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Christian Thought

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Proposal Paper Paragraph Thesis Statement

This research proposal seeks to explore the issue of gender inequality in the church and its impact on society. Specifically, it aims to investigate whether the church and community are created in the hierarchy with males having greater access than females or if there is a more egalitarian approach. The five articles I chose will be analyzed throughout the paper to achieve this objective. These articles are: “Paul’s Perspective on the Role of Women in Leadership and its Relevance to the Church in Africa” by Nathaniel Oluseyi Oyewole, “Gender Based Violence in African Apostolic Churches: A Case Study of Johanne Marange Apostolic Church in Manicaland Province, Zimbabwe” by Magede Mavis and Mbwirire John, “Justifying Gender Inequality in the Church of England: An Examination of Theologically Conservative Male Clergy Attitudes Towards Women’s Ordination” by Alex D. J. Fry, “Unheard Voices of Women in the Bible with Implications of Empowerment in the Context of Today’s Church” by M. Mudimeli & J. van der Westhuizen, and “Gender Inequality: The Problem of Harmful, Patriarchal, Traditional and Cultural Gender Practices in the Church” by Hannellie J. Wood. Through this research project, I hope to shed light on an important social issue that affects millions worldwide.

Thesis Statement: Throughout the church and society, a pervasive gender hierarchy has created a system where one’s access to power and resources is heavily influenced by gender, with males consistently granted greater access than females.

Proposal Paper Outline

Topic: Anthropology) Are males and females equal with equal access to roles in the church and society, or are they created in the hierarchy with males having greater access than females?

Title: “Muted and Outshined: The Resounding Effects of Gender Inequity on Women’s Voices in Church and Society”

Introduction:

Throughout history, men have been regarded as superior to women, reflected in many aspects of society, including the church. This has resulted in men holding positions of power and authority while women are relegated to subordinate roles. Despite progress towards greater gender equality, much work must be done to break down these long-standing barriers. In this paper proposal, we aim to explore the pervasive gender hierarchy in both church and society and its impact on women's access to power and resources.

Thesis Statement:

Throughout the church and society, a pervasive gender hierarchy has created a system where one's access to power and resources is heavily influenced by gender, with males consistently granted greater access than females.

Objectives:

This paper aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. Examine the historical context of gender hierarchies in the church
2. Identify contemporary expressions of gender inequality in Christian denominations worldwide.
3. Analyze how patriarchal traditional and cultural gender practices in the church perpetuate harmful practices.
4. Identify and evaluate how theology may be used to challenge or reinforce gender inequalities.
5. Provide practical suggestions for how churches can promote gender equity.

Methodology:

To answer these research questions, this proposal paper will conduct a literature review of relevant articles, books, and case studies related to gender inequality in the church.

Expected Outcomes:

As a result of this proposal paper, it is expected that you will gain valuable insights into how gender inequality functions inside religious institutions such as churches, providing insights that will help you understand how it operates. By analyzing different articles from different regions (Africa and England), it will be possible to identify common threads in the patriarchal structures

that limit the participation of women in leadership roles across the regions. I also hope that this proposal paper will offer recommendations for improving gender equality within these institutions. This could be done through education initiatives or a policy change.

Conclusion:

The issue of gender inequality in the church is complex and multi-faceted. However, it is essential to address this issue if we hope to promote greater social justice and equity within our communities. By examining case studies from Africa and England, this proposal paper aims to contribute to ongoing conversations about gender equality in the church and provide recommendations for promoting greater inclusion and empowerment of women.

References

- Fry ADJ. Justifying Gender Inequality in the Church of England: An Examination of Theologically Conservative Male Clergy Attitudes Towards Women's Ordination. *Fieldwork in Religion*. 2019;14(1):8-32. doi:10.1558/firn.39231
- Mavis, M., & John, M. (2020). Gender Based Violence in African Apostolic Churches: A Case Study of Johanne Marange Apostolic Church in Manicaland Province, Zimbabwe. *International Journal of Humanities, Arts & Social Sciences*, 5, 41–50.
- Mudimeli, L. M., & van der Westhuizen, J. (2019). *Unheard Voices Of Women In The Bible, With Implications Of Empowerment In The Context Of Today's Church*.
- Nathaniel Oluseyi Oyewole. Paul's Perspective on the Role of Women in Leadership and its Relevance to the Church in Africa. *Pharos Journal of Theology*. 2022;103(2):1-11. doi:10.46222/pharosjot.103.2045
- Wood, Hannelie J. 2019. "Gender Inequality: The Problem of Harmful, Patriarchal, Traditional and Cultural Gender Practices in the Church." *HTS Teologiese Studies* 75 (1). doi:10.4102/hts.v75i1.5177.

Annotation Paragraph For Each Reference

1. In this article, Fry examines male clergy members' attitudes toward women's ordination in the Church of England. By analyzing their religious beliefs and conducting fieldwork, she explores how they justify gender inequality. My research projects could benefit from a detailed explanation of how these clergy members rationalize their opposition to women's ordination. Fry is an experienced scholar who has studied religion and gender issues. The article aims to shed light on how conservative theology perpetuates patriarchal church structures. According to the source, the intended audience is likely other scholars or individuals interested in exploring the intersection between religion and gender.
2. Gender-based violence is a pervasive issue in African Apostolic churches, as detailed in Mavis and John's (2020) case study of the Johanne Marange Apostolic Church in Zimbabwe. In this article, the author discusses how women are mistreated within this religious context, including forced marriage, physical abuse, and lack of access to education and healthcare. According to the authors, these forms of violence are rooted in the patriarchal structure and beliefs of the church. This complex issue is analyzed with credibility by Mavis and John, both of whom have backgrounds in social work and gender studies. This article is intended for scholars and practitioners interested in gender-based violence in Africa or religion.
3. According to Mudimeli and van der Westhuizen (2019), women play an essential role in the Bible, but their voices are often unheard. The authors argue that society perpetuates gender inequality by ignoring or downplaying the contributions of women in the Bible. As a result of this study, they say that women can be empowered by gaining a better understanding of their stories, which can ultimately lead to a more equitable society. It is important to note that both authors are qualified and experienced in biblical studies, with Mudimeli being a professor at Northwest University and van der Westhuizen holding a doctorate in theology. This source is intended to shed light on the underrepresentation of women in biblical narratives and advocate for women to be empowered within today's church. There appears to be an intended audience for this book: scholars and theologians interested in feminist perspectives on religion.
4. Nathaniel Oluseyi Oyewole examines biblical teachings regarding women in leadership roles in his article "Paul's Perspective on the Role of Women in Leadership and its Relevance to the Church in Africa." Oyewole argues for a more inclusive approach to female leadership roles, particularly within African churches. His arguments regarding faith-based issues are of the highest quality due to his experience as an ordained minister and an assistant professor of theology at Nigeria's Bowen University. The most important thing to note is that although Oyewole's point of view may be influenced by his Christian beliefs, he also draws on historical and cultural contexts to support his arguments. It would appear that the article is targeted at theologians, church leaders, and others

interested in exploring issues related to gender within religious communities, which would be the intended audience of the article.’

5. It is in Hannelie J. Wood’s article “Gender Inequality: Harmful, Patriarchal, Traditional and Cultural Gender Practices in the Church” that she discusses the issue of gender inequality within the church, particularly in the context of harmful patriarchal practices that go unchallenged so often. Moreover, she argues that by relying on these practices as well as reinforcing damaging gender stereotypes, these practices not only perpetuate gender inequality but also harm both men and women at the same time. Her perspective is informed by her experience and insights as an ordained minister in the Uniting Reformed Church of Southern Africa. This article is aimed at scholars and practitioners within the Christian community who are interested in promoting gender equality within the churches that they belong to.