

**FACTORS AFFECTING THE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN CHURCH
LEADERSHIP: A CASE OF EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF
KENYA, EKERENYO PARISH, EKERENYO DIVISION,
NYAMIRA COUNTY –KENYA**

BY

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ABSTRACT

Gender disparities in management opportunities in Kenya are a real challenge to development. Despite growing participation by women in the workplace, there are still very few women in the top public decision and policy making positions in Kenya. The purpose of this study was to establish factors affecting women participation in church leadership at Evangelical Lutheran church of Kenya, Ekerenyo parish Nyamira County. The study was guided by the following objectives: to establish whether leadership empowerment programmes inhibit women progression to top leadership at ELCK Ekerenyo parish, Nyamira County, to determine to what extent socio-economic status inhibit women progression to top leadership at ELCK Ekerenyo parish, Nyamira County, to assess whether affirmative action inhibit women progression to top leadership at ELCK Ekerenyo parish, Nyamira County and to examine whether the gender stereotyping factors affect women progression to top leadership positions at ELCK Ekerenyo parish, Nyamira County. The study was guided by the Feminist theory which recognizes the pervasive influence of gender divisions on social life. The study employed descriptive survey design. Sample size of 76 out of a population of 254 church members was selected through simple random sampling. The study used test-re-test method to determine the validity and reliability of the instrument. The data collected was analyzed using qualitative and quantitative techniques with the help of Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS). The data was presented by use of percentages and frequencies. The findings of the study indicated that factors such as gender stereotyping, family responsibilities, lack of interest in management positions and low levels of the implementation of affirmative action adversely influence lack active participation of women in church management in Ekerenyo ELCK in Nyamira County. It was therefore concluded that unless such factors are looked into and corrected appropriately, the number of women actively participating in church leadership in Ekerenyo Parish will remain low compared to that of their male counterparts. The following recommendations were done in order to remedy the situation. Churches should encourage women to participate in church leadership position. The churches should review church doctrines, policies and practices that hinder or discourage women from participating in church leadership. The churches should come up with more affirmative action policies at the church and ensure that they are implemented in order to correct gender imbalance and to guarantee women opportunities for participation in church leadership positions and policy making. It was believed that once the recommendation have been put in place as expected then this may attract more women in church leadership in Ekerenyo ELCK parish in Nyamira County.