Gender Sensitivity and the Administration of Eucharist in the Methodist Church Nigeria

By

Ugwa James Kalu
Department of Religious and Cultural Studies
University of Port Harcourt
theveryrevugwa@gmail.com 09073757772

Abstract

The issue of Gender Sensitivity in organized and unorganized societies is a case of study. In civil society masculinity domination is the opposition of the agent of social change in favour of feminism. However, this work critiques the Methodist women ordination and the indecent appearance of women involvement in the administration of Eucharist (Holy Communion). Eucharist (Holy Communion) is a sacrament of the Holy Order established by Christ representing his body and blood and how a woman under the monthly blood circle is allowed to carry Holy Communion against the scriptural warning of blood touching blood -Hosea 4:2 KJV. The Monthly circle of a woman is by itself disgusting and a bad sight to onlookers how much more when an observer watching women under this condition stand in the Church to administer Holy Communion. This work adopted Historical and Phenomenological approach of research which was descriptively analyzed and discussed. Data were collected through primary source of oral interview and secondary source of library research. It was discovered that most Methodist members are not comfortable when a woman gives Eucharist (Holy Communion), but were intimidated to receive it under the pretense of being obedient members. Many are bold not to join in this ritual whenever a woman is involved and this work recommended that women that are ordained should not be allowed to administer Holy Communion until they reached mono-pause. This alone can help return a healthy environment and the awe of sacrament back to this instituted practice of the church.

Key words: Gender, Sensitivity, Eucharist, Church Administration, Healthy Environment

Introduction

Ahiamadu Amadi Enoch (JORAC vol17, No 1, 2017.195) opined that the conceptual image of women in the Nigeria ethnic groups is that of the inferiority. In agreement with Ahiamadu, Kore (2013) said that women in Nigeria are regarded as sources of sexual satisfaction for men and they are treated as men's property, slaves and property bought

by their husbands…viewed as incomplete human beings. Conceptually, scholars of all hues have tried to conceptualize "Feminism' as coinage pregnant with meanings and connotations according to diverse people and contexts. Ahiamadu and Iniobong (2017.196) concluded that there is no short-cut to the real meaning of feminism, but the concept of feminism roots from women oppression and relegation in human societies in which they partake of their formation, sustenance and its development. Though obi Chris (2010) defined feminism as a social movement based on historical and cultural concrete realities with the view to challenging the patriarchal structures which have kept women in subjugation. Similarly, this cultural patriarchal subjugation resulted in treating women as backbenchers in the family, societies and they could not be allowed to perform certain functions in social and cultural matters. This paper is all about the position of the bible and culture about women in performing some sacred and religious functions exclusively meant for men in this dispensation.

The efforts of the United Nations Organization (UNO) conventions have serious impact on the libration and emancipation of women in the World in general and specifically in Africa and by extension in Nigeria. The notion of some people especially in Igbo land was that the law codified by UN on women has been geared towards instigating women to rebel against their positions which, culture, tradition, and religion placed on them. Women are no longer comfortable where they were originally placed. In the area of family values in Africa, Wotogbe-Weneka and Ngozi Iheanacho (JOTRAC Vol.17,No 1, 2017.212) saw the UN conventions on women as a blessing in disguise as these laws helped to minimize most, if not all the African family values that had prevented women from actualizing their God-given potentials. The UNO concerned its self on the elimination of the discrimination against women and recommended to all the states parties to effectively adopt educative and public information programmes, which would help eliminate prejudice and practices that might hinder full operations of the principles of the social equality of women Wotogbe-Weneka and Ngozi Iheanacho (JoTRAC Vol.17,No 1, 2017.212). This move produced Feminism theory and practices which movement promoted egalitarian society and emancipation of women from patriarchic philosophy. Women began to involve in areas too sacred for women to trek. The society changed gradually from what it used to be to a society of new culture and tradition. Traditional society gradually gives way to a free society where anything can go, where anybody can do anything and become anything without considering the gender restriction of the traditional Igbo culture.

Conceptual Analysis

Gender: In the words of Newman (2018) gender refers to the socially constructed characteristics of men and women, such as norms, roles and relationships of and between groups of men and women. It varies as it were from society to society and can be changed.

Tim Newman (2018)quips that sex refers to the biological differences between males and females, such as the genitalia and genetic differences, while gender can be referred to the role of a male or female in the society. These roles maybe culturally placed or religiously placed and in the context of this work we shall refer to the gender role of religion in the area of sacerdotal function in the administration of Eucharist in the church today. The paradigm shift in religious matters especially in the areas of priestly functions in this dispensation of feminism and women liberation theology has raised many theological questions among scholars. But women wanted to be liberated from men dominion, and their wanted to achieve this by also taking the office of priesthood and rising to the rank of chief priest.

March, C., Smyth I., Mukhopadhyay M (1999) refers Gender to the roles and responsibilities of men and women that are created in our families, our societies and our cultures. The concept of gender also includes the expectations held about the characteristics, aptitudes and likely behaviours of both women and men (femininity and masculinity). These scholars said that Gender roles and expectations are learned. They can change over time and they vary within and between cultures. Systems of social differentiation such as political status, class, ethnicity, physical and mental disability, age and more, modify gender roles. The concept of gender is vital because, applied to social analysis; it reveals how women's subordination (or men's domination) is socially constructed. As such, the subordination can be changed or ended. It is not biologically predetermined nor is it fixed forever.

Gender Analysis according to Status of Women Canada (1996) is the collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated information. Men and women both perform different roles. This leads to women and men having different experience, knowledge, talents and needs. Gender analysis explores these differences so policies, programmes and projects can identify and meet the different needs of men and women. Gender analysis also facilitates the strategic use of distinct knowledge and skills possessed by women and men.

In response to the role differences of men and women one come to wonder the reason behind feminism and women constant agitation to free themselves and do whatever that seem right to them. Biblically, it was discovered that women had never at any time did the work of priest and priesthood never belong to women. However, women were allowed to render some services in the temple or synagogue, but never had any women occupied priesthood position. Women like Deborah, Esther, Ruth, Priscilla and others occupied prominent positions in biblical history, but none was a priest and never administer holy things no matter how holy they might appeared (Judges 4:4ff; Esther 2:15;4:16; Ruth 3ff; Act 18:24-26)

However, Judaism has continues to maintain that within its religious life, men and women have distinct and differentiated roles. This is simply because a Jew cannot accept the idea that the only significant roles are those which they have chosen, rather the entire role as a Jew, the whole range of obligations that is placed on his shoulders, rests in the fact that he did not choose: he was chosen. Peter Moore et al (1979.28) said that:

> A Jew is a Jew by birth, not by choice. And this is the cultural or historical After all, he may chose to turn his back on history, cast aside his religion, and assimilate to some other culture or way of life. What is it, is a religious and moral fact. He has an obligation, a vocation to live in the light of the Torah (the command of God, vision of the prophets, the teachings of the Rabbis. This obligation is always his. He may accept it or refuse it fulfill it. But being born a Jew, he is by that fact alone given a role. No act of choice or commitment is needed to acquire it. No contrary choice or commitment will abolish it. What he is he has chosen. What he is called to be, he has not.

By implication, no Jew can choose any career outside that ordained within his religious – gender, cultural-gender and Traditional-gender approved. If religion is not allowed a woman to do a certain job, nothing on earth can make her take up such responsibility. It is a serious issue to violet this law.

Gender Equality: Molyneux, Maxine (1985) views Gender Equality to mean that women and men have equal conditions for realizing their full human rights and for contributing to, and benefiting from, economic, social, cultural and political development; while Status of Women Canada (1996) defines Gender equality as the equal valuing by society of the similarities and the differences of men and women, and the roles they play. It is based on women and men being full partners in their home, their community and their society (UNIFEM.1993).

The Jews according to Peter Moore et al (1979.29) the Jew believes have nothing to do with roles. Jew and non-Jew, Man and woman, people of all colours and creeds have equal rights but different roles. To this effect, let me state here that equal rights does not mean the same role or marginalization as suggested by the advocates of women priesthood. There are those roles a woman is not meant to play in the society; some are religious, cultural, traditional roles etc. It is

Aberration to observe before our very eyes women assuming those roles not meant for them in the name emancipation and liberation or Feminism. Some people may ask "what

are gender roles for women?" permit me to say that this question emanates from the mind full of stubbornness and high-heartedness. These among women were antagonistic elements among women who may not in somewhat way want to be led, rather to lead. Summarily, there are roles of duties for men and women in the society, how much more in the church of God.

Gender Equity is the process of being fair to men and women. To ensure fairness, measures must often be put in place to compensate for the historical and social disadvantages that prevent women and men from operating on a level playing field. Equity is a means. Equality is the result.

It is disheartening the way the society is going anti-clockwise direction. Though the liberal scholars are seeing nothing wrong with the way things are going. They believe that the ever changing world must be changing in every aspect which shouldn't bring problem and confusion to people. The conservatives opine that the changes we see are emanating of human agents. They said that human action into the world produces changes we record. However, there areas changes may occur and there static areas that changes should not be expected. Consequently, any change in that area will lead to corruption of the sacred and tantamount to sacrilege, vise a viz women administration of Eucharist.

Gender Empowerment is about women and men- taking control over their lives: setting their own agendas, gaining skills, building self-confidence, solving problems and developing self-reliance. No one can empower another: only the individual can empower herself or himself to make choices or to speak out. However, institutions including international cooperation agencies can support processes that can nurture self-empowerment of individuals or groups.

This empowerment produces in women many high mindedness and abuse of the offices exclusively meant for their men counterparts. The women use politics of number against their men counterparts. The women who had accepted their position of being weaker vessels, Iroegbu Chinyere (2008.13) Slaves and property of their husbands, Onuoha (1995) gained mouth and revolted against their cultural and traditional placement in the society. When they realized that they outnumbered the men and can frustrate and paralyze the system in the society when they are neglected used that game on men and had access to actualizing their purposes. Secondly, they used what they have and got what they wanted. I presume that these intelligent women used their in between –legs to assuage the desire of women. Through this means they were granted emancipation from mental slavery, libration from weaker vessel syndrome and the likes.

Strategic (Gender) Interests: Interventions addressing strategic gender interests focus on fundamental issues related to women's (or, less often, men's) subordination and gender inequities. Strategic gender interests are long-term, usually not material, and are often related to structural changes in society regarding women's status and equity. They include legislation for equal rights, reproductive choice, and increased participation in decision-making. The notion of "strategic gender needs", first coined in 1985 by Maxine Molyneux, helped develop gender planning and policy development tools will not lock women's realities and experiences into rigid and pre-set notions of what is a strategic need versus what responds to a practical need. For, in many instances, changes in women's practical conditions of life have an effect on power relations between men and women within the community (UNESCO. 2003).

Gender-mainstreaming is a process rather than a goal. Efforts to integrate gender into existing institutions of the mainstream have little value for their own sake. We mainstream gender concerns to achieve gender equality and improve the relevance of development agendas. Such an approach shows that the costs of women's marginalization and gender inequalities are born by all.

> UN ECOSOC describes gender mainstreaming as "*the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality*". (ECOSOC 1997/2)

These conceptual analyses suggest that women want freedom from men and they want to rule their own world and marry men or women as wives or slaves as they may desire.

Eucharist: Holy Communion is an important event and celebration in Christendom which was established by our Lord Jesus Christ Himself on the Thursday of the Passion Week according to Christian calendar. It marks the Passover feast of the Lord Jesus Christ on Maundy Thursday. The word Maundy was derived from Latin word "Mandatum" meaning command. Therefore, Mandatum is the short form of the Latin word "Mandatum novum do vobis" which means "A new command I give to you" issued by Jesus at the institution of the Holy Communion (the last Supper), However, Chukwu Uzodinma (2005.10) quips that Holy communion is to the Christian what Passover is to the Jews and Christian accord great regard to this sacrament.

The awe is sacrament carries deserved to be studied because every generation in Christendom attached much importance to this feast. Children were not allowed to come close where it was celebrated what more see its elements. In this respect it was administered by the Priest who was exclusively adult male. The elements of this communion were bread and wine representing the broken body and spilled blood of our savior and Lord Jesus Christ at the cross at Calvary. A Holy feast that is celebrated with thanksgiving for the vicarious death of Christ in the cross as a token of our love and offering of our lives that we may serve the cause of His kingdom; This Eucharist by the invocation of the life-giving Spirit become the body and blood of Christ celebrated in His remembrance. Holy communion is the most important religious service in the Christian Church, in which people share bread and wine as a symbol of the last supper and the death of Christ (www.collinsdictionary.com). It is also called the "Lord's table". In the words of Anthony Carter 2018.nov.30) said that the Lord's Table which is a blessed sacrament is not for everyone but is for the converted and the repented. In other words, the Lord's Table is for those who have professed true faith in the Lord. It is referred to as "Communion or Lord's Super" (I Corinthians 11:20; 1:16) because the bread and the wine are understood to be a communion or sharing in and with Christ. Communion or common Union is born out of union with Christ and only those in union with Christ have fellowship with him. They share His body and His blood and by so doing they are united with Him (John 6:56). Those converted understand that the bread and the cup are the proclamation of His death. The communion elements move the believers to reflect upon the sacrifice of Christ and the blessedness of knowing that the blood of Christ is the forgiveness of our sins (Matt.26:28). However, while the Communion is for the converted who are now believers in Christ, it is only and exclusive for those believers who are living the examined and consequently, repentant life. (1 Corinthians 11:28). In this way, the Christian life is the examined life, the life that takes seriously the call to repentance and the promise of forgiveness. (1 John 1:8-9; 2:1)

Women and administration of Holy Communion

The position and the power of women in the early church were very little, especially concerning sacramental power (Berger T (2011) though scholars doubt why Eucharistic sacrament was the preserve of men. David Jay Webber (2005) agreed that though women have been allowed to be Priests or pastors but that should not include their inclusion in the administering Eucharist. He said:

> While most section of the New Testament are addressed to all Christians without differentiation, some sections of it are addressed only to a certain groups within the larger church, Examples in Ephesians 5:22-6:9; 1 Peter 2:18-3:7. Since God has chosen to speak a special message specifically to

> women in passages like Ephesians 5:22-24) and 1 peter 3.1-6, we would not object in principle if a deaconess, under her pastor's supervision and according to the need of the church, would teach a special Bible class exclusively for other women. It is ordinarily permissible for a woman in this way to speak God's word authoritatively to another woman. But it does not follow from this that it therefore also ordinarily permissible for a woman to commune another woman. But speaking of Christ's words of institution in the celebration of His Holy Communion (supper) is never one of those women are permitted to perform. We do not a special Lord's Supper for the Jews and another for the Greeks; we do not have a special lord's supper for the salves and another one for those who are free. We have one Lord's Supper, and it is always for the 'one body' of Christ.

There are a lot of contentions whether women should administer Holy Communion in the church or not but great scholars who have searched the scriptures have come to agree that it was not supported in the bible and by the church fathers for women to join in the giving or serving the Holy Communion. David J Webber was persuaded by virtue of what Lord's Supper stands for or what it is, as a sacrament of the "one body" of Christ it should always be celebrated in such a way that it is offered to and could be received by, everyone for who it is intended. When the Lord's Supper is faithfully administered by the church's regular-called pastor-its male pastors-and nobody should be excluded in receiving it whether male or female. He said "when the Lord's supper is faithfully administered by the church's regular-called the pastors-then the institution of Christ in all its fullness, togetherness with everything that is organically connected with that institution will by god's grace be preserved among us" (David Jay Webber (2005).

John W. Kleinig (2004) asserts that those who oppose the ordination of women and women administering Holy Communion believe that it is contrary to Christ's command. He holds that the proclamation of sermon and administration of the Lord's Supper would be invalid if it were performed by a woman. The people who believe this way could not in good conscience attend a service conducted by a woman pastor and receive the sacrament from her, for that would implicate them in the act of disobedience to Christ and the possible abuse of the sacrament.

Be that as it may, the case even in most of our Methodist Churches many members especially the women refuse to take Holy Communion from their female priests. The same scenario is quite often witnessed in our churches where male and female pastors are together sharing the bread and wine of the Communion to the congregants; one will see a long line stretched in front of the male priests while that of female would be scanty only

to be occupied by those who were shying away from being too open or radical to their decisions. There are factors that are considered as being responsible for this actions coupled with the one John kleinig said above.

Unbiblical: Most of the scholars over the years have come up with the view that allowing women to administer Holy Communion Service is unbiblical given to the fact that it was against the command of our Lord Jesus Christ. However, many advocates of this strongly believe in the orthodoxy of Christian faith which should not be abused or corrupted and allowing women to give Holy Communion is one of the two. Consequently, though it seemed as the feministic tendency and advocate for women should be given opportunity to be involved in the social and religious sphere has caused more harm than good, in fact resulting to sacrilege and desecration of the Holy places. The Mystic fares of the religiosity has been relegated to the background and what do we reap, religion without spirituality. Or better still today's spirituality has become too emotional. Religion is spirituality moved by emotion. What our eyes see moves us, what our ear hears moves us but what our faith conceives becomes old fashion type of religion. Christians are now moved by sight rather than faith. Women wanted to be involved in every sphere of the human society and this struggle has resulted in corrupting and abusing those traditional biblical heritages Christianity holds in higher esteem. There are also some gender-specific reasons why women should not be called to administer the Lord's Supper. In conservative Lutheran circles where women pastors in the usual sense are not allowed, it has been proposed by some theologians and individuals that a women should be called by the church to administer the Lord's Supper to other women; while recognizing that such arrangement might in some cases be a stumbling block to the weak, Luther's Works (1969.155 and Wisconsin 1914.262).

Impurity: Impurity has been the major object and subject behind the rejection of women involvement in the giving and sharing of Holy Communion in the church. One may wonder why culturally and religiously, women are not allowed to perform certain religious rituals due to the law of impurity on women. These among others should be examined in line with the "Holy Communion" because impurity is the antithesis and oxymoron of Holiness or purity. Can one tell what impurity will be doing on the table of holiness if not to desecrate what is Holy?

Religious Implication of Impurity of Women: Religious implications of impurity as it concerns God is not a matter of sin and righteousness as Christian theology emphasizes but rather about impurity placed on persons based on natural disposition. This notwithstanding, imposes a question which E.L. Mascall tried to stress concerning whether ordain priesthood can be conferred on a woman by saying that it depends on the type of

priesthood and the significance in the order of redemption and grace of the differentiation of human nature into male and female. That is to say that priesthood to be conferred on a woman must consider the human nature because there are some roles the nature of women cannot allow and if it does it desecrates the spiritual relevance and validity of such priestly office. Some scholars opined that:

> Only too often it is assumed that, whatever may be true in the order of nature –in the realm of biology, physiology, and psychology –where the life of the church is concerning sexual differentiation is theologically irrelevant

In contrast to this view expressed about this subject, Mascall (1978.19) said:

> Some, of course, argued for the ordination of women on the ground of that women can bring into priesthood a special contribution that men cannot make, though some argue for it on the ground of that there is no essential difference between men and women and that therefore both are equally qualified for it; this considerations, however, are not theological but psychological and they leave the theological questions untouched. Appeal is usually made for this view to Paul's declaration in Galatians 3.28 that "there is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus", Although this text only refers to baptism and was certainly not taken as carrying implications for the ministry. If we hold that grace does not destroy or ignore nature but fulfils it and perfects it, it would be strange if something as deeply rooted in human nature as sex had no counterpart on the level of grace and had not its own part to play in the order of redemption. The important and relevant point is that sex is not a principal identity but of differentiation; men and women are not the same as each other but are different. And in enquiring what their several roles in the churches' life are we learn much from their several characteristics on the level of nature.

Having this understanding on the natural characteristics of women as regards to priesthood, it is not overstatement to argue that the nature of human should guide in determining the priestly role that should be designated to women. Mascall agreed that women may be called into priesthood in the general sense of the priesthood of all believers or specific sense of ordained priesthood, but there are roles they should not play such as administration of Holy Communion. Many respondents rejected women ordination and frowned at women giving Holy Communion knowing full well that they are still carrying

the blood and the flow of their monthly circle which is regarded as being religiously 'Impurity'. How can something impure carry Holy thing and administer Holy Communion in Impurity? Has our God Changed? Is he now taking pleasure in unholy things? Is the one who said you must be Holy for I Your God I am Holy become unholy in other to accommodate women?

Concerning the true position of Religious (Judeo-Christian) background of women and their impurity which pertains to their monthly period which in anyway does not mean that the woman is sinning but it simply means that she is defiled by that natural characteristic of feminine nature. Therefore, the bible in Leviticus chapter 15:19-25 states thus:

> And if a woman has an issue, and her issue in her flesh be blood, she shall be put apart for seven days: and whosoever touches her shall be unclean till evening. And everything that she lies upon in her separation shall be unclean: everything also that she sits upon shall be unclean. And whosoever touches her bed shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until evening. And whosever touches anything that she sat upon shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until evening. And if it be on her bed or anything whereon she sits, when he touches it, he shall be unclean till evening. And if any man lie with her at all, and her flowers be upon him, he shall be unclean seven days; and all the bed whereon he lies shall be unclean. And if a woman have an issue of her blood many days out of the time here separation or if it run beyond the time of her separation; all the days of the issue of her uncleanness shall be as her days of separation: she shall be unclean (Mark 5:25-29).

There is no place in the New Testament where women were promoted to the rank of Priests or serving in that capacity rather their work was only in the minimal temple services. Although, contemporary theologians are trying to force the bible to deconstruct its theologies and reconstruct them in favour of women and their advocacy of repositioning and reconsidering their places in the society and public life. As stated above, the priesthood of women excludes those roles that are against the natural characteristics of women in their human nature. Is it healthy enough for blood to touch blood? Women on the issue of blood should not handle the blood of Jesus or better put, the blood of impurity mingling or mixing up with the blood of Righteousness and holiness. Let it be sounded loud and clear that it is not healthy for women to administer Holy Communion because it is religiously unacceptable.

Cultural Implication of Impurity of Women: -Culture is a strong string that binds the cosmological philosophy of a certain people to one indivisible entity. Consequently, it spells doom to anyone or group in a community that disregards the cultural tenets of his people. Therefore, in Igbo cultural milieu, women menstrual circle is regarded as flower and the blood attached to it is regarded as impurity. Any woman on menses in Ugwueke Culture is not expected to bathe in the stream where others bathe rather water will be fetched for her to bathe at home. Men do not come closer to their wives while on their monthly periods except for special services that is intangible. Traditions and culture in Igbo land and by extension Africa did not allow women to play some roles in the society due to the menstrual circle which is the gods of the land saw as filth. Any woman menstrual circle does not come into the house of gods, does not eat in the public, and does not bath in the stream where others are bathing rather she should seclude herself.

Similarly, in the tradition of the Jew and Palestinians, women in menses are abhorred from certain responsibilities. Even a father does not expect her daughter under her circle to be moving around how much more conducting services of any kind.

"She said to her father, let it not displease my lord that I cannot rise up before you; for the custom of women is upon me" Gen.31:35. Consequently, women should not be permitted to perform some rituals in the church especially that of the Eucharistic services. Culture and menstruation is about cultural aspects surrounding how societies view menstruation. A menstrual taboo is concerned with menstruation because in some societies it is perceived as unclean or embarrassing, inhibiting even the mention of menstruation whether in public or in private settings. Many Traditional religions consider menstruation ritually unclean, although anthropologists point out that the concepts 'sacred and unclean may be intimately connected (Rock art 2005.23).

Attitude towards Menstruating women

Related to the position of women in African independent churches is the issue of how menstruating women are regarded in some of the churches. As in African traditional religious practice, menstruating women are forbidden to enter or even go near sacred objects or places; in the belief that if they did so they would be desecrating those objects or places. The Celestial church of Christ in Nigeria is practically and particularly notorious for this practice. The founder of that church once gave the following answer to the question as to why menstruating women were not allowed in his congregation:

> It is one of the things not yet clear to the world. The Lord is clean. There was no stain even when Moses was to be given the Ten Commandments. The Lord told him to cleanse himself for three days, wash his clothes

> without having any sexual intercourse, and said that it was then that He (God) would meet him. It is even in the book of Leviticus where the Lord forbade any woman on menstruation to enter any church (Temple) whatsoever for seven days. It doesn't apply to the celestial church alone.

In the African Traditional society and Igbo society in particular, menstrual blood desecrates the Obi, "Ezi" or "Alaezi" where the Elders do pour libation. Women menstruating are not permitted by tradition to move around the family compound (Ime Ezi) hence doing so will a slight on the gods and the spirit of the ancestors. Costly purification ritual are performed in the family alter if this is knowingly and unknowingly contravened.

The priest of the family shrine, kindred, or community shrine does not eat food prepared by the menstruating wife nor stays close to her for doing so will make him spiritually blind and the gods will cease from speaking to him-they will desert him because he has contaminated his body and spirit, If the priest of a shrine will not eat food prepared by his menstruating woman how can the congregation who enjoys "Priesthood of all believers" eat and drink the body and the blood of Jesus Christ from menstruating Priest considered to be impure at the time of menstruation?-Ponder on this fact!

Ethical Implication of Women Involvement in Administration of Eucharist

Scholars like Nwankwo S.C, Opoku, Parinder, and Idowu think morality is dependent on religion and that is the reason Mbiti agreed that Africans are notoriously religious and religion permeates all spheres of their lives. However, African ethics or morality is religiously rooted. These scholars of African extraction pointed out that moral values and principles derived from religion makes African morality a religious morality. In other words, moral beliefs and principles of African people are derived from their religion which provides the necessary justifications for moral values and beliefs. It is worthy of note that these moral concepts such as good, bad, right and wrong is defined in terms of their religious prescriptions and commands Nwankwo S. C (2017.18). In his line of direction Kudadjie (2002) agreed that religion is the key factor of morality, but there other influences like tradition and supernatural beliefs, factors of social structure and hard social facts that bend people to adopt certain modes of behavior.

Ethics in traditional African Religion according to Iwuagwu A. O (1998) is the morality of African traditional religion because the sense of sin and of guilt was already rooted in human nature from the beginning and it was the conscience that classified the difference between right and wrong. However, Uche C. (2007) said that Christianity and Judaism are strongly ethical religions that recognize no ultimate separation between the service of god

and moral conduct. Christian ethics is seen as the way of life appropriate to those who accept the Christian faith. The sources Christian ethics are the writings of the Old Testament and the New Testament and the interpretations that the church has given through history to the principles of the conduct contained in the books. In the analysis of all views, it is understandable that religion influences and directs the morality and social behaviour of a given society. The ethics, value system and norms cherished and celebrated in every society is an offshoot of their religion based on what their conscience approves as the right and wrong. From the Judaism and Christian religion there are many norms and values and what is an abomination or taboo to them; in other words, sin and righteousness. This is not limited to religions activities without including roles and duty description as it affects every member of the society. If the bible should be held in high esteem by Christian as the infallible scripture, one wonders why being disobedient to the visions of heaven as stipulated by the scripture (Acts 26:19). It is surprising why some people men and women alike waters down the doctrine and the teachings of the bible only to accommodate their concepts and philosophies. Women ordination to priesthood is unbiblical, but if it is somehow to be accommodated it should be on the basis of 'serving tables' and not ministering in the word and sacrament'. In Judaism, even in Christianity the distinction between men and women in their roles lies in their different commands. There are certain commands which are the preserve of women and there are others which men are bound, and from which women are exempted. To expressed this in the technical language of the Jewish law: women are exempted from positive commands whose performance has a specific time. This by implication means that they are not obliged as men are to put on the phylacteries (tefillin) or the fringed garment (tzitzit) which are two of the outward signs the Jew puts on to serve as visible reminder of his religious vocation Jonathan Sacks (1979.33).

It is beyond the obvious that women ordination is an imposition and intimidation of the Church from the globalization and secularism tendency of the social environment. Some Churches desiring to belong to the trend of modern society adopted hook line and sinker the ordination of women. It is here understandable that women from old are not part of the sanctuary priesthood, but are delegated to do some works their nature permits, it is an aberration for women to mount pulpit under pool of blood and to worsen the matter, they carry the blood of Christ with the blood in their hand thereby given ugly occasion for blood to touch blood. I am not advocating the cancellation of women ordination, but humbly suggesting accepting those women whose flow has stopped, those who has taken the position of not counting time, those are advanced and mature for the duty, so that the Church will be a healthy ground for the Holy Spirit to function and not a home of pretence and stage managed miracles.

Conclusion: It is a great thing for the Church to re-examine herself whether she is in faith or whether she has been contaminated by the evil winds that blows off the society with its evil brooms that sweeps it away. Women ordination, though good as it may appear should be practiced with every amount of care. One cannot come to church healthy and go home sick simply because of what seems a Holy food received from the hand of a woman of a flow. Without careful examination the church may not discover her plight until the necessary precautions are taken which is the hub of this work. This work now recommends that women ordination should be discontinued by the Church especially orthodox Christian Churches and more especially the Methodist Church and if by any means it must be upheld, should be granted to women who have entered their mono-pause. Better still women may be priests but should not be allowed to administer Holy Communion until they enter mono-pause. This alone will help the Church return to her originality in holiness and integrity.

References:

Anthony Carter (2018.Nov.30) "When should you not take communion?" Retrieved 15/2/2021 by 9.38pm

Chukwu Uzodinma N. (2005) "The Christian calendar and Liturgical Colours": Chuzzy Service Nigeria, Umuahia.

Webber Jay David (2005) Women Duty in the scriptures: posted July 2005 retrieved February 15 2021 by 7.23 pm

March, C., Smyth I., Mukhopadhyay M., *A Guide to Gender-Analysis Frameworks;* Oxfam, 1999

John w. Kleinig (2004) "Is it Proper for women to be called to Administer the lord's super to other women?" http://www.angelfire.com

Sacks Johnathan (1998) the Role of Women in Judaism in Man and Woman Priesthood SPCK London

Iwuagwu A. O (1998) "African Traditional Religion: Students Handbook. Owerri: Ager pubishers

Louis Bouyer (1998) "Christian Priesthood and women" in Man and woman, Priesthood SPCK London

Martin Luther (1959) the misuse of the Mass: vol.36 Philadelphia. Fortress press

Mascall E.L. (1998) "Some Basic Consideration in Man, Woman, Priesthood" SPCK London

Molyneux, Maxine (1985) "Mobilisation without Emancipation? Women's Interests, States and Revolution in Nicaragua": *Feminist Studies* II, 2, 1985.

Nwankwo S.C (2017) Understanding Religious Ethics: An Exercise in Afrocentric Ethicalism": Rainbow Printing Press. Aba, Nigeria.

Peter Moor (1998) Man and Woman Priesthood SPCK London

Status of Women Canada, (1996) "*Gender-Based Analysis: A guide for policy-making" Canada*
UNIFEM; (1993) *Focusing on Women –UNIFEM's experience in mainstreamin* OECD, *DAC Source Book on Concepts and Approaches Linked to Gender Equality*
UNESCO's Gender Mainstreaming Implementation Framework April 2003
Berger, T (2011) Gender differences and making of liturgical history; lifting a veil on liturgy's past, famham; Ashgate publishes limited.
UChe, C (2007) "African New Religious Movement: causes, Course and consequences" *in Journal of Humanities Vol.3 No. 1* Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly, Vol. 91, No 4