THE EFFECTS OF THE MISSIONARIES' STRATEGIES UPON THE *AGIKUYU* RITUALS IN THE LIGHT OF *KIAMA KIA ATHURI* AND ITS PERSISTENCE: A CASE OF ANGLICAN CHURCH OF KENYA, DIOCESE OF MOUNT KENYA SOUTH: 1960-2020

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DECLARATION

This dissertation is a product of my own work and nothing has been done in collaboration. It has never been previously presented to any other institution. I agree that St. Paul's University, Limuru, has the right to make this dissertation available to anyone or photocopy at their discretion.

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ABSTRACT

The study assesses the effects of missionary's strategies on the rituals in light of *Kiama kia athuri* (Council of elders) among the *Agikuyu* Anglican Christians in the Diocese of Mt. Kenya South (DMKS). This persistence has caused conflict in the Church leadership due to *Kiama Kia athuri* rituals. The Church holds the view that these rituals are contrary to the Christian faith. *Kiama* members maintain that the rituals are compatible with Christian faith. The general objective of this dissertation is to investigate the effects of the missionaries' strategies among the *Agikuyu* ritualistic life and the persistence of *kiama kia athuri*. The guiding objectives are first, to establish how *Kiama kia athuri* rituals were culturally performed in the pre-colonial second, to evaluate how the missionaries historically interacted with the *Agikuyu* ritual practices in light of *Kiama kia athuri* and third, to examine how the *Agikuyu* in the DMKS view the practice of *Kiama kia athuri* today. The hypothesis is that proper understanding of the *Kiama kia athuri*; dealing with the loopholes in the Church and coming up with the right theology by the Church will reduce the drifting back of the *Agikuyu* Christians to their cultural tendencies. This is to answer the questions on how *Kiama kia athuri* functioned during the pre-colonial period, how the missionaries historically interacted with the *Kiama kia athuri,* and the present views of the *Agikuyu* Christians and traditionalists concerning the *Kiama kia athuri*. This is a triangulation of qualitative and quantitative research whereby a historical research methodology is used. Research design is primary and secondary data collections. Primary data involved interviews, questionnaires and focused group discussions (FGDs). The secondary data was collected from the library and the diocesan archives. Research design and technique are interviews and questionnaires. The sampling methods were purposive and snowballing. The target population was the clergy and the Christians in the diocese. The data was collected through open-ended questionnaires, semi-structured interviews for in-depth investigation.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACK:	Anglican Church of Kenya
AIC:	African Instituted Churches
CMS:	Church Mission Society
CSM:	Church Society Missions
CPK:	Church Province of Kenya
DMKS:	Diocese of Mount Kenya South
EARM:	East African Revival Movement
NT:	New Testament
OT:	Old Testament
PCEA:	Presbyterian Church of East Africa
PEV:	Post Election Violence
RCC:	Roman Catholic Church.
Rt. Rev.	Right Reverend
SCOS:	Standing Committee of Synod
UN:	United Nations
KCEAT:	*Kikuyu* Council OF Elders Association Trust
GCE:	*Gikuyu* Council of Elders
HC:	Holy Communion

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MEANING OF TERMS

Culture is a part of the human person-person's way of life or mode of being (Shorter, 1978: 21).

Implication is a likely consequence. A conclusion that can be drawn from something (Stevenson & Waite 2011: 715).

Rites of passage are the rituals which dramatize passages in the life style. They are characterized by a separation from old status and incorporation into a new condition (Hornblower & Spawforth, 2013: 1318).

Rituals are the symbolic activity in a religious context, comprising of several single act and the rites (Hornblower & Spawforth, 2013: 1318).

Missionary is a person sent on a religious mission (Stevenson & Waite, 2011:915

Persistence is a continued firmly obstinately in a course in spite of difficulty or opposition (Stevenson & Waite, 2011: 1070).

Strategy is a plan designed to achieve a particular long term aim (Stevenson & Waite, 2011: 1425).

Conflict is a serious disagreement or argument. An incompatibility between opinions or principles (Stevenson & Waite 2011: 301)

Initiation is admitting formerly into a group, typically with a ritual (Stevenson & Waite, 2011: 311).

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

The early missionaries in Kenya interacted with the local communities in their religious functions. They viewed Africans' religiosity as incompatible with the Christian faith. However, these cultural-religious practices and customs have persisted. The main aim of this study is to analyze why *Kiama kia Athuri* has persisted among the *Agikuyu* Anglican Christians. What is its effect on the church? The study investigated the missionaries' encounter with the *Agikuyu* culture and their influence in this process. The study further explored today's views of *Agikuyu* concerning the place of *Kiama kia Athuri* vis-à-vis the Christian faith in the Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK), DMKS.

This chapter provides the background to the problem, problem statement, research objectives and questions, significance, justification, scope and the limitations, and the structure of the study.

1.2 Background of the Problem

The *Agikuyu* had their social organization and structure before the coming of missionaries and colonialists. This was through the Council of Elders, *Kiama kia Athuri* or *Kiama kia Mburi* or *Athuri a Kiama*. This was supreme in religion-political and socio-economic entity.

The missionaries emphasized the worship of God of Heavens (Yahweh) and the atoning sacrificial blood of Jesus Christ. The *Agikuyu* worship *Ngai* (God) of the Mountain-*Kirinyaga* (Mt. Kenya) whom they approach through animal sacrifices, praying facing *Kirinyaga*.

In the recent past about 17 years ago, there has been a regrouping of *Agikuyu* cultural groups such as *Thai, Kiama kia Ma, Ngwata Ndai,* and *Mungiiki* advocating for the old *Agikuyu* way of worship to *Ngai* led *by A*gikuyu elders. Several *Gikuyu* councils such as *Kikuyu* Council of Elders Association Trust (KCEAT) registered in 2014 and *Gikuyu* Council of Elders (GCE) registered in 2018. This is an indication that the *Gikuyu* people are persisting in their culture.

The study focused on *Kiama Kia Ma* adherents who adhere to Christian faith. First, this is a relatively new term adopted around 2008 perhaps in relation to post-election violence (PEV) aiming at brokering peace with elders of other ethnic groups (Englebert, 2002: 52). Early writers such as Leakey (1977), Kenyatta (1938) and Bewes (1953) among others do not have this title. Secondly, they might have adopted this title to distinguish and disassociate themselves with the above radical and extreme functions which advocate for female circumcision and divination.

Anglican faithful in DMKS have joined *Kiama kia Ma*. This has created some misunderstanding. Some Christians view *Kiama Kia Ma* adherents as backsliding to the pagan traditional way of rituals, worship and as a form of syncretism. However, Kiarie (2011) quoting James A. Scherer and Stephen Bevan (1999) notes that syncretism is not a problem of a local church, but its universal problem. He alludes to those critics of syncretism who argue that all religions including Christianity practice syncretism. The term has been used negatively by some quarters such as Christian missionaries when they encounter other cultures especially in Asia and Africa, while African theologians who advocate for acculturation view it positively. Christians Africans view syncretism negatively saying, through the blood of Jesus, people are redeemed from their cultural inclinations, there is nothing good that can be

borrowed from the culture while African Christians view syncretism positively saying that culture and Christianity complement each other.

Despite these divergent theological perspectives among the Christians, the persistence is being propelled by the political and economic tendencies more than the religious aspect of it. For instance, during the Kenyatta era in 1968, the government relied on 1968 Kikuyu oaths to maintain political power within *Nyumba ya Mumbi* (the House of Mumbi) [currently the phrase *mundu wa Nyumba* (a person of same house) is being used to denote the same], this was after fallout with Jaramogi Oginga Odinga politically and assassination of Tom Mboya a Minister in Kenyatta government in a broad day light and in a cold blood which culminated in a heinous massacre when Kenyatta visited Kisumu (Sabar, 2002: 80, Githiga, 2001: 10, Elkins, 2005: 75, Gachini, 2014: 107). However, members of the East African Revival Movement (*EARM*) or *Tukutendereza* movement resisted saying, "that they cannot mix the blood of Jesus with that of a goat". In the Moi era, the 1982 coup d'état attempt was the genesis of cracking down on any tribal groupings. Moi muscled power to himself and all gatherings were suspected to be political clandestine movement, any suspicion of rituals was taken very suspiciously and were met with ruthless hand of the government agencies and machinery (Kalu, 2005: 373). The 2007/8 PEV had political and economic inclination because *Agikuyu* elders wanted their tribesmen to continue enjoying land economic gains from the areas they were being evicted from in the Rift Valley. In fight for this political and economic dominance and gains, the adherent of *Kiama* comes from all walks of life such that Christians are being initiated to these councils.

Kiama kia Ma persistence escalation caught the attention of Bishop Timothy Ranji during the 2007Synod. The Synod passed a resolution, strongly warning those who were involved with *Kiama kia Athuri* to stop forthwith. Bishop Ranji warned the clergy involved a dire consequence of sacking if they continued with such ritual practices.

These practices continued prompting the Diocesan Synod held in 2015 to appoint a committee to investigate more about *Mburi cia Kiama*. The bishop of DMKS, the Rt Rev. Ranji invited a renowned African Traditional Religion (ATR) scholar, at St. Paul's University, Limuru, Dr. Sammy Githuku to the committee. The committee tabled its' recommendations during 2017 Synod. The committee looked at *Agikuyu* groupings in general "there are many groups in the country. Some groups are more legalistic than others". This is a wide scope, the researcher narrowed down to *Kiama kia ma kia athuri* group in this work. The recommendations of the committee were that there is need of future dialogue; to reach out to men in love and win them to Christ; Anglican faithful to disassociate with the rituals and abusive language to non-members; ACK to keep the relationship between the Gospel and culture in tension throughout the discourse and church to inculturate rites of puberty and *kurenga kiande* coming up with a liturgy (Synod min 010/2017). Despite these recommendations the problem continued. This prompted Bishop Charles Muturi Muchene to depose some KAMA and Church elders due to their publicly involvement with *Kiama kia ma* activities in the month of February 2020. This propelled the researcher to study a single grouping rather than the groups together for an in-depth study.

The contention that DMKS is facing on cultural issues is not new. Since the inception of Christ's ministry; there was contention with recipients of Christ's Ministry with recipients' cultures. In Matthew 15:1-2, Pharisees and Teachers of the Law confronted Jesus due to His disciples' failure to honor the traditions of the elders like hand washing. Likewise early Christians struggled with the Gentiles' "circumcision culminating in the Council of Jerusalem in Acts 15" (Dolan, 1969: 13, Onyango, Class Notes: 2016, Fiedler, 1996: 63).

In the African continent, African Instituted Churches (AICs) are predominantly a constant reminder of Christianity's contention with African culture. Canon Taylor of Anglican Church of Uganda anticipated that "87% of married men and 80% of married women were permanently excommunicated from the [Anglican] Church ascribing to cultural practices" (Hasting, 1967: 61).

Therefore, the pertinent issue in the DMKS is that, first, why cultural persistence on rituals in an area that has been evangelized since 1901 is embraced, seeking a cultural approval in their social life. Secondly, *Kiama kia Ma* adherents are advocating fusion of Christianity and *Agikuyu* religion; praying facing *Kirinyaga* as opposed to the cross and use of the blood of animals instead of the blood of Jesus Christ as Hebrews 10:1-10 states.

> but those sacrifices are annual reminder of sins, because it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin. We have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus once and for all (Cf. Hebrews 9).

Questions arise; why has the *Kiama Kia Athuri* become a thorny issue about 15 years ago? Does the exposure of the Africans have effects on this? Does the theological training among the clergy have effects? Does the question of superficiality and authenticity as John Kiboi notes that the issue is raised by scholars such as Galgalo and Msaki arise (Kiboi, 2017: xix, Galgalo, 2012: 49)? Why is it that in an area so evangelized for over a century as Kiambu,

men are initiated into *Kiama* to seek solutions instead of running to Christ? This study addressed the cultural issues dealt with in light of *Kiama kia athuri.*

1.3 Problem Statement

In the past seventeen years, there was an increased initiation to *Kiama Kia Athuri* (Council of elders) among the *Agikuyu* Anglican Christians whereby *Agikuyu* traditional rituals were carried out to *Ngai* facing *Kirinyaga*. Embracing a new phenomenon caused a change that could otherwise be felt and a concern. The missionary entry introduced aspects of the traditional changes among the *Agikuyu*. This persistence caused controversy within the Anglican Christians pertaining to rituals. This research is an attempt of evaluating effects of the missionaries' strategies upon the *Agikuyu* culture in the light of *Kiama Kia Athuri* rituals, its persistence and implications among the *Agikuyu* Christians of the ACK, DMKS.

1.4 The Main Objective

The research aims at evaluating the effects of the missionaries' strategies among the *Agikuyu* establishing the implications of the persistence of *Kiama kia Ma* rituals in the Church

1.5 Research Objectives

a. Establish the way *Kiama kia Athuri* was conducted in the pre-colonial period.

b. Investigate the historical interaction of the church missionaries' strategies with the *Kiama kia Athuri* process.

c. Examine the present views of *Agikuyu* Christians and traditionalists about the *Kiama kia Athuri*.

1.6 Research Questions

a. How was *Kiama kia Athuri* conducted during the pre-colonial period?

b. How did the missionary Church strategies historically interact with *Kiama kia Athuri*?

c. What are the present views of the *Agikuyu* concerning the *Kiama kia Athuri*?

1.7 Research Hypothesis

The proper understanding of *Kiama kia Athuri kia ma*; dealing with the loopholes in the Church and coming up with the right theology will reduce the drifting back of *Agikuyu* Christians to their cultural tendencies.

1.8 Justification

This study aimed at guiding the Church to addressing issues causing the Christians' persistence in their cultural practices and customs, specifically *Kiama kia Athuri kia ma*. It also guides Christians who are embracing *Kiama kia Athuri kia ma* to practice positive *inculturation* that is compatible with the Christian faith. This study provided an aid to the *Church* as the conscience of the society to give it pastoral guidance from an informed position and not hearsay, propaganda and sheer ignorance.

1.9 Significance

This research will help the Church to be more proactive in dealing with its cultural challenges rather than simply react to them by excommunicating, defrocking, severely disciplining the members or simply burying its head in the sand.

The research provides answers to the differences between the adherents of the *Agikuyu* eldership regarding *Kiama kia Athuri kia ma* and the Church. The Church can propagate the true gospel and theology to them, making them experience the redeeming power of the blood of Jesus and passion of the Cross.

1.9 Scope and the limitations

While the ACK has forty dioceses (Lectionary 2020), the researcher dealt with the DMKS which covers parts of Kiambu, Nairobi and Kajiado Counties. The study narrowed further to only part of the Diocese in Kiambu and Nairobi Counties. The research dealt with the issues of *Kiama kia Athuri* rite of passages, due to the way the missionaries and colonial government fought African cultures, there is limited knowledge on *Kiama kia Athuri*. The study covered up to the year 2020 because the contention is still being experienced to date.

The other challenge is that the generation that lived during the pre-colonial period have died. Subsequently the *Agikuyu* eldership movement is secretive and does not divulge information to non-members or allow non-members to attend their council rituals.

Kiama kia athuri dealt with all matters related to social, economic, religious and political issues which are closely intertwined. In the *Agikuyu* world view, everything has a religious perspective. This is quite a wide scope; the study limits itself to the *Agikuyu* social structure and organization.

The Covid-19 pandemic was another limitation due to Ministry of Health (MOH) regulations and protocols term of association, movement and assembly.

1.10 Structure of dissertation

This study has five chapters. Chapter One highlights the introduction to the dissertation. It identifies the background of the study, problem statement, hypothesis, research objectives and questions, justification and delimitation and scope of the study. Chapter Two captures the literature review on *kiama kia athuri* rite of passage. The missionaries‟ engagement with the *Agikuyu* culture and the persistence of *Kiama kia athuri kia ma* and the contention thereof with the Christian faith is highlighted. Chapter Three highlights the detailed historical research methodology that was used to reach the desired outcome of this study. It shows design techniques and methods used in data collection for in depth interviews, FGDs and questionnaires and sampling technique used which is purposive and snowballing samplings. Chapter Four dealt with data collection, analysis and interpretation. Chapter Five dealt with findings, recommendations and conclusions.

1.11 Summary

This chapter has shown the persistence of *Kiama Kia Athuri kia ma* emphasizing the traditional values and how such values are being embraced. Such persistence is having effects on religious authorities on areas such as the role of elders, women in the society and ritual. The pertinent issues being the rituals in view of the blood of Christ versus the blood of animals and the facing of the Cross versus facing the *Kirinyaga*. This is causing conflict between Christians ending with divergent views over the traditional rituals.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter expounds the origin of the *Agikuyu* based on their legend and not on anthropological development of the human revolution and settlements/migration. The legend or myth shapes the *Agikuyu* worldview, belief, custom, practices, political and economic systems. These make their social, political and economic factors so religious (Smith, 1927: 138, Bottignole, 1984: 31, Karangi, 2013: 613). The chapter highlights how the *Kiama Kia Athuri* was conducted in pre-colonial times. The missionaries' Church strategies in relation to the *Agikuyu* culture in light of *Kiama Kia Athuri* rituals. The present views of *Agikuyu* traditionalists and Christians concerning *Kiama Kia Athuri kia ma*. This chapter examines the views of other scholars to identify gaps in their works.

2.2 The *Agikuyu* People

The *Agikuyu* originated from Gikuyu and Mumbi. Mugai (divider of all things) created the earth (Kenyatta, 1938: 32). Mugai then created *Kiri-Nyaga*, (a dotted mountain) as his dwelling place whenever he visited his people. *Kiri-Nyaga* displayed his might and majesty (Kenyatta, 1938: 33). In any difficult situation, *Ngai* advised Gikuyu to offer a sacrifice under the sacred *mukuyu* tree facing *Kiri-Nyaga* raising their hands as they prayed (Bewes, 1953: 317, Temu, 1974:78).

Agikuyu live in the Central part of Kenya which they believe was bequeathed to them by *Ngai*. Its beacons are four mountains namely *Kiri-Nyaga* in the North, *Kiri-Mbiroiro* (Ngong Hills) in the South, *Nyandarua* or *Thibara* (Aberdare Ranges) in the West and *Kirima kia Njahi* (Kilimambogo) in the East (Muriuki, 1974: 26, Cavicchi, 1953: 12). The land trust-ship is under the custodian of the senior most man in the clan and under *Kiama* at the national level. The community was governed by the *Kiama kia athuri.* According to Temu (1972:79) notes that "to be a *kikuyu* is a religion itself". The *Agikuyu* social organization was achieved through rites of passage, rituals and ceremonies which were very religious (Leakey, 1977:1, Wanyoike, 1974: 83). The *Kiama* was in control of the social organization and order

from family level to national level though women played key roles behind the curtains (Wanyoike, 1974: 31, Worthmann, 1987: 147).

2.3 Ag*ikuyu* Rites of Passages

The *Agikuyu* rites of passage created a complex social structure that fully integrated an individual to a full member in the tribe with new authority, responsibility and functions (MacGlasan, 1964: 48, Cavicchi, 1953: 16). The memorable rites were birth, rebirth, circumcision, marriage and death (Werner, 1911: 449, Bottignole, 1984: 32, Kiboi, 2017: 9-17)). Those circumcised on the same day formed *riika* (age-group). *Riika* unified them despite coming from different location, clan, or family. They acted as one body in matters pertaining to tribe. *Riika* had a strong oneness of brotherhood, sisterhood or blood hood amongst themselves (Bunche, 1941: 49, Akiiki, 1995: 28, Kanogo, 2005: 49, Fiedler, 1996: 97). Hence the *Agikuyu* proverbs "*Nyumba na riika itiumagwo*" (the clan and age group cannot be repudiated) and *"Riika na nyumba itiuraga*" (one does not lose the age group or the clan right) (Wachege, 1992: 11).

Before *irua* (circumcision) and after *irua*, the *irui* (initiates) were inculcated with the essential information pertaining on the law, beliefs and customs of the *Agikuyu* (Kenyatta, 1938:88, Worthmann, 1987: 148). After healing the *irui* discarded the old clothes and were vested with new ones, signifying transition in their lives from childhood to adulthood (Kenyatta, 1938:87).

Women *irui* were vested with jewelry while men were vested with warrior's equipment. They were now fully fledged members of the community. Men joined the warrior grade. They started the journey to climb the four stages of *Agikuyu* eldership through payment of goat to elders every time one was expected to join the upper grade (Kirwen, 2005: 107, Getonga, 2014: 102-4, Muga, 1975:59, McGlasan, 1964:51).

2.4 *Kiama kia Athuri* (Council of Elders)

The *Agikuyu* were governed by *kiama kia athuri* chosen from the entire tribe. There were territorial and national units with defined responsibilities in areas of religion particularly the worship to *Ngai* and to carry out sacrifices due to pestilence or famine (Kenyatta, 1938: 8, Muriuki, 1974: 128).

These eldership stages were important rite of passage to *Agikuyu* men. It gave them a social location of authority, influence and power. Women attained social status, responsibilities and duties as that of their husbands, "failure of a husband to go up the tribal social ladder, a wife was ridiculed by other women" (Kenyatta, 1938:101, Leakey, 1977:4, Hobley, 1910: 430).
The four stages of *Agikuyu* eldership are: -

Athuri a mburi imwe (Elders of one goat)

Athuri a mburi igiri (Elders of two goats)

Athuri a mburi ithatu (Elders of three goats)

Athuri a mburi inya (Elders of four goats)

2.4.1 *Athuri a Mburi Imwe*

This council was made up of newly-initiated and newlywed young men (18 years-40 years). This stage of eldership was referred to as *Kamatimo* (carriers of Spears). They carried spears denoting a warrior whose sole duty and responsibility is to defend and guard the tribe (Basil, 1967: 179, Kenyatta, 1938:107).

The ritual of admitting one to *Kamatimo* was offering a goat to the elders. The slaughtered goat had special parts of the ceremony. The *Kamatimo* handed these special parts commonly referred to as *kuringa rucuthi* (sacrum with lumbar and caudal verbatae attached) and skin to two elders of his choice who acted as his witness. The *Kamatimo* could attend local council proceedings as a listener and a learner. They were apprentices in areas of slaughtering a goat the tribal way, lit *kiama* fire, carried firewood, roasted meat and carried ceremonial

articles (Kenyatta, 1938:107).

2.4.2 *Athuri a Mburi Igiri*

Kamatimo resigned from the warrior-ship when he had a child old enough for circumcision (Kenyatta, 1938:107). They were also referred as *Kiama kia horio* or *kiama kiria kinene* (the senior council) The ceremony called *gutonyio kirira* (instruction of the tribal customs) was carried out by *athuri a mburi ithatu (elders of three goats)* (Kenyatta, 1938:107). The initiates were given a *muthigi* (blackened staff) as the badge of their authority. They could receive *iringa* (act as a witness) from the first graders. They were allowed to contribute during the council deliberation but never participated in *ndundu* (inner circle of council). This was a secretive deliberation of the council (Leakey, 1977:99).

2.4.3 *Athuri a Mburi Ithatu*

They were also referred to as *Kiama kia matathi*. *Matathi* is a fragrant smelling leaves used in ceremonies). One attained this eldership when he had old enough child for marriage. They were vested with *muthigi* and *matathi* as sign of office. These artifacts acted as symbols of peace (Kenyatta, 1938:109). This *Kiama* was accorded arbitration and administration responsibilities and duties (Kershaw, 1996:217).

During the ceremony the core of the tribal traditions and customs are introduced to the initiates. The initiates consulted a seer or a diviner to be advised on the suitable day for the ritual (Kenyatta, 1938:108). The initiate and his wife/wives are sworn to keep the council secrets and never ever divulge them to non-members, his senior wife followed him carrying a calabash of *muratina* (traditional brew) (Kenyatta, 1938:108). As the ritual goes on, an elder takes a horn full of *muratina* facing *Kiri-nyaga*, makes libation invoking *Ngai* to give peace,

wisdom and prosperity to the council members and the initiates. The rest of the elders stood facing *Kiri-nyaga* lifting their *muthigi* praying saying *thai thathaiya Ngai thai* (peace, peace we beseech *Ngai*, Peace be with us peace). Kenyatta postulates that this was a very religious ceremony invoking the name of *Ngai* (1938: 106-109).

Leakey (1977) notes "the initiate can now brew the *muratina* in his homestead and welcome his *wakine* (equal mates)" (Tate, 1904: 260). It is mandatory to attend the council proceedings and fully participate (Leakey, 1977:995). The salutations of this order were *Wanyu wakine* (greeting to my equal). This form of greetings and salutations were reserved to only those who were politically, socially, religiously and social equals (Kenyatta, 1938:109).

2.4.4 *Athuri a Mburi Inya*

This was limited to very few elderly elders in the society. This most dignified eldership position was achieved when a man had all his children circumcised; married and his wife (wives) had passed child bearing age (Leakey, 1997:997). Elderly men were seen to have withered the worldly passion. Women who had passed child bearing were seen to be immune to worldly mischief; they were viewed as mothers of the community (Kenyatta, 1938:133). This council held religious office and political authority (Mbiti, 1979: 151, Hobley, 1910: 433). The initiate carried a blackened *muthigi* staff and wore brass *icuhi* (rings) in his ears (Kenyatta, 1938:67, Mbiti, 2012; 370).

The initiation is secretive and attended only by a few people. Half the ewe is eaten by the elders, the other half burnt as a sacrifice to *Ngai* under *mugumo* tree. The initiates' life is fully

dedicated to *Ngai* and the welfare of the community. They announce dates for circumcision and *ituika* (Kenyatta, 1938: 71). They assume the role of the holy men.

They are the high priests (Zahan, 1970:31). All religious and ethical ceremonies are handled by them (Mbiti, 2012: 306, Hobley, 1910:433). They have power to curse, conduct cleansing rites during adversity, planting and harvesting seasons, and they officiate in public rites, offering prayers and sacrifices to Ngai (Leakey, 1977:977).

In this section I have purely drawn from anthropological and historical scholarly work based on *Agikuyu* legend to capture how *Agikuyu* social order and organization was in pre-colonial period. I have also shown how must rites of passage were carried out among the *Agikuyu* people in the pre- colonial era.

2.5 The Missionaries' Interaction with *Agikuyu* Culture.

When the missionaries set foot on *Agikuyu* land, they found a people with their way of life, worldview, religion, norm, social order, governance and organization under strict guidance by the *Kiama kia athuri*.

2.5.1 The First Missionary in *Kikuyu* Land

The first Anglican missionary to work among *Gikuyu* was Rev. A.W. MacGregor in 1900 and Rev. Harry Leakey in 1901 respectively. They started a mission station at Kabete (1900) (Temu, 1972:91, Capon, 1962:6). Kiarie (2011) quoting Barker (1986 122) and Kamunyu wa Kang'ethe (1988:24) notes that the CMS missionaries were aligned to the Evangelical wing (Low Anglicans) of the Church of England. They stressed on personal salvation through the blood of Jesus only and His Imminent coming therefore putting all their effort towards

converting as many heathens as possible. This notion made missionaries view anything in the culture as pure paganism therefore coming up with a lot of dos and don'ts. They advocated for negation of cultural norms and practices such as beer drinking, dances, ceremonies, sex (except for procreation), smoking and possession of the worldly material. Thus, they introduced theology thatwas selective, individualistic, pietistic and often unreflective.

For missionaries to achieve their dream of converting as many heathens as possible, Karanja (1999) argues that the CMS and CSM missions agreed in 1902 to divide Kikuyu land into spheres to ease competition of the few converts in the initial stages of evangelism. CMS got a sphere from Ngong to Mt Kenya and CSM the West of the line. Therefore, the *Agikuyu* had no choice but to choose the Mission and the teaching; they found themselves being influenced by the teaching of the mission in their respective spheres. Joseph Wandera in Phiri argues that due to such arrangements it is only the Anglicans and Catholic that are across the country while Methodists, Presbyterians and Reformed are regional (2016:785).

2.5.2 The Missionaries Acquire Land.

In futility, MacGregor searched for land for no one was ready to sell their inheritance, a land bequeathed by *Ngai* to them. Finally, MacGregor persuaded Chege Wa Kanyi of Kabete to sell land to him. Chege agreed after consulting with his sub-clan. MacGregor paid forty-three goats all black with white patches on their necks. This land was on a patched rock which Chege had viewed as of no importance to sub-clan (DMKS, 2014:69). In this aspect, MacGregor fulfilled *Agikuyu's* traditional requirement for buying land.

2.5.3 The First Converts in *Gikuyu* Land

MacGregor started his mission work by establishing a school. The first students were children of the poor for they had no herds to look after (Bewes, 1953: 205, DMKS, 2014:70). The children of '*Nyagacu'* (unfaithful women in marriage) were enrolled in schools.

This shows that the poor and those who had no influence in the society were the first to embrace Christianity. They were viewed as social outcasts. Elders viewed their conversion as inconsequential in the society.

2.5.4 The Missionaries' Conception of the *Gikuyu* and Cultural Practices

The missionaries and the European adventurers had a different opinion towards the *Agikuyu*. Majority spoke negative things while minorities were positive about *Agikuyu* people**.**

2.5.4.1 The Negative Attitude

According to Ingham (1962) and Bottignole (1984: 40) "the *Kikuyu* were poorly described by the Europeans because they defended their territory". Publications back home by these European adventures portrayed Africa as "a dark continent, a place of cultureless savagery, people living in an imaginative world of spirits, gods and demons, full of a immorality, criminality, lack of ability for organized social life, and capacity for higher civilization" (Barnes, 2007:810, Phiri, 2016:89, Elans, 2007:810). Hollingsworth and Onyango agree that Missionaries drew from Social Theory of Darwinism of superiority of races to describe Africans (1960:144, 2003:26 respectively). Missionaries encouraged settlers to settle at Tigoni which they said had "a few savage herders, thus relocating the *Agikuyu* people to reserves and rendering others landless" (Overton, 1983:111).

Bottignole and Harlow concurs that *Agikuyu Ngai* was viewed as god of paganism (1984: 67, 1965:395 respectively). They termed the *Agikuyu* rites of passage as evil (Coupon, 1962:40, Bunche, 1941:51). The accompanying rituals and songs are immoral and devilish (Ward, 2000:269). Missionaries therefore were of the view that due to Africans' primitive and paganism, they must receive Christianity in conjunction with Western culture (Strayer, 1878:77).

2.5.4.2 The Positive Attitude

Missionaries like Scott, Ruffie, Barlow, Bewes, Binns and Macgregor were positive about Africans (Kibicho, 2006:47). Ingham and Bunche note "*Kikuyus* are industrious, hardworking, careful agriculturalists and sociable" (1962:163, 1941:49). A Catholic missionary notes "*Agikuyu* show honesty, and rectitude, stealing is not known to them, respectful, good harmony among them is praise worthy" (Bottingnole, 1984, Cavicchi, 1953:17).

Kibicho captures the following about the *Kikuyu* sacrifices as he quotes Barlow sentiments in 1908 in CMS magazine-

> The *Kikuyu* have quite a wonderful system of sacrifices, perhaps almost unique among the tribes of East Africa... *Akikuyu* have a distinct difference between sacrifices to *Ngai* and those to spirits, showing *Kikuyu* idea for the Deity, it is not so vague and confused with that of the spirits of the ancestors as it is supposed to be the case of many other tribes (2006: 84).

These missionaries first sought to understand *Agikuyu* and their culture. Each and every society has got its good and bad side; no society is perfect. Therefore, there were cases where

some *Agikuyu* cultural customs failed these moral standards and biblical expectations. Missionaries ought to have rectified these short comings while upholding what was good using *Agikuyu* world view and thought form.

2.6 The Missionaries' Views towards *Agikuyu* Rites of Passage

The *Agikuyu* had rites of passage which were carried out by *Kiama* Elders. Many scholars have written about female circumcision saga, marriage pertaining to bride price, circumcision of boys which were in the domain of *Kiama kia athuri*. However, rites of passage on second birth, *Kiama* and *ituika* which brought a lot of controversies in the Church are scantly discussed by scholars. Therefore, this study will major on them, for they are very crucial and mandatory for eligibility in *Kiama kia athuri* initiation. Therefore, it is imperative to address how the Church engaged with these rites.

2.6.1 The Second Birth Rite (*Guciarwo Keri*)

Leakey notes that this rite had several terms such as *"guciarwo ringi* (to be born again); *guciarwo na mburi* (to be born by means of a sheep); and *guciarwo keri* (to be born a second time)" (1977:550). This ceremony initiated the child to a full membership in the family; thus, severing the strong relationship of a mother and a child (Ward, 2000:268, McGlasan, 1964:49). This ceremony was performed when a child was about two and half to eleven years, giving a child his/her own identity, with a spirit and body of its own (Leakey, 1977: 550).

Second birth gave the boy the responsibility in his family such that if the father died, he could participate and assist in disposal of his body and inherit property (MacGlasan, 1964:49,

Ward, 2000:208). In same line Leakey (1977) and McGlasan (1964) agree that "this rite was compulsory and one could not undertake other rites if they had not undergone the second birth rite".

The father of the child to be reborn gave the sacrificial ram, suffocated it, and pierced its breast to draw blood. Fellow council of elders and family elders could then assist to slaughter (Leakey, 1977:550-552, Ward, 2000:268). From the skin the father cut two long straps; from right side if a child to be reborn was a boy and left side if a girl. Then the meat was roasted. Firewood used for this ceremony was fetched by boys, warriors or council elders (Leakey, 1977:553).

The child was placed at its mother's leg and bound with sacrificial animal intestines to symbolize that the two were one. The mid-wife (if possible, the one who attended the mother during the Childs' delivery) came and cut off the goats' intestines to symbolize the severing of the umbilical cord. Cutting four times if a girl or five times for a boy; saying each time he cuts "*Ndatua*" (I give a name) other women respond "*tua*" (give a name). During the last cut the mid-wife named the child. The goats' intestines were treated as they were the afterbirth (Leakey, 1977:554). Mother's head was shaved and the hut swept. That night the parents had to have ceremonial sexual relationship twice referred to as "to make sacrifice for bearing child". However, Leakey does not mention this ritual sex and nakedness of the mother. The rest of men who participated in the sacrifice "could not sleep with wife or any woman or eat meat connected with a similar or anyform of sacrifice" (Leakey, 1977:559, Ward, 2000:268).

2.6.2 The Missionary and *Athomi* versus Second Birth Rite

The missionaries and *athomi (first converts)* objected this ceremony for it was a sacrificial ceremony involving animal and it was idolatrous. It was also very ridiculous, awkward and embarrassing for a naked boy of understanding to sit between her naked mother's legs and demand of the ceremonial sexual relation by the parents (Karanja, 1999:132, Mugambi, 1989: 42)

2.6.3 *Athomi Kiama kia athuri* versus Traditionalist *Kiama kia athuri*

Karanja (1999) argues that "moral decay of *athomi* as early as 1909 left the missionaries like Macgregor and Hopper at a quagmire desiring to have Christian *Kiama* based on *Agikuyu* eldership requirements and ethos". Lonsdale further argues that *Agikuyu* elders detested *athomi* as "cursed leaders", while Bewes (1953) notes that "by 1929 *athomi* wanted to be nominal Christians holding to traditional belief". Karanja (1999) argues that the greatest reason missionaries' envied *Kiama kia athuri* was increased extra marital affairs and illegitimate pregnancies outside marriage bed among *athomis'*. Tignor (1976:56) concurs with Karanja quipping that "*Athomis* preferred their *Kiama* to be under the authority of *Agikuyu* council of elders than *Athomi Kiama* under missionaries'. This dismayed the missionaries". Kiarie construe that "as not all those who ate the bread to their fill understood the real significance of the meal (John 6:26)", same might have happened to the early converts" (2011:4).

Traditional council of elders was in charge of discipline in the society and there were stringent discipline and measures for the offender. For example, the *Boran* of Ethiopia

represents a view held by majority of African communities in regard to pre-marital sex;

> If a man was accused of having carnal knowledge of an unmarried girl, it was a grave offence; he was ostracized, heavily fined and excluded from community life. He was not allowed to attend any meeting of any kind; he was not allowed to participate in the activities of his age-mates; like going to war, hunting or attending ritual ceremonies (Mbennah, 2001:25, see Njau, 2000:38, Bewes, 1953:202).

In my view, the African dealt with equal measures such heinous acts deserved, however, the missionaries were in a dilemma of how to discipline their errant members and make them accountable of their misbehavior because they saw the African measures to curb mischief and immorality as primitive.

The bone of contention with the *kiama* was *muratina* and blood. Kenyatta (1938) and Leakey (1977) argue that *muratina* (traditional brew) used for religious ceremonies was prepared differently and ingredients used were different as *muratina* for casual drink. The elder who prepared *muratina* for religious use, was carefully selected by the elders for that special duty and purified himself for that special assignment? The *muratina*, equipment used and Ceremony were held in great honour. Missionaries failed to inculturate these aspects towards the Altar Wine and Holy Communion service as Apostle Paul exalts in 1 Corinthians 11: 23-30. The goat or sheep used for sacrifice were without blemish and their blood held in great honour for its atoning effects. It was through them *Ngai* answered their prayer. The missionaries failed to inculturate these towards Christ as the Lamb of God and His atoning Bloodshed at Calvary. For example, Bishop Vincent Lucas of Msasi, Tanzania of University

Mission of Central Africa (UMCA) felt that "the Flour sacrificed under the *msolo* tree was a true foreshadowing of Christ's True sacrifice at Golgotha, thus he regarded ATR, social order and organization as a wild tree onto which Gospel could be grafted" (Fiedler, 1996:38).

2.6.3 The *Ituika* Controversy

This was the domain of the 4th graders *Kiama kia mataranguru*. The 4th graders mainly dealt with the political and religious aspect of the *Agikuyu* people. The last *ituika* (handing over of power) took place between 1890/8, when Maina *riika* handed authority to Mwangi *riika* (age groups). *Agikuyu* had two *riika's* which ruled namely Maina / Irungu and Mwangi. The members joined *riika* by birth. The rule was if the father belonged to Mwangi, the son belonged to Maina and the grandson belonged to Mwangi while great grandson belonged to Maina (Kershaw, 1996; 277, Kenyatta, 1938; 101).

A generation ruled for between 30-40years, therefore, *ituika* ceremony was expected at around 1928-1936 when Mwangi was to hand over to Maina (Cavicchi, 1953:16, Karanja, 1999:172). Leakey notes "*ituika* was carried out from territorial to National level" (1977:6). The requirement was that the incoming generation paid goats to the outgoing generation. The outgoing generation would build a mud hut and use it to instruct the leadership of the incoming generation (Kenyatta, 1938).

The *athomi* objected this process and they pegged their decision on the following three points: -Goats offered as a fee were for sacrifices;

- This was a pagan worship and idolatry.

- Ceremonies were obscene and evil; they cited the ritual sex acts whereby a chosen elder slept with his senior wife in the hut in a broad daylight.
- The *athomi* felt that the *ituika* purpose of handing power was now overtaken by the new colonial government; therefore, *Agikuyu* form of governance was now redundant and irrelevant (Karanja, 1999:173, Ward, 2000:282, Kershaw, 1996:36&277, Ingham 1962:304, Harlow, 1965:359,

Horace, 1936:165). This is the ceremony which united the *Agikuyu* countries i.e., South, Central and North at the *Mukurwe wa Nyagathanga*, the ancestral homestead of Gikuyu which was bequeathed to him by *Ngai* (Leakey, 1977:6-7). Karanja (1999:174-176) and Strayer (1978) concurs that the essence of this rite was to deter dictatorial governance by one generation; it wasa very peaceful transition of power.

According to Muriuki (1974) the colonial government capitalized on this conflict because without *ituika*, the *Agikuyu* lost their unity, religious and political direction to colonial government and missionaries' advantage.

In my view both the missionaries and colonizers understood the meaning of *ituika* which was to avoid dictatorial governance and uphold democracy as Kenyatta (1938) argues. If they grasped this, they deliberately hindered this event to disorganize the *Agikuyu* people and advance their political and economic selfish gains of continuing colonizing them hence the popular *Agikuyu* saying "*gutiri ngurani ya mubea na muthungu*" (There is no difference between the priest and the settler). This sentiment by *Agikuyu* is that Missionaries allocated themselves big chunks of land as colonizers did. Karanja (1999) and kimambo (1999:340)

concur that “at Kikuyu; CMS acquired 30 acres for main station and 15 acres for out stations, CSM 3,000 acres and Consolata in Nyeri acquired 3,000 acres”. Gachini notes that “Catholic Diocese of Nyeri has been sued by squatters who claimed that a land of 2,761 acres was alienated from their fore fathers between 1956 and 1965” (2014:60). My sentiment is based on the fact that they supported *Aembu Nduiko* ceremony (equivalent of *Agikuyu ituika*) of 1932 for it was to illegitimate female circumcision (Ambler, 1989:139).

2.6.4 A Brief History of Diocese of Mt Kenya South.

The origin of the DMKS can be traced to the first two German Lutheran missionaries through CMS to Kenya, Dr Krapf and Rebmann who came to Coastal region in 1844 and 1846 respectively. They put up their first mission station at Rabai Mombasa (CPK 1994). Karanja (1999) notes that “Kenya-Uganda railway construction opened the hinterlands for mission work, CMS opened mission stations in Kikuyu land”. The first Anglican missionary to work among the *Gikuyu* was Rev. A.W. Macgregor in 1901. He started mission station at Kabete (1901). Karanja (1999) notes “that the Rev Canon Harry Leakey joined MacGregor at Kabete in 1901”.

The first *Gikuyu* to be ordained as priests were Rev Samuel Nguru and Rev Yusuf Magu. By 1934, Leakey had started 13 Churches; Kabete in 1901; Kiambaa in 1914; Thimbigua in 1917; Muongoiya, Gacarage, Karura, Ndunyu, Kirangari, Ndumberi, Kiambu, Kanyariri, Kibichiku and Kangemi (Ng‘eny, 1994).

Church in Kikuyu land expanded from Ngong Hills to Moyale, leading to formation of

Diocese of Fort Hall in 1961, its first bishop was Obadiah Kariuki. In December 1964 it was re-named "Diocese of Mt Kenya" and in 1975, the diocese was divided into two; Diocese of Mt. Kenya South and Diocese of Mt. Kenya East. Bishop *Kariuki* headed diocese of Mt. Kenya South with its headquarters at Kiambu and Bishop David Gitari diocese of Mt Kenya East (DMKS, 2004, Saba 2002, Githiga, 2001). In 1984, the Diocese of Mt Kenya Central was curved out of DMKS and in 1998 Diocese of Thika was curved leaving the present DMKS (ACK Lectionary, 2021).

The DMKS has been served by five bishops namely Bishop Obadiah Kariuki (1961- May 1976), Bishop Sospeter Magua (Aug. 1976- Sept. 1982), Bishop George Njuguna (1984-1995), Bishop Peter Njenga (1996-2004), Bishop Timothy Ranji (July 2004 to 2019) and Bishop Charles Muturi (19th Dec 2019-to date). The diocese has had two assistant bishops; Bishop Eshbon Ngaruiya and Bishop Charles Muturi (2010-2019). It is worth to note that the second Archbishop His Grace Mannases Kuria hailed from this diocese. The diocese covers some parts of Nairobi, Kajiado and Kiambu Counties (DMKS, 2014 & 2019, Ng'eny, 1994:116).

The diocese has one bishop, 16 archdeacons, 37 area deans (rural deans), 218 priests, 15 deacons, 8 sub-deacons, 18 Church Army officers, 129 evangelists, 495 lay readers and 52 auxiliary office staff making a total of 989 workforce (DMKS, 2019:12, Appendix 1). There are 14 archdeaconries and 184 parishes with a total of 59,777 Christians (DMKS, 2019:10, Appendix 2). The population is made up of 9,000 KAMA, 15,000 MU, 10,000 KAYO, 2,500 Choir members and 28,000 Brigade and Sunday school members (DMKS, 2019:11, Appendix 3).

2.7 To Examine the Present Views of *Agikuyu* Christians and Traditionalists about *Kiama kia Athuri*.

2.7.1 The *Kiama* persistence

Karanja (1999:174-175) concur that "Christian African, the African Christians and nominal Christians continued to co-exist in the Church". This had repercussions because of their divergent perspective towards African culture. Njoroge explains the dilemma the *Agikuyu* encountered, "Once exposed to Christianity and modernity, many *Amugikuyu* people lived a life of tension between affiliation to *Gikuyu* traditional values and the pull of modernity" (2017:212).

Englebert postulates that "traditional resurgences take various forms occurring at different stages of social organization" (2002:52). Orchardson argues "that government policies inhibit some cultural practice" (2002:116. However, these policies do not totally eradicate such traditional ways of life (Bunche, 1941:51, Njau, 2000:36). I concur with their sentiments because despite government inhibition policies vices such as female circumcision and early forced marriage are thorny issues that the government is dealing with currently. Raboteau affirms this by alluding that "despite slaves living in Europe, Latin America and America for so long, ATR traits persist even today" (2004;16).

Ezukwu and Ward concur that subsequent Independents African Governments and Christian Africans vehemently fought Africans' cultural practices and religion which they deemed inconsistent with national development and Christian faith. Such attitude led to such practices being carried out secretly (1996:31, 2000:269 respectively). Katherine notes that "Tanzania's

Iraqw Council of elders hold their meetings and rituals very secretly to avoid government attention" (1997:563, Njau, 2000:36).

According to Horzinger (2016), Englebert (2000) and Oni and Segun (2010) the political insurgencies in the world (Africa) have led to resurgence of traditional forms of governance and social organizations led by Council of elders. The effects of these elders are also felt "in religious institutions in the areas of the role of Council of the elders and women for religion permeates African life from birth to death". Ezukwu concurs that "re-affirmation of the African eldership and values has cast serious doubt and challenge on Christianity" (1996:4). This further reaches to mythical origin that is deeply entrenched on kingship (Segun 2010:3). The argument of Elizabeth Ezenweke is that "a religion may be suppressed, but its core tenets continue to exist and at one point resurfaces" (2016:202). The above sentiments by scholars have shown that the failure of the government in political arena is causing different countries to seek answers in their old cultural social order and organization led by the council of elders; eventually elders‟ effects are creating contention with the Christianity in the area of rituals.

Idowu challenges the Western views on African religions. He challenges the Western anthropological assumptions and descriptions of African cultures as primitive, inferior and their religion as animistic and polytheistic. He advocates the study of African culture and religion to de-construct the destructive Western notions (1962). Justin Upkong also argues that the African Church must identify with its culture for it to remain relevant, thus resulting in its growth (1996).

According to Kwame Bediako the fusion of the Western culture and Christianity succeeded in only enslaving the Africans minds. He asserts that anything that the Africans did in pre-Christian era was viewed as harmful, valueless and primitive. Bediako argues that the African Church must eliminate this notion for her to realize genuine conversion and growth (1999).

Laurenti Magesa argues that inculturation is a process that occurs when a faith inculcated in a cultural set up meets with another culture. The encounter results in a new faith that is embodied to the old culture. Therefore, there is a need that the Gospel and Culture dialogue as equals to result in a formulation of a distinct and unique theology that suits (2004). While Charles Nyamiti states that inculturation is an aim and effort of theologically incarnating the Gospel teaching in the African cultures (1994).

Humphrey Waweru notes that contemporary scholars such as Wole Soyinka (Nigerian) and Ngugi wa Thiong'o (Kenyan) started to question the colonialists and the missionaries' negative views, attitudes and perceptions towards African culture, traditions and religion. They advocated for Africans to embrace their culture and decolonize themselves from the European prejudices. Waweru reiterates that theologians like Jean Marc Ela, Desmond Tutu, Buthelezi and Boesack called for the Theology of Liberation. He further notes that Tharusha Tshibangu argues that the African Church must become truly Africans in the areas of structure and rituals so that the individual African Christians can be able to address the tension they feel due to Christianity commitment and their own culture (2011).

Benezet Bujo argues that colonialism robbed Africa of their cultural identity and filled them with an inferiority complex, making them despise their African origin (1990). In this line,

Brown Ndung'u Ikenye asserts that colonialism led Africans to be shameful, doubtful and apprehensive about their culture, thus creating feeling of danger and rage leading to paranoid vigilance. He advocates for decolonizing and deconstruction of the African mind (2002).

Uhuru Hotep argues for decolonizing of the African mind by dismantling white supremacy belief and the structures, which uphold them in every area of African life in an effort to recover and reconnect with best traditional practices as a means of ending dominance of the African psyche (2003).

John Pobee maintains that the aim of the African theology is interpretation of the essential Christian faith in authentic African languages in the flux and turmoil of our times, so that there may be genuine dialogue between the Christian faith and the African culture (1979).

Stephen Belcher clearly shows the different myths of Africans from all over. However, he does not show how these myths affect their religion, day to day life, their perspective, world view and their thought forms (2005). This study focused on how *Agikuyu* myth of origin affects their world view, perspective, religion and thought forms.

The above scholars are writing in post-colonial era. However, this study narrowed to *Agikuyu* people of Central Kenya deducing how the *Agikuyu* cultural persistence of *Kiama kia Athuri* is affecting the country politically, economically and religiously. However, this study limited itself on the religious effect for that is the major focus of this study.

2.7.2 Council of Elders vis-à-vis Government Institution

The United Nation (UN) membership is 193 nations of which Kenya is member; 103 states recognize existence of ethnic groups in their constitution, 70 states grant special political and cultural preferences to these ethnic entities, 61 state like Ghana, India, Indonesia, Nigeria et al recognize traditional form of governance, social organization and customary laws (Horzinger, 2016:469). The JuriGlobe World Legal Systems Research Group highlights those traditional customary laws and practices are affected in some states to date whereby 57% of the world population is involved (2016), while the Afro Barometer Survey quoting Logan (2009 & 2013) states that "many African countries are embracing traditional forms of governance headed by council of elders in conflict management". In a survey they carried in 19 African countries, 44.7% respondents had more confidence in their traditional elders and institutions thus Africa is adopting "hybridization in its political leadership" (Round 4, 2015, www.afrobarometer.org). Emmanuel Mbennah argues that "the Great Lakes and Horn of African Regions" are using traditional institutions led by the council of elders in search of conflict resolution caused by political upheavals (2001). Walls concur that "African National Cohesion is pegged on repression and apprehension of African culture and governance so that different ethnic groups have a common ground to share their identity" (2002:108). Ezukwu concurs with Walls in the sense that Yoruba of Nigeria and Bamuleke of Cameroon bled their fundamental cultural aspects and modernity (1996:3-4).

Orchadson argues that in Kenya, political leaders camouflage under their ethnic and political strong holds. They are crowned elders by their respective ethnic council of elders and elders of their political strongholds. They maintain their statesmanship and eldership and have a

political mileage. (1998:86-87, Kirwen, 2005:99). For example, following the "Handshake" between President Uhuru Kenyatta and Raila Odinga, Kikuyu Elders visited Odinga at Bondo.

To reciprocate, the Luo Council of Elders in conjunction with KCEAT planned an inaugural visit by Odinga to Nyeri in a later date with the aim of pulling a bigger crowd than what the Deputy President Ruto attracted at Murang'a. However, the other function of GCE objected to the visit. The bottom line of this is to gain a political mileage (Daily Nation, October 18, 2020; 22). This insinuates that traditional councils of elders are being used to access political and economic powers and control by the rich.

Englebert alludes that "several African states such as Ghana, South Africa and Uganda have promulgated constitutions that embrace traditional leaders from the 1990s" (2002:51). The Kenyan Constitution promulgated in 2010, Chapter 2, section ii, 2 (a) encourages cultural practices which are consistent with the natural law. In my view, the political elites allow and ascribe to cultural practices which add a niche in their political endeavors but not necessarily out of conviction or the values of these customs and practices.

2.7.3 Council of Elders' vis-à-vis Christianity

The greatest contention between culture and Christianity is on rituals conducted by the *Kiama kia athuri*. This contention was incubated by the missionaries who viewed anything African as evil and hatched under African Church leadership who hated their culture even more than the missionaries. Wall (2002:107) argues that "converts and educated elites denied so many aspects of their African heritage".

The African patriarchal hierarchical order has been reflected from different scholarly perspectives such as Feminine Theology, African Biblical Hermeneutics, Systematic, Missiology, Sociology, Historians, Political Scientists, Anthropology, Traditionalist and Missionaries. These perspectives vary accordingly (Phiri, 2016:89). In my views the Feminist Theology, African Hermeneutics, Missiology, Systematic, Sociologists, Missionaries and Historians has a distinct implication to Christianity engagement with African culture in the sense that they use the bible to evaluate the African cultures.

From feminist theologians, patriarchal (council of elders) is viewed as a tool of oppression. Esther Mombo and Hellen Joziasse define patriarchy in feminist perspective as "unjust hierarchical and dualistic ordering of life in which the male has the power and authority and female is subordinate" (2016:159). In my view, though the feminist theologians are right in arguing that some cultural aspects which were propagated by elders like female circumcision, forced widow inheritance and early and forced marriages denied fullness of life. I disagree with their views when they argue that land held in trust by male elders for the clan disempowered women economically, they use two perspectives to anchor their argument. In cultural setting, the senior most male in clan held land in a trust. Not all men were in charge, therefore there were no landless people; there was no land economics attached to land as we witness today.

Therefore, in this recent time it is fair for all genders to inherit land bearing in mind colonization of Africa interfered with Africa and its economic set up. Demarcation of land and issuance of title deeds is European invention not Africans.

I argue that some aspects under the domain of elders like land trust, respect, oneness of community, chastity of life, morality et al enhance life. However, Njau argues that "through circumcision women acquired authority and status in the society" (2000:37). It's worth to note that these cultural issues that are being debated today have been a thorny issue from the time of missionaries. Capon deduces that "not only the missionaries from different missions disagreed, CMS missionaries disagreed too". For example, on subject of female circumcision; Kabete and Embu missions advocated for complete abstinence while Kahuhia and Weithaga missions saw no harm in the continuance of practice as long it was a minor operation. He further notes that even at Kabete, around Kiambaa area, converts were tolerant of cultural practices. However, all agreed that female circumcision was evil (1962:41).

Julius Gathogo from an African hermeneutic perspective construe that "*Agikuyu* legend of Gikuyu and Mumbi was intended to strengthen patriarchal society through the *Kiama* to demean women and exert power over them" (2011). In my view, Gathogo's view is not correct for most scholars show that in honour of women in *Agikuyu* culture pegged on the myth, their clans are named after Gikuyu and Mumbi daughters and in honour of Mumbi, *Agikuyu* are referred to as "*Nyumba ya Mumbi*" (House of Mumbi). In the same thought of argument, Mombo and Joziasse deduce that "cultural and religious teaching are used to subordinate women." They further argue that "a woman is either identified with a father, husband or son" (2016:163). However, I argue that this concept of referring to women as above is worldwide even today; it is not confined to *Agikuyu* people.

Gathogo concludes that "*Kiama kia athuri* has no place in the modern civilized world" (2011). Contrary to this view Mbennah demonstrates that councils of elders in the Great Lakes Region

are effective in restoring order in countries devastated by political skirmishes (2001, Englebert, 2002:51, Ezukwu, 1996:3-4, Oni & Segun, 2010).

Waweru argues that "the goat that a man offer to elders does not matter, what matters is the integrity and maturity of the man who is offering that goat" (2007:44). Waweru further points that "the four grades of *Kiama kia athuri* can be equaled with ACK offices such as deacon, priests, bishops and archbishops. *Muthigi* can be equated to the bishops' staff as well as other roles a bishop undergoes before consecration as an initiation process". According to Ezukwu and Muga the Church can learn from the Council of Elders who never bestowed power over one person, but the *Muthamaki* (leading elder) who used his influence and persuasion but not coercion (19996:14-18, 1975:44-45 respectively). It is in this aspect Wachege denotes Christ as the leading *Muthamaki*. I support the above scholars' views and arguments because there is an outcry by laity due to abusive language and threats of curses thus forcefully making the Christians do the will of the clergy (1992).

The extreme view of the Christian Africans is that Christianity has nothing to do with the culture. They hold the dialectic model of discontinuity of the ATR and exclusivist position that salvation is only found in Christ (Phiri, 2016:90). Such proponents are theologians like Byang Kato, Ela and Bujo who emphasize that African culture need theology to free it from its oppressive and depriving customs and practices (Waweru, 2007:62). Upkong contest this view and states that "there was a close relationship between African cultural values and biblical perspectives" (2016:95), thus holding the dialogic model of continuity of ATR to Christianity and inclusivism position that salvation in Christ but through other non-Christian religions or philosophies (Phiri, 2016:90).

However, such views as inclusivism are viewed by the Christian Africans as a pure paganism wholesomely. Margaret Murugi Mwangi and Lay Canon Gideon Numa argue that "Bishop Ranji has fought the battle of syncretism belief of some clergy who compromise their faith by indulging in cultural practices of *Mburi cia Kiama* which has nothing to offer to Christianity" (DMKS, 2019:163). Bishop Ranji had cautioned the clergy to strongly stop and avoid cultural practices contrary to Christian faith (min 04/cc/15).

Stephen Sykes and John Booty deduce that Anglicanism meet a challenge when it meets with other cultural and social models of tribal leaders. These models pose a threat of distorting the nature of pastoral authority in the Church (1980). In that line Ward and Stanley construe that these tribal leaders' model cause controversies ending in hibernation, only to resurge again creating more controversies (2000). Therefore, this study seeks to address how Missionaries interacted with *Kiama kia Athuri*, controversies thereof and the current controversies due to persistence.

The traditionalists hold the view that *Kiama kia Athuri* Kia Ma adherents are Christians. Kambo argues that:

> *Kiama kia athuri kia ma* membership comprises 80% of Christian of different denominations and faiths who hold leadership positions in their Churches" including professionals such as doctors, lawyers, politicians, businessmen, pastors, priests. *Kiama kia athuri kia ma* uphold the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20) and Joshua 24:1-15 "Me and my house we will serve the Lord", the *Kiama kia athuri kia ma* demonized by the Anglican Church is absolutely not the one I know of as a member. It is good wisdom to criticize what one knows about (*Kiama* circular, 26th July 2016:12).

The *Kiama kia athuri kia ma* hold the view that they are advancing their culture as Jewish had the culture and Christ did his mission within their culture. Mbiti argues that "Africans hear and see confirmation of their own cultural, social and religious life in the life and history of the Jews people as portrayed and recorded in the pages of the Bible" (1986:26, Lonsdale, 1999:206). This is the position of pluralists who hold that Christ is simply one of many truths (Phiri, 2016:90).

The above statement corresponds with that of Karanja and Parrat argument that the new faith was understood within the social milieu in which it was received. Such statement by the council elder deduce that both traditional and biblical cultures are true, however Christian Africans feel that its either biblical or traditional culture for both cannot be right (1999:74, 1987:34 respectively).

I concur that Africans easily blend the culture and the Christian faith (Galgalo, 2012:24). This is the fact that both those who ascribe to *Kiama kia Athuri kia ma* and African Christian perspectives attend Church service in the morning, partake the Holy Communion and in the afternoon attend *Kiama kia Athuri kia ma* and equally participate in its rituals and ceremonies. However, I propose that the *Kiama kia athuri kia ma* should be made to know "Christ as per excellence" and "Christ above culture". They should clearly understand the difference between the *Agikuyu* Ngai and God (Yahweh) of Heavens worshipped by Christians.

The elders are questioning denominationalism and their divergent doctrines. Thus, the argument posed by Juvenal Ndayambage and I concur with states; "a truly religious society has one faith and One Church, but religious pluralism where different religious faiths exist

within a single society splinters society weakening the influence of religion and inhibiting religion from acting as a cohesive force within the society" (2014:75).

Muga and Ward concur and argue that "before Christianity, there were no denominationalisms within African ethnic groups thus people held the same view, however Christian denominationalism has caused different views from one bible thus creating confusion" (1975 & 2000 respectively). For example, during the consecration of Catholic Bishop Kimengich of Eldoret Diocese, the Vicar General remarked, "elders from the North Rift will also conduct a traditional coronation during two-day installation" (The Standard, Saturday 1st Feb 2020, pg. 10). The elder rituals are embraced in one denomination and castigated in the other.

Robert Runcie former Archbishop of Canterbury construed that, "there is misuse of authority in the Anglican Church by bishops and clergy". He deduces that "a lot of power is being used instead of authority" (1988). Tengatenga concurs when he decries "the veto power of the ordained and how one usurps all powers to himself suppressing all others". They note that "Bishops weld a lot of power over the clergy" (2005). However, Runcie and Tengatenga do not deal with how Anglicanism deals with the issue of veto powers in the cultures it meets in her endeavours to evangelize and the effects of these to the Christian faith. This study interrogated how the *Agikuyu* social order and organization courtesy of *Kiama kia athuri* can be inculturated to diffuse misuse of authority in the Anglican Church.

2.7.4 The Gaps

Scholars have written quite a lot about *Agikuyu* in various ways and approaches. Therefore, this dissertation must be viewed in the context of their work which lay the foundation of the *Agikuyu*, missionaries' attitude toward the Africans and their culture Scholars such as

Kenyatta (1938), Muriuki (1974) and Leakey (1977) have written from an anthropological approach. Scholars such as Strayer (1978), Temu (1974), Tignor (1976), Cagnolo (1933) among others are writing from historical perspective though close to the colonial and missionaries' era when anything African was not valued, therefore lacking objectivity in their writings. Kanogo (2005), a historian focuses on gender issues thus viewing the *Agikuyu* council of elders from a patriarchal perspective which is viewed as detrimental to women's advancements, thus majoring on social economics and justice. This study majored on the social organization of the *Agikuyu.* Scholars such as Kibicho (2006) and Kiriro (2011) due to their exposure are writing during pre-colonial period when African elites are writing to affirm their culture thus qualifying everything cultural as good and being able to compare their culture with other cultures such as European and Jewish which are embraced worldwide.

The researcher has observed that much has been written on *Agikuyu* council of elders; especially the controversy caused by their rulings such as circumcision rites, second birth rites, sacrifices and pride price issue, no in-depth work has been done about *Kiama* adherents who ascribe to Anglicanism today. The gap identified is that no in-depth scholarly work in historical perspective has been carried out on controversy between the *Kiama kia athuri kia ma* adherents and the Anglican Church in DMKS, Kiambu.

2.7.5 Conceptual framework

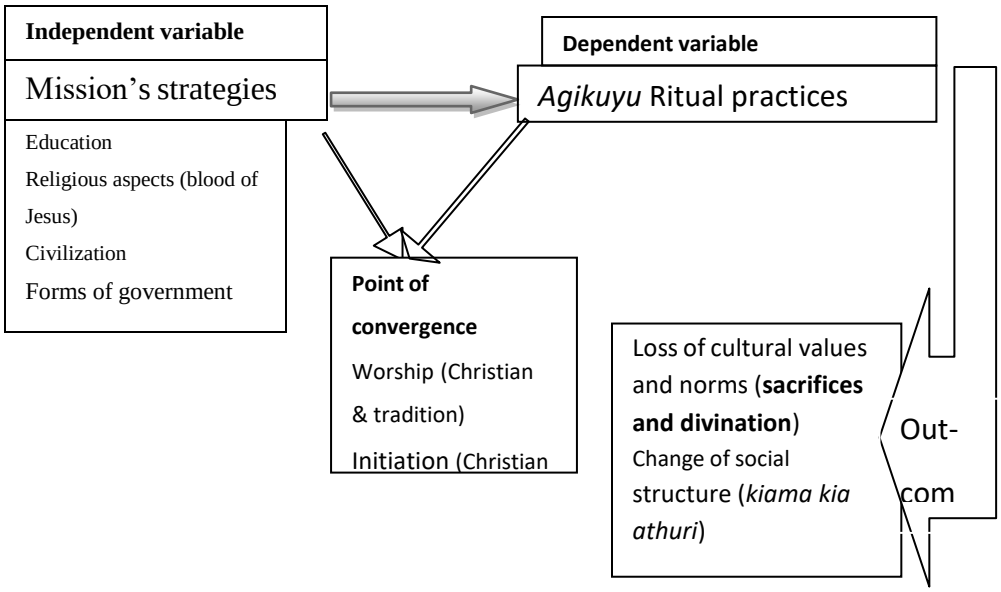


***Figure 1: Conceptual framework*.**

2.7.6 Explanation of the conceptual framework

The figure above shows the conceptual framework. It has two variables; independent and dependent. The missionaries' strategies are the independent variable while the *Agikuyu* ritual practices form the dependent variable. It is expected that the missionaries' strategies affected the ritual practices of the *Agikuyu* people. The framework has a point of convergence whereby the two variables interact causing the expected outcome as shown. Independent variable helps in responding to the second objective and the point of convergence. The dependent variable assists in responding to the first objective about the ritual practices. The outcomes will help in responding to the third objective concerning the present views of the *Agikuyu* people on *kiama kia athuri kia ma*.

2.7.7 Conclusion

The literature review has shown that *Agikuyu* life is greatly inspired by their myth or legend of origin rather than the anthropological development theory of humankind. It has been deduced that *Agikuyu* life was guided and marked by rites of passage which created a complex social order and organization under the guide ship of *Kiama kia Athuri.* The contention thereof with Christianity which are rituals, sacrifices (blood), ceremonies and libation have been shown. The scholarly gap has been identified that no in-depth study has been carried out in historical perspective by a historian in the DMKS.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter dealt with methodology used to carry out the study. It highlighted research methods and design, sampling and analysis of the data collected.

3.2 Research Designs

The researcher used a triangulation of research methods in order to get in-depth information from the respondents. Triangulation of quantitative and qualitative research designs was used.in conjunction with descriptive methods which portrayed characteristics of a group of people, community or an organization. This incorporated the historical survey which describes past events and occurrences (Chadran, 2004:74).

3.2.1 Historical Methodology

This included historical study of the African Religion. This is a careful study of the past events, occurrences or phenomenon to inform possible outcomes to current events, problems or questions. This helps to have a trend of past occurrences that inform and influence the current situations with an aim to produce, clarify, inform, amend or enrich the existing knowledge (Kinoti, 1998:8, Peter, 1994:57). This method applies a scientific method of inquiry to historical problems.

3.2.2 Descriptive Method

This method deals with the attitude and opinions of a group of people, organization or a party on a defined subject such as a ceremony or organization. The techniques used are

interviews, case, observations or surveys (Kinoti, 1998:9). Mugenda and Peter postulate that a case is a strategy of doing research that involves empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context using multiple sources of evidence (1999:173, 2008:67 respectively).

3.2.3 Qualitative Method

This involves collecting detailed and in-depth information whereby respondents' words, gestures and opinions are examined and interpreted. It is used to explain social economic political phenomena in terms of the conditions for relationships that exist, opinions that are held by the African elders, Christians and experts (Mugenda, 2008:53). Qualitative research is talking and listening to the views of the participants on the issues that shape their lives, worldviews and experiences on a particular subject. Their attitude, behavior and experiences count a lot.

3.3 Research Method

This deals with the method and systematic process in which data are corrected, sampled, interpreted and analyzed. The study embraced the use of descriptive with both qualitative and quantitative; aiming at presenting the state of the church after the influence of the church missionary society Interviews and FGDs methods was used.

3.3.1 Data Collection

The researcher used both primary and secondary data (Peter, 1994:63) Primary data was collected from the field through interviews, questionnaires or FGDs, Secondary data was collected from libraries and archives.

3.3.2 Sampling Method

This is a means of selecting a portion of the population in question. It represents the population in the study appropriately. The sampling frame was the *Agikuyu* elders, Church leaders and the Christians in the DMKS. The study employed both purposive and snowball samplings for in-depth information from the respondents as elaborated below.

3.3.2.1 Purposive Sampling

This is also referred to as judgmental sampling (Bacon, 2009:50). The researcher picks the respondents and informants based on their expertise, experience, age, status, religion or denomination (Kinoti, 1998:50; Peter, 1994:75). A sample of 100 participants was achieved, this was from the clergy and laity from the 14 archdeaconries, 6 archdeaconries were sampled. These are Kirangari, Karura, Uthiru, Riruta, Sigona and Kabete (Appendix ii). Out of the 280 clergy, 25 clergy were sampled based on their age, gender, seniority, expertise and years of service.

3.3.2.2 Snowball Sampling (Referral Sampling)

Involves the researcher identifying one interviewee who is knowledgeable with the information at hand, after obtaining information, the interviewee directs the researcher to another person who has similar or information needed. This process is repeated until the researcher acquires the desired and quality information. The researcher relies on the recollections of the respondents (Mugenda, 2012:301). The researcher being a Minister in the Church will know some members who openly advocate for *Mburi cia kiama* even though some are non-Anglicans Members that can assist. Researcher aimed at sampling 20 *Agikuyu*

Christians involved with *Kiama kia athuri kia ma* as follows 10 elders, 5 women and 5 youths who ascribe to Anglicanism.

3.4 Research Instruments

These are the ways and means by which the primary data is collected in social sciences. The researcher used questionnaires, interviews and focus groups discussions. The interviews and focus groups were guided by unstructured questions schedules (Peter, 1994:77-78).

3.4.1 Questionnaires

This enabled the atmosphere for a large number of responses for in-depth and elaborate information for comparison. The questionnaire was systematic questions of open ended and unstructured format to answer without limitation allowing the respondents to give their own views. This helped to avoid researchers' biases. The information sought was about the *Agikuyu* council of elders' vis-à-vis Christian faith (Gatara, 2010:72).

3.4.2 Interviews

This involved unstructured and open-ended questions which are short and concrete to the study. They allowed for in-depth and quality information. Descriptive oral stories were allowed in this historical research topic. This allowed the interviewee to draw from their experiences bringing out their true feelings about the issue at hand. The respondents were allowed to dig deep into their feelings (Kinoti, 1998:13).

3.4.3 Focus Groups Discussions (FGDs)

This was a collection of data using small groups of respondents in an informal discussion based on a determined topic. Ten FGDs of 30 participants were used, constituted through their ability to give reliable needed information. Open ended and unstructured questions based on a determined topic were used to enable the participants to narrate their experiences.

An FGD was made up of clergy, *Kiama kia athuri kia ma* members and the laity. The session did not exceed two hours. The process of administering FGD was through posing a question and the members discussed together under the moderation of the researcher for the information to be obtained. The information from the members was written in a notebook and recorded too.

3.5 Ethical Requirements

Ethical concerns were featured in all stages of this research process. First, permission was sought from the St Paul's University, Director Board of Postgraduate Studies adhering to regulations, guidelines and the laws stipulated in their policies. The Ministry of Education permission through National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) was sought and granted. Second, the researcher sought for respondents' consent without coercion, force or using incentives to lure them or using deceit to study them. Third, a high level of confidentiality and anonymity was used concerning informants and information received. Fourth, the researcher tried to maintain objectivity and neutrality in this study; avoiding biases and prejudices. Five, the researchers revealed his identity as an Anglican priest.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the methodology that was used to achieve the desired results in this study. This is a historical study and appropriate research methods and design had been elaborated. The researcher revealed his identity and intent as a priest to the respondents due to sensitivity of the *Mburi cia Kiama* issue in the DMKS. Six, researcher acknowledged the sources of his information (Chandran, 2004:33-36, Gatara, 2010:147-160)

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter has data analysis, presentation and interpretation. The themes that emerged were analyzed in qualitative and descriptive methods leading to a narrative. Questionnaires, interviews and FGDs were treated in a quantitative method. The percentages and tabulations were e used. Due to the sensitivity of the issue of *Kiama kia ma* affiliation in the diocese, respondents feared the researcher's intention. This affected the rate of returns of the questionnaire and interview quality. Out of the 100 questionnaires issued, 70 were returned. The interviews were carried out very secretively, some respondents declined to answer some questions. Ten FGDs comprising three people each were carried out. For confidentiality, locations of interviews and FGDs were not disclosed. The research objectives and questions guided the data collection process.

For confidentiality, names were not mentioned in this chapter. The respondents were coded, for example B1or B2. This format was used on all respondents in FGDs questionnaires and interviews.

The research questions of this study were;

1 How was *Kiama kia Athuri* conducted during the pre-colonial period?

2 How did the missionary Church strategies historically interact with *Kiama kia Athuri*?

3 What are the present views of the *Agikuyu* Christians and traditionalists concerning the *Kiama kia Athuri*?

4.2 The rite of passage to kiama in the pre-colonial period.

This objective gauged the current *Agikuyu* understanding of the rite of passage to *Agikuyu* eldership. The older people explained that "it was a must to join *kiama* in the pre-colonial period". On the rites of passage, 60% of the respondents were very familiar with the process of initiation to *kiama*. The number of the goats paid as a fee to the elders, requirements and the role of *kiama* in the society. This corresponds well with Appiah's argument that "the elderly in African society are the custodian of knowledge" (2014). Younger generation, mostly Christian Africans that was 30%, were not conversant with the process of initiation to *kiama*. Kirkwood argues that "the more a convert forgot the culture, the more they were viewed as a good Christian" (1993:169). Younger respondents affiliated to *kiama* who were aware of the process were represented by 10 %. For they have received instructions from the elders during the initiation process and subsequent teachings.

Respondents making 60% of the interviewees concurred that *kiama* was the governing council or the government of the day. BI concurred "that *kiama* was in charge of the religious, economic, political and social order of the *Agikuyu* people". *Kiama* had several grades. Each grade was accorded its duties, rights and responsibilities. The respondents agreed that there were four eldership stages namely *Kamatimu*, *Horio*, *Matathi* and *Matuuranguru*. *Kamatimu's* responsibility and duty was to protect the community. B5 said "they were like the modern armed forces". This grade was joined immediately when a man got circumcised at around age of 18 years. *Kamatimu* comprised men aged between 18 years

to 40 years Elozukwu concurs that such arrangement in leadership where power was devolved and entrusted in the hands of the many discouraged dictatorship and coercion (1996:14-16). In FGDs; that is 23 out of 30 (76%) of respondents felt that "every man and woman was expected to marry". Therefore, when *Kamatimu* married they joined the *kiama.* B8 postulated that "it was mandatory to offer the goat when they got their first-born child". To join this grade, the requirement was to be a father therefore one's character and integrity never mattered. The young father was advised on how to take care of his wife, children and the extended family. This then reveals that the family unit was highly valued and family life education given a paramount place in the society. In this line of argument from feminist perspective, Mombo and Joziasse concurs that "ideal man in Kikuyu culture gives offspring and is able to lead. He is responsible, the head and tough so that his family feel his presence when he is around and he provides for his family" (2016:167).

The 2nd graders were referred to as *Horio* (pacify). This was also referred to a *kiama kiria kinene* (The Senior Council) whose vital role was to dispense justices; their office badge was a *muthigi*. Due to this vital role, B7 argued that "their character and integrity mattered a lot". This was aimed to create mentorship in the society. Mombo and Joziasse from feminist point of view affirm that "a *Kikuyu* man respects himself and is respected in the society. The man as a patriarch, a leader, is a strong image" (2016:168).

The 3rd graders were known as *matathi* and the office badge was *muthigi* and carried *matathi* leaves. The 4th graders were referred to as *matuuranguru*. This was composed of very elderly men who their wives had passed child bearing age. B1 postulated that "the 3rd and 4th graders were the spiritual leaders and priests. They guided the community in all sacrifices, circumcision and other ceremonies. They had the power to curse". In the same thought line

Mbiti argues "that elders are thought to be near God and could go to the places where God was and sit there on behalf of the community" (2012:19).

However, respondents agreed that *Agikuyu* had no permanent offices of a leader, king or a ruler. *Kiama* members were equal, but whenever they met, they chose one who acted as a *muthamaki*. After the occasion he relinquished that office. B20 noted, "that is why *kiama* members greetings were '*wanyu wakini'* (greetings to my equal)."

During the goats offering in the forest women were not allowed in that meeting. B1 elaborated, "How can we let women near our council. Our secrets must not spill out". This was in reference to the Gikuyu and Mumbi myth of creation. How *Ngai* blessed the couple with only daughters. However, *Ngai* provided young men to marry the daughters. The men went to live at their wives' compound, therefore women became the rulers. The myth elaborates that over the years women become very domineering, ruthless and cruel rulers. Therefore, men conspired to overthrow them and they succeeded. Therefore, this reveals that *Kiama* in essence is used to maintain influence, power, identity and control.

Parrinder postulates that "African people lives are filled and marked with complex and intertwined rites of passage, without them one never took part in the tribal life (1962:94). To *Agikuyu* men, the rite of eldership was highly regarded. Therefore, it was marked with an elaborate ceremony in the forest. There was great feasting and women were expected to cook and take food at a designated point. Men picked food and in return, filled the baskets with meat for their wives and children back home. B1 said "A *Gikuyu* man has never slaughtered and failed to give his family meat''.

Kenyatta (1938) notes that

> During these ceremonies, discipline was of essence and paramount. No indiscipline was tolerated and indiscipline such as drunkenness was heavily penalized. The culprit was penalized a goat. If the habit persisted the culprit was allowed to attend the ceremony after the prayers was requested to leave. If it persisted further, the culprit was ex-communicated for *kimera kimwe* (one season or six months)". B10 emphasized "if such a man never amended his habits he was deposed from a higher grade to a lower grade.

Such heavy penalties were meant to deter men from indiscipline when in the community. So that they do not disgrace the *kiama* and the duties, rights and responsibilities accorded to them. Fear was inculcated in men. B 30 a lady emphasized.

> They greatly feared to be seen drunk and staggering, they were heavily reprimanded and penalized. One day a friend of my husband got drunk and urinated on himself. When my husband learned of it, he hurriedly acted. Then he called his other friend and discussed the issue. Their tones could tell the seriousness of the issue. I overheard as I prepared tea.

However, Ng'ang'a (2019:180) argues that " it is the fear that drives people to obey in order to avoid the repercussions of such things as curses or segregation and not a true conviction that leads to repentance as in Christianity. The bible is the final authority in all matters and conduct.

During the *kiama* ceremonies in the forests men were grouped according to their grades. They were counseled in matters of family, morality, respect and their responsibilities. They also discuss tribal matters but no politics. Currently political matters are in the domain of Kikuyu Council of Elders. Men were regarded as the head of their families therefore they are expected to set a good example especially to their juniors. Therefore, *kiama* had strict rules and regulations to be followed by the members. For example, meat from the forest was meant for the bona fide wife(s) B10 emphasized.

> Digressing to another function or to a mistress was a heinous crime. Even having a mistress in your village was not acceptable. How could you counsel the younger generation? Such behavior was heavily penalized. *Kiama* members were expected to live a pious life. Be of good character and integrity. Men were expected to join the ladder of grades as they age. There were clan, territorial and community councils of elders.

This section has shown the current *Agikuyu* understanding of the rite of passage to eldership as it was done in the pre-colonial period, the roles and responsibilities of the *kiama kia ma* members. . This was paramount for these understanding is the one informing the persistence we are experiencing and the practices thereof.

4.3 The historical interaction and strategies of missionaries with *kiama kia athuri* initiation.

This objective interrogated the current *Agikuyu* knowledge of how the missionaries interacted with the rite of passage to *kiama*. The views the missionaries had; what they taught about it and why they had such views. In these sections, Themes such as governance, rituals, ceremonies, sacrifices, dances, and marriage emerged.

4.3.1 Governance

Elozukwu notes that "most of Sub-Saharan societies had democratic governance under the guide ship of elders (1996:14). Each and every community has its way of governance. All respondents agreed that before the onset of the Europeans, *Agikuyu* were governed by *kiama kia Athuri.* Elders were in charge from family to national level. The Europeans found a community that was well governed, guided and organized under *Kiama*. This was a very complex form of governance for all aspects of life were heavily intertwined and viewed

from a religious perspective. The deliberations, counsel, guidance and decisions of *kiama kia Athuri* were taken seriously by the community. B5 noted that "elders were highly respected and regarded in the society. Elders strictly instilled respect, morals, order and responsibilities in the society".

The *Agikuyu* had no ruler or king but wherever they met, one elder was appointed as a *muthamaki*. He had no veto powers but only a persuasion role. B21 said "his appointment ended with the conclusion of that meeting". The Europeans viewed this kind of governance as primitive and archaic. The Europeans confused the *Agikuyu* form of governance with theirs. B1 said "they confused our *athamaki*, for example, Njiiri wa Karago and Kinyanjui with their elected leaders, they elevated them to the chief's office; this created a great confusion". Galgalo notes that "Missionaries' acted as agents of the colonial government (2012:13). Therefore, those trained by the missionaries became the chiefs (Welbourn, 1965:13). Reed argues that "the educated Africans usurped white collar jobs and dress code coupled with ability to read enticed people to attend mission schools (1999:143).

Tignor argued that "The *Agikuyu* colonial chiefs who were educated at the Mission schools usurped power to enrich themselves through bribes" (1976:51/5). B7 lamented "They became very authoritative, dictatorial and corrupt". B25 postulated "They became worse than the colonial officers". The Europeans used the tactic of divide and rule to control *Agikuyu*. This indicates that the Europeans before understanding the *Agikuyu* way of governance replaced it with their own form of governance where men were not equal. B8 lamented, "Europeans introduced the political elites in our country. They disregarded our system which was democratic; our democracy was viewed as barbaric and primitive". B35

construed that "men greeting in the same grade were '*wanyu wakine'* (greeting to my equal), now with European structure, young men were referred to as "Sir" by their seniors". Respondents believed that Europeans were crafty, B1 quipped "not that they did not understand our governance; they had a deliberate move to divide us". Respondents agreed that the *Agikuyu* society was so cohesive under *Kiama*, therefore the European had to break the core- that is *kiama* for him to penetrate and make headway. Even the missionaries were aware of the cohesion that *kiama* created, so missionaries joined with the colonizer to divide and rule. B10 quipped "hence the *Agikuyu* saying "*gutiri ngurani ya mubea na muthungu*, (there is no difference between the priest and the colonizer)".

In the FGDs, 70% of participants felt that those who were despised in the society; poor and children of *Nyagacu* got education; finally they were used in land demarcation leading to unjust land allocation among *Agikuyu*. They colluded with the European for he was their savior.

4.3.2 Sacrifice (blood), rituals, libation, dances and ceremonies

The *Agikuyu* social life was marked by rituals throughout the year. Mbiti argues that "the *Agikuyu* depended on elders in all aspects of their life characterized by rites (2012:370). Such rites were accompanied by ceremonies and dances, which Europeans viewed as evil and demonic. Richard Simiyu Wafula notes that "missionaries de-Africanized their converts as the first step of making them good Africans" (2015). The *Agikuyu* had no formal set up of education but informal. The songs were used for communicating messages and education to the initiates (Kenyatta, 1938:67). B18 said "that why they had obscene words intended to educate but not for immorality". Respondents noted that these ceremonies were viewed from

a religious point of view. B1 retorted “in African setup there is no demarcation between the profane and religious or secular and sacred”.

An alien cannot easily comprehend the African concept of sacredness. As such, an alien ends up confusing and demarcating secular from sacred. Fiedler argues that “the missionaries must aspire first to understand the Africans they intend to evangelize to; their culture, thought forms and worldview before they judge them” (1996:79). The missionaries made a mistake of using their thought form, worldview and perspective in trying to understand the *Agikuyu* thought form, worldview and perspective. Missionaries ended up misinterpreting and misjudging *Agikuyu* rites. They ended up terming *kiama* rite as ritualistic and sacrificial. B29 noted that they confused *Ngoima ya igongona* offered under the sacred *mugumo* or *mukuyu* tree offered by the 4th graders with the goat offered to *kiama* by the initiates. Missionaries and *athomi* therefore preached against using goats as sacrifice. Ng’ang’a writing from Christian African perspective argues that “when you become a Christian, you totally surrender your past. Your worldview is no longer the traditional worldview (2019:169-171).

B5 explained that the goat for sacrifice was referred to as *Ngoima* not *mburi*. *Ngoima* was castrated before it started to mate therefore it was perceived to be pure, it had to be of one colour and unblemished for it to be acceptable for sacrifice. Such goats never went for grazing. It was housed in wife’s house in *gichegu* (goats’ pen) and greater care was taken over it. This *ngoima* was very precious to the family. So, *Agikuyu* used to sacrifice something that was very precious and dear to them. On one hand, *mburi for kiama* used to graze openly and it was not a must that it was castrated.

In most ceremonies, libation with *muratina* was carried out. This was a sign of unity with the ancestors. The missionaries confused ancestor unity with Western practices of ancestor veneration, therefore they condemned libation. B8 stated, “they even misinterpreted *ngoima* (spirits) our ancestors as Satan or devil". The missionaries equally confused *muratina* for sacrifices and for casual drink. This drink was prepared from honey, sugarcane and *kiratina* fruit. They termed it as evil and illicit. B10 expound “that *muratina* for sacrifice was carefully prepared.” The elder to prepare purified himself for a week. Special utensils for that occasion were used. This was held in great honor. The preparation process and handling of sacrificial *muratina* and for casual drinks were very different. Most respondents held the view that *kiama* was not sacrificial; however, that was the missionary’s misinterpretation.

Due to this misunderstanding, missionaries decided not to baptize children of those got involved with *kiama* and parents who had not wedded in the church. Esther Mombo argues that, “children born out of wedlock became a symbol of sin to their parents” (2013:864). However, respondents felt that CMS and CSM held such views and not Roman Catholics, hence the reason why Roman Catholics command a huge population of Christians in Kenya. B25 narrated that in 1947, he was in Standard Four, he passed well but because his father belonged to *kiama*. He was denied admission at CMS Kabete intermediate school whereby missionaries were in charge of admission; eventually he joined Catholic school at Riruta.

4.3.3 Judicial System

Kiama was in charge of law and order in the society (Leakey, 1977:996). Therefore, to deter crime in the society, they imposed heavy fines on the culprits. If offenders failed to raise the fine, the clan paid the fine. In the African culture and more so the *Agikuyu* perspective, a

person belongs to a society. The clan (*muhiriga*) was the primal tie. Therefore, when a person became a notorious thief, the *muhiriga* had the right of executing him either by lynching him with dry banana leaves or throwing him down a cliff locked in a beehive (Kenyatta, 1938:109). In the same argument B21 said "this was to deter others from following in his footsteps. The missionaries and Europeans viewed such modes of melting justice as primitive, salvage, archaic, repugnant and barbaric". However, the Europeans had such penalties like life imprisonment or death. It is only the executing method that differed; they hanged. They introduced their punishments in their colonies and built jails. Europeans mode of execution was viewed as civilized while that of *Agikuyu* was primitive. Yet both punishments led to death and were meant to deter others.

Elderly respondents explained that in order to maintain law and order in the society, the elders had concepts of *migiro* (taboos), *thahu* (uncleanness), *mehia* (sin), *kirumi* (curse) and *kirathimo* (blessings) which were associated with rituals. From infancy children grew strongly warned not to commit *migiro, thahu, mehia* and to avoid *kirumi* while they were encouraged to seek *kirathimo*. B5 and B7 concurred that "these were like the set rules to be followed. They set dos and don'ts in society". However, In FGD, 70% of respondents felt that missionaries failed to understand the concepts which were parameters that were used to deter evil and encourage good morals and behavior in the society.

4.3.4 Circumcision

The 4th graders announced the dates of circumcision. Respondents explained that missionaries objected to female circumcision. Karanja notes that "the missionaries' were very much against circumcision that was the domain of the elders. Missionaries completely

objected to female circumcision" (1999:172). B1 quipped "it became an anathema to circumcise a girl", Respondents noted that some *Athomi* circumcised their girls secretly. The missionaries had no problem with boys' circumcision, but they greatly objected to ceremonies and dances which they termed as obscene, evil and devilish. The ceremonies were meant to create memorable times to initiate just like the modern graduation do. The pains endured were meant for introducing one to adulthood where courage, perseverance and responsibility were necessary. Missionaries at some point objected to traditional men's circumcision rite and contemplated to outlawing it, but *Agikuyu* resisted. B17 retorted "even the *athomi* of the highest order could come to terms of a full grown up *Gikuyu* man not being circumcised". W a r d n o t e s t h a t " The missionaries outlawed night dances and ritual in it, material for counseling and *atiiri* (sponsors) and teachers were carefully chosen by the missionaries. Boys of *athomi* were circumcised in the Church compounds" (2000:266). B30 alluded "by missionaries allowing boys' circumcision in the Church compounds shows they did not fight culture blindly, however they fought girls" circumcision that had no value". Some resisted, this caused a great division between *athomi* and traditionalist. Those who wanted to uphold the rite did what they knew could effectively communicate the message. They composed a song called *Muthirigu* to ridicule the *athomi*.

Some respondents felt that the simple operation does not make a man as *kiama* insinuates though it is necessary. It is the maturity that matters. We have so many men circumcised, yet behave childishly. B16 said "it does not matter whether women attend or not, it is the behavior change that matters". In the same agreement B29 emphasized "Prophet Jeremiah advised Jewish when they put a lot of emphasis on physical operation to circumcise their

hearts too" (Jeremiah 4:4). B3 pointed out "it is circumcision made without hands...circumcision of Christ (Colossians 2:11), that makes a man". In the same argument, Ng'ang'a argues that "how does a simple operation on a fourteen-year boy make him a man, whether circumcised or not, he is just a boy, he becomes a man by learning and taking up the behavior of an adult" (2019:212).

4.3.5 Social life

The missionaries aspired to change the social life of Africans by introducing Western culture in conjunction with Christianity. They viewed African houses as non- Christianity. Kirkwood notes that "In South Africa missionaries wondered; when will these Africans move from heathen kraal to the Christian home? This meant re-structuring African society this is square houses, iron sheet, gates and fences" (1993:126). The Europeans re-defined African beauty. She further quotes Mrs. Price 1879 assertion that:

> In and especially Christian countries, a slender figure is admired, unlike Africa where the fat African model is appreciated; because it is thought a dishonor to eat too much. The more civilized and more Christ-like the *Bakwene* became, the more they would admire colonized slenderness and not fatness.... when *Agikuyu* girls first went to mission school, first they stripped off their traditional attire, jewel and beads and replaced with European attire, their pierced ear lobes were sewn (Kirkwood,1993: 115-164).

Reed notes ''that young men, especially educated had a passion for European attire such as suits, ties, boots and commodities such as liquor and cigarettes. They coupled this with European white color jobs'' (1999). Harry Thuku baptized in 1908 construes that "young men were looking for modernized fashions, out of imitation not because the missionaries won them over"

This section has shown the current *Agikuyu* understanding of the contention that arrival of missionaries' and Europeans caused in the community. However, respondents agreed that missionaries introduced good things such as education, hospitals, farming practices and modern civilization.

4.4 The presents views of *Agikuyu* on *kiama kia athuri*

The objective sought the present views of *Agikuyu* people on the relevance of *Kiama* today. To examine whether *kiama kia athuri* has been an issue in the DMKS. The researcher asked the question "Can you remember a cultural issue(s) that a bishop(s) that you served under faced? Majority of the respondents from the tenure of bishops George Njuguna to date captured cultural issues such as women ordination, burial rites, dress code, *kamweretho* (women paying dowry forthemselves), *kiama kia ma* and *mburi cia kiama*.

B30 reiterated "even Archbishops Manasses Kuria and David Gitari faced cultural issues such as burial rites and women ordination'' [Provincial letter dated 11th March 1999, min cc/11/2007]. B35 said the cultural issues had been there but became prevalent near the end of Bishop Peter tenure. It is Bishop Timothy who has really dealt with the cultural issues of *Kiama kia athur*i and *mburi cia kiama* and now Bishop Charles.

The clergy respondents explained that the archbishops never openly fought culture while Bishops Njuguna and Njenga were very moderate on cultural issues. B35 explained that "Bishop Njenga balanced culture and Christianity. However, Bishop Ranji took the issue of *mburi cia kiama* head on and aggressively preached against *kiama"*. B35 sentiments were confirmed by B1 who has been *Kiama* national leader for long postulated

> The missionaries tried to kill *Kiama* but failed. However, President Moi tried after the 1982 failed coup d'état to kill *Kiama* for the second time and failed… Once we were hiding in the forest carrying out the initiation, we were caught and locked in a cell together with our meat…. However, when president Kibaki ascended to power in 2002 *Kiama* thrived and men in great numbers started to join *Kiama*.

This argument reveals and places the reason why the contention seems to have died and resurged about fifteen years ago. Bishop Njenga retired in April 2004 and Bishop Ranji took over in July 2004. Therefore, Bishop Ranji took the leadership of the DMKS two years after President Kibaki ascended to power and when there was no political pressure against *Kiama kia athuri*, therefore *kiama* had already carried extensive campaigns to recruit men, *Kiama* initiation were carried out openly, hence the reason it became a big issue in the DMKS during the tenure of Bishop Ranji.

Themes such as politics, relevancy, and *kiama* transformation, respect, rituals, dialogue, persistence and theological inculturation cropped up.

4.4.1 *Kiama* relevance

In the interviews, 35% of respondents felt that some aspects of *Kiama* are very relevant today for it brings men together thus uniting them. They felt that if the *Kiama* take its role properly, then it can lead in curbing vices such as drugs and substance abuse, and be mentors and role models in the society. B8 said "If *kiama* in the pre-colonial era guided the community very well, why not now?" Bevan notes that "the East Asia bishops called for some elements of Oriental culture of traditional asceticism… teachings and practice be promoted to enhance Asian spirituality" (2002:59)

On modernity and church, 30% of respondents felt that *Kiama* is irrelevant for the times have changed and modernity and new structures of governance are in control. Therefore, *Kiama* has been rendered redundant in the society. *Ituika* is meaningless today. B14 explained "*Kiama* is irrelevant; it has been overtaken by the bible and the blood of Jesus". However, 20% of respondents held the view that *Kiama* is 'Relevant but' because it is fighting the same vice that the government and Church are fighting such as drunkenness, immorality, sanctity of life and other abuses in the society such as female circumcision. However some aspects like rituals and sacrifices are outdated. 15% of respondents felt that *kiama* is 'irrelevant but' the concerns that they are raising are genuine, but they are not the right agency to implement them, the government is capable.

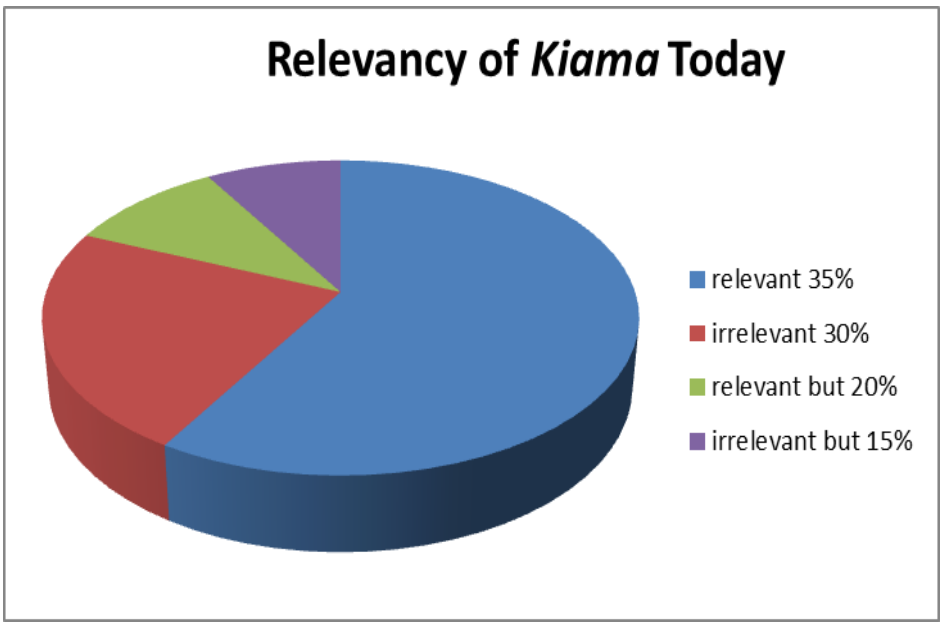


Figure 2: Respondents in depth response to relevancy of kiama today.

4.4.2 *KIAMA* TRANSFORMATION

Culture is like a living organism; therefore, over the years it evolves, culture is not static. Therefore, the hibernation and underpinning of *Kiama* by missionaries, colonial and subsequent independent governments for many years; *Kiama* has experienced several transformations. Several groupings like *Kiama kia ma, mungiiki, ngwata ndai, thai* and *Kenda muiyuru* have emerged, such grouping have created confusion and it is difficult to differentiate these groupings. *Kiama kia ma* do not advocate for 2nd birth rite, female circumcision, obscene and sexually oriented dances during circumcision rite of boys. They do not advocate for *guthiga* or enrolling to warrior ship. B5 explained "we have to align with modernity". However, women are not allowed in the compound. The majority of the respondents asserted that they hold to the traditional teachings which are relevant today such as issues of morality, respect and men responsibility in the society. They do not advocate for warrior ship which have been overtaken by modernity. B1 quipped "instead of spear and shield, we give initiates a book and a pen for the battle that is before them is that of education". Most of the respondents felt that the missionaries did not give *Agikuyu* a chance to make decisions on what to uphold or disregard in their culture.

The teachings were done orally in the cultural set up but initiates were allowed to take note and on the graduation day they were issued with a certificate to remind them of this rite of passage. The certificate has replaced the elaborate ceremonies and dances whose purpose was to instill memories for life.

On the issue of initiation to *kiama,* B1 explained that though the rite process is carried out as in the pre-colonial period. It is not a must that one drinks *muratina*. We have introduced

water and soda; however, meat must be roasted and not boiled meat. Christian Africans respondents felt that as long as rituals are performed, *Kiama* has no place in the Church.

4.4.3 Rituals and sacrifices (blood).

Christians Africans and clergy respondents felt that *kiama* initiation is full of rituals and sacrifices which are demonic and contrary to Christianity. Any African rite of passage had a ritual which is the reason and meaning of that ceremony. K*iama* is viewed as ritualistic, secretive, sacrificial, idolatry and demonic. B14 said "That is why they hide in the forest". The rule of *kiama* is that only the initiate participates in its proceeding thus creating a room for non- members to speculate what transpires.

Thus *kiama* has been accused of being discriminative, demeaning and segregating women and non-members. The majority of *kiama* respondents held the view that each and every institution or organization including the Church is secretive in nature. B8 said

> Do not we have three Houses in the Anglican Church, House of Bishops, House of Clergy and the House of Laity? When each House meets and discusses their agendas is that being discriminative or demeaning the other? Not at all it is just following rules and regulations of the Church.

Therefore, in this regard the traditionalists held the view that it is their way of doing things in an orderly and proper way that is misunderstood as ritualistic. In this aspect they equated the orderly manner that Holy Communion is carried out in the Church with *kiama*. They argued that in the Church, one gets initiated into baptism which is the first ritual. Then one is confirmed to be ushered in the Lord's Table. They argued that one cannot be confirmed if not baptized. It is this process that makes one a full member and communicant in ACK.

They argued that when one becomes ripe for marriage. One must wed as per the Church

rules and regulations failure to which one forfeit the right to Holy Communion (HC) until one rectifies what went wrong. In ACK the woman continues enjoying the right to HC even if she violated the wedding rules and regulation for it is viewed that it is the man who initiates marriage. Does this mean that the Church discriminates and demeans men? It is also a common thing to see a young person of 12 years who have fulfilled Church requirements on Holy Sacrament receiving HC element while older people who have violated the same rules or does not meet the requirements does not receive HC. Does this mean the Church demeans and humiliates old people? No Therefore as the Church has rules and regulations towards the rituals, so is *Kiama*.

Clergy respondents felt that there is no comparison between the Church rituals, initiations and sacrificial giving with those of *kiama.* They held that HC is a memorial service and there is no blood involvement nor are ancestors involved in the Meal like the way *kiama* do libations. They postulated that Christ' sacrifice was final and God of Heavens is prayed to and not the god of *kirinyaga.* B40 deduced that "first, you cannot compare an elaborate structure of the Anglican Church with that of *kiama*. Secondly, what the blood of Jesus cannot do, the blood of goat can neither do". Clergy construed that once a Christian gets involved with other rituals contrary to Christian faith, automatically one stops being a Christian even if they continue terming themselves as Christians. B29 postulated "Apostle Paul reprimanded Galatians because they started in the Spirit and ended up in the fresh that what *kiama* members are doing". Gatu argues that "eradication of African rituals and systems were never fully replaced by Church rituals, structures and systems and never satisfied the needs of Africans".

The dilemma, battle, perceptions and contention in the *Agikuyu* minds and hearts concerning rituals and sacrifices in relation to culture and Christianity is clearly elaborated by B7,

> I do not think *Agikuyu* prayed to a false God. *Agikuyu* had no idols, but a Supreme God, *Ngai* whose dwelling place was *Kirinyaga*; they associated *Ngai* with snow and majesty displayed by *kirinyaga,* even in the bible God majesty is through his creation. We also sing that Jesus' blood washes as white as snow, that is why elders approached *Ngai* in time of dire need and he answered them. In their ignorance they sought *Ngai* who is now revealed in Jesus Christ, that's why I cannot face *Kirinyaga*. I now face the Cross. But to me, my forefathers never worshipped idols. I don't think it is right to say they worshipped and sacrificed to demons; no it was like in the Old Testament. They really purified themselves before they approached *Ngai* and *Ngoima ya igongona* was carefully chosen. In this regard the blood of the unblemished *Ngoima* offered under *Mugumo* or *Mukuyu* tree, that lamb is now Jesus, John the Baptist said, „the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" [John 1:29]. Therefore, to me the blood of goats is replaced by the blood of Jesus, who was sacrificed once and for all, I cannot mix the blood of goats and that of Christ.

4.4.4 How Church can relate with *Kiama* members

The study showed that *kiama* members have leadership roles in the DMKS from local Church to the diocesan level. B1 quipped "we are Church leaders". This sentiment was amplified by B14 who said "during this year's Synod, we had a number of *kiama* members. They are our husbands and brothers and we know them. They are full communicants in our Churches". In the ACK, one to be elected as a leader must be a full communicant.

The above sentiments have shown that in the Church, Christians of different inclinations towards culture have continued to co-exist for a long time. This however has caused a conflict over whether *kiama* members should hold leadership positions in the Church. B1

quipped,

> I cannot understand why *kiama* has generated a heated debate nowadays. We have harmoniously worked and related with the Archbishops and Bishops in this diocese. This debate started about 15 years ago. Sometimes *Kiama* members contribute 98% of materials and money needed to construct some Churches or Church developments.

On the issue of giving, 85% of the respondents felt that *kiama* members generously contribute more than those who profess Salvation. They are more committed to the Ministry and devout themselves fully than most of the Christians. B3 retorted "Can they be the Cornelius of the day [Acts 10], this is a waking call to the born-again Christians to revisit how they serve and their dedication to the ministry.

The researcher asked the question; how should the Church relate with *kiama members?*

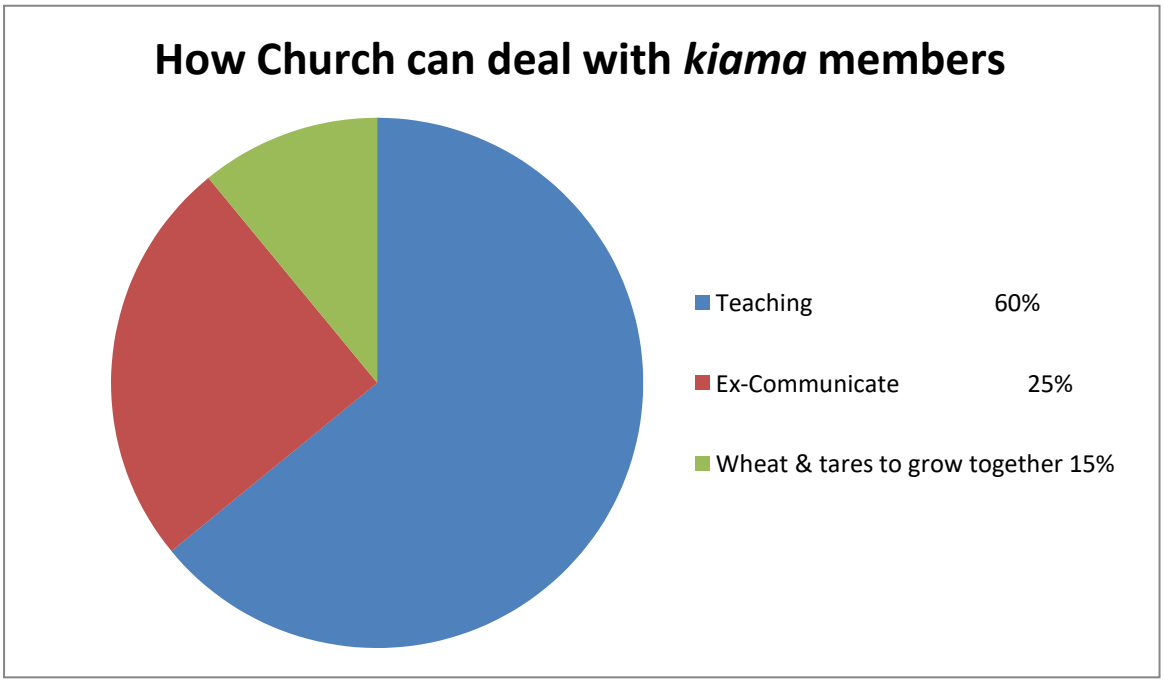


Figure 3: Respondents' response on how the Church should deal with *kiama* members.

4.4.4.1 Teachings

On teachings 60% of the respondents expressed the need for the church to embark on more teaching concerning Christian doctrine. B30 quipped "clergy are hiding in the pulpit and misusing pulpit authority instead of teaching". They felt that such topics as *kiama* are not pulpit material, where they are hurriedly spoken of; proper teaching is required. They felt that if clergy are to preach about *kiama;* then they should carry out proper research to be factual without any preconceived idea. By doing so their sermons will be relevant otherwise if they continue preaching from sheer hearsay; then they become irrelevant; these makes men even more defensive leading to more initiations to *kiama*. Respondents felt that, during sermons, Christians raise questions in their minds. The Church does not adequately

answer or create a forum for questions; eventually congregants seek answers in *kiama*.

The Church is the conscience of the society and should not be subjective. It should keenly reach out, listen to the cry, needs and questions of the people and then give the true gospel. B40 said,

> Jesus ministered to the Samaritan woman and answered and corrected the woman perspective when she raised the issue of praying on the mountain or Jerusalem. Jesus calmly met the Samaritan woman at the point of her need. It is the duty of the Church to correct incorrect theology, guiding people to worship in truth and in Spirit "neither in Jerusalem nor the mountain'' (see John 4:1-25). The Church as the true guardian of the society must remain focused and relevant in all situations. Its mission is to shine and scatter darkness before her.

In the above view, 90% of the respondents explained that it was the duty of the Church to correct the wrong theology of *kiama* instead of creating a tug of war. The issue of *kiama* members worshipping two Gods- *Ngai* of *kirinyaga* and God of heavens (Yahweh) interchangeably as need be, therefore to *Kiama* members are One God. B28 explained that

> Laban made the same mistakes as *kiama* members, „May the God of Abraham and the God of Nahor, the God of their Father, judge between us". Jacob swore in the Name of the Fear of his father Isaac (Genesis 31:53-54), Jacob corrected the theology of Laban that his God was same as God of Abraham, Jacob put the distinction.

However, B10 warned that Churches must be careful with the Sunday school children for her husband has been in *kiama* for almost ten years and he has introduced his boys to praying facing *kirinyaga* raising their hands chanting "*Thai"* when they were as young as six years. Respondents felt that the content of the Sunday school teaching materials needed to be well constructed and effectively taught.

FGDs respondents felt that there is a need to revisit Catechism classes. They argued that

though this is the duty of clergy who are theologically trained, the duty has been left to evangelists of which some are not theologically trained. They emphasized the need of all evangelists to be trained and clergy to be more involved in teaching catechism. B28 noted

> Catechism is hurriedly taught aiming at memorizing instead of understanding. The reason being, the effectiveness of the clergy and evangelists is based on how catechumen memorizes during confirmation day. Poor answering of questions is heavily reprimanded by the bishop, to avoid such shame and a sense of humiliation before the congregation. The clergy and evangelists aim at perfecting memorization and not understanding; therefore, memorization is given priority over understanding. The performance is also measured on the number of candidates presented, therefore to have a higher number, some catechumens are taught for less than a year.

4.4.4.2 Ex-communicate

On the issues of relationship between the Church and *kiama* adherents, 25% of respondents felt that the Church should ex- communicate with the *Kiama* members. They are intruding in the Church. The Cross has nothing to do with *kirinyaga* and the blood of Jesus has anything to do with the blood of goats. Jesus is the One and for all sacrifice.

4.4.4.3 Co-exist

On the coexisting, 15% of the respondents felt that the wheat and the tares should be left to grow together, however the Church being aware of the situation should embark on teachings. The Church should put regulation and rules concerning eligibility of such Christians in the Church leadership, in doing so a lot of love should be exercised. This section has revealed that to *Kiama* members there is no difference between *Ngai* and God of heavens (Yahweh).

4.4.5 Factors influencing *Kiama* persistence

The respondents captured the following issues as the reasons for the persistence of *Kiama*; politics, social evils, identity, power and control, lukewarm Christianity, peer pressure, misfortunes. The figure below illustrates.

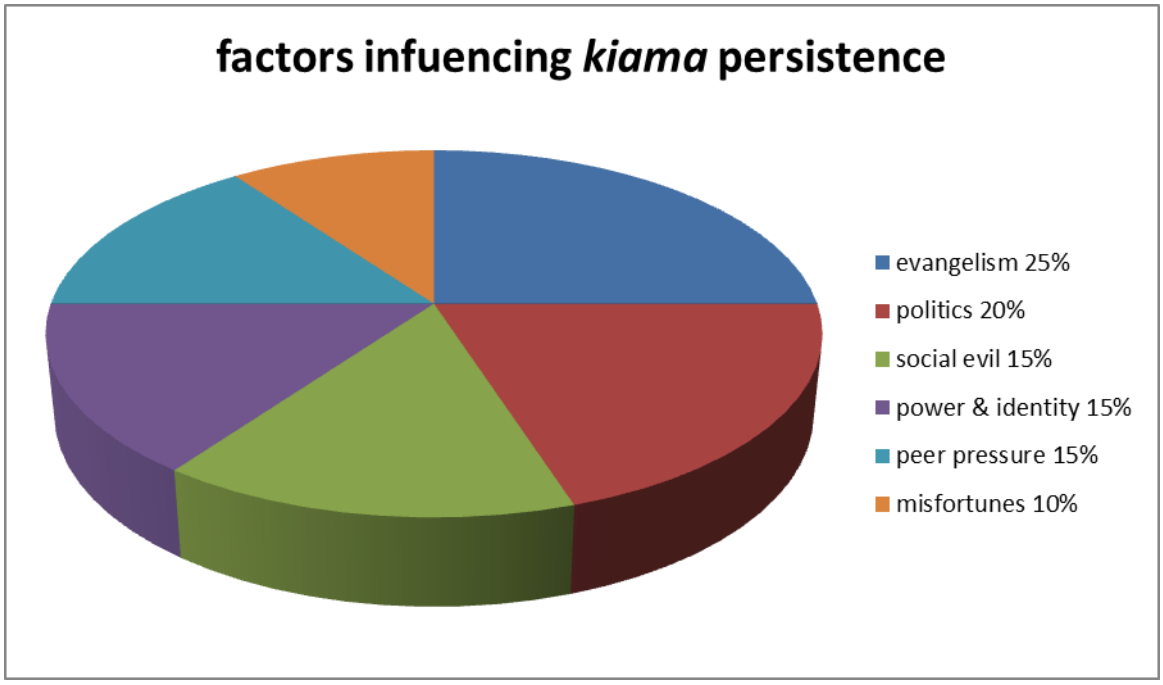


Figure 4: Respondents' response on the factors influencing the persistence of kiama.

4.4.5.1 Social evils

On the social evils, 15% of the respondents felt that modern government structures which sometimes are corrupt, social vices like disrespect, prostitution, single parenthood, immorality and substance abuse are causing people to search for answers. B30 explained that "Men reverting to *Kiama* are the symptoms, the Church should treat the causes and men will stick in the Church. The Church is dealing with a confused society and as leaders we should dwell much in teachings".

There has been a trend in the society where men are mistreated by their wives and children

when they become of age; especially when they retire, thus men living a secluded life. Such fear is making men look for consolation in *Kiama.*

Respondents accused Church of immorality, embezzlement of money and drunkenness (see min 18/cc/2012). The Church is portrayed as being abusers rather than the shepherds of God's flock. Schumacher notes that "this erodes the dignity, respect and trust of the clergy" (1974:45).

4.4.5.2 Politics

Under politics, 20% respondents felt Kenya's General Elections from 1992 to date have experienced a kind of contention that leaves the country divided on ethnic basis. Such reconciliation is spearheaded by elders as per their ethnic requirements. This has revealed that in order to maintain political dominance and economic gains like land that *Agikuyu* has amassed in other areas which are not cultural *Agikuyu* land mostly in Rift Valley; *Kiama* is used to broker peace, reconciliation and political block to maintain political power, control and wealth.

4.4.5.3 Peer pressure

Under peer pressure, 15% respondents concluded that men are under pressure from their peers especially during social gatherings like *ruracio* whereby they are denied entry into the negotiation room. Equally the Church disallowed alcohol in its totality. *Kiama* is persisting and attracting large numbers due to peer pressure, idling and people have liberty to do what Church condones like two wives or drinking. B35 quipped "*kiama* is advocating for the wide path contrary to Christians' advocacy of the narrow path. This has attracted many men. The fear of being different from one' peers is causing people to join *Kiama* (Ng'ang'a, 2019: 111).

Respondents felt that *kiama* adherents are looking for socializing and sense of belonging in a social group. Humans are social beings. They are trying to fill that gap. In social gatherings non men members are segregated, leading to a sense of humiliation. This has prevailed upon men to join *Kiama*.

4.4.5.4 Power, economic, identity and control

The new government and Church structures dislodged men from their influential social class. The welfare of women and girls were given the first priorities. 15% of correspondents felt that through empowerment of women, men were dislodged from their seats of power, economic, influence, identity and control. Therefore, through *kiama* men are trying to reclaim their former position and social location in the society. Mombo concurs and notes "patriarchy order life whereby men have power and authority and females are subordinated" (2016:159).

In the Church circles, women's issues, especially their ordination, became very evident. In 1971, one of the agenda in Anglican Consultative Council held in Limuru, Kenya was women ordination. Diocese of Maseno pioneered in ordaining the first women Rev Lucia Okuthe on 14th Jan 1983 and Rev Emily Odido on 29th July 1984 as a Deacon and a priest on 15th Dec 1985 by Bishop Okullu created a lot of tension within the ACK (Onyango, 2003:79-83). When Bishop Emily Odido Onyango was elected Assistant Bishop of Bondo diocese in 2021, (first Woman Bishop in Kenya) it was contested, eventually she was consecrated. The first women to be ordained in DMKS was in 1997 when Bishop Njenga asked in his charge "it is important we ask ourselves why women have never been ordained in our diocese; the Synod approved" (min Synod 07/1997, min 27/1997, see min 13/1989). Kiundu notes that

women also resisted women ordination „Women should not be entrusted with ordained ministry and leadership because they can be easily tempted" (2016:50). B30 and B35 concurred "during the celebration of 150 years (1994) of evangelization in Kenya. The Church joined the secular at expense of men; lenient decisions favoring women were made. The Church failed to balance. The end result is a decreased number of men in Church Councils, leadership and in attendance".

Majority of respondents (78%) in the FGDs felt that clergy prefer women in Church leadership for it is easier to manipulate women especially in matters of money (see min 018/cc/2018, bullet 6; min 32/cc/2019). In this aspect men with potential in the Church are threat to the clergy. When such men are elected to such a position, the clergy use threatening language such as that of cursing to have their way; men take a back seat (see min 031/cc/2019). This has revealed that even in the Church, men do not feel at home, therefore they search where they can feel at home.

B6 and B24 agreed that it is not easy to serve in the Mothers Union when the husband is deeply entrenched in *Kiama.* The husbands advocate for rituals which are contrary to their wives' faith, women give in. In this aspect the MU leadership accuses us of taking part and entertaining these rituals in our homes, for example during *ruracio* and *gutinia kiande* ceremonies, men ask for]*muratina*, libation, praying facing *kirinyaga*; also, the way women wear the traditional dress. What do you do and the husband is the head of the family? Majority of women serve with brokenhearts.

MISFORTUNES

On the misfortunes, 10% respondents felt that misfortunes, pestilences and calamities in

families make people seek answers in their culture. B5 retorted “there is *ndwari* (infirmities) and *murimu* (sickness). *Ndwari* originates from such incidents as a refusal to honor a parent’s request; it is incurable while *murimu* is curable. B5 and B1 construed “there is a lot of underutilized prime lands in Kiambu, simply because the parents cursed such lands. We have witnessed children coming to seek advice.” Orchadson concur that “misfortunes and illness lead one to seek traditional rituals (1998:85). In the same thought line Ng’ang’a deduces that “some Christians associate some calamities with their culture teachings and requirements, hence when faced with such, they seek solution in their cultural rituals so as to appease their ancestors (2019:109

4.4.5.5 Lukewarm Christianity

Under Lukewarm Christianity, 25% respondents lamented the superficial Christianity. Over the years Christianity has not been properly entrenched as way of life but like a social club or for convenience purposes (Galgalo, 2012:5). This Luke warmness is making men comfortable in practicing syncretism. Majority of the respondents (95%) felt that the clergy should preach the true gospel that leads to conviction. Therefore, is the duty of the Church as the light of the world to have programs of substance that touch the hearts, mind and the intellect of the congregants. Such preparation by the clergy fills the vacuum in the men’s hearts and one is left to make the right choices. B35 emphasized “Jesus never fought his culture he preached the gospel truth; people made their choice and got entrenched in their faith.” Galgalo argues that “if the Church practices Missio Dei- putting Christ at the center of it all- people will be well grounded in their faith (2012:36)

In the FGD, respondents felt that lukewarmness of the Christian starts when no clear

examples are coming from the leadership. The leadership matters a lot in Christian grounding. B40 explained that, Jesus could comfortably say to his audience, "Learn from me, can the leadership say that today?''. Therefore, Church leadership should be exemplary in issues of money and immorality. The Church then should aspire to be like the early Church that imitated their leader- Christ, until outsiders called them „Christians- Christ like". B30 emphasized "such reaction by the leadership leads the congregants in the right direction. The authority should be pious; full of love letting its light be the guiding principle followed by total commitment to Jesus Christ."

4.4.6 Respect

Respondents agreed that in the *Agikuyu* community high level of respect especially towards the elders was advocated. They explained that the Western culture of individualism and emphasis of individual rights has eroded this aspect (Fiedler, 1996; 22). Respect has declined a lot and has become a concern in the society. However, *Kiama* accused the Church of being part and parcel of this problem in the society. There has been a trend or some statements by clergy such as *''niaritaye atananjia ngutondoira, nguita ruta na ngukoma alta-ini*" (Let him retire before he starts stammering, salivating, and sleeping in the altar). B20 quipped "these are statements from the Church leadership". Bishop Ranji frequently decried vulgar language by the clergy (min 031/cc/2019; min 048/cc/2019).

The respondents accused the Church of showing disrespect to the retired clergy. Bishop Ranji had decried disrespect of junior clergy towards their seniors (min 018/cc/2018, bullet 6; see Kiundu, 2016:51-54). Respondents argued that retired clergy are forgotten and ignored by the junior clergy. Therefore, the Church is accused of having a dustbin for her retirees, including archbishops and bishops. In such situation they are rendered irrelevant in the Church yet they are very resourceful, potential, have great expertise and are respected elders

in the society. Archbishop Gitari lamented “The ACK constitution is clear that we be invited for Synod, we are rarely invited” (Chitando, 2014:315). B14 said “the Church should learn from Archbishop Gitari. During his burial they lamented “you took our father when he was strong and returned him to us when he was old, frail and sickling and you forgot him”. B8 argued “if this is what the Church does to its very own, who are we? *Tunajipanga mapema* (we prepare ourselves earlier)”.

The retired clergy should be accorded respect and allocated to teach some issues in the Church especially in family life, morality and integrity. The respondents explained that some clergy uphold the retired clergy and involve them in the ministry. However, there are some clergy who mistreat them, they rarely involve them in the ministry. The respondent explained that sometimes they visit retired clergy secretly without the knowledge of Vicars. They contribute from their pockets and not from the Church coffers for such clergy who do not approve such visitations. These are the clergy who really sacrificed, the diocese is where it is because of the sacrifices they made like serving large parishes without means of transport or intentionally delaying payment of their allowances so that income generating projects are completed.

The respondents felt that to avoid such incidents, it is the duty of the diocesan office to officially place a clergy in an able parish upon his retirement with clear responsibilities of that clergy. They should not be left at the mercy of the incumbent. Though respondents in Church leadership applauded the diocesan office effort towards paying their NHIF cover and some upkeep allowances, the good working relationship of the three bishops in the diocese, the Emeritus Bishop Njenga, Emeritus Bishop Ranji and the diocesan Bishop Muturi,

however they said there is room for improvement. Respondents felt that "during Church services we are reminded that so and so is retired, elsewhere we refer to them as "Bishop or Reverend".

B1 emphasized that upon retirement the State accords some of the retired archbishops and bishops' huge responsibilities in high profile government offices, for example; retired Archbishop Eliud Wabukala and retired Bishop Njenga both from ACK for the State recognizes the potential of such ministers. The Church should learn from the State (see Cavvichi, 1953:17).

Though the issue of respect declination has become a thorny issue in many ethnic groups, the Church is being accused for it is the conscience of the society. Therefore, any misdemeanour by the Church leadership is viewed very critically by the society. Appiah notes "youths were warned strongly not to disrespect the elders nor take for granted their counsel nor ridicule the wisdom and expertise of the elders and ignore their experiences gained as they age (2014:15). Men are yearning for respect accorded to the old in the society, they are seeking answers in the *kiama*.

4.4.7 Dialogue

Majority of respondents felt that no amicable dialogue has been carried out in the diocese. However, respondents had varied views as shown by the chart below:

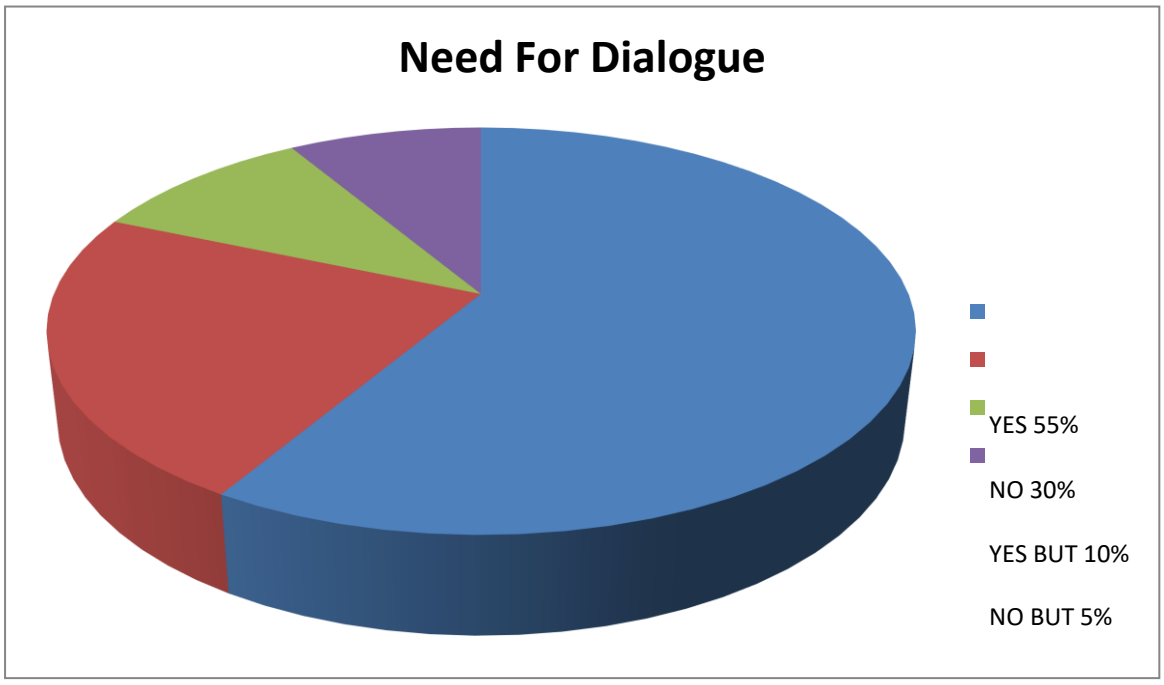


Figure 5: Respondents in depth response for the need for dialogue

On the need for a dialogue, 55% of the respondents felt that there was a need for a dialogue, however not a dialogue that will try to outrun each other but a neutral dialogue that is based on facts aiming at teaching. The dialogue should allow each function to express itself. These respondents felt that the entry point should be issues that are common and the differences to be discussed latter. The guiding principle should be the essence of one God and his virtues and values. Then that which does not work with this one God is discouraged and disbanded. For this to succeed majority felt that titles should be put down and men sit together as men and discuss issue as men.

On the dialogue, 30% vehemently said ‘No’ to such dialogue. They held the view that each function will try to out-run the other and prove itself right. Therefore, such dialogue cannot bear fruit. These are two religions; they have nothing in common.

Furthermore, 10% were apprehensive they answered, “Yes however ’they felt that unless they are guided by the biblical principles, then they are not good while 5% said “No but”. They felt that though such dialogue may not bear fruit. They felt that the arguments by both sides need to stop. They should agree to disagree but stop name calling, mutual respect should be exercised.

4.4.8 Inculturation of *kiama*

These tried to answer the question on what the Church could borrow from *kiama*. In the discourse of this study, it clearly came up that *kiama* are using cultural hermeneutics while Christians are using biblical hermeneutics. Cultural hermeneutics means that one understands and uses the culture to interpret the scripture. Biblical hermeneutics one uses the scriptures to interpret the culture, scripture takes the imminence. These are two parallels with no point of convergent. The following diagram showed the views of the respondents.

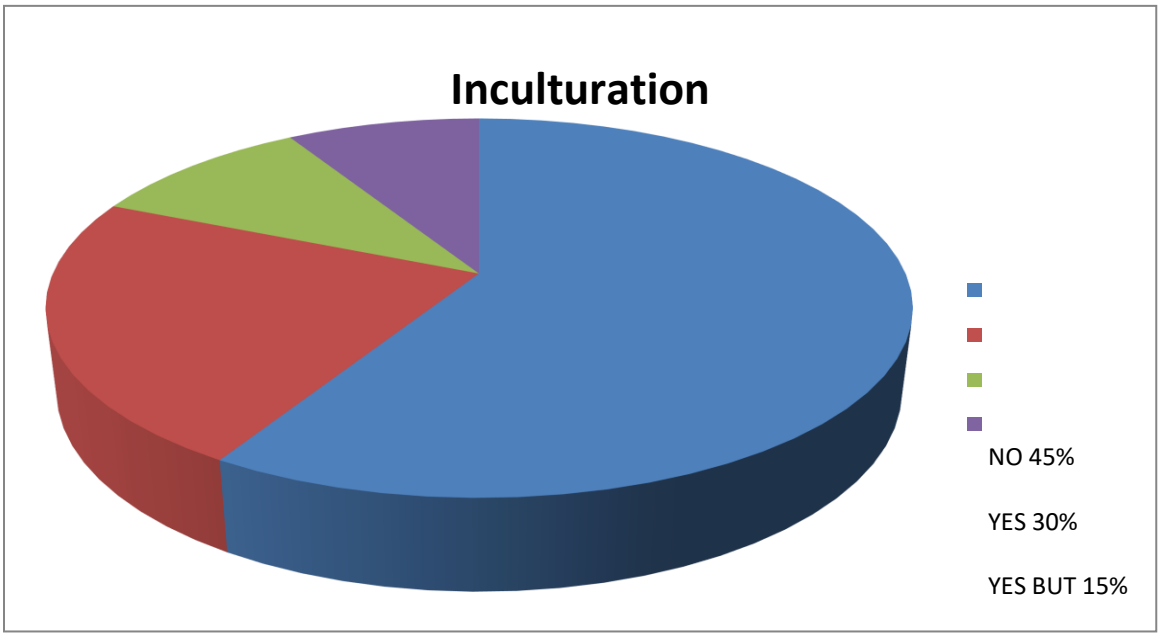


Figure 6: Respondents' response for a need for inculturation.

On the need for inculturation, 30% felt that there is need to enculturate the good aspect of *Kiama* like grading system in KAMA, social responsibility by men. B35 asserted that "Jesus fulfilled the cultural aspect of the Jews which did not conflict with his mission; therefore, no all aspect of culture is bad." Fiedler suggests that "traditional rites, social order and organization can possibly be Christianized and used to strengthen the Church in Africa". 45% respondents said "No" emphasizing the God of Heavens, Yahweh and not the God of the Mountain; arguing traditionalists‟ emphasize on Universality of God, whereby God reveals himself in our culture. They felt that all that culture does is even better fulfilled in the Church. In the same thought line Fiedler argues that 'traditional rites, social order and organization can possibly be Christianized and used to strengthen the Church in African thus the Church

helping to preserve good African cultural aspect (1996; 85). However, Kiarie cautions that "when inculturation takes place there are risks as well as gains achieved (2015:148). In the same line Ng'ang'a argue that "if a purpose in a culture is good, you look a way of retaining it while discarding the things that make that custom bad (2019:211).

The 15% respondents who said "Yes but" held the view that inculturation is good; a lot of caution should be exercised when determining what to inculturate. They felt very minimal aspects of *kiama* needed to be inculturated such as grading and respect. Bishop Ranji had decried that "the African Sunday celebrated in the diocese embraces cultural aspects that conflict with Christian faith" (min 048/cc/2019). This affirmed the argument expressed by Ng'ang'a that "great care has to be exercised on deciding what has to be inculturated for not all aspects of African culture is compatible with the gospel (2019:22).

Elozukwu argues that "good aspects of traditional rites such as marriages, initiation or birth are retained" (1996:4). However, the 10% of the respondent who said "No however", felt that these are two religions but as Christianity borrowed from Judaism, we too can borrow from our culture selectively.

From the above argument, it is clear that respondents with cultural inclination hold the dialogic model of continuity of ATR to Christianity and inclusivism position of Salvation in Christ through other non-Christian religions or philosophies, while other are holding the pluralistic view that Christ is one among many Truths. Majority of respondents with Christianity inclination held the dialectics model of discontinuity of ATR and exclusive position that Salvationis only found in Jesus Christ (Phiri, 2016:89)

In this aspect the majority of respondents are of the opinion that inculturation is not possible for African culture is not compatible with Christianity. Kiarie referring to scholars such as Hillman (1993:24), Mugambi (2013), Houston (2013), Wandera (2006), Galgalo and Mombo (2008) argues that:

> African clergy are alienated from their own culture. This is due to theological formation they receive that is Western oriented and conditioned, with no African concerns. This limits the contextual approach that would encourage African clergy to engage their context critically while doing theology and thus inculturation is not encouraged, resulting in alienated priests detached from African realities. This is in spite of the Lambeth conference of 1998 commending and encouraging authentic inculturation in the Anglican Communion (2015:172).

The above argument shows that there is a need for the clergy to be aware of their cultural inclinations so that they are able to critically engage with their ministerial challenges at an informed position and amicably give concrete and convincing answers guided by the scriptures.

Galgalo concludes that:

> Lack of proper, relevant and adequate theological education lead to ineffective ministry, therefore right theology is the key to realizing strong Christians and effective people and transformation power of the Gospel (2012:49)

The researcher observed that the level of education and age allowed an open mind in the area of inculturation.

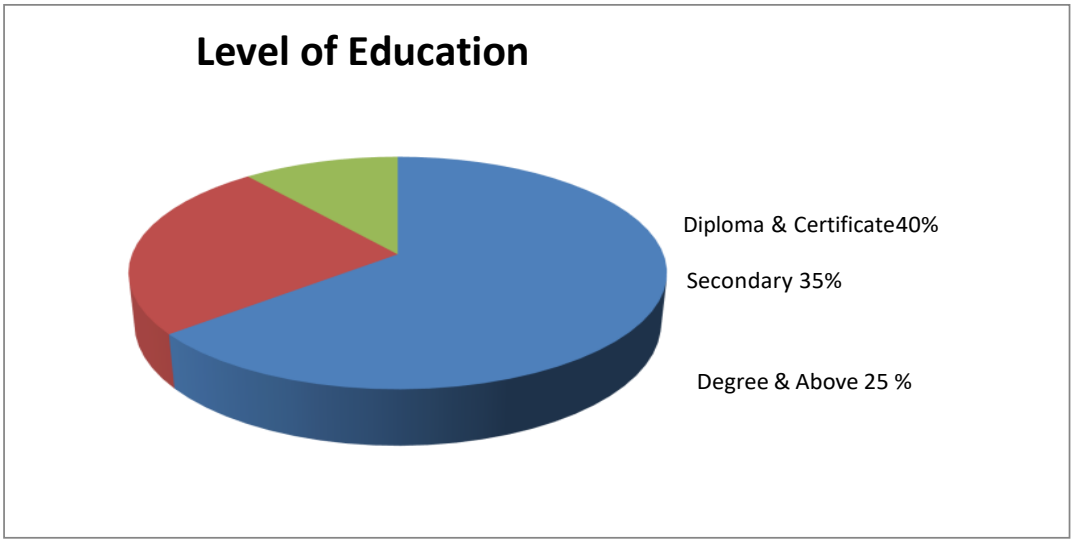


Figure 7: respondents' level of education

On the level of education, 35% of respondents were for secondary education and below, while 40% had certificates and diplomas and 25% had degrees and above. The researcher accepted the answers given for no verification of educational documents were done.

4.4.9 Conclusion

This chapter has shown how different respondents held and expressed opinions and views about *Kiama kia athuri* today. These different groups according to level of education, age, religion, gender and perception to culture differed on the role of *Kiama kia athuri.* However, they all agreed that *Kiama kia ma* adherents adhere to Christianity, are full communicants of the Anglican Church in DMKS and hold leadership positions from local Church level to the diocesan level. However, clergy held that theologically, once one involves other Gods, rituals and sacrifices, automatically ceases to be a Christian despite attending the Church. The respondent differed on the relevance of *Kiama* today and how the Church should deal with *Kiama* adherents. However, majority of respondents felt that no amicable dialogue has been

held; maybe such dialogue can change each function's perceptions towards issues under contention such as syncretism, blood rituals and initiations.

There was a discourse on how the Church carries herself in areas of morality, respect, money, commitment and misuse of its God given authority in the pulpit. However, the majority of the respondents felt that the Church is the conscience of the society; therefore through preaching the gospel truth with a lot of resilience, the Church can correct the wrong doctrines in the society.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.0 Introduction

The aim of this study was the contention that the persistence of *kiama kia athuri* among the *Agikuyu* have caused in the DMKS in relation to rituals. To investigate, the researcher aimed to know the meaning of *kiama* in the pre-colonial period; the colonial period missionaries teachings about initiation rites to *kiama* and the post- colonial views of *Agikuyu* on the rite of *kiama*. This chapter presents a summary of the findings, recommendations and conclusion.

5.1 Summary of the findings

The first objective of this study was to find out how *kiama kia athuri* was perceived in the pre-colonial period in the *Agikuyu* community in Kiambu county. The finding is that this was a highly regarded rite among men. To join the first grade the character and integrity of the initiate never mattered for the young man was counseled on how to cater for his young family and how to relate with the extended family. However, once a man got his first child it was mandatory to join *kiama*. To join the other upper grades were also mandatory as one aged. However, the integrity and character of the initiate greatly mattered for the vital role they played in judicial and religious matters.

The second objective was to find out how colonial government and mission societies interacted with the rite to *kiama kia athuri.* The findings were that the missionaries collaborated with the colonial government in dissuading practices which they termed as

primitive, barbaric and archaic such as dances, rites, brews and customs that they termed as incompatible with Christianity such as libations, female circumcision, sacrifices, ceremonies and praying facing *Kirinyaga*. The *Agikuyu* resisted such moves however the *athomi* sided with the missionaries. This created a great conflict and divisions among the *Agikuyu* people in areas such as circumcision, *ruracio*, *muratina*, and *kiama kia athuri*. The European replaced this *Agikuyu* governance structure with European governance structure, constitution and judicial systems while Missionaries introduced new religious beliefs, structures and denominations, which never satisfied the African people. They introduced the statutory grown-up age to be 18 years where a person needed his own will and consent to such issues as marriage or drinking. This gave young people a right to indulge in alcohol at their will. The cultural way of regulating beer was severed and done away with; end result was alcoholism in the society.

The third objective was to find out the post-colonial *Agikuyu* people views on *kiama kia athuri*. The *kiama kia athuri* persist even today despite missionaries and colonial government efforts to annihilate it. The finding showed that this rite of passage to *kiama kia athuri* is highly entrenched and valued in *Agikuyu* culture. Majority of respondents agreed that the society was well organized, guided and disciplined under the governance of *kiama kia athuri.* They agreed that vices such as disrespects, immorality, prostitution, single parenthood and corruption were very minimal in the society.

The findings showed that today *Agikuyu* are divided on the relevance and importance of *kiama* in modern society. However, the majority of respondents agreed that for about 15 years now, men in large numbers including those in Church leadership are initiating to *kiama kia athuri.*

The findings further showed that the majority of the respondents felt that issues that *kiama* emphasized such as respect, morality, men's responsibilities and integrity are genuine concerns in the society, they are lacking today in the society. However, there were a sharp division on the rites of passage concerning ceremonies, ritual, sacrifices (blood) and religions aspect of libation and praying facing *Kirinyaga* which majority respondents with Christian inclination termed as idolatry. The research revealed that *kiama* adherents today have transformed. The findings showed that current *kiama* has stopped advocatory for rites such as 2nd birth, circumcision, dances and elaborate ceremonies, warrior ship, women circumcision *guthiga*, *hukuro* and traditional operation apparatus, however they maintain praying facing *Kirinyaga*.

The finding showed that the majority of correspondents felt that amicable dialogue based on mutual understanding can eliminate the differences that are being experienced between Church leadership and *kiama kia athuri*. They viewed that both functions can find out their common objective like social vices like disrespect, immorality, single parenthood, prostitution and corruption and unite in curbing them. The finding showed that the shortcomings of the Church leadership especially the clergy is lending the Church irrelevant in the society, therefore a need for clergy reformation. The finding further showed that it is the duty of the Church to teach the true theology by preaching the true gospel. The Church is one to correct the theology of *kiama kia ma.*

5.2 Recommendations

The researcher recommends that:

1. The ACK, DMKS should have comprehensive theological training of the clergy whereby imminent cultural tendencies such as dowry, circumcision and council of elders are critically taught and students are well informed. This will help the clergy to correct the doctrines taught by *kiama kia athuri* from an understanding point of view.

2. The ACK, DMKS should plan and organize comprehensive and substantial programs, seminars, retreats, conventions and conferences for men where persisting cultural issues are discussed. Participants question and answer sessions should be given eminence. Such a move will create a forum for dialogue thus enhancing the understanding of doctrinal issues raised by such cultural groupings. In so doing the Church will confront these issues theologically from a point of understanding

3. The ACK, DMKS should inculturate the good aspects of *kiama kia athuri* in KAMA such as grading of KAMA members and lifelong teaching in KAMA where Christian principles are taught.

4. The ACK, DMKS through her clergy should devolve theology from the pulpit to the congregation level so that the congregants become more conversant with theological discourse. The Church need to emphasis more on the teaching in areas such as sacrifices, rituals or prayers.

5.3 Conclusion

The first chapter highlighted the background of the study, the problem statement, objectives, research questions, hypothesis, significance, justification and the delimitation of the study.

In chapter two the researcher highlighted the literature review. This majored on the scholarly work about *Agikuyu* council of elders, in pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial periods on how each interacted with the rite of passage to eldership. The scholarly gaps were identified.

In chapter three the methodology to be used was elaborated. This chapter indicated how the primary and secondary data were collected and how the research was going to be conducted.

In chapter four the data was analyzed, presented and interpreted as per the findings. The respondents were sampled as per religious beliefs, gender, age, expertise, positions and educationlevels.

In chapter five the summary of finding, recommendations and conclusion were made. The findings have shown that the rite of passage to *Agikuyu* eldership was highly regarded and every man was expected to join eldership and go up the grades ladder. Missionaries and colonizers tried to abolish this rites before they clearly understood the meaning of this social structure and organization of men. This created a lot of controversy and conflicts. Although today the *kiama kia athuri* has persisted there are aspects like politicking and commercialization in it. The research has shown that there is a problem with Christian with its aspects of sacrifices (blood) praying facing *Kirinyaga* and libations. However, the study has revealed that amicable dialogue can reduce the rift between *kiama* and the Church. The burden of correcting the theology and doctrines of *kiama* on praying facing *Kirinyaga*, libations and sacrifices lies on the Churchleadership through preaching the true gospel as Jesus did.

5.4 Suggestions for further research

This study cannot claim to have exhausted the study on *Kiama kia ma kia athuri* bearing in mind that the practices vary greatly from one region to the other and from one clan to the other. The DMKS covers three counties namely Nairobi, Kiambu and Kajiado there is a need for research in the remaining six archdeaconries especially in Kajiado ad Nairobi which are cosmopolitans.

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APPENDIX I: ACK: Diocese of Mount Kenya South strategic plan 2021-2024

The staff composition identified below covers the staff at the dioceses level only

Category	No. of Staff
Bishop	1
Archdeacons	16
Area Deans	37
Clergy	218
Deacons	15
Sub Deacons	8
Church Army Officers	18
Evangelists	129
Lay readers	495
Auxiliary Office Staff	52
Total	989

APPENDIX II: The Interim Diocese Population census as at January 2021

List as follows;

Archdeaconry congregations

Archdeaconry	No. of Parishes	No. of Christians
Cathedral	18	6,667
Githunguri	15	2,190
Kabete	17	3,839
Karura	15	6,454
Kiambaa	14	4,305
Kirangari	11	3,981
Kiriita	10	2,657
Kiserian	8	1,906
Limuru	13	2,433
Ngong	8	1,202
Riruta	13	3,427
Sigona	14	1,699
Thimbigua	13	4,789
Uthiru	15	14,228
Total	**184**	**59,777**

APPENDIX III: Departmental Membership

The church has organized departments that address the various gatherings, these are as follows

Archdeaconry	Kenya Anglican Men Association (KAMA)	Mothers' Union (MU)	Kenya Anglican Youth organization (KAYO)	Choirs	Brigade & Sunday School
Cathedral		1874			
Githunguri		601			
Kabete		1950			
Karura		1892			
Kiambaa		1480			
Kirangari		1510			
Kiriita		557			
Kiserian		302			
Limuru		687			
Ngong		705			
Riruta		630			
Sigona		547			
Thimbigua		1230			
Uthiru		1521			
Total	**9,000**	**15,486**	**10,000**	**2500**	**28,000**

APPENDIX IV: FGD SCHEDULE

These are questions that guided FGD in-depth insights. The FGD had 30 members and focused groups comprising between 3-5 participants were made.

These enabled the participants to express themselves full and also created room for the interviewer to ask subsequent questions or clarifications

Questions

1. Can you recall any cultural issues that the bishop(s) you served with faced in the diocese?
2. What is *kiama kia athuri?*
3. What was its purpose?
4. What was its importance?
5. Was it a must to be initiated to *kiama kia athuri* in the pre-colonial period?
6. How was one initiated to *kiama?*
7. What were the missionaries' views towards *kiama kia athuri*?
8. What were the views of *Agikuyu* on missionaries' teachings about *kiama kia athuri*?
9. Are you aware of *Agikuyu kiama kia athuri* unitiation today?
10. What are the factors influencing initiation to *kiama kia athuri* today?
11. Is initiation to *kiama kia athuri* today relevant?
12. Can *kiama kia athuri* be enculturated?
13. How do you think the Anglican Church of Kenya diocese of Mt Kenya South should deal with issue of *kiama kia athuri* today?

APPENDIX V: INTERVIEW SCHEDULES

These are questions to guide an in-depth individual interviews in the ACK diocese of mt. Kenya south 40 participants will be interviewed. These interviews were carried-out either face to face or through the phone calls.

Questions schedule

1. What are the cultural issues(s) that ACK diocese of Mt. Kenya South ever faced?
2. What do you think were the causes of these cultural issues(s)?
3. What were the areas of conflict aroused by these cultural issues(s)?
4. What is *kiama kia athuri*?
5. What was *kiama* importance?
6. Was it a must to be initiated to *kiama kia athuri* in the pre-colonial period?
7. What was the requirement for initiation?
8. What were the missionaries' views towards *kiama kia athuri*?
9. What were the *Agikuyu* views towards the Missionaries' views on *kiama kia athuri*?
10. Are you aware of initiation to *kiama kia athuri* today?
11. What are the factors influencing initiation to *kiama* today?
12. Is initiation to *kiama kia athuri* today relevant?
13. How should the ACK diocese of Mt. Kenya deal with *kiama kia athuri*?
    Can *kiama kia athuri* be inculturated?

APPENDIX VI QUESTIONNAIRE FOR DMKS-KIAMBU COUNTY

This research is purely for academic purposes aiming to establish the missionaries‟ influence onthe process of *Kiama kia Athuri* among the *Agikuyu* people of Kiambu County.

You are kindly requested to answer the following questions honestly and accurately. Your views will be treated with a lot of confidentiality. Do not indicate your name to avoid future prejudice.

Please tick where appropriate or fill the required information in the provided space.

SECTION A: PERSONAL DETAILS (Tick where appropriate)

1. Your gender:

   [ ] Male

   [ ] Female

2. Your education level:

   [ ] Primary

   [ ] Secondary

   [ ] College/University

3. Your age: Below

   [ ] 35 Yrs

   [ ] 36-50Yrs

   [ ] 51-65Yrs

   [ ] 66-70 Yrs

   [ ] 71-75 Yrs

   [ ] 76-80Yrs

[ ] 81-90Yrs

[ ] Above 90Yrs

4. Under which bishop(s) have you served. (Tick the appropriate).

[ ] Bishop Kariuki

[ ] Bishop Magua

[ ] Bishop Njuguna

[ ] Bishop Njenga

[ ] Bishop Ranji

[ ] Bishop Muturi

5. Can you remember the cultural issue(s) that a bishop you served with faced?

6. What is your theological inclination on *Mburi Cia Kiama*?

SECTION B: RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is *Kiama kia Athuri*?
2. When did it begin in Kikuyu land?
3. Why was it established?
4. What was the purpose of the *Kiama*?
5. Was initiation to *Kiama kia Athuri* a must among the *Agikuyu* people in the pre-colonial Period?
6. How was the process carried out?
7. What was its importance?
8. What were the early Christian missionaries' views on *Kiama kia Athuri (Mburi cia Kiama)?*
9. What were the views of the *Agikuyu* on missionaries" teachings about the *Agikuyu* customs?
10. What were the impacts of the missionaries on socio-cultural, economic, religious and political views of the *Agikuyu* people?
11. What were some of the specific interactions of missionaries in the *Agikuyu* institution of the *Kiama kia Athuri (Mburi cia Kiama)* process?

12. What are the factors that are influencing the persistence of the institution of *Kiama Kia Athuri?*
13. How is the process of *Mburi cia Kiama* carried out today?
14. How has the process of *Mburi cia Kiama been* transformed today?
15. Why has the process of *Mburi cia Kiama been transformed* today?
16. Is there any importance of the institution of *Kiama kia Athuri* today?
17. How do you think the Church should deal with the issue of *Kiama kia Athuri* in the Church today?
18. What are your views on the following-? (With the aid of a translator)

I Rituals

II Ceremonies

III Blood sacrifice

IV Praying facing *Kirinyaga*

V Inculturation of *kiama*

APPENDIX VII: GLOSSARY

Gikuyu The Big Fig Tree

Mumbi The creator

Kiama Council / Council of elders

Athuri (sin. Muthuri) men, can also be inclusive of women

Kia of

Ma truth

Kirinyaga (Mt Kenya) Meaning a dotted mountain, referring to the snowcapped peak.

Mburi Goat

Athomi The educated, a term used to refer to the early converts

Mukuruwe wa Nyathanga Original homestead of Gikuyu and Mumbi

Mukuyu *Ficus capensis or ficus sycomorus*

Mugumo *Ficus natalensis or ficus thonningi*

Mukuruwe *Albizzia gummifera and albizzia coriaria*

Ngoima Castrated Lamb for sacrifice

Muratina Traditional beer made of sugarcane juice, honey and *kiratina* fruit

Kihii (plur. *Ihii*) Uncircumcised man

Kamatimu Carriers of spear. Denoting warriors

Maringa allocated portions eg of meat

Horio Peaceful / Pacify / Arbiter

Matathi Frank smelling shrub. Used to signify peace.

Maturanguru leaves carried by elders

Muthigi Staff usually blackened by keeping it in water

Riika (plur. *Mariika*) Age group

Irua Circumcision

Irui (sin. *Kirui*) Initiates

Ituika From root word *tuika* meaning to break. It means handing over of power

Ruracio pride prize

Nyagacu Unfaithful wife

Guciarwo born

Njohi Beer

Njahi *Dolichos lab lab*

APPENDIX VIII: NAMES OF RESPONDENTS

NAME	POSITION
Ven Canon John Mutonga	Vicar General / Archdeacon Sigona
Ven Canon Perminus Muiru	Archdeacon Kirangari
Ven Stephen Ngariuko	Archdeacon Uthiru
Ven Dr Richard Kamau	Archdeacon Kabete
A/D Rev Robert Machatha	Kinoo
A/ D Rev Geoffrey Kinyanjui	Ndenderu
A/D Rev Dr Gathagu	Ndurarua
A/D Rev Josphat Ngahu	Kangemi
Rev John Gitau	Kangemi
Rev John Woi	Thogoto
Rev Stephen Mwangi	Kagondo
Rev Paul Ngige	Ruthigiti
Rev James Muthungu	Mountain View
Rev Pharis Muchai	Muthua
Rev Ishmael Waweru	Thimboro
Rev Ken	Kabete
Rev Sarah Mburu	Waruku
Rev Joan Gitau	Ndumboini
Rev David Njuguna	Gakobu

Rev George Igogo Muthiga

Rev George Njenga Nyatarangi

Lecturer, St. Timothy Anglican Divinity College Curate, Kirangari

Rev. Luke Gachoka Gikambura

Rev. Philip Kahiga Uthiru

S/D Oliver Gacheru Kinoo

S/D Florence Wambui Thimboro

Captain Waweru (a Presbyterian) *Kiama* Chair National level

Focused Group Discussion asked for anonymity (30 people)

Interviewees asked for anonymity

APPENDIX IX: INSTITUTIONAL PERMISSION LETTER

ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

Private Bag 00217 LIMURU, KENYA
Email: office@spu.ac.ke
Website: www.spu.ac.ke

Tel Office: +254 (0) 20 - 2020505/10
Mobile: +254 (0) 728 - 669000
(0) 736 - 424440

19th April 2021

National Commission for Science and Technology,
P.O. BOX 30623-00100,
Nairobi.

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: RECOMMENDATION FOR STEPHEN NJENGA NDUNG'U-MTHLMR120517 TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

This letter confirms the above named person is a student of the Masters of Theology program at St. Paul's University.

The second year consists of a major research work leading to a dissertation. The student's selected topic is *'Evaluating the effects of the missionaries strategies upon the Agikuyu rituals in the light of Kiama Kia Athuri and its persistence: A case of ACK. Mt. Kenya South diocese: 1960-2021.*

Kindly grant this student ~~the required~~ permit.

Yours Faithfully,

DIRECTOR POSTGRADUATE STUDIES ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY 12 MAY 2021

Dr. Julius Kahuthia
Director, Board of Postgraduate Studies

APPENDIX X: RESEARCH PERMIT (NACOSTI).

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE,TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Ref No: 552060

Date of Issue: 18/May/2021

RESEARCH LICENSE



This is to Certify that Rev...STEPHEN NJENGA NDUNG'U of St. Paul's University, has been licensed to conduct research in... Kiambu on the topic: EVALUATING THE EFFECTS OF THE MISSIONARY STRATEGIES UPON THE AGIKUYU RITUAL IN THE RITE OF KIAMA GIA ATHURI AND ITS PERSISTENCE : A CASE OF ACK MT KENYA SOUTH: 1960 – 2021 for the period ending : 18/May/2022.

License No: NACOSTI/P/21/10662

552060

Applicant Identification Number

Director General
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE,TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATIONS

Verification QR Code

NOTE: This is a computer generated License. To verify the authenticity of this document, Scan the QR Code using QR scanner application.

APPENDIX XI: CONSENT FORM

Introduction

I am Stephen Njenga Ndung'u currently a student at St. Paul's University Limuru taking a Master's Degree in Theology (History Specialization).

The Study and its Purpose

As a postgraduate student, the process of completing my studies requires that I conduct a study and write a thesis on my findings. The proposed topic of my study is evaluating missionary strategies upon the *Agikuyu* culture in the light of *Kiama kia athuri* and its resurgence: A case of ACK Mt. Kenya South Diocese.

The purpose of this study is to conduct research and critically analyse and evaluate the factors causing the resurgence of *Kiama kia athuri* and its implication to the Christian in the ACK Diocese of Mt. Kenya South. To explore how the diocese can come up with a right theology concerning these *Agikuyu* cultural practices in order to help the Christians not to lapse to cultural practices which are not compatible with the Christian faith. Therefore, I kindly request you to participate in this process.

1. **Signing of Consent Form**

   To participate in this study, it is mandatory to sign a consent form before taking part in the process of this study. This is to indicate that I have clearly and articulately explained the details of this study to you and you have agreed to participate in this study freely.

2. **Voluntary Participation**

   Your participation in this study is based on your free will. You can terminate the process at any point should you feel like doing so. However, your participation and cooperation to the full length of this study will be highly appreciated. The interviews will last for about 1 hour

however in case there is a need for further clarification, you will be kindly requested to participate again.

3. Identification to Participate

You were identified to take part in this study because the researcher believes that you have been an Anglican member in the Diocese of Mt. Kenya South. Moreover, you have been selected since the researcher I am confident that you possess information concerning *Kiama kia athuri* and/or the church standing on the said cultural practice. It is the researcher's hope that your participation and insight will enrich this study.

4. Privacy and Confidentiality

I assure you that the information that you will provide will be treated with utter confidentiality from me. You will not be required to write your name on the questionnaire hence this consent form where you write your name and sign will be provided for a public domain. In a subsequent publication of the findings of this study, you will remain anonymous and your personal identity, opinions and remarks will remain anonymous in order to protect your right and participation. In case a need be, your identity to be revealed the researcher will notify you and will do so only with your approval.

5. Risk Factor

You are assured that the opinion which will be derived from this study squarely lies on the shoulders of the researcher and in no way will be viewed as your decision. I assure that the information obtained from you will be safely guarded and immediately the thesis has gone through the St. Paul's University processes, the information will be discarded immediately.

6. Potential Benefits

There are no monetary benefits or gifts attached in participating in this study. However, since this is a theological endeavour geared towards how the ACK South can formulate theological insights to deal with resurgence with *Mburi cia kiama*, the findings will help the church as a whole to help its members not to lapse back to cultural practices which are not compatible with Christian faith.

7. Queries

<u>For more queries and information, you may contact</u>

Research Student: Rev. Stephen Njenga

MTH Student, Faculty of Theology

St. Paul's University Limuru

Cell phone: 0723233343

Research Supervisors:

1) Rev. Canon Dr. Emily Onyango
2) Rev. Dr. Sammy Githuku

8. Agreement to Participate

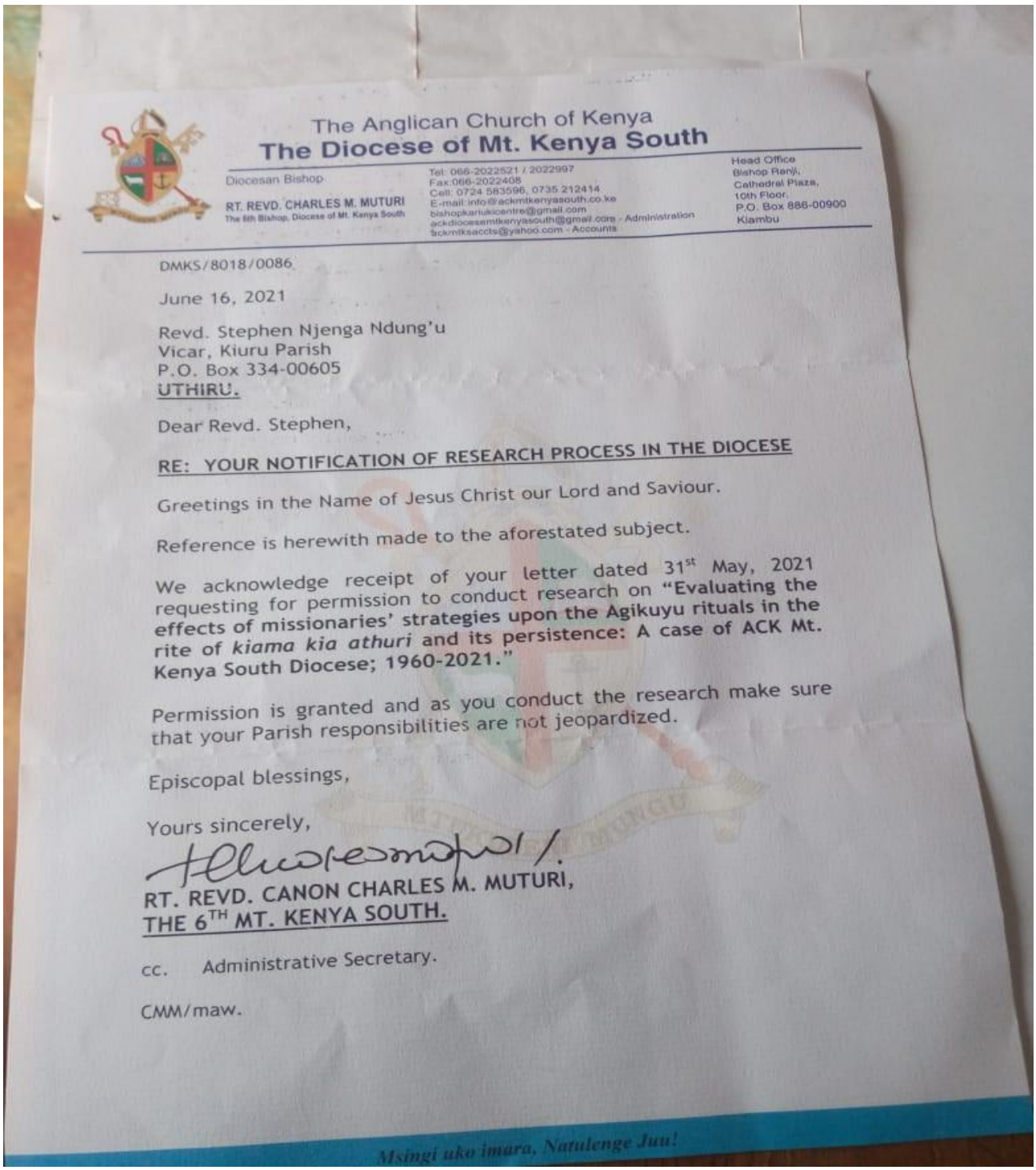
I …… **(Full names of** participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project. I consent to participating in the research project fully aware there are no monetary benefits or gifts expected. I understand that I can discontinue from this project at any time and no legal undertaking can be instituted against me.

SIGNATURE OF THE PARTICIPANT DATE

……

Thank you for taking your time to fill this form. God bless you.

APPENDIX XII: A LETTER FOR NOTIFICATION OF RESEARCH



The Anglican Church of Kenya
The Diocese of Mt. Kenya South

Diocesan Bishop
RT. REVD. CHARLES M. MUTURI
The 6th Bishop, Diocese of Mt. Kenya South

Tel: 066-2022521 / 2022997
Fax:066-2022408
Cell: 0724 583596, 0735 212414
E-mail: info@ackmtkenyasouth.co.ke
bishopkariukicentre@gmail.com
ackdiocesemtkenyasouth@gmail.com - Administration
tackmtksaccts@yahoo.com - Accounts

Head Office
Bishop Ranji,
Cathedral Plaza,
10th Floor,
P.O. Box 886-00900
Kiambu

DMKS/8018/0086

June 16, 2021

Revd. Stephen Njenga Ndung'u
Vicar, Kiuru Parish
P.O. Box 334-00605
UTHIRU.

Dear Revd. Stephen,

RE: YOUR NOTIFICATION OF RESEARCH PROCESS IN THE DIOCESE

Greetings in the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

Reference is herewith made to the aforestated subject.

We acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 31st May, 2021 requesting for permission to conduct research on **"Evaluating the effects of missionaries' strategies upon the Agikuyu rituals in the rite of *kiama kia athuri* and its persistence: A case of ACK Mt. Kenya South Diocese; 1960-2021."**

Permission is granted and as you conduct the research make sure that your Parish responsibilities are not jeopardized.

Episcopal blessings,

Yours sincerely,

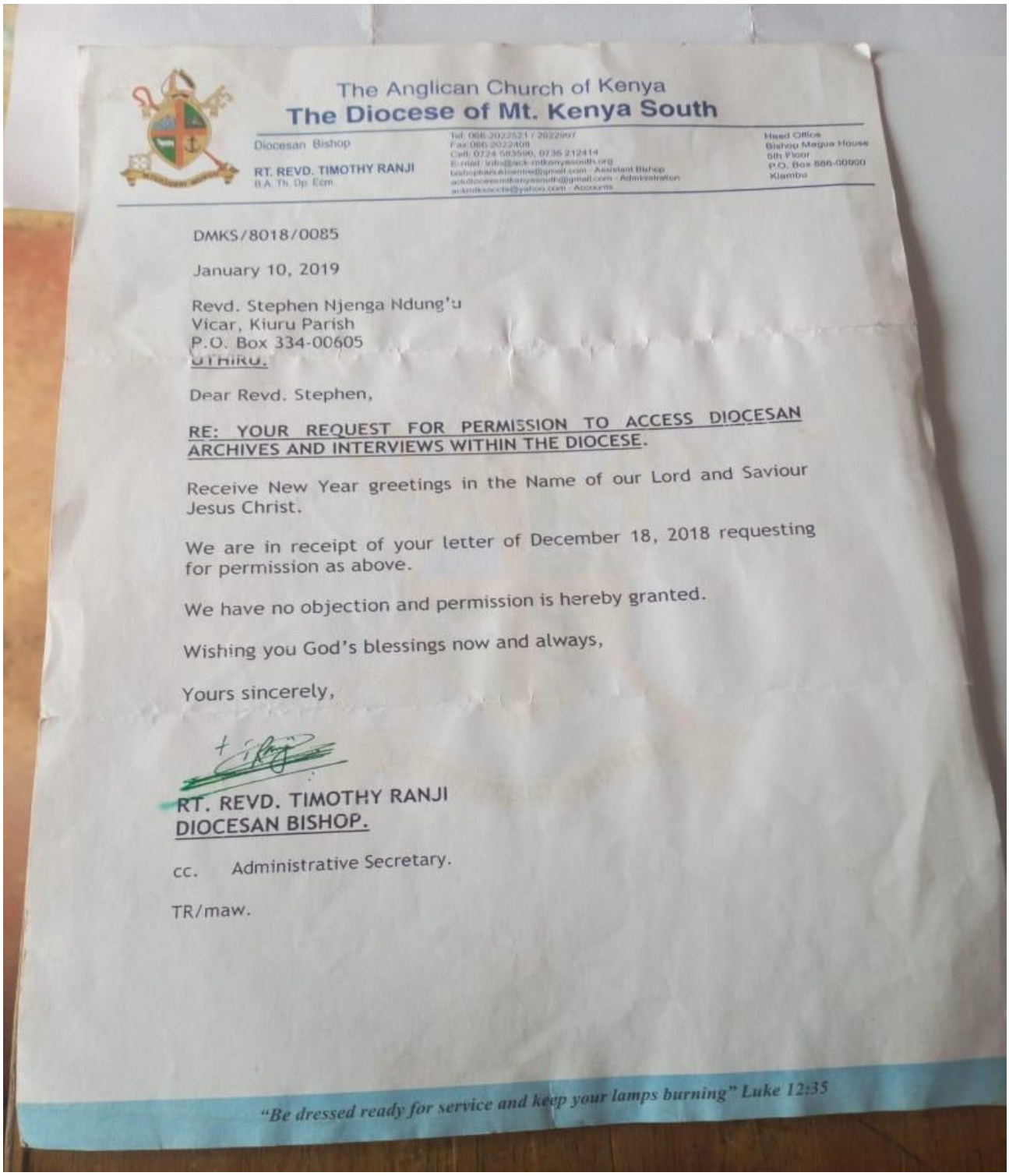
RT. REVD. CANON CHARLES M. MUTURI,
THE 6TH MT. KENYA SOUTH.

cc. Administrative Secretary.

CMM/maw.

Msingi uko imara, Natulenge Juu!

APPENDIX XIII: DIOCESE PERMISSION TO DO RESEARCH



The Anglican Church of Kenya
The Diocese of Mt. Kenya South

Diocesan Bishop
RT. REVD. TIMOTHY RANJI
B.A. Th. Dp. Edn

Tel: 066-2022521 / 2022997
Fax:066-2022409
Cell: 0724 583590, 0735 212414
E-mail: info@ack-mtkenyasouth.org
bishopbars@ksentrd@gmail.com - Assistant Bishop
ackdiocesemtkenyasouthd@gmail.com - Administration
ackmtksoccts@yahoo.com - Accounts

Head Office
Bishop Magua House
5th Floor
P.O. Box 886-00900
Kiambu

DMKS/8018/0085

January 10, 2019

Revd. Stephen Njenga Ndung'u
Vicar, Kiuru Parish
P.O. Box 334-00605
KIHIRU.

Dear Revd. Stephen,

RE: YOUR REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO ACCESS DIOCESAN ARCHIVES AND INTERVIEWS WITHIN THE DIOCESE.

Receive New Year greetings in the Name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

We are in receipt of your letter of December 18, 2018 requesting for permission as above.

We have no objection and permission is hereby granted.

Wishing you God's blessings now and always,

Yours sincerely,

RT. REVD. TIMOTHY RANJI
DIOCESAN BISHOP.

cc. Administrative Secretary.

TR/maw.

"Be dressed ready for service and keep your lamps burning" Luke 12:35

APPENDIX XIV: THE MAP OF AREA COVERED BY THE DMKS; copied from the diocesan profile of churches in DMKS 2019

