

KIBOGORA POLYTECHNIC

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THE CONTRIBUTION OF WOMEN IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IN FREE METHODIST CHURCH IN RWANDA.

Case Study: RURU Parish

Undergraduate thesis presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
award of Bachelor degree with honors in Theology

PAPER PREPARED BY:

NAME: NYANDWI Speciose

REG. N° 2000357

NAME: IRAKIZA Fabrice

REG. N° 2000362

SUPERVISOR: Revd Dr Wendy Kilworth-Mason

Kibogora, August, 2023

DECLARATION

Declaration by the Candidate

We, NYANDWI Speciose and IRAKIZA Fabrice hereby declare that this research thesis is our own original work and is not a duplication of any similar academic work. It has not been previously or concurrently submitted for any other degree, diploma or other qualification in Kibogora Polytechnic or any other institution. All materials cited in this paper which are not our own have been acknowledged.

NYANDWI Speciose

Reg Number:

Signature:

Date:

IRAKIZA Fabrice

Reg Number:

Signature:

Date:

Declaration by the Supervisor

I declare that this work has been submitted for examination with my approval as KP Supervisor

Supervisor's name: Rev. Dr Wendy Kilworth-Mason

Signature.....

Date.....

ABSTRACT

This research is about the contribution of women in Christian education in the Free Methodist of Rwanda. The main objective of this study was to analyze the contribution of women in the Christian education of the Free Methodist church in Rwanda (FMCR) with reference to RURU Parish. The specific objectives were to identifying the challenges that women face in making leadership contributions in Christian education, and to suggest strategies for overcoming any barriers, to assessing the impact of women's contribution on the growth and development of Christian education, and on the spiritual formation and discipleship of church members and to exploring the various ways in which women have contributed to Christian education, including through teaching, leadership, mentoring and pastoral care. The target population was church members of the FMCR, RURU Parish, and as the total population 328 members, the sample size was 77 respondents. In order to collect data, the researcher used documentary review, questionnaire, semi-structured interview and observation. The data analysis was done through quantitative and qualitative methods. The findings of this study showed that women from RURU parish in FMCR face challenges of the lack of self-confidence, inferiority complex and cultural bias. Hopefully, the findings from interviewees indicate that the Sunday school has helped them memorize many Bible verses and know some important Bible stories, love Jesus, know Christian values and love their church. The answers of the respondents showed that the church thinks that Sunday school is for training children so that they can know Christian values, can help children and adult to know Jesus Christ and become a good Christian. As conclusion, we should encourage women to be enrolled in ministerial training that will increase their knowledge of spiritual and doctrinal matters, so that they can contribute actively in Christian education in the church. The researchers recommend church leaders training to face the challenge of numerical disparities between women and men, especially in teaching ministry.

Key terms: Christian education, church

DEDICATION

To our beloved parents;

To our beloved family.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CUR: Catholic University of Rwanda

FMCR: Free Methodist Church in Rwanda

PIASS: Protestant Institute of Arts and Social Sciences

RSV: Revised Standard Version

USA: United States of America

CHAPTER ONE: GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores the problems related to the role played by women in the Christian education of the church. In this chapter, we focused on the background to the study, the problem statement, we explained the purpose of the study and our objectives, stated our research questions, determined the significance of the study, we exposed its limitations, and examined the scope.

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Eleanor and Wade (2007:13) affirms that, the Bible is the center of the Christian faith and serves as the primary text book for Christian education. The Bible supplies the content of instruction, model of education, methods of education and the rationale for Christian education. For this reason, the Bible is the primary lens through which Christian education is perceived. Furthermore, the Bible is seen as foundational to Christian education for its claim of revelation and inspiration (2Tim.3:15-17, RSV). It is therefore the essential source for understanding Christian thought and practice in education.

In the New Testament, at the center of teaching of Christian Education is the salvation of humankind by God in Jesus Christ (Homrighausen & Enklaar, 2004)

According to the Acts of the Apostles and the various epistles of the New Testament, women continued to occupy an important place in the life of the church and in the work of evangelism, including in Christian education. Euodia and Syntyche shared Paul's struggle in the cause of the gospel (Philippians 4:2-3).

Across the years, the contribution of women in Christian education has been significant globally, in Africa, and in Rwanda in particular. This research document aims to explore and analyze the contribution of women in Christian education specifically in Rwanda, with reference also to Christian Education on a global level, in the continent of Africa and in the Sub-Saharan Region (Kiragu, 2006).

Globally: Women have played a significant role in Christian education, contributing to theological education, to Christian schools and to mission work. Many women have become influential theologians, scholars and educators. Women such as Sojourner Truth, Catherine Booth, and

Katharine Bushnell have made significant contributions to Christian education (Wiesner-Hanks, 2002). In recent years, there has been a rise in women's leadership in Christian education with many women serving as Pastors, missionaries, and educators in seminaries and universities. However, women still face challenges in some denominations and cultures where their leadership is not fully recognized or supported (Wiesner-Hanks, 2002).

In Unites States of America (USA), there are many women who contributed to the advancement of Christian education. Susan B. Anthony, not only advocated for the equal compensation of women in the field of education but also was a woman devoted to her Christian faith whose desire was against secularization of education but rather the immersion of faith and learning (Polk, 2019). Harriet Beecher Stowe, half-sister of Catherine Beecher, was an educational reformer for women, whose writings brought to light the tragedy of slavery and the need for social justice for all people (Michals, 2017).

On the African continent: Women have played a significant role in Christian education, contributing to evangelism, theological education. It is therefore evident that women just like men are capable and endowed with abilities to lead churches. Moreover, a key Pentecostal belief is that both men and women receive charismatic gifts that enable them to lead and carry out church ministries (Mwaura, 2005: 35).

In Sub-Saharan Africa women have contributed to Christian education in various ways, including as evangelists, in the work of Bible translation, and in general education. In many rural areas, women have taken the lead in evangelism and discipleship, reaching out with the gospel, particularly to other women and children (Daniel, 2010: 44).

In Rwanda, women have made significant contributions to Christian education, particularly in the aftermath of the 1994 genocide. Christian education is taught in schools and churches in Sunday schools. For instance, Africa New Life Church, an organization that strives to transform lives and communities through the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ and through acts of compassion is one of actors supporting this cause following the opening of a new school in Bugesera District in 2020, which offers courses under 'Accelerating Christian Education' program (IGIHE, 2021). Many women have started schools and served as teachers, providing education to their communities. Women have also been involved in theological education with the Protestant

Institute of Arts and Social Sciences (PIASS) and the Catholic University of Rwanda (CUR) offering theological education to women (Carney, 2015: 76)

Therefore, women have made a significant contribution to Christian education globally, in Africa and in Rwanda. Women have been involved in evangelism, theological education, Christian schools and community development. Although women still face challenges in some cultures and denominations, their contribution to Christian education has been invaluable.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Despite the important role that women have played in Christian education throughout history, their contributions have often been overlooked or undervalued, while many women have been involved in teaching, mentoring and leading in Christian contexts. This has led to a lack of recognition for the significant impact that women have had on shaping Christian education and theology.

Therefore, the problem to be addressed is how to recognize their past contributions and how to amplify the contribution of women in Christian education in order to fully appreciate their role in shaping the Christian faith and to empower more women to take on leadership roles in Christian communities.

The Bible does not explicitly address the specific challenges facing women in Christian education. However, there are a few passages in the New Testament that can provide some insight into the general attitude to women and their role in the church.

One of the most well-known passages is 1 Timothy 2:12 which states, “I do not permit women to teach or to assume authority over a man; she must be quiet.” This passage has been interpreted in various ways with some arguing that it applies only to a specific historical context and others claiming that it is a universal principle that should be applied in all churches in all cultural contexts, for all time.

Another passage that can be considered to be relevant is 1 Corinthians 14:34-35, which says, “Women should remain silent in the churches. They are not allowed to speak but must be in submission, as the law says. If they want to inquire about something, they should ask their own husband at home; for it is disgraceful for women to speak in the church.”

These passages have been interpreted literally and used to justify limiting women's involvement in church leadership and teaching roles.

Overall, the challenges facing women in Christian education are likely to be shaped by a variety of factors, including cultural norms, historical traditions, and both denominational and individual beliefs and interpretations of scripture.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1.3.1 General objective

The main objective of this study was to analyze the contribution of women in the Christian education of the Free Methodist church in Rwanda with reference to RURU Parish.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives.

This study was done following these specific objectives in the Free Methodist Church in RURU Parish:

1. Identifying the challenges that women face in making leadership contributions in Christian education, and to suggest strategies for overcoming any barriers.
2. Assessing the impact of women's contribution on the growth and development of Christian education, and on the spiritual formation and discipleship of church members.
3. Exploring the various ways in which women have contributed to Christian education, including through teaching, leadership, mentoring and pastoral care.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions that are interconnected with the specific objectives were:

1. What are the challenges that women encounter when seeking to make contributions in Christian education, and what strategies can be suggested to overcome those barriers?
2. How has women's contribution impacted the growth and development of Christian education and the spiritual formation and discipleship of church members?

3. What are the different ways in which women have contributed to Christian education specifically through teaching, leadership, mentoring, and pastoral care?

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

1.5.1 Why Christian education?

Then what should be the purpose of Christian education? Henderlite once said that the task of church in education is “To bring man to God, telling of God’s Grace, in the hope that man will be able to respond to God in faith.... The church must teach the data of faith, ours is a historic religion the events of which occurred at a time and place in history” (Henderlite, 1972: 198).

This means that Christian education, it’s not about Bible study or other theological theories but it is all about their implication on the whole life and for all time.” (Yust, 2002: 69)

The main purpose of Christian education is to create people with God’s character and act it out in their lives. Thus the foundation of the Christian education is based on Jesus’ principles which are to seek and to save man. (Luke 19: 10). In relation with this,

We might summarize the purposes of Christian education in these words: You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it, you shall love your neighbor as yourself (Matthew 22:37-40). Christian education is all about God and also about others. Because we serve God through serving others. It’s all about equipping people to do all things for only God’s Glory (1 Cor 1: 31)

1.5.2 Significance of this study for the student researchers

It helps the researchers get extra knowledge about the contribution of women in Christian education of Free Methodist church in Rwanda. It also helped the researchers to put into practice what they had learned in class as theories; hence it improved their skills.

1.5.3. Significance of the study for the Free Methodist Church of Rwanda (FMCR)

The outcome of this study is expected to benefit many parties. FMCR will use to determine further strategy about Christian education, involving a high number of women through the process

1.5.3. Scientific preference

The results of the study may help other researchers who may be interested in doing further research in the same area. This study may make several contributions to enhancing the contribution of women in Christian education in Rwanda

1.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Normally there were Financial problems as researches were supposed to find ticket for transport, Restaurant and accommodations but researchers tried their best to find them.

1.7. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study was been limited on the time scope, content scope and geographical scope

1.7.1 Time scope

This study was been limited in the interval of 2020-2023

1.7.2 Contents scope

This study was been focused on the contribution of women in christian education in free methodist church of Rwanda in Ruru Parish

1.7.3 Geographical scope

This study was been located in RURU Parish at the shoe of the Lake Kivu NYAMYUMBA Sector, RUBAVU District, Western Provence in Rwanda Cauntry

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION

The second chapter of this study presents the definition of key terms, literature related to the specific objectives, research gaps, and the conceptual framework of the study.

2.1 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS/ TERMS

2.1.1 Church

The term "Church" is derived from the Greek word "ekklesia," which means "assembly" or "congregation." In the New Testament, the Church is described as the body of Christ, with Christ as its head (Ephesians 1:22-23). The Church is also referred to as the bride of Christ (Ephesians 5:25-27), highlighting the intimate relationship between Christ and his followers.

According to the Book of Discipline, it is clear from Scripture that the church is of God and for people. It is His creation. Christ is its head. The church is the people of God chosen for a purposeful partnership in accomplishing the will of God on earth. (The Free Methodist Church USA, 2009: 1).

2. 1.2 Christian education

Christian Educational institutions are founded to practice principles essential to the Christian faith from a philosophical, theoretical, and practical biblical worldview (Knight, 2006).

2.1.3 Free Methodist Church

The Free Methodist Church is a Christian denomination that emerged in the United States during the mid-19th century. It was founded in 1860 by a group of pastors who broke away from the Methodist Episcopal Church due to what they saw as a lack of emphasis on evangelism, holiness, and social justice. The lineage of the Free Methodist Church begins with the people of God in the Old and New Testaments, and includes influences and contributions from the multitude of renewal movements in western Christianity: Wycliffe and the German Moravians; the sixteenth century Reformation with its many counterbalancing renewal movements, not the least of which were the Arminian correctives (which taught that Christ's salvation was for all humankind without limit, but that it must be freely chosen); the Catholic-Anglican tradition; the English Puritan influence;

the Methodist tradition; and the ensuing vigorous nineteenth century holiness movement. God has used these and others across the ages to make the unchanging Christian gospel known more clearly. In sum, Free Methodists identify with the flow of history of the Christian church while maintaining distinctive evangelical and spiritual emphases (The Free Methodist Church USA, 2019).

2.2. Theories on Christian education

2.2.1 Objectives of the Christian Education

For Megill (1998:4) the objectives of Christian education are:

- 1) To help believers grow in knowing, understanding and appreciating their cultural, biblical and Christian heritage.
- 2) To help people know and understand who they are in their specific situations with others.
(iii) to help people grow in their relationships with God and with their neighbours.
- 3) To help people know, understand and interpret what is happening in their environment in the light of their Christian faith. This means that the purpose of Christian education is to equip people to understand what life is all about to enhance their relationship with God and with their fellow human beings.

2.2.2 Holy Spirit in Christian Education

According to Yount (2008: 23) the role of the Holy Spirit is essential in the supernatural transformation of learners through Christian education. Christian education without the Holy Spirit is meaningless. Dickason (1991:121) says “the Holy Spirit is sovereign, most wise, and ultimate teacher of spiritual truth. He makes God’s truth relevant to the person involved and enables applications that cause life and growth. This means that teaching and learning effort are in vain unless they are in cooperation with the Spirit. He is of the view that the Holy Spirit helps Christian educators by giving them discernment of God’s truths and empowering them to instruct students in the way that produces spiritual transformation”. The Holy Spirit helps both teachers and students to understand the Bible’s message through illumination. Only the Holy Spirit creates the necessary changes so that believers can achieve the goal of becoming more like Christ. So Christian education is dynamic and distinct from any other type of education.

2.2.3 Adult and children Sunday school as an important vehicle for Christian education

The Sunday school idea is an important aspect of Christian education. It could be said to be the main source of Christian education in Africa (Matshinga 2001: 45). The idea of Sunday school started during the Industrial Revolution, in Europe. It aimed to teach the youngsters reading, writing and knowledge of the Bible. Sunday schools were first set up in the 1780's in England by Robert Raikes, a Christian philanthropist and editor of the Gloucester Journal. He was supported by many clergymen to provide education to working children on Sunday, their one day off from factories. The movement rapidly grew and spread to American colonies because conditions were favourable.

Globally, the effectiveness of Sunday-schools has also increased linearly with growth of churches. Missionaries sent out are noted to be products of Sunday-school programmes in America. Indeed, it is noted that 83% of part-time workers in a church received Christ while in Sunday school (Luis, 2013). Growth and effectiveness of Sunday-school programmes is attributed to competent workforce, good teaching methods and proper arrangement and organization of the programmes (Francis, 2009).

Sunday schools in Rwanda were places where children and young people gather to learn about Christianity and its teachings on Sundays. These schools are usually associated with churches and are meant to supplement the regular religious education provided by the church.

In Rwanda, which is predominantly Christian, Sunday schools play an essential role in nurturing the spiritual growth of children and adolescents. They often focus on teaching Bible stories, moral values, and the principles of Christian faith through various activities such as singing, Bible study, arts and crafts, and games.

The specific structure and curriculum of Sunday schools may vary depending on the denomination and church traditions. They are typically led by volunteers or church members who are passionate about teaching and guiding young minds (Kubai, 2007)

So, as conclusion Sunday school is for children and all adults. The church of Rwanda should set Sunday school for all age so that everyone in his or her age could be equipped and rooted in the word of God.

2.3. Theories on the contribution of women in Christian education in the Free Methodist Church

In the Free Methodist Church, women have contributed much in Christian education. Within nineteenth-century religious periodicals women writers were often restricted to the mission society pages (Cayton, 2010) or the Sunday school section. Yet in the North American Free Methodist Church the contributions of women to print culture increased to include women who wrote about their ministry, offered spiritual guidance and wrote original articles for denominational publications. In addition to his time as editor for denominational publications, Roberts also served as editor and publisher for his own independent religious periodical *The Earnest Christian*, which he founded in 1859 (Snyder, 2006).

The Earnest Christian consistently featured regular women contributors who wrote on religious life, spiritual growth and conversion experiences. Prior to Roberts taking over as editor of *The Free Methodist* in 1887 the magazine featured few women writers outside the pages of the Sunday school curriculum or mission society news. Yet, as editor of both magazines Roberts began to regularly feature more women and encourage readers to subscribe to both *The Free Methodist* and *The Earnest Christian* (Snyder, 2006).

In addition, As Ruggles and Robbins note in their study of early twentieth-century women's role in Christian education through writing magazine on Christian beliefs and practices, these publications provided opportunities not available elsewhere: 'Women reading and writing for the publications of foreign mission movement acquired a gendered agency through their use in print – one that clearly influenced the larger enterprise in which they were participating' (Ruggles & Robbins, 1996: 653–4).

For Free Methodist women writing provided them with a sense of spiritual agency, giving them the power to voice their opinions and demand denominational support for more senior leadership roles. The writings of Free Methodist women in the late 1880s illustrate the social tension in American culture between ministry and family.

The women wanted to share their faith and engage in active ministry but, at the same time, their writings are full of the tension between their duties at home and their duties in ministry. Fighting against the 'cult of domesticity' late nineteenth-century Free Methodist women had to illustrate that not only were they called to share their faith, but also that they were capable of balancing both family and work. In an era where women's roles were still largely confined to the domestic sphere this was no easy task (Epstein, 1981).

Out of all the women who attempted to preach, Bosanquet became the most prominent and favored for Wesley. Bosanquet's prominent role was shaped by John Wesley's recognition of her strengths and ability, giving her the title minister. Bosanquet stood firm in her position on women in leadership, especially in preaching. She challenged the leading of the Spirit and followed his direction. Following the Spirit, she was lead Bath. She writes in her journal dated February 1778 "On the 8th of December last, I set out for this place, and came here on the 12th. Much have I seen of the hand of my God here in many ways." (Mack, 2000: 20).

John Wesley's small groups influenced three women for the evangelistic mission: Mary Bosanquet (later Fletcher), Sarah Crosby, and Sarah Ryan. Although Wesley at first opposed her preaching, he was lenient allowing women with an extraordinary call in ministry. Bosanquet's powerful testimony, as well as selections from Crosby and Ryan through their calling, changed the Methodist understanding of women's roles. The evangelistic efforts of these women influenced other women and truly reflected the person and work of Christ. Despite the Methodists strange view for women and their roles, Wesley, as well as many other, were able to discover the calling of women by naming it the extraordinary call. The evangelistic efforts by these women provided cause for women to break through their silence and do follow God's calling on their lives (Chilcote, 1991).

Thus, If the women contribute effectively Christian education, the number of believers will increase at high level through practicing it in their family, church and even in their community

2.4 Challenges that women face in making leadership contributions in Christian education

2.4.1 Inferiority complex

One of the challenges against women involvement in Christian education is an inferiority complex, the “unrealistic feeling of general inadequacy caused by actual or supposed inferiority in one sphere, sometimes marked by aggressive behaviour in compensation.” By that the researcher intended to show why women always felt that they were inadequately prepared for any elective posts in the church. According to Kasomo the lack of self-confidence was the reason why women were taken for granted (Kasomo, 2010: 14).

Women did not agree to be in leadership positions as that would place them ahead of their male counterparts. Women needed to have self-confidence about what they could do. The role of women in church leadership became insignificant because of the attitude women. They did not of conceive themselves as lesser beings because they too had received “the charisma from the Spirit of God and are therefore called to serve the church irrespective of the sexes” (Kasomo, 2010: 15).

2.4.2 Criticism of women based on misinterpretation of some Bible verses

The traditionalist view holds the notion that this is a Christ perspective which is found in 1 Tim.2:11–15. One person who holds deeply to this view is John Macarthur, in May 2020, he said the only thing that the women are called do is to teach younger women to love their husbands so that the word of God will not be dishonoured and any instruction to men is in violation of God's standards. He lined out that the woman is the helper and not the one in charge and because of that there was never a female priest, spiritual leader, no Woman Apostle, Prophet, Pastor in the New Testament and also no sermon recorded by a woman.

Another challenge facing women's contribution to Christian education is found in misinterpretation of certain Bible verses. The two texts (1Corinthians 14: 33-35/1Tim.2:11–15) prohibiting women from preaching and leadership in the Church are by no means representative of the Apostle's attitude toward women in ministry. A careful study of all the passages in Romans, for instance, in which women are mentioned, fails to yield even a hint of such discrimination.

2.5 Impact of women's contribution on the growth and development of Christian education

Whereas the historical framework for women in education has been one of change, increased empowerment, and continued value in broader more diverse roles. The biblical role of women is one of strength and value as in the stories of women such as Esther, Deborah, and Ruth (Esther 4:14; Ruth 4:13-15; & Judges 4-5). The influence of women continued through the establishment of the first church following the resurrection of Jesus Christ through women such as Lydia and Priscilla (Acts 16:14; Romans 16:3).

Key women were utilized in building the Israelite nation and were included in the lineage of Jesus, the son of God and redeemer of all humanity. First century women were chosen by God to be the first voices to proclaim the good news of the resurrection of Christ (Matthew 28:7) during a time where the cultural view did not place women in leadership positions. The authors of the gospels included women as a fundamental source of truth and advancement of the cause of Christianity, which was a counter-cultural and precarious position. The liberation of women to be voices of truth and leaders for the gospel was empowering (Cobb, 2019: 17).

According to Thomas Schreiner we are apt to misunderstand the scriptures if we immediately delve into texts that limit women from pastoral office, for the dignity and significance of women is taught in the Bible. He says that Genesis teaches that men and women are made in God's image and together they are to rule over the world God created. The dignity of women is often portrayed in the Old Testament. We think of the courageous life of Sarah (Gen 12-23), the faith of Rahab (Joshua 2), the commitment of Hannah (1 Sam 1-2), and the devotion of Ruth (Ruth 1-4). Women helped our Lord Jesus Christ to travel in a different way in his ministry (Luke 8:1-3) Jesus Christ commended them for listening to the word of God."

Schreiner affirms the equality of men and women created in God's image. Thus women must be in ministry such as church planting, evangelism and in local church ministry, making contributions as prophets, deacons, offering leadership in the work of Christian education." (Schreiner, 2015).

2.6 Various ways in which women have contributed to Christian education

According to the Old Testament, Israel from the start had its female prophets, judges, counselors, and worship leaders (in fact women were multi-gifted). For instance, Miriam possessed instrumental, hymnic and prophetic gifts that served Israel well during the wilderness years

(Exodus 15:20) and Deborah was named a prophet (Judge 4:4-5) Craig Blomberg says that in the New Testament women play a surprisingly prominent role in the early Christian movement. For instance, Peter raises Tabitha (Dorcas), who was praised as always doing good and helping the poor, from death (Acts 9:36-42)”

Matthew 28:7 recognizes women as the primary witness of the final events of Jesus’ earthly career and resurrection. Mary Magdalene and another woman also named Mary are said to be sent by an Angel with a message that Christ has risen. Scott (2011: 21) observes that this has great significance because in the contemporary culture of the time, women’s testimony was not to be trusted. However, Scott notes, Jesus entrusts women to be those who will witness and testify to those events. In making women the primary witness, therefore, Jesus redeemed the traditional view of the untrustworthiness of women.

A case in point is a recent catalog statement from one of America’s largest and most conservative Evangelical seminaries “as members of the Faculty of Trinity Evangelical School and leaders in the church of our Lord, we recognize that God has given his gifts to both men and women in the body of Christ” It means that each woman should be encouraged and receive the training she needs to be fully prepared for future Ministry. (Belleville, 2005: 18).

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the design and methods that the researchers used to collect and analyze data. It is concerned with the research approach, target population; sampling procedures; sample size; research instruments for data collection; data collection procedures; ethical issues and data analysis as well as the reliability and validity of measures.

3.1 Research approaches and design

A suitable research approach for our topic, “the contribution of women in Christian education in the Free Methodist Church in Rwanda, with a case study at RURU Parish,” could be a mixed-methods one combining both quantitative and qualitative methods to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research topic.

Here is a breakdown of the research approach:

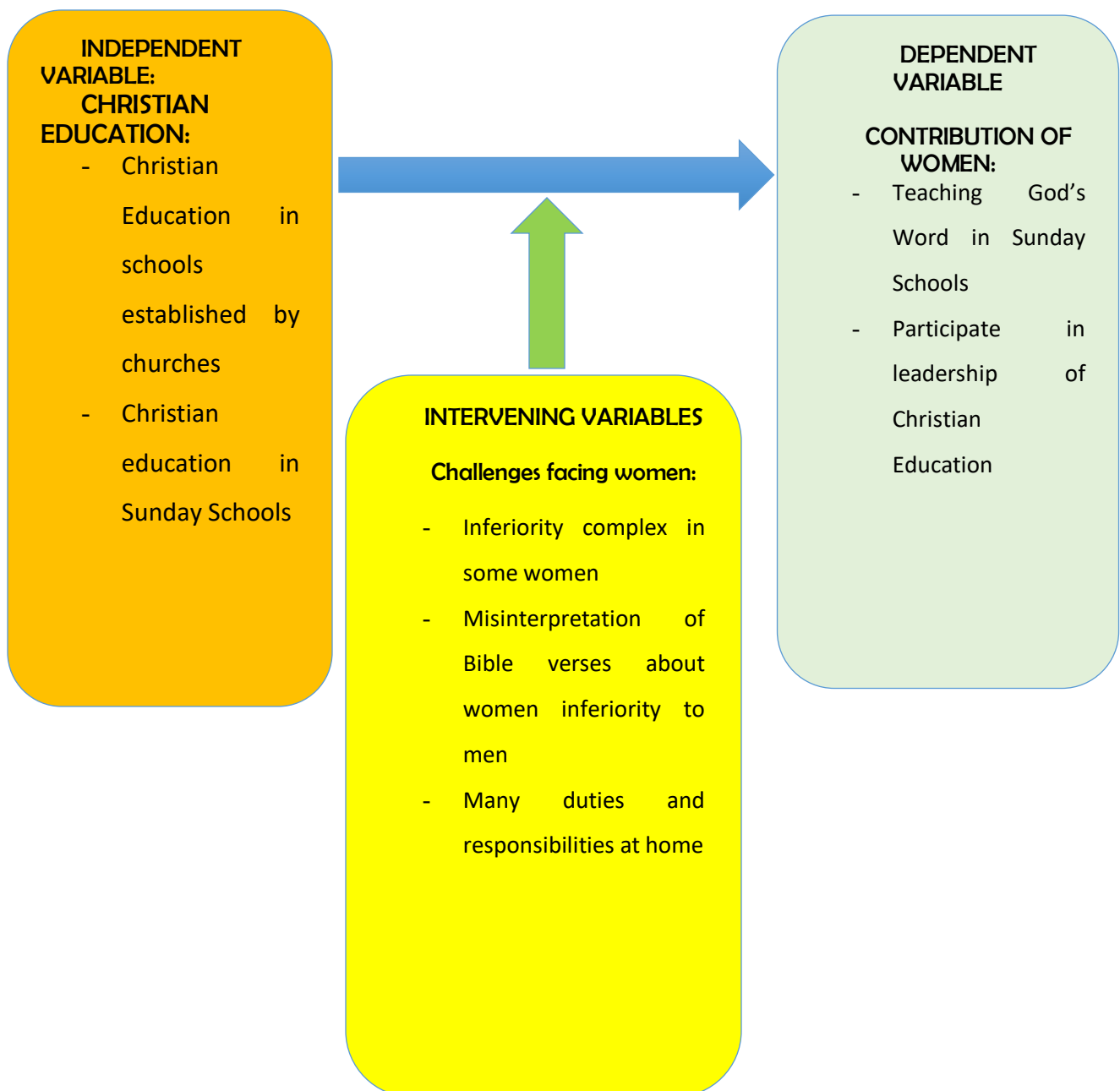
Quantitative research: This approach involves collecting numerical data that can be analyzed using statistical methods. In this case, a survey could be conducted to gather data on the number of women involved in Christian Education in the Free Methodist Church of Rwanda, in RURU Parish, and their level of involvement. The survey would be administered to a sample of members of RURU Parish.

Qualitative research: This approach involves collecting non-numerical data through interviews, observations, and analysis of documents. The survey could also collect data on the attitudes and perceptions of church members of women in Christian Education. Interviews could be conducted with women who are involved in Christian Education at the RURU Parish., exploring their experiences, challenges, and contributions. In addition, observations could be made of Christian education activities to gain an understanding of the roles that women play in them. Finally, documents related to Christian education in RURU Parish could be analyzed to identify the contribution of women.

Case study: RURU Parish has been selected, as the place where data could be collected through surveys, interviews, observations, and document analysis.

Figure 1: Conceptual framework

A conceptual framework is a system of concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs and theories that supports and informs research (Maxwell, 2005: 33). The following is the conceptual framework of the theories on Christian education and women contribution to it.



3.2 Target population

The target population is “the entire aggregation of respondents that meet the designated set of criteria” (Burns & Grove 1997:236). The target population in this research was all church members of the FMCR, RURU Parish. (328 members)

3.3 Sampling procedure

The following sampling procedure were being used:

Identify the sampling frame: This was from a list of women involved in Christian education at the RURU Parish (the list was obtained from the church's leadership and relevant church committees).

Selecting the participants: A purposive sampling technique selected participants based on their knowledge and involvement in Christian Education in RURU Parish: teachers, facilitators, or leaders in Christian Education activities. The sample being diverse enough to capture different perspectives and experiences. (Jiang, 2022)

Obtaining informed consent: Participants were informed about the study's purpose and their role in the research. They were assured of their confidentiality and anonymity, and be given the option to decline participation. (Manti, 2018).

3.4 Sample size

Sample size is a part of the population chosen for a survey or experiment (Prof. Essa, 2013). To get a sample size, Yamane’s (1967) provided a formula as found in the paper published by University of Florida. The formula is given as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N e^2}$$

Where:

N: Population size,

e: Level of precision equals to 10%

n: Sample size

Therefore

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N e^2}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
& \frac{328}{1 + 328(0.1)^2} \\
&= \frac{328}{1 + 328 \times 0.01} \\
&= \frac{328}{1 + 3.28} \\
&= \frac{328}{4.28} \\
&= 76.63 \approx 77 \text{ people}
\end{aligned}$$

According to the above-mentioned formula, the researcher found a sample size of 77 people from the FMCR, RURU Parish.

Table 1: Population distribution under study

Population of the study	Total number of study population	Sample size
Men	79	23
Young people	51	14
Women	198	40
TOTAL	328	77

Source: Primary Data, July 2023

3.4 Data collection techniques

In order to collect data, the researcher used different documents, the questionnaire, observation and interview.

3.4.1 Documentary technique

According to Yin (2003), documentary review is important to case study research as the information may differ or may not be available in spoken form and because texts discuss policies, procedures or events. By reviewing and analyzing documents, such as reports, policy documents, and meeting minutes we were able to examine what these various sources of evidence might reveal, providing insight into the official perspectives and practices related to women's involvement in Christian Education. (Love, 2003).

3.4.2 Questionnaire

The questionnaire was the main instrument for collecting data in the survey research, it was a set of standardized questions, often called items, which followed a fixed scheme in order to collect individual data about one or more specific topics. (Smyth, 2016). The questionnaire (see Appendix) was submitted to 66 selected respondents from the field.

3.4.3 Semi-structured interviews

We learnt that semi-structured, in-depth interviews are frequently used in qualitative researches, in which ‘open, direct, verbal questions are used to elicit detailed narratives and stories’ (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree 2006: 315). A semi-structured set of questions was designed to elicit information from participants. An interview guide was developed to collect data on the experiences, views, and contributions of women in Christian Education in RURU Parish. The guide was used with both male and female participants involved in Christian education to explore their views on the challenges, opportunities, and contributions of women. (Gill, 2018: 12). Using the interview guide the researchers asked some questions of selected 2 women teachers of Sunday school from RURU Parish.

3.4.4 Observations

Observations of behaviors, events, or processes was used to assess the activities, interactions, and behaviors of women involved in Christian Education in the Parish, thus providing a better understanding of their roles and contributions. (O’Sullivan, 2002: 28).

3.5 Data analysis

According to Sekaran and Bougie (2016), a visual representation i.e. figures; graphs and table of the data central tendencies maybe utilised to provide the investigator a general understanding of the data behaviour before a thorough data analysis is initiated.

Descriptive statistics: summarizing the data such as means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages. This can provide an overview of the data and highlight any patterns or trends.(Is this relevant to your research? If not, exclude it.) (Fisher, 2009)

Content analysis: Analyzing textual data, such as interview transcripts or documents, to identify themes, patterns, and meanings, provided a more in-depth understanding of the data and the experiences as well as the perspectives of the participants.

Interpretation: To answer the research questions and draw conclusions was grounded in the data and took into account any limitations or biases in the data or the research process. We analyzed data from the questionnaire and interview in commenting on them, using relevant theories.

The data analysis process was guided by the research questions and objectives. The analysis was conducted systematically and rigorously to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings. (Welsh, 2002)

3.6 Ethical considerations

It is important to ensure that the research is conducted ethically and responsibly. In the case of the present research, the following ethical considerations were taken into account:

Informed consent: Participants were informed of the nature of the study, their rights, and the potential risks and benefits of participating. They were given the opportunity to ask questions and provide their consent to participate voluntarily (Jefford, 2008)

Confidentiality and anonymity: Participants' identities were protected, and their personal information kept confidential. Participants' names are not used in the research report and all data collected stored securely.

Respect for cultural practices: Researchers respected the cultural practices and norms of the population under study, taking care not to offend or harm participants' cultural beliefs and practices. (Johnson, 2000)

Avoiding harm: As researchers we didn't need to take measures to minimize any potential risk of harm to participants resulting from their participation in the study, including physical, emotional, and psychological harm. (Long, 2022)

Fairness: As researchers we treated participants fairly and with respect, avoiding any forms of discrimination or bias in the research. (Francez, 2012).

Transparency: Researchers provided a clear explanation of their research objectives, methods, and findings, conducting their research with transparency and integrity. (Geraats, 2002)

Ethical considerations were maintained throughout the research project, with appropriate measures taken to address any ethical concerns that arose (Arifin, 2018)

CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.0. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researchers talked about presentation of findings, discussion of findings and summary.

4.1. PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

This part comprises various parts used to explain situation of the respondents, about the contribution of women in Christian education in Free Methodist church of Rwanda especially RURU Parish. The perception of Christian, church leaders about the contribution of women in Christian education in FMCR especially RURU Parish have been investigated. We used tables to present data from the respondents and presented the data using various items like Frequency tables and diagrams. All the 77 expected respondents have participated and provided the following information.

4.1.1. IDENTIFICATION OF PARTICIPANTS

This section shows the identification of the respondents according gender, age group, marital status, and academic background.

Table 1: Participation of the respondents according to the gender

Gender	Frequencies	Percentages%
Females	49	63.6
Males	28	36.4
Total	77	100

Sources: Primary data, July 2023

This table 1 shows that the female frequency is 49 and the percentage is 63.6%, while males have a frequency of 28 and their percentage is 36.4% of all respondents including church members. The involvement of women in the Church leadership is noteworthy and women make the majority in church seats. Gbenga (2012: 23) points out that to those women who comprise the majority in the church membership and are the sustaining force in most congregations, have very little power

within the leadership of the church. The above insights from James make it important for a study to be conducted and which will unravel underlying factors that make women to be poorly represented in Church leadership.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents by Age group

Age group	Frequencies	Percentage %
Below 18 years	12	15.58
Between 18 – 30 years	48	62.33
31 years old and above	17	22.07
Total	77	100

Sources: Primary data, July 2023

The table 2 shows that the number of respondents in the age group of 18-30 years old is 48 and has the percentage of 62.33%. In addition, the respondents in age group of 31 years old and above were 22.07% while the respondents who had age below 18years old were 15.58%. It is important to note that these findings left the researchers with the knowledge about the competence of the research outcomes since the study involved mature respondents who are mostly respected as far as providing the trusted information is concerned hence unbiased findings.

Table 3: Distribution of respondents by their marital status

Marital Status	Frequencies	Percentage %
Single	13	16.88
Married	52	67.53
Divorced	4	5.19
Widows	8	10.38
Widowers	0	0
Total	77	100

Sources: Primary data, July 2023

The table 3 shows that there is a high number of 52 respondents who are married with the percentage of 67.53% of all respondents. There are 13 participants who were still single, with the percentage of 16.88%. In addition, 8 participant who were widows had a percentage of 10.38%.

Finally, 4 participant, with the percentage of 5.19 % was divorced. None of the respondent was widower.

Table 4: Distribution of respondents by their academic background

Education level	Frequencies	Percentages %
Primary	37	48
O' level	16	21
A 'level	18	23
Secondary School Certificate	6	8
Diploma	0	0
Bachelor's degree	0	0
Total	77	100.0

Sources: Primary data, July 2023

The table 4 shows that there is a high number of 37 respondents who have primary level of education with the percentage of 48 % of all respondents. In addition, there were 16 participants from ordinary level of education means S1, S2 and S3, with the percentage of 21%. Furthermore, 18 participants who had Ordinal level with the percentage of 23%. In this research, 6 respondents had secondary school certificate (A2), with the percentage 8%. Finally none of the respondents had either Diploma (A1) or Bachelor's degree (A0).

Table 5: Dissemination of Respondents according to the time they have been in the FMCR

Time	Frequency	Percentage %
Less than 2 Years	27	35.06
Between 3-10 Years	18	23.37
Above 10 Years	32	41.55
Total	77	100.0

Sources: Primary data, July 2023

In this table 5 shows the time our respondents have been in FMCR. In this regard, 18 participants that are equal to 23.37% answered that they had been in the church between 3 and 10 years. In addition, 27 respondents corresponding to 35.06% affirmed that they had been in the church less

than 2 years. Finally, 32 participants corresponding to 41.55% answered that they had been in the church above 10 years.

Table 6: Distribution of respondents according to baptism

Baptism	Frequency	Percentage%
Yes	77	100
No	0	0
Total	77	100.0

Sources: Primary data, July 2022

In this table shows that 100% Of respondents had been baptized in FMCR.

4.1.2. CHALLENGES THAT WOMEN FACE IN MAKING LEADERSHIP CONTRIBUTIONS IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION, AND TO SUGGEST STRATEGIES FOR OVERCOMING ANY BARRIERS

This section shows the respondents opinions about the challenges that women face in making leadership contributions in Christian education, and to suggest strategies for overcoming any barriers.

Questions 1: Women from *RURU* parish in FMCR Face challenges when they try to make leadership contributions in Christian education.

Table 7: Whether women from *RURU* parish in FMCR face challenges when they try to make leadership contributions in Christian education

Whether women from <i>RURU</i> parish in FMCR face challenges when they try to make leadership contributions in Christian education	Frequency	Percentage%
Strongly Agree	6	7.79
Agree	7	9.09
Do not know	11	14.28
Disagree	30	38.9
Strongly Disagree	23	29.8
Total	77	100.0

Source: Primary Data, July 2023

The table 7 shows that 38.9% of the respondents answered that they disagreed that women from *RURU* parish in FMCR face challenges when they try to make leadership contributions in Christian education, while 29.8% of the respondents strongly disagreed, likewise. Then, 14.28% of the respondents answered that they didn't know that women from *RURU* parish in FMCR face challenges when they try to make leadership contributions in Christian education. On the contrary, 7.79% of the respondents agreed that women from *RURU* parish in FMCR face challenges when they try to make leadership contributions in Christian education, while 9.09% strongly agreed, likewise. The study showed that most general responsibilities allocated to women, include hospitality, caring for the church visitors, cleaning the church and doing decorations in weddings or conferences, counselling the youth, singing in the church choir, leading praise and worship, preparing the pastor table, managing children's homes, cooking and serving food when there are church functions.

Question 2: Their own lack of adequate Christian education prevents women from *RURU* parish from contributing to Christian education leadership.

Table 8: Whether the lack of adequate Christian education prevents women from RURU parish from contributing in Christian education leadership

Whether the lack of adequate Christian education prevents women from RURU parish to contribute in Christian education leadership	Frequency	Percentage%
Strongly Agree	11	14.28
Agree	27	35.06
Do not know	8	10.38
Disagree	21	27.27
Strongly Disagree	10	12.98
Total	77	100.0

Source: Primary Data, July 2023

The table 8 shows that 35.06% of the respondents agreed that the lack of adequate Christian education prevents women from RURU parish to contribute in Christian education leadership, 27.27% of the same disagreed that the lack of adequate Christian education prevents women from RURU parish to contribute in Christian education leadership. In addition, 12.98% of the respondents strongly disagreed that the lack of adequate Christian education prevents women from RURU parish to contribute in Christian education leadership. However, 10.38% of the respondents didn't know, while 14.28% of the respondents affirmed that the lack of adequate Christian education prevents women from RURU parish to contribute in Christian education leadership. It is important to note that the lack of female in leadership positions may reinforce an idea that men are more high-achieving or skilled in leadership than females, or that females are in less of a position to make decisions or advocate for change. This perception could negatively influence both female teachers and students (Eckman, 2010).

The 1st question of Interview: What do you think are the strategies can be used to overcome the barriers that women face which prevent them from contributing to Christian education?

One woman teacher of Sunday school answered “The church leaders should organize training sessions for Pastors about the role of women in Christian education, and how they can participate actively in church activities, especially in preaching”.

Another woman teacher answered “Women should avoid all sorts of inferiority complex and consider themselves as active members of Christ’s body, in order to play their roles as Christian educators at home and in the church as well”.

This indicates that training sessions are needed and inferiority complex in women should be fought so that they can play their roles in Christian education.

Question 3: Family daily activities limit women’s capacity to undertake Christian education leadership in RURU parish

Table 9: Whether family daily activities limit women’s capacity to undertake Christian education leadership in RURU parish

Whether family daily activities limit women’s capacity to undertake Christian education leadership in RURU parish	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	27	35.06
Agree	24	31.16
Do not know	4	5.19
Disagree	9	11.68
Strongly Disagree	13	16.88
Total	77	100.0

Source: Primary Data, July 2023

The table 9 shows that 35.06% strongly agreed that family daily activities limit women’s capacity to undertake Christian education leadership in *RURU* parish, while 31.16% of the respondents agreed likewise. In addition, 5.19% of the respondents answered that they didn’t. However, 11.68% of the respondents disagreed that family daily activities limit women’s capacity to undertake Christian education leadership in *RURU* parish, while 16.88% of the respondents strongly disagreed likewise. The theoretical approach to work-family balance is rooted in role theory because role theory suggests that managing multiple roles simultaneously may cause women stress (Ruppanner, 2013: 46). It is argued that when family and work roles collide with each other, conflict ensues between these roles.

The 2nd question of interview: What are the cultural factors preventing women from contributing to Christian education at RURU Parish?

One woman teacher answered “In Rwandan culture, especially in rural areas, women are not allowed to speak in front of others, while there are men.”

Another woman said “Some Rwandans think that when women participate actively in church activities, she may lack enough time to be occupied with family chores”.

Their answers show that in Rwandan culture, in some rural areas, there are cultural barriers which can hinder women from contributing to Christian education.

Question 4: Men criticism of the women prevent women from contributing to leadership of Christian education in RURU parish.

Table 10: Whether men criticism of the women prevent women contributing to leadership of Christian education in *RURU* parish

Whether men criticism of the women prevent women contributing to leadership of Christian education in <i>RURU</i> parish	Frequenc y	Percentage %
Strongly Agree	28	36.36
Agree	24	31.16
Do not know	6	7.79
Disagree	12	15.58
Strongly Disagree	7	9.09
Total	77	100.0

Source: Primary Data, July 2023

The table 10 shows that 31.16% of the respondents agreed that men criticism of the women prevent women contributing to leadership of Christian education in *RURU* parish, while 36.36% of the respondents strongly agreed likewise. In addition, 7.79% of the respondents answered that they didn’t know. However, 15.58% of the respondents disagreed that men criticism of the women prevent women contributing to leadership of Christian education in *RURU* parish, while 9.09% strongly disagreed likewise.

The 3rd question of interview: What are the challenges that hinder women from participate in Christian education?

One woman teacher answered “Among the challenges facing women which can hinder her, there is cultural bias and the fact that many women in rural areas has low education and some even are illiterate”. Another interviewee answered “Inferiority complex and many responsibilities at home seem to be some of the challenges which hinder from participating in Christian education”.

This shows that, cultural bias, low education and many responsibilities at home seem to be some of the challenges which hinder from participating in Christian education.

Question 5: Women sense of inferiority (that they are less able), limit their contribution to Christian education leadership in RURU parish.

Table 11: Whether women sense of inferiority (that they are less able), limit their contribution to Christian education leadership in RURU parish

Whether women sense of inferiority (that they are less able), limit their contribution to Christian education leadership in RURU parish.	Frequenc y	Percentage %
Strongly Agree	51	66.23
Agree	17	22.07
Do not know	9	11.68
Disagree	0	0
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total	77	100.0

Source: Primary Data, July 2023

The table 11 shows that 66.23% of the respondents strongly agreed that women sense of inferiority (that they are less able), limit their contribution to Christian education leadership in RURU parish, while 22.07% of the respondents agreed likewise. However, 11.68% of the respondents answered that they didn’t know. None of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed. According to

Kasomo (2010: 16) the lack of self-confidence was the reason why women were taken for granted. Many women affirms to be in leadership positions as that would place them ahead of their male counterparts. Women needed to have self-confidence in them and in what they could do. The role of women in church leadership became insignificant because of the attitude women always had towards them. The women were not to conceive themselves as the lesser being because they too had received “the charisma from the Spirit of God and are therefore called to serve the church irrespective of the sexes”.

The 4th question of interview: How do you see women contribution in teaching their children the way of Jesus Christ?

One of the interviewee answered “Women can play great role in teaching their children at home, through teaching them interesting Bible stories, since they are the one who spend much time with them” Another interviewee said “Women can teach their children at home through Bible verses memorisation and small Christian songs”.

The answers of the interviewees indicate that women can play great role in teaching their children at home, through teaching them interesting Bible stories, Bible verses memorisation and small Christian songs.

Question 6: The contribution of women in Christian education resulted in the increase in number of new believers. In their Family, their workplace and in Church itself.

Table 12: Whether the contribution of women in Christian education resulted in the increase in number of new believers. In their Family, their workplace and in Church itself.

Whether the contribution of women in Christian education resulted in the increase in number of new believers. In their Family, their workplace and in Church itself.	Frequency	Percentage%
Strongly Agree	59	76.62
Agree	14	18.18
Do not know	4	5.19
Disagree	0	0
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total	77	100.0

Source: Primary Data, July 2023

The table 12 shows that 76.62% of the respondents strongly agreed that the contribution of women in Christian education resulted in the increase in number of new believers. In their Family, their workplace and in Church itself, while 18.18% agreed likewise. However, 5.19% of the respondents answered that they didn't know if the contribution of women in Christian education resulted in the increase in number of new believers. In their Family, their workplace and in Church itself. Finally, none of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that the contribution of women in Christian education resulted in the increase in number of new believers. In their Family, their workplace and in Church itself.

Question 7: The women contributed significantly in teaching evangelistic strategies at RURU Parish

Table 13: Whether the women contributed significantly in teaching evangelistic strategies at RURU Parish

Whether the women contributed significantly in teaching evangelistic strategies at RURU Parish	Frequency	Percentage%
Strongly Agree	61	79.22
Agree	16	20.77
Do not know	0	0
Disagree	0	0
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total	77	100.0

Source: Primary Data, July 2023

The findings in Table 13 show that 79.22% of the respondents strongly agreed that women contributed significantly in teaching evangelistic strategies at RURU Parish, while 20.77% of the respondents agreed likewise.

Evidently, women throughout history have played an essential role in the New Testament church. Women were present and added to the church when the church began (Acts 1:14; 5:14; 8:12; 16:15; 17, 4, 12). Women labored in the church in various ways, and that included teaching (Philippians 4:3; Acts 18:26; Titus 2:3-4). In Romans 16, we read of several

women who were commended as faithful servants in the church. Some women had spiritual gifts that allowed them to prophesy and even speak in tongues (Acts 21:8-9). But it is very obvious that these women had been given limitations in their work. Why? Because God did not give them positions of authority and leadership in the church, because leadership is reserved for men.

The 5th question of interview: When you think about your childhood how important was a Sunday school for you?

One interviewee said “The Sunday school has helped me memorize many Bible verses and know some important Bible stories”. Another interviewee said “Sunday school incited me to love Jesus, know Christian values and love my church”.

The answers from interviewees indicate that the Sunday school has helped them memorize many Bible verses and know some important Bible stories, love Jesus, know Christian values and love their church.

Question 8: Women from RURU Parish contribute by teaching new converts to be baptized.

Table 14: Whether women from RURU Parish contribute by teaching new converts to be baptized.

Whether women from RURU Parish contribute by teaching new converts to be baptized.	Frequency	Percentage%
Strongly Agree	0	0
Agree	0	0
Do not know	9	11.68
Disagree	50	64.93
Strongly Disagree	18	23.37
Total	77	100.0

Source: Primary Data, July 2023

The table 14 shows that 64.93% of the respondents disagreed that women from RURU Parish contribute by teaching new converts to be baptized, while 23.37% strongly disagreed likewise. This indicates that women, according to this study, don't participate in Christian education, especially teaching catechism for the new converts. It's important to note that none of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that women from RURU Parish contribute by teaching new converts to be baptized.

The 6th question of interview: What do they want from their children to get from Sunday school?

One interviewee said “We want our children get Christian values, such as respect”. Another interviewee answered “We want our children know Jesus Christ and learn good behaviors”.

According to the answers and interviewees, they wanted their children get Christian values, such as respect, know Jesus Christ and learn good behaviors.

Question 9: Women from RURU Parish participate in teaching Christian doctrine

Table 15: Whether women from RURU Parish participate in teaching Christian doctrine

Whether women from RURU Parish participate in teaching Christian doctrine	Frequency	Percentage%
Strongly Agree	0	0
Agree	11	14.28
Do not know	0	0
Disagree	52	67.53
Strongly Disagree	14	18.18
Total	77	100.0

Source: Primary Data, July 2023

Table 15 shows that 67.53% of the respondents disagreed that women from RURU Parish participate in teaching Christian doctrine, while 18.18% strongly disagreed likewise. This indicates that women from RURU Parish do not participate actively in teaching Christian doctrine. However, 14.28% of the respondents agreed that women from RURU Parish participate in teaching Christian

doctrine. The church should teach what the Bible states about the role of women, regardless of what others are teaching and practicing. In addition, Christ accepted women as his followers on the same basis as men, although he appointed no women apostles. Then, women were among the earliest members of the church and an important part of its life. They were outstanding in their abilities to extend hospitality, to help provide for the needy and to express serving love which is to characterize the church as the family of God.

The 7th question of interview: What do Children want from Sunday school?

One interviewee answered “Children want a safe and good environment where they are accepted and can express their feelings about religious beliefs”. Another interviewee said “Children want to know each other and know how to sing in the church and are interested in Bible stories, like Joseph”.

The answers from interview indicate that their children want a safe and good environment where they are accepted and can express their feelings about religious beliefs, know each other and know how to sing in the church and are interested in Bible stories like Joseph.

Question 10: Women from RURU Parish are given positions in Christian education leadership

Table 16: Whether women from RURU Parish are given positions in Christian education leadership

Whether women from RURU Parish are given positions in Christian education leadership	Frequency	Percentage %
Strongly Agree	40	51.94
Agree	37	48.05
Do not know	0	0
Disagree	0	0
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total	77	100.0

Source: Primary Data, July 2023

The table 17 shows that 51.94% of the respondents strongly agreed that women from RURU Parish are given positions in Christian education leadership, while 48.05% of the same agreed likewise. Indicates that women from RURU Parish are given positions in Christian education leadership, even though they do not show participation in teaching Christian doctrine or new converts, as shown in other above mentioned tables.

Cultural bias assumes that men and women act in certain ways. However, research shows that the innate differences between men and women are related to such areas as physical strength and spatial judgment—none of which is pertinent to school leadership. Women leaders such as Deborah, Priscilla, and the women Paul identifies (Phoebe, Priscilla) provide clear examples of successful women's leadership in the Bible. These examples are affirmations of women's leadership capacities and calling in God's Word, during a time and culture when women's leadership would have been largely unthinkable.

The 8th and last question of interview: What is the church think Sunday school is for?

One interviewee answered "The church thinks that Sunday school is for training children so that they can know Christian values". Another interviewee answered "The church thinks that Sunday school can help children know Jesus Christ and become a good Christian".

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The last chapter of the present study is concerned with the summary of the findings, conclusion and recommendations. At the end of this study, the researchers make recommendations, in regards to the findings from the questionnaire and interviews. Finally, the researchers suggest one topic to future researchers.

5.2. SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The findings of this study showed that women from RURU parish in FMCR face challenges when they try to make leadership contributions in Christian education. The study showed that most general responsibilities allocated to women include hospitality, caring for the church visitors, cleaning the church and doing decorations in weddings or conferences, counselling the youth, singing in the church choir, leading praise and worship, preparing the pastor table, managing children's homes, cooking and serving food when there are church functions.

In addition, the findings showed that the lack of self-confidence was the reason why women were taken for granted. Another challenge was inferiority complex. Many women affirms to be in leadership positions as that would place them ahead of their male counterparts, and this limits them from contributing to the leadership of Christian education. In addition, the findings showed that women, don't participate in Christian education, especially teaching catechism for the new converts.

Finally, the findings from interviewees indicate that the Sunday school has helped them memorize many Bible verses and know some important Bible stories, love Jesus, know Christian values and love their church. The answers of the respondents showed that the church thinks that Sunday school is for training children so that they can know Christian values, can help children know Jesus Christ and become a good Christian.

5.3. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, according to the findings of this study, there were more women than men in the churches and so it could well be said that they are the church. As those who are the church they ought to be responsible for the ongoing church. The question that arose was whether they could grow the church by themselves. Pastors with vision know how to value the women in their congregations and how to give them opportunities to participate actively in Christian education through developing their talents as teachers and nurturers of children and youth, music directors in the worship hour, and leaders in other avenues of service. Women, trained and motivated in witnessing, can reach women in homes where no male evangelist can enter. They can serve as Bible instructors, hold cottage meetings, and lead out in public evangelism where opportunity presents itself. Thus the theological beliefs form a barrier that should be addressed. However, it is important to note the passages in the Bible such as Galatians 3:28, “there is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither Slave nor Free, nor is there male and female, for you are one in Christ Jesus”. This verse confirms that women and men should have equal opportunities and rights within the church. Thus, we should encourage women to be enrolled in ministerial training that will increase their knowledge of spiritual and doctrinal matters, so that they can contribute actively in Christian education in the church. The study therefore concludes that there was a lot of prejudice that hindered women's involvement. It was also concluded that poor biblical interpretation about the role of women in the Church could be a contributing factor to women's participation in the church. Considering poverty also as a barrier (that made the churches not self-supporting) affecting the growth of the district the study concluded that women's empowerment was crucial to the stability of the church.

5.4. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.4.1. To church leaders

- The church leaders need to face the challenge of numerical disparities between women and men, especially in teaching ministry. This great difference has led many to think that women are just put in some places in the church as a token to silence anyone who dares raise questions about equal participation of women and men.

- The church leaders should organize training sessions about the contribution of women to Christian education.
- The church leaders should set a budget for Christian education activities especially this regarding to improve the skills of women in the ministry
- The church need to study well how every Parish should have financial sustainability so that they can generate Income to invest in Christian education activities especially which rise the number of women in the ministry duties

5.4.2. To women

- Women should not be barred by the church structures and cultural biases from offering their talents and gifts, especially in teaching Christian doctrine or catechism for the new converts.
- Women should avoid all sorts of inferiority complex, knowing that they have been called by God to take part in teaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They should also by right, take part in the leadership of Christian education (not be permitted or allowed by men to do so).
- Women and men should be working together as equals in recognition of each other's dignity and integrity in the household of God.

5.5. Areas for further research

Further research can be carried out on the following topics:

1. Cultural biases and women participation in Christian education in the Free Methodist Church in Rwanda.
2. Role of female evangelists in the growth of children Sunday school in the Free Methodist Church in Rwanda.
3. Impact of women church leaders on the improvement of Christian education in the Free Methodist Church in Rwanda.
4. The contribution of women in Christian Education in Free Methodist Church in Rwanda.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: INTRODUCTORY LETTER

Dear respondent,

We **Fabrice IRAKIZA** and **Speciose NYANDWI** are students of KIBOGORA POLYTECHNIC we are carrying out an academic research on the topic “The Contribution of women in Christian education in Free Methodist church of Rwanda. Case study: RURU Parish.” This questionnaire is an instrument for a project for the partial fulfilment of the requirements for the bachelor degree of faculty of education in KIBOGORA POLYTECHNIC

We would like to request you kindly participate in this study by answering all questions that focus on the above topic. Please do this on your own and answer honestly, just by indicating whatever you think is right to you on each question by ticking the appropriate case for section **A & B** and give your appropriate answer for open questions

All the information and answers you give will be treated confidentially. Please do not write your name on the questionnaire. You will not be identified or mentioned in any report.

Thank you for your precious time and honest response.

Sincerely yours,

Fabrice IRAKIZA

Speciose NYANDWI

APPENDIX 2: RESEARCH LETTER



KIBOGORA POLYTECHNIC

Email: info@kp.ac.rw
Website: www.kp.ac.rw

FACULTY OF THEOLOGY AND RELIGION

IMPAMVU: UBURENGANZIRA BWO GUKORA UBUSHAKASHATSI



Nyakubahwa,

Turabaramutsa mu izina ry' Umwami wacu n' Umucunguzi wacu Yesu Kristo. Tubandikiye iyi baruwa tubasaba ko mwakwemerera abanyeshuri bakurikira gukorera ubushakashatsi mu kigo/Itorero /Ishuri mubereye umuyobozi.

1. Ms./Mr ... I. RAKIZA Fabrice.....
2. Ms./Mr ... NYANAWI Spence.....

REG N°: 2000362
REG N°: 2000357

Aba banyeshuri bari mu mwaka wanyuma w' amashuri ya Theology na Religion muri Ishuri kaminuza rya Kibogora Polytechnic bakaba bari gukora ubushakashatsi ku mu bufite titre ikurikira:

Umuhanze (umwamyamba) w' amashuri ya Episkopi
Methodiste Abanyeshuri by' amashuri
mu kigo/Itorero mu kigo/Itorero mu kigo/Itorero

Turatekereza nta shiti ko aho hantu mukorera hazababera isoko bazavomamo amakuru yose nkenerwa . Tukaba tubandikiye iyi baruwa tubasaba kuborohera ubushakashatsi bari gukora mubaha amakuru yose mwaba mufite bakeneye.

Turahamya ko amakuru yose bazahabwa muri kino gikorwa azakoreshwa gusa mu nyungu z' Itorero ryacu na Kaminuza ya Kibogora Polytechnic. Ku bindi bisobanuro mwaduhamagare kuri Phone: **0788727650** cyangwa **0788611130**.

Tubashimiye ukuntu mwakiriye ino baruwa yacu n' uburyo muzamufasha mu gusohoza izi nshingano. Mugire amahoro y' Imana.

Bikorewe I Kibogora, Kuwa 01 Kamena 2023

Rev. Dr. Mathias Twahirwa, PhD.
Dean of Faculty of Theology and Religion
Kibogora Polytechnic



APPENDIX 3: QUESTIONNAIRE TO BE ANSWERED BY THE MEMBERS OF FMCR/ RURU PARISH

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Don't write your name on this questionnaire

SECTION A: Demographic Profile of Respondents

1. Please specify your gender:

Male ☐ Female ☐

2. Indicate your age group:

Below 18 years ☐

18-30 years ☐

Above 30years ☐

3. Marital status:

Single ☐

Married ☐

Divorced ☐

Widow ☐

Widower ☐

4. Indicate Your Academic Level

a) Primary ☐

b) Secondary ☐

c) Certificate ☐

d) Diploma ☐

e) Bachelor's degree ☐

f) Masters' Degree ☐

5. How long have you been as a Church members?

Less than 2 years ☐

Between 3-10 years ☐

10 years and above ☐

6. Are you baptized by FMCR?

Yes ☐

No ☐

SECTION B

1. Women from RURU parish in FMCR Face challenges when they try to make leadership contribution in Christian education.

a. Strongly agree ☐

b. Agree ☐

c. Do not know ☐

d. Disagree ☐

e. Strongly disagree ☐

2. Their own Lack of adequate Christian education prevents women from RURU parish to contribute in Christian education leadership.

a. Strongly agree ☐

b. Agree ☐

c. Do not know ☐

d. Disagree ☐

e. Strongly disagree ☐

3. Family daily activities limit women's capacity to undertake Christian education leadership in RURU parish.

a. Strongly agree ☐

b. Agree ☐

- c. Do not know ☐
- d. Disagree ☐
- e. Strongly disagree ☐

4. Men criticism of the women prevent women contributing to leadership of Christian education in RURU parish.

- a. Strongly agree ☐
- b. Agree ☐
- c. Do not know ☐
- d. Disagree ☐
- e. Strongly disagree ☐

5. Women sense of inferiority (that they are less able), limit their contribution to Christian education leadership in RURU parish.

- a. Strongly agree ☐
- b. Agree ☐
- c. Do not know ☐
- d. Disagree ☐
- e. Strongly disagree ☐

disagree

6. The contribution of women in Christian education resulted in the increase in number of new believers. In their Family, Their work place and in Church itself.

- a. Strongly agree ☐
- b. Agree ☐
- c. Do not know ☐
- d. Disagree ☐
- e. Strongly disagree ☐

7. The women contributed significantly in teaching evangelistic strategies at RURU Parish

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Agree ☐

- c. Do not know ☐
- d. Disagree ☐
- g. Strongly disagree ☐

8. Women from RURU Parish contribute by teaching new convert to be baptized.

- a. Strongly agree ☐
- b. Agree ☐
- c. Do not know ☐
- d. Disagree ☐

- e. Strongly disagree ☐

9. Women from RURU Parish participate in teaching Christian doctrine

- a. Strongly agree ☐
- b. Agree ☐
- c. Do not know ☐
- d. Disagree ☐
- g. Strongly disagree ☐

10. Women from RURU Parish are given positions in Christian education leadership.

- a. Strongly agree ☐
- b. Agree ☐
- c. Do not know ☐
- d. Disagree ☐
- g. Strongly disagree ☐

Interview question

1. What do you think are the strategies can be used to overcome the barriers that women face which prevent them from contributing to Christian education?
2. What are the cultural factors preventing women from contributing to Christian education at RURU Parish?
3. What are the challenges that hinder women from participate in Christian education?
4. How do you see women contribution in teaching their children the way of Jesus Christ?
5. When you think about your childhood how important was a Sunday school for you?
6. What do they want from their children to get from Sunday school?
7. What do Children want from Sunday school?
8. What is the church think Sunday school is for?