

Biblical Equity in Africa: Operationalizing and Mainstreaming Selected Pauline Texts on Mutual Gender Relations in the Africa church

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Abstract

Gender disparity is a global problem, though widespread in African society. It is more pervasive in African churches due to the influence of African culture and religion as well as misinterpretation of some selected Pauline text. However, these texts now have been given a liberative reading, which rejects the alleged superiority and elevation of men and the inferiority and subordination of women. Through the use of documented evidence, the article shows that the African church seems to have a problem in operationalizing and mainstreaming the new re-interpretation of the selected Pauline texts so as to facilitate biblical gender equity and mutual gender relations. While some gains have made as to the ordination of women into priesthood and consecration into episcopacy, the struggle continues until biblical gender equity and mutual gender relations are fully realized.

Keywords: Biblical Gender Equity, Mutual Gender Relations, Operationalizing; Mainstreaming, Selected Pauline Texts, African Church, Church Leadership

Introduction

The African church refers to both the missionary founded mainline churches and Pentecostal/Charismatic churches in Africa. The problem is that these churches seem not to have operationalized and mainstreamed some selected Pauline texts, which have been re-interpreted to favour biblical gender equity and mutual gender relations. Why have the texts' liberative re-readings not been operationalized and mainstreamed in African church? Several studies show that despite many calls on equity, equality, equal rights and opportunities, women still experience rough and real existential drawbacks in their effort to access leadership in church and society, (wa Gatumu, 2020, pp. 79-105; wa Gatumu, 2019, pp. 24-52; wa Gatumu, 2016, pp. 42-55, Mwaniki, 2015, pp. 350-351, wa Gatumu, 2013, pp. 32-76; Painter-Morland, 2011, pp. 441-472).

This article therefore seeks to highlight the re-interpretations the selected Pauline texts so as to show why the African church should operationalize and mainstream them. However, since biblical gender equity and mutual gender relations are not exclusively an African problem, this paper first evaluates its global nature. Secondly, it evaluates the barriers that African culture and religion engender on mutual gender relations. Thirdly, it assesses the dominant situation in the African church on gender equity. Fourthly, it highlights the re-interpretations of the selected Pauline texts, which were previously read as allowing women submission and inferior status. Fourthly, it points to some future optimism in the light of the gains hitherto made.

The Global Nature of Gender Equity and Mutual Gender Relations

Gender equity and mutual gender relations are intricate and old universal problem. Although with varied results in distinct regions, human societies globally are beset with gender bigotries on women (Okoli and Okwuosa, 2020, <https://hts.org.za>; Klingorová and Havlíček, 2015, p. 9; wa Gatumu, 2013, p. 42). The United Nations Economic and Social Council Annual Ministerial Review noted that women empowerment and gender equality have not been fully effected, operationalized and mainstreamed on the global space (Zukang, 2010, pp. xii-xiv; Ali, 2010, pp. 1-3). A World Bank (2012, pp. i-ii) report on gender equality and development noted a variation on global gender equality. While some states had assured women and men equal rights, others, especially in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa had not. A study commissioned by Action by Churches Together Alliance found that while women fill churches, their being abused, victimized and subjugated is real (Mendoza, 2015, p. 13). Relations between men and women in

family, church (religion), school (education), economy and politics are more often tainted with domination, marginalisation, discrimination and victimisation. As such, gender inequity and uneven gender relations form the most stubborn social disparity in the world, albeit more noticeable in Africa (Okoli and Okwuosa, 2020, <https://hts.org.za>; Bako and Syed, 2018, pp. 425-443; Klingorová and Havlíček, 2015, p. 2; Msuya, 2010, pp. 1146; Hellsten, 2009, p. 144; Schalkwyk, 2009, pp. 4; Offenhauer, 2005, p. 1).

African Cultural and Religious Hindrances

Most women in Africa have less personal liberty, fewer resources and their voice in decision-making structures is limited (Msuya, 2010, pp. 1146; Ilesanmi, 2018, pp. 1-7). This seems to relate with the classical social contract theory as popularized by Thomas Hobbes, John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. The theory holds that societal life and behaviour are regulated via agreed moral and political rules and that people voluntarily surrender their rights and freedom to some authority. The authority should command obedience, uphold and protect the natural rights of men and preserve life and property (Laskar, 2013, pp. 1-7). In her critical deconstruction of the theory, C. Pateman notes that it contains implicit uneven gender relations. It excludes women in societal life, though they are integrated through a contract of different order, i.e., the sexual contract. While the social contract theory considered all people as ‘naturally free and equal,’ it also held that men’s right to control women is natural. It deems women’s sexual nature as inhibiting them from having equal status with men. As such, it engenders structures of human existence at the expense of women. For instance, patriarchal structures of civil society depend on women’s subdual but accept men’s conjugal rights as more superior to women’s human dignity. Women were assimilated into civil society not on their status as women but on their inferior relations to men. It therefore encourages women’s dependency on patriarchy, which leave them vulnerable (Pateman, 1988, pp. 1-2, 11, 41, 80-81, 127, 170, 180, 227).

Irrefutably, African patriarchal culture seems to have inherited the fixings of social contract theory due to its disregard for gender equity and its regard for erratic gender relations. According to Pateman, “the patriarchal construction of the difference between masculinity and femininity is the political difference between freedom and subjection” (Pateman, 1988, pp. 2, 207). Naturally, African patriarchal culture tends to allow domination and subjugation of women. It places men in leadership position while it excludes women (wa Gatumu, 2013, p. 67).P.

Theron's research in twelve African theological schools found gender inequality as a pressing issues in Africa, which she attributed to patriarchy. Since women's contribution to the welfare of society and family are belittled, there is a need for a praxis of justice and dignity to all people in Africa (Theron, 2015, p. 53). Other scholars have noted that patriarchy trains men for leadership roles. However, it deems women's culturally determined roles such as domestic activities as trivial. It also accepts biblical interpretations that exclude and alienate women from church leadership (Okoli and Okwuosa, 2020, <https://hts.org.za>; Makama, 2013, pp. 116-117; Sen and Pirooska Östlin, 2007, p. viii).

According to some scholars, before the arrival of missionaries and colonialist in Africa, wives, mothers, aunts, sisters and grandmothers were valued and respected. They not only played major and relevant roles to the community life, but were also at the centre of the community's existence. They were at the centre of production, household management and agriculture as well as playing vital religious role such as prophetess, diviners and priestesses (Agbaje, 2021, pp. 1-20; Bertolt, 2018, pp. 10-14; Kalu, 1996, pp. 269-288). Women's submission and control have thus been traced to missionary Christianity and colonial rule. Missionaries are accused of introducing a different concept of priesthood, but which disproved African primal religious cultures that shared priesthood between men and women. Colonialism, through commerce and education, not only diluted the matrilineal system, which upheld the status and autonomy of women, but also fortified indigenous male dominance. Women were denied access to education, employment and political power. This resulted to their economic dependency, exploitation and oppression (Bertolt, 2018, pp. 10-14; Montgomery, 2017, p. 227; Olaleye-Oruene, 2010, pp. 132-136; Gennrich, 2008, pp. 57; Anunobi, 2002, p. 42; Uchem 2001, p. 1; Kalu, 1996, pp. 269-288). However, it is overwhelmingly probable that missionaries and colonialists only took advantage of existing gender oppressive structures. While missionaries and colonialists may have elated oppression and control of women, African culture had marked loopholes on the same hence providing an opportunity for their enactment (Montgomery, 2017, pp. 226-230; wa Gatumu, 2013, pp. 65-72; Akyeampong and Fofack, 2014, pp. 42-73).

Pre-missionaries/colonialists African culture albeit respecting women was double-sided. It may have had aspects that permitted relative practise on mutual gender relations and held a human rights structure that defined gender roles as complementary rather than hierarchical. But it also had aspects that allowed for specific gender-related forms of abuse. These violated the rights of

women and blinded people from noticing how they abused women (Msuya, 2010, pp. 1151-1153). It was usual for men to own women due to the traditional silence on gender inequity and so respect for women was relegated to submissive status while men enjoyed dominant status (Friedline, 2019, p. 10; Anunobi, 2002, p. 43). This was bequeathed to, and accepted by the African church. So it is clear that cultural and religious beliefs, customs, practices and faulty biblical interpretation have always conveyed major obstacles to the success of women's ascent into prime leadership position both in church and society (Agbaje, 2021, pp. 1-20; Okoli and Okwuosa, 2020, <https://hts.org.za>; Casimir, Chukwuelobe and Ugwu, 2014, pp. 166-173; wa Gatumu, 2013, p. 48).

The Dominant Situation in the African Church

The status quo in the African church is not friendly to mutual gender relation and equity. Research findings have clearly shown that while some African churches have improved on gender equity, others have not due to the idea that women must be silent (Theron, 2015, pp. 53-79). V. Agadjanian's research in southern Mozambique revealed huge denominational discrepancies in women's leadership and the barriers they face. While clarifying their means to formal religious authority, he identified limits that patriarchal gender ideology imposes on women church leaders. He noted that women's rise to church leadership positions defines their face and identity. At times they challenge patriarchy, but most often they attune to the gendered world around them. Their positions of authority hardly clash with the deep-rooted gender inequities and stereotypes on women's submission (Agadjanian, 2015, pp. 982-1008).

The power of women leaders is executed under socially, religiously and culturally correct caveats and within gendered boundaries always restricted to "women's matters." Ultimately, women's leadership is restrained through organizational and financial needs of churches as well as the usually hidden stern rivalry between men and women (Agadjanian, 2015, pp. 982-1008; Agadjanian and Menjívar, 2011, pp. 148-162). It seems that the African church has not adequately advocated for a liberation that caused total equity between men and women. Religion and patriarchy, which silence the voice of women, seem to influence the African church's view on the status of women. Basically, lowering women's status is an outcome of cultural and institutional set-up of religious communities as well as the interpretation of religious texts

(Kategile, 2020, pp. 47-48; Klingorová and Havlíček, 2015, pp. 2-3; Ani, 2013, p. 67; Daniel, 2010, p. 130; Oduyoye, 1995, p. 88).

Some mainline churches ordain women into priesthood while others do not. Other have recently consecrated and enthroned women into episcopacy. Others have not yet appointed and installed them into the topmost leadership position. The Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA), which perhaps is different from Reformed Church of East Africa (RCEA) only by name, has ordained women since the 1970s (Mombo, 2008, pp. 123-143). While women leadership is seen at parish and congregation level, no woman has been elected to the General Assembly office, either as Moderator or General Secretary since 1891, when the church arrived in East Africa (Wainaina, 2015, p. 1). The RCEA's General Assembly recently approved women's ordination after years of protracted debates (Tanis, 2018, <https://wcrch.ch>). The idea of women bishops in the Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK) has also been controversial, despite their being ordained into priesthood since the 1980s. In October 2014, the ACK house of bishops declared a five-year moratorium on appointing and consecrating women bishops. Thereafter, Global Anglican Future Conference (GAFCON), in which ACK plays a prominent role, resolved that its member churches must refrain from ordaining women to the episcopate. Its Task Force on Women in the Episcopate chaired by Kenyan retired bishop concluded in 2017 that women bishops pose a threat to the unity that GAFCON prizes. This was after two ACK women priests in 2012 and 2014 sought to become bishops but never reached the voting stage (Masai, <https://livingchurch.org/2021/01/21/>; Masai, <https://livingchurch.org/2021/08/02/>).

Similar obstacles have been noted in other places in Africa and in different churches. For instance, the Nigerian Kwara State Diocese of the Anglican Church ordained three women in 1993 which the house of bishops nullified. Likewise, the synod of Methodist Diocese of Kwara and Kogi States sought to ordain women in 1994 but the church's headquarters overturned the decision (Omotoye, 1999, p. 65). Topmost women leadership in Pentecostal and Charismatic churches is more often than not held by church founders while other women occupy low levels of leadership or none (wa Gatumu, 2013, p. 42; Migwi, 2016, pp. 3-5; Mwaura, 2005; Asamoah-Gyadu, 1998, p. 21). They are often offered "unique permission to speak," albeit artfully being subjugated and excluded along gender lines. Two forms of Pentecostal hermeneutics, that is, literal interpretation and proof-texting of biblical texts together with Pentecostal Trinitarian doctrine, cause the fickle handling of women (Gabaitse, 2015, pp. 1-12). Migwi's research on

African Pentecostal churches in Limuru sub-county in Kenya found that while women are spiritually gifted, they occupied low levels of leadership. Inadequate understanding of Pentecostal gender ideology, literal reading of Scripture, traditional Gĩkũyũ culture and lack of theological training were among the factors that stalled women's top leadership (Migwi, 2016, pp. xiii, 61-101).

The African church therefore cannot claim to have delivered adequate gender equity. The exclusion of women along gender lines exists not only in mainline churches, but also in Pentecostal and Charismatic churches (Nadar, 2009, pp. 131-146; Masenya, 2004, pp. 1-5). It appears that the African Church and African culture "have formed a coalition to restrain and frighten women away from leadership" (wa Gatumu, 2013, p. 46). Mostly, African churches not only appreciate and implement cultural aspects that oppress and subordinate women, but also popularize readings that twist texts to exclude women from leadership (wa Gatumu, 2019, pp. 21-33; Maisiri, 2019, pp. 7, 19-31, 33, 46-66; Wright, 2015, p. 243, Ande, 2010, p. 124; Wells 2006, p. 88; Vaughn, 2005, p. 354; Kaabwe, 2003, p. 210; Nasimuyu-Wasike, 2001, p. 179; Daines and Seddon, 1993, p. 15). The main obstacle towards operationalizing and mainstreaming mutual gender relations and biblical equity in African is not only the influence of culture, but also the misinterpretation of selected Pauline texts (Casimir, Chukwuelobe and Ugwu, 2014, pp. 166-173; Klingorová and Havlíček, 2015, p. 2).

Re-interpreting Selected Pauline Texts

The re-interpretation of several Pauline text, which were earlier read as excluding women from church ministry and worship, encourage the transformation of the African church's attitude towards women. These texts suggest that the African church must follow the example of Jesus and Paul who never discriminated women (Okoli and Okwuosa, 2020, <https://hts.org.za>; Ndute, 1998, p. 102). Jesus honoured the dignity of women treated them with openness, respect, acceptance and tenderness. During his earthly ministry, women were involved in spreading the gospel. Besides, most New Testament house churches were known by names of women who led them. This implies that women were accepted as ministers of the church. As such, gender inequity and lopsided mutual gender relations are contrary to Jesus' teaching and mission. Paul, who built on Jesus' women-friendly ministry, introduced his fellow women co-workers as those who worked very hard among the saints (Rom 16: 1-15). It is probable that rather than being a

chauvinist and misogynist, he was a defender of mutual gender relations and equity. He never upheld hierarchical gender relations and did not ratify women's submission or exclude them from church leadership through the texts he wrote. Non-Christians also knew women leaders serving in the early church. Pliny the Younger questioned two women among Jesus' followers, whom he referred to as *ministrae* or ministers. In a list Celsus composed on founders of Christianity, five out seven were women (Okoli and Okwuosa, 2020, <https://hts.org.za>; Amadi, 2019, p. 77, Kateusz, 2019, pp. 19-20; Paul 11, 1995, <https://www.vatican.va>). Certainly, Jesus and Paul did not support women submission or exclusion from church activities (Ademiluka, 2017, pp. 1-8, Payne, 2015, <https://www.cbeinternational.org>).

The view that women with unveiled heads in 1 Corinthians 11: 10 cannot prophesy or pray is informed by a misinterpretation of the phrase ἐξουσίαν ἔχειν (to have authority). The phrase was previously read as a symbol of authority through women's veiling, which also implied their inferiority (Hillyer 1970, pp. 1065-1066; Williams 1962, p. 960). However, in the New Testament, the phrase means having the right to do something or having ability, might or power to accomplish a task or to those with authority to do what they do. As such, interpreting the phrase as a symbol of authority lacks textual support because it substitutes ἐξουσίαν ἔχειν (*to have authority*) with κάλυμμα (veil), a word that is not mentioned in the text. Such an interpretation is weak because it only seeks to harmonize the assertion of verses 5-6, which ostensibly compel women to veil (wa Gatumu, 2020, p. 79, 87-89; Stuckenbruck, 2017, p. 265; Schreiner, 2011, p. 43; Shipley, 2010, pp. 7-11, 224). While veiling in the text's socio-cultural context defined women's status as inferior, the text does not give superiority and authority to men. Rather, it inspired women to wisely exercise their right to veil their heads so as to avert dissuading people from worship and to avoid defying the Roman law. There is no exegetical justification that allows the text to be used as a basis to establish hierarchical relationship between men and women (wa Gatumu, 2020, pp. 79-105; Rooijackers, 2018, pp. 26-42; Roetze, 2015, p. 187; Montague, 2011, p. 187; Shipley, 2010, pp. 7-11, 224; Martin, 2004, p. 76; Soards, 1999, pp. 221, 224, Furnish, 1999, p. 77; Fiorenza, 1983, pp. 227-228).

Furthermore, the ruling in 1 Corinthians 14: 33-35 that women should ask their husbands what they desired to learn at home does not directly say all women must to keep silent in church. The Corinthian church comprised of men and women who had the ability (δύνασθε) to prophesy for the benefit of all church members. It is clear that "all" in verse 31 refers to women and men who

had ability to prophesy and regulate prophesy (Fee, 2021; Semenye, 2016, p. 98; Hovhannisyan, 2014, Commission, 2013, p. 5). In fact, women prophets existed in the New Testament church (Acts 21: 9; 1 Cor 11: 5). The two Corinthian texts sought to bring order in the church and so they do not bar women from serving the church via worship or leadership. Following the Mediterranean world's honour and shame motif, the aim of 1 Corinthians 11: 2-16 and 14: 33-35 was to restrain believers from bringing shame to the church. Both texts were addressing contextual issues and not ordering a shared practice, which was not straightforwardly related to any other context. As such, male and female have equal and limitless access to vocal and executive leadership roles in the church. (Lioy, 2020, pp. 112-113, 118, 121-122, 128; Ademiluka, 2017, <http://www.scielo.org.za>; Folarin and Afolabi, 2012, <http://dx.doi.org>; Ademiluka, pp. 76-96; Witherington III, 1988, pp. 102-103).

According to wa Gatumu (2019, pp.24-25), Ephesians 5:21-33 has been read through patriarchal lenses to exclude and alienate women from church leadership. However, the text neither patronizes men superiority and authority nor encourage women's inferiority and submission. It challenges social structures that permitted and enforced control and gagging of women. Rather than relegating women to submission, it sought to transform Graeco-Roman and Jewish household management through mutual submission between husband and wife based on love and respect (Girard, 2000, pp. 125-129, 136-141). Also, the text sought to encourage men to love their wives, unlike in Graeco-Roman culture, which made it derisive for men to show emotions of love to their wives (Coontz, 2005, p. 77; Burns, 1986, p. 286). The main issue for the text was not on wife's submission, but husband's sacrificial love for the wife. Again, the call for mutual submission is made through a Greek present middle voice verb, ὑποτασσόμενοι. The idea of the Greek present middle voice is that the subject of the verb does the action continuously, willingly and freely for personal benefit. As a result, mutual and willing submission in Ephesians 5: 21-33 radically differs from the regulatory and coercive submission of women in Graeco-Roman and Jewish households (wa Gatumu, 2019, pp. 29-32; Reynolds, 2016, p. 63; Lu, 2016, pp. 9-15; Payne, 2015; Bird, 2013, pp. 74-109; Padgett, 2011, p. xvi; George, 2011; p. 107; Spencer, Spencer and Tracy, 2009, pp. 72-76; Hoehner, 2002, pp. 728-729; Girard, 2000, pp. 125-152).

According to the views of several scholars, 1 Timothy 2: 11-15 has been misinterpreted as allowing hierarchical relations between men and women. It has been used as a strong basis for women's submission and as an example of their inability to preach and teach. Some evangelical

churches have used it as a manual by which congregations are organized into a gender inequity setup. (Belleville, 2003, <https://www.cbeinternational.org>; Köstenberger, 2016, pp. 11-12). Verses that are cited to ratify hierarchical relations and women's inability to teach and preach include women must learn in silence (2:11) and women are not allowed to teach or to have authority over men (2:12). Others include the woman was deceived and became a transgressor (2:14) and a woman shall be saved through bearing children (2:15) (Vergeer, 2016, pp. 71-88; Celoria, 2013, <https://www.cbeinternational.org>; Belleville, 2003, <https://www.cbeinternational.org>). The text has been understood through the misinterpretation of 2:12, which is also informed by the mistranslation of the Greek verb *αὐθεντεῖν* (*authentain*). The verb's translation "to have authority over men," was unknown until the third or fourth century. Before then, it meant "to originate." The word also had negative subtext that implied negative authority or to flourish a crime such as murder (Belleville, 2019, pp. 317-341; Long, 2016, p. 294; Mbamalu, 2014, <http://dx.doi.org>; Huizing, 2011, p. 17; Davis, 2009, p. 5; Belleville, 2005, pp. 218, 223; Kroeger, 1979, pp. 12-15). Among the reasons why Paul wrote the epistle was to encourage Timothy to fight heresy, to avoid unorthodox teachings and dangerous speculations (Jeon, 2017, p. 71; Wall and Steele, 2012, p. 55). A Gnostic heresy taught that man originated from woman, which was based on Eve's elevation since she desired knowledge (*gnosis*) due to her accepting to eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge as recorded in Genesis 3: 6 (Foster, 2016, <https://www.cbeinternational.org>, Mowczko, 2009, <https://margmowczko.com>). The change of language in the text from plural to singular may hint that Paul was refuting heretical teachings that may have been spread by specific women – not all of them. Such background allows Verse 12 to be translated, "*I permit no woman to teach nor to act on her own authority as originator of man.*" Perhaps this is why Paul appealed to the creation to insist that man was created first, then woman (vs. 13).

So, Paul's was not coercing male superiority or women inferiority in any of the texts above. He would not have prohibited his female co-workers from preaching and teaching or from holding positions of spiritual authority in church. He sturdily supported his female colleagues and acknowledged their prophetic gifts and involvement in church's ministry (Rom 16: 1–15; 1 Cor 11: 5; Phil 4: 2–3). He sought to challenge and transform the contemporary view on women (wa Gatumu, 2019, pp. 24, 35, 41).

Towards an Optimistic Future

Some visible transformation on gender mutual relations and gender biblical equity have been achieved globally. This seems to offer some optimism on gender equity and mutual gender relations in African church. Yet according to a research that Pew Research Center conducted, the optimism is not on the same level amongst men and women. Many respondents agreed that men enjoyed special favour in the job market and more opportunities for high-paying jobs. Women desired gender equality more than men but were less optimistic on whether it shall ever be achieved (Horowitz and Fetterolf, 2021, <https://www.pewresearch.org>). It is also overwhelmingly probable that the re-interpretation of Pauline texts have made the African church to begin fixing its negative view on women. As Philip Jenkins notes, the re-interpretation of these texts have inspired “a liberating potential for a traditional society, especially in matters of family and personal relationship” (Jenkins, 2009, p. 175).

During the first Biblical Equity African Conference (BEACON) held in 2017 at Brackenhurst Conference Centre in Kenya, women ordination provoked a heated debate. The idea of a woman bishop was not taken as something that should materialize in the near future. Yet as BEACON 2021 was going on at St. Paul’s University-Limuru, Kenya, women’s ordination and consecration/enthronement had happened, despite being challenged. The RCEA ordained her first women priests in 2018 yet anti-women sentiments are still being heard (Chemorion, 2019, <https://www.worldpulse.com>). Also, the ACK Diocese of Bondo appointed and consecrated Rt. Rev. Emily Onyango as the first female bishop of the ACK (Masai, <https://livingchurch.org/2021/08/02>). After her consecration on 27th March 2021, Emily prophetically noted that it would now be easier for African women to move into leadership positions. About three months later, ACK Diocese of Butere elected Ven Rose Okeno on 1st August 2021 as the second female bishop and the first elected diocesan bishop. She was consecrated and enthroned on 12.09.2021 (Conger, 2021, <https://anglican.ink>; Masai, <https://livingchurch.org/2021/01/21/>). However, despite the success stories that have been made, the *Aluta Continua* notion still persists.

Conclusion

While gender disparity is a global problem, it is widespread in African society. It is more pervasive in African churches due to the influence of African culture and misinterpretation of some selected Pauline text. The mutual gender relations that the Pauline texts assert had no parallel in the Graeco-Roman and Jewish cultures and neither does it conform to the African culture (wa Gatumu, 2019, p. 28; Schreiner, 2018, p. 179). Rather, the texts seek to transform

African culture so as to embrace mutual gender relations and to facilitate biblical equity in the African church. The African church must therefore commit herself to gender equity and avoid being overlaid with cultural hierarchies that demean women. She must disown the double-sidedness of African culture on women and liberate herself from gender inequity. She should become the agent of transforming African patriarchal culture (Phillips, 2018, p. 1, 8-22; Mwaura, 2005, p. 411; Isichei, 1995, p. 190, Hastings 1989, pp. 36-52). This is possible as a result of the gains that have been so far attained. Yet despite the gains, calls for mutual gender relations and gender biblical equity should continue indefatigably.

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