

**WOMEN'S ROLES IN THE ANGLICAN CHURCH
OF KENYA: A CASE STUDY OF THE DIOCESE OF
NAKURU, 1961-1998**

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ABSTRACT

In this thesis, the role of women in the Anglican Church of Kenya, based on the Diocese of Nakuru between 1961 and 1998 is examined. Women's involvement in church activities such as evangelisation and secular ones like participation in various aspects of community development are discussed. The aim of this study is to give a historical and analytical account of women's roles in the Diocese of Nakuru. The thesis is based on three hypotheses, namely: that the role performance by women in the church is influenced by the levels of their income, education, autonomy and family size; that women are empowered in many fundamental ways through involvement in church activities; and that there has been a remarkable impact in the church due to women's participation. Consequently, this study considered three theoretical principles viz., Liberal Feminism, Evangelical Feminism, and Biblical Feminism. The study used participant observation, survey, and case study methods based on non-random sampling. Secondary material was specifically obtained from the Diocesan archive of Nakuru. Oral research was conducted in the Diocese of Nakuru. Taken as a whole, the role of women in the Diocese of Nakuru was minimal indeed. One of the major factors, which stood ahead of the others, was the fact that the church leadership did not recognise the significance of women's contributions in the church. The church leaders largely misinterpreted the Bible arguing that women had not been allowed to play certain roles in the church. The major point of contention was mainly that of priesthood, which concurrently influenced the other roles played in church. This study, therefore recommends that women be given equal opportunity as their male counter-parts to fully participate in church related activities. Besides, it is the recommendation of this study that more women should be trained and engaged in the provision of health, education, priestly and other missionary services in the church.