called Bricolage liturgy.

3.3.5 Bricolage liturgy

In Bricolage liturgy the immediate context that conditions belief is that of religious plurality. That is, it incorporates different praise and worship traditions. In modern age liturgical ritual is beyond order and is determined by its anthropological and cultural contexts. That is, by the people involved and participating in the liturgical ritual as well as the circumstances pertinent in a particular time and place. As such liturgical ritual has to be understood and investigated in terms of firstly its radical a-centric character and secondly its dual contexts (i.e. anthropological and cultural) (Barnard et al 2014:37-39).

While Bricolage liturgy refers to a mixture of different worship styles in one service, Barnard et al (2014:129-130) allude to churches where, regardless of the mixture of different worship styles, the service takes a specific starting point from the Christian witness and is rooted and established in the worship of Jesus Christ. However, while ministers in this type of service speak freely about Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, they do so with a recognition that others have their own particularities. In this way, Christ can be regarded as a-centred particularity. This worship reflects a radically a-centric and a-typical choice, showing particularity within the context of a secularised society. In this type of service, it is not the pre-given meanings that count, but the flow of the ever-new meanings which arise out of the a-typical form of worship.

The researcher is of the opinion that Barnard et al have made an accurate observation. The description above is typical of the worship services in the Assemblies of God (Back to God) churches. They also take a specific starting point from the Christian witness and are rooted and established in the worship of Jesus Christ. While the preaching might seem to be coercing people into the worship of Jesus Christ, the church recognizes that each person is a free moral agent, able to choose between right and wrong.

3.4 THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN MAJOR RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

In the following sections the role of women in some major religions is discussed briefly. This is meant to give a brief comparison with the teachings in the Christian religion, and in particular Pentecostalism as one of its variants. For purposes of this study, the researcher will concentrate only on the teachings of these religions and not necessarily on the practices thereof.

3.4.1 Buddhism

In Buddhism women's participation is generally focused on two generalisations. First is that the core teachings of Buddhist traditions are gender free and gender neutral. Contemporary Buddhist teachers state that Buddha's teachings apply to all beings without differentiation between men and women, with regard to them being enlightened and realizing Buddhism's deep insights into reality (Gross 1994:1).

3.4.2 Hinduism

Since Hindu women come from various cultural, social, geographical and linguistic backgrounds, their roles have been varied in history, literary tradition and society (Sugirtharajah 1994:59). The attitudes of Hindu legal texts towards women are ambivalent in various senses. While on one hand a woman may be elevated to a goddess, on the other hand she is seen as a temptress and a seducer. Women can be both deified and dehumanised. While their role as mothers is revered, as a sexual partner she is seen as an obstacle to a man's spiritual quest. As a mother, a woman is revered as a teacher to her children more than a father, but as a wife she is expected to do the will of her husband (Sugirtharajah 1994:70-71). However, in the twentieth century, women's issues became the focus of attention because of the Indian political resistance to British imperialism and social reform movements (Sugirtharajah: 1994:75).

According to Sugirtharajah (1994:80-81), in Hindu tradition the question of women priests has not been an important issue. Women are important in religious practice in the sense that the home is the centre of religious practice such as daily worship, life-cycle rituals, festivals and feasts. The temple, being wholly the domain of male priests, is not central to Hindu religious practice. This has resulted in few women aspiring to officiate in public religious ceremonies. This, they do out of personal interest.

3.4.3 Islam

Badawi (1994:84) mentions that Islam is founded on the revelation of a text in Arabic, the Qur'an. This text was revealed in stages over a long period to Muhammad, who is believed by Muslims to be the last messenger of God (Allah). Islam proclaims all believers equal before God - men and women, the poor and the rich, such that there are no hereditary privileges. Furthermore, the ulama who are the theologian-jurists of Islam are not priests and can be either men or women, as long as they have the requisite knowledge (Badawi 1994:84-85).

The word for God in Islam is Allah, and although it is treated as masculine, it has a grammatically feminine ending. This suggests a vision of a being which transcends the feminine and masculine. The account of the Qur'an about the creation and fall of man emphasizes the common origin of men and women, and in no way does it privilege men over women. It is the consequence of Arabic grammar that the first created human being was feminine, understood from the noun "nafs", which is feminine. In the Qur'an both Adam and Hawwa' (Eve) are responsible for the fall. As such classical authorities of Islam honour childbirth and do not regard it as suffering in expiation of the original sin. Strong women are keystones in the foundation of Islam since the first person to hear of Muhammad's revelation was a woman, Khadijah, who later got married to Muhammad. Although the four schools of Sunni Muslim law (The Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i and Hanbali schools) concur on broad principles of legislation, they differ on rulings on specific issues such as the rights and responsibilities of men and women in the family. However, each Muslim believer, man or woman, is free to choose the school to which they want to belong (Badawi 1994:87-92).

3.4.4 Judaism

Judaism is the religious culture of the Jewish people, and its central doctrine is belief in one God, love for God, as well as to love to one's neighbour, as found in Deuteronomy 6:4,5 and Leviticus 19:18. The story of the Jews originates from God calling an individual (Abraham), then from him a nation (Israel) with which he made a covenant. From the narratives of the Hebrew Bible, women enjoyed a particular status privately and publicly in the areas where they lived. For example, the Hebrew matriarchs such as Sarah, Rebekah, Leah and Rachel were not only involved in domestic roles as mothers and wives, but also contributed in course of Jewish history.

Also, women like Deborah, Huldah and Miriam played important leadership roles in Israel. Also, an ideal woman is described in Proverbs 31, as one who works hard for her household, enters into negotiations to buy and sell and one who is respected for the work that she does (Wright 1994:113-114).

Furthermore, there are also women role models from whose narratives contemporary women learnt important lessons and drew inspiration. Hagar was a single mother who was made homeless by the father of her child; Tamar was a young woman who was raped by her brother; Yael, was courageous in killing the army commander of the enemy in a war. Ruth was loyal to her mother-in-law, Naomi; and the five daughters of Zelophehad, were instrumental in bringing a change in the inheritance law (Wright 1994:114).

The role of women in Jewish religion is further shown by inscriptions of the intertestamental period, wherein women are shown as having titles of leadership positions. Some are shown as being regarded as archisynagogissa (head of synagogue), and some being regarded as presbytera (elder or member of council) (Wright 1994:115). In rabbinic Judaism, the interpreters of the Torah into oral teaching, codified it into the Mishnah. The purpose of the Mishnah was to expand, define and resolve conflicts inherent in the Torah. So, the Pharisees based their interpretation of the Law on both the Pentateuch and the Mishnah. The Mishnah had six orders, one of which was the "Nashim", which dealt with the legal status of, and attitudes to women. Since the Mishnah was not clear with regard to various issues regarding women, subsequent interpreters had to deal with new situations and adding their own interpretations in the process (Wright 1994:116-117). MacDonald (2016:140) argues that it is important to understand why and how women, who were once leaders in the Jesus movement and in the early church, were marginalised as Christianity became a state religion, if women are to reclaim their rightful, equal place in the church today.

The Gaonic period (from the seventh century), shows that Jews were often influenced by the cultures of the societies in which they were dispersed; and the private and public roles of Jewish women is further clarified. When European Jews were emancipated in the early nineteenth century, their social and intellectual lives changed. It was during this period that two religious movements were formed: The Orthodox and Reformed movements, the theological premises of which determined the extent to which women

were accorded equality with men. While the Orthodox movement did not restrict women in the choice of their secular careers, there were restrictions pertaining to their religious lives. Women could engage in some activities such as the reading of the Torah and conducting services, as well as engage in activities which were traditionally regarded as men's, but they only do these things for each other and amongst themselves as women, but never in mixed congregations of men and women. On the other hand, the progressive movements accorded women full equality with men. This meant women were permitted to lead services and become rabbis and also assume those roles which were traditionally regarded as being exclusively for men (Wright 1994:118-119).

Traditional Judaism has a structure of 613 commandments derived from the Torah, the majority of which apply equally to men and women, especially the negative commandments. However, there were some commandments which were linked to gender, such as those regarding circumcision and menstruation; as well as those commandments which are not directly linked to biological differences but are gender based. For example, while necessarily prohibited, women were exempt from activities which were time-bound such as dwelling in the "sukkah" during the Feast of Tabernacles or to hear the shofar on the New Year. It appears as if women were exempt from activities which fell outside the domestic sphere, not as a legal-logical principle but as a social-cultural one (Wright 1994:136-137).

Wright (1994:139) asserts that over time, Judaism has responded to the religious needs of the Jewish woman in contemporary society without losing sight of the prophetic principles of strict justice and truth, which are the pillars on which religion is founded and which also sustain it. This is in line with liturgical inculturation which as stated in section 3.2.4, is the dynamic interaction between worship/liturgy/cult and the surrounding culture, in which a new form of worship comes into being (Wepener & Meyer 2012:305).

3.4.5 Christianity

The primary source of authority in many Christian traditions is the Bible, and most of the attitudes towards women are based on the interpretation of its text. However, this does not mean that there is consensus to all about what the Bible says about women. While the interpretation of the Bible changes as society changes, there are some

Christians who hold the belief that the authority of the Bible transcends time and place. This means that what was written some centuries ago should be read and believed without considering the social and cultural conditions of the time in which it was written. However, modern scholarship has brought the need to consider the society's historical, cultural and social backgrounds when interpreting the Bible (Drury 1994:30; Gabaitse 2015:5).

Attitudes towards the role and position of women are based on three major issues: First on which biblical texts one chooses; second, on how one reads the Bible; and third on how much weight one gives to the contexts in which the texts were written. Recognising the male dominance in the writing and interpretation of the Bible, women movements have begun to interpret the Bible in their own way, by showing out a more positive teaching about women than had been done before (Drury 1994:31).

Drury (1994:32-35) describes women as part of the created order by referring to the two creation accounts in Genesis: one is about the equality of men and women when they were both created in the image of God; and other is the one mostly emphasized, that a man was created first, and then a woman. This account is used to bring women in subordination. She further insists that the second issue used to bring women into subjugation is by showing them as fundamentally evil, because it was a woman (Eve) who tempted a man (Adam) to disobey God. These views were further entrenched in Christian belief by Aristotle and Augustine (Bishop of Hippo). Aristotle believed that the male seed provided the "form" of the human body while the woman's role was to passively receive the formative part of the male seed; and Augustine believed that the woman was not made in the image of God in the same way that a man was.

Unlike in the Old Testament era, women were given much recognition in the few years of Jesus, although they assumed no leadership roles. The New Testament mentions a number of women who worked closely with Jesus. Jesus showed more kindness to women and as such they seemed to be more influential in his time. However, his kindness towards them was always met with opposition by those who vehemently upheld the traditions of the fathers. Jesus did not look at women in terms of gender but he considered them in terms of their relationship to God. The Gospel texts have a uniform testimony to the presence of women among the followers of Jesus. His teachings about women constituted a break from tradition, and have been described as being without precedent in contemporary Judaism. The numerous healings of

women such as the healing of Peter's mother-in-law, concern for the widow of Nain, and the healing of a woman who was bent for eighteen years, attested to Jesus' care and concern for women. This showed that according to Jesus, women are equal to men in the sight of God; and that love, grace and forgiveness are opened to women, and that women would be participants in the kingdom of God (Yemisi & Dada 2015:246).

However, according to Drury (1994:55), it is in the teaching of the Epistles (e.g. Ephesians) and the pastoral letters to Timothy and Titus, as well as the epistle of Peter that most of the material that keeps women in subordination to men has come. These materials mention, inter alia the following:

- "Wives, be subject to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church" (Eph 5:22-23; Col 3:18).
- "And so train the young women to love their husbands and children, ... kind and submissive to their husbands, that the word of God may not be discredited" (Titus 2:4-5).
- "... the women should keep silent in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be subordinate even as the law says" (1 Cor 14:34).

Yemisi & Dada (2015:246), mention that Paul is considered a controversial figure in the issue of women. They mention that it was some of his writings (as quoted above), which give clues that the status of women in his days was that of subordination within a patriarchal setup. However, it is believed that Paul was writing about women from different perspective. Paul might not necessarily have limited the status of women to that of submission, but it could be that he wrote being mindful of the culture and tradition of that time. That is why at a later time, Paul tried to recognize few women. He commended with great affection Phoebe (Rom.6:11); Priscillia, Junia and Nereus' sister (Rom.16:3, 7, 15). Also, Paul called Euodia and Syntyche his fellow workers. All these may suggest that before Paul's death the situation of women might have changed slightly. These have encouraged some churches such as the Lutherans, Methodists and United Reformed church to have women clergy. The movement towards equality of women and men in the church has gained speed from the twentieth century, and many Christians accept the equal status of men and women in the church (Drury 1994:56, 57).

3.5 WOMEN'S ROLES IN THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT WORSHIP

3.5.1 Women in Old Testament worship

The following illustrations show further that the Old Testament reinforces woman's equality in nature and in dignity with men: When Sarah was annoyed by her maidservant, Hagar, she sent her out of the house. When the angel of the LORD found her at a well, he said, "Hagar, servant of Sarai...." This is the only instance in all of the many thousands of ancient Near Eastern texts where a deity, or his messenger, calls a woman by name and thereby investing her with exalted dignity. Hagar is the Old Testament counterpart to the Samaritan woman (see John 4). Both were women and both were not of Abraham's family, yet God treated them with compassion, gave them special revelations and bestowed on them unconventional dignity (Waltke 1995: 8).

Also, in the Old Testament women were called to be "prophetesses." In this way God placed them on an equal status with their male counterparts (the prophets). Miriam who lived around 1400 B.C. (Exodus 15:20f) was the first of several who are referred to as such. Deborah (Judges 4:4-7), Isaiah's wife (Isaiah 8:3), Huldah (2 Kings 22:13-20), and the false prophetess Noadiah, as stated in Nehemiah 6:14, are others. Furthermore, Joel (2:28) predicts that in the last days the LORD will fulfil Moses's prayer that all the Lord's people, men and women alike, become prophets (Numbers 11:29), by filling them with the Holy Spirit. This was realised on the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit was given to both men and women, young and old alike, to enable them to proclaim boldly the triumphant news, Jesus is Lord of all, and to build his Church (Waltke 1995: 8; Holman, 2004 sv. prophetess).

One of the most significant stories with regard to the question of women's roles in worship and ministry, is that of the prophetess Huldah. During the reformation of Josiah, his workmen (who were repairing the temple), found the Book of the Law, which King Manasseh had neglected during the previous generation. Josiah directed five of the leaders, to Huldah to inquire from the God about the book, and not to her famous male contemporaries, viz. Jeremiah and Zephaniah. For the officials from king to go to a relatively unknown prophetess with such an important a matter, proves that during that period of Israel's history there was little or no prejudice against a woman's offering of prophecy (Waltke 1995:9; Wright 1994:122).

Miriam and Deborah composed the two oldest pieces of literature preserved in the Bible, which are regarded by scholars as literary masterpieces (Exodus 15 and Judges 5). Women celebrated before the LORD with singing, dancing, and tambourines (e.g., 1 Samuel 18:6; Psalm 68:25), although not being part of the temple choir (Waltke 1995:9).

3.5.2 Women in the New Testament worship

The New Testament is regarded as the criterion for what is Christian. It presents the history of the origin of the Christian faith. It is therefore necessary that given the negative experiences of women in the church today, they have to investigate whether these experiences, as mediated through Christian understanding, coincide with how things were at the beginning.

The role of women in ministry in the New Testament is better known and clearly documented. Luke wrote about the important role that women played on Paul's second missionary journey when he established the church in Macedonia and Achaia as shown in chapters 16 and 17 of the Book of Acts. The Apostle had a vision of a man of Macedonia begging him to come and help him, but when he arrived he found women in prayer who became his first converts. Phoebe, Prisca who is also called Priscilla, Junia, Euodia, Syntyche are celebrated as "minister" (diakonos), "co-worker" (sunergos), and "missionary" (apostolos). The mutual submission of men and women to one another is unique to the New Testament. However, their equality before God in their nature, spiritual gifts, and prayer is found in both Testaments. The question of the role of women in worship is not whether they should participate in ministry, because they obviously should, but it is whether they should rule the church (Waltke 1995:10).

Drury (1994:33) states that in the New Testament, the Apostle Paul seems to suggest that in Christianity distinctions of race, social status and gender do not apply when he wrote: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28). However, while this equality of the sexes is recognised as shown in the afore-mentioned scripture, most women think that this equality has had very little effect in their everyday lives until the twentieth century, since elsewhere in Paul's letters and in the letters written by some of his followers, this ideal seems to be contradicted. Holm (1994: xiii) agrees and submits that while women have a part to play in many religions, their role is almost

always subordinate to that of men, and happens mostly in private. Furthermore, there is a disparity between the classical teachings about the equality of men and women and women's lived experiences.

In recent time, the roles and status of women have changed gradually from subordinates to main leadership roles. This is attributed partly to the advent of Pentecostalism. For example, there are women superintendents in churches as well as women educators in Pentecostal colleges and seminaries. The other factor that enhances women's roles is that they are now enrolling in Bible colleges. According to 1993 statistics, 45% of women enrolled for seminary degree in the USA. Among African Independent Churches, female leaders often have influence; are able leaders with prophetic gifts that have left good marks in the African context (Yemisi & Dada 2015:247).

However, despite these positive changes, women still face challenges with regard to their roles in the church because some husbands do not support this. For example, the recent vote of the Church of England against the ordination of women bishops and the ordination of women into priesthood by the Church of Nigeria, Anglican Communion is an evidence of some of the challenges facing women in the contemporary church (Yemisi & Dada 2015:247).

3.6 THE EQUALITY OF MEN AND WOMEN IN WORSHIP

Waltke (1995: 8) states that while Feminism has value of reasserting the equality of women with men, unfortunately, both Judaism and Christianity have not only failed to proclaim this truth, but have shouted it down. However, the error is not in the Bible itself, but in the interpreters thereof. First, in the first creation account both men and women are created in God's image which, according to the ancient Near East, (as D. J. A. Clines has shown), entailed dominion. God crowned men and women as kings and queens to rule over his entire creation. Second, the account of Eve's creation reinforces and clarifies the equality of men and women. This is manifested in that when the Lord said, "I will make for Adam a helper suitable to him," he meant, he would form a woman who is equal to and adequate for the man (See also Drury 1994:33). Adam and Eve were opposite in sexual differentiation but equal in personhood and dignity. This is corroborated by Adam's response when he saw Eve. He articulated the human being's only words preserved from before the Fall. In celebration and admiration of

Eve's equality with him, Adam said: "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh." At the same time, he recognized her sexual differentiation from him by saying: "She shall be called 'woman' for she was taken out of man" (Genesis 2:23).

3.6.1 Women are equal to men in prayer

Women prayed directly to God without the priestly mediation of their husbands. For example, when Jacob defaulted in his responsibility to pray for his barren wife (Gen 30:1-2), unlike his godly forefathers who prayed for their children and wives, (see Gen 24:7, 12-15; 25:21), Rachel petitioned God directly, and God listened to her and opened her womb (Gen 30:22-24). Hannah, in her barrenness, went directly to God in prayer and sought for a son, independently from her husband, Elkanah and the high priest Eli. She went further, when challenged by Eli, to speak up and defend her right. She named her son Samuel, which means "Asked of God," and dedicated him to the LORD with the prayer that he would introduce kingship into Israel. "Hannah's prayer turned Israel around from the nadir of its spiritual history and political misfortune and started it on its upward ascent (Waltke 1995:9).

3.6.2 Equality of Women and men in prophesying and receiving God's revelations

Pertaining to women prophesying, Hamilton (2000:178) asserts that when Paul wrote in Corinthians 11:4, 5 that "Every man who prays or prophesies..." and "every woman who prays or prophesies..." he implied that women were allowed to pray or prophesy just as men did. Praying and prophesying were important activities in worship, because they summarized the full scope of Jewish priestly ministry. Also, according to the prophecy of Joel 2:28 when the Holy Spirit would have been poured on all flesh, your sons (men) and daughters (women) would prophesy.

Furthermore, there are accounts in the Bible of women who received direct revelations from God. When Rebekah felt the twins struggling in her womb, she asked God, "Why is this happening to me?" God revealed to her Jacob's triumph over Esau. Her husband Isaac, however, wanted to change this God-ordained events. This made the family somehow dysfunctional as shown in Genesis 25:22-28; 27:1-40. When King Jeroboam wanted a revelation from God he sent his disguised wife to the prophet Ahijah, who entrusted God's word to her, and she in turn mediated it to her husband (1 Kings 14:1-18) (Waltke 1995:9).

3.6.3 Women in teaching

Mothers stood on equal footing with fathers in teaching children. This is aptly illustrated in the wisdom literature: "She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue" (Proverbs 31:26). Also, the wise men in Israel actively promoted the role of women teaching in the home. In Proverbs 1:8 we find a father's command to the son, "do not forsake your mother's teaching." This seems unexceptional to the modern reader. Nowhere else in the wisdom literature of the ancient Near East, from the Euphrates to the Nile, is the mother mentioned as a teacher. In order for the mother to teach Israel's inherited wisdom, she herself had first to be taught. This implies that "son" in the Book of Proverbs is inclusive, and not gender specific (Waltke 1995: 9-10).

There are many other examples of women teachers, pastors and theologians in the contemporary church. Yolanda Dreyer was the first woman who was ordained a minister in the Afrikaans-speaking Dutch Reformed churches in South Africa. She was also the first woman who was the head of the Department of Practical Theology at the University of Pretoria, and she was the first woman who became the chairperson of the Society of Practical Theology in South Africa. She made many contributions on the position of women in marriage and in other spheres of life. At the University of South Africa (Unisa), the staff consists of black and white members in the Department of Philosophy, Practical and Systematic Theology. Among them is a woman, Elsabé Kloppers, who contributed in the hermeneutical approach to Practical Theology, with regard to the mediation between the Christian tradition and practical experiences (Pieterse 2017:6-7).

3.7 WOMEN AND LEADERSHIP ROLES

3.7.1 What is leadership?

Although this study is not about leadership per se, it is important that the notion of leadership be briefly discussed. Leadership has many definitions arising from the influence of world affairs and politics, as well as the many disciplines in which the leadership concept is studied. Tracing the evolution of the leadership concept from the first three decades of the twentieth century, the following can be gleaned: (a) Leadership is a process (b) Leadership involves influence (c) Leadership occurs in groups, and (d) leaderships involves common goals. Consequently, leadership can be

defined as a process whereby an individual, influences a group of individuals to achieve common goals.

Kwaka-Sumba & Le Roux (2017:135) state that women have been successful leaders the world over, but this is rarely seen as a norm, or readily accepted. In the political front, there have been female prime ministers such as Benazir Bhutto (Pakistan), Margaret Thatcher (of Britain) and Indira Gandhi (India); and current leaders such as Chancellor Angela Merkel (Germany) and President Dilma Rousseff (Brazil).

3.7.2 Women and leadership roles in the church

In her article *Women and Leadership from a Pastoral Perspective of Friendship*, Dreyer (2002:43-44) states that there is a growing unease among women and men who experience the leadership of the church as being stuck in a patriarchal mindset, exercising “hard authority” or power in an authoritarian manner. She advocates an alternative leadership, with a specific perspective on authority, which she calls “soft authority”. This perspective would lead to non-patriarchal and non-authoritarian forms of leadership. She asserts that while a church without authority will be unconvincing and without credibility, a church whose authority is based on coercive and abusive power is equally unpersuasive. This form of authority goes against the very essence of church as the body of Christ existing in the world to serve God and people.

The issue of women occupying leadership positions in the church differs according to various religious traditions. In the Roman Catholic Church, women are allowed to participate fully in church roles except in priestly roles. However, their exclusion from priestly roles was not considered as a form of discrimination as the belief is that it is men who have been called into the priesthood and not women. In Pentecostal churches, although women are allowed to aspire to the highest leadership positions, the majority of the leaders are men. In some of these churches there are female pastors, and also females who head some departments in the church (Attoh 2017:162-163).

The challenge faced by women to attain leadership positions has been represented through the “stained glass ceiling” metaphor. This is said to be an invisible, humanly created barrier preventing women from ascending into elite leadership positions within ecclesiastical organizations. This barrier differs in height depending on the church

tradition. However, because of some limitations of this metaphor, an alternative image of the “leadership labyrinth” was introduced. The labyrinth conveys the impression of a journey riddled with challenges all the way, requiring persistence, focus and awareness (Northouse 2013:352-353; Kwaka-Sumba & Le Roux 2017:137).

Various reasons are given for the few numbers of women in church leadership positions, among which are: First, is the reference to the Bible text where women are enjoined to be quiet in the church, and instead to be responsible to their husbands at home. Second, is the traditional role of a woman in the family as being subordinate to the man. This is said to influence men’s perception about women in leadership positions in the church. Third, it is also perceived that men do not readily subject themselves to a woman’s leadership unless they are sure that the said woman leader has what it takes to lead. Fourth, is the need for women to develop themselves and prepare themselves for leadership roles in the church. It is perceived that some women have the idea that leadership positions are meant for men, and consequently they do not need develop to themselves in that regard. The fifth factor is women’s encumbrances with domestic responsibilities. This is said to hinder them from active participation in leadership roles in the church (Attoh 2017:163-167).

Another factor as stated by Dreyer (2002:47), is disempowerment arising from the effects of sexism on women. Negative messages about womanhood have been internalized and external forces have kept women out of positions of power and authority. Women have not been socialized to be leaders. Natural leadership qualities in women have been suppressed by means of labels such as “unfeminine behaviour”. Furthermore, women have had little opportunity to develop leadership abilities. The church has substantially contributed to the disempowerment and exclusion of women from positions of power and authority. To this day women are excluded from leadership positions in some churches and are rather sparsely represented in others.

Leadership from a Perspective of Friendship: In traditional theology the image of the almighty all-powerful God emphasizes God’s transcendence and the distance between God and people, who are prone to brokenness and powerlessness. People who identify with God’s maleness and the wielding of power in their everyday lives can exercise their leadership and authority in the image of the almighty and all-powerful God. However, women who cannot identify with maleness and whose concrete reality

mostly does not include wielding power over others by “ruling” and controlling, need to find another perspective on leadership, power and authority. Women need to move away from the image of God as a “distant controlling device manufactured in the minds of men (Dreyer 2002:52).

Friendships between human beings and deities are described in the literature of antiquity, including the Bible. Both Abraham (2 Chron 20:7) and Moses (Ex 33:11) were called “friends of God”, and in John 15:14-15 Jesus calls the disciples his friends. In these friendships there is trust and sharing of secrets. Therefore, a different conception of the power, rule and authority of God can lead to a different practice in the leadership that is exercised in God’s name and in his service. In classical theism God is the king, having dominion from a distance, but if the power of God is seen from the perspective of friendship it becomes a different kind of power altogether. This is the power of compassion, as manifested in the ethics of Jesus (Dreyer 2002:54- 55).

Leadership in its pastoral approach: Dreyer (2002:57-58) states that Feminist theology sees God’s power not as hierarchical, but personal. God’s power serves love. Therefore, if Leadership draws from this power, it would show the type of compassion which is not a one-sided paternalistic pity, but is the disposition to love in a world filled with suffering. This compassion is the power that drives to justice, beyond the narrow limits of a legalism. This is leadership in its pastoral approach, intending to heal and bring hope for human brokenness.

3.7.3 Women in the AOG (BTG) leadership roles

As alluded to in section 1.2.1, in the AOG (BTG) there are no women in the high echelons of church leadership, such as the National Executive Committee (NEC) and the Back to God Teaching Team. Members of these structures are elected from ordained ministers in accordance with the document on rules and procedures of the church. Since no women have been ordained as ministers as yet, it follows that they are not eligible to be members in those committees. In most cases women are elected into committees which have something to do with women’s fellowship or other sub-committees of the church.

Mbamalu (2002:53-54), writing about women’s contribution in one of the urban AOG churches in KZN, says: “Of much concern is the issue of women and their contribution to the church and development. Across all of South Africa and, of course, the whole

of the African continent, women are the backbones of national economies”. He however laments that women in that AOG (BTG) church have been kept in a lowly state.

Responding to Mbamalu’s question as to why women are not involved in the church leadership, the pastor of the church said: “Women cannot be involved as elders of the church because the Bible specifically makes mention that they must not be made elders in the church [1 Timothy 2:9-15]. Women are not supposed to have authority over men in the church. Theirs is to take care of the children and be respectful to their husbands.” (Mbamalu 2002:54).

Furthermore, Mbamalu (2002:54) states that although there is a women's fellowship in that AOG church, women have little or no influence in the administration of the church. Church policies, are determined without the input of women. As a result, there was a general decline in women's capacity-building in the church. While the pastor asserts that the notion on the exclusion of women from the eldership positions in the church is anchored on biblical text, it can be seen that this notion originates from the western concept of patriarchal structure.

In addition, ordination of women to the priesthood is non-existent in the mission churches, such that the indigenous African churches have outstripped the missionary churches in this area, as they have many women church leaders and prophetesses. There are also some women founders of churches (Mbamalu 2002:54).

One of the women in the above-mentioned church stated that while they were aware of the Women Beijing Conference of 1995, and its attempt to empower women and to redress the dehumanisation and exclusion of women from the public life, they thought that issues discussed at that conference were for the worldly people. She mentioned that their husbands are Christians and behave better than most men who do not have knowledge of the Bible.

3.7.4 Overlap between leadership and liturgical leadership

Northouse (2013:2-4) writes about the evolution of leadership in the twentieth century. He shows that in the first three decades of this century leadership was about control, centralisation of power and domination. In the 1930s the emphasis shifted from domination to influence. In the 1940s this view shifted to the group approach, where leadership was said to be the behaviour of an individual while involved directing group

activities. The 1950s saw the continuance of the group theory, leadership being seen as effectiveness, and leadership as a relationship that develops shared goals. In the 1960s leadership was understood as behaviour that influences towards goals, while in the 1970s the organisational behaviour approach came to the forefront. In the 1980s leadership was rapidly developed, and the view thereof was that of influence, leadership-as-excellence and as a transformational process. However, in the 21st century, scholars agree that there is no common definition of leadership.

Although there is no common definition of leadership, some abiding components of leadership were identified as follows, as mentioned in section 3.7.1 above: leadership is a process, it leadership involves influence, it occurs in groups, and it involves common goals (Northouse 2013:5). These components of leadership can be experienced in both liturgical and secular leadership.

3.7.5 Liturgical presidency/leadership in the early church

Bradshaw (1983:3-4) states that liturgical presidency developed from the work of the clans of the Levites. There were twenty-four clans which alternated in doing work in the Temple, each consisting of an average of 300 priests and 400 Levites. However, in domestic liturgical practice, the head of the household had the prerogative of pronouncing a blessing over a meal with friends and colleagues. In the synagogue, there was a body of elders which had ultimate control over the synagogue and its members, but with no liturgical responsibility. It was the 'hazzan' or attendant who took care of the synagogue building and announced the beginning and end of the Sabbath. There was also the 'archisunagogos' who was the ruler or permanent superintendent of the synagogue. He or she had the responsibility to maintain order and supervise conduct of worship in the synagogue (Also, refer to Wright 1994:115). Later, bishops assumed the responsibility of liturgical rites and other liturgical acts, thus limiting the role of the lay men.

3.7.6 Women as liturgical practitioners

Berger (2006:755-756) argues that women have been liturgical practitioners through the ages although there is no liturgical history available to show women's ways of worship in a continuous manner. Therefore, she advocates gender-attentive approach to liturgical historiography, rather than the traditional approach. She continues to argue that traditional liturgical historiography was shaped by performances of gender, gender

division and symbolic meanings associated with masculinity and femininity. Traditional histories of worship speak of the power of gender, although it is deemed marginal to the development of rites and institutions, which are deemed central to the history of worship. She suggests that in order to bring traditional liturgical history to an end as we know it, women need to be brought to the centre of the history of worship.

3.7.7 Arenas of influence of women in church leadership

There are various ways in which women can contribute effectively as leaders. Ngaruiya (2017:38-44) mentions activities such as prevention of drug abuse, children and youth education, sex education and fighting against HIV and AIDS, entrepreneurship, music and church leadership development. For example, Mbuwayesango (2014: 84) reports that African women theologians have joined in the struggle against HIV and AIDS, participating in grassroots movements to prevent the spread of the epidemic.

From an academic leadership aspect, Fiorenza (2014:3-4) states that women theologians have a responsibility to insist that the study of the Bible and its reception history be changed, because the mainstream scholarship has not only theorized and served the interest of domination, but has also silenced women by excluding them from professional biblical studies.

3.8 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, liturgy and worship are major themes. After seeing several definitions of liturgy, the researcher agrees with Adam (1992:4-5), that liturgy can be defined as the joint action of Jesus Christ, the High Priest and his church for the salvation of human beings and the glorification of the Heavenly Father. Liturgy can manifest itself in various ways, such as the Eucharist (which is the basis and fountainhead of all liturgy), baptism, confirmation, orders, marriage and preaching. Also, liturgies can be distinguished as rituals of ultimate concern, formative for identity and inculcating particular visions of the good life (Smith 2009: 86-87).

The researcher dealt with worship regarding its meaning and various styles, among which are liturgical, traditional, revivalist, and seeker service. Since different religious traditions employ different formularies in their worship, it was necessary to see how far do women feature in the processes of worship. Therefore, the concept of liturgy

was also discussed. Related to it were liturgy as ritual, liturgy and tradition and liturgical inculturation. The views of Wepener, Wepener & Meyer, Barnard et al, Pieterse were key in the discussion of invented tradition, liturgical ritual, as well as liturgical inculturation.

Furthermore, the researcher discussed the role of women in major religions of the world, viz, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Christianity. Regarding worship in the context of the Bible, this discussion includes women's roles in the Old and New Testament worship; as well as the equality of men and women in various facets of worship, such as prayer and prophesying.

In summing up the chapter, the researcher discussed the role of women in leadership positions in the church. This included the overlap between leadership and liturgical leadership, liturgical presidency/leadership in the early church, as well as women as liturgical practitioners.

In this case it was seen that different Christian church traditions differed in their dealing with this matter. In the Roman Catholic Church, women are allowed participation in all roles except in the priesthood, while in Pentecostal churches, women are allowed participation in the priesthood although currently the majority are still men.

This chapter forms an important part of this research because this study is about how far women impact worship in their different churches. Therefore, the insights from this chapter will form a basis of comparison with the responses of the interview participants.

The next chapter entails the research methodology employed in this study.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the researcher deals with the qualitative research methodology as employed in this study. According to Neuman (2006:2) methodology and methods are sometimes inappropriately used as synonyms. He asserts however, that while the two terms are closely linked and interdependent, they are distinct. While method refers to sets of specific techniques for selecting cases, measuring and observing aspects of social life, gathering, refining and analysing data, as well as reporting results, methodology is broader. Methodology refers to understanding the social-organizational context, philosophical assumptions, ethical principles and political issues of the enterprise of social researchers who use methods. That is, it is the general approach to studying research topics, which relates to theories and methods (Silverman 2000:300).

This chapter will include the research setting, research design, preparation for collection of data, sampling techniques and data collection methods. Also, included in the methodology are data analysis, criteria for measurement of quality, limitations of the study and ethical considerations.

4.2. RESEARCH SETTING

As stated in section 2.2.1.1 the research was conducted in three Assemblies of God township churches in the Germiston District of the Eastern Reef region. The number of participants was supposed to be a total of 30 women, ten from each church; and three congregational leaders, one from each church. While all three congregational leaders were interviewed, due to some personal commitments, only 23 women participated in the focus group interviews: six, eight and nine participants at the abovementioned churches respectively.

4.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design serves as the architectural blueprint of the project and links parts of the project such as data collection and data analysis to research questions; developing and modifying theory, as well as identifying and dealing with validity threats (Bickman & Rog 2009:11; Maxwell 2009:215). However, qualitative research does not

understand “design” as fixed standard arrangements of research conditions and methods having their own coherence and logic. Rather, design is understood in a less descriptive way to be an interactive model which consists of components of a research study and the ways in which these components may affect and be affected by one another (Maxwell 2009:214-215).

Creswell (2009:3), corroborated by Tashakkori & Teddlie (2009:284), states that the two research designs, namely, qualitative and quantitative should not be viewed as polar opposites or dichotomies, rather they should be seen as opposite ends of a continuum, in the middle of which resides mixed methods.

This study adopts a qualitative research paradigm. In a qualitative paradigm, research takes the insider (“emic”) perspective as its departure to social action, since its goal is to understand and describe human behaviour rather than to explain and predict it (Babbie & Mouton 2001:53). In this study, the researcher attempted to understand the role of women in AOG (BTG) worship in Germiston District from women’s perspectives, not necessarily wanting to generalise the findings to other areas.

4.4 PREPARATION FOR DATA COLLECTION

4.4.1 Permission for access to the churches

In preparing for collection of data from the churches in the Germiston District, the researcher first wrote a letter to the Regional Council Committee (RCC), which is a committee having oversight of the AOG churches in the Eastern Reef region. After permission was received from the RCC, the researcher wrote letters to the congregational leaders of the churches he had identified, to request permission to conduct the research. In these letters he identified himself, stated the purpose of the research, as well as stating the research procedures that will be followed. See Appendix 4 on page 151 and Appendix 6 on page 153.

4.5 SAMPLING TECHNIQUES

Sampling is a statistical procedure for finding cases to study. It is useful in that it allows the researcher to feel confident that the cases selected are representative of the population being studied and that broader inferences can be made because of such representativeness (Silverman 2005:380). Tashakkori & Teddlie (2009:291) agree and

state further that the units of analysis selected in a study maximises the researcher's ability to answer the research questions of the study. According to Berg (2007:41), the logic of using a sample is to make inferences about some larger population from a smaller one, (i.e. the sample). In this study, purposive sampling technique was employed.

4.5.1 Purposive Sampling

Neuman (2012: 147) lists various types of non-probability sampling e.g. convenience, quota, purposive, snowball, deviant case and sequential sampling. In this study a purposive sampling was used. In Purposive sampling a researcher seeks all possible cases that fit particular criteria, using various methods (Seale 2012:587).

Traditional purposive sampling is a technique in which specific cases (units) are selected based on a specific purpose or research question rather than randomly. In this case the researcher's aim is to generate much detail from few cases and maximise the possibility of answering the research questions. There are three broad categories of purposive sampling viz. sampling to achieve representativeness or comparability; unique cases or sampling special; and sequential sampling (Tashakkori & Teddlie 2009:291-292). This study adopted a sampling that sought to achieve representativeness. In this study the participants were chosen on the criterion that they were fairly knowledgeable with worship in the AOG (BTG) church. The researcher was assisted by congregational leaders in this regard.

4.6 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Two methods of data collection were employed in this study, i.e. qualitative focus group interviews, and qualitative semi-structured interviews. Three focus group interviews were conducted with women congregants, one at each of three churches; and three structured interviews with congregational leaders, one at each church.

4.6.1 Qualitative focus group interviews

A focus group interview is a type of group interview formed by an investigator to discuss a particular topic or topics, in which an interviewer asks questions to a group, and responses are given in an open discussion among the group members (Neuman

2012:394; Berg & Lune 2012:164; Patton 1990:173; and Marczyk, DeMatteo & Festinger 2005:154).

4.6.1.1 Evolution of focus groups

Citing Kidd & Parshall, Mogoane (2012:49) states that focus group interviews evolved out of research methods designed by Paul Lazarsfeld during the second world war. The method was designed to gauge the audiences' responses to propaganda and radio broadcasts. However, the focus group method was later used in marketing and media research; and recently the method has popularly been used either as the primary data collection method in health and social sciences or in combination with other methods such as single interviews, surveys and observations. In this study it is used in combination with qualitative semi-structured interview method.

4.6.1.2 Uses of focus groups

Focus groups can be used as a stand-alone data gathering strategy or as a line of action in a triangulated project, such as in an exploratory investigation in emerging areas of interest. They can also be used in combination with individual interviews as a kind of validity check on findings or in preparation for the design of a survey instrument (Berg & Lune 2012:164-165).

Information obtained from focus groups can also be used to provide insight into how various procedures, systems or products are viewed, as well as the desires and concerns of a given population. In this way the information obtained from a starting point in generating hypotheses, developing questionnaires and identifying issues to be examined using more quantifiable research methods (Marczyk et al 2005:156).

In addition to the abovementioned uses, focus groups can be used to diagnose a potential for problems with a new program, service or product; and interpreting previously obtained quantitative results (Stewart, Shamdasani & Rook 2009:591). In this study the focus group interviews were used as a data collection method in combination with qualitative semi-structured interviews, for triangulation purposes.

4.6.1.3 Composition of focus groups

According to Marczyk et al (2005: 154), like many other qualitative research methods, there is no definitive way of designing and conducting a focus group. While Ammerman et al (2012:501) state that a focus group can consist of at least four members, Marczyk et al (2005:154), prefer 6-10 participants, because if participants are fewer than 6, diversity of opinions to be offered may be restricted. On the other hand, more than 10 participants in a focus group may limit the time for each individual to express their opinions comprehensively. In addition, focus groups are typically homogeneous (Patton 1990:173), in the sense that they are composed of individuals who share a particular characteristic, demographic or interest in the topic being discussed. In this study, the focus groups consisted of women between the ages 21 and 65 years old who belonged to the same local church. The researcher did not choose congregants under 18 years because most of them would be minors and this would have implications in ethical considerations. Also, most congregants under 18 years would not have sufficient experience to relate women's roles and to have seen their impact in church worship over a sufficiently long period of time, although as young people, they may have a unique perspective on the issues pertinent to this study. Furthermore, those over the age of 65 would probably pose a challenge of availability for focus group interviews. Moreover, most of them would have it difficult communicating in English, which was the language in which the interviews were conducted.

4.6.1.4 Conducting focus group interviews

In this study the focus group interviews were conducted by a research team consisting of the moderator as well as the research assistant. In this research, the researcher acted as the moderator.

The role of the moderator: It is important that a focus group be conducted by a trained moderator. The moderator is responsible for setting the ground rules, raising the discussion topics and maintaining the focus of the group discussion. Among the important issues in the ground rules are matters of confidentiality, respect for other members of the group and their opinions as well as speaking one at a time. Also, consideration has to be given to issues pertaining to themes and sub-themes for group

discussions, the make-up of the group as well as the questions to be asked (Marczyk et al 2005:155).

As suggested by May (1993:97), the researcher first established rapport with the interviewees by ensuring that there was a basic sense of trust between them. This is meant to enhance the interviewees' participation, as well as free flow of information. The other important issues considered by the researcher was to make a distinction between directive questions and non-directive questions. Directive questions are those that require a 'yes' or 'no' answer, while non-directive questions allow more latitude for expanding the response. Also, probing (encouraging a respondent to give or clarify an answer) was employed by the researcher (May 1993:97).

The researcher's assistant: The researcher's assistant helped with the organisation of the venue and recording of the proceedings. This enabled the researcher to concentrate on facilitating the discussion and to capture the non-verbal actions of the participants.

4.6.1.5 Focus group interview guide

In interviewing the focus group participants, the researcher made use of the focus group interview guide. The interview guide is an important tool in conducting the focus group because although it does not contain all the questions to be asked during the group discussion, it has a set of very general open-ended questions which serve to direct the discussion and keep it in focus (Stewart et al 2009:600). In this study, the interview guide has four major themes viz. knowledge of the concept of worship and roles played by men and women in the church; the impact of women in worship; factors promoting or hindering women's roles and impact in worship; as well as improvement to the current situation. Under each theme there are various sub-themes as shown in Appendix 2 on page 149.

4.6.1.6 Advantages and disadvantages of focus groups

Advantages of focus groups: Stewart, Shamdasani & Rook (2009:592-594) mention the following advantages of focus groups: First, focus groups are advantageous with regard to time and budgetary considerations in providing a quick overview of differences and range of ideas within a group. Second, focus groups provide a rich body of data which is expressed through the respondents' own words and activities.

Since types of research data can be placed somewhere in the continuum between the 'emic' and 'etic', focus group data are more towards the emic side of the continuum. Third, focus groups allow the researcher to interact directly with the respondents. This gives the opportunity for probing, clarifications and follow-up questions, as well as the opportunity for researchers to observe non-verbal responses of the respondents. Fourth, focus groups allow respondents to build on responses of other group members, and thus giving more information than would have been obtained in individual interviews. Fifth, they are flexible in the sense that they can be used in a variety of settings and to examine a wide range of topics. Sixth, the results of focus group research are usually easy to understand since they can be derived from the verbal responses of the participants. Also, according to Berg (2007:148) focus group interviews place participants on a more even footing with each other and the investigator; and they do not require complex sampling strategies.

Disadvantages of focus groups: First, due to the relatively small size of the focus group, the information obtained through this method may not be representative of the whole population studied. Second, while the focus group method can be advantageous in distilling perceptions and concerns, it is also likely that the individual's opinions can be altered through group influence. Third, as a qualitative research tool, it is difficult to quantify information obtained from a focus group (Marczyk et al 2005:156).

Furthermore, Stewart et al (2009:594) state that in a focus group setting, an unskilled or inexperienced moderator can bias the results of the research by knowingly or unknowingly providing cues about what type of responses are desirable. Also, according to Bernard (2000:210) familiarity tends to inhibit disclosure if focus group members know one another.

4.6.2 Qualitative semi-structured interviews

A qualitative semi-structured interview is the interview where questions are normally specified by the interviewer, but is free to probe beyond the answers in a way that seeks elaboration and clarification. This interview allows the interviewee to answer in his/her own terms than the standardized interview permits. The interviewer should not only concentrate on the content of the interview, but should also record the nature of the interview, the way in which they asked the questions and the context of the

interview (May 1993:93). In this study the researcher asked questions as stated in Appendix 3 on page 150, but probed further, for elaboration and clarification.

May (1993:94) states that there exists a tension between subjectivity and objectivity in the interviewing process. On one hand the interview is said to produce knowledge free of prejudice or bias, but on the other hand a self-conscious awareness must be maintained in order to let the interview flow. In order to achieve a balance in interviewing, the following should be taken note of: First, is the effect that the interviewer has on the interviewee. In this regard, the age, sex, race or impartiality of the interviewer plays an important role. Second, the understanding of the interviewee about what is expected of him/her in the whole interview process. If the interviewer does not know what is expected of him/her, he/she may feel uncomfortable and consequently affect the data collected. Third, is motivation. The interviewer must maintain the interest of the interviewee by making sure that the interviewees feel that their participation and answers in the interview are valued.

In order to cater for the concerns mentioned above, the researcher acknowledged that since the interviewees were aware that he was a pastor in the area, they might have been cautious of giving responses that might have 'offended' him. However, the researcher allayed those fears by informing the interviewees to be as free and sincere as possible without fearing him. He also informed them about anonymity confidentiality of the interviews.

Also, to ensure that the interviewees understood what was expected of them, he gave them the interview schedule beforehand, so that they could acquaint themselves with it and to prepare themselves for appropriate responses. Moreover, the participants who were selected for this purpose were those regarded as knowledgeable in women's roles in the AOG(BTG) worship. To ensure that participants felt their responses were valuable, the researcher, in his introductory remarks mentioned the value of their sincere opinions for the aims of the research, i.e. to recommend changes for the improvement of worship in order to enhance the church's overall witness.

4.7 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETRATION OF THE FINDINGS

4.7.1 Analysis strategies for qualitative data

Maxwell (2009: 236) insists that every qualitative research requires decisions about how data analysis is to be done. Supported by Creswell (2009:184), he states further

that data analysis should be conducted simultaneously with data collection as this allows the researcher to focus his/her interviews and observations as well as deciding how to test emerging conclusions.

Preparation for data analysis is usually done by first converting the raw material such as audio tapes into partially processed material, e.g. transcripts. These are then coded and subjected to a particular analysis scheme. The analysis scheme employed depends on whether the themes (categories) emerge during the analysis (emergent themes) or whether the themes were determined before the analysis (pre-determined themes). The development of these categories that summarize the whole mass of the narrative data, is the essence of qualitative data analysis (Stewart et al 2009:301).

4.8.2 INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

Interpretation in qualitative research implies that the researcher draws meaning from the findings of data analysis. This meaning may result in lessons learned, information to compare with the literature, or personal experiences. Also, interpretation of results in quantitative research happens when the researcher draws conclusions from the results for the research questions, hypotheses, and the larger meaning of the results (Creswell 2009:230).

4.8 CRITERIA FOR MEASUREMENT OF QUALITY

4.8.1 Measures of trustworthiness

As a way of clarifying the notion of objectivity, qualitative research uses the concept of trustworthiness. This implies the way in which a researcher convinces himself or herself and his/her audience that the findings of the research are worth taking note of (Babbie & Mouton: 2001:276). In this study, criteria for measurement of quality are credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability.

Credibility (comparable to internal validity): Bickman & Rog (2009:11-12) state that internal validity refers to the extent to which causal conclusions can be made in a study, i.e. the certainty that particular outcomes can be attributable to a given program. On the other hand, credibility refers to the validity of a study and whether the design of the study is sufficiently rigorous to make definitive conclusions and desired recommendations. Among the factors that determine credibility are the person or party

making judgments, research question or representativeness of a sample in a descriptive study.

Babbie & Mouton (2001:277) mention that among the factors that enhance credibility are prolonged engagement in the field until saturation is reached; persistent observation (i.e. constantly pursuing interpretations in different ways); triangulation (collecting information about different events and relationships from different points of view); referential adequacy (the materials available to document one's findings); peer debriefing (reviewing perceptions, analyses and insights with a colleagues of similar status who are outside the context of the study, but has general understanding of the nature of the study); and member checks, i.e. going back to the source of the information to check both the data and the interpretation. To enhance credibility in this study, two methods of data collection will be employed for triangulation. However, because of time constraints, prolonged observation and peer debriefing could not be done. Moreover, this is only a MTh study and is not as extensive as it would be for a PhD.

Transferability: Transferability is comparable to external validity, which is the extent to which it is possible to generalize the findings (from the context and data) of a research, to other populations and settings (Bickman & Rog 2009:12). Transferability refers to the extent to which the findings can be applied to other contexts or with other respondents. The following conditions hold for transferability: First, are thick descriptions. The researcher must collect sufficient detailed descriptions with precision about the sending context to allow judgments about transferability to the receiving context. Second, is purposive sampling. This allows the qualitative researcher to maximize the range of specific information that can be obtained from, and about the context (Babbie & Mouton 2001:277). To enhance transferability in this study, the researcher employed thick description in data collection and analysis, over and above the use of purposive sampling.

Dependability: According to Neuman (2006:196), in qualitative studies, the setting in which researchers operate is evolving and data collection is interactive. Therefore, the context dictates unique measures that may not be repeated. However, dependability refers to the extent to which an enquiry will provide its audience with the evidence that if it were to be repeated with the same or similar respondents (subjects), in the same or similar context, the findings would be similar (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 278). This

can be made possible by reporting in detail, the processes of the study, so that future researchers can be able to repeat the study. So, to enhance dependability in this study, due diligence was taken to report the processes of the research in as much detail as possible.

Confirmability: This is the degree to which the findings are the product of the focus of the research and not of the biases of the researcher, i.e. there should be sufficient evidence that the conclusions, interpretations and recommendations can be traced to their sources and if they can be supported by the inquiry (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 278). In order to reduce the effect of investigator bias in this study, triangulation by way of the use of focus group interviews and semi-structured interviews was employed.

4.8.2 Authenticity

While qualitative researchers adhere to the principle of validity to be truthful, and to avoid false and distorted accounts, they use the term validity infrequently because of its close relationship with quantitative measurement. While validity may mean truthful or correct, authenticity means giving a fair, honest and balanced account of social life from a viewpoint of someone who lives it. This is so because qualitative researchers are less concerned with matching an abstract concept with empirical data, but they are more concerned with portraying social life that is true to the experiences of the people being studied (Neuman 2012:124-125). For this study, the researcher made due diligence to ensure that the interviews are conducted in such a way that all participants express their views freely, without undue interference from him. Also, the researcher attempted to be as objective as possible in reporting both the content and context of the interviews.

4.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Voluntary participation and informed consent: Sieber (2009: 110-111) is of the view that voluntary informed consent goes beyond the consent forms issued by the researcher to the participants. It has to start as a conversation between the participants and the researcher, which will continue throughout the research. By voluntary participation it means that participants will participate in the research study without undue threat or inducement, and that they will know that they can quit at any time without repercussions. On the other hand, by informed consent it is meant that

participants will be informed of what they need to know about the research, including who the researcher is and what the research is about.

In view of issues in the paragraph above, in this study the researcher first called a meeting with all participants. In this meeting he discussed in detail the research procedures, including issues of voluntary participation, informed consent, the use of the tape recorder, confidentiality and anonymity. Thereafter he issued out the voluntary informed consent letter as shown in Appendix 1, on page 147 for participants to sign. For the sake of confidentiality, the appendices at the end of this report are only examples, the originals are at the University of Pretoria. Also, letters of permission for the study, from the AOG churches were not included in the list of appendices.

Confidentiality: Confidentiality refers to access of data, not to people directly. This means adequate safeguards to access to research data must be employed (Sieber 2009:123). To ensure confidentiality in this study, all information regarding the research study will be held in a safe place. Only the researcher, his assistant and his supervisor will have access to data of the research study. All data will be kept at the University of Pretoria for fifteen years.

Anonymity: Anonymity means that the researcher does not have the record of the identity of the participants (Sieber 2009:124). In this research study, numbers were allocated to focus group participants, such Participant 1, Participant 2, etc. Pseudo-names such as CL1 (for the first congregational leader) were used in the qualitative semi-structured interviews. This was meant to hide the identity of the participants and their organization (church).

No harm to Participants: The researcher realises that every research dealing with people has the risk of harming them in one way or another. This harm might occur when information that may embarrass them or endanger their home life, friendships or jobs is revealed. While the participants had understood what the study was all about and had signed the voluntary informed consent forms, the researcher ensured that there was no harm to the participants by way of endangering the relationships between congregants and congregational leaders. On the contrary, based on some of their comments after the interviews, some participants were encouraged to think even more about the research topic.

Deception: In this study there was no need for the researcher to hide his identity or the aims of the study. The researcher revealed his identity and purpose of the research in the letter of request for access to the churches, and in the meetings which he held with the participants.

4.10 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

As Marshall & Rossman (2006:42) mention, all research projects have limitations which derive from, inter alia, their conceptual framework and design. Consequently, by acknowledging this reality, the researcher does not make overweening claims about generalizability and conclusiveness of what has been learned in the study. It follows from this understanding that the limitations of this study are hereunder mentioned:

- Since this study concentrates on a few churches out of a total number of twenty-six churches in the Germiston District, it is not possible to generalize the findings to the whole district.
- Although the researcher allowed the participants to express some of their ideas in their indigenous languages, English was the primary language of the interviews. This might, however, have affected the way in which participants expressed their opinions and consequently the accuracy of the data collected.
- The cross-sectional nature of the study due to time and financial constraints did not allow for information to be collected up to saturation point.
- Due to the complex nature of group dynamics in focus group interviews, it may be difficult to avoid the effect of friendship pairs/groups, in cases where the participants have prior interaction. Moreover, the other disadvantage of the focus group interview method is that it takes place outside the natural setting of social interaction. This might have been the case in this study.

4.12 CONCLUSION

This chapter discussed the methodology of the study. That is, the researcher's understanding of the social-organizational context, philosophical assumptions, ethical principles and political issues pertaining to the methods used in the study. This entailed the research setting; and research design, which is a qualitative research paradigm.

The data collection methods employed in conducting the study were qualitative focus group interviews and semi-structured interviews, in which the sampling adopted was purposive. While criteria for measurement of quality adopted in the study were credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability; as well as authenticity, ethical considerations were confidentiality, informed consent, anonymity and no harm to participants.

One of the limitations of the study is that since it concentrates on a few churches out of a total number of twenty-six churches in the Germiston District, it is not possible to generalize the findings to the whole district.

In the next chapter the researcher deals with the presentation and analysis of empirical data; and interpretation and discussion of the findings.

CHAPTER 5: PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF EMPIRICAL DATA; AND INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents empirical data from three qualitative focus group interviews, as well as data from qualitative semi-structured interviews with three congregational leaders, whose profiles are given below in sections 5.2.1 and 5.2.2 respectively. This presentation as well as analyses are done in accordance with the themes stated in the respective interview schedules, as well as the themes that arose during the interviews.

As Barnard et al (2014:53) and Tesch (1990:95) mention, the analysis of empirical data can be done in various ways and at different levels from different perspectives. However, the general principle is that the analysis should not only be based on the thinking about one's data, but it should also be done with and through the data. This enhances the production of fruitful ideas. In this regard, the 'emic' point of view by the participants must be confronted by the scholarly anthropological, sociological, psychological and theological outside perspective ('etic' point of view) of scholars in theology and liturgical studies.

In this study, content analysis of data is adopted. According to Tesch (1990:79), the central idea in content analysis is to categorise the many words of the texts into much fewer content categories. Therefore, the basic procedure in content analysis is to design categories which are relevant to the research purpose and to sort all occurrences into these categories.

In section 5.3.1 the researcher discusses and interprets the findings by focussing on the research questions, while in section 5.3.2 the researcher discusses and interprets other empirical research themes. As Creswell (2003:194-195) states, interpretation involves making sense of the data, and asking questions with regard to what was learned. In this research, the researcher has done this and also compared the findings with the views of scholars as entailed in the literature review of this study.

5.2 PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF EMPIRICAL DATA

5.2.1 Presentation and analysis of data from qualitative focus group interviews

This section presents empirical data from the three qualitative focus group interviews. The first focus group interview consisted of eight participants, who were younger

women in their late twenties, together with middle-aged women in their late forties and early fifties, as well as women above sixty years. Although they appeared knowledgeable about their roles and impact in worship, they seemed concerned regarding their status as women in church worship. At times during the interviews their frustration was evident. This frustration stemmed from their observation that not much is changing.

The second focus group consisted of nine members, mostly women who were in their late twenties up to middle fifties. There appeared to be no elderly women in their sixties. They also showed the same frustration that was seen in the first focus group. The third focus group consisted of six participants. These were middle-aged women except one, who would have been in her late twenties or early thirties. These women appeared enthusiastic about the women's ministry in their church but had some reservations about women's roles and participation in combined worship for men and women.

Maxwell (2009:236) states that strategies for qualitative data analysis fall into three main categories, viz. Categorizing strategies, connecting strategies as well as memos and displays. Categorizing strategies involve inter alia, coding and thematic analysis while connecting strategies involve narrative analysis and individual case studies. For this study, data from focus group interviews and semi-structured interviews will be analysed through coding and thematic analysis.

The steps followed in data analysis for this study are in accordance with the description given by Creswell (2009:185 -186):

Step 1: Organise and prepare data for analysis

Step 2: Read through all the data

Step 3: Begin a detailed analysis with a coding process, following the steps in Tesch's descriptive method of open coding as described by Tesch (1990:142-145) and Creswell (2009:186-189):

1. Get a sense of the whole by reading through the transcriptions carefully, writing down the ideas that come to mind.
2. Pick one interview document and go through it asking yourself what it is about, and its underlying meaning; write your thoughts in the margins.

3. When this task is complete, make a list of all topics, and cluster together similar topics. Form the topics into columns arrayed as major topics.
4. Take this list and go back to the data. Abbreviate the topics as codes, and write the codes next to the appropriate segments of the text. Try this organizing scheme to see if new categories and codes emerge.
5. Find the most descriptive wording for your topics and turn them into categories. Look for ways of reducing the number of categories by grouping topics that relate to each other.
6. Make a final decision on the abbreviation of each category and alphabetize these codes.
7. Assemble the data material belonging to each code in one place and perform a preliminary analysis.
8. Recode your existing data if necessary.

Step 4: Use the coding process to generate a description of the setting or people as well as categories for analysis.

Step 5: Advance how the description and themes will be presented in the qualitative narrative, usually by narrative passage to convey the analysis.

Step 6: Interpret the data by asking questions such as “What were the lessons learned?” These lessons could be the researcher’s own interpretation based on the experience he/she brings to the study; or meanings that he/she derived from comparison with literature review.

The process of data analysis: After data collection, the researcher transcribed the tapes of the interviews. During transcription, he had in mind the themes in the interview schedules. The researcher then followed the coding process as outlined in Step 3 above.

The table below shows the themes and sub-themes identified in the process of analysis of data from the focus group interviews:

Table 5.1: Themes and sub-themes from focus group data analysis

Theme	Sub-themes
1. Participants' understanding of the concept of worship; and roles played by men and women in worship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the concept of worship • Roles played by men in worship • Role played by women in worship • Major differences between the AOG (BTG) and other Pentecostal churches with regard to the role of women in worship
2. Women's impact in worship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas where women make significant impact in worship • Areas where women make less impact in worship
3. Factors promoting or hindering women roles and impact in worship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Factors promoting women's roles and impact in worship • Factors hindering women's roles and impact in worship
4. Improvements to the current situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role of congregational leaders in improving the situation • The role of women leaders in improving the situation
5. Challenges faced by women in worship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Judgmental attitude by congregational leaders • Home background
6. Women's concerns regarding their roles in worship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling oppressed • Being good but not good enough • Women's voice not heard

5.2.1.1 Participants' understanding of the concept of worship; and roles played by men and women in church worship

(a) Participants' understanding of the concept of worship

The participants in the focus groups presented various perspectives of what worship is. While one participant pointed out that worship is about serving, (such as participating in leadership activities), another went further to qualify this as a service unto God that must manifest inside and outside the church. Still, another participant mentioned that worship is a relationship between an individual and God. Another participant stated that with regard to singing, worship differs from ordinary singing in the sense that it is the type of singing that brings a person closer to God. She said: *“Worship in terms of singing, I see it as being more intimate with God, rather than [just] singing. In worship you ... you feel that you are now closer to God.”*

Summarising what other participants had said, one participant said: *“I would say worship is the good work that one does, that gives glory to God. It can be at church, it can be done outside of church. When you take care of the needy, it's a form of worship. When you offer or give it's a form of worship. The observer should see God's glory or God being magnified in your deeds. That's worship, according to me.”*

In the second focus group, views about worship were not as diverse as those of the first group. While one of the participants mentioned that worship is expressed to God only, another said worship is acknowledging God. One of them went further to say that besides the worship we are used to, which involves singing praises to the Lord, the whole of a Christian's lifestyle is worship. She said: *“Whatever I do is a worship to God... lifestyle as a whole, the way I do things is a worship. I pray lots not because I have to pray, but it's a worship to God. Also, one of them went further to give a holistic description of worship as follows: “Ja, the way you dress, ... and the way you address people ... the way you talk to people. It's language, the way you dress, the way you carry yourself ... your attitude. All these things constitute a form of worship, because worship is what you were created to be, ... so everything you do is worship in one way or another.”*

As examples of worship they mentioned paying homage to God through prayer, praising God by singing, reading God's word, giving and testifying.

In the third focus group views about worship were also diverse but agreed to a large extent with those of the other focus groups. One participant in this focus group described worship as an activity in a relationship between a deity and one who believes in that deity in this way: *“I think worship is an activity whereby there is a Higher Power, and there is another person who believes in that Higher Power, and in my instance ...my Higher Power is obviously God. As participant number one has said, because of that relationship, you start honouring that person [deity]. But worship for me is not just limited to singing or praying. It is also in my life-style, how I live, how I walk, how I talk ...”*

According to the participants, other activities entailed in worship, are caring and praying for one another, preaching, thanksgiving, catering and hospitality, as well as fundraising. Cleaning was also mentioned as part of worship, as it ensured that worship took place in a clean and tidy environment.

While one participant stated that what motivates her to worship God is that she feels comfort in God’s presence, another participant said she worships God, first because he is God, second, because she believes in him and third, she trusts him in everything, because God is like her father.

(b) Roles played by men in worship

Among the activities stated by the participants in the second focus group, as men’s roles in church worship were the leadership role, preaching, conducting Holy Communion and water baptism, conducting a special prayer for people in authority, leading in church projects and decision-making on behalf of the church. One participant said: *“In my church we have a part where men pray for kings and authority of the world. That is done by men [only]; and also, when it comes to pastors, I have never seen a woman being a pastor in my church.”* The participants this focus group unanimously agreed that men were doing almost everything in church. In exasperation, one participant asked: *“Could we be wrong to say they do it all?”*

Speaking about men as the only people allowed to run the programme of the church service, one participant in the second focus group said: *“I think the services have been conducted over the years by men. You have to be a male figure to be a conductor of the service, most of the time, 90% of the time.”*

Participants in the third focus group agreed that men's roles included preaching, participating in the worship team, taking care of the spiritual and organizational needs of the church, visiting the sick at home, and ensuring that there is order in the church.

(c) Roles played by women in worship

While participants in all focus groups agreed that men did most of the major activities of the church, participants in the first and second focus groups stated that women's roles included teaching in the children's ministry (children's Sunday school classes), catering, participating in the church choir and singing in the worship team, prophesying, as well as participating in the activities of the women's ministry. The third focus group mentioned that while men took care of the spiritual needs of the whole church, women took care of their own spiritual needs in the women's ministry. All the focus groups agreed that women were active in the church's fundraising, especially for evangelistic campaigns. One participant in the third focus group who seemed to be one of the leaders in the women's ministry asserted: "...we women of the AOG, we've got a duty. Our duty is to pray and work. We make money so that ...our pastors must go out and preach the word of God..." She repeated this statement some time later by saying: "Especially in our church, women do have their role: The role of women in the AOG is to pray, is to make sure there is money. They make money, that is our main role."

(d) Major differences between the AOG (BTG) and other Pentecostal churches with regard to the roles of women in worship

Women preachers and pastors: Participants in two focus groups stated that the major differences in roles played by women in the AOG (BTG), when compared to other Pentecostal churches are that in other Pentecostal churches women are allowed to be pastors. They are also given the opportunity to preach to the whole church, unlike in the AOG (BTG) where they preach mostly in the women's ministry. Also, in other Pentecostal churches women take leadership positions for the whole church while in the AOG (BTG), this is limited to the women's ministry.

Women as congregational leaders: Emphasizing the role played by women and the recognition they enjoy in other Pentecostal churches, one participant said: "The

difference is women in leadership. They have a say about matters of the church. They have their say. So, they are given a chance ...they are recognised.”

Women’s spiritual gifts becoming more conspicuous: In the first focus group, the participants asserted that since women participate fully in church activities, in other Pentecostal churches, their spiritual gifts are more evident than those of women in the AOG (BTG).

5.2.1.2 Women’s impact in worship

According to the participants in the first focus group, women (20 years of age and older) in their church, constitute about 60% of the church. However, one of the participants mentioned that those who make a significant impact in the church make about 20% of the total number of congregants. In the second focus group, participants mentioned that there were about 150 women in their church, but only about 40% (i.e. about 60) of them make a meaningful impact in worship. In the third focus group one participant stated that there were 184 women in their church of which about 56 play active roles in the church.

(a) Areas where women make significant impact in worship

Participants in the focus groups asserted that the major impact of women in worship is evident in children’s ministry and fundraising. Responding to a question by the researcher with regard to the reasons for their effectiveness in children’s ministry one participant stated: *“I think with children’s ministry, it’s just the natural nurturing character that they [women] are born with. It is a gift from God that they have ... that motherly thing that they have.”*

Another participant emphasized that women are passionate and effective in children’s ministry because they want to ensure that children are nurtured well as a preventive measure, because otherwise, as mothers they will experience difficulties when the children grow up. She said: *“I think the role that is played by women ... is because we women, are the ones who experience the difficulty of raising a child. If you ... neglect a child ... and if the child is led astray, the mother is the one experiencing difficulty at home. That is why we want to give them the [Gospel of] Jesus while they are still young.”*

With regard to fundraising, participants attributed the impact that women have to their ability to convince congregants to contribute money for the needs of the church. Furthermore, in the second focus group, one participant mentioned that women participate actively in counselling.

(b) Areas of less impact in worship

While participants acknowledged that there are areas of worship where their impact is not significant, they attributed this situation to the system of running the church. They said that women are not elected into leadership positions such as eldership and deaconry. They are also not elected into church committees, except in the case where there are few men, whose number does reach the quota needed for the church committee. Consequently, they are not involved in the decision-making processes of the church. Furthermore, women do not make much impact in preaching except in the women's ministry

5.2.1.3 Factors promoting or hindering women roles and impact in worship

(a) Factors promoting women roles and impact in worship in worship

Among the factors that promote women's impact in the church are their passion to raise God-fearing children who will not be troublesome when they grow up. This is why women participate and make a great impact in children's ministry. Also, in the second focus group, participants mentioned women's commitment in spiritual matters, and in particular, the women's ministry and prayer services. Furthermore, their skill in motivating and organizing fundraising activities makes them effective in raising funds for the women's ministry and for other church projects.

Participants in the third focus group mentioned that women's impact in what they did in church was enhanced by their action-orientatedness in church activities; as well as their mutual cooperation, being organised and able to listen. One of the participants emphasised: *"I think women are very action-orientated. Over and above praying, we also action that prayer ... whether we are given a task to raise funds or whatever it is, I feel women are very action-orientated.* She went further to explain how organised and cooperative women are: *"I think we are also organised. ... females normally listen. It's rare that you find rebellion in females. ... I find that with women, we are very*

receptive, we are quick to listen and that's why we are quick to understand the situation and action on it and succeed."

(b) Factors hindering women roles and impact in worship

Participants in all focus groups mentioned several factors that hinder women from making a significant impact in worship, inter alia:

Culture of the congregants: The participants mentioned that women cannot function maximally in the church because of the African culture, which does not give women opportunities to participate in activities, as much as it does to men. One of the participants, emphasizing the issue of cultural hindrances said: *"... this goes back to this cultural behaviour of saying a woman does not have a say, ... and those who are willing to talk or say something, they are regarded as being rebellious ..."* Going further she gave an example as follows: *"Like in Ndebeles, a woman is not supposed to speak or suggest anything. It must end up like that ... in African culture, a woman is to submit."*

Selective use of certain Bible texts: The issue of selective use of certain biblical texts, and quoting them without regard for their contexts was mentioned in all focus groups. In particular, is the Bible verse in which the Apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthian church that a woman is supposed to be silent in the church and not speak. Explaining this point, one of the participants said: *"I should think the verse that we read every Sunday, that says ...women are to be quiet in the church, it [the church's practice], is based on that. To them [men who are leaders], everything should be done by men. A woman is somebody who just has to keep quiet. If she wants to know anything she should ask at home."*

Historical foundation of the church: One of the participants mentioned that it is not only the culture and selective use of biblical texts, but also the way in which the church has always been run. She emphasized: *"I speak on a personal level when I say when I started in this church I was in Sunday School, and it has been like that for years. Everything has been done by men. It's just how it is. We also grew up and thought it is the right way in which things are done in our church."*

Participants in the second focus group mentioned that the status quo has remained in the church because people are afraid of removing the ancient landmarks, as it is the

church's proverbial saying, quoted from Proverbs 23:10. Responding to the researcher's question as to what these landmarks are, the respondent said they are the teachings of the founder of the church.

However, one participant went on to say that the founder of the church, being a visionary that he was, could have changed some of the ways things are done currently, if he were alive at present.

Lack of divine revelation about the equality of men and women: Participants in the second focus group repeated the factors mentioned by participants in the first focus group, such as the procedure of the AOG (BTG), and the Scripture in 1 Corinthians 14:34, which states that women must keep silent in church. However, one participant stated further that one of the reasons why women are not allowed participation in some church activities such as preaching, is that there has not been divine revelation to the church leaders about the equality of men and women as envisaged by God in the Bible. She commented: *"I am not sure which book [in the New Testament] says the Holy Spirit gives us gifts as he deems fit. He does not say he gives gifts to men [males]. As Mama [My mother] says, it means all of us, whether you are male, whether you are a female, you have been given a gift. So, you can be given a gift as a woman to prophesy, to preach the word of God ..."*

5.2.1.4 Improvement to the current situation

(a) The role of congregational leaders in improving the situation

Top-down approach solution: One of the participants in the first focus group mentioned that it may not be possible for women's roles to improve through a bottom-up approach, where the initiative will start at the level of the congregants. Rather, the people in the higher echelons of leadership are better positioned to bring about changes to the current situation. This top-down approach is, according to one participant, a viable solution to the challenges faced by women in worship. However, in the third focus group, one participant bemoaned the top-down approach adopted in the church. She complained that women are not consulted with regard to what is to be done. This results in some of them losing interest in some church activities. She said: *"It's not a good idea to come up with ideas as the leadership and give it to your church. Sometimes I feel like it is better to sit your church down, hear what they need, listen*

to them ... so that you understand what is it that they feel, for them to be ... fully participating in every worship of the church ...”

Back to the Bible: One of the participants emphasized that the leadership of the church should go back to the Bible. When probed further as to what if going back to the Bible would lead to the same passages that subject women to men’s authority, she said what she meant was going back to correct interpretation of the Bible and to implement what the true teaching of the Bible is, regarding the role of women in church worship. She alluded to the fact that Paul emphasized that being male and female does not matter when one is in Christ, as mentioned in Galatians 3:28.

Workshops: There was a suggestion from one of the participants that workshops should be conducted for all people in the church. This will help permeate the right practice regarding the roles of women in church worship. Another participant added that the workshops will help people to understand and embrace change.

Showing confidence in women: In the second focus group interview, one participant mentioned that men in the leadership should begin to show confidence in women’s abilities to can play important roles in the church.

Developing women theologically: One young participant in the third focus group said that one of the factors that would help women in the preaching role is that they be given the opportunity to develop themselves, by bringing into public knowledge of all church members, information about attending Bible schools. She said: *“I think the other opportunity that we lack from our church is allowing females to go to Bible school, and learning the Bible themselves because it’s not fair to expect Ma’am X to preach the word of God if it’s only based on some few revelations that you have. You have to actually study the word of God to be able to stand as a preacher of the word, even if you just study it for yourself. ... I think that is one thing I have seen from our church, I have never seen a female going to Bible school.* While her assertion that women do not go to Bible school was not altogether correct, her contention was that the leadership does not bring information about theological development into public knowledge.

(b) The role of women in improving the situation

While one of the participants suggested that there is a need for prayer in order to realise the solution to the current situation, another participant said there is a need for people who will be bold enough to raise these issues regarding the status of women in worship. One participant in the second focus group mentioned that while women are to “vocalise” their opinions regarding their status in worship, they should also remove the mentality of making the church the only place of operating. That is, women have to find places outside church where their gifts, and skills will have impact.

5.2.1.5 Challenges faced by women in worship

Judgmental attitude by congregational leaders: Some participants felt that congregational leaders have a judgmental attitude on women who are outspoken about issues of the church. This discourages them in trying to bring improvements to church worship.

Home background: Two of the participants mentioned that in the case where a married woman has a husband who suppresses her at home, this woman cannot, suddenly become outspoken at church regarding church matters, out of fear of being reprimanded by her husband.

5.2.1.6 Women’s concerns regarding their roles in worship

Feeling oppressed: One of the concerns that women have about their roles in worship is that they feel oppressed and limited in their service of God. One participant said: *“We feel we cannot serve God to the optimum level where God wants us to be, ... we cannot reach that level because there is a ceiling. It feels like there is a ceiling above us that suppresses us not to default, if I may say so. ... So, we feel we are not free to serve God as he wants us to serve him, or as the [Holy] Spirit leads. Because when the Spirit directs me, it [He] does not direct me as a woman, it directs me as a vessel. Now, this thing of being a woman limits me ...”*

Being good but not good enough: Another concern is that while women are committed to nurturing children in a God-fearing way, it is surprising that when these young men and women are grown up, the very women who raised them are no longer good enough to stand before them to teach them or preach to them. One of the participants said it seemed as if the church was saying to women: *“You are good but*

not good enough.” She went further to add: *“It is almost as if we are saying raise him so that he may lead you tomorrow.”* Emphasizing this point in frustration, another participant said: *“... the very women that lay the foundation to the children, in the absence of men, ... trusted and allowed with the lives of the little ones, ... which is the future church, yet the very women are not given an opportunity to participate.”*

Women’s voice not heard: Furthermore, women showed concern that while they are numerically more than men, their voice seems not to be heard. One of the participants said: *“Most of the institutions, it’s always the females who are more [in number]. In the workplace, everywhere ... And if they are sharing one common goal [concern], that qualifies to be heard.”*

5.2.2 Presentation and analysis of data from the semi-structured interviews

In this section data is presented and analysed according to the themes in the semi-structured interview guide. Three congregational leaders participated in the semi-structured interviews, Congregational leader 1 (CL1), Congregational leader 2 (CL2) and Congregational leader 3 (CL3). CL1 was a middle-aged man who was an elder in the church. He appeared knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the church affairs and in particular the role played by women in the church. CL2 was a young man who was a member of the youth committee. CL3 was an elderly man, a pensioner who was probably above 65 years. He seemed knowledgeable about the liturgy and church procedures of the AOG (BTG).

5.2.2.1 Knowledge of the concept of worship and roles played by men and women in the church

Knowledge of the concept of worship: While according to CL1 worship is always in relation to God the creator of heaven and earth, in showing reverence, deep appreciation and deep respect towards him, CL2 agreed and said: *“Worship to me is very simple, is what we do, or rather what I do in reference to God, having an understanding of what I am doing ... doing it in honouring God, not just doing [saying] it with my mouth, but because the Bible says God is a spirit, therefore, doing it in a spiritual sense.”*

Regarding the examples of worship, CL1 said: *“...singing of songs that show how great God is, God’s everlasting grace...”* but did not mention other examples until the researcher alluded to them. CL2 mentioned singing, preaching, offering, confession of

faith and participation in the Holy Communion as examples of worship. Concerning giving or offering, CL2 said: *"... If I give with reference to God, knowing what the Bible says about giving, if I am not giving as required by the church, but I give as required by the word [of God], in reference to God, that to me is a form of worship."*

According to CL3, in order to worship God, one must be saved, baptised and filled with the Holy Spirit, because the word of God says that God does not hear a sinner. He emphasized that the word of God requires that people should worship him in spirit and truth (as mentioned in John 4:23). He also mentioned activities such as singing, praying and clapping of hands in praise, as part of worship.

Men's roles in worship: According to the congregational leaders, men's roles in worship are preaching, conducting Holy Communion and water baptism, as well as taking leadership role in the church. CL1 also mentioned that men's roles in worship included planning, facilitating and implementation of plans made in the church. CL1 said: *"They [men] play more [of] a planning role ...of the activities and the facilitating...and communicating to the people who are elected or requested to participate [in the church service programme] ensuring, for example, that offering taken, is banked, and there is a trace [record] for it."*

However, CL1 mentioned that the weakness in the congregational leaders' planning is that the plans are not communicated to other stakeholders in the church. So, when the plan fails, the other stakeholders cannot help with their inputs to bring solutions. CL2 mentioned that men lead in the church in the sense that they are the ones elected as elders and deacons. Women are not elected in eldership or as deacons. Responding to a question why women are not elected into eldership and deaconry, CL2 said: *"I think the reason is our culture, [it] is where we come from. As different tribes I don't think we have made that kind of transformation from the cultures of our tribes into the culture of the church. I think the mentality is not much different."* By this he meant that the cultures of the different congregants influenced the way women were treated in the church.

The other reason mentioned as the cause for the current way of treating women in the church was the interpretation of some Scripture texts. Two of the congregational leaders agreed. CL2 said that the church seems to emphasize more of behaviour rather than the "new birth". He gave an example of the text in 2 Corinthians 5:17 which

states that if any man is in Christ then he is a new creature. He said that the church does not emphasize what happens inside (i.e. spiritually), rather it looks at how a person behaves. That is why it emphasizes what clothes women should wear and how they should wear them. Furthermore, CL2 referred to a scripture text where the Apostle Paul writes that women should be silent in the church and not speak. He said the church has not thoroughly explained what this text means, and the context in which the Apostle Paul was teaching through that scripture text.

CL3 differentiated the roles played by men according to their leadership roles. Elders are responsible for oversight of the church, preaching, visiting the sick and drawing the programme for the church services. Deacons are responsible for the church's finance department, while there is a committee that is responsible for the men's services. Responding to the researcher's probe as to what the roles of other men who are not in leadership positions are, he said they participate in the programme as drawn by the church elders.

Roles played by women in various modes of worship: CL1 said that the role of women in the church is singing. They are not given the platform to preach. He said: *"...traditionally, preaching by women on Monday [prayer meeting] and Sunday is not so much encouraged, ...if that happens, it will be a once-off special service or it will be by default and not necessarily by plan..."*

CL1 said with regard to the Holy Communion, women play a *"small supportive role"* of washing the utensils used during the ritual. Also, concerning prophesying, CL1 went further to say that the church feels comfortable if it is a man who prophesies. He attributed this to the African culture, which is the background of the majority of the congregants. He also corroborated one of the reasons for the current treatment of women in the church as mentioned by CL2, as the teaching and interpretation of the Bible. First, he said in the Old Testament, while most men are mentioned by name, it is not always the case with women, they are only mentioned as a woman or a widow. Second, he also mentioned the issue of the Apostle Paul's teaching in the letter to the Corinthians, that women are to be silent in the church, and are not supposed to speak. What he found challenging with the teaching of this scripture text is that some women might be unmarried, widowed, or their husbands might not be believers or churchgoers, or knowledgeable about the Bible. In these cases, it would be impossible

or difficult for women to ask their husbands at home, as the said New Testament text teaches.

However, CL1 emphasized that the supportive role that women play in the church is crucial to the operation of the church. He said: *“And I can tell you, that supportive role, although it is not always visible, although it is not always out there, it is crucial. It is actually more of the backbone of the success of any ministry...”*

CL3 agreed with the other congregational leaders that women played a role in the prayer services, visiting the sick in hospital and in their homes. They also participate in the choir and in the worship team, as well as individually leading songs during the church service. They also play a major role in the women’s ministry, in which they participate according to the roles assigned to them by the women’s committee. Regarding the women’s teachings in their ministry he emphasized that: *“The role of women in the church ... if I may say, is to see [to it] that women are being taught how to handle their families and how to raise up their children at home.”*

Major differences between AOG and other Pentecostal churches pertaining to the role and impact of women in worship: Two of the congregational leaders admitted that they had not been sufficiently exposed to other Pentecostal churches besides the AOG (BTG). However, CL1 mentioned that he knew how one church in the AOG (Association) operated with regard to the roles of women in worship. He mentioned that out of the three elders of the church, one was a woman. Also, one of the three deacons in that church, was a woman. Furthermore, he noticed that women in that church were given the opportunity to preach in the Sunday services, unlike in the AOG (BTG) where, if that was to happen, some form of justification was to be given. Although CL2 also admitted to not being exposed to the ways of worship in other Pentecostal churches, he conceded that the women in the AOG (BTG) operated differently in the sense that they do handwork, which is meant for fundraising in the church, as well as economic self-empowerment for their families.

CL3 said the major difference between the AOG (BTG) and other Pentecostal churches is that in other Pentecostal churches there are women pastors and lay preachers who are given the opportunity to preach and lay hands on the sick.

5.2.2.2 Women's impact in worship

(a) Areas in which the women make the greatest impact on worship

All three congregational leaders agreed that women make a great impact in the church's fundraising. Referring to women's impact in building their church CL2 said: "... for instance, ... in this building, I do think a large percentage of money is from their side." Also, women are active in outreach services and home visits to other congregants.

Another area of great impact for women is taking care of the less disadvantaged members of the church. According to CL1, women "*go all out to ... voluntarily bring money, to purchase what needs to be purchased, and to do deliveries, and to keep records, far much than you could expect, ... And I think that this is worship in a practical sense.*" Furthermore, according to two of the congregational leaders, women's ministry is more effective than the youth's, men's and girls' ministries. According to CL2 this is attributable to their unity, mutual cooperation and numerical advantage over other ministries in the church.

Also, according to CL1 women are also effective in areas of prayer. He stated: "*I know in our local church, every three days of the beginning of the month, they [women] would have fasting and prayer.*"

Furthermore, CL1 also mentioned the significant role played by women in the children's ministry. In his words he stated: "*And our Sunday school here at home [church] is run by women. Teachers, Sunday school organisers for the local church – the women are running the entire Sunday school [ministry], and this is the breeding ground for a bigger church tomorrow.*"

(b) Areas in which the women make the least impact on worship

While CL1 mentioned that in his church women make the most impact in caring for the disadvantaged, it is clear that this does not happen in all AOG (BTG) churches because according to CL2, in his church women have the potential to do charitable work, but do not do it. He said: "*I think considering the power they have, they would make an impact on that [charity], but I think they are not doing anything.*" CL1 stated that the reason why women make lesser impact in church worship in his church, is that they are not given equal opportunities with men, otherwise they would be just as

effective as men in many areas of church worship. When the researcher asked him regarding the areas where the women make less impact in church worship, he asserted: “... *it may just be because space or opportunities are not necessarily availed. If they were availed [given] equal opportunities like males, ... they would give as great impact as men would.*”

(c) Number of women playing a meaningful role in worship

According to CL1 of all the 65 women congregants in their church i.e. married, unmarried and widowed excluding young women and girls, at least twenty play a meaningful role in church worship in general. However, this number is higher in the women’s ministry because many of them are given the opportunity by the women’s committee to participate in various activities of their worship. On the other hand, CL2 mentioned that about half of the approximately 50 women in his church are active participants, and they make significant impact in church worship.

CL1 mentioned that the reason why women have a significant impact at church is that some of these women are heading their families because their husbands have passed on, or they are single parents. The challenges they meet in that regard encourage them to seek for help from the women’s ministry. This then makes them stronger in their faith and ministry as Christians. They seem to derive their strength from the knowledge that God is the solution to any problem they encounter.

(d) Comparison of the roles and impact of men and women in church worship

According to CL1, women are more effective than men in the area of training young women to be effective wives at home; They pray with them in the midst of the challenges they encounter in their family lives. According to him: “... *the women’s ministry, relatively speaking, would be stronger than men’s ministry ...*”

Also, according to CL1, women love beautiful things in church. While men would always go for cheaper items to save money, women would first look for items of beauty and quality, and then find a way of paying for the items.

5.2.2.3 Factors affecting women’s roles and impact in worship

(a) Factors promoting women’s roles and impact in worship

CL2 asserted that women’s unity and mutual cooperation in their activities, and prayerfulness are major factors in making them more effective in church worship. This

was corroborated by CL1, when he stated that women pray for one another in the midst of the social challenges they encounter. Furthermore, CL1 mentioned that their impact in church is attributable to their meticulous planning and enthusiasm in church activities such as outreaches. CL1 stated: *“I know that when we are out on outreach, women are very active, when we go and visit homes, or home cells, they are very active.”*

(b) Factors hindering women roles and impact in worship

The congregational leaders agreed that the major hindrances to women’s impact in church worship are the culture and traditions of the congregants. Mentioning an example of prophecy, CL1 stated: *“We would always be comfortable if prophecy came from a male, but if a lady does prophesy, we tend to question it a little bit more than we would if it was a male. And that may be just because our membership is all African, largely 99,9%. So, it may be coming from African practical side ... the church is part of a society. So those African norms, we find them creeping into the church.”*

CL1 stated further that another factor that hinders women from having an impact in church worship is that they are not consulted by the church leadership in the planning of activities. Citing an example of church infrastructure, he said: *“You will find that for example when we have ... to do a major upgrading for example, infrastructure or painting or something that we think is necessary to upgrade church facilities, we [men] would do almost everything else, and only as an afterthought go to the mothers and say ‘what do you think?’ And yet ... because the project would be far ahead, you will find that we are just doing it ... so that we could tick a box (i.e. as a formality), but in the designing, in the initial stages you find that they [women] are not necessarily roped in.”*

5.2.2.4 Improving the current situation

(a) Role of church leaders in improving women’s roles in church worship

According to CL1 church leaders must appreciate the roles played by women so far, such that if for example, it is mothers’ day they should do something better for them. Also, church leaders should improve their communication with women, so that they become involved in the church activities from the planning stage. This was an attempt to remedy the situation that he had earlier bemoaned, that men first finish plans about church activities, and then as a formality consult women for their ideas.

(b) Women's roles in improving the situation

CL1 mentioned several ways in which women can improve and enhance their impact in church worship. First, he asserted that they should continue the good work they have been doing all along. In this regard he mentioned their respect for the leadership, even to the men younger than them. Second, he stated that they should look for innovative ways of making the church more welcoming and hospitable, such as introducing a welcoming committee that would ensure that visitors are taken care of when they come to the church. While CL2 was forthright in saying women seem to lack confidence that they are capable of doing some of the roles which are traditionally for men in the church, and emphasized that they should be more confident, CL1 was softer in saying that women should push for more participation in other areas of worship.

5.3 INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

Barnard et al (2014:54) distinguishes four levels of interpretation of liturgical ritual: First, is the liturgical ritual phenomena as perceived by the researchers and the participants. Second, is the reconstruction of the phenomena by researchers and participants. Third, the interpretation of the reconstructed phenomena by researchers and participants. Fourth, is the interpretation of the interpretation of the reconstructions in further academic discussions and societal and ecclesial discourses. In the case of my research the interpretation will be based on how the researcher and the participants perceive the phenomenon.

5.3.1 Interpretation and discussion of findings focussing on the research questions

In this section, I will provide detailed interpretation of the main findings of this study, focussing on the research questions as stated in section 1.2.2.2.

5.3.1.1 *Research question: What are the current roles and impact of women in the in the AOG (BTG) churches in the Germiston District?*

Women's ministry: The responses from the participants in the focus groups and the congregational leaders showed that the current roles of women in worship in the AOG (BTG) are limited. In the main, all the respondents agreed that women play a meaningful role in the women's ministry. In the women's ministry, the percentage of

women participating is greater than those playing a meaningful role in the worship of the whole church. According to CL1, the reason is that the women leaders give much attention to the planning of their services, and they give everyone an opportunity to participate in the services. As a pastor in one of the AOG (BTG) churches of the Germiston District, I can attest to this fact.

Children's ministry: All the participants in two focus groups agreed with the congregational leaders that women play a major role in the children's ministry. Only one focus group did not mention this point. According to the women themselves, this is attributed firstly to the nurturing character that women have, to raise children. Secondly, women are passionate about Children's ministry as a preventive measure against the dangers that arise when children are not raised in a godly life.

Singing and worship team: All participants in the study, agreed that one of the significant roles played by women is singing during the services, and participation in the worship team.

Prayer services and house visits: Two of the congregational leaders commended women for their commitment to spiritual matters and passion they show in participating in prayer services. Also, one of the congregational leaders highly commended women for their commitment when congregants make house visits to the homes of church members. Women in the focus groups also agreed that women are in most cases, the first to visit congregants who are sick. They also help during funerals and weddings. While this is true, one of the contributing factors is that they are numerically more than men, and as such their presence is always more evident.

Fundraising: All research participants agreed that one of the stand-out activities in which women play an important role, and also show significant impact is fundraising. This is evident in the women's ministry and in other church projects, such as providing for the needy members of the church and community. However, one of the congregational leaders felt that if women's full potential can be harnessed, they can be even more effective. It was also clear that women regarded fundraising as their major role, of which they are very proud.

5.3.1.2 *Research question: What are the factors related to worship affecting the role and impact of women in the AOG (BTG) churches in the Germiston District?*

(a) Factors promoting women's roles and impact in worship

Regarding factors that promote women's roles and impact in worship, participants mentioned the following:

Unity and cooperation: One of the congregational leaders asserted that the reason why women are effective in the church's fundraising activities, is their unity and cooperation. Women in the focus groups also agreed to that assertion and went further to attribute this to their natural skill to convince people to contribute money towards church projects. Furthermore, the other factor that contributed to their success was their action-orientatedness.

Freedom of participation: One of the participants hinted that the reason why women are passionate in the activities where they have great impact, is because they are restricted in other areas of worship. Therefore, wherever they are free to play a meaningful role in church, they excel. Mbamalu (2002:55) rightly noted in a case study, that not one South African black woman was in a member of the women's fellowship in one church with a predominantly white membership in Kwa Zulu Natal. This was possibly attributed to prejudice, racism or social inequality. He also concludes that another reason for that could be that the present-day African woman wants a place of fellowship where she is free to express herself and contribute to the leadership needs of the church. Given what the participants said, and Mbamalu's experience, it seems fair to conclude that where there is some form of inequality, be it racial or gender, women's roles are hindered to some extent, as they do not experience the requisite freedom to participate fully.

Women's commitment to church activities: Participants also agreed that women showed greater commitment to church activities such as prayer service and home visits. This is in line with the assertion of Maskens (2015: 332) that in Pentecostal circles, women are more inclined to live religious experiences in connection with the Holy Spirit, while the religious experience of men of the assembly is more associated with the words, writings and formal power of definition. Also, Hackett, Cooperman &

Cornibert (2016:6-8) agree, and note that based on a wide-ranging and comprehensive database, women are more devout than men by several measures of religious commitment; they are likely to affiliate with religious faith, and in many countries, women attend religious services more often than men.

(b) Factors hindering women's roles and impact in worship

Participants mentioned major factors affecting the roles and impact of women negatively as the following:

African culture and tradition: All focus group participants, as well as congregational leaders mentioned culture and tradition of the church members as major factors hindering women to play a meaningful role in church worship. This agrees with Klingorová & Havlíček (2015:2), who state that the relationship between religion and culture is reciprocal. That is, religious systems are locked in a circle of mutual influence with social norms and patterns of social organisation. Consequently, they conclude that the status of women in religion also reflects the status of women in society as a whole.

Selective use of certain Bible texts: Women in the focus groups, as well as congregational leaders lamented the use of certain Bible texts to suppress women into silence during worship. Of special mention is I Corinthians 14:34 where the Apostle Paul wrote that women should keep silence in the church, for they are not permitted to speak. The participants argued that the context of this text has not been properly interrogated by the church leadership, and as such it places women at a disadvantage. This agrees with the concept of literal readings of the Bible as stated by Gabaitse (2015:5) when she states that a literal reading of the Bible does not take the historical context of texts seriously. The Bible is read in the present to mean what it means, and as such, scriptural directives that insist on women being silent in church are also taken literally, obeyed and enforced.

Gabaitse (2015:6) mentions selective use of some Bible texts as one of the elements of the Pentecostal hermeneutic. She calls it Proof texting. Proof texting refers to the use and harmonising of a few biblical texts to support one argument, without considering how those texts relate to the Bible as a whole. As such, doctrines are supported, proven and disproven by using stand-alone biblical verses.

5.3.1.3 *Research question: What are the differences and similarities between the AOG (BTG) and other Pentecostal churches regarding the role and impact of women in worship?*

Women in leadership positions: All research participants agreed that one of the major differences between the AOG (BTG) and other Pentecostal churches is the role played by women in leadership positions of the church. Participants mentioned that in other Pentecostal churches women are allowed to be pastors, while that is not the case in the AOG (BTG). Also, some Pentecostal churches have women in other church leadership positions, such as eldership and deaconry, while in the AOG (BTG), women's leadership positions are mainly limited to the women's ministry. This denies women the opportunity to participate in decision-making activities of the church. Yemisi & Dada (2015:247) have rightly noted this situation when they mention that in recent time, the roles and status of women have changed gradually from subordinates to main leadership roles. They state that there are women superintendents in churches as well as women educators in Pentecostal Colleges and Seminaries. However, Gabaitse (2015:2), asserts that the Pentecostal church remains a space which subjugates women "even as it offers them a unique permission to speak." I think the abovementioned authors have accurately represented what is happening in Pentecostal churches, including the Assemblies of God (Back to God).

Women as preachers: From what the participants stated, it is clear that in the AOG (BTG) churches women are not afforded the opportunity to preach in combined services for men and women, as it happens in other Pentecostal churches. This point was raised by all participants in this study who had the experience of worship services in other Pentecostal churches besides the AOG (BTG).

5.3.1.4 *Research question: What ought to be done in order to enhance the role and impact of women in the AOG (BTG) churches in the Germiston District?*

Participants in the study posited various ideas in search of a solution that will enhance the role and impact of women in the AOG (BTG) worship.

Involvement of women in the planning stages of church activities: One of the congregational leaders said that the church leadership should begin to involve women in the planning stages of church activities, as a way of improving women's situation

regarding worship. This was stated in one focus group as a top-down approach where congregational leaders decide church matters and only inform women of their conclusion. I think Mbamalu (2002:54) made an accurate observation on the general principle applied in the AOG when stating that though there is a women's fellowship in that AOG church, women have little or no influence in the administration of the church. Church policies, are determined without the input of women. As a result, there was a general decline in women's capacity-building in the church.

Guidance of the Holy Spirit in church operations: Women in the focus groups called for congregational leaders who will not only go back to correct interpretation of the Bible, but who will also allow the Holy Spirit to guide them in the running of the church. This corroborates what Gabaitse (2015:9-10) mentioned when she stated that the Holy Spirit is central to Pentecostal living and existence and is perceived as a living power who is experienced by women and men, and directs individuals and the Pentecostal community. She argues that if the Holy Spirit overruled the Law about circumcision when some Jewish believers demanded that the Gentiles be circumcised in obedience to the Law of Moses, during the Jerusalem Council meeting, then the same Holy Spirit can still give new, life-giving and transformative interpretations of the Bible depending on context.

5.3.2 Interpretation and discussion of findings based on other empirical research themes

5.3.2.1 Differences between roles played by men and those played by women

The participants portrayed men as leaders, people who guide the church and take care of the spiritual needs of the congregants as a collective and as individuals. Men are looked upon as decision-makers and gatekeepers, in the sense that everything that happens in the church must start with them, or they must be informed about it. On the other hand, women do not have much to do in corporate church worship. Their roles and impact are visible in the prayer services, women's ministry, children's ministry, fundraising and charity.

Furthermore, while men do not involve other stakeholders in the initial stages of planning church activities, women are meticulous in their planning. This allows them to involve many women in the activities of the women's ministry, and to be successful in fundraising.

5.3.2.2 The dual purpose of the roles of women in the AOG(BTG)

While all the focus groups and the congregational leaders stated various roles of women in worship, in the AOG, it was clearly articulated in the third focus group by three participants. One participant said: *“When we get together as women, we must teach each other to work and pray, because when we work, that is where we get our money. So, with that money we can provide at home and in the church.”*

One younger participant brought a biblical example of Mary and Martha to clarify the dual purpose of women’s roles in the AOG. She said: *“I think the dual purpose that my two mothers are referring to is also depicted in the story of Mary and Martha. ... Martha was busy cooking and preparing food for Jesus as he had visited in her house. Never mind that she complained, but she did a certain service, which shows that we work with our hands as females ... But Mary showed another aspect, that actually women as well can sit at the feet of Jesus, can honour him, and worship him, and look to him as a Higher Power, just praise him and be in his presence and ... get a revelation of who God is, by just sitting at his feet. So, we pledge dual purpose... So, I just want to draw a link to what the Bible has taught us.”*

From what the participants in the focus groups and the congregational leaders said, it is apparent that women played many roles which in the final analysis can be categorized into the spiritual and the organisational. This is attested by Drogus (1994:8-9) that women’s groups in Colombian Pentecostal churches “took on the lion’s share of responsibility for the church.” Their activities included fundraising, evangelization, social welfare, maintaining the church, and holding midweek women’s services. This happens despite them not participating in church leadership and pastoral roles.

5.3.2.3 Gradual change to allow women to preach in services for all

It is important to note that while there is an outcry in the AOG (BTG) that women are not afforded the opportunities to preach in services for the whole church, the situation is gradually changing. However, this opportunity is given in services held at regional level, and rarely in the local church services. One of the participants commented: *“It’s only now when I see women can even preach during Sunday service, of which it never happened before ...”* Another participant corroborated by saying: *“But I think now they*

[congregational leaders] have also come to the realization that even women can preach.”

This is in line with what is happening in other South African churches as observed by Wepener (2014: 4). He states that while there is a need for an in-depth analysis of the role and place of women in worship in South Africa, in all the liturgies that were incorporated in his research about liturgical reform in South Africa, the changing role of women in worship was emphasised. From his observation of worship services and the interviews he conducted, women had gained a much stronger voice over the past decades. One church had a woman archbishop, while the other had a woman priest.

5.4 CONCLUSION

In this chapter the researcher presented and analysed empirical data from the focus group interviews and interviews with congregational leaders. The presentation was done through a thick description narrative and verbatim quotations from the participants. Presentation and analysis of data from focus groups was done separately from the presentation and analysis of data from semi-structured interviews with congregational leaders.

The thematic structure of the interview schedules was the basis of the presentation of data. The transcribed interviews were then analysed by means of content analysis in order to identify other key themes and to summarise the content. Tesch's process of open coding was employed with data from the focus group interviews. Eventually categories were established from the raw data and the content arranged into six categories.

With regard to interpretation and discussion of the findings there was no separation of information between focus group interviews and semi-structured interviews. This section also linked the research questions with the categories formed in analysis of data.

Furthermore, this chapter entailed the interpretation and discussion of findings based on other empirical research themes such as the (a) Differences between roles played by men and those played by women and (b) The dual purpose of the roles of women in the AOG.

In the next chapter of this study, which is the last, the researcher summarises the study by considering how the objectives of the study were achieved, and how they linked with the theoretical framework. Also, the researcher reviews the appropriateness of the theoretical framework adopted in this study. Each major finding of the study is then summarised before a conclusion is made. Furthermore, recommendations are then made.

CHAPTER 6: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

As stated in the rationale of this study in section 1.2.3 one of the reasons for this research is that from a religious perspective, gender inequality and the role of women in religion have been widely documented as evidenced by, among others, by Klingorová & Havlíček (2015). However, while Gabaitse (2015), Bawa (2017) and Attoh (2017) recognise the shift made by Pentecostalism in improving women's status and roles when compared to other religious traditions, they assert that much still needs to be done.

In this chapter the researcher first makes comments regarding how the study covered and achieved its objectives. This will help in measuring how far the objectives were achieved. Also, the researcher reviews the appropriateness and helpfulness of Osmer's four core Tasks of Practical Theological Interpretation, as the theoretical framework of the study.

In addition, the researcher summarises each major finding of the research, making a conclusion by comparing the findings of the research with the literature review, to indicate areas where the research findings either confirm or differ with literature. The researcher then summarises the information and makes a conclusion regarding each research question.

The last section of this chapter entails the recommendations of the study, implications for future research, limitations of the study, and its summary.

6.2 COMMENTS ON THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

In this study, the empirical observation was guided by the objectives as stated in section 1.2.4.2. These are:

- (a) To outline the historical and cultural origins of the AOG (BTG) worship that gave rise to the present situation regarding the role of women**

In section 1.1.1 the researcher showed by citing Liphoko (2005:23-24) and Mbamalu (2002:88-89), how Nicholas Bhekinkosi Hepworth Bhengu together with Mr H C Philips worked at the Emmanuel Mission in Nelspruit and later became part of the Assemblies of God. The work grew from 1939 until 1945 when Nicholas Bhengu, Alfred Gumede

and Gideon Buthelezi perceived an anti-black development attitude from white leaders of the Assemblies of God. From that time Nicholas Bhengu led the Black section of the Assemblies of God in South Africa. This work grew to this day, even after his passing on in 1985, to an extent where it has churches in South Africa, Lesotho, Mozambique, Botswana and Swaziland. Hence it is fair to say that this objective was achieved

(b) To describe the current roles and impact of women in the in the AOG (BTG) churches in the Germiston District.

This objective is linked with the Descriptive empirical task of Practical Theological interpretation as stated by Richard Osmer (See section 2.2.1). The researcher found the participant's responses appropriate and helpful in this regard. The focus group interviews conducted with women in the three churches, as well as the semi-structured interviews with congregational leaders, showed that currently, women's roles included participating in the worship team, singing in the church choir, teaching in the children's ministry, and leading in activities pertaining to fundraising and charity. Therefore, this study has adequately shown women's current roles and impact in worship.

(c) To investigate the significance of the role and impact of women in different church activities regarding worship, in the AOG (BTG) churches in the Germiston District.

Since there are different activities in church worship, the researcher wanted to find out the variation in women's roles and impact in these activities. In this regard the findings of the research are that women's roles are insignificant in activities related to church leadership, decision-making and pastoral office. However, women's roles and impact are more significant in activities of the women's ministry, children's ministry and other supporting roles such as fundraising and singing in the church choir.

(d) To find out factors related to worship affecting the role and impact of women in the AOG (BTG) churches in the Germiston District.

The researcher considered this objective in conjunction with Richard Osmer's Interpretive task of Practical Theological Interpretation as discussed in section 2.2.2 of this study. The participants in this study showed there were factors that affected women's roles and impact positively, while there were those which had a negative

effect. Among those which had positive effect are their passion for children, their cooperative attitude, their unity in women's ministry, their meticulous planning and their action-orientatedness in church activities. However, the cultures of the congregants, which included patriarchy, lack of confidence in women, women's lack of theological development as well as non-participation in leadership roles affected women's roles and impact in worship negatively.

This study succeeded in differentiating activities where women's roles and impact were significant from those activities where their roles and impact were not significant.

(e) To suggest ways of improving the roles and impact of women in the AOG (BTG) churches in the Germiston District

In doing the empirical work of this study, the researcher considered this objective in conjunction with the Pragmatic task of Richard Osmer's four core tasks of Practical theological interpretation. Here the participants suggested ways of improving women's roles and impact in church worship. Also, in section 6.5 the researcher makes recommendations for improvements.

Based on the discussion above, it is my view that this study was able to address and achieve its objectives as set out in section 1.2.4.2.

6.3 THEORETICAL REVIEW OF THE STUDY ON THE ROLE AND IMPACT OF WOMEN IN WORSHIP

6.3.1 Review of the appropriateness of Osmer's four core tasks of practical theological interpretation to this study

Richard Osmer's four core tasks of Practical Theological Interpretation were relevant to this study, and framed the study appropriately. As stated in section 2.1 of this study, the advantage of using Osmer's method is that it bridges the sub-disciplines of academy and ministry, and the interpretation of the interconnectedness of ministry (Pieterse 2017:38).

6.3.1.1 Descriptive task of the theological (What is going on?)

In the Descriptive Task the researcher investigated what participants said about the current roles and impact of women in worship. This study has shown that participants are aware of current roles played by women in the AOG (BTG) worship. Some are

also aware of the biblical and historical roots of the patriarchal way of conducting church worship and liturgy of the AOG (BTG). Also, while two of the congregational leaders had never been in fellowship with other Pentecostal churches, besides the AOG (BTG), women in the focus groups were aware of these differences regarding their roles in worship. The major differences were said to be inclusion of women in leadership positions viz. the pastorate, eldership and deaconry; as well as women having a say in the affairs of the church; and preaching in corporate services over and above the women's ministry. This issue is mentioned by Drogus (1994:9) that except for a few individual examples mentioned elsewhere in the literature, it appears that in general pentecostal women are not notably active as preachers or leaders outside of sex-segregated prayer groups. Most women in this study were concerned that their spiritual gifts do not operate to the maximum because of their limited participation in church worship.

On the other hand, all participants commended women for the significant roles they play in prayer services, home visits, fundraising, children's ministry, as well as participation in the choir and worship team. Osmer's approach enabled the researcher to carry out this part of the research.

6.3.1.2 Interpretive task of the theological (Why is this going on?)

In the Interpretive Task, the researcher explored the reasons for women's current roles and impact, from the participants' perspectives. According to the findings from the focus group participants as well as congregational leaders, several factors affect the roles and impact of women in worship in the AOG (BTG) negatively. Among these factors are the African culture carried over by members, especially men in leadership positions, from the home into the church. Furthermore, the historical foundations of the church as well as selective use of certain biblical texts were alluded to, as some of the causes.

However, the participants are also aware of the factors that affect women's roles positively. In this regard they mentioned inter alia, women's passion about children's ministry and fundraising, as well as their unity in church activities.

6.3.1.3 Normative task of the theological (What ought to be going on?)

As stated in section 2.2.3 of this report, in the normative task of practical theological interpretation, theological concepts are used to interpret particular episodes (Osmer

2008:4). In the Normative Task the researcher compared the current roles with the norm in other Pentecostal churches, from the perspective of the participants, as well as from the views of scholars as seen in the literature review.

The responses of the participants imply that there are several aspects regarding the role and impact of women in worship and church life in general that are found wanting in the AOG (BTG). Congregational leaders have to realise that while Pentecostalism has made strides in improving the status of women in worship, there are still areas where women's roles still need improvement, as stated by Gabaitse (2015), Bawa (2017) and Attoh (2017).

While each church has its own tradition of worship, there is still room for the AOG (BTG) to learn from other Pentecostal church traditions and worship styles, particularly in improving the roles and impact of women in worship.

6.3.1.4 The Pragmatic Task (How might we respond?)

Finally, in the Pragmatic Task the researcher explored what the participants suggested as solutions for the way-forward, particularly with regard to church tradition, the pentecostal hermeneutic, and inclusion of women in leadership positions. From the participants' responses it appeared to the researcher that these are the root causes of areas where women have less impact in worship.

Church tradition: In dealing with the tradition of worship within the context of the AOG (BTG), it would make sense to consider the critical questions which have to be asked with regard to liturgical inculturation according to Wepener (2008:318). These questions are: Which specific parts of history of the liturgy does one look back at? To which voices from the past do you listen to and which one do you ignore? Which practices or rituals and symbols do you regard as central and important and should be preserved and which ones not? Which aspects of our tradition are deemed as the heart of it, without which we are not who we are any longer? Which aspects of our tradition are not really essential?

Avoiding the negative effects of the Pentecostal Hermeneutic: Gabaitse (2015:2-5) mentions elements of the Pentecostal hermeneutic which affect the impact and role of women negatively, as proof texting and literal reading of the Bible. My opinion is that congregational leaders ought to be trained in interpretation of the Bible regarding contemporary issues affecting the life of the church. Also, congregational leaders

should employ the spirituality of servant leadership and transactional leadership (with its trade-offs, reciprocity and mutual exchange) in dealing with the issues of the role of women in the Assemblies of God (BTG) worship.

Also, not only congregational leaders should be trained but also whole congregations. There should be teaching series for congregants, workshops or Bible study sessions, which will deal with the role and impact of women in worship in general, and the effects of the Pentecostal hermeneutic in particular, in an attempt to stall the current trends.

Inclusion of women in leadership positions: My view is that including women in leadership positions will go a long way in addressing the outcry about the top-down strategy of doing church activities. Also, this will give women an opportunity to be involved in the church's decision-making processes.

Furthermore, as pointed out by Northouse (2013:362), promoting a richly diverse group of women in leadership roles will help governments, businesses and societal institutions such as the church, to be more representative. It also helps these institutions to be more ethical, productive, innovative, and to demonstrate higher levels of collective intelligence and less conflict.

6.4 SUMMARIES AND CONCLUSIONS

In this section the researcher gives brief summaries and conclusion for each major theme of the study.

6.4.1 Participants' understanding of the concept of worship.

The participants mentioned various activities which they regarded as part of worship. These included prayer, singing, praising God, offering and participating in Holy Communion. Some said worship is intimacy with God, and it gives one comfort in God's presence. However, some participants went further to mention that in general, a person's lifestyle constitutes worship of God. Others mentioned caring for the needy as worship; as well as activities such as catering and cleaning.

This corroborates the assertion by White (2000:22-25), who describes worship in terms of various views such as that of Martin Luther who says it is a phenomenon whereby our Lord speaks to us through his word and we respond to him through prayer and songs of praise. Furthermore, the perception that baptism and Holy communion are part of worship is supported by the view of John Calvin, who states that worship

consists of a few ceremonies that unites us with God and show that Christ is present among us. These ceremonies include the preaching of God's word, the sacraments, and the whole external government of the church. Thomas Cranmer, who mentions that worship is to be directed at God's glory and honour while it reduces people to the most perfect and godly living i.e. the glorification of God and sanctification of humanity supports the participants' perspective of worship as a Christian's lifestyle.

Conclusion: From the participants' responses it is clear that almost all participants understood the concept of worship fairly well.

6.4.2 Participants' knowledge and understanding of the roles of men and women in church worship.

Roles played by men in worship: While the participants in various focus groups mentioned different roles played by men in worship there was agreement with regard to the major roles played by men. These included leadership and pastoral roles as well conducting sacraments such as baptism and Holy Communion, and taking care of the spiritual needs of church members and administrative role of the church.

Conclusion: From the discussions in the focus group and semi-structured interviews, it is fair to conclude that almost all participants understand the different roles played by men in church worship.

Roles played by women in worship: All participants agreed that women were effective in prayer services, participation in singing and worship team as well as fundraising. Other activities in which the women's roles and impact are significant include caring for the needy, participation in home visits. All congregational leaders as well as two focus groups emphasized that women's role in the children's ministry was very significant. With regard to fundraising activities, all participants unanimously agreed that women formed the backbone of the churches' fundraising strategy.

Conclusion: It seems appropriate for me to conclude that almost all participants understand the roles and impact of women in worship, in the AOG (BTG). They recognise themselves as the backbone of the church's fundraising strategy, and they are proud of it.

6.4.3 Women's roles and impact in different areas of worship in the AOG (BTG) churches in the Germiston District

Roles of significant impact: From the responses of the participants in the interviews, it was not difficult to identify the areas of worship where women make significant impact. All participants were unanimous about the great impact women have in women's ministry, fundraising, charity and prayer services. Two focus groups and all congregational leaders mentioned the huge impact women have in children's ministry.

Conclusion: it is reasonable to conclude that when women are given an opportunity to participate freely in worship activities, they do their best, and the results of their work are there for all to see.

Roles of less impact: The research participants were unambiguous about the roles in which they have less impact and the causes thereof. As mentioned before, these include congregational leadership, preaching for the whole church, the pastoral role, as well as the decision-making process of the church. This corroborates Klingorová & Havlíček (2015:3) who mention that in the histories of religions, the voice of women is rarely heard, due to the patriarchal dispositions of societies in which these religions emerged, and which eventually stifled some of the changes in the status of women

6.4.4 Causes of factors that affect the role and impact of women in the AOG (BTG) churches in the Germiston District

Causes of Factors promoting women's roles and impact: Hackett et al (2016:6), state that women are more religious and show more commitment than men in religious matters. This point was clearly articulated by almost all participants that the reasons for women's impact in children's ministry, fundraising, prayer services and home visits are their passion for children, unity and cooperation, as well as being action-orientated. it was emphasized that women are good listeners, they are respectful and not rebellious.

Conclusion: Given the success that the AOG (BTG) experience in areas where women participate fully, it can be concluded that if the AOG (BTG) churches can harness these success attributes, great success can be experienced even in other areas of worship.

Causes of women's insignificant roles and impact in worship: African culture, historical foundation of the AOG (BTG), proof-texting and biblical literalism, lack of confidence in women, lack of women's theological development as well as not being included in leadership and decision-making processes, were mentioned as some of the reasons accounting for women's insignificant roles in worship.

Conclusion: It was clear that the participants were aware of the hindrances to the roles and impact of women but could not do much to change the situation. Therefore, it is incumbent upon congregations to revisit the roles of women in worship in order to effect the necessary changes.

6.4.5 Differences between the AOG (BTG) and other Pentecostal churches regarding the role and impact of women in worship?

While some participants did not have the knowledge and experience of what is happening in other Pentecostal churches, from those who had this experience it was clear that there were three major differences: First, is that in other pentecostal churches women are allowed to occupy leadership positions for the whole church. Second, women are appointed and ordained as pastors. Third is that women were allowed to preach in services for the whole church. These three factors made women's spiritual gifts more conspicuous than in the AOG (BTG).

Conclusion: From what the participants said it seems fair to conclude that if the AOG (BTG) is to benefit maximally from women's spiritual gifts, one of the pragmatic options is to appoint women in leadership and pastoral positions.

6.4.6 What ought to be done in order to enhance the role and impact of women in the AOG (BTG) churches in the Germiston District?

Avoid the negative effects of culture in church worship: Some aspects of the congregants' cultures were seen as hinderances for women's roles and impact in worship. Culture cannot be completely dissociated from people's religious lives. That is why Chupungco (1992:28-29) mentions inculturation as the creative and dynamic relationship between the Christian message and culture (or cultures), and that there should always be interaction and assimilation between Christian faith and culture. However, some elements of culture, such as those which subject women to men, and limit their participation in worship, should be avoided.

Women to develop themselves for leadership positions: As Attoh (2017:163-167) states, there is a need for women to develop themselves and prepare themselves for leadership roles in the church. This could also include women attending Bible schools in order to develop themselves theologically. Theological development will also enhance their chances of being allowed to preach. Women should do away with the idea that leadership positions are meant for men, and consequently they do not need develop to themselves in that regard. This is in line with what Yemisi & Dada (2015:247) have noted that enrolling in Bible schools enhanced women's roles, as evidenced by the 1993 statistics, where 45% of women enrolled for seminary degree in the USA.

6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

Training of congregational leaders: Since most of the blame for the current roles and impact of women in worship is laid on congregational leaders, I recommend that they be trained theologically, and with regard to church administration. This will help improve the current situation.

Pastors to be trained in Gender and religion: Ambrose (2012:74) states that adopting the lens of gender history, one can explore the interactions between men and women in the context of family and church. She contends that these socially constructed gender dynamics have dictated norms within Pentecostal circles, pertaining to how men and women interact. Therefore, I recommend that pastors within the AOG (BTG) be trained in gender and religion, and how women have had influence in the establishment and development of pentecostal churches in various parts of the world.

6.6 IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Given that a qualitative study such as this one cannot be generalised, it is necessary that a quantitative study be conducted, which will include all churches in the Germiston District. Furthermore, this study could be replicated in other regions of the AOG (BTG) in order to ascertain the trustworthiness of the findings.

One of the findings in this study is that the tradition of the church, and the church's patriarchal approach to worship are concerns to most participants, I recommend that

another study be undertaken in which the impact of culture and tradition on the roles and impact of women in worship in the AOG (BTG) could be investigated.

In this study, there was no observation of actual church services in the participating churches, in which the roles of women in worship could be seen first-hand. I therefore propose that another study be conducted, wherein observations will be made in a number of churches.

6.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Since this study is cross-sectional and dealt with only three of churches in the Germiston District of the Eastern Reef region, a quantitative study should be undertaken, that would involve more churches and more participants so as to enable generalizability of the findings.

The interview guides for the focus groups and the semi-structured interview with congregational leaders were not piloted first. This may raise concerns regarding their appropriateness in the study.

The researcher depended on congregational leaders in the choice of focus group participants. So, this purposive sampling of the participants depended on the subjective judgment of these leaders, and therefore, the sample might not be representative of all the women in the churches (Bless & Higson-Smith 2000: 92).

In one focus group, instead of ten participants, only five availed themselves for the focus group discussion. This might have limited the participant's views, and consequently the findings of the study.

Since English is not the language of communication for most of the participants, this might have affected the way they articulated their views and hence the findings of the study.

6.8 SUMMARY

This study is a ritual-liturgical exploration of the role and impact of women in Pentecostal church worship, focussing in the Germiston District of the Assemblies of God (Back to God). It is a qualitative study conducted in three township churches. The data collection methods were qualitative focus group interviews with women, as well as semi-structured interviews with congregational leaders.

The theoretical framework of the study was Richard Osmer's four core tasks of Practical Theological Interpretation, viz. The Descriptive task, the Interpretive task, the Normative task and the Pragmatic task. These four core tasks proved to be an appropriate and useful framework for this study. Furthermore, Gender theories were also employed to frame the study theoretically. The researcher considered classification of gender theories according to their main themes, viz. production and property relations; family structure and household; social roles; and sexuality.

The ritual-liturgical exploratory nature of the study demanded that the researcher should also deal with concepts such as worship, liturgy, ritual and women's roles in the Old and New Testament worship. Regarding worship, the researcher dealt with its meaning and various styles, inter alia, liturgical, traditional, revivalist, and seeker service. There was also a discussion of the concept of liturgy, which included liturgy as ritual, liturgy and tradition, and liturgical inculturation.

Data from the focus group interviews was presented in narrative form and 'emic' view of the participants. Tesch's descriptive method of open coding as described by Tesch (1990:142-145) and Creswell (2009:186-189) was adopted in presentation of the data. Also, the thematic structure of the focus group interview schedule was adopted.

The study revealed that the participants knew the roles played by men and women in worship. Also, the participants indicated that women played major roles in prayer services, worship teams, church choir, children's ministry, charity and fundraising. However, their roles were not significant in preaching in corporate services and congregational leadership, including being ordained pastors.

The study showed further that women's passion for children was a factor in their success in children's ministry, while in fundraising and women's ministry their success was attributed to their unity, cooperation and action-orientatedness. In contrast, factors which accounted for their roles and impact being insignificant were, the culture of members of the church, church tradition, selective use of some texts of the Bible to bring women into submission, lack of confidence in women by male congregational leaders and lack of exposure to theological training for women.

Participants indicated that the pragmatic way-forward is to go back to proper study and interpretation of the Bible. While some participants proposed a top-down approach to change systemic issues of the church, others said in improving the situation the

different leadership structures should consult with other church members in a bottom-up approach.

Women participants also raised concerns that they teach and raise young men in the children's ministry, but when these young men are grown up, as women, they are no longer allowed to preach to them.

This study showed that while women are allowed to participate in some areas of worship in the AOG (BTG), the fundamental issues of patriarchy and gender equality with regard to preaching, ordination of pastors, as well as appointment into leadership positions of the whole church still need to be addressed

In conclusion, the words of Margaret Y. Macdonald are worth noting when she said: *"It is high time the church, which claims to embody, his [Jesus] good news to the world, stops betraying its own essential heritage of absolute equality..."* (MacDonald 2006:140).

However, Gabaitse's words give hope when she says: *"Finally, the marginalisation and exclusion of women is inimical to the true spirit of Pentecostalism for the simple reason that the Holy Spirit, if listened to, is able to destabilise and threaten patriarchal ideology and prerogatives. This can happen only if the Pentecostal church were to be open to the change and transformation that the Holy Spirit can usher and effect. However, even if the Pentecostal church is not open to embrace women into the centre, the Holy Spirit will continue to critique, unsettle and act against the Pentecostal church for preaching equality between men and women, while in reality they marginalise women and elevate the status of men through an uncritical use and interpretation of the Bible."* (Gabaitse 2015:11).

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8. APPENDICES

8.1 APPENDIX 1



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Department: Theology

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION AND INFORMED CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN ACADEMIC RESEARCH

Title of The Study: The role and impact of women in worship, in Pentecostal churches of the Germiston District: A ritual-liturgical exploration.

Researcher: Motsepe Lawrence MOGOANE

Institutional affiliation: Pastor, Assemblies of God (Back to God)

Researcher contact details

Cell: 082 560 9053

Email: Imogoane@webmail.co.za

Work address: Spruitview Assembly of God

1441 Matsipa Avenue

Spruitview

1425

You are cordially invited to participate in an academic research study due to your experience and knowledge in the research area, namely women participation in worship. Each participant must receive, read, understand and sign this document *before* the start of the study. If a child is 18 years or younger and is requested to partake in a research study, the parent/legal guardian must give consent. Children from 7-18 years are also required to sign an assent form.

- **Purpose of the study:** The purpose of the study is to explore the role and impact of women in worship, in the Pentecostal churches of the Germiston District, particularly the Assemblies of God (Back to God). The results of the study may be published in an academic journal. You will be provided with a summary of our findings on request.
- **Duration of the study:** The study will be conducted over a period of two months and its projected date of completion is 31 August 2018.
- **Research procedures:** The study is based on Richard Osmer's four tasks of practical theological interpretation viz. The descriptive task, the interpretive task, the normative task and the pragmatic task, combined with Don Browning's four steps of Practical Theology.

Data will be collected through focus group interviews with 8-10 women from your church, semi-structured interviews with one member of the church leadership or women's committee. Questionnaires based on the research study will be sent to twenty respondents from your church.

- **Your rights:** Your participation in this study is very important. You may, however, choose not to participate and you may also stop participating at any time without stating any reasons and without any negative consequences. The relevant data will be destroyed, should you choose to withdraw.
- You, as participant, may contact the researcher at any time in order to clarify any issues pertaining to this research. The respondent as well as the researcher must each keep a copy of this signed document.

Confidentiality: All information regarding the research study will be held confidential; Pseudo names will be used to hide the identity of the participants and their organization (church). Only the researcher, his assistant and his supervisor will have access to data of the research study. All data pertaining to the research study will be destroyed as soon as it is no longer needed.

WRITTEN INFORMED CONSENT

I hereby confirm that I have been informed about the nature of this research.

I understand that I may, at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation in the research. I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions.

Respondent: _____

Researcher: _____

Date: _____

VERBAL INFORMED CONSENT *(Only applicable if respondent cannot write)*

I, the researcher, have read and have explained fully to the respondent, named _____ and his/her relatives, the letter of introduction. The respondent indicated that he/she understands that he/she will be free to withdraw at any time.

Respondent: _____

Researcher: _____

Witness: _____

Date: _____

8.2 APPENDIX 2: SCHEDULE OF THEMES FOR QUALITATIVE FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

A) Knowledge of the concept of worship and roles played by men and women in the church

- 5 What do you understand by the concept of worship?
- 6 Describe the role played by men in worship in your church.
- 7 What role do women play in different worship modes of the church (e.g. preaching, singing, prayer services, Holy Communion, baptism, prophesying or praying for the sick)?
- 8 Give a brief background of how the different roles of men and women developed to the current situation in your church.
- 9 What do you think are the major differences between your church and other Pentecostal churches with regard to the role of women in worship?

B) Impact of women in worship

- 10 Do you think women bring about a difference in the worship modes of the church?
- 11 What are the areas in which the women make the greatest impact on worship in your church and why?
- 12 What are the areas in which the women make the least impact on worship in your church and why?
- 13 Approximately how many women are there in your church, and how many of them play a meaningful role in the worship of the church?
- 14 Comparing men and women, what would you say are the differences in their roles and impact in church worship?

C) Factors promoting or hindering women roles and impact in worship in worship

- 15 What are the factors promoting women's roles and impact in worship?
- 16 What are the factors hindering women roles and impact in worship?

D) Improvement to the current situation

- 17 What would you suggest should be done by women in order to improve their roles and impact in worship in your church?
- 18 What would be the role of church leaders and other sections of the church to promote and improve the roles and impact of women in worship in your church?

8.3 APPENDIX 3: SCHEDULE OF THEMES FOR QUALITATIVE SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS WITH CONGREGATIONAL LEADERS

A) Knowledge of the concept of worship and roles played by men and women in the church

1. What do you understand by the concept of worship?
2. Describe the role played by men in worship in your church.
3. What role do women play in different worship modes of the church (e.g. preaching, singing, prayer services, Holy Communion, baptism, prophesying or praying for the sick)?
4. Give a brief background of how the different roles of men and women developed to the current situation in your church.
5. What do you think are the major differences between your church and other Pentecostal churches with regard to the role of women in worship?

B) Impact of women in worship

6. Do you think women have an impact in the worship modes of the church?
7. What are the areas in which the women make the greatest impact on worship in your church and why?
8. What are the areas in which the women make the least impact on worship in your church and why?
9. Approximately how many women are there in your church, and how many of them play a meaningful role in the worship of the church?
10. Comparing men and women, what would you say are the differences in their roles and impact in church worship?

C) Factors promoting or hindering women roles and impact in worship in worship

11. What are the factors promoting women's roles and impact in worship?
12. What are the factors hindering women roles and impact in worship?

D) Improvement to the current situation

13. What would you suggest should be done by women in order to improve their roles and impact in worship in your church?
14. What would be the role of church leaders and other sections of the church to promote and improve the roles and impact of women in worship in your church?

8.4 APPENDIX 4: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO DO RESEARCH (TO REGIONAL COUNCIL COMMITTEE)

TO: The Secretary
Regional Council Committee
Eastern Reef Region
Brakpan
Sirs

1441 Matsipa Avenue
Spruitview
1425
15 March 2018

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO DO RESEARCH

Greetings in Jesus' most wonderful Name. I refer to the above-mentioned matter.

I, **Motsepe Lawrence Mogoane**, (Student Number 21321532), am a student at the University of Pretoria. I am currently registered for the Master of Theology degree. As part of my studies, I am expected to do a research project. The purpose of my research is to explore the role and impact of women in worship, in Pentecostal churches in the Germiston District. This is a ritual-liturgical exploratory study with particular focus on the Assemblies of God (Back to God).

I hereby request permission to conduct this research in churches in the Germiston District. In this study, I will conduct focus group interviews with about ten women between the ages 21 and 65, in each of the three churches I will choose. I will also conduct an interview with one congregational leader (elder/deacon or a member of the mothers' committee) in each church. Furthermore, I will issue questionnaires based on my research topic to about 60 -100 church members in the same district. I will seek permission for access to the churches from each individual church leadership office, pending your permission for me to proceed with the study.

The interviews with the women and with the congregational leaders will be tape-recorded. The tape recordings and transcripts, as well as the questionnaires will be used by the researcher and his supervisor for purposes of this research only, and will be destroyed as soon as they are no longer needed. For confidentiality, the identities of the participants will not be revealed.

I will appreciate your positive response **in written form** so as to forward it to the university for ethical clearance. If the RCC members would request more clarity on this issue, I will be glad to have a meeting with them.

Yours faithfully

M. L. Mogoane (Researcher)

Cell: 082 560 9053

8.5 APPENDIX 5: PERMISSION TO DO RESEARCH (FROM REGIONAL COUNCIL COMMITTEE)



ASSEMBLIES OF GOD
Eastern Reef Regional Council

24/04/2018

MOTSEPE L MOGOANE
1441 MATSIPA AVENUE
SPRUITVIEW
1425

RE: PERMISSION TO DO RESEARCH

SIR

The Eastern Reef Regional Council Committee gives you permission to access any information that can assist you doing your research in our region. We understand that the purpose of your research is to explore the role and impact of women in worship in Pentecostal churches in the Germiston District.

Hope all is in order

Yours in His service

Dr Jele S. Manganyi

Pst Z Mogomotsi

8.6 APPENDIX 6: SPECIMEN OF LETTER OF REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO DO RESEARCH (TO AOG LOCAL CHURCHES)

1441 Matsipa Avenue

Spruitview

1425

01 May 2018

To: The Elders/Deacons
Assembly of God Church

GERMISTON DISTRICT

Sirs

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO DO RESEARCH

I, **Motsepe Lawrence Mogoane**, (Student Number 21321532) am a student at the University of Pretoria. I am currently registered for the Master of Theology degree. As part of my studies I am expected to do a research project. The purpose of my research is to explore the role and impact of women in worship, in Pentecostal churches, with particular focus on the Assemblies of God (Back to God).

I hereby request permission to conduct a research in your church. In this study, I will conduct a focus group interview with about ten women between the ages 21 and 65. I will also conduct an interview with one congregational leader (elder/deacon or a member of the mothers' committee) in your church. Furthermore, I will issue questionnaires based on my research topic to twenty church members.

The interviews with the women and with the congregational leader will be tape-recorded. The tape recordings and transcripts, as well as the questionnaires will be used by the researcher and his supervisor for purposes of this research only, and will be destroyed as soon as they are no longer needed. For confidentiality, the identities of the participants will not be revealed. Permission for this research has been sought and obtained from the Eastern Reef RCC. See attached copy.

I will appreciate your positive response **in written form** so as to forward it to the university. If the church leadership would request more clarity on this issue, I will be glad to have a meeting with them.

Yours sincerely

M. L. Mogoane (Researcher) Cell: 082 560 9053