THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT IN THE AFRICA INLAND CHURCH: A CASE STUDY OF A.I.C CHURCH IN NAKURU TOWN.

BY
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ABSTRACT

The national/central level of the AIC Church is predominantly composed of the male gender who hold the top leadership positions and the female gender on the other hand, hold positions at the local church level either in their own women groups or as Sunday School teachers. This is a tradition that even in the 21st Century still lingers on and Nakuru Town Region is not an exception. Due to such disparity, it therefore made it a good area of study, because as a result the research was carried out so as to determine the role of women in the development of the AIC Church. The research was done in Nakuru Town Region by employing the purposive sampling. Stratified random sampling was employed so as to divide the homogenous subgroups. The quota sampling was also important for the study so that the division of the population could be done in the preferred strata. This study administered interviews to the respondent both individually and to the women groups which comprised of the women committee members. The key objectives of the research, were to:- (i) explore the AIC leadership structure and how it affects the role of women in church development projects. (ii) assess the levels of education for women leaders as a measure of their role in church leadership and development. (iii) assess special areas of church projects where women are involved in and determine their contribution to church development. In this case, the research objectives and questions were relevant to the study. The sample size of the research was 6 churches out of the 11 churches in Nakuru Town Region; 3 churches in the urban and the other 3 in the rural setting. The total number of the respondents was 48 and the target population was both the women and men leaders in the 6 respective churches. The research used the descriptive design because it was able to describe the roles of women in the church development work. The data collected was analyzed using the Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) and the descriptive statistics were used to explain the findings of the study by use of tables, percentages and pie chart. From the findings of the research it was clearly evident that though the women are the majority in the church compared to the men, they are not fully recognized by the men, hence not being elected at the top leadership of the church or even not considered in the major decision making of the development of the church. In addition, their roles in the church are similar to their domestic roles. This has resulted to a challenge whereby the women do not have the freedom to explore their options to other kinds of church development projects. Basically, this research was important so as to understand why the women in the AIC Church are not vibrant especially on the physical development of the church, whereas in the 21st Century women are being empowered by all means. The key recommendations of the study emphasize the need for the church to empower women leaders and there is also need for further research to investigate the communication strategies of the church. The women in the AIC Church should be fully supported and encouraged by their male counterparts, so that they can be able to have the freedom to participate fully in the church development projects. In conclusion, the research findings were able to unveil so much on the women and their roles in the church. The leadership of the AIC Church being male dominated should be reconsidered so that the women can be part of the decision making and also have the freedom and power over their own issues/projects. Due to the leadership structure of the church, it becomes complex for women to explore widely on other options of church development.

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