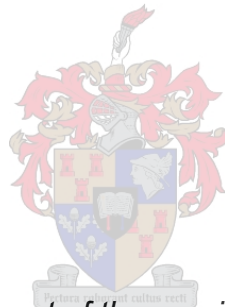An Exploratory Study of Women Leadership in the South African Charismatic Church
Through an African Women Practical Theology Lens

Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree Master of
Theology (MTh) at Stellenbosch University

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Discipline: Practical Theology with a specialisation in Gender

December 2022

Declaration

By submitting this thesis electronically, I, Keletso Yende, declare that the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the sole author thereof (except as expressly stated), and that reproduction and publication by Stellenbosch University will not infringe on any third-party rights, and that I have not previously submitted it in whole or in part for any previous qualifications.

Keletso Yende

December 2022

Abstract

This exploratory study aims to explore the extent of and causes of women's underrepresentation in leadership roles and the challenges women leaders face in South African Charismatic churches. Through literary research, this study aims to explore the impact of some of the contributing factors to this underrepresentation and other concomitant challenges. The contributing factors that hinder the fair representation of women in leadership positions discussed, identified and discussed in this study are, hermeneutics, culture, and patriarchy. This study also explores whether interpreting these contributing factors or hindrances through an African Women Practical Theology lens can help transform the problem of the underrepresentation of women leaders in top leadership positions in the South African Charismatic church. To conclude, this study suggests some practical ways in which the South African Charismatic church can start to transform the praxis of women's leadership and lastly provides recommendations for further research. Some of the recommendations made include re-viewing and reconstructing patriarchal cultures, resisting literal interpretations of scriptures, remaining faithful to the ministry of the Holy Spirit, giving priority to women's experiences and voices, educating people about issues relating to women's leadership and learning from appreciative inquiries and implementing more of what is working.

Opsomming

Hierdie verkennende studie het ten doel om die omvang van en oorsake van vroue se onder verteenwoordiging in leierskaprolle en die uitdagings wat vroue leiers in Suid-Afrikaanse Charismatiese kerke in die gesig staar, te verken. Deur middel van literêre navorsing poog hierdie studie om die impak van sommige van die bydraende faktore tot hierdie onder verteenwoordiging en ander gepaardgaande uitdagings te verken. Die bydraende faktore wat die regverdige verteenwoordiging van vroue in leiersposisies belemmer en wat in hierdie studie geïdentifiseer en bespreek word, is hermeneutiek, kultuur en patriargie. Hierdie studie ondersoek ook of die interpretasie van hierdie bydraende faktore of hindernisse deur 'n Afrika-vroue Praktiese Teologie-lens wat kan help om die probleem van die onder verteenwoordiging van vroue leiers in top leierskap posisies in die Suid-Afrikaanse Charismatiese kerk te transformeer. Ten slotte stel hierdie studie 'n paar praktiese maniere voor waarop die Suid-Afrikaanse Charismatiese kerk die praktyk van vroue leierskap kan begin transformeer en gee laastens aanbevelings vir verdere navorsing. Sommige van die aanbevelings wat gemaak is, sluit in hersiening en rekonstruksie van patriargale kulture, weerstand teen letterlike interpretasies van die Bybel, getrou bly aan die bediening van die Heilige Gees, voorkeur gee aan vroue se ervarings en stemme, opvoeding van mense oor kwessies wat met vroue se leierskap verband hou, leer uit waarderende navrae en die implementering van laasgenoemde.

Dedication

In loving memory of my daughter Nombuso Bokang Yende whose brief life continues to inspire me to fulfil my purpose.

Acknowledgements

Most importantly, I want to express my gratitude to God Almighty for everything he has done for me in this journey. It has not always been easy, but knowing that he was always with me helped me to stay the cause and finish strong.

None of my achievements is solely due to my efforts. I would like to also thank my husband, parents, family and friends for their prayers and support as well as my supervisors for sharing their expertise and giving me guidance and encouragement.

I would also like to thank the Dutch Reformed Church in SA, for the bursary that funded my studies. Lastly, thanks to my home church for providing me with opportunities to be trained as a leader and to discover and exercise my gifts.

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Chapter 1:

Introduction

1.1 Background and Motivation

I am a 37-year-old, married Sotho Christian woman who is also a Pastor of a local church which is part of the Pentecostal and Charismatic denominations. I was born and grew up in QwaQwa, a village in the "Eastern Free-State province, which is in South Africa between the borders of KwaZulu-Natal province and the country Lesotho" (Manti, 2009:9). I am the second born of five children; we are three girls and two boys in my family. My parents are both Sotho hence our upbringing was influenced by tradition, culture, and religion in a Sotho context. My grandparents also lived in QwaQwa but like most of their peers, were born in Lesotho and immigrated to South Africa, I am thus of a Lesotho descent. Manti (2009:33) confirms that the Sotho people in QwaQwa came from Lesotho. The influence of the Sotho culture in the Free State has its roots in Lesotho and is therefore similar to it.

As a child, I was instinctively aware of gender inequalities and the issues and dynamics of gender and leadership. I did not know the correct terminology back then but I did notice how differently females were treated from males in the church, community, households, and school environments: the gender roles were clearly distinct. The first woman I observed was my mother, she was a qualified teacher with a Diploma in Education but was not financially independent, to the extent that she could not use an automated teller machine (ATM). My father, who was also a teacher, with a Degree in Education, managed the finances and made all purchases in our home. My two sisters and I were given chores that were different from those of my brothers. We were taught that my brothers would become leaders of the family when my dad passed, particularly the eldest one. We were told that this was because my brothers would retain the family name even after marriage. An interesting dynamic in my upbringing, however, is that contrary to the girls I grew up with, who were raised

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to become good wives and whose ambition was to marry good husbands rather than becoming entrepreneurs or CEOs, my father raised me to be an independent person, and as a result, my ambitions in addition to having a family included becoming an entrepreneur and business leader. How he affirmed me as an individual and encouraged me to get an education was different from how most girls in my extended family and community were raised, and surprisingly even contrary to how he treated my mother, which I still do not understand.

In 1997, my family moved to Bethlehem, an urban town in the Free State province. This is where I started my High School education and even in this new town, my observations regarding gender issues were similar even though the community was more diverse in terms of culture, it was a mixture of Afrikaans, Sotho, English, and Zulu. I later pursued tertiary education in the Gauteng province and started working in the Financial Services Industry. My extended family members and community were not supportive of my decision to pursue an education and build a career rather than getting married at a tender age. I got married at 31, which by their standards was very late. At this stage I already had a Master of Business Leadership degree and was established in my corporate career.

Despite the affirming way my father raised me, the voices of my extended family members, my friends, and society still impacted my confidence as a woman in the workplace. I had to constantly fight the feeling that I did not belong and that my desire to reach top leadership positions was unrealistic. There were so few women in executive and senior management positions even though the majority of people in the workplace were women, this glaring underrepresentation of women in such positions grabbed my attention. This issue bothered me and I always wondered, in addition to a seemingly unsupportive environment, could other women also be experiencing the same internal struggles as I was and thus not pursuing top leadership positions?

When I first arrived in Cape Town in 2010, I joined a branch of the same Charismatic Church which I was attending in Johannesburg. I noticed a similar pattern to that of the corporate companies I worked for and my church. In corporate, even though the majority of staff were women, most of the top-level leadership positions were occupied

by males. In church, even though the majority of members were women, the Lead Pastor, and most of the church leadership were men. The majority of women who serve in the church did not serve in top leadership positions. Although I was afforded opportunities to lead some departments in the church and am now a pastor of one of the churches' branches, the overall status is still that top leadership positions are dominated by men. My observations and experiences as a leader in the church and as a pastor also motivate me to do further studies on this issue of women in church leadership as I believe my story can assist with providing a better understanding of the how culture, particularly Sotho culture, patriarchy, and hermeneutics influence the leadership or lack of leadership by women in the South African Charismatic church.

Seeing more women in leadership positions in different sectors of society and giving them space to become the fullness of what God created them to be is something I am very passionate about. Although I am a leader myself, my upbringing did not make me immune to societal views about women and their roles. It has taken me years to realise that I do not need anybody to affirm me or share my views about women and equality in order to pursue my dreams. I have realised that there is power in sharing about my struggles and how I overcame them. I also realised that just being bothered by gender inequality is not enough and I need to do something to be part of the solution as the struggle is bigger than just my story. I then decided to mentor young girls through my Non-Profit Company, Sister K Foundation, and assist in grooming young girls and women to become future leaders and occupy positions of influence. Pursuing theological studies with a gender focus, the choice of this research topic and the life-giving scriptures I preach are ways of getting involved in meaningful ways. I believe a better understanding of how culture, patriarchy and hermeneutics impact women leadership experiences will help give insights that will help us with ways of addressing the underrepresentation of women, not exclusively in the Charismatic church but in other denominations and societal sectors.

1.2 Problem Statement

Researchers admit that there is a lack of enough literature and research about the dynamics of female leadership within religious organizations in developing countries, including Sub-Saharan Africa (Agadjanian,2015:2). Whilst the issue of disproportionately low representation of women leaders in different sectors of society has been studied, the studies are recent and are mostly from a western perspective (Agadjanian,2015:1). In post-apartheid South Africa, although there are black theologians who have a voice, they have not included the voices of women and thus the situation of black women was not considered, and women were not given a voice (Masenya,1996:14). More studies, from African-Women voices, with the aim of addressing women underrepresentation are thus needed. This also to an extent influenced my decision of the lens I apply in this study which I shall speak about in the methodology section (1.7) as I believe that the more voices are heard, the greater the impact.

The research that is available, however, shows that the issue of women being underrepresented in top positions of leadership in many countries including South Africa remains a reality (Teffo, Kanjere & Thaba, 2011:1). This underrepresentation is found in many sectors of society, including the church where women form most of the membership but are underrepresented in leadership positions (Masenya, 1996:15). Researchers such as Teffo et al (2011:1) report that the practice of having an underrepresentation of women in leadership persists while women continue to be the majority of members of the church. This also applies specifically to Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches (Gabaitse, 2015:2). The findings of these studies are consistent with my observations and experiences not only in my church but in other Charismatic churches and other denominations as well. The second issue with women in church leadership is that their experiences have not been pleasant. Mullino–Moore (1999: 206) states that the personal anguish of women living in the church and envisioning its future is more than the anguish of a few overly sensitive women. It is a reality of the institutional church and all its institutions, institutions where glass ceilings still exist for women and institutions where, from the simplest rural church to the most sophisticated

theological guild or seminary, women are still ignored, denied, and silenced, and institutions in which the very theories of human existence reinforce oppression. According to Kgatle, (2019:4), even those who make it to these top positions are expected to submit to men, with the notion that men are in charge. For centuries, women have been and they continue to be oppressed and dehumanised by the patriarchal system that unfortunately exists even in the church.

Researchers such as Msila (2013:6) have identified culture as one of the barriers to woman leadership, claiming that the patriarchal nature of many African societies is at the basis of the problem of women's underrepresentation in leadership. Wood (2019:2) also states that harmful and traditional cultural lenses are one of the contributors to the suffering of women in patriarchal settings. She states that the church is one of the institutions that is contributing towards the continued perpetuation of gender inequality. Society is a larger structure within which the church exists. Sadly, the church often conforms to the social norms around it rather than exercising its role from God (Kretzschmar & van Schalkwyk, 2003: vii). This assertion holds true for women brought up in a Sotho culture as Molapo (2005:47) states that the Sotho culture is patriarchal. He states that in Lesotho, the Government is often seen using culture and custom as excuses for the failure to pay attention to issues addressing the empowerment of women. With regard to Sotho women leadership, Teffo et al, (2011:15) observe that according to culture and tradition, women are viewed as being incapable of leading, especially in public spaces, which include the church. This view asserts that the fundamental responsibilities of a woman are those of a wife and mother and thus even the jobs they are equipped for should be reflective of this traditional caring role, which excludes leadership (Mosetse, 2006:32). This study will explore the impact of these kinds of patriarchal views on women's leadership in the church, in particular whether a different lens may help us to better address the challenges faced by women church leaders in my context as a Sotho woman in a Charismatic denomination.

Another barrier to women leadership identified which we will explore in this study is Biblical interpretations that do not support the full humanity of women. Claassens (2012:149), explains how biblical texts are important in establishing and maintaining a

worldview in which men are privileged and consequently in control. She cites the patriarchal worldview found in many Bible passages, which contributes to a worldview that is similar to modern society. In this sense, many women and men have internalized the biblical text's ideals and worldview and struggle to see the text (or their environment) in any other light. Pui-lan (2004:12) also warns that when it comes to the Bible, we must be cautious because, while it is supposed to be good news for everyone, "not everything written in it is good news for women". African women theologians have as a result applied cultural hermeneutics to examining the Bible from their standpoints and to scrutinizing the multicultural layers embedded in biblical narratives. In her book *Introducing African Women's Theology,* Mercy Oduyoye emphasizes "the need of cultural hermeneutics as a tool for women to analyse their own experiences and realities, as well as to recognize that culture is dynamic rather than static". A hermeneutics of liberation is an important part of cultural hermeneutics, as it helps African women to identify and promote components of their culture that are life-affirming. The adverse impacts of death-dealing hermeneutics which are usually established by males who are influenced by patriarchal culture will be explored in this study as it continues to pose a threat to women leadership to (Oduyoye, 2001:11).

1.3 Research Questions

The study's core research question is: In what ways can using an African Women Practical Theology lens to explore hindrances to women's leadership in the South African Charismatic church assist us to remedy the underrepresentation of women leaders in the same?

The following three sub-questions will be investigated in order to answer this question:

1. Do cultural and traditional Sotho interpretations of women leadership perhaps act as barriers to women leadership in the church, for both women and men in terms of how women view themselves as leaders and how men and churches are receptive to and supportive of women leaders?
2. How may exploring these interpretations through an African Women Practical Theology lens help us to change the experiences of women leaders?

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3. What can be done practically to transform the praxis of women leadership in the South African Charismatic church?

1.4 Research Objectives

The following are the goals of this study:

1. Explore the state of underrepresentation of women leadership and the challenges women leaders face in the South African Charismatic church.

2. Explore through literature research what the impact of some of the contributing factors such as culture (particularly Sotho culture), patriarchy and hermeneutic is on the state of women leadership in the church.

3. Explore whether interpreting these contributing factors through an African Women Practical Theology lens can help transform the problem of underrepresentation of women leadership in top positions in the South African Charismatic church.

4. Recommend some practical plans the South African Charismatic church can put in place in order to work toward women being equitably represented in leadership positions in churches and having a positive leadership experience.

This study aims to guide us through the realities of women in Sotho cultural settings and explore the underrepresentation of women leadership in the Charismatic Church denomination in South Africa. It will also explore the impact of culture, patriarchy, and hermeneutics on the condition of women leadership in the church. I will discuss the tool of an African Women Practical Theology lens and explore whether this tool can assist in attempting to remedy the underrepresentation of women in leadership positions in the Charismatic church. I will conclude the study by offering some practical plans Charismatic churches can put in place in order to promoting the cause of women leadership in the church and providing recommendations for further research.

1.5 Study Hypothesis

I have formulated a hypothesis for this study which is in two parts, firstly, that Sotho cultural views on women leadership are patriarchal and thus have harmful consequences for women leadership in the church, and secondly, that interpreting the views of Sotho culture on women leadership in the church through a African Women Practical Theology lens can have a positive impact of better understanding this matter and confronting the issue of underrepresentation of women leadership in the church by contributing towards transformation.

1.6 Significance of the Study

Through an African Women Practical Theology lens to interpret and reflect on Sotho culture, patriarchy and hermeneutics and their impact on women leadership, I hope to challenge understandings that perpetuate the underrepresentation of church leaders who are women. I also hope to highlight and encourage the church community and leaders to embrace views that affirm women leadership. This is done to ultimately contribute to boosting the number of women in positions of leadership in the South African Charismatic Church, other denominations as well as other sectors.

Since gender inequality is a form of social construction (Wood, 20018:2), I believe challenging harmful understandings of gender can help contribute toward gender equality. If differences are created culturally and are socially constructed (Wood, 20018:2), it stands to reason that they can be re-constructed following views from different interpretations such as an African Women Practical Theology lens. I believe that the significance and impact of this study will be enhanced should the findings be made available to and considered by church leaders and members, community leaders, parents, and children which is what I am intending to do. It can help equip not only church leaders but also parents and potential leaders so that issues of patriarchy and women leadership can be addressed in homes, in society, and in the church.

1.7 Research Methodology

In this exploratory study, I use a literature research study method within the Practical Theology discipline to conduct my study. The study includes various types of literature that provide insights into the issue of Sotho culture, women leadership, as well as the condition of women leadership in the South African Charismatic Church. The tool I use is an African Women Practical Theology lens. I explore how this lens can help transform the underrepresentation of women in church leadership i.e., transform from a praxis of limiting cultural and hermeneutic understandings that contribute toward the women leaders being underrepresented in the church to a praxis of transformed understandings that support the leadership of women and the rise of more women in church leadership and women having more positive leadership experiences.

1.7.1 Literature review method

According to Snyder (2019:333), "literature review as a research method is a more or less systematic approach of gathering and summarizing previous research". He also emphasises the importance of this method because it can serve as a solid foundation for advancing knowledge and building theory. Grant & Booth (2009:94) state that the literature review research method is a quest to identify previous achieved work to allow building onto this work, identify gaps, and avoid duplications. Onwuegbuzie & Frels (2016:65) agree that this method entails a review of prior information as well as primary research by researchers. This is the main approach of this study, exploring what other researchers have studied and seeing what we can take from there to answer my research question.

1.7.2 African Women Theology

In addressing my chosen lens for this study, I first explore various concepts of an African Women Practical Theology, I will start by first giving a brief description of African Women Theology. This particular branch of theological inquiry was developed due to several reasons, firstly, a realization that there is not much written about African women, written by African women. Secondly, because of the scarcity of material

written by African women theologians, topics concerning the fact that in religion and culture, African women have been overlooked or ignored (Phiri, 1997:68). Thirdly, African women's issues have been disregarded, regardless of the fact that the contextualization of the Christian message within African culture is emphasized in African theology. Women's encounters with God are thought to be similar to those of men. African women now have a responsibility to make it clear that, despite sharing the very same territory, women's religious and cultural experiences vary from those of men. Lastly, claiming that when African males write African theology, they represent all Africans, including African women is no longer acceptable (Phiri, 1997:68). According to Maseno (2021:1), the emancipation of women is a priority in African women's theology. It investigates African culture and exhibits an awareness of women as a different group with intrinsic differences. Furthermore, African women theology examines women's subjugation as seen through the eyes of African women. African theology has long emphasized the importance of appreciating African culture and ensuring that its purity is preserved. However, by doing so, it focused solely on the positive qualities of the African community and ignored what was ingrained in the society and did not deserving of reclaiming.

Another norm and source that greatly influences African women's theology in women's experience. Their context and experience are crucial since they do not do theology that is disconnected from their everyday lives. They acknowledge that individuals in their circumstances have unique experiences and insights. As a result, the experience of African women serves as an additional standard and source for African women's theology. For African women's theology, the Bible is both a norm and a source. The Bible is essential in the theologizing of African women theologians. The Bible, however, cannot be the sole standard since any reading of the Bible that harms women, the defenceless, and the voiceless is unacceptable (Maseno, 2021:3).

1.7.3 Practical Theology

Practical theology may be deemed as a theology that is useful, applicable, or relevant, one that is applied and practiced. Social justice, church expansion, spiritual formation, preaching or homiletics, and assisting with challenges such as divorce are some of

the areas that Practical Theology can address in society (Pena, 2020:1). Given this description, we can see that Practical Theology covers a diverse range of issues, within the framework of this research, the issue of women in church leadership roles being underrepresented. According to Dryer (2009:151), Practical Theology seeks to be transformational, in that it is not only concerned with theories to understand contemporary religious actions. It is also interdisciplinary, as it makes use of insights and theories from other theological disciplines to bring about transformation from current praxis to new praxis in any given context. According to Osmer (2011:2), The Descriptive - Empirical Task is the first of four interconnected tasks in Practical Theology: second, The Interpretive Task, third, The Normative Task, and fourth, The Pragmatic Task. Below is a brief description of each of these tasks.

Firstly, the Descriptive-Empirical Task asserts that Practical Theology should help describe what is going on and looks to collate and collect information to have a deeper understanding of the situation and settings. The descriptive-empirical task poses the question, what is going on? It concentrates on acquiring data to better comprehend specific episodes, scenarios, or contexts (Osmer, 2011:2). This task is concerned with what is happening in people's lives, families, and congregations. It is imperative to perceive this task as more than just gathering information from people on their circumstances and situation. It deals with gaining lived experiences and exploring the quality of attentiveness of church leaders or researchers.

Secondly, the Interpretive Task asserts that Practical Theology must study why something is going on, Osmer (2011: 2) states that "by collaborating with the social sciences to analyse and explain why particular behaviours and patterns emerge". This usually homes in on the literature one may use when researching and exploring a certain topic of interest (Osmer, 2011: 2). The interpretive task or sagely wisdom investigates the causes of the observable events in the descriptive-empirical task. This task emphasises the theoretical knowledge and interpretation and designates the ability to employ theories from the arts and sciences, to comprehend and respond to specific incidents, circumstances, and contexts (Osmer, 2008: 83). This task can be thought of as a road map to help the researcher reflect on the empirical data gathered (Osmer, 2008:61).

Thirdly, the Normative Task asserts that Practical Theology raises normative queries from ethical and theological perspectives to give an idea of what should be going on. The Normative task asks, "What ought to be going on?" Raising normative concerns from theological, ethical, and other perspectives. This examines the ethical standards that drive our actions as well as our ability to be directed by good practice. (Osmer, 2011:2). It is an attempt to answer the theological issue, "How is worldly wisdom of the arts and sciences related to God's Wisdom?" How do we meet the present situations with what ought to be happening, with the assistance of pastoral counselling, social values, or ministry? (Osmer, 2008:93).

Lastly, the Pragmatic Task states that Practical Theology provides recommendations and plans of action on how to reshape a situation to a desirable outcome. The question posed in this task is, "How might we respond?" Creating a plan of action and taking precise actions to mould the episode, scenario, or setting in the required directions. This looks at what we might do to move from the current situation to a preferred situation (Osmer, 2011:2). These four core tasks could be perceived as a spiral and not a circle moving chronologically and the empirical research of this study can address all four tasks of Osmer's theological interpretation. As new ideas arise, it frequently returns to tasks, reintegrating or re-exploring activities that have already been investigated. These four activities are interconnected, and their interaction sets practical theology apart from other areas (Osmer, 2008: 11). Given this understanding of what Practical Theology is, its aim, and its tasks, I now proceed to show how African Women Theology can work together with Practical Theology to create what I refer to as an African Women Practical Theology Lens.

1.7.4 African Women Practical Theology lens

The most practical way to explain my chosen lens of African Women Practical Theology is by highlighting that I am a Practical Theologian who is also an African woman. I, therefore, do theology from this perspective. Holmes (2020:3) speaks of this as the concept of positionality, this means that "a researcher's social-historical-political position affects their perspectives, implying that they are not distinct from the social processes they examine". Quite simply, we cannot study the social world we live in by

escaping it. In addition to this lens being a true reflection of my context, Slee (2017:1) asserts that practical and feminist theologies highlight the importance of theology to be concerned with the lives and practices of ordinary believers and with the vital importance of gender justice. If this is true for practical and feminist theologies, then it stands to be true for practical and women theologies as well. A feminist research approach seeks to initiate social change in the lives of women (Given 2008: 335) and since Practical Theology works interdisciplinary it is about moving from an existing praxis to a new one (Dryer, 2009: 151-152). I refer to Feminist Theology here because African Women Theology shares many similarities with Feminist Theology as we will explore further in the study. The combination of African Women Theology and Practical Theology disciplines, therefore, I believe will give the best insights for this study. I can summarise my understanding of African Women Theology and Practical Theology as an approach that prioritizes the best interests of women and works to genuinely alter their situation, in this context, women's leadership is from underrepresentation to fair representation.

1.8 Theoretical Framework

1.8.1 Sotho culture and women leadership

Kretzschmar & van Schalkwyk (2003:20), state that culture can be defined narrowly or more broadly. A narrow definition can be understood in terms of social custom. This can be people's language, food, clothes, how their family life functions etc. A broader definition incorporates socio-economic, political and practices. It also includes the attitudes and expectations people have, the way they behave, their values, and all elements of institutions and structures of society. Since one cannot separate thinking from life experience (Kretzschmar & van Schalkwyk, 2003: ix), I am particularly drawn to the Sotho cultural context since I am Sotho, and my experiences will add to the literature and interpretations of this subject. I believe that findings from this study will aid Sotho communities in understanding the subject of, women and leadership, and particularly, leadership in the Church. Whilst literature on Sotho culture is available, I have found that most of the available literature that speaks about Sotho culture is from Western male scholarly perspectives. Kompi (2016:1) notes that whilst globalization,

colonialism, and modernization have influenced the distinctiveness of the Sotho culture from other African cultures, the Sotho people have done well to retain their cultural traditions. This, however, means that Sotho culture overlaps with other African cultures. It remains important, however, that Sotho women be given the platform to tell their own stories.

1.8.2 The Charismatic church and women leadership

For much of the 20th Century, it was only acceptable for men to be elders, deacons, ministers, pastors, or priests in the church (Grady, 2000). Many Pentecostal and Charismatic churches have since updated their views regarding this and currently permit women to occupy the above-mentioned positions of leadership. Gabaitse (2015:2) in her study, discovered that the Pentecostal church still has ambivalent attitudes towards the women's movement despite the general view that it provides a potentially liberating space; it provides women with a unique ability to express themselves but it largely subordinates them. This shows that in the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement, in theory, women leadership is accepted but does not seem to be supported in practice. According to research, the Pentecostal movement allows subordination of female church members by their male counterparts while displaying a liberal and somewhat democratic outlook on the surface. Mogoane (2019: iv), in a study that included Charismatic Churches, participants asserted that the role of women was insignificant to preaching in formal services; this was the same case in leadership positions, such as being ordained pastors. Examples of elements that resulted in the insignificance of impacts and women's roles include the prevailing culture and traditions of church members, the frequent use of selective Biblical texts that seem to support the concept of female submission, and the tradition of the church (Mogoane, 2019: iv). Women are free to participate in certain aspects of worship, according to this study, but concerns of gender equality in scripture interpretation, ordination to the priesthood, and appointment to church leadership must be addressed in the background.

1.9 The Study's Scope and Limitations

This is an exploratory study by literary analysis; by definition, an exploratory study is designed to maximize the discovery of generalizations, and these generalizations can include social processes, beliefs, belief systems and can include descriptive facts (Given, 2008:327). Another definition is that it is investigating a problem that has not been thoroughly studied before in order to gain a better understanding but usually does not lead to conclusive results. The first limitation, therefore, is that the findings are not definitive due to the nature of the investigation. Secondly, the findings, recommendations, and conclusions of this study may not necessarily be applicable in certain circumstances which is consistent with Hofsted's (2009:87) conclusion which is that in some cases it is found that findings from a study with a limited scope may not be applicable in other circumstances. For the purpose of this Master's study, a more focused scope is more appropriate to complete the study and hence the chosen literary approach.

Lastly, since people do not live in isolation and their culture is thus influenced by other cultures in the world, findings that are from a pure specific culture are limited (Chulu, 2015:4). This also applies to Sotho culture; it is affected by other African cultures and cultures of the world. The same can be said about the church since Sotho people do not worship in isolation and, various cultures are present in the church, observations and findings cannot be deemed as exclusively from a pure Sotho perspective, the findings can therefore be relevant to a broader African perspective.

1.10 Outline of the Chapters

There are six chapters in this study. The topics that will be discussed in each respective chapter are described below:

Chapter 1 is the introduction to the study and confirms the research topic to the reader. It also outlined my motivation for pursuing this study. I also discussed the problem statement, research question, hypothesis, and the importance and

significance of this research. I also discussed the literature research methodology and the African Women Practical Theology lens through which this study is done. In the section that follows, the study's brief theoretical framework is provided including a deliberation on Sotho culture and women in church leadership. I then discussed the scope and limitations of the study; this chapter outlined and closed the chapter with a conclusion that gives the reader an overview of the chapter.

Chapter 2 is titled "The current state of women leadership in the South African charismatic church". Here, the descriptive task of practical theology is discussed and I explore to what extent women are underrepresented and their experiences as leaders. I begin the chapter with a broader view of this and discuss other sectors, countries, and denominations. I then focus on the status, particularly in the South African Charismatic church. As a woman with corporate leadership experience who is also a Pastor in my church, I also reflect on my observations and experiences as a woman in leadership.

Chapter 3 is titled "Exploring hindrances to women leadership in the South African Charismatic church". This chapter explores the interpretive task of practical theology and seeks to answer why women are underrepresented in leadership roles and the obstacles that women in leadership face. The hindrances to women leadership explored are culture, patriarchy, and hermeneutics.

Chapter 4 is titled "Changing the praxis of women leadership by viewing culture, patriarchy, and scripture through an African women practical theology lens". I discuss the normative task of practical theology and explore what ought to be happening in terms of female leadership in the South African Charismatic church. I show how looking at culture, patriarchy and hermeneutics applying an African Women Practical Theology lens can be helpful in transforming the praxis of women leadership and begin to reflect what ought to be happening.

Chapter 5 is titled "Transforming women leadership in the South African Charismatic Church". I discuss the pragmatic task of practical theology and explore some practical suggestions on how we are going to change the praxis of the underrepresentation of

women in leadership in the South African Charismatic church towards a new one of equality and support for women leaders.

Chapter 6 is titled "Conclusions and recommendations for further research". A summary is provided in this concluding chapter showing how I addressed the research questions and objectives of the study. I also provide some insights gained from the study and suggestions and recommendations for further research.

1.11 Conclusion

The study's motivation, problem statement, research question, and sub-questions, including the study's goal, were all introduced in this chapter. This chapter furthermore provided the hypothesis of this study, in addition to the significance of the research conducted in this study. I discussed the Exploratory Literary Research Method and introduced African Women Practical Theology as the lens through which the study will be conducted. I then provided a theoretical framework consisting of Sotho culture and women's leadership in the Charismatic Church. The study's scope and limitations were then discussed. I offered an outline of the remaining chapters of the study in the concluding portion of the chapter, to give the reader a better view of the elements that are studied in the rest of the study which concludes with findings, recommendations, and suggested areas for further studies. We will now move to Chapter 2, the descriptive task of Practical Theology which provides an answer to what is happening with women leadership in the South African Charismatic church.

Chapter 2:

The current state of women leadership in the South African Charismatic church

2.1 Introduction

Practical Theology is not simply an application of Philosophical or Systematic Theology to a particular situation but is a consuming exploration of the situation at hand and should be approached with thoughtful hermeneutics in the application of ancient texts (Van der Merwe 2020:1). Osmer (2008:1-6) outlines what he refers to as "the four tasks of Practical Theology" as already discussed in the preceding chapter. The first is the Descriptive - Empirical Task where Practical Theology should help describe what is going on and look to collate and collect information to gain a better understanding of the current situation and settings. I will seek to answer the question "What's going on?" using this initial task of practical theological interpretation. The purpose of this chapter is to describe the situation of women in leadership in the South African Charismatic Church. Stated differently, it will answer the questions of what is going on in the South African Charismatic church in terms of women leadership, the status of underrepresentation of women in leadership positions, and the experiences of women leaders in the church. I will attempt to collect data that will aid us in identifying patterns and dynamics of women's leadership in the Charismatic church. Keeping in mind that this is not an empirical research study but an exploratory literature review, I will be drawing from existing studies, and web-based sources which include some Charismatic church websites that have information on their leadership structures and my experience. This process will help us interpret what is really going on.

Research scholars studied questions ranging from whether women can lead, whether differences exist between how men and women lead, whether men are more effective leaders compared to women and the causes of underrepresentation of women in

executive positions of leadership (Northouse 2016:398). This latter question in the statement by Northouse (2016:398) seems to suggest that there exists an underrepresentation of women in executive and influential positions since it states that researchers are now in search of the reasons why women are often underrepresented in such positions. Underrepresentation is defined quite simply as inadequately represented, (The Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2021). The Cambridge Dictionary (2021) states that a person or a thing is considered underrepresented in a given group if there are not sufficient of them. As a result, we can describe the inadequate representation of women in church leadership as women holding far fewer leadership roles than men. My observations and experiences are consistent with the results that women are underrepresented in leadership roles, and the goal of this chapter is to investigate the extent of this underrepresentation. It will look into the state of women's leadership and particularly the underrepresentation of women in top-level positions of leadership such as the Church Executive Committees, Bishops, and top-level clergy within the Charismatic church. Charismatic churches are described as ones that put great emphasis on the Holy Spirit, worship, Scripture, and the work of Christ, the maturing of believers in Christ, and the creation of a strong personal relationship between God and man according to Adebayo & Zulu (2018:16). Some research refers to Charismatic as the same as Pentecostal. This will be discussed extensively in this chapter because it is beneficial in helping us understand my interpretation of South African Charismatic Churches.

Given my context of having experience in a corporate environment and having attended an Anglican church in my formative years and later a Charismatic denomination, I believe it is important to look at women's leadership in a broader context before zooming into the Charismatic denomination. Exploring women's realities in other denominations, sectors and countries will provide valuable insights which will help enhance the analysis of this study. As you will see, many parallels can be drawn that are useful to this exploratory research. The section on women leadership in other sectors globally and locally is then followed by a section that looks at women leadership in various denominations. This information is important to include in this study as it provides similarities and/or differences to women's leadership in the Charismatic denomination. The limited availability of data on women's leadership also

necessitated that I also look into the church in a broader context. Northouse (2016:397) states that the relationship between gender and leadership roles was ignored, he observes that it is only in the 1970s that researchers started focusing on this issue. He further observes that this interest was actually sparked by the changes in society that led to an increase in women occupying leadership positions. Although it was very challenging to gather data for most churches due to the unavailability of data on church websites, I have managed to discuss some statistics that I found that add a voice to the findings in this chapter. Data from some of the oldest and biggest churches which was available is used in this section to answer whether or not women are under-represented in the Charismatic church in South Africa. I will explore the challenges that women in leadership roles confront in the final section of this chapter. It is an unfortunate reality that women's challenges do not end when they gain access to leadership positions but rather metamorphize as they face more challenges once they are in those top positions albeit in small numbers. It is critical to comprehend the difficulties that women encounter when seeking leadership positions within religious traditions like Charismatic and Pentecostal churches (Gabaitse, 2015:1). This is what I discuss in this section which is preceded by the numbers.

As a researcher, one cannot remove oneself from the research, as a result, throughout the chapter and the research dissertation as a whole, I also contrast some of the studies and findings with my experiences as a Sotho woman who has worked in Corporate S.A. for 13 years and has held various leadership positions in a Charismatic church. I will also share my experiences as a Sotho woman who is also a Pastor in the same Charismatic Church. It will be interesting to show how relatable my experience is to those of other women who were part of various studies, which I will discuss in this chapter.

2.2 Women Leadership in a Global Report

Sambaza (2021:1) reports that "the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report of 2020", reveals an existence of a gender gap in the workforce, where 78% of workers are adult men whereas only 55% of the women are in the active labour market. The report also demonstrates that the gender disparity grows as one moves up the corporate ladder, citing a statistic that only 36% of private sector executives and public sector officials are women, heading only 18.2 percent of global companies. On average, women make up only 22.3% of board members in the "Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's member countries". Northouse (2016:399) states similar statistics and further states that, even though the number of women with tertiary qualifications has drastically improved, there is no corresponding representation of female leaders in the top echelons of political, and corporate sectors.

In a report provided by "Women in the Workforce" (2021), it was reported indeed there has been progress, however, the gender divide was still quite large at influential leadership levels. Women make up a small percentage of CEOs of the world's major firms. "On the Fortune Global list (2020), only 13 women (2.6%) who were all white, were CEOs of Fortune 500 companies". The report was based on an analysis that included over 1,100 organizations across the world which focused on women in leadership. It was also found that the female representation was decreasing as the levels rise, "executives account for 23% of the total, senior managers for 29%, managers for 37%, professionals for 42%, and support employees for 47%". In 2020, women held 20.6% of seats on the boards of directors worldwide, a slight increase from 20% in 2019 (Women in the Workforce, 2021:1).

When one reads through reports about the state of women leadership, report after report and study after study, the outcomes consistently show women's underrepresentation in leadership positions in various sectors globally. This is something not unique to any one country or any one sector, but it is a reality that is found across countries and across sectors. In the next section, I will concentrate on South Africa and study what the reality of women's leadership is in its different sectors.

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2.3 Women Leadership in Different Industries in Africa and South Africa

As a South African, I am proud to be a part of a country with a constitution that lays the groundwork for the development of "a democratic, non-racial, non-sexist, united, and prosperous society founded on justice, equality, the rule of law, and all people's fundamental human rights" (South African Government, 2021). This is indeed an encouraging declaration that raises an expectation that nobody should be discriminated against or diminished based on their caste, creed, sex, race, or culture. Some South African laws, as embodied in the nation's supreme law, the Constitution's Bill of Rights, protect women's rights in the workplace. Arguably, this is not enough, and some are of the view that although equality for women is implied in the Constitution, gender diversity has been side-lined legislatively (Maphisa, 2017:89). I agree with the former view in this regard as I believe the under-representation of women transcends legislative reasons.

As a Sotho woman in South Africa, unfortunately, I can attest that the reality of women leadership does not align with this expectation of equality that is created by the constitution and legislation. It pains me to observe that the reality of South Africans, particularly that of South African women, does not reconcile with what is enshrined in the Constitution. Increasing the proportions of women in high management positions is critical to improving women's rights, freedoms, and opportunities. For women to achieve equality in the workplace, their progression into powerful and authoritative positions is necessary (Kayi, 2013:11). It comes to reason that if women were discriminated against in the workplace or in churches, they would be sufficiently represented in those institutions. Unfortunately, the story of women's underrepresentation in leadership senior roles persists in several sectors of society (Maphisa, 2017:89). Statistics shown by Yako (2019:19), show that in South Africa, women's representation levels in crucial decision-making structures remain low, despite women being the vast majority in society.

According to the "Business Women's Association of South Africa's 2017 census of women in leadership", women made up 51 percent of the population in South Africa. Despite women being the majority, they represent only 44.3% of the employed

workforce, where 10% are often centred on lower levels of their organizations (Maphisa, 2017:11). This census further shows that despite women being the majority in the country, their representation among directors is a mere 20.7% and only 29.4% are executive managers. These numbers are much lower at the top echelons of leadership; women represent only 11.8% of chairpersons. Even more concerning is that the representation of women at the level of Executive Manager has grown at the slowest pace between 2008 and 2017, where female representation grew by a mere 16.2 % (Maphisa, 2017:1). Despite their ambitions and desires, female South African professionals accounted for only 3.3 percent of CEOs on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange by March 2020 (Sambaza, 2021:1). Of these, it is sad to note that only one female CEO was head of a JSE Top 40 company. In this census, a total of 297 companies were included. The participants include 277 JSE-listed companies and 20 State-Owned Enterprises. Although some might argue that this is not a large enough sample to represent the country, we see various other studies that show a similar picture. We have also seen how South Africa's reality reflects the global trend of female underrepresentation in positions of power.

Women's underrepresentation in corporate leadership continues to be a political and economic issue. Men have historically dominated corporate boardrooms, but this has begun to be challenged in recent years, as corporations and shareholders have recognised the worth of having a more gender-balanced board (Maphisa, 2017:7). Some argue that progress has been made, which is true; as an example, "the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report", South Africa has made strides toward closing the gender gap, rising from 18th place in 2006 to 17th place in 2020 (Sambaza, 2021:1). Despite this progress made by women, men still have a strong grip on the majority of the leadership positions in both industry and the government. The number of women represented in influential positions has not materially shifted (Maphisa, 2017:1). While some improvement has been noted, the picture remains gloomy as the poor representation of women continues. So-called equal opportunities for women do exist today, although it is not as easy as simply slotting into a job or a care career. There are still genuine obstacles and differences that women must navigate and overcome (Yako, 2019: 23). Throughout Africa, more women are now getting tertiary qualifications; despite these gains, a report by the government of South Africa shows

that women have a higher chance of getting into lower-skilled employment (Department of Women, 2015).

Sambaza (2021:1) states that even though society appears to be progressing, the reality on the ground may indicate that we are still a long way from our goal. We observe many women attempting to push through a multitude of challenges in the workplace. Some women feel the constant need to prove their abilities to peers and superiors, many others are unable to put in long hours in the office due to family obligations or the need to get home before darkness due to security concerns. Many women do not receive appropriate mentorship and guidance since their numbers are already minuscule at the workplace. Women mostly lack the ability to network after hours, and they equally face the age-old inequality of pay for the same work as their male counterparts. As a result of these pressures, a lot of women decline promotion opportunities or quit the workforce altogether. I worked in the financial services industry for over 13 years. Most of this time I spent occupying middle to senior management positions, and from my observations and personal experience, it is evident that women have many hurdles to organize and be given the positions they deserve. In boardrooms, the majority were always male and the few women who were there were managers in departments like marketing which were not considered as important as other departments such as finance or operations. My years in corporate were followed by Leadership in the Church. Church also plays a significant role in degrading and marginalizing women as the other sectors did. In the following section, I will discuss women's Leadership in the Church and draw some findings from my experiences and observations.

2.4 Women Leadership in the Church: Various Denominations

In the preceding sections, I discussed the reality of the underrepresentation of women in various industries globally and locally. In all sectors, there was a constant observation of female under-representation in prominent leadership roles. Now I draw closer to exploring the state of leadership in the Church in Africa and then specifically in South Africa. As a woman who leads and pastors a church, studying the phenomenon of Women in Church Leadership and contributing towards more

understanding is a passion of mine and experienced reality. In this section, I will look at some African countries and contrast the studies with some observations in a South African context. In Priest & Barine (2017:138-139), women share their stories of experiences where they were marginalised, dominated, and discriminated against by churches. Though affirmative action and activism have eased many women into leadership positions, it is cited that they are often concentrated on subordinate levels while men take up more senior positions. In congregations, there is still resistance to women serving as Pastors.

In Africa, almost 70% of church members are female, and despite this fact, research shows that women are often underrepresented and unsupported. A significant lack of women leaders at senior levels is an everyday reality in this continent (Priest & Barine, 2017:232). This reality is consistent with the reality of women's leadership in other industries. It means that inadequate women representation in leadership is a phenomenon that is not unique to the Church of South Africa, but it applies continentally in different sectors. According to Mapuranga (2013: 78), African churches have had women playing subservient duties since the introduction of Christianity to the continent, he states this is a consequence of African traditional beliefs that a "good" woman must be submissive to the men in the family and be subservient to the males within her family and society. The coming of the missionaries into Africa furthered this idea, according to Mapuranga (2013: 81), missionaries through religion, emphasized the subservient role of women. Despite this, however, in Zimbabwe's Pentecostal Church, the significance of the roles of women in the church and religion has been recognized. In this context, despite the intimidation and hurdles encountered by most African leaders who are women, particularly men's reluctance, women continue to serve as successful church leaders. Contrary to expectation, the few women who have ascended to church leadership in Pentecostal congregations end up preaching the same message of submission of women to men, this can be termed as "bargaining with patriarchy," they try not to cross the path of the men who bear authority, allowing themselves to maintain their positions. It is unfortunate, that research on African societies has revealed that "in some instances, women themselves, directly and indirectly, contribute to the sustaining and in this case resilience of traditional patriarchal oppression" (Mapuranga, 2013: 84). Mapurunga

(2019: 84) further states that women aid in the perpetuation and sustenance of this oppression by "domestication" of each other. This for me represents evidence that cultural practices that are harmful to women leadership do not only affect men's perceptions about women but also perceive how women perceive themselves. The findings by Mapurunga hold even in a Sotho culture context.

From a young age, girls are domesticated, while their brothers are readied for public life as theologians or academics. Men have much more direct access to greater power. It is argued that while male missionaries were being guided and prepared for further education with space in theological activities, women were being trained on fashion, fabrics, taking care of households and how to be good housewives, they had no space in theological activities (Mapuranga, 2013: 78). This is certainly something I agree with based on my experience and observations of how the girls in my community work. Girls in a Sotho culture context are certainly raised in this way which clearly does not encourage girls and women leadership.

In her study of women in the "Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) in Malawi", Chifungo (2014:2) revealed that women are the majority in both the church and the country, according to Malawi demographic data. The church, however, continues to deprecate the role of women in the church. She describes various practices that she observed and experienced that showed the Church's unfriendliness towards women. Some practices she refers to include how, in 1996, she and other girls were basically kicked out of a homiletic class and were told it was for boys only because it was about preaching and women had nothing to do with that subject as they were not entitled to preach (Chifungo, 2014:6). She also recounts how promising women are demoted to singing and cleaning the church, with little opportunity to exercise their leadership abilities (Chifungo, 2014:6). These experiences echo those of many other women in different countries and different denominations. I can certainly relate to these prejudices. Sadly, many women in the society are eager to serve the Lord in a greater capacity but their opportunities in the church are non-existent or very limited. The Church does not give attention to such individuals and has therefore failed miserably in equipping them. Specifically, regarding preaching, what I observed in my church is that whilst women are permitted to preach during Sunday worship services, they are

seldom given a platform during conferences and seminars. I have also observed that they are also hardly ever invited as guest preachers, except when it is a women's conference or an event geared for women-only attendance.

As I now look at the state of the churches in South Africa, I will begin with some reflections based on my home church where I grew up in. In QwaQwa (this is the village I was born in the Free State Province), my family church was an Anglican church. I was only 12 years old when we left this church, but I had observed that the Reverend was male; in the church, men and women were separated; there were distinct sections for men and women, as well as boys and girls. Women only led in the children's church ministry, and women's ministry, they didn't lead much in the overall church structure. This was a purely black church with most people being Sotho, 70% of the congregants were women and only 30% male. Although this was not a Charismatic church, I believe it is salient to mention as even in the study I will look at the women leadership a little broader than just in the Charismatic church to assist with understanding. In 1997 when my family moved to Bethlehem (a town in the Free State Province), we joined another Anglican Church. This was a predominantly white church, when my family joined, we were the only black family then. It has transformed over time and is now more diverse, there are now whites, blacks, and coloured congregants. The main difference was the seating arrangements, in this church families sat together. There was no gender segregation. Leadership was still however male even though women were still in the majority at 60% of the membership. I stayed in this church and served as an altar girl for 5 years till I left town when I completed my matric; I was now 17 years old.

My observations agree with findings by Masenya (1995: 149), who also states that in the South African church, women form the majority of the congregations, despite this, women rarely get an opportunity to interpret scripture through their own experience or lead services. Priest & Barine (2017:135) state that women's leadership is still rarely seen as the norm and often not readily accepted despite women having demonstrated it. In South Africa, as in many other countries, normative humanity is male. These findings correspond to those of research done in South Africa, Zambia, and Malawi by Gennrich (2013: 93) where he discovered found that congregations were composed

majorly of women, women groups in the church conducted all service tasks while men were dominant in leadership positions, there was a scarcity of female members in the upper echelons of church leadership. When the emphasis is placed on female leadership at the levels of Pastoral to Bishop, according to Gennrich (2013:87), women constitute less than 10% compared to their male counterparts. Priest & Barine (2017:151) also state that many women are denied traditional senior leadership roles with ecclesiastical having found alternative avenues and ways of being leaders. Based on their study where women from different African countries in leadership roles (faith-based) were interviewed Priest & Barine (2017:136) conclude that using the labyrinth metaphor is an accurate description of the complex journey of leadership that women face. For African women, the journey of leadership is a complex one that requires persistence, focus, and awareness. Women leaders, in ecclesiastical contexts, are faced with religious doctrine, cultural and traditional practices that create hurdles in their leadership journey (Priest & Barine, 2017:136).

Gennrich (2015:135) reports about a study titled "Report of Women in Positions of Leadership" which was conducted in 2012, by Norwegian Church Aid. The study, is a small one, that sought to find out how many women have been assigned to significant positions in the church, so its results can therefore not be generalized. However, the results were similar to the audits. A follow-up study showed the existence of women in influential positions; however, this progress is moving at a snail's pace. Men are predominantly represented in influential positions (Gennrich, 2015:135). The 2012 pilot study also looked into Lay and Ordained church leaders in seven Southern African nations, displaying signs of a rise in the number of women in these roles, but it concluded that women mostly served in supportive roles while their male counterparts were assigned strategic leadership positions. This makes many churches miss out on the multitude of gifts that women have been given by God in service to the ministry (Gennrich, 2015:142).

It is not all doom and gloom however, there are some success stories to be celebrated. One such story is outlined by Gennrich (2015:5) who states that in 2013, there were 347 female priests in the Anglican Church in Southern Africa, and two of them were bishops. There are still several disparities in implementation, and it has taken more

than four decades to get to that point, but this is an inspiring illustration of the Holy Spirit at work (Gennrich, 2015:153). Another example is that of Reverend Purity Malinga who in 2019 became the 100th Bishop to be elevated by the Methodist Church in Southern Africa. She was consecrated as the first female Bishop of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa and the 1st woman in the 200-year history of the Methodist Church to be elevated to Bishop (Forster, 2019). The elevation of a woman to a presiding Bishop is of overwhelming relevance to the Methodist church and the church as a whole. Bishop Malinga is therefore the church's senior-most leader, whose responsibility is responsible for shaping the direction and policy of the Methodist Church with the help of regional bishops in the following southern African nations. Her outgoing attitude and inclusive leadership style were expected to have a big impact on the culture and identity of southern African Methodism. (Forster, 2019). Although this shows progress and is a positive move, the Methodists admit that this does not mean that patriarchy is dead. Males remain the dominant gender in the leadership structures of the Methodist church (Forster, 2019). Evidence of this includes a study by Penxa-Matholeni (2020:154), which revealed a recording exposing a high-ranking Methodist Bishop expressing his views about a female colleague who was a church leader. In the recording, he expresses his disgust by what he calls "wenzani lomfazi," referring to his female colleague as "this woman." This was in response to a female Reverend who was officiating for the male preachers. This Bishop seemed to recast the ritual of robing into an act of indecency by reducing his female colleague's actions to "fondling of men's chest and by making a body-shaming reference to her large breast". He implied that his female colleague had fraudulently appropriated some forbidden spaces exclusive to a male Bishop when he asked this question, "from where does she get the power to do this" (Penxa-Matholeni, 2020: 154). This indeed is evidence that even when women do occupy leadership positions, their experiences are not necessarily pleasant as the environment remains hostile towards women leaders.

Hohlo (2020:110) conducted a study on women clergy in the Anglican Church and investigated the extent of equality (or lack thereof) to which the church treated women in God's ministry. She found that female members of the clergy still experienced open exclusion, injustice, and inequality affecting their effective contribution to the "mission."

She concluded that the leadership and ministerial experience of female members of the clergy serving in several parishes have improved drastically since the commencement of ordination in 1992 (Hohlo 2020:118). While this was a positive outcome, she still concluded that the church has to look into relational challenges concerning the lack of equality, exclusion, male domination, and economic as well as educational injustices (Hohlo 2020:118). From the various studies and findings of the various denominations in this section, we can see that in most denominations, women are allowed to occupy leadership positions and can be ordained as Pastors. And while some women occupy these positions, the challenge of inequality and underrepresentation remains and needs to be continually addressed till a state of equality and women no longer experience any prejudices. The experiences of some of these women are also sometimes not the best as some resistance to their leadership is still expressed.

2.5 Women Leadership in the Pentecostal and Charismatic Church

Let me first start by defining the Pentecostal and Charismatic denominations before I discuss the statistics. According to Anderson (1992:3), a narrower definition of the Pentecostal Church is those churches that as proof of being baptised by the Holy Spirit, insist on speaking in tongues. He further explains that Neo-Pentecostal refers to the churches and movements that originate in the Charismatic Movement or non-denominational churches and movements. While there are different categories of Pentecostals and slight differences can be drawn, Anderson (1992:3) believes that all Pentecostal and Charismatic churches can be referred to as Pentecostals as they all acknowledge the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the Church. Dickow (2012: 42 - 45) interviewed several leaders in the South African church intending to differentiate between Pentecostal and Charismatic and concluded that it was difficult to classify churches as either Charismatic or Pentecostal. Some of the leaders interviewed said their churches were Charismatic in the expression of worship and Pentecostal in the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and others even said they were reformed in church governance. While some recognized that they were classified as Charismatic, their view was that they identified as Charismatic and Pentecostal and would not draw a line between the

two. Some viewed lack of structure and accountability as a distinguishing factor for Charismatic churches. Their opinion, in terms of doctrine, these denominations were the same. For purposes of this study, when referring to Charismatic churches, Pentecostals are also implied and vice versa.

According to Musvota (2021:3-4), the success and great impact of the "Azusa Street revival in Los Angeles, California in 1906", is one of the reasons William Joseph Seymour is credited with founding Pentecostalism. Within a decade following the Azusa Street movement, Pentecostal Christianity had spread to 50 different countries. It was thought that the gospel would be spread all across the world, according to most Pentecostal missionaries, and Africa would not be left out of the Pentecostal movement's growth, and the continent received its fair number of missionaries. According to Musvota (2021:3-4), "Henry and Anna Turney, Charles Chawner, Jacob Lehmann, John G. Lake, and others were among the early Pentecostal missionaries who came to South Africa". Several Pentecostal churches were founded in Africa such as Assemblies of God, but they were later identified as having schisms, which has become a hallmark of modern Pentecostal Christianity. The same schisms, ironically, aided the rise of Pentecostal Christianity in Africa. Nicholas Bhengu is a schismatic Pentecostal leader whose "Back to God Crusades" led to the conversion of many Africans to Pentecostalism. Other African pastors, preachers and evangelists who were instrumental in the spread of the Pentecostal movement in Africa were not memorialized in history books, with the exception of Nicholas Bhengu, who made an immense contribution to the South African Assemblies of God. In South Africa, schisms within the Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM) resulted in the formation of other denominations, including the Zion Christian Church, led by Engenas Lekganyane. In the history of the AFM in Zimbabwe, Paul Kruger, a well-known missionary, relocated from South Africa to Zimbabwe and established the AFM (Musvota, 2021:3-4).

According to Adebayo and Zulu (2018:16), the Pentecostal doctrine traces its origin and inspiration to the events that transpired at Pentecost as described in the book of Acts 2:1-4. The Pentecostal denomination is an experiential form of Christianity, that results in "the baptism of the believer in the Holy Spirit, with the evidence of the fruits and gifts of the Holy Spirit such as speaking in tongues". The Charismatic Pentecostal

Church adopts Pentecostal beliefs and is referred to as the Charismatic movement. Charismatics can be defined as those who emphasise gifts of the Holy Spirit much like a Pentecostal but who remain a part of a mainline church. Both denominations, Charismatic and Pentecostal, emphasizes Scripture, the Holy Spirit, the work of Christ, worship, maturing of the believer in the image of Christ, and maintenance of a relationship with God (Adebayo & Zulu, 2018:16).

Mathole (2005:177) discusses how the Charismatic church emerged from and has its roots in Pentecostalism and the broader Evangelical movement. This further confirms and explains their striking similarities. Because of the overwhelming similarities, for the purposes of this study, no differentiation has been drawn between Pentecostal and Charismatic denominations. As a result, the words are used interchangeably and both mean denominations that emphasize Scripture, the Holy Spirit, the work of Christ, worship, a good and close relationship with God, and the maturing of the believer into the image of Christ. As a result of the history of these denominations sometimes stemming from influences outside of South Africa and the African continent, some church headquarters referred to in this study are based in foreign countries and have branches globally. As Adebayo and Zulu (2018:16) state, African Pentecostalism was influenced by the work of several Pentecostal missionaries from Great Britain, North America, and other countries.

Now that I have defined the Charismatic and Pentecostal denomination and given a background of its origins, I will now shift to the state of women leadership in this church. Kgatle (2019:1) observes that women have an important part to play in African Pentecostal Christianity. They are the majority in most local congregations, and they give a significant portion of the church's income. They are frequently the most active participants in the local assembly' many activities, such as the provision of food, fellowship, and prayer. Female contribution in general church activities has been recognized by multiple scholars studying the dynamics of gender in the leadership of Pentecostal Churches. Mwaura (2013:411) notes that Christianity did not only attract African women during its introduction to the continent, to this day women dominate the population of mainline, Charismatic, and Pentecostal churches, despite this, they are severely underrepresented in church leadership structures.

In a study conducted in Pentecostal churches in Zimbabwe, Mapuranga (2013: 80) shows that women are consistently the majority in Pentecostal churches, men, however, dominate influential and strategic leadership positions, and men have historically been the founders of these churches. In the 1960s and 70s, men had an exclusive monopoly over influential positions, Mapuranga (2013: 80), however, reports that after the year 2000, within the Pentecostal church, several women rose to prominence as leaders. Unfortunately, because men dominate most official leadership positions, women in key positions in Pentecostal churches wind up leading women-only groups/ministries. Further research discloses that these so-called "women-for-women ministries are found in multiple parts of the continent". This can be seen positively as more women can now access opportunities to lead in the Church, but it is still a problem as the narrative is not the same in congregations that comprise both men and women. When I left my family home church, I initially did not confine myself to any particular church. I visited different churches and from observations, the pattern was the same irrespective of denomination, majority of women congregants but male-dominated leadership. This was until I started attending my current church. When I was in Johannesburg, I started attending a Charismatic church in 2006, I was 22 years old then. I wasn't actively involved in the church at that time, I was a mere churchgoer. I stayed in the same and only started serving when I moved to Cape Town. A Cape Town branch was started in 2011 and I was involved from the beginning. I started serving in different departments such as ushering, counselling and intercession. I then served as a Head of the Administration department, followed by leading the women's ministry, a ministry for single people, etc. until I became a Pastor in March 2020 and was commissioned to start a new branch where I have been serving as the lead pastor. Although I rose to a leadership position in my church, I found that women leaders are the minority. The number of female leaders in my Church appears to be adequate at first glance, but when the number of female worshipers is evaluated, the number of female members considerably outnumbers the number of men. The number of women serving in various areas is likewise far higher than the number of males serving; yet, men dominate every level of leadership. Kgatle (2019:1) confirms that this is not only in my church but in the broader Pentecostal churches. Women are sometimes allowed a voice in Pentecostal congregations because they believe the Holy Spirit speaks through both men and women. Women are however still subordinate to men in the

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church and this takes away that voice they were empowered with. Unfortunately, Pentecostals are largely in favour of genetics despite their apparent liberal view of the ministry of the Holy Spirit, thereby disadvantaging women. The Pentecostal space is that of ambivalence, tensions, and paradoxes. Women are not entirely silenced, but they occupy subordinate and sometimes insignificant positions (Gabaitse, 2015:1). Worship and activities in the church may seem democratic but according to research, women do not occupy a similar status as men. All man which includes women and men, can be baptised in the Holy Spirit, providing a sense of equality but women are still strained in the margins, they may at times be accepted due to the emancipatory function of the Holy Spirit but often, their progress is stifled through selective and oppressive interpretation of Biblical texts (Gabaitse, 2015:1).

In her article, "The Voices and Experiences of Vhavenda Women in the Pentecostal Churches in Thohoyandou", Mudimeli (2021:1) aimed to, firstly, give a description of the experiences and voices of Vhavenda women in the church, examining both good and bad experiences. Secondly, she aimed to discover how these ladies found ways to get around cultural and religious discourses that create the oppressive conditions that women face in the pursuit of church leadership. Finally, she aimed to tear down the unhealthy cultural and religious discourses in terms of *vhusadzi* (womanhood) theology, and as a result, empower African women. Mudimeli (2021:2) found that women form the majority in Pentecostal churches in Venda, just as we have seen in other churches, leadership, however, is elusive to them. As a Sotho woman, I can relate to these findings derived from the research based on Vhavenda women. This is a clear indicator that this underrepresentation can very well be the experience of women from any South African culture. The fact that women are underrepresented in the power structures of most churches, cuts across all cultural barriers (Mwaura 2013, 411).

A small number of women in positions of leadership are indeed professing to be guided by the Spirit, however, many others face rejection, even from church members. Gabaitse (2015:10) states that spiritual manifestation among Pentecostal women gives them recognition and power and vertical mobility is possible. In some contexts, female leadership is much more easily accepted compared to others which are much

more restrictive. Many women continue in ministry without receiving acknowledgement through titles. Gabaitse (2015:10) reported that there exists extensive research on women's role in Venda churches, especially in Pentecostal churches, despite this, the scarcity of data has been something that I experienced through writing this study. The available data shows that in many churches women serve as Sunday school teachers or lead in female-only groups. Most women end up preaching about issues relating to management of the household such as treating husbands with respect, ways of raising children, and how to create and maintain good relations with their in-laws. These are all admirable causes, but they do little to empower other women who regard them with admiration to come forward as new leaders this may result from the lack of proper training or even a complete absence (Mudimeli 2011, 94). Gabaitse (2015:2) states that African Pentecostal women are subordinated to male authority, this is because power is interpreted as the right of males, and women are therefore side-lined.

An empowering feeling exists when we observe that Charismatic ministries do not impose any doctrinal beliefs and restrictions on women. These ministries view the Levitical beliefs and restrictions as being quite inconsistent with the teachings of the New Testament and especially regarding the experiences that followed the Pentecost (Gabaitse, 2015:2). This study has uncovered ambivalent attitudes towards women in Pentecostal churches from numerous research documents. This means that the Pentecostal Church subjugates women while at the same time, "offering them a unique permission to speak." Scholars of Pentecostalism have for the longest time, emphasized the emancipatory functions of the Holy Spirit, and the fact that women in these churches can preach through the reception of the Holy Spirit, but they ignored the oppression that these women still face regarding patriarchal beliefs of the church. Gabaitse (2015:2) states that new studies have shown that there is gender-based barriers to inclusion in the Pentecostal movement in Asia, Africa, and the West.

I have debunked the myth that men and women have the same status in the Pentecostal church. According to the literature above, most Pentecostal churches remain to be patriarchal, and they resist gender transformation, they selectively use an oppressive interpretation of Levitical scripture to propagate oppression (Gabaitse,

2015:2). These churches have hierarchical and authoritarian leadership structures rather than liberal democratic structures, where men are on top, followed by women. Mapuranga (2013:79), states that women's exclusion from theological colleges and their silence inside the Church was duplicated in other fields and disciplines. This is seen in the emphasis on the education of boy children at the expense of girl children. The boy was regarded as the one to safeguard the continuity of the clan in African communities. This discrimination is present in religion where more men receive ordination compared to women, therefore, getting easier access to leadership roles at the expense of women. The reality of the boys being seen as the ones who would ensure the lineage's survival, resulted in them getting preferential treatment. The lack of formal education among girls effectively locked many of them out from mission work and theological progress.

2.6 The Numbers: Women Leaders in South African Charismatic Churches

The information in this section is based on various websites I viewed intending to find actual data that corroborates the reality and truth of the underrepresentation of women in positions of leadership in the Charismatic church which is discussed in the previous sections in this chapter. I used my church as a reference and studied some of the oldest and some of the biggest Charismatic so-called "mega-churches" in South Africa. These include some with headquarters outside of South Africa, but I only report the data relating to the leadership of the church that is based on leadership structures within South Africa. I will also use an example of my journey to church leadership. In my current church, the congregation has a majority of women at 60%. Leadership is still male-dominated but there are a lot of emerging women leaders and pastors. We have one woman Bishop and about 30% women pastors, me included.

Some of the oldest Pentecostal denominations in South Africa include Assemblies of God, African Faith Mission, and Full Gospel Church, they are also referred to as classical Pentecostal denominations (Resane, 2018:1). In their research conducted in 2006 on church history, the Pew Research Centre includes Assemblies of God, Rhema Bible Church, Durban Christian Centre, and African Faith Mission as some of

the oldest and biggest Charismatic churches in South Africa. In her article "What these seven local mega-churches are doing in light of the coronavirus pandemic", Ngwadla (2020:1) includes the following Charismatic and Pentecostal churches: Hillsong Church South Africa, Enlightened Christian Gathering Church, Rhema Bible Church, and Christian Revival Church also as some of the biggest Charismatic denominations. The other churches included in the article are not Charismatic denominations so I did not include them in this exercise.

In the South African Charismatic church, there is limited research which has been done on women's leadership. One of the few available studies I engaged with was done on the Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM) a classical Pentecostal Christian denomination in South Africa. The study by Kgatle (2019:4) states that there were 2,400 ordained pastors in 2019, with a significant (and growing) number of women among them. The number of ordained female pastors has increased throughout time, and there are presently 300 of them. Interesting to note however is the fact that the majority of these women pastors do not lead assemblies. However, several co-pastors are focusing on certain areas of ministry. Pastors are largely responsible for training and assisting people in their ministries. in addition to typical pastoral activities such as preaching, pastoral care, and meeting and sacrament administration. Women in the AFM continue to hold jobs in local assembly departments, and some serve as pastors' wives, providing support to their husbands. Many women are not leading pastors; although being ordained, they are not given the same call to lead local churches as their male counterparts (Kgatle, 2019:4).

On the website "Top Church Founders" (2021), many founders of Charismatic and Pentecostal churches across the globe are profiled. None of those Founders were women. The leaders mentioned who have large churches in South Africa although not all with origins in South Africa include the following: "Dag Heward-Mills (Lighthouse Chapel International, Accra Ghana), Mosa Sono (Grace Bible Church, Soweto South Africa), Ray McCauley (Rhema Bible Church, Johannesburg South Africa) and Brian Houston (Hillsong Church, Sydney Australia)". Based on these studies, I searched some of these churches' websites to see their leadership structures and get data on the number of women who hold senior positions of leadership in relation to the number

of men in these positions. The following 10 churches which had information about the top leadership form the basis of my findings in this section: Assemblies of God, African Faith Mission (AFM), Full Gospel Church, Rhema Church, Durban Christian Centre (DCC), Grace Bible Church, Hillsong Church, South Africa, Enlightened Christian Gathering Church, Christian Revival Church (CRC), and Lighthouse Chapel International.

The data about the leadership of these ten churches shows that all of the Founders are male despite the main population that ends up making up the majority of the membership being women. Church planting is a very consuming and extremely arduous task, is it that only men can master the patience and resources to establish new churches and lead them to success? I believe that women too should be empowered from a young age to be equipped with the skill, and mastery to be able to establish churches themselves to further spread the Gospel. 100% of these churches are currently being led by men, I mention this since in some of these churches the founders are not based in South Africa and the church has leaders who are not necessarily the founders. Only 30% of these churches mention the spouse of the leading pastor as a co-leader in the church. The other churches are silent on the role played by the wives of the leading pastors and bishops. The churches use different terminologies for the top tier of leadership in the church. Some refer to this level of leadership as the Executive team, Executive council, National leadership, and others, the Bishops' Council. Whichever terminology is used, the thing they have in common is the underrepresentation of women on this level of leadership. 80% of the churches have 100% male leaders. A further 10% has one woman leader out of a team of seven. These churches are a sample of the extreme underrepresentation of women in South African Charismatic churches that can be extrapolated to give a description of most of the churches in the country.

I was particularly excited about the last 10% which is the most transformed church out of this sample of 10 churches. In this church, the executive leadership of the church is 50% women and 50%, male. This church shows that the Charismatic churches can change the praxis of the underrepresentation of women; it shows that indeed there is hope for women leaders in the church. Not much information is shared on how this

church managed to transform and have such a good number of women represented in their leadership structures, unfortunately. The only information I could find is what the church's beliefs are in terms of gender equality. Their statement of faith states that:

> "Gender Equality: The Bible teaches us that both man and woman were created equal by God, and in His image; that they both had a relationship with God, shared equally with God, spoke to God and fellowshipped with Him, and were both given authority to rule over the earth (Gen 1:26-28). The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ came to redeem women as well as men. Through faith we all become children of God, regardless of racial, social, or gender distinctions (Galatians 3:26-28). In the Church spiritual gifts of women and men are to be recognized, developed, and used while public recognition is to be given to both women and men who exercise ministries of service and leadership (1 Peter 4:10-11). In the family neither spouse is to seek to dominate the other but rather serve and submit to one another; spouses are to learn to share the responsibilities of leadership based on gifts, expertise and availability (Ephesians 5:21). Both mothers and fathers are to exercise leadership in the nurture, training, discipline, and teaching of their children (Proverbs 1:8, Ephesians 6:1-4, Colossians 3:20). (Rhema, 2021:2)".

Based on the representation of women in positions of leadership in this church, it is evident that this statement is not only written on paper but is lived out in practice and embraced by the church leadership and congregants.

The next level of leadership in these churches is the lead pastors of the multiple church branches across the country. All these churches have multiple locations in all provinces of South Africa. This information was available for only 30% of the sample churches and of that 30%, I could not tell whether 10% were male or female as the information provided was only initials and surnames. The data available showed that 70% of the branch pastors were men. This picture is in line with the findings from the various studies in this chapter that showed that the representation of women in leadership structures reduced the higher up the ranks one went. In this section, a branch pastor is the lowest leader I discussed and 30% were women. The national leaders are all male and 30% mention the wives of these leaders as co-leaders in the respective churches. This data is indeed consistent with my experiences in South African corporates and churches as a whole and the Charismatic denomination.

2.7 Challenges Faced by Women Leaders in the Church

Some studies show an improvement in women who succeed in breaking the stained-glass ceiling and occupy senior leadership positions in churches. However, simply having women in positions of leadership does not imply a genuine shift away from traditional top-down hierarchical systems, as well as some male leaders' approachability and acceptance of and support for female members in top leadership posts. The Church has been chastised for its clericalism, or the monopoly of authority in the hands of ordained leaders in churches, and for the fact that male clergy are typically resistant to being contacted by their congregations (Gennrich, 2015:154). When I view this with an African Women Practical Theology lens, I learn that this lack of approachability of the seasoned male church leaders by new female leaders means that the women leaders navigate the intricacies of leadership on their own, and are lonely, without a receptive guiding hand, and this can be quite detrimental to their leadership experience.

Priest & Barnie (2017:138) state that years of equality and affirmative action activism have brought about leadership spaces that women can occupy. However, though the opportunities exist, often they are at subordinate levels while men take up more senior positions, from an African Women Practical Theology lens, I find this quite diminishing to women in the church if indeed equality exists in society, and top leadership positions should also be open to women. Research also shows that whereas congregations may give opportunities to women in the Church, they resist a woman serving as a pastor. Studies on theological education show the historic fact that very few women studied theology because theological education is linked with ordination. Ordination remains a tendentious issue with interest as to where although ordination of women is technically permissible, execution varies, and the number of ordained women is minimal. Women leaders are often discriminated against and marginalized, both within the Church and in society in general.

Kellerman & Rhode (2007:129–131) show that evidence of female leadership rejection comes from studies of people's reactions to highly agency women. According to their

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study, people despise strong women and react to their power with anger, frustration, and hostility, according to their research. They did not, on the other hand, show hatred toward equally dominating guys. Many people are more tolerant of men's assertiveness and domination than that of women (Kellerman & Rhode, 2007:129–140). Women leaders encounter hurdles that their male colleagues do not. They may face misgivings about their leadership abilities, but they may also be chastised for demonstrating too much autonomy and not enough unity. Women's influence is harmed by this double bind, which leads to resistance to their leadership. Kellerman & Rhode (2007:129 – 168), further state that the idea that males are suited to lead and women are naturally suited to care is constantly promoted. We too often unwittingly promulgate this belief. Women and men both feel that women are incapable of being leaders hence women avoid taking on roles of leadership.

A practical example of the challenges women leaders in various sectors in the social experience including in church leadership is found within the research for the article Ndiyindoda, Penxa-Matholeni (2020:153), the women interviewed, empowered themselves through education and succeeded in top-level positions in the workplace. As mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, women's leadership problems don't end when they ascend to leadership positions. Even in leadership positions they still experience challenges. The women referred to in this study are from the Xhosa culture, but I found that as a Sotho woman, I could relate to some of their experiences. Their stories, I believe, are relevant for this study. The women in this study now hold positions such as ministers of religion, pastors, lecturers, school principals, bank managers, and teachers. According to these women, *laqala dhabi* (the battle began): The battle for physical and emotional spaces began and for their voices and the voices of other black women against sexism and racism in the workplace to be heard. This is a battle they knew they would have to fight, and they were prepared to be in battle because the struggle continues and the Constitution backs them (Penxa-Matholeni, 2020:153). Male leaders' insensitivity and lack of support are sighted as one of the difficulties that women confront in African church settings. Masenya (1994:65), advises that a review of the practice of theology in the past and even today shows that women have been neglected and even excluded from the practice of theology. In

Christianity, women were excluded from religious leadership roles and education, which prepares them for clerical and teaching roles.

As Wood (2019:1) states, "to be true to our faith in the God who sides with the poor, the Church in Southern Africa today is being called to work towards gender justice as an essential aspect of social, economic, and environmental justice. Some people are afraid this will mean giving women power over men or undermining African cultural traditions". This call is an urgent one which can no longer be de-prioritised. As Priest and Barnie (2017:135) correctly noted, all over the world, we find women who have been successful leaders and transform societies. However, this is rarely seen as the norm and often not easily accepted. In much of Africa, patriarchal culture and traditions have constrained female leaders. Wilsom (2011:3) states that in an African context, the tug-of-war between religion and culture presents issues that exacerbate women's susceptibility by increasing patriarchal control over them. While women are now resisting and organizing for every level, patriarchy is still alive, and well and liberation has proven illusory. In Southern Africa, exceptionally high levels of misogyny threaten women's progress as women saints (Wilsom, 2011:5). In the chapter that follows, we will go through these challenges in further depth.

2.8 Conclusion

In this chapter, we explored the descriptive task of practical theology and answered the question, what is going on in the South African Charismatic church women leadership. In doing so, I began by exploring the state of underrepresentation of women in different industries globally and locally. We saw from the findings here that there was a definite underrepresentation of women in positions of top leadership. This finding was coherent with the status of women's leadership in various industries in Africa as well as specifically in South Africa. In South Africa, we noted that whilst the constitution sought to protect the interest of women by having equality as one of the governing principles in the country and while legislation protected the interest of women (South African Government, 2021), the experienced reality of women contradicted their rights outlined on paper. In reality, women were not afforded equal

opportunities to occupy senior leadership roles as their male counterparts and as a result, remained underrepresented even 28 years post-democracy.

It was important to give a broader overview before looking specifically into the church as the church exists within the context of specific societies. Before exploring women leadership in the South African Charismatic church, I started with defining the Pentecostal Charismatic denominations and noted that sometimes the terms are used interchangeably. I then explored women leadership in the Pentecostal and Charismatic Church. and focussed on specific numbers of ten South African Charismatic churches where some are regarded as the oldest in the country and others the biggest. To no surprise, the study showed that women in various denominations, including the Charismatic, are underrepresented in leadership positions. As a leader in a church, these findings certainly did not come as a shock as they confirmed my observations and experience as one of the few church leaders.

In the final section of the chapter, I introduced some more challenges faced by leaders in the Church who are women. These included the hostile treatment of women who are in leadership positions as in some instances they are still viewed as imposters. We saw that this resistance can be attributed to the existing patriarchal structures that still exist in society. This closing forms a good basis for the chapter that follows as I will be exploring why the underrepresentation of women remains in various industries and specifically in the South African Charismatic church. After determining what is going on, the next stage is to determine why it is happening. This is the interpretative task's work, which will be discussed in the next chapter (Osmer, 2008:6).

Chapter 3:

Exploring hindrances to women leadership in the South African Charismatic church

3.1 Introduction

In chapter 2 of this study, I explored in terms of Osmer's (2011:2) tasks of Practical Theology, the descriptive task and gave context to what was happening in South African Pentecostal and Charismatic churches specifically pertaining to women leadership. I explored the reality of the underrepresentation of women in top leadership positions in different industries globally and locally as well as in different church denominations to show that underrepresentation of women in leadership is not a phenomenon unique to the church at large or the Charismatic church in particular. I also defined what I mean in the scope of this study by The South African Charismatic and Pentecostal Churches. I also noted that the few women who succeed in breaking the glass ceiling and navigate the labyrinth to successfully occupy top leadership positions face more challenges such as male insensitivity and lack of support (Penxa Matholeni, 2020:153). This leaves female leaders in environments that are not favourable for them to perform at their best.

The question that is central in this chapter is why are women not equally represented in senior leadership positions, and why are there seemingly persisting antagonistic attitudes towards women leadership? What kinds of theories could help us better comprehend and explain the current condition of women in church leadership? These are the essential concerns of the interpretive task of practical theological interpretation that is the focus of this current chapter (Osmer, 2008:6). Put differently, one might say that this chapter seeks to explore why there is a stained-glass ceiling or labyrinth in women's leadership journeys. According to the Open Education Sociology Dictionary (2021), the stained-glass ceiling explains how women access leadership positions in various religious institutions and organizations by breaking an invisible barrier. A stained-glass ceiling is also metaphorically used to detail the complex journey that women in leadership face (Priest & Barnie, 2017:136). On the other hand, according

to Northouse (2016:399), the labyrinth was introduced as an alternative picture of leadership when the glass ceiling limitations were cited. Eagly & Carli (2009:1) puts it this way, "the glass ceiling has shattered". This meant that the notion of women's advancement being obstructed was no longer valid. Schopp (2008:38) describes the labyrinth as the complex, indirect and challenging journey of women leaders in getting to top positions of leadership and women's success is analysed through the winding and twisting corridors. This aligns with Gregory-Mina (2012:67)'s description which describes the labyrinth as a representation of the various twisted possible routes that women use to climb up the career ladder with feasible courses to the corporate life. It depicts the routes and multiple barriers that women face in different organisations, including the church. It contains numerous obstacles that women will face in corporations; they are not a straight line. Women navigate a more complicated maze of challenges along their leadership journeys. Male colleagues, on the other hand, are able to advance to executive positions without having to overcome these obstacles (Gregory-Mina, 2012:68). The presence of a glass ceiling and labyrinth implies that every female does not have equal access to higher ranks until they break the invisible barrier and navigate certain challenges. It means that the journey has challenges that can be successfully navigated albeit not easily as we have seen when we explored the state of women in church leadership. The leadership labyrinth creates obstacles that result in a deficiency in numerical uniformity between women and men in leadership positions. This, we found to be the situation in Chapter 2 of this study when exploring women leadership in some South African Charismatic churches. And now we look at what are these challenges and hindrances that women face and what causes them?

As you will see, many reasons may be credited to be the source of women's experiences regarding leadership. Mapuranga (2013:74) states that the reason men monopolize top positions, "can be accredited to an array of historical, cultural, theological, and socio-economic phenomena". Religious and cultural factors continue to exert an enormous influence on women's lives and play a vital role in perpetuating injustice against women (Penxa-Matholeni, 2020: 152). This injustice includes the practice of denying women the opportunities to hold leadership positions in the Church. In their study on women leadership, where women shared their stories of

experiences where they were marginalized, dominated, and discriminated against by churches, Priest & Barine (2017:135) saw patriarchal structures as the biggest constraint facing female leaders. The different reasons for underrepresentation are very diverse, and it would not be possible to discuss all of them in the scope of this research. As a Sotho woman raised in an entirely patriarchal Sotho culture, I will discuss the impact of culture and patriarchy on women leadership. I will draw from my Sotho culture as I reflect on the effect it has had in my journey and experience as a leader in a Charismatic church and my observations on the impact on other women in a similar context. As a pastor in a Charismatic denomination, I will also explore theological reasons and explore hindrances from a Charismatic church's point of view.

This current chapter will thus focus on cultural, patriarchal, and Charismatic denomination hermeneutic hindrances to women's leadership. What are these, and what role do they play in hindering women's leadership? I intend to explore some of these questions. Continuing the four interconnected tasks of practical theology by Osmer (2011:2), this chapter focuses on the interpretive task which I have described as describing why do women make up such a small percentage of people occupying positions of leadership in the church and why women leader's experiences are still predominantly unpleasant.

3.2 Culture and women leadership

According to Gennrich (2015:54), culture consists of social policies or an accepted way of doing things, as well as remembering significant occasions and sharing duties and privileges. Merriam Webster Dictionary (2021) defines culture as "the beliefs, customs, arts, etc of a particular society, group, place or time; a way of thinking, behaving or working that exists in a place or organization". It encompasses social, political, and economic behaviours in a larger society. Attitudes, expectations, behaviour, religious beliefs, basic worldviews, and ceremonial activities are all part of a culture. To expand on this definition, culture can also be defined as "the accumulation of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spatial relations, universe concepts, and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people through individual

and group striving over generations" (Hofstede, 1997:5). These definitions of culture are helpful since they also explain that culture influences religious beliefs and practices. This makes a case for my exploration of culture as a possible cause of women's experience in religious spaces, as in the case of this research, in the South African Charismatic church. Let us explore the concept of culture and women leadership by first looking at some cultural concepts which I believe influence leadership.

3.2.1 Ethnocentrism

Ethnocentrism describes how individuals are more inclined to place their own cultural, ethnic, or racial group in the forefront of their perceptions of others and the world. People tend to prioritise their values, beliefs, and attitudes over other groups. Ethnocentrism is the perception that one's cultural practices are better than others while failing to understand the complexity of their cultural differences. It accounts for society's way of thinking that the existing cultural values and way of thinking are correct and intrinsic. Ethnocentrism is a major obstruction to effective leadership because it fails to detect how people understand and lacks respect for others' perspectives (Triandis,1990:34). I believe that this concept of cultural superiority needs to be included in this discussion as later we will see how this mind-set causes people to even overlook biblical truths of gender equality over cultural believes of patriarchy.

3.2.2 Prejudice

Like ethnocentrism, prejudice is the tendency of individuals to fix their attitudes, beliefs, or emotions about another individual or society based on false data or lack of information. It is mainly fuelled by unsubstantiated data or past interaction with an individual or group of people that left an impression and can be based on anything ranging from gender, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation (Hoyt, 2010:484). Ethnocentrism and prejudice are both biased ways of thinking. They hinder leaders' ability to harness the power of a multicultural work environment and diversity in different organisations. Such leaders are biased when selecting their subordinates, which creates a vacuum that limits the organisation's opportunity to maximise human capital and create a diverse working environment. These concepts are passed on from

one generation to the next and impacts leadership perceptions in the church. We have seen this is the case with limitations regarding gender differences (Hoyt, 2010:484).

3.2.3 Stereotypes

As defined by Hoeritz (2013:29), stereotyping can be defined as "the practice of identifying a stereotyped group's perceived qualities with an individual based on that individual's membership in the stereotyped group. Some prejudices have cross-cultural roots, whereas others are more flexible and culture-specific". There was a lot in common among those who shared cross-cultural trends (sexism, personal reliance). Groups of lower status, such as women and the elderly, gain stereotypic warmth but lose stereotypic competence (owing to their lower status); on the other hand, males and middle-aged adults display the reverse trade-off, being stereotypically more capable than warm (Fiske, 2017:1). Gender role preconceptions contribute to the lack of female leaders. Women have been assigned the stereotypes of being warm, compassionate, because of the role they've played in society, they've been labelled as caring, indecisive, emotional, and passive. These prejudices, are carried over into the job and the church, where women are not seen as possessing the attributes required of leaders, who are thought to be resolute, rational, and strong (Hoeritz 2013:6). Individuals who are linked with a negatively characterized group suffer from stereotyping, in this context women being the negatively characterised individuals. This is certainly something I can relate to as in the Sotho culture, we were also raised to be nurturers who are warm and soft spoken. As women we were not raised to be assertive and expressive of our opinions and thoughts. According to the "role congruity theory of prejudice against women leaders, prejudice against women leaders develops as a result of the incongruity between the two stereotypes, and as a result, women will have less access to leadership opportunities and face greater obstacles as they carry out leadership roles" (Hoeritz 2013:6). Detrimental stereotyping has a negative impact on oppression, discrimination, lack of opportunities to advance and social exclusion. Stereotyping wears down one's objectives, effort, and personality on an individual level. The fundamental issue is perceiver sincerely believing the target is as viewed, but he or she is unaware of his or her own inputs into the views are entwined in the intricacy and negativity of stereotypes (Hoeritz 2013:30). This is certainly a challenge

that I have personally experienced as in some instances in my leadership journey I turned down opportunities because I didn't believe I would be able to handle them. This belief was not because I lacked the skills but it was a result of not having dealt with the limiting beliefs that one inherited from growing up in a patriarchal society.

3.2.4 Cultural Dimensions

As part of my study of culture and leadership, the following dimensions explain the culture and how people use culture to make leadership decisions.

3.2.4.1 Power distance - the extent to which a group's weaker members of a community or organization tolerate and expect unequal power distribution is measured by this dimension (Hofstede, 2003:3). Power distance explains inequality in organizations and society but from below. In this dimension, inequality is endorsed by leaders and followers. In a setting where followers are stratified, they tend to create levels based on power, status, authority, gender, wealth, and prestige. The degree of respect accorded to authority is deeply rooted in culture.

3.2.4.2 Uncertainty avoidance - this cultural dimension explains the extent to which a society, organization, or individuals stick to cultural norms and practices to avoid the unpredictable turn of events brought about by change. The community relies on societal norms, beliefs, rituals, and procedures to make things more predictable and less uncertain. Uncertainty avoidance explains why a group of individuals or society may fail to drop the gender stereotypes and rules built over the years due to fear of uncertainty (Hofstede, 2003:3).

Members of the society, including religious leaders, parents, teachers, and elders, play a crucial role when it comes to determining how people understand the world. This is how cultural concepts are passed on from generation to generation (Gennrich, 2015:55). Cultural practices are approved ways in which a group of people is accustomed. These cultural traditions are founded on society's ideals or views about particular topics. Cultural practices transform into traditions when they are passed from generation to generation until they become acceptable practices in that culture (Gennrich, 2015:54). Most of the obstacles women encounter stem from unequal

division of labour, structure, and culture of modern organizations. This explains why women are still dominated by stereotypical cultural notions that particularly marginalise them. According to societal ideas, Sotho culture included, the primary role of the woman is to cook, clean, run household errands, and nurture children.

Legal systems and policies have better policies that advocate for women's rights and equal representation, but cultural beliefs still dictate the influential impact on women's experiences. This cultural violence is excused as socio-economic and political practices. A study conducted in Namibia concluded that women's rights on paper are not translated into people's hearts and minds (Ikhaxas 2008:xxiii). Legal rights enacted have not brought any difference to the gender regime in the country. The laws transform only the formal declaration of rights, which neglect the cultural policies and practices that promote and leave the patriarchal rules unchallenged even in the contemporary societies in Africa. Culture still overrode the law. Governments are critical in enacting laws that are not just gender-inclusive but also boost women's economic potential. Whilst this study was done in Namibia, one can certainly see the similarities in a South African context. I remember growing up when one mentioned the equality enshrined in the constitution, elders would frown upon those individuals and highlighted their perceived flaws of equality. According to Sotho elders, equality, and democracy where the reasons for "moral decay and disrespectful women". In a Sotho culture context, assertive and outspoken women are regarded as "disrespectful".

Maphisa (2017:1) states that it is critical for executives to invest time understanding cultural dynamics and variances in order to maximize boardroom involvement. Based on his research, Maphisa (2017:1) observed that in certain instances, the proportion of women nominated to boards has increased dramatically, but the quality of their involvement has not, owing mostly to women being ignored, overlooked, or disrespected and therefore not being heard. According to Kellerman & Rhode (2007:6), the misalignment between the attributes typically connected with women and those generally connected with leadership is one of the barriers to seeing women in positions of influence. The Kellerman & Rhode (2007:389-390) study of women in corporate leadership positions found that gender stereotypes were highlighted by 46%

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of women as a hindrance to women and men advancing in business leadership. Gender stereotypes made women feel that they were at a disadvantage. Gender imbalance in the workplace is a reflection of men and women's social relationships. The lack of women in high leadership positions reflects the power imbalance in men and women's social relationships. Stereotyping contributes to the underlying power imbalance by limiting women's influence and potential in the workplace.

3.3 The influence of culture on women's leadership in the South African Charismatic Church?

Scriptures such as Galatians 3:28, which reads "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus", show us that everyone, irrespective of gender, ethnicity, social class, or age, is welcome in God's kingdom. Genesis 1:26 also show equality of humanity in that it tells how humans, both men and women are created in God's likeness. However, because we live in a patriarchal society, the church often does not reflect this (Musvota, 2021:2). People took their cultural views to church, such as the concept that a man is greater, powerful, respected, and a controller, whereas women are weak, inferior, and submissive. Women were stereotyped as weak and powerless, unqualified to hold leadership positions as a result of these ideas (Chifungo, 2014:3). Cultural beliefs and practices influence how we understand normal, right, and appropriate based on social ideas and assumptions. The Church's perspective regarding male and female leadership has been influenced by cultural customs and rituals. Mudimeli (2021:10), explored the influence of religion and culture on the perspective of women on church leadership, as well as whether the Bible supports or opposes women's participation in church management.

As previously stated, those who were opposed to women becoming pastors cited the Bible and culture to demonstrate that women are not supposed to lead. Even some of the women agreed that since Jesus exclusively called men to be his disciples, there is no scriptural confirmation of a woman functioning as a pastor. They also referenced to Paul's statement that women should not ask questions when learning, implying that women should not be in positions of leadership in the Church. Scriptures such as 1

Timothy 2:8–15 and 1 Corinthians 14:34–35 are utilised in the Church to silence the voices and opinions of women. When these passages are read and interpreted, they are read with the intention to stifle women's voices and to discourage women from aspiring to be pastors. In (Mudimeli 2011:129), male participants shared their views which include the view that, women are subservient to men and are subject to them. Second, women do not have the same rights as males. Finally, women are incapable of leading. The insights drawn from above show that in cases of culture that upholds patriarchy, this has adverse repercussions for women in church leadership. This link between culture, patriarchy and religion is also evident in my own Sotho culture in which I was raised and that has the most significant impact on me, not just as a woman but as a church leader. The balance of this chapter is devoted to considering specifically, how the Sotho culture influences women's leadership in the South African Charismatic Church.

3.3.1 Sotho culture and women leadership

According to Gennrich (2015:56), questioning the meaning of "our culture" researchers have shown that African culture was also based in pre-colonial times in patriarchal systems. Even still, it was quite different from what many young men today get to describe as "our culture." Women were acknowledged as contributing and crucial role players in the economic structure of the day, not as equals. While men retained overall authority, women were active leaders in their fields of labour, both economically and politically, in many communities. Many African languages, unlike most European languages, lack gender pronouns, therefore several names are used for both male and female babies. This also demonstrates that age and seniority were more important than gender. Young men in pre-colonial times, for example, surrendered to the leadership of elder women and men. Many pre-colonial cultures' religious practices, as well as how they dressed, placed a greater premium on seniority and other social status markers than on gender. While women's fertility was highly valued because it was necessary for tribes and societies to survive, women's bodies were not regarded as objects purely for men's sexual enjoyment (Gennrich, 2015:56). This is certainly the reality of Sotho people, according to Van der Wiel (2017:37), missionaries from Europe arrived in Lesotho and began to teach Sotho people about

Christianity, this is where the voices of women regarding spirituality and eventually in the church was shut down. This is when principles of superiority of the male gender was taught and became part of the Sotho people's culture.

As communities were exposed to European colonial and missionary powers, women's standing deteriorated. These missionaries enforced a new (public) economic structure, which devalued the homestead economy. Certain men were chosen to profit economically and politically allowing them to enrich themselves by giving tribe land away. This was done through giving them money for their crops and establishing forced chiefery. This established a type of patriarchy, that not only gave males more power over women, but also formed classes among men based on money and political power, robbing women of their full humanity status (Gennrich, 2015:57). Many men were lured to work as low-wage laborers in the towns as more tribal property was handed over to colonial settlers and cattle-bartering replaced currency as a source of income. These men often did not return home for periods over 12 months. As a result, their boys grew up without the correct guidance of their fathers, and many customs were misconstrued by the newer generation of males. Over time, the missionaries' teachings on sex, family and marriage, as well as the inferiority of women as unfit for leadership, had a significant impact on how African societies saw women. It solidified a system that had no regard for women, devalued the household economy, and thought it was acceptable for males to govern how their wives lived their lives (Gennrich, 2015:57). Work for enhanced gender justice might be stymied by culture and tradition. People sometimes use their cultures as an excuse for not becoming more gender-just in their relationships. Occasionally, cultural beliefs and customs make it difficult for women to seek help when they are in distress. Women may also face a conflict between their cultural and biblical convictions, or between their social expectations and their biblical values (Gennrich, 2015:62). Some ministers, church elders, and deacons believe the problem of women in leadership is a cultural one. A woman, according to the Nkhoma Synod's Chewa cultural setting, is a source of evil. After the matrilineal culture was pushed into patriarchy, women lost their dignity, and this notion arose. This is most noticeable at gatherings where women and girls sit separated from men and boys in political meetings, chiefs' meetings, mealtimes, etc. (Chifungo, 2014:31). The Sotho culture is quite similar: Van der Wiel

(2017:25-39) speaks of practices in the Sotho culture where girls are not allowed to attend school, men solve society problems at a "*Khotla*" (a men's only community meeting) where women are not allowed, "*dingaka*" (healers) is usually men and "*moloi*" (witches) are women and use evil spirits to harm others. Growing up, I frequently heard women accused of witchcraft, but never a man. Even as an adult, I don't recall a man being accused of being a witch in my community, unless he was a professional traditional healer, but certainly not an ordinary man as in the cases with women.

A study by (Gennrich, 2015:144) tells of Sotho women stories about leadership in their churches. Mariam is one of these women, and her story is one of many regarding ordained women's social and cultural rejection. Mariam was ordained in 2006 and currently serves as a church leader in one of Lesotho's villages. She has suffered grief and resentment as a result of the community and congregation's lack of support since she started working there as a minister. In her Church, both women and men undermined her authority, and worse, they constantly questioned her doctrines. When she offered to do the burial service at a funeral, the elders and chiefs of the community refused. She attempted to enlist the help of her church's leadership, but all of her efforts were futile. Other concerned ladies in her congregation approached her and asked her to resign as a pastor and hand over the reins to a more powerful figure. When Mariam saw that all hell had broken free, she became bold in Church, ordering command from a strong group of men and women. After church services, she started conversing with the church elders, telling them that she was the Church's leader and putting down her regulations in the Church. Not only the church leaders, but also the congregation, were taken aback by her new attitude and demeanour. They started following her rules and regulations, and she is currently reaping the benefits of her labours in the Church, where she is respected (Gennrich, 2015:144). I choose to rely Mariam's story because it is so relatable to mine although I haven't experienced outright rejection from my church community, my rejection was always an internal one and like Mariam, I reached a turning point where I decided to embrace myself as a leader, and I have also seen the fruits. Had I not done this, I wouldn't be a pastor in my church since I would not have taken up the opportunity.

Gender transformation is never easy, in modern cultures, inequality between men and women has become the standard. Most churches justify their actions with deeply ingrained attitudes and theological reasons. Cultural and religious ideas sometimes reinforce one other, making it harder for people to conduct things differently without being seen as disobedient or a threat to power, and Mariam is now reaping the benefits of her labours in the Church, where she is respected (Gennrich, 2015:188). Masenya (1994:69) states that the practice of sexist domination, unlike other forms of expression, is mainly experienced in family settings. In the family, people learn that the male role is to work in the community and provide economically for the family while the female role is to provide the emotional warmth under the economic position of the male. The superior-inferior or master-slave relationship is initially learned and accepted as natural in this environment. This is the upbringing that shaped me as a woman and a leader, and I had to break free from it in order to fulfil my full potential as a church leader. According to Masenya (1994:72), patriarchy in African traditions contributed greatly to the low esteem of women. The Sotho tradition and culture is no exception. Viewing women as inferior to men has had far reaching implications on how theology was practiced: theology would basically exclude women, their views and their experiences. Feminist theology as a domain emerged as a reaction against such dehumanising and demoralising views on women. There is a need for a theology that would realise and acknowledge the full humanity of all beings created in God's image. A study conducted by Mapuranga (2013:74), indicates that in modern Zimbabwe, women Pentecostal leaders tend to negotiate with patriarchy. They refuse to criticize patriarchy and push for a subservient interpretation of the Bible. It indicates that a liberating biblical hermeneutics is required within the modern Pentecostal movement in Zimbabwe. In addition, these insights from another African country are no different from those in our South African and Sotho context. In my journey, I have met some women and observed from a distance how many women are not willing to ruffle feathers and just accept the status quo. Having had issues with myself view as a leader, I can relate as I understand how difficult and near impossible it is to fight external factors when people haven't dealt with their own beliefs that were inherited from upbringing in patriarchal societies.

3.4 Charismatic churches, culture, and women leadership

According to Mwaura (2005: 440), subservient views toward women should be viewed in the context of larger social and cultural norms. Irrespective of the reality that women's spiritual abilities are acknowledged in Charismatic churches, they are nevertheless restricted and have to deal with unfavourable attitudes. Taboos around menstruation and childbirth impede and inhibit women's full participation and exercise of leadership. This is due to the belief that they are ritually impure. The altar sanctuary is a male-only refuge in some churches, demonstrating this fear of pollution. Separate doors for each sex are common in congregational segregation. Mwaura (2005: 440) also states that male authority is also a source of opposition for many female leaders, according to the report. A contrast is also maintained between legal and Charismatic power in South African Zionist churches. Healers and prophets who hold charismatic roles are not part of the administrative hierarchy. As prophetesses and healers do not always threaten male supremacy, their power runs parallel to legal authority. Women's leadership is also fostered in the Spiritual AICs by the notion of co-dependency. As a result of their spouses' roles as bishops, women may hold positions of influence.

In a Zimbabwean Charismatic church context, which is also similar to a South African Charismatic church context, Musvota (2021:14) concluded that traditional cultural and theological perspectives perpetuated the patriarchal issue that has resulted in a dearth of female leadership among Zimbabwean Charismatics and Pentecostals. In theory, women are eligible for all positions. However, cultural norms and structural barriers can occasionally impede women from progressing up the corporate ladder. As a result, in Zimbabwe, Pentecostals don't just follow traditional culture, but rather rethink gender inequality in order to develop an original, non-patriarchal theology. Rethinking strategies for eliminating gender discrimination would contribute to the creation of a new, bright future with gender equality. As a result, promoting simply one or two women to leadership positions will not result in change. As (Musvota (2021:14), clearly states that "if Pentecostal believers in Zimbabwe are sincere about limiting gender discrimination, they should rather establish itineraries, roadmaps, and paths of transformation so that a cultural change is made manifest".

According to Mwaura (2005: 441), women were given numerous options in the Charismatic and Pentecostal churches without overt limitations like the AICs. Many Charismatic congregations enable women to take the lead because of their unstructured nature and free orientation. In their interpretations of scripture, Charismatic congregations use a liberating hermeneutic. Within their cultural and historical context, Pauline injunctions directed at women are criticized. However, mixed views toward women still prevail. Women may benefit from increased involvement and leadership chances on one hand, but they are typically vilified and demonized on the other. These findings are congruent with my experience in my Charismatic church, where there are more women in leadership positions and more possibilities for leadership are offered based on gifts rather than gender. Unfortunately, this is not the case for many other Charismatic churches.

According to Mwaura's (2005:442) report, fundamentalist inclinations can also be seen in Charismatic views about women. Due to the emphasis on a holiness ethic, women may have the flexibility to practice their spirituality and may have relative stability within marriage, as we have shown. Women may be oppressed by churches that adhere to a literalist reading of scripture. Some people have patriarchal and sexist ideas about women and marriage. Although they may accept the necessity and usefulness of women's work outside the home for economic reasons, true womanhood is a woman who devotes her life sacrificially to her husband and children's needs they assert. Her principal responsibilities are to be a wife and mother, as well as to submit to her husband's authority in all areas of life. Women's quiet and submission in Church and society are prescribed and encouraged by those spreading a male-centred ideology. Such theology is seen as normative and serves as a foundation for influencing attitudes and behaviour inside churches. These churches accept the New Testament's domestic regulations, which call for women's silence, and put them into reality literarily. It is taught to wives that they must be obedient and submissive to their husbands. Though this teaching is biblical, and reciprocal respect and obedience are virtues in human relationships, a woman's well-being can be jeopardized if she accepts it without question. It considers women to be morally powerless, which is unbiblical.

Nonetheless, Charismatic churches, like AICs, provide more good opportunities for women to participate as leaders and members (Mwaura, 2005:442).

3.5 Patriarchy and women leadership

Patriarchy is a social structure in which men have the majority of authority in the home, society, the church politics, and the economy. Individual men's deliberate influence over individual women isn't always the case (although in some cases, it may be). It's largely about people functioning inside a dominating worldview that shapes their power in relationships and in their lives. Most cultures, including Charismatic churches, are patriarchal (Gennrich, 2015:15). Men have not advocated for women's leadership because women are considered less than men. The Bible's representation of women influences this perspective. For example, in Genesis 2:18, women are described as helpers to men. Although the term helper has been used in other texts in the Bible to represent superiority and not inferiority, it has been universally interpreted as a representation of inferiority. Other texts in the Bible proceed to show how patriarchy reinforces only those parts that are beneficial to its existence. For example, 1 Corinthians 7:14 states that wives should have no authority over their bodies, whereas the husbands have authority over theirs. However, the full-text states that men and women are responsible for each other. In this case, the Bible treats them as equals. This has resulted in discriminatory treatment in churches and other workplaces.

The workplace and church unfortunately are not designed for women with family responsibilities. In most cases, women have to leave the workplace and church to give birth to children or inflexible and demanding work arrangements that do not support dual commitment (Carbajal, 2018:3). Women who are readily available and desire to demonstrate their abilities and potential must be accommodated by society. Frahm-Arp (2010:256-257) discovered that while professional success was significant to the women she spoke with, virtually all of them believed that the most important achievement a woman could attain was being a wife and mother in her own family. However, these women were forming their roles and identities as moms, wives, and members of their families in ways that were distinct from what they had experienced

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growing up. Their new identities and comprehension of these duties were strongly affected by the teachings of their faiths. These women perceptions of economic and social success were based on whether one had a nuclear family or not. If you had a nuclear family, you were deemed as successful. Their families represented their success as, modern South Africans living in the city, which also formed their identities. Women found the image of being submitted to a loving, caring, responsible husband, rather than a man who abused, took advantage of, or abandoned them, alluring, and it was around this idea that they created their identities as wives. These women did not regard themselves as subordinate pawns in a repressive patriarchal society, instead, they were seen as women who had broken free from these constraints by pursuing the Charismatic marriage ideal.

The most significant barrier for female leaders is patriarchal systems (Priest & Barine, 2017:135). According to Mudimeli (2021:5), patriarchy persists to dictate how women in the Church ought to be treated. Women have been defined as inferior, prolonging their marginalization and subjugation. In the Church and society, the consequent uneven gender relations have resulted in male supremacy and female subservience (Mwaura 2013, 412). Pentecostal women encounter a variety of problems, including societal attitudes of women and biblical interpretations that support theological and cultural discourses that marginalize women (Mudimeli 2011, 167). Men talk of women's independence in the Church, yet they only mention a sporadic instances where women have been given an opportunity to preach or perform some sort of duty. The Church continues to be heavily influenced by men. Many women have given up on church ministry because males do not appear to be willing to share the authority and ministry that comes with it. While researching "the role of women ministers in the Methodist Church of South Africa's mission", Mkhwanazi and Kgatla (2015:181) found that many women left the Church and others chose not to further their qualifications after ordination because of their male colleagues' rejection of ordained ministry, such stereotypes are reinforced by African culture's devaluation of women, and mis interpreted scriptures. According to Mkhwanazi and Kgatla (2015:194), major efforts by male members in particular, as well as a passionate fight to eliminate any sort of bias towards women in the Church, should be expected.

According to Landman (2009:40), patriarchy tries to govern religious discourse in the following areas: "marriage, church leadership, intimate bodies, desire, and family and household". She goes on to say that "patriarchy promotes the ideas that in the Bible, marriage is between a dominant male and a subordinate female; the Church, as a body of Christ, is male, and thus women are barred from leadership roles; women's bodies are sinful; desire and sex are only for reproduction; and women are to be subordinate within the family and household because it is God's will that men be the head thereof" (Landman, 2009:40-42).

3.5.1 Gender inequality

Gender inequality is an aspect of patriarchy, which is an exclusionary social system. The dominant societal system that affirms male authority in all sectors of life is known as patriarchy (Gennrich, 2015:6). Gender inequality is defined by the European Commission (2004:1) as "a legal, social, and cultural situation in which one's sex and/or gender dictates the varied rights that they can enjoy. Uneven access to or enjoyment of ownership, as well as the assumption of conventional social and cultural roles, reflect these factors. These have an impact on men and women's status in all aspects of society, whether public or private, in the family or on the job, in economic or political life, in authority and decision-making, and in social gender relations". Women are seen as second-class citizens in almost all countries (European Commission, 2004:1). In the context of this study, we can thus define gender inequality as the situation women find themselves in where they are not afforded equal opportunities to lead in the Church based simply on their gender. They are not given the same opportunities and rights as men.

3.5.2 Marginalization

Marginalization, according to Subbulakshmi (2021:1), is merely expressing scorn. It is the sociological process by which a single person or a group of people are marginalised or pushed to the edge of society. It occurs when people are driven to the periphery of a group, usually as a result of discrimination, causing them to stand out and appear different from others. As a result, they feel isolated and isolated from the

rest of society. Being demoted to a position of insignificance is known as marginalisation. It can also refer to being relegated to a lesser social status. Women still dominate the pews in churches today, according to Mwaura (2005: 411-412), which is consistent with our findings thus far. They are, however, conspicuously absent from the Church's male-dominated power structures. The patriarchal worldview that underpins African cultures' systems has shaped how people perceive gender roles in the workplace. Women's marginalization and oppression are perpetuated by patriarchy's definition of women as inferior. The resulting unequal gender relations in church and society have translated into male supremacy and female subservience. There are numerous causes for this, according to Maphisa (2017:89). (some more controversial than others). It could, however, be the outcome of a patriarchal society in which women have been less involved in the drive for economic equality than black people, particularly black men.

According to research performed among South African women in the church, the majority of women believe that women's inactivity is a contributing reason to their marginalization. It is believed that women do not have leadership skills, capacity, and exposure in support of this. However, balanced lessons are required so that women, whether in the secular or religious spheres, can obtain training and empowerment. Women's capacity development thus becomes essential (Musvota, 2021:9).

3.6 Biblical hermeneutics regarding women leadership

In a study of churches conducted by Dickow (2012:70), there were few women among church leaders. Some said their rule was that pastors were men. Their wives also fulfilled spiritual functions but in subordinate roles. They justify this distinction on biological and biblical grounds. According to Ani (2011:21-23), it was thought that God initiated, and the Bible endorsed, women's inferior status and inferiority to men. Women were likewise excluded from the church in South African contexts because of these historical ideas.

The misreading of texts, according to research performed among Zimbabwean Charismatic churches, is a key barrier to women's leadership. Chifungo (2014:3) found

that the scripture misinterpretation is the primary reason why the church has excluded women in Malawi till today. Women have been oppressed by using texts like 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 and 1 Timothy 2:11-12 to prevent them from expressing their God-given qualities and skills to lead. In support of this, some men interviewed quoted what they deemed as an instruction by Paul which "as in all congregations of saints, women should remain silent in churches. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the law says, if they want to inquire about something, they should ask their own husbands at home, for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church" (1 Corinthians 14:33–35). Paul also instructs, "Now I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is the man …" (1 Corinthians 1:13). As a result, it should be recognized that these texts, if interpreted literally, discriminate against female church leadership. If the Bible is rightly interpreted, however, it shows that God's use of women should extend to allowing them to lead in top positions. Esther, Naomi, and Deborah, biblical heroines, exhibit tenacity, demonstrating that they inhabited a substantial space, as suggested by Paul, who states, "there is neither male nor female, Greek nor Jew." This meant a gender balance, which should be maintained by default in Zimbabwe's Pentecostal congregations (Musvota, 2021:8).

According to Mapuranga (2013: 81), AICs have actually enabled the possibilities for women to participate in and lead. This stands in stark contrast to the patriarchal condition brought about by missionary faiths. Although white missionaries were believed to be the leaders as "Reverend Fathers" and "Pastors," African males were later taught and co-opted into these positions of leadership under the patriarchal system, leaving women behind. Women were instead taught to be domestic and to emphasize their mothering roles.

It is indeed reasonable to wonder why it took approximately 200 years before women were elected to positions of leadership in the Church. The most probable explanation is that, generally, Christianity remains a highly patriarchal faith. Men dominate practically every level of leadership and institutional structures in the "Methodist Church of Southern Africa". Women were first allowed to be ordained in the Catholic Church 43 years ago. According to Forster (2019:1), "by 2016, women made up only

17 % of the clergy, 4 % of regional executives (circuit superintendents), and there were no female bishops. Some attribute this to religious patriarchy, while others attribute it to patriarchy's prevalence in African societies throughout the region. Women have held prominent leadership positions in other countries where Methodism is practiced, such as the United Kingdom and the United States". However, in some contexts, including as Africa and parts of Latin America, the church has not progressed as it should in recognising and electing women to top leadership roles (Forster, 2019:1).

On the other side, according to Mapuranga (2013: 87), some people are against the current trend of women preachers. This is a calling reserved for men, according to them. Some women have been stereotyped to believe that they will never be able to do "what men do." In the study conducted by Mapuranga (2013: 87), this patriarchal was expressed by many women and men in the Pentecostal Church. This patriarchal approach was also highlighted by Bernard Mlambo who was, a pastor and lecturer at a University Zimbabwe). He stated unequivocally that he is not in support of the continued emergence of female church leaders and questions who gives women the power to stand and teach God's message. The best way to articulate this view is to quote him, he says "Unfortunately for the women, I quote the Bible, which is the only authentic source of what God tells me to follow. It instructs women to be silent in Church and never speak in front of a congregation. In addition, Jesus Christ himself never chose women amongst his disciples". "Furthermore, after his resurrection, Jesus commanded the eleven disciples who were left to go and make disciples of the nations" (Matthew 28). "There was no woman amongst them sent he states, so where are these women church leaders getting their authority from?" This is how powerful patriarchy is. Some men and unfortunately also some women with stereotypic mentalities interpret the Bible to meet their personal needs. Women pastors will not receive the credit that they deserve if the aforementioned interpretation is used. This is why women want to modify the texts to make them more inclusive of women, because according to scriptures such as Galatians 3:28, we all are equal before God. As demonstrated Luke 8:1-5), "the 12 attended him, and also some women... Mary named Magdalene... Joanna the wife of Herod's steward, Susana and many others" could be interpreted to mean that women were included among Jesus' selected disciples   Female disciples can also be found in the same Bible. This is why

Mapuranga (2013:87) claims that both masculine and feminine components are represented in the Bible. In today's society, depending on their standpoint, one might use the Bible to advocate for or against the leadership of women in the Church. Unfortunately, for a long time, even the Charismatic churches shared this anti-women viewpoint, which is one of the reasons why our findings in the previous chapter indicated an underrepresentation of women in church leadership roles.

3.7 Leadership theories

We have seen in the discussions in this chapter how culture and patriarchy affect leadership. As Beare (2017:1) has observed, culture has an impact on practically every area of leadership. In our context then, it stands to reason that culture has had an impact on the l experience of women in the church as far as leadership is concerned because it has affected policies, theories, and attitudes. It is thus of importance to this study that I explore some leadership theories which have contributed to the situation of men dominating in leadership positions. In this section I will discuss some early theories of leadership which I believe still impact the experience of women leadership even today as they have formed part of the culture in many institutions.

3.7.1 The Great Man Theory

The Great Man Theory was first proposed by philosophers in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. It is thought that man possessed exceptional, distinctive, and amazing qualities that were superior to those of his subordinates (Naser, 2016:15). This theory concentrates on the idea that there were certain leadership traits and that there were people born with those attributes. It further complicates the issue by stating that these traits could not be taught or learned by those who do not have these attributes in their genes. These leadership traits were used as a criterion for distinguishing leaders and subordinates. According to Naser (2016:15), the name of this theory suggests that the study was based on men, and females were not seen in any leadership roles.

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3.7.2 Trait theory

The trait theory focuses on the universal leadership traits that distinguish between leaders and subordinates or productive leaders and counterproductive leaders. The common leadership traits developed by the trait theory include self-assurance, the constant need for achievement, reactiveness, self-scrutiny. The attributes were described in masculine terms and formed essential criteria for successful leadership (Naser, 2016:16). In other words, the trait theory failed at providing universal leadership traits.

3.7.3 Behavioural theory

The trait theory was not efficient in identifying universal leadership qualities, which led to behavioural theory initiation. The behavioural theory focused on leaders' behaviours rather than the qualities they possessed. The method began by defining the various leadership styles, and then went on to determine which was the most impactful. The theory observes and evaluates a leader's actions and behaviour when responding to a specific situation. Unlike the great man theory, the behavioural approach believes that leaders are made and not born (Naser 2016:17).

3.7.4 Contingency theory

The Contingency theory focuses on the context of a leader, the individual traits, and the situational aspects of a leader. It deals with leadership success and failures considering the leader, subordinates, and the situations they find themselves in. The success of a leader was determined by situational concepts such as judgment and consideration of situational factors (Naser 2016:17). The theory was based on men and is mainly applicable to men in leadership positions.

The theories mentioned above are mainly associated with men and hierarchical positions. However, there are leadership theories that are central to gender discussions. As we prepare to move into the next chapter which will explore what the situation with regards to the leadership of women in the church should be. I will

conclude this section with mentioning a theory which I believe assists us to start applying a different lens to women leadership in the Charismatic church. The Transformational and Transactional Ideas are two theories that attempt to explain the great effects that leaders have on their subordinates in order to achieve excellent performance. The influence of leaders on their followers is the focus of both transformational and transactional leadership. According to Naser (2016:19), transformational-transactional leadership suggests that leaders and followers consider themselves an essential tool for achieving organizational and societal goals. In this theory, a leader's success is not based on their gender but on their ability to work with followers to achieve specific goals.

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter has shown how cultural and patriarchal systems are ingrained in society and affect women's experiences on leadership. This also affects their chances to occupy leadership positions in churches and other organizations. In most cases, women have to conform to the Church's expectations and norms instead of leading from their attributes and from within. Still, there is no renormalization of women's leadership and inequality in churches. There is still a far greater proportion of men than women occupying leadership positions in churches, and the standard of leadership is based on masculine characteristics. The patriarchal system is typically represented by male domination. Therefore, women are expected to adopt the same leadership style. When culture is inhibited by ethnocentrism and prejudiced, it becomes problematic because it dominates their thoughts and views of the world. These cultural dimensions are self-centred and prevent leaders from banking on the many facets and qualities of others.

We explored biblical hermeneutics and saw how harmful interpretations of Scriptures continue to perpetuate and encourage negative experiences of women when it comes to leadership. Scriptures such as 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 and 1 Timothy 2:11-12 have been used to prevent women from expressing their God-given leadership abilities. It is unfortunate that this also happens in the Pentecostal and Charismatic denominations which state that they embrace giftings of the Holy Spirit. Indeed,

misinterpretation of these scriptures have had a huge impact on the state women find themselves in today.

Culture differs from human nature in that it is learnt rather than intrinsic, and it is derived from one's social environment rather than one's genes (Hofsede, 1997:6). I believe society can unlearn oppressive believes and practices that limit women leadership in the church. In the following chapter, I will discuss these in detail as we move into exploring what should be happening in the Charismatic church relating to women leadership.

Chapter 4:

Changing the praxis of women leadership by viewing culture, patriarchy, and scripture through an African women practical theology lens

4.1 Introduction

We addressed Osmer's (2008:26) descriptive practical theology work in the previous chapters. We talked about information that can aid us in seeing patterns and trends in the state of leadership by women in the Charismatic church in South Africa. We also explored the interpretive task of practical theology and discussed some factors that can be accredited to the underrepresentation of women leaders in the church and to the adverse experiences of the few women who have been able to rise to leadership positions. As a practical theologian who is also a Sotho woman, this chapter will be used to investigate the normative task of practical theology. As Osmer (2008:26) states, "What should be going on?" is the question I will seek to answer in this chapter. According to Osmer (2008:4), this task allows us to include religious concepts into interpretations of women leadership experiences, settings, or contexts, as well as establish ethical and biblical principles to direct their responses and learn from previous experience. We fail to remedy the problem of women in leadership roles being underrepresented in the church if we do not complete this normative job. The concept I will be using to explore what should be going on in the South African Charismatic church when it comes to women leadership, is an African Women Practical Theology lens. I will show how viewing culture, patriarchy, and hermeneutics in relation to women's leadership through an African Women Practical Theological lens will help us better understand what ought to be happening in the church regarding women's leadership. As I explain each of these concepts, we will start seeing how they are useful if applied in re-viewing the hinderances to women leadership we have discussed in previous chapters.

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Inspired by Sheppard (2011: 25), allow me to paint a picture of what the church, in my view, should look like, what I call a "liberated church". Consider a church where the lead pastor, whether male or female, demonstrates strong support for consecrated females in pastoral leadership. Several women hold positions of theological leadership. Women and men alike anticipate and enjoy the presence of women preaching and leading. Women leaders have a pleasant leadership experience and feel accepted and supported. Girl children have women leaders to look up to, and they are inspired to walk in their calling. The church has different education programs, which include African women theology, black theology, and liberation theology, to name a few. Issues such as gender, racial, sexual, and homophobic discrimination are discussed frequently and made part of the sermons. Imagine this church, it is possible to have a church such as this, but certain things ought to be happening in order to make this a reality. This is the focus of this chapter.

Agbonkhianmeghe & Orobator (2015:4-5) state that, theology cannot be simply exported wholesale from one context to another without paying attention to the specificity of the host context, which includes the culture. They further state that the New Testament concept of incarnation explicitly recognises the importance of the context in understanding theology. They simply mean that since God became fully human without ceasing to be God, no aspect of humanity is alien to God. This is one of the reasons why as a Sotho woman practical theologian leading a Charismatic church, I am writing from the African women practical theological context and lens. I will attempt to make sense of women's reality in light of the factors that affect their leadership in the South African Charismatic church. I am optimistic that through the process of relooking at culture, patriarchy, and interpretation of scripture through an African women's practical theology lens, culture, including Sotho culture and the attitudes, beliefs, and mindsets of people will shift in favour of women's leadership.

4.2 Women leadership through an African Women Practical Theology Lens

In this study, two theories are used to interpret women leadership and the hindrances to fair representation of women in top leadership positions in the South African

Charismatic church. The theories are African women theology and practical theology. Combined, I refer to these as the African women Practical theology lens, which can assist us to view culture, patriarchy and hermeneutics in a way that can aid positive change in women's leadership in the South African Charismatic church. This lens promotes the liberation of women and is against sexual and gender injustices. The African women's Practical theology is used to analyse gender imbalance in Charismatic church leadership. When I initially set out to do this research, I considered using a Feminist lens because I realized the importance of sharing women's experiences as essential in doing Theology, which is one of the main focuses of Feminism. As a result of the main shortcoming of the feminist lens, which is the reality that it mainly focused on the context of women in developed industrialised countries (Bruno 2006:3), I considered an alternative lens. It was a concern for me that in a South African context which has a history of apartheid, some were of the view that the feminist movement primarily comprised white, middle-class, academic women for whom political liberation was secondary to gender equality (Bruno 2006:3).

Based on my social location, which is that of an African woman leader in a South African Charismatic church, I decided to use an African women lens to conduct this exploratory study. This does not, however, imply that I shall disregard or dismiss aspects of feminist theology that are relevant to this research. According to West (2010:16) In South Africa, African Women's Theology both participates in and contests feminist theology, supporting family resemblances with other varieties of feminist theology. African Women's Theology, combines and incorporates racial diversity, class, and cultural categories with gender. Haddad (2000:144) also highlights that there are many forms of feminism, each located within contexts and particular moments in history, taking many forms, and named differently by women themselves. The variations in terminology, according to Phiri (2004:156), do not change women's desire for a sexist-free society and the creation of a just society in which both men and women desire the well-being of the other. For these reasons therefore, I will be making reference to some feminist concepts which I believe are useful for this study. In the sections that follow, I will discuss each aspect of my chosen lens separately i.e., African Women Theology, followed by Practical Theology, both interwoven with some feminist concepts that apply to this lens.

4.2.1 African women theology and women leadership

Oduyoye (2001:10) describes African women as limited to those who acknowledge themselves as Africans and believe that women have the ability and duty to think and speak in their own words about God and all other religious and cultural concerns. African women's theology includes work by women who do not believe that African men's theology should be applied to the entire spiritual community. Women are at the center of African women's theology from a theological standpoint. So, organizations like the "Association of African Woman Scholars and the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians", both of which arose from the "Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians (EATWOT)", have marked a substantial stage in the process of African women characterizing women's issues in their own stipulations (West, 2010:16). Phiri and Nadar (2015:90), discuss African women's theologies by beginning with the fundamental concept that humanity is made up of both male and female individuals, and that both expressions of humanity must work together in a balanced way for the entire community to enjoy the wholeness of existence. As a Sotho woman who believes in the full humanity of women, these descriptions resonate. The Sotho culture and Sotho people are part of the African culture and continent. From the previous chapters, we've seen so many similarities of the Sotho culture with other African cultures which makes it impossible to isolate Sotho from Africa. The study's findings will be more holistic and impactful if the African context of my experience as a Sotho woman is considered.

In the previous section, I have referred to my initial consideration of using a feminist theology lens for this study. I think it is vital at this stage that I expand more on my decision to write from the perspective of an African woman and not a feminist and why I however choose not to completely disregard feminist perspectives that resonate with me. I shall do this by first looking at some background regarding feminism. According to Ikhaxas (2008:xxviii), feminism is an ideology of resistance to patriarchal privilege and supremacy. It challenges and rejects the exercise of sexual privilege and patriarchy through sexual and cultural impunity, and the violation of women's integrity. It proposes an alternative to patriarchal notions of womanhood and motherhood by resituating these sources of identity in a conceptual and lived politics that re-defines

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and enhance women's ownership of personhood, bodily integrity, autonomy, and dignity as female persons. According to Masenya (1994:64), feminist theology is defined in terms of feminism as a whole. A look back at how theology was performed in the past is presented in order to illustrate the exclusion of women from major theological endeavours. Women's appeals for acknowledgment as complete, full and equal humans in the practice of theology give rise to feminist theology. Feminist theology, an aspect of feminism, also arises from an experience of oppression in society.

Apartheid, according to West (2010:16), substantially influenced South African debates on feminism, to the point where racial and class inequalities prescribe the bounds. This created a rift between academic feminists, who are generally white, middle-class women who have been largely quiet in the political emancipation struggle, and activists, who are mostly black and working-class women. Political liberation and human rights are important activist aims, but they rarely appear on the academic agenda, which is primarily biased toward equality as defined by feminists IN developed nations. From the late 1900s until now, the apartheid legacy continues to haunt South African women in their discussions, activism, and academic practice. Women's resistance to oppression in South Africa has been a continuation of perseverance from the previous century, as it has been in all developing nation situations, whether supported by published work or not. It is primarily segregated based on race (West, 2010:16). In the 1980s, black women in South Africa worked on a theological gender assessment of black leadership in general, and black theological leadership specifically. Despite being constantly subsumed by the prominent struggle for political independence and a reluctance to address gender concerns, African Women's Theology has advanced, albeit slowly. One of the organisations that has helped in advancing African Women's Theology is the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians. The Circle provides an institutional space for people to collaborate, as well as a reimagined African Women's Theology debate (West, 2010:18).

4.2.2 Practical Theology and women leadership

Practical theology is an academic discipline that studies church practices in conversation with other branches of theology and designs programmes and strategies for salvation/transformation of the church and the world (Graham 2017:1). Given the interdisciplinary nature of practical theology to bring about transformation, we can see how African women's theology and practical theology can be put to use together as a lens through which women's leadership can be transformed. As I continue this section and discuss approaches to practical theology, one will already see how they relate to African women's theologies, as discussed in the previous section.

Chifungo (2014: 41), speaks of an approach to Practical Theology that incorporates freedom and redemption. I agree that these elements are important, and I believe must be implemented in order for women to be represented equally in Charismatic church leadership. As a result, practical theology is concerned with the emancipation of women, the poor, the oppressed, and the marginalised. Practical Theology, according to Chifungo (2014: 41), examines human suffering and emancipation, and hence should work to ensure that everyone who suffers and are oppressed, including women, are treated as complete human beings. Practical Theology's involvement in socio-cultural and political issues will only help Christians practise their faith. Because Practical Theology will be able to persuasively explain the Christian faith's liberating potential within the context of a more profound, more comprehensive sociological theory, this will be the case. This means that the South African Charismatic church is required to put on the back burner the cultural attitudes and structures that oppress and victimize women.

Liberation is one part of practical theology, according to Ackermann (1998:17). Liberation theology begins with the recognition of humanity having equal value a society that is just. As a result, she feels that essentially liberation theologies commence with the fundamental assessment that consider the experiences of women and oppressed minorities, and that transition should come after constructive research (Ackermann, 1997:65). Consequently, she interprets liberty as the urge for everyone to be fully included in human society (Ackermann, 2014:4). Jesus' paradigm, the truth

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that makes us free, contains the liberating part of practical theology. As a result, freedom is seen as a major concept in the Christian gospel, which is thought to include the desire for human emancipation manifested in a new human-divine relationship in a new equitable society (Ackermann, 1988:16). As Ackermann (1988:17-18) states, "in Liberation theology, oppression is defined as a pyramidal framework and patriarchal standards of a society and church in which women's oppression is portrayed not just in terms of race and socioeconomic stratification, but also in terms of marital status". As a result, she calls for a fundamental change in our theological perspective, in which the pyramid of dominance in theology and church life is replaced with one of collective approach, in which women are no longer regarded as strangers or the other, but must join men on a unified journey of discovering the meaning of life and ministry in Christ.

Ballard (199:44) states that Practical Theology pays direct attention to Christian practice and presence in the world, ranging from institutional structures to the Churches witness and evangelism, from pastoral action to personal and social ethics. Practical theology's natural partners in critical dialogue are the social sciences, from psychology to critical theory and to practical and professional expressions of these disciplines. In the context of this study, we've explored leadership theories, systems of patriarchy, culture and Charismatic denominations. A call for collaboration is an invitation to get involved and help build a community characterised by mutual love, equality, and regard for all living things. Every one of God's gifts is verified in partnership, and no one is deemed greater to the other; everyone is on an equal footing (Chifungo ,2014: 42). If the church does not properly utilise the gifts of all of its members, it will be impoverished (both men and women). As a result, Practical Theology should place a greater emphasis on theories derived from a liberal ecclesiology, in which unjust structures that are hierarchical and policies that are discriminatory are seen unworthy of the church of Jesus Christ.

According to Chifungo (2014: 43), salvation, has striking similarities with concepts of well-being and prosperity, with the objective of a rich life for all. As a result, all individuals who suffer and are oppressed, including women, should have their whole humanity promoted by religion. Salvation is about both liberation and grace; liberation

since it reforms or liberates people and society from wickedness and suffering. Because it implies fighting oppression in whatever form, salvation can also be considered performing theology. Salvation, on the other hand, is about God's eternal grace, which enables us to submit to Him in Christ. What salvation is all about is the act of executing and converting grace, which results in the goal of all humanity and all of creation flourishing Chifungo (2014: 24). Grace's transformative element aspires to fulfil humanity in both women and men. It emphasizes each person's potential and abilities while giving less attention to gender stereotypes, characteristics, and duties. "You are all one; there is no such thing as a Jew or a Greek, a slave or a freeman, a male or a female," Paul says in Galatians 3:27-28, describing his vision (Ackermann, 1988:22-23). This demonstrates that if the question of salvation is truly addressed, the Charismatic church's issues of female subjugation, discrimination, and oppression may be properly resolved. The leadership of women will no longer be a source of disagreement and debate as transformed people recognise the potential and capabilities of women in the church. Men, on the other hand, will help to deconstruct all forms of illegitimate power in the church and society.

I will now turn to the connection between theory and practice. Practical theology is a science in action that comprises both theory and praxis drawn from the Bible as well as community praxis in an interface between the religious and pragmatic of the Word and reality (Louw, 2017:2). The concept is based on faith in Jesus Christ and has been adapted to the current position of the church. At the same time, Ackermann (2014:4-6) describes praxis in three ways. She defines theology of praxis as a "theoretically grounded operational communicative science" to begin with. This indicates that theology binds together knowledge, action, and compassion for the downtrodden and afflicted. Praxis has a communication dimension in that it moulds Christian theology and believers in a creative and performative fashion, leading to Christian communicative religious activities; it is faith in practice. Second, theology of action, according to Ackermann (2014:5), involves thought and critical interaction. Following a critical examination of women's, marginalized, and oppressed people's expressive praxis, praxis is defined as "intentional practical involvement in which people try to do something for the general welfare" (Ackermann, 1996:41).

As Fowler (1999:84) states, A practical theological method takes as its starting point one or more praxis contexts. Its distinguishing feature is that it is a method that emerges through contemplation in the midst of current practices in which religion groups participate. Praxis – theory – praxis, is a cycle that starts with practices and ends with practices. Its goal is to improve the authenticity and sufficiency of the practices with which it begins, not to formulate abstract understandings or ideas. Another characteristic of practical theology is that its contextual, local and stay close to experience. Traditional Christian interpretations that are timeless, universal, or comprehensive is not the focus of praxis. In its ongoing monitoring of the horizon of challenges and issues the church faces, it responds to crisis events or emergent issues by initiating practical theological discussion and inquiry (Fowler,1999:85). Given these two characteristics of practical theology, incorporating an African women theology to view the issue of women leadership through an African women Practical Theology lens is in my view the most appropriate approach, given my context.

Finally, according to Ackermann (2014:5), theology of praxis is empirical theology based on experience and focused on concrete situations. In the same way that sharing the experiences and stories of women, the poor, and marginalised people help to break the silence that limits their lives, experience has both formative and transforming effects on Christian believers and teaching. Hearing and reflecting on the stories of those who have been oppressed in their lives can enhance the lives of those who have been fortunate, and this process promotes healing on its own (Ackermann, 1996:44, 48). She concludes her discussion of praxis by alluding to Jesus Christ's ministry. She identifies with Jesus' ministry because she understands that it encompassed more than simply lectures and lessons (theory); it also included healing, compassion, and being among the oppressed (Ackermann ,2014:13). This is something she delights in as well.

Concerns about theology and practice are a part of the church's life. By disregarding these two aspects, the church misses the complexity of how faith communities' work. Connecting knowledge (theory) with action and passion (praxis) is one of the most tough issues for female Charismatic church leaders. The church must devise new techniques of action that will enable women to hold positions of leadership without

being hampered. It is necessary to be more sensitive to women's life stories and experiences when it comes to leadership responsibilities. We talked about how her personal practical theological perspective was influenced by the three most crucial parts of practical theology: redemption, freedom, and theory and praxis. If the church paid attention to this, I believe women's leadership practices would change. The Charismatic church in South Africa should be doing this (Chifungo:2014: 48).

Osmer's tasks of practical theology, which are first The Descriptive-Empirical Task, second The Interpretive Task, third The Normative Task, and fourth The Pragmatic Task, have been a primary focus of this work relating to practical theology Osmer (2011:2). I have described these in detail in chapter 1 of this study. I am including them here as a reminder to the reader as these tasks have been integral to how I have approached the issue of underrepresentation of women leaders and negative women leaders' experiences in the South African Charismatic church. In the section below, I address practical theology as normative task and explore what ought to be happening with regards to women leadership and my approach to this is by applying the African women practical theology lens to culture, patriarchy, and hermeneutics which we have identified as hindrances to women leadership in the South African Charismatic church.

4.3 Reviewing culture, patriarchy, and hermeneutics through African women practical theology lens

According to Oduyoye (2007:1), the only way to change unfavourable views against women is for an entire community of women to come together. Men began to reconsider religious discrimination and cultural beliefs that reduced women's humanity. Africa needs to be cured of gender insensitivity; sexism is a disease. To deal justly with one another is a fundamental demand of life together. Human culture has evolved the practice of short-changing women and using religion to buttress the diminution of the humanity of women (Oduyoye, 2007:2). In this section I will discuss culture, patriarchy, and hermeneutics in separate sections although they sometimes will overlap as in some instances these can't be completely separated from each other.

4.3.1 Culture

We have established that Sotho culture and African culture are mainly patriarchal. It would then stand to reason that I can discuss culture and patriarchy under one heading. I opted to separate the headings to aid ease of reading but as evident, these two headings are interconnected. Distinct civilizations have different experiences with women. Family and cultural experiences can either be affirming and supporting or oppressive and harmful, disintegrating women's personalities and lives (Kretzschmar & Van Schalkwyk, 2003). Mercy Oduyoye's key concerns, according to Pui-lan (2005:1), have been the ways African religion and culture have formed and influenced the experiences and realities of African women. Women's common identity and sense of belonging can be provided through culture, but it can also be exploited and used as a tool of dominance. African women's theology is evolving in response to global concerns and transformational events in Africa's religio-culture. Masenya (2001:13) highlights some shortfalls of culture which include the fact that there are no absolute truths when it comes to culture, culture is usually used as a phrase to avoid addressing actions that need call for analysis, when left unchallenged, domesticating cultural practices thrive on the power of myth.

In several branches of religious studies, especially practical theology, understanding lived experiences becomes a vital means of mapping the creation and unmaking of culture (Sheppard, 2011:1). As Sheppard (2011:17) puts it, silence is not a liberating option. My view was that because of the need to amplify black women's voices in this discourse, it would be more beneficial to look into women's leadership from a lens that embodies my context, which is an African women's lens. As Masenya (2001:2) states, women's theological voices haven't been heard, and black theology is still male-dominated. African women bring their entire selves to the theological throne. They bring their gender, which is powerful rather than frail, as well as their nationality, culture, and socioeconomic circumstances; they want theology to address their entire existence (Kobo, 2010:3). It is thus imperative that I add my black African women lens to the discourse. Moreover, as a practical theologian whose aim is to move from one praxis to a more liberating one, I also had to apply a Practical Theology lens.

African culture, particularly Sotho culture, has had a significant impact on my Christian and theological growth. Some South African academics believe this and try to analyse culture by appreciating its significant aspects while highlighting its flaws. The importance of culture is African women's particular contribution to theologies of women. Cultural feminism is a phrase used by Kellerman and Rhode (2007:129–365). Gender is viewed because of sexual differences between men and women, but male supremacy and patriarchy, or father rule, are the basis of women's subjugation in this context. However, proponents of this method do not argue for the abolition of gender distinctions. They, on the other hand, want to emphasize and appreciate those differences. Women are more effective than males, and men are more informed, making them better suited for the current leadership. As Oduyoye (2007:2) points out, a culture of respect and dignity for women's humanity can only emerge if we examine the tradition passed down to us objectively and re-imagine what we want to be.

Culture is crucial to the lived experience of African women, and so is patriarchy. African women's theology is practiced within a live and dynamic culture that is saturated with ancient religious symbols, beliefs, rites, rituals, and an entire worldview that we imbibe with our mother's milk and breathe till death (Oduyoye 1998:360). As a protest theology, the purpose of African women's theology is to look for, investigate, and expose the historical and cultural underpinnings of thought systems that continue to degrade women. African women's practical theology counters the patriarchal forces that always assume that the women's voice is included in men's voice. Culture is not above critique, and patriarchy, as expressed in African culture, is crucial to their debate. It is upon this cultural critique of patriarchy that emanates from the theological reflection of the Circle, I am proposing that churches relook at culture (Haddad, 2000: 237). Cultural critiques are contested terrain. Solidarity amongst African women regarding criticism of culture is not easily attained as it is not easy to resist African patriarchy while at the same time affirming the culture in which it is embedded. Furthermore, many African women theologians wish to actively seek to draw men into the process of bringing about change. Both men and women should be incorporated in finding new inclusive meanings from the Biblical text. She asserts that African women's theology differs from western feminist approaches to Biblical interpretation

precisely because these western approaches exclude the chances of men's ability to provide a viable interpretation of Scriptures related to women (Haddad, 2000: 237).

To summarise this section therefore, I am saying that when viewed through an African women Practical Theology lens, culture needs to change. All oppressive elements of it that are antagonistic towards women and women leadership have to be challenged. From an African women theology lens, what ought to be happening to the extent that culture is concerned is the need for culture to be engaged and interpreted by ourselves as African women so that we can work towards transformation, we need to identify and promote the life-sustaining and enhancing aspects of culture and develop awareness to the pitfalls of connecting one's identity to their culture (Oduyoye 2001:13). This is what ought to be happening. We ought to be aiding the transformation of women leadership in the South African Charismatic church by re-viewing culture through a lens that seeks to looks to promote a culture that promotes respect and dignity for women's humanity (Oduyoye, 2007:2). And I will also add a culture that recognises the full humanity of women and affords her opportunities and encourages her to serve using her leadership gifts in the South African Charismatic church. Going back to my reflections on how girls and boys are raised in the Sotho culture where boys are raised to lead and girls to serve in capacities of motherhood and being wives, looking at these practices with this proposed lens would yield a different experience for girls in the future. Girls will not be raised in an environment and society that conditions them to believe they are not good enough to lead but they will be raised in an environment and society that encourages them to serve in any capacity that God has gifted them. Though Ackermann (2006: 227) speaks about what she terms a feminist theology of praxis, I draw many similarities to her assertion of what I am proposing as an African women Practical Theology lens. A feminist theology of praxis, she claims, "begins with a critical examination of the circumstances in question, with special attention on how gender roles are perceived and lived out. It then strives to address contextual issues with liberating and transformational praxis to promote human flourishing, guided by the conviction that such theology is done in the service of expanding God's rule on earth". This is exactly what I am saying ought to be happening when we re-look at culture through an African women Practical

Theology lens, we should promote liberating and empowering aspects to it that promote women leadership and discard oppressive practices.

4.3.2 Patriarchy

African patriarchal customs including Sotho customs and culture make gender distinctions that penalize women, but the desire is not to discard of culture and tradition. The concept is to let them adapt to the current times rather than stagnate in order to develop society, as customs and culture should (Musvota, 2021:2). A way of overcoming this is by looking at these traditions and cultures through a lens that advocates for equality. As unfortunate as it is, the reality is that the church is influenced by cultural beliefs that favour men over women (Musvota, 2021:2). Women leaders are underrepresented as a result of this and women's experiences in church are not positive. Haddad (2000:45) believes that some women do not discriminate between a worldly and a religious life, and that the church is thus an intrinsic part of their lives.

Oduyoye (1995:12) is unequivocal in her rejection of African patriarchy. She claims that while it is frequently claimed that African religions and cultures provide enough and required participation for women, this is not supported by women's experiences in the continent (Oduyoye 1995:12). According to Oduyoye (1995:12-13), when eventually a woman has used all of her energy attempting to be heard, she barely has enough strength left to speak what she wants to say. Some African men often claim that their continent does not need women's liberation suggesting that African women are not oppressed. Instead, women are called to be African. This call with its strong connotations of submissiveness, is seeking to render feminism a non-issue for Africa (Oduyoye 1995:13). We have seen that this is far from reality as African women in the church remain mostly subordinated to non-leadership roles. And women's liberation in Africa is a dire need.

Afrocentrism in womanist theology embraces African patriarchy too uncritically. Oduyoye (1995:1) critiques patriarchy through a series of cyclical narratives that address how women are viewed in the African cultures. Focusing on language as an essential discourse in the first narrative cycle, she analyses these cultures' myths,

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folktales, and proverbs as liberating and oppressive to both men and women. Liberating aspects need to be affirmed and oppressive aspects re-interpreted from a women's perspective. Myths often emphasize mutuality and reciprocity in relationships, stressing women's involvement in divination and political life (Oduyoye 1995:35). Having been excluded from these areas of public life, African women can appeal to these cultural images that are so highly regarded in society (Oduyoye 1995:35). In Akan and Yoruba folktales, gender roles are circumscribed and often ascribe negative traits to women (Haddad, 2000: 237 -239). This is indeed consistent with Sotho culture language and tales as well.

Many of the African women theologians in the Circle for Concerned African Women critique patriarchy from a cultural perspective. Mercy Oduyoye's critique of patriarchy, while arising out of her own experience of Ghana and Nigeria, nonetheless points the way to similar theorizing in our South African and Sotho context. African women theologians also stress the importance of engaging women in the church in theological reflection. This emphasis lies at the heart of my work and contributes to the ongoing dialogue as to how we do this effectively as activist-intellectuals. The survival theologies of the women are the working theologies of faith of poor and marginalized women who make up the majority of women in the church in South Africa. Integrating their voices into the women's theological project is crucial (Haddad, 2000:196).

Women are great instances of the harmful impact religion may have on a woman's life and the misery created by patriarchal religion, according to Landman (2001:84). Women in the Bible are good instances of this. Their examples cannot empower the uplifting of women today because they did not offer alternatives to female operations. It seems that the only thing we share with a woman in the Bible is oppression. But then again, we do not even share consciousness of oppression with them. The woman in the Bible is not depicted as people were aware of, let alone reacting against being oppressed.

According to Landman (2001:89 - 90), the contribution of African women theologians is a theology that should display the following biblical contributions: Firstly, African women's theology is relational. In Africa, female theologians replaced patriarchal

theologies and traditional hierarchical relationships with mutuality-based relationships. She is socially conscious. Secondly, African women's theology is interconnected. It recognizes the interdependence of men and women. Thirdly, African women's theology is to be culturally sensitive. It promotes cross-cultural and intra-cultural discussion to challenge oppressive practices and build liberating practices in African customs. Finally, African women's theology tends to employ the genre of narrative to put its findings into practice. An African woman theologian aims to bridge the gap between theological meta-language and literary language by using narrative theology to communicate her thoughts.

Through an African Women Practical Theology lens, women should be relocated from the kitchen (culturally designated womanized sites) to the kraal (culturally viewed as men sites) (Kobo, 2016:1). This generation cannot afford to be like previous generations that adhered to oppressive cultural practices where women also played a part in maintaining patriarchy. Kobo (2016:1) examines our foremothers' fanatical dedication to culture, which she claims inhibited public speech and bound them to the home, as well as how the younger generation has socialised this heritage. I agree fully with this as in my upbringing as well, I did not see many women actively oppose the status quo, instead it was women who were socializing young girls to adhere to societal norms which relegated them to the kitchen. This reality is also crucial since it also helps us uncover women's role in patriarchy (Kobo, 2010:4). Any transformation initiatives must not only be directed at men but also at women as women still suffer from limiting beliefs where women leadership is concerned.

4.3.3 Hermeneutics

According to Chifungo (2014: 43), God's word plays a vital role in liberating and freeing subjugated and afflicted people, such as women and the impoverished. The Word of God nullifies all crimes performed under the pretence of chauvinism or ethnicity. Because the church of God, particularly Charismatic groups, has utilised incorrect Bible translation and God's word to exclude women from leadership roles, it is vital for the church of God, particularly Charismatic groups, to reassess their Bible

interpretation systems. The Bible is meant to be liberating and offer salvation, not to oppress and marginalise.

Gender equality, according to Kategile (2020:1), has its roots in the Bible's story of creation. Humans (including women) were formed in the image of God, according to that story (Genesis 1:26). We may perceive the shared humanity and equal worth of a woman and a man in front of God. This image is what makes humans (both male and female) representatives of God in the earth. The imago Dei is shared by both men and women, and this divine image is a social reality. We can conclude these factors imply that God's intention was for men and women to serve together in all elements of the church. As a result, gender disparity was not a component of the positive intention from the start. This shows that we need to consult the Bible to help us understand and unpack issues resulting in the underrepresentation of women leaders. Since we identified culture as one of the hindrances to women leadership, it is thus important that we look into cultural hermeneutics.

If the Bible is meant to liberate people, including women, how then did we come to the assertion that biblical interpretation of the word has become a hindrance to women leadership in the South African Charismatic church? I believe one of the reasons is a fact that Masenya (2002:100) states, which is that in South Africa, how the Bible was introduced, how it was received and interpreted was basically male history and its interpretation is still mainly a male prerogative. Despite many churches having women as the majority of their members, women remain submissive receivers of male Bible interpretations. The entire context of an African woman receives very little attention. For this reason, Masenya introduced what she terms a "bosadi" approach to the reading of Biblical texts. This reading is an approach that takes cognisance of the unique situation of an African-South African woman. According to Masenya (2012:206), "a bosadi approach examines what ideal/liberative womanhood should be for an African-South African woman Bible reader. The approach aims at challenging disempowering notions of womanhood as embedded in African cultures". It includes criticism of oppressive components of African culture, a criticism of oppressive aspects of the Christian bible while revealing the liberatory elements, the connection of post-apartheid racism, sexism, classism, and African culture as significant factors in the

context of an African-South African woman, factors that shape women's reading of the Bible in one way or another; the concept of ubuntu, taking the ubuntu concept seriously implies that (Masenya, 2012:206). The relevance of this approach lies in the fact that at its essence, it shares the value of liberation for women those African women practical theology embraces. The Bible, far from alienating people from African culture, speaks to the African cultural context. Both the contexts of the reader and that of the Bible are considered in a *bosadi* reading. It is thus essential to seek out Biblical texts that resonate with the life experience of African women (Haddad, 2000:233). I include this approach here as it supports the African women's theology's view.

In contrast to using the words *bosadi* approach or feminist hermeneutics, others like myself use the general phrase African women. African women's hermeneutics demands a linked, inspection that is both structured and methodical of the African environment and biblical text. Its distinguishing element is the emphasis on gender and patriarchy's structural nature, (West 2015:26). As Oduyoye (2001:11) states, African women's theology, built at their speed and from their perspective, reflects their goals and viewpoints. Women theologians have faced a considerable challenge in interpreting the Bible and culture from their setting, especially now that the Bible has become ingrained in the African culture. Many people have looked to biblical and cultural hermeneutics to help them differentiate the good that is liberating. As a result, African women rely on tradition when it comes to theology, but they do so with critical thinking skills. Women might use cultural hermeneutics to look at the Bible through African eyes, separating and extracting what is liberating.

Because we know that not all aspects of African culture are liberating, we approach the Bible with the same caution we apply to culture. Any interpretation of scripture that oppresses women, the vulnerable, or the voiceless is no acceptable. We found a few footholds on the route to cultural hermeneutics by taking small steps. In human affairs and civilization, there are no absolute truths (Oduyoye, 2001:12). Culture is frequently used as a euphemism for practices that warrant scrutiny. We must not shy away from interpreting our own culture, engaging in intercultural discourse, and striving to transform our culture. A keen sensitivity to the diversity of cultures as well as the dynamism of specific cultures is, however, required in this process. Domesticating

cultural behaviours thrive on the myth's ability to go unquestioned, its important therefore to stop acting on them and start reflecting on them. Our goal should be to recognize and support what promotes and sustains life while developing a deep awareness of the pitfalls of linking one's identity to their culture. We should look to recognise cultural aspects that are affirm life for African women, whether or not they are approved by traditional Christian teaching. Women's complete personhood and engagement in religion and society are crucial in this endeavour. She connects cultural and biblical hermeneutics, and she sees this as a fruitful ground for creative theological discourse (Oduyoye, 2001:13).

Many people believe that calls for gender justice and progress toward gender equality are incompatible with African culture, that they have bewildered people, and that they have led to a great number of unhappy households. Many men and women in Southern Africa believe that the world is perfect in its current status. It is natural for men to be the heads of households, top politicians, and corporate executives, according to them. According to them, our civilizations are built around this order because the Bible says so. Some people believe that women were created to be care givers of children and servants of men in the home, church, and workplace (Gennrich, 2015:204). Through applying an African women practical theology lens, we get to a different conclusion. We see that God created men and women equally, in his likeness (Genesis 1:26). Her sole purpose was not merely of a carer but to use her gifts as God has given, these gifts also include leadership. My research has been based on this focus. I hypothesized that using an African women's Practical Theology lens to form a new understanding of culture and hermeneutics could help transform women's leadership in the church. This is what ought to be happening; life-giving and transformative lenses should be used to challenge oppressive cultures and practices that have kept most of women in the pews of churches while preventing them from serving in leadership positions.

4.4 Conclusion

Given society's patriarchal past, turning current gender equity structures and regulations into meaningful social changes for women on the ground is a complex undertaking (Haddad, 2000:134). What I am proposing as a way of changing the narrative regarding the underrepresentation of women leadership is what the "Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians" refer to as "depatriarchalization" and "decolonization" of African and feminist theological discourse relating to women leadership (Njoroge and Dube, 2001). As I have discussed in this chapter, this can be done through viewing issues relating to leadership of women in the Charismatic church through an African women practical theology lens.

We have seen that discussing women in leadership roles without first discussing emancipation is difficult, just as discussing healing from any illness without first discussing the remedies available is difficult. A person's desire for freedom suggests that they are restricted in some way, whether by systems or discriminating actions. Women must be released from the oppressive hierarchical institutions and discriminatory practices that have kept women out of leadership roles in the Charismatic church, according to Ackermann (1985:41).

In the next chapter, I will be focusing on to the pragmatic task of practical theology. We'll investigate techniques for positively impacting women's leadership in the church and engage in a reflective debate about the response that arises when they're put into practice (Osmer, 2008:26).

Chapter 5:

Transforming Women Leadership in the South African Charismatic Church

5.1 Introduction

In chapter 2 of this study, I explored Osmer's (2011:2) descriptive task of Practical Theology and we saw that in the South African Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches, women are underrepresented in leadership positions. In chapter 3, Osmer's (2008:6) interpretive task of Practical Theology saw us explore why this underrepresentation exists. We concluded that cultural, patriarchal, and hermeneutic hindrances result in the underrepresentation of women in leadership roles. In the previous chapter, I then turned to the normative task of Practical Theology (Osmer, 2008:4) and discussed what should be happening in terms of women leadership in the church. I responded to this through an African Women Practical Theology lens. We saw that through an African Women Practical Theology lens, we could review cultural, patriarchal, and hermeneutic hindrances in a way that promotes gender equality and thus helps transform the praxis of the underrepresentation of women in the church. In this chapter, I move on to the last task of Practical Theology, which is to consider how we could respond to the church's underrepresentation of women leaders in the Pentecostal and Charismatic church of South Africa. This is referred to as the pragmatic task of Practical Theology (Osmer, 2008:26). It is pointless to figure out what is going on, why it is going on, and what should be going on without also figuring out how to respond to or apply the results. As a result, I direct my attention to this practical issue, attempting to identify tactics for influencing women's leadership in more acceptable ways. Chifungo (2014:41), adds to this task the need to enter into a reflective conversation. We can thus refer to this chapter as a plan of action which I am proposing that is put into place in society and churches, particularly the South African Pentecostal and Charismatic church, to begin to transform or accelerate the transformation from a praxis of underrepresentation of women leaders to equitable representation.

The actions that I recommend in this chapter will be discussed under the following headings: re-view and reconstruct patriarchal cultures, preach life-giving and equality promoting hermeneutic, give priority to women's experiences and voices, educate people about issues relating to women leadership, learn from appreciative inquiries and implement more of what's working, be intentional about enabling women leadership and finally encourage collaboration between men and women.

5.2 Re-view and reconstruct patriarchal cultures

Consider this for a moment, many of our forefathers wandered around in animal fur, and in some societies, young ladies walked around topless. Even in my Sotho culture, the dressing code of our forefathers was animal skin and unmarried women were topless. However, we rarely see individuals practicing these things anymore unless it's for a one-of-a-kind cultural memorial event. Many communities have abandoned this cultural practice. So, not only do distinct groups have different cultures, but the same cultures change throughout time. Traditions fall away and flow and new ones emerge. This is dependent on what a group or civilization considers essential. If this is true for dress codes, then, the same should be true for patriarchal practices. It is possible to challenge and change cultural assumptions about how men and women should act and interact. Those with the most authority usually have the most impact on what a society cherishes the most (Gennrich, 2015:55). Community and Church leaders must begin to speak against cultural practices and beliefs that limit women leadership.

The bulk of South African men were raised in patriarchal households. This type of cultural upbringing can be found in all aspects of society and institutions, including church, school, family, and business. Such institutions legitimize women's subjugation by enhancing and supporting chauvinism and its structures. Patriarchy still holds sway in a traditionally male-dominated culture, as indicated by a poor understanding that females might ever be solid and successful church leaders. Even though platforms for inclusion may advocate the opposite, this is an idea that exists in their heads (Sekano & Masango, 2012:1). Men who resist women's leadership are products of patriarchy

and are found to be caught in it, Sekano and Masango (2012: 4). As a result, having to obey women's instructions makes them feel emasculated and depressed. The society that has always prioritized them over women is collapsing, which they are deeply concerned about. Some males are forced to receive commands from unmarried young women, which they find incredibly upsetting. They remark, "*Go etelelwa pele ke basetsanyana go re dira e kete re tsamaya re sa tswala,*" meaning that young female leadership makes them feel like they're moving around naked, which highlights their insecurities. These clichés play a big part in men's hearts becoming frozen, especially pertaining to female leadership.

Language used needs to be changed, cultural sayings that do not promote equality need to be eliminated. Oduyoye (2007:3), agrees that in the idioms of African languages, that promote violent outbursts should be discouraged. There are many women's sayings whose wisdom is debatable because they do not contribute to harmonious living or the growth of an individual's capacity. Verbal abuse is defined as phrases aimed at suppressing or marginalizing women. They prey on women's intelligence, disseminating untested preconceptions about women's cognitive abilities. In Sotho, idioms are referred to as "*maele*", which means advice. They articulate a fundamental reality or a functional moral principle. When a woman has power over a man, phrases like "*tse etelelwa pele ke e tshehadi di wela ka lengope*", meaning those led by a woman will lose direction, "*ho hulwa ke mosadi ka nko*", meaning being dragged by the nose by a woman are used. These phrases are typically used to discourage men who are receptive to a women's leadership. These idiomatic phrases are meant to demoralize the person to which they are referring. As a result, these phrases and parables are viewed negatively; they equate womanhood with fragility, inability to lead, and the promotion of male-female conflict. These African proverbs and expressions are used to denigrate women. (Sekano & Masango, 2012: 5). Even if most metaphors and parables are derived from previous events and circumstances, for the purpose of the church and the community at large, constructive metaphors and parables should be used rather than detrimental ones. A phrase like "*mosadi o tshwara thipa ka bohaleng*", meaning a woman holds a knife on its sharp side implies that a woman is brave enough to risk her life to save others and to endure abuse herself. This leaves me wondering what the handle is for, why can't we all hold the knife by

the handle? With reference to the biblical story of Esther, Kondemo (2021:566) argues that Esther entered the king's courtyard when she was not supposed to and said that if she died, it would be because she couldn't endure seeing the Jews slain. She is a figure of woman who chooses to take a position and employ all of her resources to help others, even if it means putting her own life in danger. Women's self-esteem can be boosted by such proverbs, which also break the superiority complex.

Patriarchy, according to Kgatle (2019:6), should be disabled. The church should see its power system as a transgression, accept it, and then renounce it; as a result, they should be able to recognize females' individuality now that they have established themselves in their proper roles of leadership in the church and society. As a result, patriarchy should be perceived as a divergence from God's plan and a threat to God's mission by the church. Should war be declared on patriarchy and engaged, a sustainable community will emerge, where everyone can feel God's love as God's genuine presence (Kgatle, 2019:6). According to Andrew (2005:36), the topic that needs to be addressed is if church structures are to enable women with the flexibility and chances to engage in their ministries and offer their gifts in the same way that men do. Churches should make a concerted effort to change their leadership by bringing more women into its ranks. Women with leadership potential should be identified and promoted by church leaders for them to succeed to the throne. The fact that women face issues like pregnancy and childcare isn't an excuse. These issues may be addressed, and additional persons should be chosen to assist women who are having difficulties.

African women themselves must also understand their culture and customs in order to challenge and modify them, reclaiming value and upholding the humanity of women. This means that anything from the Bible, as well as African traditional religion and culture that affirms the humanity of females and males serves as a foundation for what should be promoted (Phiri, 1997:4). The responsibility to re-view and reconstruct patriarchal cultures rests on all humans, irrespective of gender. It will take us working together to achieve a common understanding of culture that is liberating to women and encourages leadership according to ability and not gender.

5.3 Resist literal interpretation of scriptures

The literal paradigm of scriptural interpretation is one of the most popular in Pentecostal churches. A literal interpretation of the Scriptures is one that accepts the Bible at face value and without question, claiming that the Scriptures say it and we must believe it (Gabaitse, 2015:5). A literal interpretation of the Bible ignores the historical context in which the scriptures were written. With this approach to Scripture reading, the Bible is read today to mean precisely what it says without consideration of context. Literalism implications can be disastrous, especially when it comes to the attitude towards women and the regulations that govern their status. Because congregants and teachers are committed to taking and interpreting the Bible literally, scriptural commandments that require women to be passive in the church are also understood literally; they are observed and implemented. Furthermore, passages like 1 Corinthians 11:3 and 1 Timothy 2:9 which speak about the headship of men and modesty and silence of women in the church are understood literally and with general legislative power, thus excluding women from the centre. Pentecostal literal interpreters ignore the fact that passages that appear to encourage women's marginalization have a history; they originate in specific Jewish, Greco-Roman, and other patriarchal societies. As a result, readers must probe behind the surface of stories in the Bible, as well as the contexts in which they were written, what the writings mean in the context, and how they might effectively approach the 21st-century flesh-and-blood Bible readers. These settings are unimportant to Pentecostal literal readers, particularly when it comes to patriarchal Scriptures. Because they affirm and strengthen the prevailing African dominating women's marginalization by ideological frameworks, Paul's rulings towards women are perceived and implemented in the immediate environment without investigating his goals (Gabaitse, 20015:5).

Masenya (2009:138-139) contends that a life-giving hermeneutic that rejects death dealing Bible readings allowed her to successfully continue her faith journey. She could readily relate to God through certain biblical texts because she was connected to the life-giving Spirit behind texts. She was able to experience the mystery and inspiration of the Bible as God's Word despite the attempts of influential Bible

interpreters to the contrary. These unrecorded African women's hermeneutical practices for interpreting the Bible have sustained them for many years. The ideal however is for women not to need to find ways of coping with literal interpretations that suggest they are lesser humans. These kinds of interpretations must be avoided, and women should not be subjected to them. According to Masenya (2009:138-139), The following two hermeneutic approaches are the underlying aural hermeneutic of resistance:

Firstly, a selective hermeneutic: long exposure to the slave masters' hermeneutical approaches and schemes aided the grandmother in developing strategies for discerning between the live Word of God and the master's word. In women's liberationist biblical and theological debates, she used a hermeneutic of suspicion, which is a very basic hermeneutical method. She was able to pick and choose the parts of the Book she wanted to use in her life. Secondly, a self-conscious and self-affirming hermeneutic: the society's outcasts have a way of carving out a niche for their survival, if not for happiness. Even the most despised victims of oppression have ways and means of survival and self-preservation, if not for liberation, then for survival and self-preservation so that they may live to see another day. Although some women were aware of their vulnerable position as slaves, they believed that, despite their masters' refusal to acknowledge their humanity, they could prove their worth as human beings against all obstacles. These are just a few examples of where all women can find comfort and begin to accept themselves as God created them.

The same Bible that was used and to extent continues to be used to keep women from leading affirms women's leadership and this is the view that should be embraced. As Duncan (2019:2) points out, some women in the Bible demonstrate that women can and should lead, and these examples should be highlighted. Deborah, for example, was an arbitrator, messenger of God and female character of autonomous entity in Biblical times, instructing and leading the nation of Israel in times of crisis while also executing legal, organizational, and Charismatic military operations. In the New Testament, Duncan (2019:2) further "notes the work of many women; the first witnesses of the resurrection of Christ, Prisca (Acts 18:24–26), Lydia (Acts 16:14–15), Phoebe (a deacon, Romans 16:1–2), Mary (Luke 1:46–55), Mary Magdalene (John 20:18), Martha (John 11:27), Joanna and Susanna (Luke 8:3), Junia, Tryphaena and Tryphosa (Romans 16:121), Julia (Romans 16:13,15), Nympha (Col 4:15), Euodia and

Syntyche (Philippians 4:2–3) and female prophets were leaders in the New Testament church (1 Corinthians 11:5). Philip had four prophetess daughters (Acts 21:9)". Women continue to speak at church meetings, despite Paul's prohibition against speaking in church meetings by women (which was aimed at promiscuous women disrupting the redeemed community's worship; Acts 1:12–14, 18:24–26, 21:7–9, Romans 16:1–16). In Corinth, however, the importance of female prophetesses was recognized by Paul. Paul makes a significantly more substantial innovation in Galatians 3:27–28, which deals with the equality of women and males, who have all 'put on' Christ and dwell 'in Christ.' As he built a new Christian paradigm, Paul broke free from patriarchal norms. There were no distinctions in the ordering of ministry in the early church. The only prerequisites were the existence of unique charisms (educating, apostolicity, prophecy, missionary, and spiritual support - Ephesians 4:11). Women were appointed as deaconesses (1 Timothy 8–13), a status that gave them the right to be heard on matters of faith (1 Timothy 3:13). In the early church, women had leadership positions, the Montanist movement, and many were martyred for their religion (Duncan, 2019:2).

What is referred to as the "Pauline restriction of women" in 1 Timothy 2:11–15 should also be examined and understood from a libertarian perspective. Women should not be discouraged from preaching, organizing, or approaching males in the church because Paul restricted women's participation in 1 Timothy 2:11–15; rather, it should be seen for its appropriate historical context of him attempting to fix issues of harmony in the church. In fact, the verse should be interpreted as an attempt to defend women in this context, since they have been a convenient target for those wanting to exploit them for the goal of spreading disorder in the church and profiting. Furthermore, 1 Timothy 2:11–15 should be viewed in conjunction with other scriptures. It is clear from Galatians 3:28, "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor male nor female, because you are all one in Christ Jesus", and other Pauline letters that Paul urged women to participate. In fact, Paul promotes equality. Paul was a minister who worked with women. Even though Aquila and Priscilla were a couple, Paul favours Priscilla over Aquila as her husband. Eudia and Syntyche, who Paul refers to as his co-labourers are two further women mentioned. As a result of these corroborating texts, it is clear that Paul was not averse to having women in leadership positions if he

could work with them (Kgatle 2019:6). This is the benefit to women leadership when one uses a lens such as African Women practical theology lens that encourages and supports women.

5.3.1 Pentecostals must remain faithful to the ministry of the Holy Spirit

Since this study focused specifically on the Pentecostal and Charismatic denominations, I think it's crucial to include one of these denominations distinctive: the fundamental belief in the ministry of God's Holy Spirit as part of the hermeneutic teachings that should be encouraged and practiced. According to Kgatle and Mofokeng (2019:2), every examination of a Pentecostal hermeneutic begs the question of whether there is such a thing as true Pentecostal hermeneutic. A Pentecostal hermeneutic should be understood as one in which God's Holy Spirit is part of the process in understanding Scriptures. Pentecostals believe that when one relies on the Holy Spirit, there will be an appropriate interpretation. This is because Pentecostals place a strong emphasis on the Holy Spirit's work in practically everything they undertake. Pentecostals believe that the Holy Spirit resides within them, and that he did great works in Christ's life, such as his resurrection and other mighty deeds by the Apostles in the Book of Acts. They can receive revelations from the same Holy Spirit today. In a Pentecostal hermeneutic, the role and action of the Holy Spirit take precedence over the need for scientific understanding. This is not to say that a scientific investigation of the Bible is dismissed. As a result, scientific exploration serves solely as a prelude to a revelation that the Holy Spirit has already inspired. In essence, the Pentecostal hermeneutic of experience recognizes the Bible as the word of God in its current form. That one can only read and understand it via the Holy Spirit's work. As a result, Pentecostalism emphasizes relationship with God through reading the Bible, praying, worshiping, and other activities, all of which add to the knowledge of God revealed in the Bible. Furthermore, every Christian must have a personal and intimate relationship with God as well as the ability to comprehend and interpret the Bible in order to preach it to those who do not have the same privileges or access to God. The purpose of these activities among Pentecostal Christians is for the church to connect with the Bible in its entirety through the work of the Holy Spirit (Kgatle & Mofokeng, 2019:2).

The Pentecostal and Charismatic church should first let the Holy Spirit rebuke patriarchy's immorality and convict it. The Holy Spirit must be allowed to transform the

prevalent Pentecostal hermeneutics after the Holy Spirit convicts the church of its sin. While the Holy Spirit's freeing activity is rarely emphasized and acknowledged, and Pentecostal women stay on the margins, the Holy Spirit, who knows no bounds, encounters and engages with women on the margins. The Spirit gives people a voice in this place. This is why, even in countries where women are treated as less than human citizens, Pentecostal women can be church founders, prophetesses, and preachers. Because Pentecostal hermeneutics requires that women be under the direction of a man, they may be rendered invisible in those roles. Pentecostal women, on the other hand, are not veiled in silence or total anonymity since the Holy Spirit empowers them to operate and prosper in their roles. The fact that male supremacy is emphasised while women are marginalised does not imply that women are powerless (Gabaitse, 2015:10).

Women gain authority and respect as a result of the Holy Spirit's manifestation among Pentecostals in general and women in particular, and upward growth is visible and observable in tangible ways. Regardless of how Pentecostal hermeneutics and practices seek to suppress women, women will always have a voice because another force is at work: the Holy Spirit, and He speaks to and through women on a regular basis (Gabaitse, 2015:10). Women's marginalization and exclusion are incompatible with the true core of Pentecostalism because the Holy Spirit has the power to destabilize and threaten patriarchal dogma and prerogatives if it is followed. This is only feasible if the Pentecostal church is willing to accept the Holy Spirit's ability to bring about development and change. The Holy Spirit will keep on and criticize, antagonize, and respond against the Pentecostal church for their preaching equality of sexes while marginalizing women and elevating the status of men through an uncritical use and interpretation of the Bible, even if the Pentecostal church refuses to welcome women centrally (Gabaitse, 2015:10).

5.4 Give priority to women's experiences and voices

Telling women's stories is necessary to theological work (Haddad, 2000:229), including women leadership. Women play a significant role in Pentecostal Christianity, particularly in Africa. They constitute the majority of local churches and account for a significant percentage of their earnings. Prayer, fellowship, and eating are all activities in which women participate actively. There are significant gaps in research about the representation of women in high-level Pentecostal leadership organizations (Kgatle 2019:1). I certainly can attest to this as getting information was not readily available as one would expect. The Institute of African Women in Religion and Culture, founded in Accra, Ghana in 1989 by the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians, is credited with pioneering research into African women's stories as a subject of academic study, according to Phiri (1997:1). The Institute was formed in response to the fact that there is a scarcity of African women's literature authored by African women. This is especially true for African women who want to pursue theology. Issues relating to African women in religion and culture have been neglected or disregarded due to a scarcity of literature by African women theologians. African American Womanist theology and African women's theology have frequently been included in Third World Feminist theology studies. Despite the fact that African and African American women theologians have similar skin tones, the environments in which they practice theology are vastly different. African women's issues have been disregarded, despite the fact that African theology emphasises the contextual relevance of Biblical doctrine within African culture. Women's spiritual encounters are regarded to be similar to men. Despite living on the same continent, African women must now stress that their religious and cultural experiences are separate from men's. As a result, it is no longer accurate to assert that when African males write African theology, they are advocating for all Africans (Phiri, 1997:2).

Regarding the invisibility of women in African study of religion, Mwaura (2005: 413-414) provides two justifications. For starters, there have been far more male academics than female academics, and secondly, men scholars have a considerable edge in terms of experience over female scholars. As a result, there have not been

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enough theological texts about African women written by African women. Women have been depicted as helpless or completely missing in shaping African Christianity in history written from a male perspective. Women's experiences and viewpoints must be included in balanced historiography. The writing about women's reality, must be encouraged and prioritised. There is a strong need for local Christian authors. Many exciting and compelling stories exist but are not in print (Priest & Barine, 2017:1144).

Njoroge (2001:254–255) states that given our prevailing circumstances in Africa, however, writing and publishing women's theologies is not enough. The greatest challenge facing the African churches and theological institutions is ensuring that these voices are heeded. They are to be subjected to critics and articulated in the live-in mission of churches, theological institutions, the ecumenical movement, and society as a whole. African woman theologians need to converse with males and to listen to critical voices if they add to go and get well. We need to move from solidarity to accountability. Accountability requires an awareness, a waking up. Becoming aware and accountable means doing away with ignorance and the withholding of life-giving information. Theologies and ethics are needed to ensure that every woman, man, youth, and child is given every opportunity to experience life fully. We must also ensure that theology is taught ethically and that a lot more women are involved in teaching theology and other subjects. Studies such as this one are therefore of great importance and should be shared across churches. If more women like myself engage in doing Theology and write about injustices against women leaders and propose solutions, I believe there can be a positive impact.

5.5 Educate people about issues relating to women's leadership

Individuals should be educated about the importance of gender parity and engagement, a theme of compassion and alternative ways of doing things and customs, and the establishment of a transformational system. This will aid legislative, societal, commercial, and spiritual organisations in combating gender inequality fuelled by beliefs, attitudes, and traditions that seem to diminish women's value and productivity (Musvota 2021:1). A method that can be utilized to encourage individuals to paradigm shifts is the biblical narrative. The Bible's teaching of inclusiveness and

balance between men and women should not be overlooked; instead, it should be incorporated into Pentecostals' daily lives. As a result, adopting biblical narratives as a model for church culture can be an efficient strategy to combat gender inequality among Pentecostals. (Musvota 2021:16). Since women in leadership positions are Biblically allowed, Pentecostals and Charismatic churches should make it a point to teach their congregations about this. As a result, members must learn how to interpret divisive passages about women in church leadership. Women's limitations imposed by Paul must be reassessed. Paul's discussion of worship order in 1 Timothy 2:11–15 must be understood in the historical context (Musvota 2021:1). Priest & Barine (2017:236) state that education is an essential part of leadership development. Especially for women as women were previously discriminated against and thus could not pursue theological studies. Although the study was conducted in Angola, Kenya, and the Central African Republic, the same trends are picked up in South Africa. The church has not been teaching enough about equality and women leadership and this must change.

Kategile (2020:51) explains that females should be receptive to being taught and inspired to pursue innovative ways to meet God and the community. Women have increased their leadership positions in other areas of life; they must be encouraged to grasp the necessity to grow their responsibilities in leading in church. Men who refuse to accept women in church leadership should be taught God's intent to establish male and female genders equally. As a result, theologians must propose tactics to influence people's thinking about including women in church leadership. Other specific areas where education is needed discussed below include undifferentiated sex roles, Women's liberation, educate people about stereotyping, leadership and assertiveness training for women and prioritize mentorship.

5.5.1 Undifferentiated sex roles

Education about the need for undifferentiated sex roles is important. This education has to start in communities, schools and churches. It must focus on a new role relationship and allocation of tasks in families. It needs to be based on the notion of equal opportunity for both men and women. Parenting and family relationships must

be part of the curriculum. Except for purely biological roles, the roles of men and women must not be determined by sex (Ngcongo, 1993: 6-7). I strongly agree with this view given my upbringing and observations in different stages of life. For the inequality problem to be resolved, we need to affirm girls and raise them up to believe that they can be anything they want to, including leaders of churches. The old way of raising girls to be housekeepers and wives needs to be addressed through education.

5.5.2 Women's liberation

There is an urgent need for education for all African men and women about women's liberation. Women's liberation is linked to the liberation of all Africans and all South Africans. It is about the freedom of humankind. If women and men are allowed an opportunity to be what they can be and are given the necessary support and opportunity, tremendous potential could be unleashed. Women's emancipation is about eliminating all conditions, policies, conventions, mindsets, and rules that impede women from reaching their full potential as human beings of equal dignity with others. Education about liberation is essential because it clears myths about what women's liberation is not. Whereas some Africans see women's freedom to contribute to the destabilization of families or encourage women to challenge men or be non-compliant, with education, it will be apparent that women's liberation is likely to enable women to be more resourceful family members and leaders. This strength will emanate from the opportunities for mutual satisfaction of essential needs of women and men. Viewed in this way, women's liberation suggests men's emancipation (Musvota, 2005:1).

5.5.3 Educate people about stereotyping

Kellerman & Rhode (2007:397) state that individuals must be sensitised about stereotyping and given the tools to self-regulate their beliefs. If this step is taken, organisations will be strong enough to prevent discrimination at its source. People can stop the practice of stereotyping by doing the following things: firstly, rrecognising the circumstances that put individuals at danger of stereotyping. Secondly, implementing methods that rise over the innate desire to employ stereotypes. Lastly, making the choice and creating opportunities to interact with diverse people, especially in terms

of gender and ethnic identity. According to Eagly & Caarli (2009:3), most people are unaware that they discriminate against others because of cultural stereotypes that portray women as the gentler, friendlier sex and men as the forceful, authoritative sex. Many people believe that highly skilled women lack the ability to lead. People naturally and unconsciously believe that women aren't confident or authoritative enough to succeed in higher-level leadership positions, even if they aren't aware that they are doing so. Gender preconceptions that people all around the world share, are at the root of this prejudice. People assume men are more dominant, forceful, and competitive - attributes psychologists' term *agentic* - and women are more supportive, courteous, and selfless - qualities psychologists call *communal*. Although gender norms are generally positive, they can hinder situations where women must take responsibility and lead. Women must demonstrate that they are as forceful, assertive, and competent as males in order to dispel people's misgivings about their strength and capability (Eagly & Caarli, 2009:3). To do so, they must exceed men and demonstrate unequivocally that they have what it takes to lead. The bar is set exceptionally high for women in male-dominated sectors which is not just. A woman must have a longer record of success than a male to be deemed equally qualified. Various pressures and stereotypes also cause other barriers. Women are not only expected but also assumed to be communal. Women who take the initiative and demonstrate their strength and intelligence may be accused of being excessively forceful or outspoken. People frequently criticize these women for not being friendly or nice enough. All these are things people need to be educated about and shown their implications. This has certainly been my experience; in my leadership journey I have had to deal with been given names such as "iron lady". The same actions I took however, if they were from a man then they are deemed as "normal" and expected.

5.5.4 Leadership and assertiveness training for women

Women must learn to stand for their interests and rights without violating the rights of others instead of doing the same. Furthermore, since African women tend culturally to be trained to follow than lead, leadership training will reinforce whatever leadership skills women already have and prepare them for positions where they can be in control in society (Mathipa &Tsoka: 2001:2). In South Africa, legislation and provisions in the

"Bill of Rights" and Women's Rights provide for the fair treatment of women. This gives the assurance that there is hope for the emancipation of women. However, this hope can only bear fruit if society and communities at the grassroots level engage in a series of programmes to promote women's liberation as part of the liberation of all Africans and all South Africans (Mathipa &Tsoka: 2001:2). Women need to be educated and assisted to overcome issues such as poor self-image, lack of assertiveness and confidence. They need to realise that how they were raised in patriarchal cultural may be the start of their story but is not how their narrative needs to end.

5.5.5 Prioritize mentorship

Priest & Barine (2017:1147) list prioritizing mentoring as one of the essential interventions to women leadership development in Africa. Mentoring is seen as a powerful leadership development tool. Mentoring can help bridge the gap between older and younger women and thus assure continued strong leadership. The fact that young and old women believe the church lacks women mentors in the field of leadership has been a barrier in this regard, according to Murithi (2000:79). Where mentorship exists, elder women teach young women how to be subservient and silent in church. They have always observed women in lower roles, and as a result, young women in the church do not aspire to leadership positions. This should not be the case, Sambaza (202:1) claims that older women have a responsibility to actively teach young women so that they do not give up when things become difficult. Younger women should be encouraged to take their place at the table, vocalise their opinions, and wholly accept that they, too, deserve to be there. Without question, we, like all accomplished women, require a strong support structure in both our personal and professional life. Many women have testified that having robust support structure that enabled them to attain professional success helped them in their journeys. I can attest to this and add that men should also mentor women. I have been blessed to have both male and female mentors and this has truly enriched my leadership journey in the church as well as in my career.

5.6 Learn from appreciative inquiries and implement more of what is working

Given (2008:1) describes appreciative inquiry (AI) as the deliberate quest for something good in a person or a machine. Inquiries about what is regarded and excellent in a specific business or people are conducted by AI. The AI approach intends to conduct a study that begins with a sense of admiration and leads to a sense of interest. The concept of AI is that "every system has something that works" (Given, 2008:3). It's a "strong and asset-based, experiential, long-term planning model, participative, and system-wide approach," according to Crama (2010:1). AI examines an organization's best life-giving characteristics in the past and today and it is a process of study involving interviews. According to Given (2008:1), the underlying norm underpinning AI is that the positive core of personal and group systems has been overlooked. Every person and the collective system have a good side that can be utilised to rebuild the system. Understanding the problem is the first step in doing a research project because research is primarily concerned with solving difficulties. An AI approach transforms the terminology used to address the problem because it focuses on the positive rather than the problematic. It assumes that a company's solutions are already in place. According to Crama (2010:2), four beliefs about human nature and human mobilization shape the foundation of AI: first, that individuals have remarkable qualities and expertise as individuals and groups; second, that institutions are human social entities, the epitome of interpersonal ability, formed and lived in speech, third, that people's images of the future function to direct individual and collective actions, and finally, that people can alter their commitments and activities to prioritise policies and chances that provide a fruitful future through conversation and inquiry.

There is a long and rich history of women and their impact on the liberation of women in different societies. In South Africa, we celebrate days such as Women's Day in August every year, which is a testament to the power and influence of women. There is a history of many women who influenced the freedom of leading in churches which some of us enjoy today (Van Schalkwyk 2002:4). More studies should be done on these women and in the church context, the churches they belonged to so that lessons

can be drawn on what enabled their leadership success from the women themselves and the organisations and churches they led in. An example of a woman who succeeded in becoming a formidable leader is Albertina Sisulu. Although she was not a leader in a church as such, I feel her story is relevant because as a church leader myself, I can identify with some of the reasons that led to her success as a leader. Albertina Sisulu's leadership influence reached many areas, not only politics. She was a dignified woman with a commanding presence. She had five children, and she was a supportive wife to a husband who had been in prison for 26 years. In addition to all this, she was a leader and a symbol of the struggle in this country (Van Schalkwyk, 2002:4). Few women have left such a strong legacy as Albertina Sisulu, a nurse, midwife, mother, activist, and leader in her own right, according to Van der Berg-Cloete, White, and Buch (2020:164). The Albertina Sisulu Executive Leadership Programme was created as a result of a collaboration between the University of Pretoria, the University of Fort Hare, and the Harvard School of Public Health. What enabled her to change her position and status in a society and system that oppressed a black woman? This is one of the questions AI requires us to ask. Having read her story, three main reasons stand out for me mostly as I can identify with these:

5.6.1 Affirmation received

Sisulu cites affirmation received from her father and husband as one of the reasons she believed in her abilities. In her words (Van Schalkwyk, 2002:4): "The males with whom I have enjoyed the closest relationships in life have never tried to dominate or oppress me. They have given me a dignity that has enabled me to realize my potential as a person, as a woman in my own right. My sons have similarly always shown me respect". This, for me, highlights the importance of the role of family members in developing the character of a woman. Whilst in my upbringing, I was raised doing the chores that were reserved for girls who would one day become wives, my father at the same time encouraged me to get an education and build a career. I believe this had tremendous impact on my confidence to dream about occupying leadership positions in every area where I have had an opportunity to use my gifts. We can thus begin to see the impact one's environment can have on their confidence.

5.6.2 A strong relationship with God

In Van Schalkwyk's (2002:4) study, Albertina explains that God was like a father to her. God spoke to her and guided her through difficult times. She believed that God's sacrifice of his son Jesus demonstrated that God anticipated the church to be at the vanguard of the struggle for subjugated people's emancipation (Van Schalkwyk, 2002:4). Which, in my view, also meant the empowerment and liberation of women as they were also oppressed, not only for being black but also for being female. Albertina, therefore, drew strength from God to fight social norms. I believe this has been the pillar of my career and my ministry. I do not think I would be a Pastor today if I did not have a strong relationship with God: understanding my identity in Christ is what gives me the assurance that I can and should lead. A strong relationship with God is thus an important component to have if women are to become successful in becoming leaders in the South African Charismatic church.

5.6.3 Resilience and decision to see the vision fulfilled

Albertina had a vision of a free South Africa, where all would have an economic life where all share in the profits. She also felt that meeting one's commitments in life was achievable and that strenuous effort and determination helped people overcome obstacles (Van Schalkwyk 2002:4). I certainly believe that her resilience and courage make her a powerful woman. And this is what also keeps me going, my vision of young women occupying areas of influence not being limited their impact because of their gender. If women in the South African Charismatic church embrace a vision of equitable representation in leadership and they are resilient in pursuing this vision, it can become a reality.

Another example we can draw from is from the AFM church under the leadership of Richard Ngidi. Women were included in Ngidi's ministry, particularly at the top level. Ngidi was the first to efficiently deploy thirty perfectly trained black female employees under his management, and numerous new arrangements were organized, according to De Wet (1989:141). Because of the influence of his evangelism and leadership in KwaZulu-Natal, the AFM was recognized as "the Church of Ngidi". The women were

funded mainly by freewill offerings collected at KwaZulu-Natal conferences. Because this was a new notion in the AFM, no mandatory contributions could be used. These women were a driving force within the AFM in KwaZulu-Natal, igniting revival flames across the province (Kgatle, 2019:6). Ngidi argued that since women were not always helpers in the salvation mission; he granted them a full ministerial position before the AFM considered appointing women. The ordained women would sometimes lead gospel congregations by themselves. They were told to go to rural areas and start churches. These women devoted their all to the advancement of God's kingdom under Ngidi's guidance and protection. Ngidi's role was receiving and welcoming the new believers into worship once these women started an assembly (Kgatle, 2019:6). This is a great example of how churches can learn from what happens when a leader believes in women's leadership, when they encourage and enable it.

5.7 Prioritise and be intentional about enabling women's leadership

Gennrich (2015:82) calls on churches to ask themselves this question "Is there a strategy and programme in your church that focuses on strengthening men-women relationships and enhancing women's lives in the church and community"? Based on questions that Gennrich (2015:82) put forward as follow up questions that helps churches to have a plan that shows they are intentional about enabling women leadership, in this section, I will discuss some questions that I proposed church leaders ask themselves.

Firstly, does the churches' code of conduct include how women and men should conduct themselves and relate in your church? According to Erwin (2011:536), "codes of conduct are a practical instrument commonly used to govern employee behaviour in organisations". Companies frequently use a written code of conduct to define and communicate business practices and an ethical workplace culture. If the code of conduct is silent on gender relations, then it is left up to the people to decide how they relate to each other. Churches should thus ensure that they include how women and men should conduct themselves and relate to each other in their church to encourage positive experiences in the church.

Secondly, does the constitution, principles, and the statement of faith of your church support gender equality and inclusivity? These recommendations are similar to the first question and provide more outlets where the church can clearly state what its stand is regarding gender equality as this also influences members' behaviour. In a study titled "Prisma Paper on Gender, A contribution to reflection and policy", Plange and Jochemsen (2014:23) also include the question of churches having policies about gender equality as a key discussion point when addressing this issue. In Chapter 5 where the statistics of percentage of women in top leadership positions in the sample of South African Charismatic churches were discussed, we saw that the only church which had an equal representation of men and women in leadership positions was one that outlined its position on gender equality in its Statement of Faith. Although not much information was shared on how this church managed to transform and have such a good number of women represented in their leadership structures, I believe this transparency on its stance played a huge role. Wellman (2016:1) states that "a church's constitution can safeguard the integrity of leaders while expressing the will of the congregation while giving both guidance, principles, and procedures to follow so that there are certain expectations for everyone in the church". Guidance in terms of gender equality and inclusivity is certainly something which the church should include in its constitution and statement of faith so that the members know the churches' stance from the onset. They will then be more likely to support this stance when they become members unlike if they become members and only find out after they have made this decision to join the church.

Thirdly, what is the percentage of men and women leaders at different levels of leadership in your church? Are women adequately represented? A good measure to evaluate whether the members and leaders in the church know and support the church's stance on gender equality is by evaluating the numbers. By answering this question, the church will begin to see whether their code of conduct, constitution, principles, and the statement of faith are lived out or if they are just there to fulfil a requirement. This is assuming that a church does have these in place and they do support gender equality. If they do not include the churches stance on gender equality, then perhaps the results of the representation will indicate the need for these to include statements that support and encourage women leadership. This question can also be

viewed as Osmer's (2011:2) Descriptive-Empirical Task of Practical Theology which poses the question, what is going on? Asking whether women are adequately represented in each church will help leaders to better understand the situation and contexts at hand.

Lastly, does your church openly support women to pursue theological education? According to Muriithi (2000: 90), women who are interested in theology education are offered minimal encouragement. Women's general and theological education should be a top priority for churches. This is significant because schooling is widely regarded as a substantial disadvantage for women in positions of leadership. Theological education is required for church leadership in order to effectively communicate church challenges. It's also difficult because women are still underrepresented in contemporary theological studies and don't have as many opportunities to grow. The church should begin programs to encourage women to pursue higher education in general and theological studies. More women in church ministry and theological/religious education institutes are needed.

All these questions discussed in this section indicate the importance of necessity of intentionality by the church if women leadership is to transform. I agree with Gennrich (2015:82) when he states that an enabling environment for women leadership cannot be created if there is no conscious intentionality. The church needs to be intentional and answer these questions to see whether their intentions regarding women's leadership align with their actions. In the section that follows, I include calling leaders to account and being diligent with policy implementation as essential considerations for women's leadership. It wis not be sufficient to state our intentions and document them if they are not to be diligently implemented and monitored.

5.8 Encourage collaboration between men and women

Maluleke and Nadar (2004:2-7) highlight the absence of meaningful interaction between female and male African intellectuals. They say that "black men and women academics interact more with white colleagues than with one another". They have a

few theories as to why this is the case. To give an example, the scarcity of black intellectuals, particularly black female intellectuals, works against the necessary interaction between black women and men. Another issue is that the contestations, conflicts, and disparities usually linked with female and male experiences of suffering, death, and injustice reveal males' limits in representing the views of women, as well as the necessity to speak to them. Despite these challenges, they argue that genuine freedom must be self-implicating and self-authored, citing Steve Biko's "Black person, you are on your own" as an anxious call for Blacks to stop waiting for foreigners to write their emancipation. In the context of isiXhosa society, this argument might be made between amaXhosa men and women. AmaXhosa women and men should engage in critical discourse and collaboration for their independence, as this paper suggests, while keeping one's cultural history in mind (Kobo, 2010:4).

The most significant issue African women confront, according to Njoroge (1997:7), is changing their understanding of internalized misogynistic behaviours, mindsets, ideas, and tendencies. In a non-sexist society, we must set out to build different models of how women and men interact. This is a lifetime endeavour that can only succeed if both men and women agree to collaborate. As a result, there are no misconceptions that freedom of expression, inventing new models, and writing books and articles can bring gender justice and healing to our communities. Instead, we need to start a conversation with males about ending misogyny and seeing this endeavour as part of the work Jesus began in establishing God's dominion. Most churches still think of gender as solely a female issue. This might make males feel isolated or make gender justice appear like an afterthought. Few churches have gender norms, structures, personnel, and the funding to carry out the task efficiently. Few church leaders speak out against social and cultural practices that oppress or marginalize women. Even though some churches, mainly in South Africa, have started to use more inclusive terminology for God's people, spiritual experience and language are centred chiefly on men's encounters (Gennrich, 2015:97).

5.9 Conclusion

In this chapter, I discussed Osmer's Pragmatic task of Practical Theology which sought to answer what practical strategies that can be employed to transform the narrative of women leadership or how might we respond to the underrepresentation of women leaders in the South African Charismatic church and the negative experience of women leaders (Osmer, 2008:26). The short summary is that a great deal can be done and still needs to be done. Some suggested plans include re-viewing and reconstructing patriarchal cultures, resisting literal interpretation of scriptures, remaining faithful to the ministry of the Holy Spirit, giving priority to women experiences and voices, educate people about issues relating to women leadership and learning from appreciative inquiries and implement more of what is working. These practical strategies I have proposed have come because of applying an African Women practical theology lens to the issues that hinder women's leadership in the South African Charismatic church.

Chapter 6:

Conclusion

6.1 Introduction

In this exploratory research study, we set out to explore the extent and reasons for women's underrepresentation in leadership positions in the South African Charismatic church and the challenges women leaders face. Through literary research, the aim of the study was to explore the impact of some of the contributing factors to this underrepresentation. The contributing factors discussed in this study included culture, patriarchy, and hermeneutics. This study also sought to explore whether interpreting these contributing factors through an African Women Practical Theology lens can help transform the problem of underrepresentation of women leadership in top positions in the South African Charismatic church. Having done extensive research to understand the meaning of an African Women Practical Theology lens, I came to the summation that it is as a theological approach that prioritizes the best interests of women and works to genuinely alter their situation practically, in this context, a lens from an African women perspective that seeks to change the praxis of underrepresentation of women to fair representation. In what ways can using an African Women Practical Theology lens to explore hindrances to women's leadership in the South African Charismatic church assist us to remedy the underrepresentation of women leaders in the church, was the central research question.

6.2 Insights into the chapters of the study

In Chapter 1 which is the introduction to this study, I explained my motivation for choosing this topic. Having been raised in a patriarchal society and now being a leader in a society where patriarchy persists, such studies are important in beginning to transform the culture of patriarchy in a Sotho or any other context. I say beginning to transform because I realised whilst doing this study that this is not something that will change overnight but we can start acting now to ensure that we eventually do see

change. I showed why writing from an African Women Practical Theology lens was beneficial in this study since it not only represents my context but the context of many other voices which remain unheard. Engaging with culture, patriarchy and hermeneutics with such a lens that puts the best interests of women at the centre is a powerful way in which we can begin to find alternative ways of doing things that empower women. Introducing the interconnected tasks of Practical Theology by Osmer (2011:2), was instrumental to the study as it's the framework used to address the objectives of this study. These four tasks are The Descriptive-Empirical Task, Secondly, The Interpretive Task, Thirdly, The Normative Task and finally, The Pragmatic Task.

In Chapter 2 titled "The current State of Women's Leadership in the South African Charismatic church", I explored what is happening in the world and the church regarding women's leadership with an emphasis on what is happening in the Charismatic Church in South Africa. The whole approach to this chapter was exploring the Descriptive-Empirical Task of Practical Theology should help describe what is going on and look to collate and collect information to help grasp the situation and contexts at hand (Osmer, 2008:6). Having been born into and raised in the Anglican church and moving to a Pentecostal and Charismatic denomination as an adult, also having worked in a corporate environment, I felt it was important to start exploring women leadership, not only in my current denomination but also in different sectors and other denominations. The findings were clear, there is an underrepresentation of women leaders in different sectors including various church denominations. This was disappointing to see as one would expect that if there is any justice for women, it should be found in the church. Although available data was limited, findings from this chapter showed that despite women consistently being the majority in Pentecostal churches, men still dominate influential and strategic leadership positions. There is thus an underrepresentation of women leaders in the Pentecostal and Charismatic church. Further evidence showed that women face various leadership challenges, including but not limited to hostile treatment of women who are in leadership positions as in some instances they are still viewed as imposters as well as resistance to women leadership due to patriarchal structures that still exist in society. The example of the church which I found in the research that whose executive leadership was 50% make

and 50% female was encouraging, this was the most transformed. The limited information available on how they succeeded in this showed that intentionality for equality by a church has a great impact on women leadership. This churches statement of faith which highlights their belief in women being created equally to men shows that it's also taught in the church and practically implemented. Churches like these call for us to do an appreciative enquiry and see in more details what they are doing which other churches can adopt.

The other problem identified in this chapter was that some women who had been successful in ascending to top leadership positions were not having a positive experience. Some receive hostile treatment from their male collegues and even church members. What was interesting about this is that the rejection of women leadership was not only by men but by some women as well. This shows how deeply entrenched the belief system of women not being eligible to lead is. It also highlights those whatever interventions are proposed that will have a positive impact on women leadership should not only be directed to men and boys but to women and girls also. I could certainty relate to these findings as I also had to constantly fight the inner voice that kept saying I would fail as a leader because I am a woman, sometimes even bringing doubt of whether my leading as a woman was God's will. This certainly delayed my progress as I shunned some opportunities to progress in my leadership journey. What is taught in this regard affects all and this battle needs everyone to be involved if we are to succeed. The findings from this chapter did not paint a desirable picture on the current state of women leadership in the church.

In Chapter 3, titled "Exploring hindrances to women leadership in the South African Charismatic church", we looked at why there is an underrepresentation of women in church leadership and why women continued to experience various leadership challenges. Since these were discussed as the Descriptive-Empirical Task of Practical Theology, the why of this chapter addressed what (Osmer, 2008:6) refers to as the Interpretive Task. We saw that culture has an impact on how society views the issue of women's leadership. I specifically focussed on the Sotho culture since it is the context from which I am writing and concluded that Sotho culture understandings have hurtful implications to women's leadership, and they do not encourage women's

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leadership. We concluded that some Biblical interpretations about women's leadership have also led to the current situation in the church. The study hypothesised that Sotho cultural views on women leadership are patriarchal and thus have harmful consequences for women leadership in the church was indeed proven to be true. Through the findings of our research, this hypothesis was proven. We saw that from childhood, boys and girls are raised differently in a Sotho cultural context. The approved way of doing things is to train the girl child to become submissive wives and good mothers. This results in girls not being afforded many opportunities for education or preparation for any sort of leadership except in their homes. The boy children on the contrary are raised to become leaders in society, the marketplace and even the church. They are thus provided much more opportunities in education and leadership. This way of raising children shows that it affects all genders, boys grow up believing girls shouldn't lead and become men that don't accept leadership from women. Girls grow up believing that they should not and cannot lead resulting in some of them becoming women who do not support women leadership or women who constantly doubt themselves and ultimately do not utilise opportunities even when they are made available to them. We also saw how as a result of patriarchal cultural influences, even Scriptures can be used to keep women from occupying positions of leadership. This has been done over such a long time that even when churches change their stance on this, the reality of women in churches is not that much impacted. We saw that most denominations, including Charismatic denominations now accept the ordination of women and in principle endorse women leadership but the effects of patriarchal systems is still engrained in churches and negatively affect women's experiences in church. In essence, I could summarise my insights from this chapter as highlighting the fact that patriarchal culture, society and hermeneutic has resulted in the underappreciation of women in leadership positions. Looking at women leadership through patriarchal lens is not life giving both from a cultural and religious point of view. How then is looking at this issue with a different lens beneficial? Does interpreting the views of Sotho culture on women leadership in the church through African Women Practical Theology lens have a positive impact of better understanding this matter and addressing the issue of underrepresentation of women leadership in the church by contributing towards transformation was then the question that remained which I addressed in the chapter that followed.

In Chapter 4, entitled "Changing the praxis of women leadership by viewing culture, patriarchy, and scripture through an African woman practical theology lens", I discussed what should be happening in the church to women's leadership. Osmer's Normative Task of practical theology was explored which in short answers, "What should be going on?" Osmer (2008:26). I conclude in this study that we should re-evaluate women's leadership through applying a different lens, a lens that can be useful in transforming the underrepresentation and challenging experiences of women in church leadership. The lens I proposed is the African Women Practical Theology Lens which promotes the liberation of women and is against sexual and gender injustices. Through this lens, we can move towards changing culture from that of patriarchy to one that embraces women as equals, acknowledges and accepts their skills, and encourages women's leadership. One of the key insights gained from researching the importance of this lens is that the praxis of women leadership would not change unless women themselves got involved. From a theological point of view, women must do theology about women. "Practical theology as a theology that is concerned with human suffering and emancipation, and hence should promote the full humanity of all who suffer and are oppressed, including women" (Chifungo, 2014: 41) is a first basis to finding solutions. When Practical Theology is done by African women telling African women stories and experiences from their own experiences is done, we see how interpreting patriarchal culture and hermeneutic can empower us to change the praxis of women in the Charismatic church. This cannot be achieved in the absence of practical strategies that can be employed and thus this chapter was followed by the Pragmatic task of Practical Theology (Osmer, 2008:26).

In Chapter 5, entitled "Transform women leadership in the South African Charismatic Church", I discussed some practical ways the Charismatic churches can transform the narrative of women leadership. We can look at the impact of what we discussed I chapter 4 as highlighting all the wrong interpretations that seek to oppress women and also highlight alternative interpretations that seek to liberate women. But staying at this level is not enough to bring change. From the revised interpretations, we can come up with practical strategies that can be implemented that will advance women leadership. Some strategies proposed in this chapter include, but are not limited to: Firstly, re-viewing and reconstructing patriarchal cultures. We noted from the research

that men who resist women leadership are products of patriarchy, most men in South Africa are raised in patriarchal homes and societies (Sekano & Masango, 2012:4). Through the lens proposed in this study, we see that patriarchy cannot be allowed to persist, it must be disabled. The change can be simple tasks such as changing language used doesn't promote equality. What is clear though is that every member in society can do something. From parents and what they teach their children in their homes, to institutions and the church being intentional in words and in action to promote equality, we can all do something to contribute to disarming patriarchy from our culture. Secondly, resisting literal interpretations of Scriptures. An interpretation of the Bible that accepts Scripture at face value without context is a perfect setup for unjustified marginalisation of women. We must embrace what (Masenya, 2009:138-139) calls a life-giving hermeneutic that resists death-dealing Bible interpretations. This approach is what helped me to overcome some of my own insecurities about being a women leader in a Charismatic church. The Charismatic churches should approach Bible teaching this way and also teach members not to adopt literal interpretations of scriptures with no contextual basis. Thirdly, giving priority to women's experiences and voices is a very important transformation tool and I have fully embraced it, and will advocate for. The outcomes of this research have highlighted the urgent need for writing and publishing women's experiences and most importantly, ensuring that they voices are not only heard but also heeded to. Fifthly, educating people about issues relating to women's leadership. Education is an essential part of leadership development (Priest & Barine, 2017:236). The education should include but not limited to issues around why we have to have undifferentiated sex roles, women's liberation, stereotyping, mentorship, leadership training for women and assertiveness training for women. From the variety of subjects that need to be taught, we can see that the audience is not just men but also women, society and the church at large. Lastly, learning from appreciative inquiries and implement more of what is working. We need to learn from churches that got equality right and also hear the stories of those women in leadership of those changes. An important question of an appreciative enquiry is what is working. I believe that by also studying what is working, we can get better insights into strategies we can employ to advance the cause of women leadership. One of the successful women leaders in our country (albeit not in a Charismatic church) whose leadership story resonated with me is Albertina Sisulu.

Some of the factors she attributes to her success is the affirmation she received from her father. This shows how much impact dismantling patriarchy even from the home is and the importance of education about gender equality in formative years is. As women, it is also important to be resilient and have a strong personal relationship with God, especially women in the Charismatic church. One of the other key insights one can take from this chapter is how key intentionality and prioritising the enablement of women leadership is. All the strategies discussed are of no use if there is no implementation, which requires collaboration between women and men.

6.3 Suggestions for further research

With this being an exploratory study by literature analysis, one of the limitations is that no empirical research was done. I do believe that interviewing some women from the Sotho culture and Charismatic denomination would enhance the story by adding even more women's voices to the discourse. This is my first suggestion that more studies be done that include women from different South African cultures, even other denominations. I include other cultures because people do not live in isolation and their culture is thus influenced by other cultures in the world, findings that are from a pure specific culture are limited (Chulu, 2015:4). This also applies to Sotho culture; other African, as well as international cultures, have affected it. The same can be said about the church since Sotho people do not worship in isolation and since various cultures are present in the church, observations and findings cannot be deemed as exclusively from a purely Sotho perspective, the findings may therefore be relevant to a broader African perspective.

It will also be useful to test the impact of the practical strategies suggested in Chapter 5. Research would be needed to assess their impact on a specific congregation over time. As a leader in my congregation, I can certainly implement them in my congregation and to an extent also influence other branches in my church to do the same. Further study after some time of implementation is recommended.

6.3.1 Conclusion

This study has showed that there is indeed underrepresentation of women leaders in the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches in South Africa. The patriarchal system has repressed and harmed women. They are viewed as irresponsible persons incapable of taking care of themselves, making their leadership of others implausible. Women have been taught that leadership positions are only for men and they must only focus on taking care of their household and nurturing children (Kgatle, 2019:9). The devastating effects of both women and men believing this are still felt by women currently. Consequently, churches should carefully consider their patriarchal structures as a sin and abandon them. They should also reconsider their perspectives on the apparent Pauline prohibition of women and restructure their leadership structure.

We have seen that patriarchy, culture and hermeneutics have a great impact on women's leadership in the church. While there has been some progress in addressing this, a lot still needs to be done. We have seen that when these are viewed through a women's Practical Theology lens, new understandings that are liberating are extracted and these can help towards a new praxis. In this concluding chapter, I discussed what I believe are practical actions churches can take to advance transformation of women leadership. These include re-viewing and re-constructing patriarchal cultures, preaching life-giving and equality-promoting hermeneutics, giving priority to women's experiences and voices, educating people about issues relating to women's leadership, learning from appreciative enquiries and implement more of what's working, being intentional about enabling women's leadership and encourage collaboration between men and women. This latter point is a very important one since it will take men and women working together for us to see transformation in women's leadership in churches.

In a nutshell, the following are the responses to the research questions: Firstly, on whether traditional Sotho interpretations of women's leadership perhaps act as barriers to women's leadership in the church, for both women and men in terms of how women view themselves as leaders and how men and churches are receptive to and

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supportive of women leaders, the response is, yes. We have seen how women leadership is not encouraged because of limiting beliefs brought about by patriarchal cultural beliefs and practices. Secondly, on how exploring these limiting cultural beliefs through an African Women Practical Theology lens help us to transform women's leadership experiences, we saw that it makes a positive to start allowing women to tell their stories from their context and how empowering this can be. I also used my journey and experiences as a reference in this regard. Lastly, we concluded with some practical strategies that can be implemented to the praxis of women's leadership in the South African Charismatic church, recommended some topics for further studies and noted that much work needs to be done.

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