CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS OF QUESTIONNAIRE

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of the survey was to find out what the current opinions are of church members as to menstruation and church leadership. The results can help us to know if we still have to take into consideration this surviving influence of Akan and biblical traditional beliefs and the alleged pollutant nature of menstrual blood. This would serve as background information in order to give the contemporary boy/man and girl/woman proper education concerning women’s leadership roles in the church.

To address this question we set out to conduct a research among the Akans churches in Ghana. Akan was chosen for the research among the other ethnic groups in Ghana as they form the single majority ethnic group in Ghana. The churches chosen for the research are the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, the Church of Pentecost, the Roman Catholic Church and Apostles’ Revelation Society (ARS). The categories of churches mentioned above are important to the subject matter of this research for many reasons.

There is an enormous variety of churches in Ghana due to the rapid proliferation of new churches and schisms in some of the older churches. Therefore in order to get fair views of church members concerning menstruation and church leadership in Akan churches the researcher chose one denomination from each of the major strands of churches in Ghana. These are the mainline churches, (churches instituted as a result of European Missionary endeavors in Ghana in the 19th Century), the African Independent Churches, indigenous churches founded by Africans around 1914, Classical Pentecostal Churches in which family the Charismatic ministries belong. These are churches originally set up under the auspices of foreign Pentecostal missions in 1931 but now operate under indigenous leadership.

The Roman Catholic Church is chosen for this research because the denomination stands in its own category as a non-Protestant tradition. It is also the largest single

---

643 Ter Haar, ‘Standing up for Jesus’…222.
denomination (16.6%)\(^{644}\) of the Christian population in Ghana. It is therefore important to source views of Roman Catholic Church members on women and church leadership.

In studying church members’ attitudes and opinions about menstruation and church leadership, the Presbyterian Church of Ghana is one church that cannot be left out. This is because the Presbyterian Church being one of the largest churches and also the oldest Protestant church with a continuous and consistent missionary history had a long encounter with the Ghanaian culture. The Presbyterian of Ghana church is also the single church that has taken the mother tongue seriously and spearheaded the translation of the Christian Scriptures into Akan and other Ghanaian languages; something the researcher believes is a necessary tool for sustaining authentic dialogue between Scriptures and culture in Africa, something that this research seeks to do. The Presbyterian Church is chosen for this research as against the Methodist Church for instance, which is also a Protestant Church because the Methodist Church Ghana is more Anglophone than the Presbyterian Church in its practices.

The Church of Pentecost is also chosen as one of the churches in this study because it is one of the oldest Pentecostal churches and the fastest growing indigenous Pentecostal denominations in West Africa sub-region.\(^{645}\) The Church of Pentecost has a massive presence across the length and breadth of Ghana and beyond due to its community-based church planting method. The Church of Pentecost was chosen and not Charismatic churches for this research since the two belong to the broad category, Pentecostal type churches. As such, most of their beliefs and practices are similar. Again, the Charismatic churches are not steep in traditional issues as the Church of Pentecost does. Charismatic churches in Ghana also use English language predominantly and have adopted the American Pentecostal worship styles in terms of music and preaching while the Church of Pentecost can be described as a predominantly vernacular church. These Churches are

---


also mostly found in the cities as compared with the Church of Pentecost which is found in almost every city and village in Ghana.

In a study of this nature, where peoples’ attitudes and opinions about menstruation and church leadership are being sought, it is extremely important that we interview members of an African Indigenous Church, churches that are purely indigenous founded by Africans mainly for Africans. This research focused on The Apostles’ Revelation Society for the research because it is one of the earliest African Indigenous Churches started by a Ghanaian. This is also an African Independent Church whose members are mostly converts from Traditional Africa Religions and idol worshippers as compared to some other church’s whose members usually come from other churches. So the study of such a church will in no small way inform the research about indigenous beliefs on menstruation and cultic leadership.

We have chosen to spread the questionnaire in different denominations to find out how people’s thoughts and feelings about menstruation have influenced the ordination and recognition of the call of women to church leadership among the Protestant, Roman Catholic, Pentecostal and the African Independent Churches. Our questionnaire asked people to express their views on menstruation and church leadership. The questionnaire was directed toward respondents with no formal western form of education. We sought to assess their understanding of and attitudes toward menstruation. We tried to assess their understanding of and attitude to relevant biblical passages, their positions on issues such as men who refuse to eat food prepared by menstruating women and women who do not attend Church service and Holy Communion when they menstruate, their views on women in administration and church leadership and women and the handling of the sacraments. The resulting report offers a detailed and in some ways surprising portrait of women in church leadership in a variety of church denominations in the Akan society in Ghana.

4.2 Pilot Study

Prior to distributing the questionnaire, a small pilot study was conducted at the New Achimota Presbyterian Church on 25th June 2005 in order to gain feedback on the
questions and instructions being utilized in the research. Feedback from the pilot study led to several corrections in the final questionnaire. These changes included further explanation in the questions including more information on the purpose of the study.

4.3 Data Collection and Analysis

It was the aim of the study to have a minimum of 150 participants in the study. This was to have a sizable number of respondents that would give a true reflection of the thoughts and feelings of Akans that could be used for the research. 300 questionnaires were spread in four denominations in order to have a minimum of 70 respondents from each church. The churches were the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, the Church of Pentecost, the Roman Catholic Church and the Apostle Revelation Church (ARS) (an African Independent Church). For each denomination, questionnaires were sent to two local churches from an urban area and two from a rural area. This was to give us a range of respondents views and to find out if the doctrines of the various denominations and the dwelling places of respondents had an influence in their outlook on the fact that menstruation, impurity and female leadership. 187 questionnaires were recovered but 27 of them were not properly answered. We were left with 160 questionnaires to work with. Respondents were informed explicitly that response was voluntary. In addition, the purpose of the questionnaire and individual questions were also explained to respondents for them to understand the questions and what was expected of them.

The variables we considered very important in this research were, sex, age, level of education, Christian denomination and dwelling place of respondents because, we are of the opinion that peoples’ thinking, feelings and judgments are influenced by, sex, age, level of education, church denomination and a person’s place of dwelling.

Sample for the research was random. The researcher and her two assistants went to the church premises of the churches used for the research on the days of group meetings and interviewed the first people who came in before start of meeting. On certain occasions, questionnaires were distributed to congregants immediately after church service and respondents took questionnaires home and returned them the following Sunday.
4.4 People’s Perception about Menstruation

Gender

A significant minority (36%) of total respondents agreed that menstruation makes women impure. However, a majority of total respondents (64%) disagreed with the idea that menstruation renders women impure. 20% of respondents who agreed that menstruation makes women impure are males and 16% are females while 29% males and 35% females answered that menstruation does not make women impure. Gender is seen to be significant in people’s perception about menstruation. This is not surprising since it is women that do menstruate and not men. It is women who suffer subordination and marginalization as a result of menstruation and so more women as against men believe that menstruation does not render women impure.

Age range of respondents

A minority (36%) of respondents responded that menstruation makes women impure while a majority (64%) said menstruation makes women impure. For respondents who said menstruation makes women impure 17% were between the ages of 20-29; 9% are between the ages of 30-39; 4% were between the ages of 40-49, 4% were between the ages of 50-59 and 2% are between the ages of 60 and above. 25% of respondents who said menstruation makes women impure were between the ages of 20 and 29 years; 13% were between the ages of 30-39, 9% were between the ages of 40-49 and 12% were between the ages of 50-59, while respondents aged 60 and above formed 5%.

There are two main reasons for these responses. First, majority of the young respondents were members of the Legon community church of the Apostle Revelation Society, a denomination that strongly believes in the Old Testament laws on purity and impurity. Secondly, the church in Ghana in contrast to the churches in the Western world is made up of many young people between the ages of 18 to 50 years and so respondents above 50 formed a relatively small percentage compared with the rest. Thus the percentage of
the younger generation in total respondents is high. These could account for having more young people compared to older people agreeing that menstruation makes women impure.

**Level of education**

36% of respondents said menstruation makes women impure. A sizeable majority (64%) from the different levels of education surveyed answered that menstruation does not make women impure and should not be the basis for denying them church leadership. Respondents with primary education formed 7%, of respondents who said menstruation renders women impure while those with secondary education forms 6%, and those with professional and tertiary education forms 7% and 16% respectively. The breakdown of the percentage of respondents who said menstruation does not make women impure is as follows: 3% has primary education, 13% has secondary education, 12% has professional education and 36% has tertiary education. Level of education is not significant in respondents’ perception on menstruation. For example we have 7% of respondents with primary education and 16% of respondents with tertiary education agreeing that menstruation makes women impure. Although we have 36% of respondents with tertiary education saying that menstruation does not render women impure, this can be due to the fact that they form the largest majority of total respondents (52%). Our conclusion is that, negative perception about menstruation cannot be connected to the level of education.

**Christian Denomination**

36% of total respondents from all the denominations surveyed answered that menstruation makes women impure and so not fit for church leadership while a total of 64% responded that menstruation does not make women impure. Denomination made significant difference, as respondents from Apostle Revelation Society, an African Independent Church had more respondents (14%) agreeing with the assertion that menstruation makes women impure followed by the Church of Pentecost (10%), a denomination that does not ordain women. The Presbyterian and the Roman Catholic churches had 6% each of respondents who agreed that menstruation make women
impure. The explanation here is that the Apostle Revelation Society, being an African Independent Church, has an African traditional background and is also a church which doctrines are based on the Old Testament laws on purity and impurity. Although the church ordains women, women in their menses are not allowed to enter the church hall. The Presbyterian Church ordains women and has no restrictions on menstruating women. The Roman Catholic Church on the other hand does not ordain women but does not have restrictions on menstruating women. Thus churches that have restrictions on menstruating women have more respondents viewing menstrual women as impure. Roman Catholic and Church of Pentecost do not ordain women but it might be that because women play more leadership roles in the Roman Catholic Church, members have more positive view about menstruation and church leadership.

**Dwelling place**

36% of respondents answered that menstruation makes women impure and 64% responded otherwise. Urban dwellers formed 16% while rural dwellers formed 20% of respondents who said menstruation makes women impure. Urban dwellers respondents formed 51% and rural dwellers formed 13% of those who said menstruation does not render women impure. This shows that the negative perception about menstruation is stronger in the rural areas where people are still more bound by traditional beliefs compared to the urban areas. Dwelling place is therefore significant in this research.

In the questionnaire, respondents had been asked to specify why they thought or did not think menstruation make women impure. Some of the answers were as follows:

Respondents who answered that menstruation make women impure said:

- The Bible says that menstruation make women impure.
- Menstrual blood is filthy and women during their menses have to deal with something that is filthy and so they are associated with impurity.
- Impurity associated with menstruation is a cultural belief in Akan tradition.
Respondents who answered in the negative also said:

- The Bible says that Christians are in a new dispensation and Jesus the founder of Christianity abolished the issue of physical purity in connection with spiritual worship.
- Menstruation is a physiological change in women and has nothing to do with spiritual purity.
- Menstrual impurity is a form of discrimination against women

4.5 Interpretation of Biblical Passages on the Emission of Body Fluids

Significant numbers of respondents ranging between 26% and 42% did not answer the biblical passages. Sex, age, education, denomination and dwelling place were not significant in respondents’ responses to the Leviticus passages. The Question 3d on respondents’ opinion on semen discharge was the least answered among the questions on biblical passages on purity and impurity. Some answers to the biblical questions are as follows:

- The Bible is God’s word and so must be accepted literally.
- Jesus Christ came to make all things new.
- The birth of a male child was preferred to the birth of a female child in the olden days.
- The passages are on old ideologies used in Judaism and must be abrogated.
- These could be laws for cleanliness that helped people in the olden days to maintain good personal hygiene.
- Discharges from the bodies of both men and women were considered as making a person impure.
- Discrimination against women.
- It was to allow women to rest and birth wounds to heal.
4.6 People’s Opinions on Men Who Refuse to Eat Food Prepared by Menstruating Women

**Gender**
13% of total respondents agreed with men who refuse to eat food prepared by a menstruating woman but 63% disagreed with such men. 24% did not respond. 8% of respondents who agreed with such men are males and 5% are females. The large percentage of respondents (24%) who refused to answer the question shows that there are quite a number of people in the churches who are still confused as far as impurity associated with menstruating women is concerned.

Sex was a significant factor in responses to this question as more women disagreed with such men as compared with men. Women do menstruate and are used to menstrual blood as against men who do not.

**Age range of respondents**
13% of total respondents agreed with men who refuse to eat food prepared by a menstruating woman, but a significant 63% disagreed with such men. 24% did not respond to the question. Remarkably, respondents aged 20-29 formed a majority (8%) of respondents who agreed with men who refuse to eat food prepared by menstruating wives while respondents aged 50-59 and 60 and above formed 1% each. This could be due to the fact that one of the local Apostle’s Revelation Society (a church which doctrines are fundamentally based on the Old Testament teachings) was in Legon community where most of the members were between ages 20-29. Age made a significant difference in respondents’ responses. Still the significant number (25%) of non respondents gives an indication of the confusion in people’s minds about menstrual impurity and its taboos.

**Level of Education**
13% of total respondents disagreed with men who refuse to eat food prepared by menstruating woman while 63% disagreed with such men. 24% failed to answer the question. Respondents with tertiary education formed the majority (6%) of the group that
agreed with such men because they form majority of total respondents. The level of education was not significant as percentages did not follow any significant trend.

**Christian Denomination**

A total of 13% agreed with men who refuse food prepared by menstruating women. 63% however disagreed while 24% of these did not respond. We have respondents from Apostle Revelation Society forming the highest number of respondents (6%) who agree with such men followed by respondents from the Church of Pentecost (5%), the Presbyterian Church (1%) and the Roman Catholic (1%). Respondents from the Presbyterian Church formed majority (28%) of respondents who disagree with such men. Respondents from the Roman Catholic Church formed (18%), and the Church of Pentecost and the Apostle Revelation Society formed 16% and 5% respectively of such men. Christian denomination is significant in responds to this question as Apostle Revelation Society which has a doctrine that menstruation make women impure, (though it ordains women as ministers) had the largest number of respondents (6%) agreeing with such men, followed by Church of Pentecost (5%) that does not ordain women. The Presbyterian Church ordains women as ministers and does not have purity rules that restrict women in the church and so it was not surprising that it recorded the highest percentage (28%) of respondents who disagree with such men and also recorded the lowest percentage (1%) of respondents who are not in support of such men. Although the Roman Catholic Church does not ordain women, its members recorded the lowest percentage (1%) of respondents that agreed with such men and also a high percentage (18%) of respondents who disagree with such men. We could attribute this to the fact that Roman Catholics have had female church leaders helping with the distribution of the Eucharist for many years and so members are used to female handling “food.” The significant number of respondents (24%) who did not answer the question could be due to confusion in peoples’ minds about menstrual purity and impurity.

**Dwelling place**

While 13% of respondents agreed with men who are unwilling to eat food prepared by a menstruating woman, 63% disagree with such men. Place of dwelling was significant as
more people living in the urban areas (51%) disagreed with such men while more people living in the rural areas (8%) agreed with them. The reason for these differences is that urban dwellers are less bound by traditional believes compared to rural dwellers.

Respondents were asked to give reasons for their answers about why some men refuse to eat food prepared by menstruating women and the following were some of the reasons given:

- A belief in African Traditional Religion and the belief that menstrual blood is dangerous and so can destroy magical powers.
- It is men who indulge in fetishism who would refuse to eat food prepared by menstruating women since they fear that they might lose their powers.
- There is no basis for such behaviour.
- Others said it is the fear of infection due to poor practice of personal hygiene by women in those days when there were no sanitary pads.
- Some also said men refuse to eat food prepared by a menstruating woman because the Bible says such a woman is impure and that whatever she touches becomes impure.
- The Bible says women are made impure by menstruation.
- The work of Christ makes women pure.
- Today’s woman practice good personal hygiene.

4.7 People’s Reactions to Holy Communication Offered by a Menstruating Woman

**Gender**

A significant number of 38% said they would not accept to receive Holy Communion from a menstruating woman if they were to have a foreknowledge that she was
menstruating but 62% of total respondents responded that they would accept it. 22% of respondents who would refuse to accept Holy Communion from a menstruating woman are males and 16% are females. 34% female respondents (out of a total of 52%) compared to 28% male respondents (out of a total of 48%) said they would accept the Holy Communion. Gender is a significant factor in people’s reaction to a menstruating woman administering the Holy Communion as more male respondents said they would not accept Holy Communion from a menstruating woman and more females said they would. It was amazing to find out that there are still a significant percentage of women in the church who would refuse Holy Communion from a menstruating woman if they happen to know she was menstruating.

**Age range of respondents**

38% of respondents said they would not accept Holy Communion from a menstruating woman while 62% said they would. Majority (15%) of respondents who would refuse the Holy Communion were aged 20-29 years. These were followed by respondents between ages 50-59 years (9%) and age groups 30-39, 40-49 years and 60 and above formed 7%, 1% and 6% respectively. Respondents from age 20-29 years forms a majority (27%) with respondents from age group 40-49 years following (15%) of respondents who would accept Holy Communion from a menstruating woman. Respondents aged 40-49 years forms 9% with age group 50-59 forms 8%. Respondents within age group 60 years and above form the lowest percentage (3%). Age seems to be significant here as we have more young people agreeing to accept Holy Communion from a menstruating woman as compared to the older people. However, the surprising thing is that many young respondents said they would not accept Holy Communion from a menstruating woman. This could be attributed to the many young people in the Legon community of the Apostle Revelation Society local congregation which teachings are mainly based on the Old Testament. This shows how church denominational doctrines and biblical hermeneutics can influence the thoughts of congregants irrespective of other variables.
**Level of education**

38% of respondents said they would not accept Holy Communion from a menstruating woman. 62% of respondents forming a majority said they would. Respondents with tertiary education forming the highest (17%) said they would not accept the Communion from a menstruating woman followed by 9% of respondents with teacher training/nursing background. Respondents with secondary education formed 7% while respondents with primary education formed 5%

30%, which formed the majority of respondents who would accept the Holy Communion from a menstruating woman have tertiary education. They were followed by respondents with secondary education (15%). Respondents with professional education formed 10% and respondents with primary education formed the least (7%). The high percentage of respondents with tertiary education saying they would not accept to receive Holy Communion from a menstruating woman was because of the respondents from the Apostle Revelation Society from the Legon community most of who have tertiary education. Majority of these answered that they would refuse the Holy Communion since their church doctrine maintains that menstruation makes a woman impure. Again, the highest percentages of respondents with tertiary education in both answers (who would not accept or accept the Holy Communion from a menstruating woman), could be attributed to the fact that they form the highest number of total respondents (48%). We conclude therefore that education therefore that education is not significant in answer to this question.

**Christian Denomination**

38% of respondents from all the denominations said they would not accept to receive Holy Communion from a menstruating female church leader whilst 62% said they would. The breakdown of respondents who would not accept the Holy Communion is as follows: 16% from Apostle Revelation Society, 15% from the Church of Pentecost, 5% from the Presbyterian Church and 2% from the Roman Catholic Church.

Denomination of respondents was significant in responses to this question as the Apostle Revelation Society, a church that still believes in and practices menstrual taboos in the Old Testament, had the highest number of percentage (16%) of respondents who said
they would not accept Holy Communion from a menstruating woman. It was followed by
the Church of Pentecost (15%). Respondents from the Presbyterian Church formed 5%
while the Roman Catholic Church had the lowest (2%). Denomination is found to be
significant in respondents’ answers to this question. Apostle Revelation Society is an
African Independent Church that uses the Old Testament teachings on menstruation
(teaching that are very similar to the Akan traditional beliefs on menstruation) as basis of
its Church doctrines had the highest percentage of respondents that would not accept to
receive Holy Communion from a menstruation woman followed by Church of Pentecost,
a Pentecostal church that does not ordain women. The Presbyterian Church which
belongs to the Reformed tradition had a very low percentage 5% though it had the largest
number of total respondents (34%). The low figure of 2% for the Roman Catholic Church
can be put down to the fact that the Roman Catholic Church has used women to help with
church leadership for a long time, and so members are used to women handling the Holy
Communion.

The fact that some respondents from all the four (4) denominations used for this research
answered that they would not accept to receive Holy Communion from a menstruating
woman shows that people’s beliefs about impurity associated with menstruation still exist
in the minds of some Akan church members.

**Dwelling place**

38% of respondents said they would not accept to receive Holy Communion from a
menstruating woman. 62% of respondents answered that they would accept to receive
Holy Communion from a menstruating woman. Urban dwellers form 16% and rural
dwellers form 22% of respondents who would refuse to accept Holy Communion from a
menstruating woman. 50% urban and 12% rural dwellers said they would accept to
receive Holy Communion from a menstruating woman. These statistics show that the
dwelling place of respondents is significant and that the relatively high percentage of the
rural people may be due to the rural dwellers perception about menstruation and impurity
which stems from Akan religious-culture.
Respondents were asked in the questionnaire to give reasons for their refusal or acceptance of the Holy Communion from a menstruating woman. Some of their answers are as follows:

Majority of respondents who answered that they would accept Holy Communion from a menstruating woman if they knew she is menstruating reasoned that:

- The work of Jesus Christ makes women clean.
- Others also answered that today’s woman practices good personal hygiene.
- Some answered that they would accept the Communion from a menstruating woman only if their church authorizes her to administer it.
- Still others said menstruation has nothing to do with one’s spiritual standing.

All respondents who answered that they would refuse Holy Communion from a menstruating woman said they would refuse because the Bible says such a woman is unclean and that her uncleanness can pollute the Holy Communion and those she is sharing the Communion with.

### 4.8 People’s Impressions about Women Who Refuse to Attend Church or to Partake in the Holy Communion

**Gender**

19% of total respondents agreed with women who refuse to attend church or receive the Holy Communion when they menstruate. 68% of total respondents disagreed with such women while 13% answered yes and no. 11% males and 8% females agreed with such women. 29% of males (out of total male respondents of 45%) and 39% females (out of a total female respondent of 55%) disagreed with such women while 13% of respondents a 8% males and 5% females answered yes and no.

Gender made a significant difference in respondents responses to whether or not they agree with women who refuse the attend church or partake of the Holy Communion when
they menstruate since more males agreed while more females disagreed with such women.

**Age range of respondents**

19% of respondents agreed with women who refuse to attend church service and receive Holy Communion when they are menstruating, 68% disagreed with such women and 13% of respondents answered yes and no. Respondents aged 20-29 forms the majority (12%) of respondents who agreed with such women. Respondents aged 30-39, 50-59, 40-49 and 60 and above form 3%, 2% respectively while respondents aged 40-49 and 60 and above formed 1% each. Respondents aged 20-29 forms majority (23%) of respondents who disagreed with menstruating women who refuse to attend church and receive Holy Communion. These were followed by respondents aged 30-39 (15%), respondents aged 50-59 (13%), respondents aged 40-49 (10%) and lastly, respondents aged 60 and above (7%). Age did not make a significant difference here. Again we can say the large number of young people in the Legon community local church of the Apostle Revelation Church as well as the large number of young people in the churches account for the majority of respondents in age group 20-29 who agreed as well as disagreed with such women.

**Level of Education**

19% of respondents agreed with women who keep off from church and the Holy Communion when they menstruate. The breakdown is as follows: Respondents with tertiary education formed 7%; respondents with primary education formed 5%, respondents with secondary education formed 4%, and respondents with professional education formed 3%. 68% of respondents disagreed with such women. 34% of these were respondents with tertiary education, 15% with secondary education, 12% with professional and 7% with primary education. More respondents with higher level of education disagreed with such women compared with respondents with low level of education. Level of education seems to be significant. 13% of respondents answered yes and no to the question with respondents with tertiary education forming the highest percentage (6%) of respondents who answered yes and no.
Christian Denomination
19% of total respondents said they agree with these women who abstain from church and Holy Communion when they menstruate. 68% of total respondents disagreed with these women while 13% answered yes and no. The Church of Pentecost and the Presbyterian Church form 6% each (out of total percentages of 26% and 36% respectively) of respondents who agree with such women while The Apostle Revelation Society form 4% and the Roman Catholic Church form 3% of these respondents. Respondents from the Presbyterian Church had the highest percentage (28%) of respondents who disagreed with such women. It was followed by the Church of Pentecost (17%) and then the Roman Catholic Church (16%) while Apostle Revelation respondents recorded the lowest (7%). The Apostle Revelation Society has the highest percentage (5%), followed by the Church of Pentecost (4%) and then the Presbyterian Church (2%) and the Roman Catholic Church (2%). Denomination is significant in respondents answer to the question. The Presbyterian Church which belongs to the Reformed tradition appears to be more tolerant of menstruation and the Holy Communion as compared to the other denominations. The Apostle Revelation Society, though ordains women, still binds them by purity laws and so church members are less tolerant of menstruating women. The important point for this research is that a significant minority in all the denominations still believes that menstruating women are “impure” and so should keep off things that are “holy.”

Dwelling Place
19% of respondents answered that they agree with women who do not attend church or the Holy Communion when they menstruate. 68% of respondents disagreed. 13% of respondents responded yes and no. Of respondents who agree with such women, 7% of these are urban dwellers and 12% are rural dwellers. Respondents who disagree with such women are made up of 40% urban and 28% rural dwellers. Percentage of respondents who answered yes and no (13%) consists of 11% urban and 2% rural dwellers. Here again, the dwelling place of respondents is significant as more urban dwellers disagreed with such women compared to rural dwellers and conversely, more rural dwellers agreed with such women. This confirms the notion that dwelling place influences people’s opinions about menstrual taboos.
The questionnaire asked respondents to give reasons for their opinion about women who refuse to attend church and Holy Communion when they menstruate. These are some of the answers I got.

Some of the congregants who did not agree with women who do not attend Church or the Holy Communion when they menstruate answered that:

- Menstruation is not sinful and that Jesus Christ’s work on the Cross sanctifies even the menstruating woman from every impurity.
- Others also responded that such mentality is ancient and must be done away with while others also responded that such women have been socialized to see themselves as impure during menstruation.
- Others blamed biblical and Akan cultures for socializing women to believe that menstruation makes them impure.
- Christ has freed menstrual women of any impurity. Respondents who agreed with women who do not attend church or the Holy Communion when they menstruate also quoted the purity laws in the Old Testament for their stand.
- Women are socialized to believe men are better leaders
- Men are straightforward and are thinkers. Men have been leading since time immemorial

4.9 People’s Ideas about Women’s Feelings Regarding Other Women in the Church

Gender
24% of respondents said women do not feel at ease with one another in the church while 54% of respondents said answered in the negative. 23% of respondents did not answer the question. The percentages of respondents who think women do not get on well in the church are 11% males and 13% females. That of respondents who think women feel comfortable with one another are 25% male. Respondents who did not respond are made up of 11% males and 13% females. Gender is significant as more women feel women
the church do not get on well with other women in the church. Women have been
socialized to accept the fact that women are jealous of one another and this could be the
reason for the significant difference in respondents’ responses.
Respondents were asked to give reasons for their answers. Some of the major answers
given are as follows:

- Women in the church are jealous of one another.
- 6 (being 4%) were males and 8 (being 5%) were females. In this analysis, the
  biological sex of respondents seems rather insignificant.

**Age range of respondents**

24% of respondents said women in the church do not get on well with other women in the
church whilst 54% said women in the church feel at ease with other women in the church.
22% of respondents did not answer the question. Age was significant in answer to this
question as respondents within age group 20-29 years recorded the highest number of
respondents who said that women feel comfortable about one another. Today’s woman is
a career woman, mother, wife etc. and so she is too busy to engage in petty quarrels and
gossips as women years ago used to do since they had more time to themselves. This
could be a factor that explains why the younger generation sees women as getting on well
with one another in the church compared with the older generation. The older generation
might have observed something different years back. The astonishing thing is that a
sizeable percentage of 10% of the younger generation responded that women in the
church do not get on well with one another. This response from the younger generation
could be due to the general belief in Akan societies that women do not get on well with
one another. Another factor that adds to the sizeable percentage (10%) of the negative
responds to this question by respondents in age group 20-29 is also the large number of
youth in the church.

**Level of Education**

24% of respondents said women in the church do not feel comfortable with other women
in the church but 54% said women in the church feel at ease with other women in the
church. 22% respondents did not answer the question. Respondents with tertiary education form majority (31%) of respondents who feel that women are comfortable with one another in the church. Respondents with primary education form the least (4%). As expected, respondents with tertiary education have the least (3%) respondents saying women do not get on well with other women in the church. Level of education is therefore significant. Education we can say plays a major role in influencing respondents’ perception about women’s attitude towards other women in the church.

**Christian Denomination**

24% of respondents responded that women are not comfortable with one another in the church. A total majority of 54% said women feel comfortable with other women in the church feel comfortable with other women in the church while 54% said they do. 22% of respondents however failed to answer the question. Respondents from Presbyterian denomination formed a majority (22%) of respondents who said women in the church feel comfortable with other women in the church as well as respondents who said women do not get on well (5%) with other women in the church. Christian denomination does not seem to be significant as responses did not follow any special pattern.

**Dwelling place**

24% of respondents said women do not feel at ease with one another in the church but 54% said women in the church feel at ease with one another. 22% of respondents did not answer the question. Of the respondents who said church women do not get on well with one another, urban dwellers form 9% and rural dwellers form 15%. Urban dwellers also form 35% while rural dwellers form 19% of respondents who said church women do feel comfortable with one another. Respondents who did not answer the question are made up of 8% urban and 14% rural dwellers. Dwelling place was very significant. Most women in the urban areas are working mothers and are too busy to have time to spare worrying about what other women are doing or saying about others while people in the rural areas are mostly peasant farmers who may be fetching water together and have some time to spare for little gossips. Therefore we have more respondents living in rural areas (15%)
responding that church women do not get on well with one another while they as well form less (19%) who feel that church women get on well with one another.

4.10 People’s Attitude toward Women Leading their Church

**Gender**
20% of respondents said they do like women to lead their church but 70% said they are comfortable with women leading their church. 10% of respondents did not answer the question. 14% of respondents who do not approve of women leading their church are males and 6% are females. 31% of respondents who approve of women leading their church are males and 39% are female. Respondents who did not answer the question is made up of 6% males and 4% females.

**Age range of respondents**
20% of respondents answered that they dislike it when women lead their church. 70% of respondents said they feel comfortable with women leading their church. 10% of respondents did not respond to the question. Respondents aged 20-29 form a majority (31%) of respondents who said they are comfortable with women leading their church and respondents aged 60 and above were the least (6%). This is not surprising since the young generation have seen some women leaders in the church since childhood compared with the older generation who are used to men leaders in the church for generations and have recently been introduced to women church leaders. Respondents aged 20-29 are also form majority (41%) of respondents

**Level of education**
20% of respondents said they do not feel comfortable with women leading their church while 70% of respondents said they are comfortable with women leading their church. 10% did not respond.
Level of education is significant in respondents’ feelings about women leading the church since respondents with tertiary education form majority (39%) and also the least (3%) of
respondents who feel uncomfortable with women leading their church although they form the highest percentage (47%) of total respondents.

**Christian Denomination**

20% of respondents said they do not feel at ease with women leading their church but 70% which forms majority of respondents from all the denominations said they feel comfortable with women leading their churches while 10% did not respond. Respondents from the Church of Pentecost have high percentage (12%) within denomination of respondents. The Church of Pentecost is a denomination that does not ordain women so it was not surprising that more respondents from this domination said they do not feel comfortable with women leading the church. Christian denomination was therefore significant as denominations that do not ordain women have the high number of respondents who do not feel comfortable with women leading the church.

**Dwelling place**

20% of respondents said they do not feel comfortable when women lead their church. 70% of respondents who said that they felt at ease with women leading their churches, and 10% failed to answer the question. 8% of respondents who do not feel comfortable with women church leaders are urban dwellers and 12% are rural dwellers. 50% of respondents who feel at ease when women lead their church are urban dwellers while 20% are rural dwellers.

Respondents were asked to give reasons for their answers on people’s attitude toward women’s leadership in the church. Varied reasons were given for and against women leadership in the church. The following are some of the reasons respondents gave for their preference of men’s leadership to women’s leadership:

- Women are not objective, they are too emotional but according to some of these respondents, emotionalism has nothing to do with spiritualism and so church men compared to women are fit to lead the church.
• It is not their churches doctrine for women to lead in the church.

• Women leading the church might be in their menses and so would pollute the church and other congregants.

• The Bible does not allow women to lead the church.

• Most respondents who answered that they are comfortable with women leading their church gave the following reasons:

• Women leading the church are more caring and more spiritual than men.

• Women are more efficient than men.

• Women are equally children of God as men are and so there is nothing wrong with them leading the church just as men.

• Women can be as good as men in leading the church.

• Women cannot easily be corrupted.

4.11 People’s Opinions about Whether Women Prefer Male or Female Leadership

**Gender**

15% of respondents said women prefer men’s leadership while majority of respondents (65%) said women prefer men’s leadership. 18% said women are indifferent to whoever (male of female) leads them 2% answered that they do not know. 6% males and 9% males responded that women prefer female leadership. 34% of male and 31% females responded that women prefer male leadership. 15% of total respondents said women prefer women’s leadership 6% were males and 9% females. Sex of respondents was significant as more men said women prefer men’s leadership compared to women.
**Age range of respondents**

15% of total respondents said women prefer men’s leadership while 65% said women prefer women’s leadership. 18% said women are indifferent but 2% said they do not know women’s preference. More young people seem to prefer female leadership (5%) compared with the rest of respondents from the other age groups. We can attribute this to the fact that respondents from the younger generation have been introduced to both male and female leadership in some of the denomination like the Presbyterian Church as against the older generation that did not see female church leaders for decades and so are used to only male leadership.

**Level of education**

15% of total respondents were of the view that women prefer women’s leadership. 65% said women prefer men’s leadership and 18% said women are indifferent as to whoever leads them. 2% did not respond. Level of education was significant in respondents’ responses to women’s preference for male or female leadership. Respondents with tertiary education form age the highest percentages (5%) of respondents who said women prefer women’s leadership and 9% of respondents who said women are indifferent to who gender that leads them.

**Christian Denomination**

15% of total respondents answered that women prefer women’s leadership to men’s leadership. 65% of total respondents said women prefer men’s leadership to women’s leadership. 18% of total respondents said women have no preference as to the kind of gender that leads them and 2% said they do not know the type of leadership that women prefer. Christian denomination is significant in answer to this question. The Presbyterian Church, being the first denomination in Ghana to ordain women, records the highest percentage 8% of respondents who said women prefer women’s leadership. This is followed by the Apostle Revelation Society (3%), a church that ordains women. The Roman Catholic Church and the Church of Pentecost record 1% each of respondents who
said women prefer women’s leadership. Denominations that ordain women are used to women’s leadership and so have some respondents coming across female leaders who are

**Dwelling Place**

15% of total respondents said women prefer women’s leadership while 65% said women prefer men’s leadership. 18% of respondents said women are indifferent to whoever leads them and 2% said they have no idea as to women’s preference for male or female leadership. Dwelling place was significant in respondents’ answers to this question as all respondents that said that women prefer women leadership are urban dwellers (15%). Urban dwellers are used to women leaders because they come across many women leaders in the various secular work places who do their work well compared to rural dwellers.

The questionnaire asked respondents to give reasons why they think women prefer men’s or women’s’ leadership. Some of the reasons they gave are as follows:

- Men are bolder and braver than women and have the heart to face and deal with challenging situations more than women.
- Men, others said are born to be leaders and women to follow.
- Men are emotionally stable, intellectually better and physically stronger than women.
- Women are emotionally, intellectually and physically weak and so are not fit to be leaders
- Men are able to take quick decisions.
- Men are more flexible and thoughtful than women.
- Men have more time on their hands to lead.
- Women think men can lead better than them.
- Women think men are stronger and better.
- Men were the first to be created and so know better than women.
• Men are more reasonable than women.
• Women saying that women do not like their kind to lead them because of jealousy.
• Women leaders tend to be proud and look down on others.
• Men are heads of families and Bible says they should be leaders.

Respondents who answered that they prefer women’s leadership to men’s leadership said

• Women understand the problems of other women better.
• Women leaders are more responsible than men leaders.
• Women are more practical than men.
• Women are more devoted to God’s work than men.
• Women are co heirs with men in the kingdom of God and so are fit to be leaders while others also said the Bible says the man is the head of the house and so must lead.

4.12 People’s Views on Female Administrators

Gender
13% of total respondents said female administrators are not effective but 69% commended them. 18% of total respondents did not answer the question. 9% of responds who did not recommend female administrators are males and 4% are females. 31% of respondents who commended female administrators are men while 38% are females. 8% of respondents who did not answer the question are males and 10% are females. Gender was significant as more females compared to males find women administrators as good. More female respondents seem to like female administrators compared to male respondents.

Age range of respondents
13% of respondents said female administrators are not effective. 69% said female administrators are efficient and effective. 18% of respondents did not answer the question. Respondents aged 20-29 years make 5% of respondents who do not like female administrators followed by 3% for respondents aged 40-49 years; respondents aged 30-39 years and 50-59 years make 2% each while respondents aged 60 years and above make 1%. The breakdown of respondents in favor of female administrators are, 27% for respondents aged 20-29 years, 15% for respondents aged 30-39, years 12% for respondents aged 40-49 years, 11% for respondents aged 50-59 years and 3% for respondents aged 60 years and above. Age did not make a significant difference in response to the question. Respondents within the ages of 20-29 form the highest number of respondents (5%) who said women administrators are not effective but this could be attributed to the fact that they form the highest percentage (41%) of total respondents. This could be because they form the highest number of respondents in the research. But the point can also be made that the negative attitude toward female leadership has been handed down to the younger generation since they also form the highest number of respondents (10%) who did not answer the question.

**Level of education**

13% of total respondents said female administrators are not effective but 69% of total respondents said female administrators are effective. 18% did not respond to the question. The breakdowns of the percentage of respondents who do not approve of female administrators are as follows: respondents with primary education are 3%, respondents with secondary education are 4%, respondents with professional and those with tertiary education are 3% and 5% respectively. Of respondents that approve of female administrators, 3% has primary education, 11% has secondary education, 13% has professional education and 42% has tertiary education. Respondents with tertiary education form the lowest (3%) out of a total percentage of 47% as well as the highest percentage of 42% of respondents who said women administrators are effective out of the total of 47%. Level of education is therefore significant in respondents answers to the question. Respondents with high education appreciate female administrators compared to respondents with lower levels of education. For example respondents with primary
education records 3% of respondents who are not in favor of female administrators out of a total of 10% while respondents with tertiary education records 3% out of a total percentage of 47%.

**Christian Denomination**

13% of respondents answered that female administrators are not effective. 69% of respondents answered that female administrators are effective. 18% of respondents did not answer the question. 1% of respondents against female administrators are members of Apostle Revelation Society, 7% are from Church of Pentecost, 3% are from Presbyterian Church and 2% from Roman Catholic Church. The Presbyterian Church recorded the highest percentage (28%) of respondents who commended female administrators compared with 11% for Apostle Revelation Society, 16% for Church of Pentecost and 14% for Roman Catholic Church. Although the Apostle Revelation Society ordains women as ministers just as the Presbyterian Church does, it has the lowest number of respondents commending female administrators. This can be explained by the fact that the Apostle Revelation Society is a traditional denomination, and also practices purity laws in the Old Testament. Thus members of the church might find it difficult accepting female administrators because they would psychologically see them as “impure” and so not fit for leadership positions. The Roman Catholic Church and the Church of Pentecost do not ordain women as ministers and so their responses are not surprising. Denomination and for that matter church doctrine was therefore a significant factor in response to the question.

**Dwelling place**

13% respondents said female administrators perform well. 69% however said female administrators are efficient while 18% of respondents did not give any answers to the question. 5% of respondents who are against female administrators are urban dwellers and 8% are rural dwellers. 53% of respondents who approve of female administrators are urban and 16% are rural dwellers. 8% of respondents who failed to answer the question
are urban dwellers and 10% are rural dwellers. Many people living in the rural areas are yet to come in contact with a lot of female administrators. Dwelling place was a significant factor in answering the question.

Respondents were asked to give reasons for their views on female administrators. The following were some of the answers they gave:

Respondents who are of the opinion that female administrators are effective said the following about them:

- Female administrators are very efficient, effective and very difficult to be bribed.
- Female administrators take their work seriously. Women are more efficient and effective in their work.
- Female administrators are more patient with people than male administrators
- Female administrators are not easy to be influenced negatively
- Female administrators are security conscious.
- Female administrators are more responsible than male administrators
- Female administrators are very meticulous give attention to details.
- Female administrators are hard working.

Some responses from respondents who answered that female administrators are not effective are:

- Female administrators are disrespectful
- Female administrators are proud
- Female administrators are lazy
- Female administrators are inefficient and ineffective.
4.13 People’s Observations on Whether or not Female Leaders Handle All Aspects of Church Leadership

**Gender**

39% of total respondents said women handle all aspects of church leadership in their various denominations while 51% said women do not handle all aspects of church leadership in their denominations. 10% of respondents did not answer the question. More males (23%) compared with females (16%) said women handle all aspects of church leadership and more women (30%) compared to men (25%) said women do not handle all aspects of church leadership. Gender seems to be a significant factor here as more males as against female responded that there were aspects of church leadership that women did not handle. The striking thing in these responses is that 51% of respondents said women do not handle some aspects of church leadership. This shows that though churches like the Presbyterian Church and the Apostle Revelation Society, do ordain women these women church leaders still play subordinate roles in Akan churches in Ghana.

**Age range of respondents**

39% of respondents said yes women leaders do handle all aspects of church leadership. 51% said women do not handle all aspects of church leadership while 10% answered yes and no to the question. Respondents who said women handle all aspects of church leadership from the various age groups are as follows: 10% for ages 20-29 years, 11% for ages 30-39 years, 6% for ages 40-49 years, 7% for ages 50-59 years and 5% for ages 60 and above. Of respondents who said women handle all aspect of church leadership respondents aged 20-29 years has 27%, ages 30-39 years has 10%, ages 40-49 years has 7%, ages 50-59 years has 5% and ages 60 and above has 2%. The breakdown of those who answered yes and no are as follows: age group 20-29 years is 3%, age group 30-39 years is 1% age group 40-49 years is 3 & and age group 60 years and above is 1%. Age appears to be a significant factor here because respondents aged between 20-29 years record highest number (27%) of respondents who answered that women do not handle all aspect of church leadership. It could be that since the young generation especially those
living in urban areas see some female leaders handling some aspects of church leadership, assume that they are allowed to handle all aspects of church leadership, something that is extremely rare in Akan churches. Another explanation of the high recording for the younger generation is the high total percentage (39%) of the respondents aged 20-29 years.

**Level of education**

39% of total respondents said women leaders handle all aspects of church leadership while 51% said women leaders do not. 10% of respondents answered yes and no. The percentages for respondents who answered that women handle all aspects of church leadership are 4% for respondents with primary education, 9% for respondents with secondary education, 8% for respondents with professional education and 18% for respondents with tertiary education. Percentages for respondents who responded that women handle all aspects of church leadership are 4% for respondents with primary education, 13% for respondents with secondary education, 9% for respondents with professional education and 25% for respondents with tertiary education. Educational level does not appear to be significant in responds to this question of aspects of church leadership that women do not handle.

**Christian Denomination**

39% of respondents said women leaders handle all aspects of church leadership while 51% said they do not. 10% of total respondents did not respond to the question. The Church of Pentecost recorded the highest percentage (20%) of respondents who said women do not handle all aspects of church leadership as well as the lowest (3%) of respondents who said women handle all aspects of church leadership. This is not surprising since the Church of Pentecost does not ordain women. The Apostle Revelation Society placed second with 11% of respondents who said women do handle all aspects of church leadership. 7% of respondents however said they do not. This is also not surprising because the Apostle Revelation Society ordain women but menstrual taboos are used to keep them from handling all aspects of church leadership. The Roman Catholic does not ordain women but women are allowed to handle some aspects of
church leadership and so we have 11% of respondents saying that women handle all aspects of church leadership. The Presbyterian Church ordains women and does not officially use menstrual taboos to keep women away from handling all aspects of church leadership. Yet we got 13% of respondents answering that women do not handle all aspects of church leadership. This shows that being ordained as a woman minister does not automatically grant one access to handle all aspects of church leadership but the story is different with male ordained ministers.

**Dwelling Place**

39% of total respondents said women leaders handle all aspects of church leadership. 51% of respondents however said women handle all aspects of church leadership. 10% of respondents did not answer the question. 33% of respondents who said women handle all aspects of church leadership are urban and 6% are rural dwellers. Respondents who said women handle all aspects of church leadership is made up of 23% urban and 28% rural dwellers said women do not handle all aspects of church leadership. Respondents place of dwelling is significant because more rural dwellers (28%) answered that women do not handle all aspects of church leadership as compared to 22% of urban dwellers. 6% rural dwellers compared to 33% of urban dwellers also said women handle all aspects of church leadership. The explanation for these responses is that rural dwellers in Akan communities in Ghana scarcely see female pastors as they are very few and are also scarcely involved in congregational leadership.

In the questionnaire, respondents were to give reasons why they think women do not handle all aspects of church leadership. Some of the answers given are as follows:

- Women are not ordained in the church.
- Women are not allowed to teach men in the church.
- The church does not allow women to be elected as church elders.
- Women cannot handle the sacraments because it is against the word of God.
Reasons from respondents who said women handle all aspects of church leadership are as follows:

- Women are capable to lead all aspects of the church.
- Most activities in the church are handled by women.

4.14 People’s Perceptions on Female Pastors and the Administration of the Sacraments

Gender
34% of total respondents said women are not fit to handle the Eucharist and Baptism but 66% of total respondents said they are fit. 20% men and 14% women said women are not fit to handle the Eucharist and baptism while 29% males and 37% female said they are fit. Gender was significant here as more women said that women are fit to administer baptism and Holy Communion while more men said no they are not.

Age range of respondents
34% of respondents answered that women are not fit to administer Holy Communion. 66% of respondents said women are fit to administer Holy Communion and Baptism. Respondents aged 20-29 years formed the highest percentage of respondents (10%) who said women are not fit to handle Baptism and Holy Communion. Respondents aged 30-39 years and 50-59 years followed with 8% each while respondents aged 40-49 years and 60 and above formed 4% each. Respondents aged 20-29 years formed the highest percentage (29%) of respondent who said women are fit to administer Holy Communion and Baptism. Respondents aged 30-39 formed 12% while respondents aged 40-49 years, 50-59 years and 60 years above formed 13%, 8%, and 4% respectively. One wonders why respondents of a younger generation should feel that menstruation should make women impure. Their response could be due to both the Akan religious culture and biblical passages on menstrual impurity that have not been seen in the right perspective and also
the fact that respondents aged 20-29 years formed 35% (the highest percentage of total respondents).

Respondents aged 20-29 years recorded the highest number of respondents (29%) who said women are fit to handle Baptism and Holy Communion. They also form the highest total number of respondents (43%). Age is not significant in response to the question.

**Level of education**

34% of respondents restricted that women cannot and should not administer the Holy Communion or Baptism. Majority of total respondents (66%) said yes women can administer both Baptism and Holy Communion. The breakdown of respondents who said women are not fit to administer Holy Communion is as follows: respondents with professional education had the highest (15%), followed by respondents with tertiary education (12%) while respondents with secondary and primary educations formed 5% and 2% respectively. The breakdown for respondents who said women can administer Holy Communion is as follows: respondents with tertiary education made 36%, respondents with secondary education made 14%, while respondents with professional education made 9% with respondents with primary education making 7%.

Level of education was a significant factor as respondents with tertiary education formed the highest percentage (36%) and respondents with primary education formed the lowest percentage (7%) of respondents who said women could administer baptism and Holy Communion.

Formal education seems to give people a broader understanding to be more objective and open-minded about issues of impurity and menstruation. The problem here is that although people may have their own views about menstruation and impurity, church doctrines and practices say another thing and so we find respondents now expressing their own beliefs about menstruation and church leadership. There seems to be inconsistencies in people’s responses especially in the response of respondents who said women cannot administer Holy Communion. However, percentages of respondents who said women are not fit to handle “holy” things did not follow any consistent pattern.
Christian Denomination

34% of respondents were against administration of the sacraments by women and the while 66% said they are not against it. Of respondents who were against women administering the sacrament, the Apostle Revelation Society members had 14%, the Church of Pentecost members had 12%, the Presbyterian Church had 5% and the Roman Catholics had 3%. The breakdown for those who supported women administering the sacrament is as follows: Apostle Revelation Society 5%, Church of Pentecost 15%, Presbyterian Church 28%, and Roman Catholic Church 18%. Denomination was a significant factor in respondents’ responses to the question. Presbyterian Church respondents recorded the highest number of respondents (28%) who responded that women are fit to administer Holy Communion and Baptism, followed by the Roman Catholic Church (18%), and the Church of Pentecost recording the lowest (15%). The Apostle Revelation Society recorded the lowest number of respondents who said women are not fit to administer Holy Communion. This is due to their strong belief. However, percentages of respondents who said women are not fit to handle “holy” things did not follow any consistent pattern. However, percentages of respondents who said women are not fit to handle “holy” things did not follow any consistent pattern. that menstruation makes women impure though the church ordains women. The Church of Pentecost is a denomination that does not ordain women and so the responses coming from members are also not surprising since menstruation might be one of the reasons that the church does not ordain women. Although the Roman Catholic Church also does not ordain women, members are used to women handling the Holy Communion with the male leaders and so we have more respondents from the Roman Catholic Church responding positively to the question compared to members of the Church of Pentecost. Both the Presbyterian Church and the Apostle Revelation Society ordain women but more members from the Presbyterian Church responded positively to the question compared to members of the Apostle Revelation Church and this is attributed to the differences in church doctrines. The Presbyterian Church does not use the Old Testament purity and impurity laws to keep women away from entering the church hall during menstruation but the Apostle Revelation Society does.
Dwelling Place

34% of respondents said women are not fit to administer Holy Communion and Baptism while 66% said they are fit. Of respondents who are against the administration of the sacrament by women, 12% are urban and 22% are rural dwellers while for those who are in favor of women administering the sacrament 40% are urban and 26% are rural dwellers said women are fit to administer Holy Communion and Baptism. Dwelling place was significant in answer to this question. Many rural dwellers lack exposure to modernization, proper biblical hermeneutics and are also not used to women church leaders. It is therefore not surprising that they formed a majority that rejected the idea of women administering the sacraments.

The questionnaire also requested respondents to give reasons for their opinions about female church leaders and the handling of the sacraments

Most Congregants’ who did not favor the handling of the sacraments by female church:

- According to the Bible, women are not fit to handle the sacraments because of menstruation.

- Women should never be made church leaders or allowed to administer the Holy Communion on the grounds that they can pollute the Holy sacrament and the church if they menstruated.

- The Bible does not allow women to be pastors.

- Women cannot be leaders anywhere that men are around (This is a typical Akan belief).

Majority of respondents however were of the opinion that women can administer the Holy Communion and Baptism irrespective of menstruation because in Christ, there is neither male nor female and that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses women from all menstrual impurity.

4.15. Summary

This research indicates that in these modern times a lot of changes have taken place in attitudes of Akan church members towards menstruation and church leadership.
However, menstrual impurity still remains one of the main bases for people’s rejection of women as church leaders. In all the denominations considered in the research, both urban and rural dwellers were of the view that:

1. Menstruation is one of the factors that cause church members to have negative attitudes toward women in church leadership. 34% of the respondents said menstruation makes women impure and so unfit for church leadership. 34% of respondents across genders, different age groups, different educational backgrounds, different denominations and urban and rural dwellers hold this view. 66% of respondents however do not hold this view.

2. 38% of respondents said they would not accept to receive Holy Communion from a menstruating woman but 62% said they would accept it.

3. 24% of respondents said women in the church do not get on well with one another. The majority of respondents (54%) said that women in the church feel comfortable with one another.

4. 20% of respondents said they do not feel comfortable with women leading the church. 70% of respondents said they feel comfortable with women leading the church and 10% of respondents did respond to the question.

5. 65% of respondents said women generally prefer men’s leadership to women’s leadership. 15% said women prefer women’s leadership while 18% said they think women are indifferent as to which gender leads them and 2% said they did not know.

6. 13% of respondents said women administrators are not effective. 69% of respondents said women administrators and church leaders are as effective as men. 18% of respondents did not answer the question.

7. 39% of respondents said women do not handle all aspects of church leadership. 51% of respondents are of the view that women are denied certain aspects of church leadership in both denominations that ordain and those that do not ordain women. 10% of respondents did not respond to the question.
8. 34% of respondents said women should not be allowed to handle the Holy Communion and Baptism while 66% of respondents are of the view that women should be allowed to handle them.

Although there are considerable variations across genders, age, level of education, denomination and place of dwelling, no group is free of Akan traditional beliefs and preference to male leadership.

From the analysis of the questionnaire, we can conclude that though the church in Akan societies in Ghana has come a long way in having women ordained in some denominations, there is still room for improvement. The most interesting and surprising thing is that the research reveals that quite a sizeable number (17%) of the younger generation view menstruation negatively.

Education did seem to be a major significant factor in this research. An example is the question on people’s perception about the handling of Holy Communion and Baptism where respondents with tertiary education formed the highest percentage (36%) of respondents who are of the opinion that women should be allowed to handle all aspects of church leadership while respondents with primary education formed the lowest percentage of 7%. Again, respondents with primary education recorded 3% of respondents who are not in favor of female administrators out of a total percentage of 10% while respondents with tertiary education also recorded 3% out of a total percentage of 47%. However, where church doctrine clashes with education, we find that education became insignificant. An example is where respondents with tertiary education formed the highest percentage (17%) of respondents who would not accept to receive Holy Communion from a menstruating woman. Many of these respondents are members of the Apostle Revelation Society from the Legon Community who have tertiary education. In addition, there were occasions where respondents with little or no formal education and others with tertiary education agreeing that menstruation make women impure. Remarkable was that there were some respondents, young and old, with little or no formal education who live in rural areas but do not hold on to the belief that menstruation makes women impure while some respondents living in the urban areas with very high education still holding on to traditional believes about menstrual impurity.
The main conclusion of my fieldwork has to be that although menstruating women in Akan society are considered unclean, 64% of respondents who are church members in Akan society in Ghana do not hold this opinion. This large percentage of respondents are of the opinion that women whether menstruating or not are fit to handle all aspects of church leadership. However, there is a significant minority (36%) who still maintain that menstruation renders women impure and thus are not fit for church leadership.

We now want to proceed to discuss how the contemporary Akan Christian can grapple with this challenge of women in church leadership and menstrual impurity.