

**A MINISTRY ON HEALING WOUNDS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN THE
POST WAR SIERRA LEONE: A CASE STUDY OF THE UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH, MOYAMBA EAST DISTRICT OF THE SIERRA
LEONE ANNUAL CONFERENCE, 2002-2013.**

By

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULLFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTERS OF
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ABSTRACT

This study was designed to assess the role of the United Methodist Church in alleviating sexual violence in its Moyamba East District Conference, in ministering to those experiencing emotional, physical or spiritual difficulties, in order to improve the quality of individuals' self-esteem. Its purpose is to design Pastoral strategies, aimed at healing wounds of sexual victims in the post war context within the communities of Sierra Leone. It employed both qualitative and quantitative research design techniques to get the data which resulted in the production of a comprehensive report. The researcher used the convenience and purposive sampling and the following circuits were included in the sample: Taiama, Senehun, Gbangbatoke and Mano Circuits, respectively. The main findings of the study then were that in the Moyamba East District of the UMC in post war Sierra Leone, women experienced degrees of physical, psychological and economical violence perpetrated by some men. The Laity respondents of the church confirmed that the clergy were not effective enough in the provision of counseling and the healing of wounds to victims of sexual violence in their various parishes, which was contrary to how the clergy sample evaluated themselves. Government measures too to control sexual violence proved to be ineffective, while traditional and cultural practices by women degraded and humiliated women in the communities. From the findings, the main recommendations included call on the United Methodist Church to respond to issues on sexual violence more effectively through organized and emphasis on counseling, counseling, pastoral care, and educational programmes for the entire church. Also, the government is challenged to strengthen the reassessment of gender policies and strict supervision of personnel involved in law enforcement and judiciary to ensure that justice prevails in the society.

APPROVAL

This dissertation has been presented and examined under my authority as a research supervisor at Africa University.

Sign. Date

Rev. Sanda Sangaza

DECLARATION

I, Emerson Laggah, declare that the subject matter of this dissertation is my work, not including where sources are acknowledged in the content, and that it has never been submitted to any University for any qualification.

Sign. Date

Emerson Laggah

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DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to my late Parents (Masu-Sinnah and Joseph Laggah), and
to my dear wife Martha Laggah, and the three children: Edna, Emerson Jr., and
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

FGM– Female Genital Mutilations

FSU – Family Support Unit

GBV – Gender Based Violence

IRC – International Rescue Committee

MED – Moyamba East District

MED-SLAC- Moyamba East District of the Sierra Leone Annual Conference

SEA – Sexual Exploitation Abuse

SGBV – Sexual and Gender-Based Violence

SLAC – Sierra Leone Annual Conference

UMC – United Methodist Church

Chapter One

Introduction to the Study

1.1 Background to the study

Sierra Leone is a small State on the coast of West Africa that is bordered at the North by Guinea and at the Southeast by Liberia. It has a population of 5 million. Sierra Leone is made up of seventeen ethnic groups, with the largest being Mende in the South and Southeast and the Temne in the North of the country. Sierra Leone was a British Colony which got independence in 1961. Since then, after this historic event, stability has been steadily undermined by a series of military coups and attacks on multi-party democracy.¹

For example, armed conflict broke out in Sierra Leone on 23rd March 1991. The Revolutionary United Front (RUF), who were the rebel group, claimed responsibility for the incursion with the declared objective of over-throwing the corrupt and tyrannical All Peoples Congress Government, (APC) led by the Late President Joseph S. Momoh². The rebel war opened up the worse human violations ever committed in the history of the country and continued to be occurring on daily basis in post war Sierra Leone.

¹ TRC Report, *Witness to Truth: Report of the Sierra Leone Truth & Reconciliation Commission*, Vol. 3B, Accra, Ghana, Graphic Packaging, LTD, GCGL Printed & Bound at GPL. Press. 2004 pp.233-234

²Peters K., *War and the crisis of Youth in Sierra Leone – international African Library*, USA, Cambridge, University Press, 2011. p-19

Between 1991 and 2002, Sierra Leone was devastated by vicious civil war. The conflict was characterized by indiscriminate killing of civilians, the deliberate targeting of woman and children through rape and other sexual violence. There was wide spread conscription of child soldiers and campaigns of mutilations and other atrocities. With these activities, the impact was devastating; Sierra Leone's economy suffered infrastructure, destruction of education, and health systems were left in ruins. The human cost was perhaps the greatest.

The emergence of the armed conflict that resulted in gross human violations were for the following reasons, among others:

The causes could be traced back after the first Prime Minister, Sir Albert Margai, who died in 1964, He ruled for four years after independence, (1961) from the colonial master, Great Britain.³ Since then, Sierra Leone's 10-year civil war revolved around bad governance. The country's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) concluded that the central cause of the war was that the country was characterized by gross corruption, mismanagement and electoral violence that led to a weak civil society, endemic greed, corruption, and nepotism that deprived the nation of its dignity and reduced most people to a state of poverty, unpatriotic, socio- economic inequality, and tribalism through their successive leaders who, some of them could have been

³ TRC Report, *Witness to Truth: Report of the Sierra Leone Truth & Reconciliation Commission* Vol. 3B.2004, p 234.

church leaders. For example, the late Dr. Siaka Stevens turned the country into one party state and ruled for 27 good years.

During his long term of office there were many students' demonstrations, many opposition leaders were jailed and some fled from the country. There were also successive military coups that weakened the strength of the country economically.⁴ These and others could have led the entire generation of dissatisfied minds, especially among the youths, to mount rebellion.

Sierra Leone has rich diamond reserves. There was the competition to seize and control the lucrative diamond producing region which was widely regarded as the main cause of conflicts.⁵ The rich diamond has been critical in financing the patterns of corruption and personal aggrandizement at the expense of needed public services, institutions, and infrastructure. Instead of the diamond benefiting the nation at large, it was used for personal enrichment.

Shrinking opportunities for education apparently made the young generation in particular, to increasingly marginalize society. That is, education was just for a few of those who could afford and that the masses suffered because of abject poverty. This created the general circumstances, enabling students to drop out of school and those graduates with no jobs joined rebels to survive.

⁴ Ibid pp.85-86

⁵ Collier, P & Hoeffler, '*Greed and grievance in civil war*', Oxford Economic Papers, vol. 56, 2004. pp.563-595.

The state of health in Sierra Leone has been on a steady decline throughout in the post-colonial period, and the decline in economic growth, between 1980- 2004, affected the health sector negatively. During this period of time in the history of the country, when both infant and under five mortality rate, as well as other negative records due to mismanagement and corruption on the part of the health sector, Sierra Leone was declared as the least developed country in the human development that year by the United Nations.⁶

In 2002, Sierra Leone emerged from an eleven-year civil war characterized by horrendous crimes such as body mutilation, rape, and sexual violence, slavery and exploitation and hunger, to name but a few.

For this study, the focus was on women and children who suffered the brunt of violence of the conflict, and experienced some of the most horrific acts of violence during the war. This may be a legacy of the eleven years of the brutal war in Sierra Leone, where sexual violence was used as strategy for war. Many thousands of girls and women, men also included, were subjected to abduction, exploitation and sexual violence by various warring factions.⁷

In Sierra Leone, there were three main warring factions, these were; Revolutionary United Front (RUF), the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), and the Civil

⁶ TRC Report, *Witness to the Truth: Report of the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission*, Vol. 3B, 2004. p 241

⁷ Sowa Isata, *Addressing Sexual and Gender Based Violence in Sierra Leone: A commentary on the Disruptive Role of community Chiefs in Promoting Justice and Accountability*, 2012.

Defense Force (CDF). These factions; who are now disarmed, demobilized, rehabilitated and reintegrated into the society, were responsible for committing most of the war violence.⁸

In the Post-war Sierra Leone, violence against women and the recognition of children's fundamental rights are still matters of controversy both at home, church and in the public forum, because power, hate, sex and lust seem to reinforce male domination which heavily prejudice society against children and women's contribution to national development. On the other hand, violence perpetrated in the home often goes unrecognized and it has led to tension within the family circles, separation of parents, with heavy social and economic consequences on women and children.

Historically, women have been discriminated against and heavily under-represented in the traditionally male-dominated political and socio-economic decision-making structures of Sierra Leone.⁹ Gender inequalities are prevalent throughout society, with women having been more likely to be illiterate and suffer extreme poverty; their rights frequently violated, and they have little access to resources and opportunities".¹⁰

⁸Johannes J., Vivian J., and Rogers N., *Sexual violence in post-Conflict Sierra Leone: Obstacles to prevention responses*; Africa Safety Promotion Journal, Vol.11, No.2, 2013.

⁹Ibid Vol.11, No.2

¹⁰Barnes K. & Albrecht P. www.international-arlex.org/addressing-genderbasedviolence Sierra Leone (accessed 13th December, 2014)

The United Methodist Church: Sierra Leone Annual Conference, has not been spared as any other section of society. In some ways, the church has been affected even more because the Christian Church is called upon to respond to the needs of those who are hit hardest by the sexual and gender based violence.¹¹ Quite often religion is used to endorse all forms of gender-based violence as an excuse and yet the central message of Christianity, Islam, African Religion and other religions is to instruct believers to respect the sanity of peaceful and loving relationships, between women and children.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The United Methodist Church, as a Christian religious organization, has not being doing much to address the healing of wounds of sexual and gender based violence committed during and after the war conflicts. The church (UMC) has not yet given its membership enough pastoral care and counseling services needed by people affected by violence during the war. The church, which is supposed to be the conscience of society, seems to be lukewarm over this violence against her very members, and the church leaders, as keepers of moral law and order in their various communities,¹² seem not to take serious heed.

¹¹Laron M. ed., *Claiming the Promises; African Churches Speak*, WCC, Friendship Press, 1994. pp.37-39

¹²Agosin M., *Women, Gender and Human Rights*, USA, Rutgers, 2001. p2

The church has not yet been uniquely placed in society to play a vital role in the prevention, healing, and elimination of the different forms of violence against all humankind.

1:3 Purpose of Study

The purpose of the study was to find out what the United Methodist Church in Sierra Leone is doing to alleviate the problem of the healing of wounds of sexual violence in the Moyamba East District of the Sierra Leone Annual Conference. This study also aimed at designing a pastoral strategy, aimed at healing wounds and stopping the crisis of sexual violence among the church laity and clergy in the church; in the post war Moyamba East District of Sierra Leone Annual Conference, (MED-SLAC).

1.4 Objectives of the study

The specific objectives of the study are:

- 1.** To present the Mende cultural understanding and its response to sexual violence in the Moyamba District.
- 2.** To investigate the UMC, general understanding and response to the healing wounds of sexual and gender based violence and its implications for the ministry of Pastoral Care and Counseling and Church growth.

3. To examine what the Bible, the UMC Book of Discipline and government policies say and recommend with regards to sexual violence and prefer suggestions and recommendations to strengthen all of the sexual violence.
4. To evaluate the response of the UMC, Sierra Leone Annual Conference (UMC, SLAC) towards sexual violence victims and to assess the performance of the church in salvaging the emotional and psychological needs of these communities
5. To design programmes and strategies towards Ministries of healing the wounds of sexual violence victims in Moyamba District in Sierra Leone

1.5 Research Questions

To answer the main question the following sub-questions had to be answered:

1. What are the causes of the sexual violence in the Moyamba East District?
2. What is the role of the UMC, SLAC in addressing sexual violence in the post war Sierra Leone?
3. What steps have the UMC, and SLAC taken to advocate for and on behalf of sexual victims, especially in Moyamba District, Sierra Leone?
4. What type of Pastoral Care model and strategies would be relevant to heal the wounds in the post war Sierra Leone?
5. Is the church collaborating with other agencies to address these crises?

1.6 Justification of the Study

There has not been much research carried out on the role played by the United Methodist Church, to alleviate Sexual and Gender Based Violence in the Moyamba East District (MED). This study endeavored to address the psycho-social and emotional needs of sexual victims, more especially to create methods to heal the wounds and to stop the prevailing sexual violence in the post war context within the communities, and even beyond.

The study intended to educate ministers of the gospel in order to understand fully the concept of sexual violence in relation to healing ministry and to see the need of reaching and giving beyond borders, in order to alleviate the socio-economic, cultural and health issues of its members.

The outcome and recommendations of the research would emphasize the need for the church to play a pivotal role, and to advocate for the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children Affairs and the law enforcement to be partners in minimizing or curtailing sexual and gender based violence in the communities. The Church (UMC) is an important agent in the socialization process in dealing with various issues and challenges that emerge in the course of life.

1.7 Significance of the study

The results of this study are expected to be of benefit to a number of stakeholders that include government, pastors, laity, victims of sexual abuse, fellow researchers who live in the Moyamba East District of the UMC, as well as the Moyamba Community.

To the pastors, the findings will help discover the need to play an active role in assisting victims of sexual violence. They are expected to provide adequate pastoral care and counseling

To the government, the findings enlighten officials on the weaknesses of law enforcing agents in apprehending perpetrators of sexual violence. It also enlightened them on weaknesses of the judicial system in dealing with the culprits.

To individuals who have fallen victims to sexual violence, the findings would enable them to regain courage and hope for the future.

To the community and members of the district, the findings of the study sensitize them on the need to comfort and care for the victims of the sexual violence.

The results also gave fellow researchers an appropriate starting point for further research on issues related to sexual abuse.

1.8 Delimitations

The study restricted itself to Moyamba East District of the U.M. Church in Sierra Leone and within this district, the study focused on the following selected circuits: Taiama, Gbangbatoke, Senahun, and Mano. The researcher confined to the period between 2002 to 2013, because in February, 2002, was the year when the then former and ex-President of the Republic of Sierra Leone, Dr. Ahmed Tejan-Kabba declared the end of the eleven years civil war.¹³ Both the qualitative and quantitative research designs were used to solicit data in response to the research questions. Data was collected between late June and early August, 2014.

1.9 Limitations

Time could not permit the researcher to cover large areas of the four circuits as mentioned above and also transportation cost was very high. Much work was not done on interviews and focus group discussion because of the Ebola pandemic disease that threatened the area of study.

The study encountered disadvantage in terms of gender character that some respondents were not open up to tell their stories, the reason being the influence of African culture and the value system that women should be silent and allow men to fight for them.

¹³ TRC Report, *Witness to the Truth: Report of the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission*, Vol. 3B, 2004. p.85

Another disadvantage that hampered the data collection was the outbreak of Ebola pandemic in May, 2015, and at the height of data collection in July and August, pandemonium and fear was a challenge of the study area and the accessibility of respondents was very limited. However, progress was made that some respondents were cooperative in the midst of the pandemic.

1.10 Assumptions of the Study

The research was based on the assumption that:

Sexual violence in the post war era is high and is practise widely on daily basis despite the efforts of the church and state, especially in the Moyamba East District of the United Methodist Church, in the Sierra Leone Annual Conference.

1.12 Definition of Terms

The researcher was aware of various concepts that could highlight or be said about theoretical framework for the study which included the following: *gender, domestic violence, gender-based violence, gender equality, sexual exploitation and abuse, sexual violence, healing ministry, physical or psychological violence* and so on.

Gender: This refers to the roles, relationships, experiences and expectations of men, women, boys and girls that are constructed by society on the basis of their sex. These different roles and relationships are influenced by local contexts and other forms of

social differentiation such as age, ethnicity, class, caste, religion and socio-economic status.

Domestic Violence: any action or attitude in the home that dehumanizes or causes physical or emotional injury and that, in any way, is a violation of one's personhood. It is a pattern of abusive and threatening behavior that may include physical, emotional, and control over another person.¹⁴ Most often men use it against their intimate partners, which can include current or former spouses and girlfriends. Domestic violence is a serious problem that occurs in every culture and social group. It has devastating physical, emotional, financial and social effects on women, children, families and communities all over Sierra Leone.

Gender based violence: violence that targets individuals or groups of individuals on the basis of their gender.¹⁵

Gender equality: refers to sex equality, sexual equality or equality of the genders, implies that men and women should receive equal treatment, unless there is a sound biological reason for different treatment.¹⁶

Sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA): Sexual exploitation is any abuse of a position vulnerability, differential power, or trust for sexual purposes: this includes profiting

¹⁴World Health Organization, Fighting Genital Mutilation in Sierra Leone, Bulletin of the World Health Organization, Vol. 83, November 2005, p. 801

¹⁵Khutsoane B. S. N., Gender Based Violence in Africa: Gender Based Violence and the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against women, 2007. p.2

¹⁶ Gender Equality, en.wikipedia.org. accessed, 25th November, 2013

monetarily, socially, or politically from the sexual exploitation of another.¹⁷ For example, sexual exploitation can occur when adults have sexual relations with children in exchange for money, food or any other commodity

Sexual Violence: In this report sexual violence is used as an overarching term to describe “any violence, physical or psychological, carried out through sexual means or by targeting sexuality”.¹⁸ Sexual violence includes; sexual slavery, rape by someone of the opposite sex, rape by someone of the same sex, forceful introduction of objects into rectum/vagina, gang rape, attempted rape, force performance of sexual acts other than rape such as forcing a person to strip naked in public, forcing two victims to perform sexual acts on one another or harm one another in a sexual manner, assaulting or mutilating a person’s genitals or a woman’s breast, body searching by members of the opposite sex, and beating a pregnant woman on her abdomen

Healing Ministry?

Healing is defined as any strategy, process or activity that improves the psychological health of individuals following extensive violent conflict. Strategies, processes or activities aimed at rehabilitating and reconstructing local and national communities more broadly are also integrally linked to this process.¹⁹ As such, healing is not only about assisting individuals to address their psychological health needs in an isolated

¹⁷United Nation secretariat, secretary General’s bulletin: special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse,ST/SCG/2003/13,October9,2003<http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texts/vtx/protect/opebdoc.pdf?tbl=PROTECT&id405ac6614> (accessed June 28,2007)

¹⁸Nainar V., A Manual: Litigation strategies for Sexual Violence in Africa, 2012. p.1

¹⁹ www.un.org/en/peacebuilding/phso/pdf/reconciliation-after-violent conflict, ed. David Bloomfield, Teresa Barnes & Luc Huyse (assessed 1st March, 2015)

way, but is dependent upon and integrally linked to repairing and rebuilding communities and the social context. This implies restoring a normalized everyday life that can recreate and confirm people's sense of being and belonging.

The human condition cries out for a healing church. Healing ministry is certainly ministry to the most wounded, underserved, needy and deserving among us, and it must include examining, wrestling with and providing guidance and relief for profound and complex wounds to heart and soul.²⁰ Healing of the whole person - body, mind, spirit, and the socio-economic and environmental is the practical outworking of God's salvation.

Psychological Violence: This term refers to as emotional abuse or mental abuse. It is form of abuse characterized by a person subjecting or exposing another to behavior that may result in psychological trauma, including anxiety, depression or post traumatic disorder.²¹ Such abuse is often associated with situations of power imbalance, such as abusive relationship, bullying or conflict. The definition of psychological violence is even more challenging and elusive than the definition of **physical violence** and the borderline between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour is not clear-cut. Broadly speaking, psychological violence encompasses a wide range

²⁰ Green J.B., McKnight S., *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, Downers Grove, Illinois Leicester, Intervarsity Press, 1992. pp.299-306

²¹ Physical & Psychological violence at workplace, www.europa.eu/site/default_ef1381 (accessed 10th May 2015)

of disruptive behaviour, including bullying, harassment, coercion, verbal abuse and sexual harassment.

When defining **physical violence**, the distinction is often made between real experiences of actions and threats of violence.²²

1.13 Summary

Chapter 1 gives the background information to the study. The background leads to the statement of the problem after which the purpose of the study is given. Also clearly spelt out are the study objectives, research questions for the study, purpose of study, delimitations, assumptions and anticipated limitations. The key terms have been contextually defined.

The next chapter shows the literature used.

²² Ibid

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

The literature review demonstrates the researcher's knowledge of the field. This chapter will present the different perspectives and understanding on the healing wounds of the post-war violence in Sierra Leone. The researcher should not merely report what he or she had read, but should report critically on what he /she reads, identifying what the most important issues are and their relevance to his/her investigation.”²³

The researcher revealed the work of several authors, scholars or theologians of theories on healing wounds of sexual post war violence. Below are some books that were reviewed:

2.1 The Theological Understanding of Sexual Violence - *Collins G. (1988), Robins W. (1995), Chitando E. (2007)*

The Bible is the book that the church holds in high esteem and it talks about a range of issues about sexual and gender-based violence, but often people are caught in a situation where they pick and choose topics they want to discuss. The Bible recorded a number of issues relating to sexual violence which are sinful acts before God. According to Collins, in his book titled “**Christian Counseling**”, argues to say that,

²³Rakotsoane F.C.L & Rakotsoane M.A., *The ABC of Research Project, dissertation and thesis, Proposal Writing*, Morija- Lesotho Choice Publishing Company, 2007. p.13

Christian authoritative book recorded stories about sexual violence that related to people's socio economic, traditions, culture and Christian values, meaning that the church should not be silent about it, but proactive to the issues in order to bring wholeness to mankind. Often, the violence comes about because of the sinful act of disobedience, people whose life is corrupted in the sight of God.²⁴

There is no flourishing religious life without discipline, an individual or group should be able to pursue worthy goals and spirituality. The Bible often emphasizes justice in the face of God's love.

According to Wendy Robin's, (1995) book titled '**Through the Eyes of a Woman**', there are certain women issues which begin the premise that the Bible is not helpful.²⁵ Sexual violence is one of these issues. The following citations try to illustrate this fact:

Bonhoeffer, '**Creation and Fall**', argues that, Cain, for example, who was the son of the first parents Adam and Eve, usurped this ultimate right of creation and became the first murderer.²⁶ This was crime against human life, a murder case, (Genesis 4:1-8).

Lot offered his daughters in exchange for the three (angels) and was turned down and Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed because of their immorality (Genesis 19:1-11).

²⁴Collins G.R., *Christian Counselling Comprehensive Guide*, USA, W. Publishing Group, 1998. p-296

²⁵ Robin W., *Biblical Studies on the experience of Women: Through the Eyes of a Woman*, Geneva, WCC Publication, 1995. p.104

²⁶ Bonhoeffer D., *Creation and Fall; Temptation, Two Biblical Studies*, New York, Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1976. p.93

Jacob's children destroyed the house of Hamor and the entire town when Shechem violated Dinah's virginity (Genesis 34:1-31),

The Levite concubine was raped in Gibeah and later murdered by his master as a result (Judges 19:1-30),

King David raped Bathsheba, Uriah's wife, and by his order as commander-in-chief of the Israel army, he killed Uriah in the hottest battle front (2nd Samuel 11:1-17).

Ammon lay down and pretended to be sick, and asked for Tamar, his sister to serve him. Tamar was a virgin. While serving him, Ammon, raped her and there-after drove her from his presence. Because of this act, Absalom, Tamar's brother, hated him and later killed him for raping his sister (2Samuel 13:2-15).

"It is well for a man not to touch a woman (1 Corinth 7:1)... if they cannot exercise self-control, they should marry" (1Corinth 7:9).

From the above, it can be true to judge whether there is a total lack of distinction between sexual violence and love-making, mixed with disdain for human sexuality.

Robins, arguing from Luke's theology, says that Jesus Christ came for those who are marginalized (Luke 19:10). Since women are marginalized, they should be treated right. Since men are 'powerful', they should serve the weaker people²⁷ (Luke

²⁷ Robin W., *Biblical Studies on the experience of Women: Through the Eyes of a Woman*, Geneva, WCC Publication, 1995. pP.104-107

4:18). The statement in Luke 4:18 “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me to bring the good news to all ...”, liberates everyone, including women. The men in the Church/society should take up this theology and bring freedom to the women.²⁸

The scripture is true that in Christ we are all equal before God. It should be a norm for men and women in Christianity to be treated equally. They should be given equal opportunities depending on the situation. Men should work together with women to deconstruct this ethical issue in solidarity²⁹ as advanced by Chitando. According to Chitando, African women and girls are socially subordinate to and economically dependent upon men.³⁰ This should be something of the past within the church or community as people should adopt the theology advanced by Paul that, before God, people are all equal.³¹

Christianity, from time immemorial, has a theology of equality. However, though Christ came to teach total equality, the Jewish tradition was blatantly biased as could be seen from a line in the prayer of a Jewish man spoken daily: “I thank God He did not make me a gentile, a slave, or a women”. This statement in Gal 3:38 is very relevant to the culture in which Paul lived. “There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave or

²⁸Chitando E., *Acting in Hope, African Churches and HIV/AIDS*, Geneva, WCC, 2007. pp. 43-44-

²⁹ Ibid 43-44

³⁰ Ibid pp. 45-47

³¹ Martin G.L., *Counseling for family violence and abuse; resources for Christian Counseling*, Texas, Word Books Publishers, 1987. pp-22-23

free, male or female, for you are all one in Jesus Christ”.³² Mankind should not be gender bias, race or colour.

Being a Christian church, the ministry of Jesus Christ provides the perfect model for those who seek to understand the theological meaning of solidarity. He always stood in solidarity with those who were on the margins of society of His day, such as the lepers, women, prostitutes, children and others, who were marginalized.

2.1.1 Patriarchal Culture in the Old Testament

According to some biblical scholars like: Kornfeld M. (1988), Collins G (1988), and Robins W. (1995), it is clear that, while customs obviously changed over years, there were some features of life which remained fairly constant during the Old Testament period. The most outstanding fact about society, even today, is that of the patriarchal culture. This means that power and authority were and are in the hands of the father, the patriarch.

According to Robin, Israel as a nation and as a religious community, was constituted by male dominated families and full membership in it was reserved for adult male.³³ For example, the religion of the people of the Old Testament was male centered, the priest were male and its rule and regulations were devised by males; all the canon writers were male and their language of the Bible sounded all male, and therefore their

³²Ibid pp-22-23

³³Robin W., *Biblical Studies on the experience of Women: Through the Eyes of a Woman*, 1995. pp 72-73

tradition and culture placed the legal and social position of women often lower in Israel than even the neighboring countries in Ancient Eastern culture and religions. With this back drop, it was quite clear that women were wholly and solely dependent on their fathers and husbands (Numbers 30:2-12) and had no saying or rights on their own. This argument, according to scholars like Judith Lorber and Lisa Jean Moore (2010) theories of the 'social construction of gender', stated that, you are somewhat living in segregation depending on what gender, race, and class they are. But race and class do not really mean anything. They only have meaning because society gives them meaning. Social construction is how society groups people and how it privileges certain groups over others.³⁴ For example, the wife's primary task in life is to bear children and her greatest honor is motherhood. Whereas woman's sexual misconduct was severely punished, infidelity on the part of the man was penalized only if he violated the rights of another man.³⁵

2.1.2 Patriarchal culture in the New Testament

The Holy Scripture supports the liberation of women in many ways, if people look at Jesus the role model. Jesus' positive view of women is consistent through the New Testament accounts. There is enough evidence in the gospels to suggest that Jesus did not treat women as sexual objects or legal possessions, nor did He consider them

³⁴ The Social Construction of Gender; www.columbiastate.edu/file/library (accessed 15 February 2015)

³⁵ Robin W., *Biblical Studies on the experience of Women: Through the Eyes of a Woman*, 1995. pp. 100-102

inferior or unworthy of being a part of His circle. The Jesus' movement was not an exclusive, but inclusive group. Jesus did call His disciples together with no boundary. For example, Jesus challenged the attitudes held by many towards women as sex objects. In the Jewish practice in (Deuteronomy 21:1ff), a man was allowed to capture a woman in war and force her for a wife. Jesus' teaching is against such practice, (Matthew 5:28). He prohibits men to lust after any woman in his heart (i.e. even to think about her as a sex object), let alone take her as a sexual possession.

On the other hand, Jesus illustrated the sensitivity to the situation of women, for example, His encounter with the adulterous woman, whom He saved from an angry mob. She was charged of adultery, while the man, the perpetrator, was spared of the same crime. Jesus was more concerned with the hypocritical behavior of those who brought her to Him than to subject her to public humiliation (John 8:1-11).

Men in the patriarchal church can take up literally the example of Christ as the head of the church who sacrificed His life for it. Ephesians' theology could mean that men are in the fore front in protecting and assisting the marginalized in society.³⁶ They should adopt a serving attitude because they are leaders. Also, the church can capitalize on the strong base of human rights culture that authorizes people to insist on the right of all people, regardless of their being black, male or female. Jesus Himself was concerned with the human rights because He always sided with the marginalized. This

³⁶ Ibid p-47

means that the church could use sources of culture, activism and teaching available in society.³⁷

Meiselman M, argues that, the Jewish *and Christian* religions grew out of a patriarchal world and were deeply influenced by patriarchal thinking.³⁸ Many attitudes and practices towards women that are described in the Bible reflect patriarchal thinking, while Jesus Christ embraced everybody equal in His sight. For example, the women were the first to have witnessed the resurrected Christ from the grave. In some parts there is tension between patriarchal and liberating ideas about women. For example, in 1st Timothy 2:11-12 it is read that women should be subordinate to man; “A woman must be a listener, listening quietly and with due submission, I do not permit a woman to be a teacher, nor must woman domineer over man; she should be quiet”. And in Galatians 3:28, the opposite implies where the full equality of women is affirmed.

Jesus demonstrated His respect for women by speaking to them openly and asking their opinions at a time when men were not supposed to speak to a woman publicly.

Although there is this tension within scriptures between those passages that put women down and those that uplift them, some church leaders and believers choose to

³⁷Mucherera T., *The Pastoral Care from the Third World Perspective; a Pastoral Theology of Care for the Urban Contemporary Shonain Zimbabwe*, New York, Peter Lang Publishing. Inc., 2001. p.9

³⁸ Meiselman M (1978) *Jewish Woman in Jewish Law*, NY, in Lois Jacobs (ed)(1995) *The Jewish Religion, A Companion*, New York, Oxford University Press, pp. 592-594

ignore the liberating strands in the scriptures and continue to hold on to those ideas that support their own social and cultural views about women's inferiority.³⁹

2.1.3 The United Methodist Church Document Policy on Women against Sexual and Gender Based Violence

The U.M. Church Book of Discipline is a guide for mandate of the existence of the church and has a policy on women on sexual and gender based violence.

According to the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women, the Book is quite clear about the perception of the United Methodist Church on the position of women. The document states general principles, agencies, institutions and connectional structures, on women's continuing commitment to the full and equal responsibility and their participation in the total life and mission of the church, sharing fully in the power and policy-making at all levels of the church.⁴⁰

The church affirms scriptures that both male and female have equal worth in the eyes of God. The United Methodist Church, however, sometimes ignores the idea or notion that no gender is superior to another, thereby giving one gender more love, power, and esteem at the expense of another. The church calls upon women and men alike to share power and control, to learn to give freely and to receive freely, to be complete and to respect the wholeness of others. The document seeks for every individual's

³⁹ Robins W., *Through the eyes of a Woman –Biblical Studies on the experience of a women*, 1995. pp.84-88

⁴⁰ *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church* (Par 2201-2) Nashville, The United Methodist Publishing House, 1985. p- 613

opportunity and freedom to love and to be loved, to seek and receive justice and to practise ethical self-determination.⁴¹ It is the role of the UMC, according to the Book of Discipline, to assist the local church, Annual Conference, the councils, boards, commissions, schools of theology, and other related institutions, on the eradication of the problems of sexual harassment by developing policies and procedures for addressing the problems.⁴²

The Church should be concerned with the liberating message of Jesus Christ that recognizes every person, woman or man, as a full and equal part of God's human family. Irrespective of gender, role or status, the church view gender diversity as a blessing and gift from God Almighty. The UMC is also supposed to redress inequalities and the common phenomenon of human perception on gender and ensure to prevent further inequalities against women. The UMC promotes inclusiveness,⁴³ the awareness of issues, problems, and concerns related to the status and role of women in participating in the social life of the church and national development.

⁴¹*Social Principles of the United Methodist Church*, Nashville, the United Methodist Publishing House, 2009-2012. p-19

⁴²*The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church*, Nashville, the United Methodist Publishing House, 2004. p-659

⁴³*The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church*, (Par.161), the United Methodist Publishing House, 2012. pp.110-111

2.2 Sexual Violence in Post-Conflict Sierra Leone

According to Glasgow, the head of International Rescue Committee (IRC), argues on the prevalent happenings since the civil war in Sierra Leone ended in 2002, that, women in the country are still facing another deadly front-sexual and gender-based violence.⁴⁴ Sexual and gender based violence has continued unrelentingly into the post-war years. We saw rape and sexual violence used as a tool during the war, and now it is coping into the society. Violence is still a threat and a matter of urgent concern in the post war Sierra Leone. Violence against women still persists in various forms including intimate partner violence, sexual assault, child abuse, wife inheritance, forced marriage, forced prostitution, tribal marks, and female genital mutilation as most commonly practise among the Mende land, to include rape, and sexual exploitation of women and solicitation of child prostitute.⁴⁵

Many factors are contributing to this violence, including women's low status in society, leading to continued incidences of sexual violence and the social implications of sexual violence that have proven to be damaging, not just to women and girls, but to the communities at large by re-enforcing pre-existing gender norms about women's sexuality.⁴⁶ For example, women in Sierra Leone experience considerable difficulty in

⁴⁴ IRC – *The War continues for Women in Sierra Leone* realitycheck.org/article/2010/07/06/ (accessed 1st Feb, 2015)

⁴⁵ Mansah P., *Violence against Women Experiences from Ghana*, Department of Sociology, University of Cape Coast, Ghana, 2000. Pp-4-6

⁴⁶ Johannes J., Vivian J., Rogers N., *Sexual violence in post-Conflict Sierra Leone: Obstacles to prevention responses*; Africa Safety Promotion Journal, Vol.11, No.2, 2013

accessing justice due to illiteracy, unemployment, and inability to have legal representation and a general lack of incompetence. Simply because culture and tradition have placed women not as the same status with men, and their low status hinders them from enjoying their rights.

However, Sierra Leoneans, during the aftermath war among other factors of violence, are still subdued to the undermentioned violent post war challenges as follow.

2.2.1 Sierra Leone Legal System

The rule of evidence sufficient to convict perpetrators of crimes of sexual nature is often inadequately applied in Sierra Leone,⁴⁷ according to Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) reports. For example, despite laws against sexual violence and domestic abuse made in 2007, offenders remain unpunished and impunity prevails. In fact, out of the 927 sexual abuse cases reported in the country in 2009, there were no convictions. 460 cases are under investigation, 40 cases are pending, while 122 cases were resolved or withdrawn.⁴⁸

Women in Sierra Leone are granted equal rights to men under the 1991 Constitution, which reflects the basic human rights enshrined in international and regional

⁴⁷TRC Report: *Witness to the Truth: Report of the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission*, Vol. 3B, 2004. pp.109-111

⁴⁸ IRC – *The war continues for Women in Sierra Leone*; rhrealitycheck.org/article/2010/07/06/ (**accessed 1st Feb,2015**)

instruments such as the Declaration of Human Rights and the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights. However, a weak and largely dysfunctional criminal justice system and limited access to the formal court system have ensured that Sierra Leoneans are ill-protected from sexual violence.⁴⁹

Following the eleven years exposure to violence during Sierra Leone's brutal war, poverty and the neglect of the rights of women led to a marked increase in violence against women and girls. They are incarcerated in prisons, serving terms of imprisonment or in detention awaiting trial. The situation of women in prisons, particularly with access to justice, is a growing concern. For example, some women were kept in prison and have not been charged by the court, neither anyone to speak for them. Some remained in long term prison cells and along the way were forced into sexual harassments by prison officers or otherwise. The simple reasons for this fact, were illiteracy, unemployment, etc.

In spite of the upsurge in national legislation, as well as international instruments all aimed at addressing post war human rights challenges, sexual violence continues to be perpetrated against women and girls⁵⁰

⁴⁹TRC Report:, Vol.2, pp'167-169

⁵⁰Sesay B.A., *The need to expedite the Sexual Offences Bill into Law. Centre for Accountability and the rule* (CARL-SL), 2007. p.10

2.2.2 Stigmatization

According to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) report, many women and girls emerged from the war with both physical and emotional wounds.⁵¹ That is, many people reported feelings of hopelessness, worthlessness and despair. Reintegration has proven extremely difficult and exacerbated these wounds. Their families and communities, who saw them as impure as a result of sexual abuse, stigmatized the girls. They were exposed to ridicule for prostituting in order to support their babies. They were verbally and physically attacked, restricted from mingling with families and communities, and prohibited from marrying. For some of them, their hands or legs were amputated, or tortured for pain in life, or tortured that led to disabilities in life. The communities rejected, neglected, called them names, gossiped and it is very hard to accommodate them in total freedom.

2.2.3 Spiritual Emotions

The atrocities many Sierra Leoneans suffered, like mutilations, rape or any other sexual harassment during and after the war, caused misfortunes, bad harvests and health problems for both girls and women and the broader community.⁵² Most of the victims are no longer of themselves. They feel guilty as the worst sinners on earth. Such people need to be delivered and cared for. Margaret Kornfield's book, '**Cultivating Wholeness**' stressed that, people are not human beings having a spiritual

⁵¹ 2004) *Witness to the Truth: Report of the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission*, Vol. 3B p.260

⁵² Ibid Vol.3 p.306

experience, but are spiritual beings having a human experience. This means that, for the human journey and struggle to be whole, the spiritual growth and freedom depend in large part on psychological health. Unless people have psychological health, there would be internal forces that would compel and drive them to self-destructive and self-defeating behavior. Health is not just the opposite of illness, health is the consciousness of one's wholeness, which means accepting one's limitation, as well as one's strengths.⁵³

2.2.4 Pastor as a Community Healer

In the mist of the challenging situations, the church must be a place of solace and healing.⁵⁴ Pastors, as well as other professional health caregivers, should constitute the body of Christ and must give the pastoral care and counseling to meet the needs of the people. Because pastors are referred to as enablers, coaches, and teachers, etc., they should heal their members or communities.⁵⁵

From Clinbell's description of a pastor above, it can be argued that, the church's mandate is to guide her sheep/people, and restore them to wholeness, especially in healing the wounds of the post war violence. Pastoral care is the ministry of the church, to sustain, heal, guide, reconcile, nurture and give hope to the person and

⁵³Kornfield M.Z., *Cultivating Wholeness, A guide to care and counseling in Faith Communities*, New York, the Continuum Publishing Company, 1998. p.8

⁵⁴ Ibid p 83-84

⁵⁵Clinebell H., *Basic Types of Pastoral Counseling, resources for the ministry of healing & Growth*, Nashville, Abingdon Press, 1984. pp.26-28

family, community or society in crises, from the total resources of the church, where available and needed.⁵⁶ The people need help apart from the Holy word of consolation and comfort. According to Wimberley's theories, these total resources are the supportive systems; the theory assumes that, the arena of healing in the people's lives is the supportive community and not just a therapeutic relationship between doctor and patient. In this model the agent of healing is the support community; in pastoral care, the healing agent in the church is the caring community.⁵⁷

Also other biblical scholars' argument on healing ministry involves purely the human agent, although God is the sovereign Healer. People need pastoral care throughout their lives because their human rights are violated or abused, and pastoral counseling is a reparative function which is needed when the growth of the person is seriously jeopardized and blurred by crisis of violence.⁵⁸ The church, by its very nature as the body of Christ, calls its members to become healing communities. When the church properly responds to people in violence, both ministering to them and learning from their suffering, the church's relationship to them will indeed make a difference, and thus become growth producing.⁵⁹ Churches must be prophetic in their denunciation of violence and the pulpit must be appropriate as a source in the quest to end violence against God's children. The church provides a purpose for living and the fellowship

⁵⁶ Ibid p 28

⁵⁷ Wimberly P., *Pastoral counseling and spiritual values, A Black Point of View*; Nashville, Abingdon Press, 1982. p.87

⁵⁸ Kornfield M.Z., *Cultivating Wholeness, A guide to care and counseling in Faith Communities*, 1998 pp. ix,6-7

⁵⁹ William P., *Facing AIDS the challenge, the churches, response*, Geneva, WCC Publishing, 2004. p.77

through which love (not violence) may be real. These goals and opportunities are part of any pastoral counseling.⁶⁰

2.3 Mende Traditional and Cultural Beliefs and practices on Sexual Matters

According to historical writers like A.D. Allie (1990), K. Little (1951), Harris Sawyer (1968) and others, it is argued that Sierra Leone has a long history of conservative patriarchy, which perpetrates inequalities between men and women. Male superiority continues to create a situation where women and children's rights are suppressed to the extent that they are wholly unable to maximize their potentials to participate positively in social, political and economic activities. The traditions encourage violence, and subordination of women. These injustices are entrenched in the customs of Sierra Leone.⁶¹

Among the Mendes, particularly in the Moyamba East District Conference (MEDC), tradition and culture also play their own significance in inhibiting women in the area to empower themselves. There is a strong cultural belief that, "women should be seen and not heard". For example, the high levels of illiteracy and poverty amongst Sierra Leonean women prevent them from upholding many of their internationally recognized rights. Similarly, economic insecurity contributes to women's vulnerability to sexual and gender based violence. Their marginalization from local and national

⁶⁰Oates W.E., *An Introduction to Pastoral Counselling*, Pennsylvania, West Minister Press, 1959. p 31

⁶¹TRC Report: *Witness to the Truth: Report of the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission*, Vol. 3B, 2004. p.102

decision-making processes further limits their ability to redress these gender inequalities. Any attempt to address sexual and gender violence (SGBV) in Sierra Leone must take these post-conflict realities into account and prioritize engagement with both men and women, including national and community leaders who are in a position to influence attitudes against sexual and gender based violence.⁶²

Not in all cases, but women in these societies never attain good leadership roles because they are seen by male members of society as contradicting the traditional role that women are expected to play.⁶³ Women, traditionally, had a lower status than men and had not occupied any positions of genuine power. Therefore, for women to break down traditional barriers and access power, there is need to change the existing power structures of the society.⁶⁴

2.4 Traditions and Cultural Institutions of Secret Societies and Sexual Violence

According to Little K. (1965), secret societies are ancient cultural institutions practised by almost all tribes in Sierra Leone.⁶⁵ It is like a training school, well known and practised among the Mende people, which to them is the gate-way from adolescent into adulthood. Secret societies induct members by means of initiation, and both initiates and non-initiates observe some range of laws and protocols that are

⁶²Barnes &Albercht & Olson, Addressing Gender Based Violence, mapping challenges responses and future entry points,. www.international-arlex.org/addressing-genderbasedviolence Sierra Leone, 2007. p.3(accessed 13th December,2014)

⁶³ Ibid

⁶⁴ Ibid p. 4

⁶⁵ Little K., *The Role of the Secret Society*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1965. p. 201

contradictory to human rights.⁶⁶ For example, to impose ritual curfew on non-initiates and settlements, to restrict the movement of people except the initiates, to ask for uncompassionate fines on people by the elders for breaking their ritual laws, affect people's psychological, social, and spiritual growth.

In Sierra Leone, 'poro society' is the men's own society where young adults are educated into adulthood. On the other hand, the Sande /Bondo society has women's society that initiates girls in womanhood and make them eligible for marriage. Without the entry through this society, a woman is considered as an outcast in the community. Women are taught by the society's elders to be submissive always to their husbands. They are taught to be loyal and very obedient to sex at all times the husband needs it.⁶⁷ For example, among the Mende community, it is no secret that, in paying the bride price, the husband or his delegation to the bride's house says these words to the bride parents, "we ask the hand of this woman in marriage for sex".⁶⁸ Among the Mende, sexual intercourse is paramount that the bride should be ready at all times.

While female initiates are trained to become dutiful wives and mothers, male initiates are trained to become leaders and patriarchs. It is true that Mende cultural institutions, like the 'Poro' and 'Bondo' societies, enforce these accepted norms of gender roles

⁶⁶Fanthorpe, *Sierra Leone: The influence of the Secret societies with special reference to Female Genital mutilations*, 2007. www.refworld.org/pdfid/46cee3152.pdf pp.1,16 (accessed 30th December,2014)

⁶⁷Little, K., *The Mende of Sierra Leone: A West African People in Transition*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1951. pp. 117-26

⁶⁸ Ibid

which today's feminist activists like Reuther (2001), Okure T. (1993), Oduyoye M.A. (2004), C. Neuger (1996), Kanyoro M. (2001) and other scholars for women liberation are advocating for their deconstruction.

The Sande society practises the female genital mutilation (FGM), which is central to the rites of passage into adulthood. FGM means, the circumcision of women. The circumcision implies the removal of the prepuce of the clitoris. This can have health implications, such as complication in birth delivery, transmitting of STI and HIV/AIDS and untold psychological problems.⁶⁹

As a result of these practises (FGM), there are many deaths with regard to child mortality as well as the death of women in general in Sierra Leone. The church remain silent on these horrible practices as the culture of the people. Some clergy members as well as lay members are members of these societies and are regarded as elders. How will some clergy members and laity say anything yet they are big elders in these societies?

In the post war era, Sierra Leone has seen an influx of foreign aid; and NGOS seeking to help rebuild the country. This international intervention has given new impetus to national anti-FGM campaigners⁷⁰ so as to stop these practices which are a gross sexual violence against women and girls. This has been a world-wide concern over the

⁶⁹Koso-Thomas O., *The Circumcision of women. A strategy for eradication*. London, Zed Books, 1987. pp.25-28

⁷⁰Fanthorpe R., *Sierra Leone: The influence of the Secret societies with special reference to Female Genital mutilations*, 2007. www.refworld.org/pdfid/46cee3152 pdf (accessed 30 January 2015)

negative impact of female circumcision. It results in health problems, such as scarring, prolonged and obstructed labor, fistulae, HIV/AIDS and other sexual transmitted diseases have been cited as justifiable reasons for eradicating the practice.⁷¹ There is now a fight against these cultural institutions by the Mende people.

The advantage of the female traditional society of the Mende women is that, over a period of time to the present, this society has the potential for positive changes in the lives of women. The Mende people view this practice as a way to control sexual desires of young girls and not to involve them into prostitution.⁷² Despite all these challenges, many Sierra Leoneans still consider Sande/Bondo initiation as a social and cultural necessity for women and girls. The practice still continues among the women, including the educated elite.⁷³ In the Sierra Leonean context, female-hood cannot be considered without the performance of the ritual of circumcision. Advocating for the eradication of the practice can easily be interpreted as to mean the complete disintegration of the society. This is regarded as the culture passed from generation to generation by patriarchs so as to continue to fulfil the rituals of the elderly Mende women.

⁷¹Ontario Consultants on Religious Tolerance, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM): Debates about FGM in Africa, the Middle East & Far East, http://www.religioustolerance.org/fem_cirm.htm, [accessed August 2015]

⁷²MacCormack C.P. (ed.) B. Jules-Rosette, *Sandé, the public face of a secret society*, Norwood, Ablex Publishing Corporation, 1979. p.32

⁷³Fanthorpe R., Sierra Leone: *The influence of the Secret societies with special reference to Female Genital mutilations*, 2007. www.refworld.org/pdfid/46cee3152 pdf (accessed 30 January 2015) p19

2.5 Customary Laws on Sexual Violence

According to the Sierra Leone Daily News Paper, Sierra Leone is a highly patriarchal society, and institutionalised gender inequalities are exacerbated by discriminatory customs, particularly with relation to marriage, property rights and sexual offences.⁷⁴

The high levels of illiteracy and poverty amongst Sierra Leonean women prevent them from upholding many of the internationally recognised rights. Similarly, economic insecurity contributes to women's vulnerability to sexual and gender based violence.⁷⁵

Among the Mende people, it is a general phenomenon that the customary law, as practised in almost all the communities, clearly discriminates against the interests of women in areas such as, marriage, inheritance, property rights, and political participation. These laws and practices are a challenge for the enjoyment of women's rights, their advancement in the family and the contribution to the political, economic and social development in Sierra Leone, and Africa as a whole.⁷⁶ For example, during the post war era, many women in their various local communities became heads of households because they lost their husbands during the war. But such titles no longer hold as a result of some family members seizing these lands. Simply because women, according to traditions, may not hold title to lands.

⁷⁴Daily News Paper, Sierra Leone, 2003. p 2

⁷⁵Ibid p.2

⁷⁶ TRC Report: *Witness to Truth: Report of the Sierra Leone Truth & Reconciliation Commission* Vol. Three B, 2004. p.111

2.6 Issues Affecting Young People in Sierra Leone

Despite the fundamental principles of state policy in the 1991 Constitution, ensuring the care and welfare of children, the conflict in Sierra Leone forced children into assuming dual identities of both victim and perpetrator. For example, in their roles as perpetrators, children became direct participants in the conflict and were involved in all aspects of modern warfare, ranging from serving as spies, messengers, holders of guns, soldiers on the front lines and commandos in the jungles of the countryside. It has become difficult to absolve these children so that they could fit back into communities with this habitual life of violence in them.

Children no longer listen and take instructions from their parents as before. They no longer have respect for elders since they marched side by side with them during the war. For example, before the war, most children who grew up in rural areas with elders, were not free to look into the eyes of an elder, especially when discussing matters important for their growth. But today, it is the opposite because some of them have had sexual intercourse with their elders, mutilated and killed people.⁷⁷ They no longer value human lives.

Some of the issues affecting young people in Sierra Leone are the following,

⁷⁷ TRC Report, pp.111-113

2.6.1 Child labour and the vulnerable women

According to the Magazine called ‘Pikin News’ meaning ‘Child News’, it is stated that child labor in post war conflict Sierra Leone is a great concern and challenge in healing wounds of families, communities or societies. In the mining areas, like Moyamba District, children are active participants in mining activities and are considered to be bread winners for their families. The money they make out of mining is what they use to support themselves and their families. As a result they are dropping out of schools.

Some children are now exploited even by their parents or guardians. They sell items in the streets, for them, and do not go to school because their parents are poor or their loved ones were disabled, during the war.

The majority of the disabled women in Sierra Leone are providing for themselves and even their families and by so doing they use their children as guide and care takers to lead them on streets begging and not going to school.⁷⁸ Those children now take pleasure in streets instead of going to school.

2.6.2 Child Marriage and Education in Sierra Leone

The early marriage has been a challenge that was permitted by customary law systems in Sierra Leone. During the post conflict era this has worsened the situation that the

⁷⁸ Magazine: Pikin News, What are the Issues Affecting Young People in Sierra Leone, Vol.2, 17th ed., June 2014. pp 2-6

children are more vulnerable to early marriage; depriving them from going to school and from protecting their future development. On the other hand, according to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) report, most of these children, during the war, lost their virginity, were impregnated, married and had children.⁷⁹ These children cannot now cope as mothers and at the same time go to school. Because of this, they drop out of school, and the only way to survive is to subdue to early marriage relationship or to be forced into prostitution in order to survive. Furthermore, when a child or adolescent is compelled to marry at a young age, and if she refuses to consent to sexual relations or if she is too young to consent, such marriage may result in sexual violence.⁸⁰

The post- war period has left many young girls in the street, vulnerable to abusive and violent lives, especially in the mining zones like Moyamba East District (MED). For example, teenage pregnancies are usually outside of marriage and carry a social stigma in many communities.⁸¹

Among other causes of teenage pregnancies are lack of education on safe sex from parents, teachers, and health professionals. Most of these young girls are persuaded by “big men” or even close blood relatives with money and gifts to entice them into

⁷⁹ Ibid. Vol.3 p.268

⁸⁰ Ibid p.254

⁸¹ Straight Talk, keeping Adolescents safe, vol 1, Issued Number 2 (**July 2013**)

sexual activities.⁸² A majority of teenage girls are raped and then threatened and at times persuaded with gifts not to tell anyone. It is only when she becomes pregnant that she reveals the abuse.

2.6.3 Child Sexual Exploitation

According to Keiza Bawoh, an article writer for “Pikin News”, it is argued that society has turned a blind eye to the growth of child prostitution in Sierra Leone.⁸³ Child prostitution has brought about undue poverty, injustice, unavailability of housing and the availability of mining activities like Sierra Rutile and Sieromco bauxite mining in the study area. As a result the children suffer a long term and psychological problem, and from sexually transmitted diseases, resulting in physical disfiguration and complications which limit their hope for development in their various communities.

2.7 The Impact of War and Sexual Violence Crimes

The legacy of the conflict in Sierra Leone, as earlier mentioned, both in terms of widespread sexual violence and the changes in gender roles, brought about by violence and displacement, has influenced the nature and extent of sexual and gender based violence in the post-conflict phase, especially in the Moyamba District. Women have been offered limited assistance to deal with the health, psychosocial and economic consequences of sexual violence experienced during the war; and the continued

⁸² Ibid

⁸³ Pikin News, What are the issues Affecting Young People in Sierra Leone? Volume 2, 17th edition (June, 2014)

discrimination they face in the post-conflict phase.⁸⁴ Furthermore, the failure to put in place mechanisms to prosecute perpetrators of sexual violence has contributed to a culture of impunity around sexual and gender based violence related crimes. As such, the important peace building role of women during the conflict has not translated into greater decision-making power in its aftermath.

Mansah P's topic: "Violence against women experiences from Ghana," argues that, in Ghana there has been an unprecedented rise in the acts of violence against women and children in recent times.⁸⁵ Rape, especially of young girls, defilement of girls and to a lesser extent of boys, abandoning of babies, and cruel punishment of children, are regularly reported in the newspapers. This has triggered various reactions from civil society. Mansah' arguments highlighted examples of various crimes or violence that have taken place in Sierra Leone as well. For example, some men beating/battering their wives to death, a woman abandoned a child in latrine, rape of women and children, assault and murder, ritual female genital mutilation (FGM), sexual harassment, etc., across the country to name but a few. Among all abuses the level of crime against the women and children clearly shows the prevalence of sexual violence

⁸⁴Barnes K.& Albrecht P. www.international-arlex.org/addressing-genderbasedviolence Sierra Leone (accessed 13th December, 2014)

⁸⁵Mansah Prah, *Violence against Women Experiences from Ghana*, Department of Sociology, University of Cape Coast, Ghana, 2000. pp.3-6. (presentation)

where victims of certain types of violence are typically women and where people are at risk due to the fact that they belong to the female sex.⁸⁶

According to Wilber M.T.'s. *Leiden Journal of International Law*, it is stated that the increased publicity around sexual abuse has galvanized many individuals and groups who feel that something needs to be done. His arguments, in support of the International Human Rights Declaration, demanded that sexual abuse in times of conflict and peace times be recognized as a crime against humanity. The reason, according to Susan Brownmiller, is that, war provides men the perfect psychological climate to vent their ever present contempt for women. Women run the risk of becoming victims of sexual abuse in times of peace as well as in time of armed conflict, simply because they are women and weaker than men. Sexual abuse, in times of peace, falls within the scope of international law.

What makes sexual abuse in time of armed conflict different and brings it under international law is the fact that, a woman's body is used as an extension of the battlefield.⁸⁷ The term sexual abuse includes more than just rape, although rape might be the most common among the assaults upon the women's body and mind. It also includes other debasements of a gender specific, sexual nature such as forced oral sex, mutilation of sexual organs, even forced pregnancies and prostitution. For example,

⁸⁶ Ibid p-2

⁸⁷ Wilbers M.T., *Leiden Journal of International Law*, (Vol.7), 1994. Published by the Leiden Journal of International Law Foundation, (Autumn 1994), p-43

sexual abuse, during the Second World War was not limited to the Japanese army nor to the Asian continent for accounts of sexual abuse by the German army can be found throughout the history of the world in Europe.⁸⁸

It can be found from this theory being applicable to Sierra Leone, that sexual abuse of women has been a clear practical feature of every armed conflict and a very big threat in the post war violence, which should be handled with serious attention when dealing with punitive measures by the law on the perpetrators. For example, the Korean ex-comfort women broke their silence after fifty years, and the rape in former Yugoslavia is widely investigated, reported and condemned.⁸⁹ In Sierra Leone, many women, as well as young girls, were raped or abducted as sex slaves for example, and with such trauma in mind, they continued to experience or see the same practices by ex-combatants and men in the society. Justice must take its cause.

2.8 Rape and Effects on Women

Rape has tremendous consequences on victims and it may sometimes alter their lives forever. Some become suicidal, and at times succeeding in taking their lives. This has been the case of the victims of rape in Sierra Leone. Some who were raped have children as a result. Some women who survived the war have been abandoned by their husbands because they had been raped. Victims of rape have lost respect and are

⁸⁸ Ibid p- 44

⁸⁹ Ibid p-46

called by names. A lot of mothers, girls or children that were raped contracted HIV/IDS and other sexual transmitted diseases. The end of hostilities in the country has not seen the end to sexual related violations and other abuses.⁹⁰

According to Wilders, rape is now increasingly being used as a tactic of terror in conflict and post war conflicts times. For example:

“Late 1990s Serbian military and parliamentary units systematically raped ethnic Albanian Muslim women during the unrest in Kosovo.

1991-1994: Serbia Parliamentary troops used rape systematically as a tactic to encourage Muslim women to flee their land.

1994: In Rwanda, Hutu leaders allowed their troops to rape Tutsi women as an integral part of their genocide.

1997: Secular women were targeted by Muslim revolutionaries in Algeria and were reduced to slaves.

1998: Indonesia security forces allegedly raped ethnic Chinese women during a spate of major rioting.

The above show how, in all countries like Sierra Leone, and across the globe, women have suffered immensely in the hands of men, their rights having been violated and

⁹⁰Sesay B.A., *The need to expedite the Sexual Offences Bill into Law. Centre for Accountability and the rule (CARL-SL)*, 2007. p.10

they have been hurt. Article 27 of the Fourth Geneva Convention states that, women shall be especially protected against any attack on their honor, against rape, enforced prostitution, or any form in decent assaults.

According to Estele , in her publication ‘My Heart is Cut’, it is revealed that Cote d’Ivoire carried out horrific sexual abuse against women and girls in areas under their control, including rape, gang rape, sexual assault, forced miscarriages, and forced incest. Women and girls were subjected to sexual violence in their homes, as they sought refuge, others being found hiding in forests, after being stopped at military checkpoints, as they worked on their farms, and places of worship.⁹¹ Sexual violence was often accompanied by other acts of physical violence, such as beating, torture, killing, mutilation, or cannibalism. Numerous women and girls were abducted and subjected to sexual slavery in rebel camps, where they endured rapes over extended periods of time. Resistance was frequently met with punishment, even death.

Esteles’ publication is very relevant to the situation in Sierra Leone in the Moyamba East District (MED). The information available suggests that, most egregious acts of sexual violence were committed during the period of active hostilities as this was a densely populated area due to mining of Rutile and Bauxite. The same acts of violence, and sexual and gender based violence continued to be a challenge, not only by the ex-combatants but some men in the community in the post war era.

⁹¹Estele, *My Heart is Cut “Sexual Violence By Rebels and Pro-Government Forces*, Cote D’Ivoire, vol.19, 2007. Human right Watch ,original publication p 27

2.9 Marital Union and Sexual Violence

Among the Mendes in Sierra Leone, early marriage is another serious problem which girls face, as opposed to boys. In many societies women and girls have no choice as to who they marry. Forced marriages are wide-spread, despite the provisions of international human rights laws that give every woman the right to consensual marriage.

The practise of giving girls away in marriage at an early age, after which they must start producing children, is prevalent among certain ethnic groups in Asia and Africa. In Afghanistan, for example, the practice of forcing girls and young women to marry is widespread.⁹² Although forceful and underage marriages are crimes under Afghan law, neither society at large nor the judicial system treat them as a criminal offense. The principal reasons for this practice are the girls' virginity and the bride price. Young girls are less likely to have had sexual contact and thus are believed to be virgin upon marriage. This condition raises the family status as well as the dowry to be paid by the husband.⁹³

Among the Mende tribe, for example, early marriage robs a girl of her childhood, necessary to develop physically, emotionally and psychologically.⁹⁴ In fact, early marriage inflicts great emotional stress as the young woman is removed from her

⁹² Wilbers M.T., *Leiden Journal of International Law*, vol. 7, 1994. pp. 46-50

⁹³ Ibid pp. 46-50

⁹⁴ Daramy O., *Pikin News Magazine* vol.1, 2nd ed., 2014. p.9

parent's home to that of her husband and in-laws. Her husband, who will be invariably many years her senior, will have little in common with young teenager. It is with this strange man that she has to develop an intimate emotional and physical relationship. She is obliged to have intercourse, although physically she might not be fully developed.

In some countries girls as young as a few months old are promised to male suitors for marriage; for example, in Ghana, child marriage is an old customary practice in which girls are betrothed to men of their parents' choice during their infancy. Upon reaching puberty, they are sent to men and are forced to have sex at an early age. They get pregnant early in their teens, and are vulnerable to complications at childbirth.⁹⁵

2.10 Sexual and Gender Discrimination

Grey Sandra's theory of gender discrimination argues that, 'I don't think that will have really made a difference until we have enough women going into politics to form a critical mass'.⁹⁶ For example, five of our members in U.M. Church are parliamentarians, one minister and few councilors, making up the government of the Republic of Sierra Leone. Is it not a starting point for the role of the Church, a formidable force to address the sexual violence crimes, the voice of the church? Based on Sandra's argument, it can be hoped that, these men /women will make adverse

⁹⁵Kuenyehia A., *Women and law in West Africa: Human Rights Centre*, Faculty of Law, University of Ghana, 1998.

⁹⁶Grey S., *Women Politics, and Change*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1993. p.19

effect as members of the same household of faith, in the name of the church, to address violence. They can be the voice of the people and to see that the government enforce strict laws for equal rights and justice.

Dr. Kadie Sesay, former minister of Trade and Industry, political activist and running presidential candidate in 2012 in Sierra Leone, in her paper presentation, agreeing, with Sandra's theory in Politics, said that as a predominant or productive potential in Sierra Leone, women must not be left out in the mainstream of the political, social and economic transformation for the country, being mothers as they caregivers and leaders. Democratization should, therefore, promote inclusion rather than exclusion and adopt participatory approaches to decision-making at the local, national and international levels. The democratization process calls for the active participation of women at all levels of the political process for the following reasons:

1. Women are bound to change the nature of power and its management through the inclusion of their ideals of peace and justice.
2. Women have the right to be socially recognized and their political status elevated by virtue of their social and economic contributions and in view of the fact that they represent the majority of adults in Sierra Leone, they are, therefore, pillars for the building of democratic culture and practices in the country.

Other scholars, like Ruth and Besha argued from this angle about the integrity of womanhood that, the hindrances to real progress are both economic and social from

the beginning; the economic problems of the woman have been emphasized. The dependence of women on their husbands and fathers was seen as the basis of their lowly position in society, so that if only women could be helped to be economically independent most, if not all, of their problems would be over.⁹⁷ Violence against women affects individuals, families and communities around the world every day. Quite often, religion is used as an excuse for this violence and yet the central messages of Christianity instruct believers to respect the sanctity of peaceful and loving relationships.

Yoder, J. D. '**Women Gender Making Difference**'; argues on the theory of male dominance. He said that, one of the biggest differences in children's socialization has to do with the segregation of girls and boys.⁹⁸ The society according to Yoder normally class the boys as superior over the girls in their traditional and cultural settings. For example, in the Mende community special areas like where men should take their bath is no go area for the women, or the girls should not play with toys like a ball because it is specially made for boys who are stronger than the girls. Yoder further argues that hierarchic dominance stress the importance of physical size, and musculature and social and cognitive competencies such as leadership skills that facilitate group performance. The emotional needs of this arrangement demand aggression and fearlessness. In the same vein, other scholars like David Geary and his

⁹⁷ Ibid p.57

⁹⁸ Yoder J.D., 3rd ed. *Women Gender Making a Difference*, New York, SLOAN Publishing Cornwall Hudson, 2007. pp.61-63

colleagues argued that these childhood lessons set the stage for adult behaviors that contribute to survival and reproductive success.

The researcher found the above theory applicable to the African culture, especially for what African writers like Musa Dube, (2003), Ezra Chitando (2007), John Mbiti (1990) and others teach about gender roles. For example, men's duty is found outside the home and the women always in the kitchen. Most of the violence emanated from the early beginning of a child. From this background, women in Sierra Leone, for example, face many forms of discrimination. Pervasive beliefs that women are incompetent, intimidation by male secret societies and inability to meet financial demands, have led to the exclusion of women from decision-making at all levels.

The book '**Medieval Women**' by E. Power, which argues on the theory of the position of women often considers as a test by which the civilization of a country or age may be judged. His theory emphasizes that, women should not be subject to man's dominant rule or dictatorial marriage.⁹⁹ Women have basic rights to everything as men; physically, socially, economically and spiritually.

The women continue to struggle in their daily lives, whether at homes or the environs they find themselves. It could be found that, Power's argument is necessary and applicable because women's leadership role in some churches is under question. For example, there are controversies about women ordination into the sacred ministry in

⁹⁹ Power E., *Medieval Woman, London*, Cambridge Press, 1997. p.35

most Anglican Churches. For UMC in Sierra Leone, for example, this is now history as compared to other countries still debating on this issue. Notwithstanding the UMC, there is still need to hold and recognize women in good leadership positions, which was one of the developmental plans of action for gender during the South African Development Co-ordination Conference held in Zambia, 1990 that declared, ‘the achievement of equality between men and women through the participation in political and decision-making structures and positions’.¹⁰⁰ In the church there must be equal level of participation of all fronts. The church as an organization should act as a role model.

The book entitled; **End of Masculinity** by J. MacInnes, argues that, in society violence against women deprives women of full participation in all aspects of development. His theory is intended as a contribution to the feminist struggle against inequality between men and women, and for proper recognition for the right of children.¹⁰¹ For example, seven years ago the parliament of Sierra Leone passed a law that, as long as a man and woman in love lived together for five years in courtship, whether legally married or not, the woman has right over you as her husband, and properties as well, even right over the children, if any.¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰Warioba C and Luhanga A., *Gender Based Violence in Africa, Perspective of the Continent*, Study of the Secretary General of the United Nations: Ending violence against Women; 2007. p35

¹⁰¹MacInnes, A J., *Women -The End Of Masculinity*, Philadelphia, Open University Press, 1998. p.1

¹⁰²*Compendium of the gender Acts: the registration of Customary Marriage and Divorce Act 2007, (Act no.24 of 2007). Additional recent legislation affecting women and families, 2007. Pp.34-36*

This is relevant to this topic because the church should copy this practical aspect of these theories of inclusion and gender consciousness. The church should be an organization to address challenges and evil practices, social and economic well-being of her members as the book of UMC Discipline clearly states. God created Adam and Eve in His image, both equal before Him and that they should live side by side. For example, there are nine districts in the SLAC and only three of these districts are headed by women as District Superintendents.

2.11 Sexual Violence and the Changing World

According to Professor Julia Wood, the theory on change in modern times on issues of violence is a matter of concern. The awareness of gender inequalities must be coupled with the belief that, change is possible. For example, Professor Wood, in her book, **‘Gender Lives’** does mention that, women weren't allowed to vote, they had no voice in the government and laws that affected them. They had no access to University education, could not own property if not married and were barred from participation in many professions. Through individual action and social movements, many of these blatant set inequalities have been changed. She argues that, change comes about through communication, which is the heart of social life and social evolution.¹⁰³

¹⁰³Wood J. *Gendered Lives*, USA, Ward Worth Publishing House, 1998. p10

For far too long women have been silenced in church but in this modern time steps have been taken and the church should endure in the spirit of love not to keep silent to communicate with hope gender equality. For example, women today still remain to be dominated by men as Chitando argued that the spread of HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan African context might be as the result of African context of masculinities. Chitando says, “One does not act in the ways that endanger one’s relatives. Rather one is always seeking to enhance their equality of life. Men that are in solidarity with women should therefore engage in safer sexual practices. For him, he recognized the masculinities in Africa because we live in patriarchal society. But should take advantage to use the umbrella of masculinities to save, respect and value lives.

This book is very much relevant to this study as it supports services available for women and girls who are victims or abused, like right to education, in providing training and capacity building on gender equality and women’s right even in politics, for example. It is also relevant to the church to empower women, especially the poor and marginalized in the society. The church, which is an umbrella organization, should recognize that gender equality and all forms of violence against women and girls increase their vulnerability to HIV/AIDS, as Chitando’s pointed out above.

According to the Daily Mail, editor and proprietor; Mondeh A.M. said that, the wind of change is blowing across the female population all over the world from Britain to Canada, from France to India and from New Zealand to South Africa, the call is for

the redressing of all forms of imbalances between male and female populations. The call has become so much loud and long that even in Sierra Leone it can no longer be ignored.¹⁰⁴

2.12 Feminist Struggles over Masculinities

According to Maitra- Sinha, in her book, “**Women in a Changing Society**,” women’s role in society has been constantly changing in India, but more effort needed to see that it is shown in all works of life. For example, women are still confined in the home and in bearing and rearing of children. Women are still relegated to the background and treated as second class citizens. However, the Western Education and the liberal ideas of great leaders and reformers like Mahatma Gandhi and Raja Rammohan Roy may herald a change in the status of women in India.¹⁰⁵

Women have participated in large numbers in a freedom movement in various countries. With the dawn of independence their constitution granted equality to the genders and was a great herald to women in India. Women should work as equal partners with men in spheres of life. They should help build up a progressive and developed society. Women should be given a special role in our planning process, and in the mobilization of local skills and resources. They should be brought into the mainstream of national development not as benefactors but as contributors and

¹⁰⁴Mondeh A.M., *The Sierra Leone Daily Mail Magazine*, 1995. pp 4-5

¹⁰⁵Maitra-Sinha A., *Women in a changing society*, New Delhi, Ashish Publishing House, 1993. p.4

partakers along with men as rightful claimants of social security.¹⁰⁶ He said, though women have been given this privileged scale with men, yet violent crimes against women are on the rise and women are becoming targets of atrocities. They are humiliated, tortured, abused and discriminated against their rights and privileges.

The above argument is relevant because God created Adam and Eve equal, living side by side. But down the ages women have been downtrodden and relegated to an inferior position in the social set-up, even in the church. Women are making all efforts around the world, particularly in the church where they feel at home with their God of justice to see that their rights are respected, their voices heard, their opportunities widened. In the church, a woman deserves esteem, respect and love, not as individuals but as symbols of reverence, creation and values which are spiritual and aesthetic.

The entitled book, “**Women’s Oppression**” by Susheela Kaushik emphasizes the need for equality and justice among men and women for developmental welfare of both sexes. The concept of equality has exercised a powerful emotional appeal in the struggle of women to free themselves from exploitation and oppression. Women should not be treated as categories but rather collection of individual human beings.¹⁰⁷ Women should be given equal opportunities in all spheres of life. There could be a

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, p5

¹⁰⁷ Kaushik S., *Women’s Oppression: Patterns and Perspectives*, New Delhi, Vikas Publishing House, 1985. p.5

need to coordinate both men and women in the development and running of the church, so as to eradicate sexual violence.

2.13 Respect and Human Values

According to Junru Li in his Book, '**Everything you want to know about China**', human rights should be commonly understood as inalienable fundamental rights to which a person is inherently entitled simply because she or he is a human being. Man and women only possess natural attributes but also unique social ones such as the ability to think and be literate, which are advanced social attributes.¹⁰⁸ His point of argument has an impact on the cultural effects on people, as reflected in peoples' understanding of the connotation and value of a human being. The lives of people must be respected and valued. In terms of human rights, all human societies should avoid chaos, anarchy and strife. There should be, wholeness not illness", integration not disintegration, harmony and not discord in ways people live. It appears that, people are divided in the way they interpret and understand humanity. Human life should be valued higher than anything else. Human life should be imbued with dignity, mystery, uniqueness and sanctity.¹⁰⁹ There is need for dialogue rather than confrontation among people. Cultural exchanges and mutual understanding between

¹⁰⁸ Junru L., *Everything you want to Know about the community Party of China*, China, Foreign Press, 2012. p.86

¹⁰⁹ Ibid p 87

countries must be strengthened to make human rights dialogue more effective.¹¹⁰ For example, in the Moyamba East District (MED), after a period of 11 years of civil war, which brought about destruction on the infrastructure and the economy of the country and an increase in violence, people should sit down and iron out their differences so as to institute mechanisms to establish law and order in the country.

2.14 Summary

This chapter reviewed related literature on healing wounds of sexual and gender based violence. In the post war Sierra Leone, with special reference to the United Methodist Moyamba East District Conference, (UMMEDC), there were cases of sexual violence. The chapter discussed the theoretical understanding of sexual violence from the Biblical and theological perspective; understanding violence from the Old and New Testament points of view; various issues of sexual violence in post conflict Sierra Leone to include legal system; stigmatization; spiritual emotions; pastoral and community healing; the UMC Book of Discipline concerning women; the Mende cultural beliefs on sexual violence to include their cultural institutions of secret societies which initiate sexual violence; and the customary laws and issues that pertain to the young people in Sierra Leone; the impacts or effects of war and sexual violence,

¹¹⁰ Ibid p 87

crimes and their effects; sexual violence and the changing world and the fight against Patriarchy and the value of humanity.

The next chapter deals with the research methodology.

Chapter Three

Research Methodology

3.0 Introduction

This chapter lays out the method used in this study. It justifies the techniques used, discusses limitations experienced. It sets out to research tools and methods employed. It lays here the plan and strategies that were used to accomplish the objectives.

3.1 Research Design

A research design is a set of decisions that make up the master plan, specifying the methods and procedures for collecting and analysing needed data in a study.¹¹¹ This study employed both qualitative and quantitative research design techniques to get information. The quantitative approach forms an objective and systematic process in which numerical data is analyzed to obtain information about the study. The research scheme uses figures to quantify data. On the other hand, the qualitative approach is based on the principle that knowledge is obtained through observation with insight through varied channels which include probing through what others do, think, believe prefer or aspire to do.¹¹² The application of both the qualitative and quantitative approaches in a single study was ideal in that the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative research designs complemented each other which resulted in the

¹¹¹ Uma S., *Research Methods for Managers; A skill building Approach*, New York, John Wiley & Sons, 1984. p.17

¹¹² Coolican H., *Research Methods and Statistics in Psychology*. London; Hodder and Stoughton, 1990. p.36

production of a comprehensive report. The researcher studied the context of the situation to collect the original data, considering the fact that the size of the population is too large to be observed directly, which justified the use of the quantitative approach and that the qualitative design gave room for free expression of ideas and opinion justified its application.

In quantitative approach, questionnaires were given on a self-administered basis to be able to allow respondents a free hand so that they can share their views. They were ideal due to the fact that they enable the researcher to collect data fast over a wide area at a low financial expense.

The researcher also used primary source which includes: the questionnaires, interviews or focus group discussions to get accurate information of the study.

The secondary resource includes: books, journals, articles, Newspapers and presentations of papers in workshops or seminars and researcher's personal experience as one of the victims of the post war era. These sources helped a lot to directly and indirectly answer the research questions.

3.2 Target Population of Study

The target population of the study were church members of the UMC in Moyamba East District. In Moyamba East District, the targets were the four circuits which included Taiama, Senahun, Gbangatoke, and Mano. They had the following

population composition among the laity, Taiama, 201; Senahun, 141; Gbangatoke, 150 and Mano Circuits, 121 members. The total number of laity was 613. The number of ordained pastors who worked in the area of study was 23.

3.2.1 Sampling Strategies

The researcher used the convenience and purposive sampling. Convenience sampling was ideal in that it permitted the researcher to select participants on the basis of accessibility and interest, and purposive sampling allowed the researcher to only subjects who were suitable for the study due to prevailing Ebola pandemic disease. UMC, circuits were used in the study as has been stated above.

3.2.2 Sample of Clergy

The clergy sample consisted of **20** identified clergy (10 males and 10 females) in the MEDC. In each of the circuits mentioned above, 5 clergy were considered in the sample, both male and female received 10 questionnaires each.

3.2.3 Sample of the Laity

The researcher sampled the following number of participants among the laity from the selected circuits, Taiama had 24; Senahun, 15; Gbangatoke, 17 and Mano Circuits, 14 members. The sample frame for the survey involving the laity was 50. It constituted 12.26% percent of the projected target population of the laity in the study. The researcher used stratification methods to select participants which include: Women

and Men organizations, Youths and Young Adults, ten elderly women and men in the MEDC.

3.3 Research Instruments

To come up with the necessary data for the study the researcher used various instruments such as qualitative and quantitative approaches, questionnaires, and interviews. Focused groups discussions with cross section of both the District Youths and Young Adults and Women were applied. Organizations, as well as elderly group community elders and one of the perpetrators were used for data collection. In doing so, the researcher was able to gather the comprehensive reports about the study.

3.3.1 Focus group discussions

The first group was the Youths and Young Adults, followed by cross section of Women's District Executives, and then the elderly women and men of the Mende culture.

3.3.2 Key informant interviews

The researcher held interviews with selected number of questionnaire respondents and a few selected samples from the community under study. The objective was two-fold, first to supplement information derived from the completed questionnaires and secondly, to gain the opinion of the selected sample clergy and laity.

3.3.3 Questionnaires

Best and Kahn (2000) define a questionnaire as a document that consists of a list of questions that a researcher uses to capture the opinion of the research subjects during a research. In using questionnaires, the questions were clearly formulated and logically ordered that the intended respondents find it easy to indicate their views on the raised issues.

Questionnaires were developed and used extensively to evaluate the repercussions during the war and the extent of violence during post war era, especially citing sexual violence against women and children. It was also used to assess the severity of various dimensions of violence. The answers were from the respondents' own point of view, not censored and stated in an open mind.

Two sets of the questionnaires were designed for the use of this study. One set was administered to clergy of the selected sample and the other set was administered to lay members of the U.M. Church. The questionnaire for the clergy seeks the following: part A. general information about one's self and part B. was dealing with the ministry of Pastoral Care and Counseling. For the lay members also, part-one on general information and part-two were dealing with before/during /after the war.

3.4 Pilot study

The researcher did a pilot study to test the questionnaire, interview guides and focused group discussion guide. It was important to carry out this exercise before the study because the researcher got the opportunity to identify weaknesses of the instruments and effected some corrections. During the actual study, valid and reliable data was collected. The pilot test for this study was done in the Mokorewah Circuit of the Moyamba West District of the UMC. The Circuit was not involved in the study. The pilot study involved three elderly women members of the U.M. church who represented the laity, two clergy represented the clergy, two elderly women of Mende culture for some focused discussion. One member of the clergy and one member of the laity were selected for in-depth face to face interviews. These individuals involved in the pilot study were not involved in the actual research study.

3.5 Data Collection Procedures

The data collection for this project was done through a combination of the questionnaires and in depth face - to - face interviews and focus group discussions. The researcher first obtained a letter from the Faculty of Theology at Africa University that informed that he was carrying out the research (Appendix1). This document was used to obtain permission from the District Superintendent and a copy to the Bishop, Women's Desk and Director of Theological Education of the SLAC, Freetown, for the

researcher to go into Moyamba East District to do the research between June and July, 2014.

The letter from the District Superintendent was used as introductory letter as the researcher administered the questionnaires to the sample parish members and clergy. The researcher first obtained the respondents' oral consent. All the participants were informed that their participation was to be voluntary and were free to withdraw at any stage of the research, if they so decided. The interviews with women, the Youth and Young Adults, and one of the perpetrators, were conducted using an interview guide (Appendix III).

To interview the women leader who was also secretary of the Moyamba District Council, the researcher first made an appointment, obtained her informed consent, and then held the interview to collect data at the District Women's head quarter. The interview questions were based on their perceptions on the healing of wounds of victims' of sexual violence in the MED. The data collected in the questionnaire survey and interviews was confidentially stored and accessible to the researcher only.

The focus group discussion was done with a cross section of District Women Executives as well as the District Youth and Young Adults Executives at the head Town Office in Taiana, Moyamba East District.

The data obtained was stored in the researcher's personal files where no one else except the researcher could access them.

3.6 Method of analyzing the data

In interpreting or analyzing the data, the researcher used tabulation, frequency percentages and personality. In some instances, qualitative analyses were utilized and critically assessed on the responses with regards the role of the church in addressing sexual violence conducted in the study.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

The researcher investigated the topic on study, “The Ministry on Healing Wounds of Sexual Violence in the Post War Sierra Leone: A case study of the United Methodist Church Moyamba East District of the Sierra Leone Annual Conference, (MED of the SLAC) 2002-2013. The study took place at home as stated above, so the researcher obtained permission from the District Superintendent, with the copies of the letter sent to the Resident Bishop, District Lay Leader and District Women’s Leader who were very helpful in assisting the researcher with the study. The researcher also asked permission to seek the consent of those selected as sample population. The researcher held the project ethical values and norms that the confidentiality and privacy of the participants were maintained and names of the people involved as participants were withheld and noted by numbers or letters. During the study, the participants were at liberty to participate or not to and were encouraged for contributions when deemed necessary. However, participants were at liberty to participate at their own volition without any penalty

Chapter Four

Data presentation, analysis and interpretation

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the data that was collected in the study in response to the research questions that were given for investigation. The chapter has been divided into two sections. Data presentation and analysis constitutes the first segment, while discussion and interpretation make up the second section. Tables were used as the main media in the presentation of the numerical data, while interview reports were shown in prose.

4.1 Presentation of data

4.1.1 Clergy in the UMC in Sierra Leone Annual Conference (SLAC)

Table 1: Capacity served in the U. M. Church.

Capacity of Service in UMC	Frequency	Percentage
Deacon	1	6.25 %
Elder (full time)	9	56.25 %
Service Beyond Local Ch.	4	25 %
Evangelist	2	12.5 %
Total	16	100%

The table above shows the position of service in the Sacred Ministry. Among the respondents, there were no students but one respondent representing 6.25 %, was a deacon. 9 respondents, representing 56.25 %, were Elders in the ministry, and 4 respondents, representing 25 %, were ordained Pastors but were not serving the church full time. That is they were engaged in other jobs outside the church. They were part-time serving pastors. The elders were in greater numbers which means that there are quiet numbers of pastors serving the church as full-time ministers.

Table 2: Status of the respondent in the ministry

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Full time	12	75 %
Associate Pastor	4	25 %
Total	16	100 %

The table indicates that 12 respondents, representing 75.00 %, were serving the church as full time ministers, while, on the other hand, 4 respondents, representing 25 %, were serving as part-time pastors in the ministry. The fulltime respondents formed the majority in the sacred ministry, which include the deacon, evangelists and ordained elders in full connection.

Table 3: Existence of counseling programmes in your church

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	11	68.75 %
No	5	31.25 %
Total	16	100 %

The table above shows existence of counseling programmes on which, 11 respondents, representing 68.74 %, agreed that they had counseling programmes in their local churches. On the other hand, 5 respondents, which was 31.25 %, said that they did not have counseling programmes in their local churches. In this view, those who agreed were in majority (68.75 %) in confirming that there were counseling programmes in their local churches.

Table 4: Classes in pastoral care and counseling during theological training

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
One to Ten classes	1	6.25 %
Eleven & above classes	5	31.25 %
Non Specific (could not count)	5	31.25
Not attended any counseling classes	3	18.75 %
Non applicable	2	12.5 %
Total	16	100 %

The above table indicates the counseling classes the clergy respondents attended during their theological studies. 1 respondent, representing 6.25 %, mentioned that, he/she had 10 classes during the school. 5 respondents, with an average of 31.25 %, attended pastoral care and counseling classes eleven and more times; 5 respondents, representing 31.25 %, were not specific on how many classes they had attended during their days in schools. 3 respondents, with an average of 18.75 %, did not attend any pastoral care and counseling class in their school and 2 respondents, representing 12.5 %, did not answer the question. Now the 2 categories that made up the majority admitted that they had pastoral care and counseling classes; one was specific and the other was not specific. This means that they were not sure of themselves

Table 5: Counseling Schedules – weekly and monthly

Table 5A

Variable Per Week	Frequency	Percentage
1	7	43.75 %
6-10	1	6.25 %
Not Specific	5	31.25 %
No Applicable	3	18.75 %
Total	16	100 %

Table 5B.

Variable Per Month	Frequency	Percentage
1-10	4	25 %
1	2	12.5 %
Not Specific	5	31.25 %
Non Applicable	5	31.25 %
Total	16	100 %

The tables above show two categories of scheduled counseling: **A** weekly and **B** monthly, respectively.

Table A, shows 7 respondents, representing 43.75 %, who said that, they counseled one client per week. One respondent, representing 6.25 %, said he/she conducted counseling services with 6- 10 clients per week; and those who were not specific in

giving the number of clients were 5 respondents, representing 31.25 %. 3 respondents, representing 18.75 %, did not conduct counseling at all, and, as a matter of fact, could not talk about clients.

The same (**table B**), could be said about conducting counseling per month. 4 respondents, representing 25 %, had counseling sessions for about 1-10 members per month. On the other hand, 4 respondents also scheduled counseling services for 1 member and above per month. 5 respondents, representing 31.25 %, did not specify to the researcher how many members they scheduled for counseling per month. The other 5 respondents, representing 31.25 %, did not say anything about counseling schedule or programmes.

Table 6: Report of incidents of violence

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	13	81.25 %
No	2	12.5 %
Non applicable	1	6.25 %
Total	16	100 %

The table above shows 13 respondents, representing 81.25 %, agreeing to the fact that members of their various parishes reported violence cases to them. 2 respondents, representing 12.5 %, disagreed on any member reporting violence to them; while one

respondent, representing 6.25 %, did not answer the question. The 13 respondents according to the 81.25 % are the majority which confirmed that there were violence cases reported, and that the pastors were knowledgeable of the violence their parish members were going through.

Table 7: Type of violence reported

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Psychological	5	31.25 %
Physical	5	31.25 %
Economical	2	12.5 %
Non applicable	4	25 %
Total	16	100 %

The above table indicates the type of violence the members reported to their pastors that is more qualitative in structure, as the researcher fully discussed it in the next chapter. 5 respondents, representing 31.25 % received reports of psychological violence. 5 respondents, also representing 31.25 %, received reports of physical violence. 2 respondents, representing 12.5 %, received economic reports of violence. This table interprets that psychological and physical violence were rampant because they formed the majority in the table.

Table 8: Description of the violence

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Husband accused of battering, starving, dominating wives	5	31.25 %
Raped, sexual harassments	5	31.25 %
Bullying & Armed Robbery	3	18.75 %
Secret societies initiation	3	18.75 %
Total	16	100 %

The table above indicates types of violence reported to the pastors by their members. 5 respondents, representing 31.25 %, reported of domestic violence. For example a husband battering his wife simply because he is the man. Also 5 respondents, representing, 31.25 %, raped and had other related sexual violence against the women. 3 respondents, representing 18.75 %, reported of armed robbery/bullying and shared their grief of having no job. Another 3 respondents, representing 18.75 %, reported of violating their human rights by forcefully joining them into the secret societies against their will. The first two percentages of 31.25 %, which included battering of women by their partners and sexual assaults are in majority.

Table 9: Pastors' actions to violence

Variables	Frequency	Percentages
Pastors visited and offered Prayers	6	37.5 %
Pastors visited, prayed and counseled	5	31.25 %
The Pastor showed concern & took victims to hospital	3	18.75 %
Non Applicable	2	12.5 %
Total	16	100 %

The above table shows 6 respondents, representing 37.5 %, affirming that pastors visited and offered prayers. 5 respondents, with an average of 31.25 %, also mentioned that pastors responded by visiting and offering counseling. 3 other respondents, representing 18.75 %, said pastors showed concern and even helped the victims to the hospital, while 2 respondents, representing 12.5 %, remained silent on response of the pastor. However, the table is saying that the pastors showed concern and care and even counseled at the initial stage, but cannot tell us if it was a long-term counseling or not.

Table 10: Satisfaction of clients of care and counseling

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	13	81.25 %
No	2	12.5 %
Non applicable	1	6.25 %
Total	16	100 %

From the above table, 13 respondents, representing 81.25 %, were satisfied with pastor's intervention. 2 respondents, representing 12.5 %, were not satisfied with the pastor's response or intervention and one respondent, representing 6.25 %, remained silent over the question. The data presentation above shows that the majority of 13 respondents, with 81.25 %, are indicating that they were satisfied with the pastor's response or intervention.

Table 11: Existence of premarital counseling in local church

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	12	75 %
No	4	25 %
Total	16	100 %

The table above shows that; 12 respondents, representing 75 %, agreed that they do have premarital counseling in their various local churches. They represent the majority of respondents. 4 respondents, representing 25 %, disagreed with having premarital counseling in their various local churches.

Table 12: Reports on violence in marriage among couples

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	10	62.5 %
No	6	37.5 %
Total	16	100 %

The above table shows 10 respondents, representing 62.5 %, agreed that couple reported violence in their marriage and 6 respondents, representing 37.5 %, did not have any couple that reported violence in their marriage to them.

4.1.2 The laity in the UMC in SLAC

Table 13: Marital Status of respondent

Marital Status?	Frequency	Percentage
Single	8	33.33 %
Married	14	58.34 %
Separated (living in distance from one another because of Job , and can't move the family)	2	8.33 %
Total	24	100 %

The table indicates distribution of marital status of the respondents. There are 14 respondents, representing 58.33 %, legally married of the total sample. The other category of 8 respondents, representing 33.33 %, are not married. The 2 respondents, representing 8.33 %, are separated from each other because of the nature of the job. They cannot move the whole family together, and also their spouses maybe employed and cannot leave their jobs in order to live under one roof.

Table 14: Awareness on occurrence of sexual and gender based violence

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	24	100 %
Total	24	100 %

This table indicates all the 24 respondents, representing 100 % were knowledgeable of violence. **Table 15: Respondents' experience of violence**

Variable	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	22	91.7 %
No	2	8.3 %
Total	24	100 %

From the table above, 22 respondents, representing 91.66 %, which formed the majority agreed that they had experienced or gone through violence. 2 respondents, representing 8.33 %, disagreed that they had gone through violence according to the table.

Table 16: If yes, what form of violence?

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Rape/Sexual Harassments	11	45.84 %
Batter, abusive languages etc	9	37.5 %
Wives violated their Husbands	2	8.33 %
Armed Robbery	2	8.33 %
Total	24	100 %

The table above shows the type of violence experienced by the respondents. 11 respondents, representing 45.84 %, were sexually harassed and raped. 9 respondents, representing 37.5 %, were battered and abused by profane words. 2 respondents, representing 8.33 %, abused their husbands for lack of jobs. 2 respondents, representing 8.33 %, were robbed by armed robbers. The percentage of 45.84 % representation formed the majority, according to the table

TABLE 17: Membership of the Mende cultural (Sande/Poro) secret societies

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	17	70.83 %
No	7	29.17 %
Total	24	100 %

The table above indicates whether the respondents were members of the secret societies practised in the study area. 17 respondents, representing 70.83 %, admitted that they were initiates of the secret societies and 7 respondents, representing 29.17 %, were not. The majority 70.83 %, confirmed membership.

Table 18: Experiences in terms of violence against you during the war

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Rape/sexual assault	8	33.34 %
Abduction	5	20.84 %
Killed loved ones	4	16.66 %
Driven from homes	3	12.5 %
Amputated loved ones	2	8.33 %
Burnt down homes	2	8.33 %
Total	24	100 %

The table indicates respondents' experiences during the war. 8 respondents, representing 33.34 %, were raped and sexually assaulted. 5 respondents, representing 20.84 %, were abducted, while 4 respondents, representing 16.66 %, mentioned that their loved ones were killed. 3 respondents, representing 12.5 %, were driven out of their homes. 2 respondents, representing 8.33 %, were mutilated; while 2 respondents,

representing 8.33 %, had homes burnt down during the war. 33.34 % are the majority led.

Table 19: Awareness of someone in the family or community who has suffered violence

Variable	No. of respondents	
Yes	22	91.68 %
No	1	4.16 %
Non Applicable	1	4.16 %
Total	24	100 %

The table above reveals that 22 respondents, representing 91.66 %, were aware of someone in their family or community who suffered violence. One respondent, representing 4.16 % was not aware of someone who suffered from violence and at the same time 1 respondent, representing 4.16 % remained quiet, who never said anything. The 91.66 % is leading in the table.

Table 20: Respondent's view of the victim's experience

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Battering	5	20.84 %
Starvation at home	2	8.34 %
Rape & sexual harassment cases by husbands and non-husbands	3	12.5 %
Sexual harassments by teachers /lecturers	3	12.5 %
Child deprivation from School	3	12.5 %
Child exploitation into hard labor	3	12.5 %
Secret societies initiations	2	8.33 %
Traditions & cultural Practices eg. cleansing, polygamy, land grabbing from women	2	8.33 %
Hard labour in farming	1	4.16 %
Total	24	100 %

The table above shows people who have suffered violence according to the respondents. 5 respondents, representing 20.84 %, suffered battering. 2 respondents, representing 8.33 %, said they were starved at home by their husbands. 3 respondents, representing 12.5 %, said they were raped; and 3 respondents, representing 12.5 %, said they were harassed sexually. 3 respondents, representing 12.5 %, mentioned of

children deprived from going school. 3 respondents, representing 12.5 %, mentioned of children that were subjected to hard labor. 2 respondents, representing 8.33 %, reported of forcefully going through traditional and cultural practices. And 1 respondent, representing 4.16 %, mentioned hard labour in the table.

Table 21: Sierra Leone Government/church are addressing the issues with all the seriousness it deserves

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	14	58.34 %
No	10	41.66 %
Total	24	100 %

The table above indicates 14 respondents, representing 58.33 %, agreed in support of the government on handling these prevalent sexual and gender based violence cases. Yet 10 respondents, representing 41.66 %, disagreed saying that the government was doing very little. Though the majority were in support of the government yet violent crimes were very high and this means that, government, as well as the church, should put more effort behind the wheel.

Table 22: If (yes) can you explain?

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Enforce community Laws & Judiciary against prides and in the name of “family settlements”	8	33.34 %
Charge Perpetrators to Court & to be jailed	5	20.83 %
Sensitize community programmes	11	45.83 %
Total	24	100 %

The above table indicates government progress in addressing the sexual violence. 8 respondents, representing 33.34 %, are saying that the government should enforce community laws to protect the people from violence. 5 respondents, representing 20.83 %, are saying that much is not done to charge the perpetrators at court with severe jail punishments, while 11 respondents, representing 45.83 %, who are in majority, are saying or advocating for educational programmes to sensitize people.

Table 23: Respondent's personal view on church's treatment of perpetrators of sexual violence

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Preach violence in Pulpits	5	20.83 %
Educational Programmes	3	12.5 %
Pastoral Care & Counseling	5	20.83 %
Join other Partners combat violence	11	45.84 %
Total	24	100 %

The table above shows how the church can treat the perpetrator of sexual violence. 5 respondents, representing 20.83 %, said that the pastors should preach against sexual violence from the pulpit, while other 3 respondents, representing 12.5 %, are saying that the church should engage in sensitizing the community through educational programmes about sexual violence. 5 respondents, representing 20.83 %, advocates for pastoral care and counseling in their churches. While 11 respondents, representing 45.84 %, are saying that they should join with government and other agencies to combat sexual violence. The 45.84 %, formed the majority.

4.2 Discussion on findings

The views are unanimous from both the clergy and laity on the fact that, sexual violence, is real in the Moyamba East District, and that, almost every member is aware of its scourging effects. The Moyamba East community, as a case study, just emerged from war, and are making life out of the little resources available. As a result, pastors, as well as the laity, want measures to be taken to address the prevailing violence in their respective communities.

From the findings, over 80-90 % (table -19) of the respondents were knowledgeable about violence as was indicated in the table. Each individual victim of sexual violence has own personal and private experiences. However, from what the researcher gathered from their reports, it is clear that all forms of sexual violence involve a wrestling of power from the victim, and this causes emotional pain to complete numbness. That is, violence against women leads to adverse effects, either the victim feels depressed, restless or deflated, confused or stridently angry.

It was also revealed in a group discussion that, raping of young girls is a big challenge to the Moyamba East community and that the government has done very little about it. Some of these incidences of violence happened among the family members, and they suppressed these cases to avoid scandal and shame for the respect and dignity of the family. On the other hand, poverty was the stumbling block to pursue the matter to court for the conviction of the perpetrators. The judiciary, also seem to be weakened,

as 33.34 % of the respondents in table 22, confirmed this fact, due to the brides and corruption.

This same altitude, according to the findings from the Youths & Young Adults' interrogation, cited examples of two policemen who were custodians of the law and peace, as well as some primary school teachers, including lecturers in the higher learning institutions who were caught in sexual violence against children, (table 20). Psychological violence which included rape, incest, killings, mutilations, etc., domestic violence which included battering, insults, starvation, deprivation, and economic violence, which included robbing and unemployment were very common occurrences in the study area. It is also revealed that children no longer have family values because of their involvement in the rebel war. They did not listen to their parents or guardians because their eyes were opened to wild life. The ex-combatants, especially the children, who are disarmed, demobilized and reintegrated into their communities, remained to be hostile and caused violence among the people. The church, as well as other professional caregivers, are challenged with the responsibilities to heal the wounds and bring wholeness into the lives of these people,

With over 50% of table 4, of religious ministers being trained pastors, one would have expected the members to experience effective shepherding and those who have experienced sexual violence to have easily received healing of the wounds from sexual violence. Pastors are meant to give the pastoral care and counseling to meet the needs

of the people. They are referred to as enablers, coaches, and teachers, etc., who should heal members or communities. The researcher argues that the church mandate is to guide her sheep and restore them to wholeness, especially in healing the wounds of the post war violence. For example, in table 15, it is quite clear that 91.67 %, which is the overwhelming voice of the respondents, have suffered violence. Almost everybody has had or experienced a form of violence in life, as has been illustrated in every community under study. It is, therefore, the role of the church to give care to her people who are in need and long for wholeness. Pastoral care is the ministry of the church, to sustain, heal, guide, reconcile, nurture and give hope to the person, family, community or society in crises; either from the total resources of the church, where available and needed. In this model, the agent of healing is the support community; in pastoral care, the healing agent in the church is the caring community. The church provides a purpose for living and the fellowship through which love (not violence) may be real.

From the findings, a victim or perpetrator, openly revealed his heart in quest for forgiveness. He spoke with conviction that he joined the rebels not by his will. He was captured and recruited by force. He became a commando in the rebel war against the government from 1995 --2002. In the battle field, he killed people, abducted young girls and raped them. He burnt houses and committed other sexual related forms of violence in the battle front. When the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was set up in 2004, he was among those who came out boldly to confess to the government

and people of Sierra Leone. He had been accepted back into his community and lives in the community.

With this example, the researcher believes that, healing, as defined by some scholars, is to make whole or sound, to repair or to reconcile, or settle a dispute. The researcher is convinced that, in healing the wounds like that of the perpetrator, there is the restoration of an individual to wholeness of health, be it physical or mental, and God is the one who heals all diseases, (Psalm 103:3).

4.2.1 Perceptions on sexual violence

It is observed that, 68.75 % of the laity are not actively engaged in counseling programmes in their churches, and this may lead to incidence of violence likely to be high in the aftermath war. It is quite clear that the number of violence happenings in the communities under study is as a result of the church not embarking upon effective counseling programmes as preventive measures and educational programmes to avert violence. Although counseling is not by compulsion, the clergy should be creative to sensitize their congregations. Counseling helps a victim to understand and receive support. The process stresses on self-help. The individual discovers the wide range of choices available and makes a personal decision to make the best independent decision. Counseling is a series of interactions between the counselor and counselee. Even the interactions help the victims or perpetrators or counselees to feel belonging

to a family or community. Counseling helps the client to explore and understand his or her thoughts and make a personal decision on what to do.

However, it was revealed that there were also lapses on the part of clergy in terms of giving pastoral care and counseling to their people in the parishes. This is to confirm the researcher's findings that the church need to put better mechanism in place to structure a good and effective pastoral care and counseling programme for her members. In order to heal the wounds of the people after going through the war, the church as the established institution must give its service to those in need, especially those that are hardest hit. To preach, teach and to forgive in spirit of love should be the main talk. It is only the spirit of forgiveness that heals the society and brings true reconciliation among God's children who are traumatized and hopeless.

The study revealed that the majority of the respondents were members of the Moyamba secret societies; namely the Sande or poro societies. In other words, members were not only initiates but had also passed through other traditional and cultural practices of cleansing, tribal marking; and some members even complained of forceful attempt to initiate them into these secret societies against their wish.. This implies abuse of individual rights and sexual violence. The researcher learnt from some of the young generations in particular, (the Youths and Young Adults) during the interview that, they hated this cultural practice which the community imposed on them as the gender-norms of the community. Some also acknowledged that it led

them to health hazards as earlier mentioned of HIV/AIDS and other sexual transmitted diseases like gonorrhea, syphilis, etc.

The view that the rule of evidence was adequately applied to convict perpetrators of sexual violence crimes recorded a supremacy response rate of 58.34%, in table 21. This implies, that although the government of Sierra Leone made frantic effort to set Special Court in Sierra Leone to bring perpetrators of those who were responsible for worst crimes against humanity, and the Family Support Unit (FSU) at major police units throughout the country to handle violence cases, yet, the efforts were ineffective, (41.66 % of table 21). It may be due to poor Judiciary systems, bribes or what they referred to as, “family business and settlements”, or all together the church is silent and giving a blind eye to the violence.

It is also quite clear that, Moyamba East community are not well protected from violence, according to findings in so many cases pastors are getting from their members and at the same time reports of level of cases. Following the eleven years exposure to violence during Sierra Leone’s brutal war, poverty and the denial or neglect of the rights of women led to a marked increase of women and girls in conflict with the law. They are incarcerated, for example in prisons, serving terms of imprisonment or in detention, awaiting trial. The situations of women in prisons, particularly access to justice for example for such women is a growing concern. In spite of the upsurge in national legislation, as well as international instruments, all

aimed at addressing post war human rights challenges, sexual violence continues to be perpetrated against the women and girls.

Only 58.34 % of the respondents in table 21, admitted that the government is doing its best but needs to double its efforts to combat the violence crime rates in their communities as compared to 41.66 % that are against. Some admitted that the perpetrators are apprehended and charged in court but it seems that the punishment is not severe. In some cases the perpetrators are seen within the same communities living with the victims. This can pose threats or cause a lot of trauma in the minds of the victims.

The perception that the church in Moyamba East District should spear-head healing programmes among victims with wounds of sexual violence received a superior response rate of 20.83 % of table 23 and 45.83 % of table 22, respectively. This implies the confidence and trust that people had in the institution in sensitizing perpetrators, especially ex-combatants and cultivating the spirit of love and dignity for human lives. The church calls upon women and men alike to share power and control, to learn to give freely and to receive freely, to be complete and to respect the wholeness of others. The church seeks for every individual opportunities and freedom to love and to be loved, to seek and receive justice and to practice ethical self-determination. It is part of the UMC's role according to the Book of Discipline to assist the local church, Annual Conference, the council boards, commissions, schools

of theology, and other related institutions in eradicating the problems of sexual harassment by developing policies and procedures for addressing the problems.

From the findings, an interview with one of the victims or perpetrators, indicated that, he/she desired healing from the scar of wounds, of what might have led him/her into violence, and needed reconciliation with the community. The researcher found out from biblical scholars that, reconciliation itself is an act of rebuilding relationships, to cause to be friendly or peaceful again or to settle a quarrel, more satisfactorily. This reconciliation is not a result of cheap admonitions of victims to forgive and forget. Reconciliation helps people to realize God's will for humanity, that all are members of one family, bound together in a network of interdependence. It is all about making peace, seeking justice, healing memories and rebuilding societies. The interdependence of people necessitates that people forgive each other and reconcile.

For the researcher, this implies that, the ministry of pastoral care and counseling, and through educational programmes, could be a motivating factor for cultivating the spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation. The legacy of the conflict in Sierra Leone, both in terms of widespread sexual violence and the changes in gender roles, brought about by violence and displacement, has influenced the nature and extent of sexual and gender based violence in the post-conflict phase, especially in the Moyamba District. Women have been offered limited assistance to deal with the health, psychosocial and economic consequences of sexual violence experienced during the war; and the

continued discrimination they faced in the post-conflict phase. Rape, especially of young girls, defilement of girls and to lesser extent of boys, abandoning of babies, and cruel punishment of children are regularly reported in the newspapers.

4.2.2 With regards to coming across victims of sexual violence

In the focused group discussions, involving one of the Executive District Women's leader of the UMC, MED, it was explained that, raping of young girls by men is a big challenge to the society and the government has done very little to put the situation under control. This is a confirmation of findings of the questionnaire survey. She said that most parents prefer indoor settlement, especially when "money passes under the table". She said that, in her opinion, poverty was the stumbling block for the conviction of rapists, and observed that, those who had braved the storm and pursued the matter to court were frustrated by the corrupt action of the magistrate and lawyers. When I asked her about the role of the church, she said that, the pastors only visit and pray. She suggested that, sexual violence perpetrated against women and girls in MED, is a total disgrace to womanhood, and even a disgrace to the Christian community, who profess the same Christian faith that, they are "one another's brothers'/sisters' keeper in the body of Christ". This is immoral, and demands the proactive role of the UMC to care for her members, in collaboration with the government and other law agencies to bring the perpetrators to justice.

4.2.3 Regarding to the causes of rape or sexual violence in the MED

In an interview with the secretary general of Moyamba District Council, who also happened to be one of the District Executive's Secretaries, of the Women of MED, she stated that, since the war was declared over, the issue of violent cases were so rampant as a result. She said that, in the midst of such challenges as one of the women's' leaders, she organized workshops and seminars in the schools, community and sometimes during some of the UMC women's programme meetings, to sensitize people in securing laws that criminalize rape and other sexual related matters. Through these little efforts, the secretary impacted into the minds of victims and perpetrators and entire populace that life is to be valued and respected. She confirmed that it was the duty of the government to protect the rights of children and women and halt the abuses. The church must not be lukewarm, because it has the moral and the spiritual authority over the state to see that justice is done.

4.2.4 Against secret societies in Sierra Leone in terms of sexual violence – Group discussion

In interviews with elderly women on hazards of their traditional practices like FGM, tribal mark, wife inheritance and 'food taboos' (food taboos forbid women not to eat banana, mangoes or eggs when pregnant or eat proper food when newly given birth), etc., they responded saying that, there was no problem related to these allegations of health hazards like HIV/AIDS. They had been practising these rites from time

immemorial before these pandemic of sicknesses the international communities and local NGOS are criticizing and attributing them as a result of their cultural practises.

This implies that, in some cases, community members showed ignorance of the negative health implications of traditional and cultural practices. Most traditional practices like the FGM, or elements of traditional practices are experienced by women as degrading, humiliating, and with the perceived effect of devaluing them. The traditional customs according to Mbiti J, (1990), Little K. (1951), such as women being segregated at funerals and sacrifices, and some widowhood rites that, for instance, require women to be naked except for leaves covering their genitals, are stark examples of the humiliation of women.

From the above data, it is clear that sexual violence is still a challenge in the post war era. Many things happened during the war and still continue to be threats and challenges into the present. The study looks at these wounds where the people are picking up from the available resources for healing. How will it happen? It is just a matter of 'giving and taking' that people need to accept one another and forgive each other for the sake of love, because God is love. Like the above commando who came out boldly to confess and ask for forgiveness, needed fellowship and love from the community. In the same vein, post war healing will take place if people accepted that sexual violence continues to be a challenge and can be overcome if the individual, for example the perpetrator and the offender, accepted the fact that it is wrong and should

be put behind their grievances for the sake of God and live side by side in peace, love and harmony. In achieving this purpose of study, the researcher found that, the clergy and other caregivers should be the instruments of peace. The church must take the leading role for justice to be done as it has the authority, power and influence over all combined forces, including the government, in seeking peace and justice.

4.2.5 The church, clergy response to sexual violence in Moyamba East District

As earlier mentioned, the church is uniquely placed in society to play a decisive role in the prevention and elimination of different forms of violence against women and children, possesses the moral authority, responsibility and capacity to minister to the needs of those who have been abused, as well as to deal with perpetrators. How this should be achieved or effective lies squarely with the role of the clergy. The pastors, for example, are looked upon to guide, teach and coach in the lives of the people or communities. They should be role models as people of God. They represent God and are thought to be nearer God.

According to the findings, all the pastors in the sacred ministry are qualified clergy men and women in the ministry of the word. All of them went to college and the least among them all may have attained a certificate. But the researcher feels uneasy with the way they practise their professionalism as pastors, especially in the area of pastoral care and counseling. How? Through the findings and group discussions, the pastors underestimate the pervasiveness of sexual and domestic violence in their congregation.

Some of the clergy members have naive consciousness to talk about sexual violence in public or denounce in their sermons. The reason being that the clergy maybe in agreement with the traditions and cultural views that it is a taboo to talk about sex in public. The secretary, regarding the causes of violence in the interview, said that, at the back of their minds, some clergy treat sexual violence as family matters.

From the findings, an aged women had this to say concerning the church: “I really think people don’t think that sexual violence happens in their congregations; for the victims and perpetrators are some of those who worship and go to dinner together with you”.¹¹³ Based on the number of times the interviewees spoke of sexual violence, pastors do not seem to consider sexual or domestic violence as central to larger religious themes such as strong families, a peaceful society, pursuing holiness or social injustice. Women’s greatest risk of violence in the study comes from intimate partners, a current or former husband or boyfriend. The people within the community were wounded in body, mind and spirit and needed healing.

The clergy need more training in pastoral care and counseling to heal the wounds of their parishioners. They need to focus training in family violence, child abuse, sexual violence, stress, addiction, divorce, depression, anxiety, trauma, grief, aging, relationships, career guidance and life transitions. There could be no healing of wounds if pastors lacked skills in these areas and the church having no counseling

¹¹³ Interviewed- July 10th, 2014

centers to give holistic healing therapy. Church should have counseling centers for recovery from grief, addictions, and sexual violence. Pastors should also preach on marital conflict, divorce, depression, anxiety, and all forms of abuse, such as rape, which is a devastating and traumatic matter.

4.2.6 The laity and sexual violence in UMC

The effect of sexual violence on children includes emotional disturbances that can contribute to a continued cycle of violence in their adult life. Should such disturbances be dealt with adequately at an early stage, there is a better chance of healing which could prevent the individual from becoming a perpetrator of sexual violence as well later on in life. Adults who are exposed to sexual violence can also develop psychological disturbances. Therapy or counselling can contribute to healing as well as to finding new meaning in life and hope.

As regards the question about feelings of violence against them or their loved ones, it is believed that violence in any form, whether physical, psychological or economical, is sinful and it is a crime. The majority of respondents were knowledgeable about violence and each individual victim of sexual violence had his/her own personal and private experience. The respondents said that sexual violence disempowers, humiliates, and degrades victims to low self-esteem, totally undermining and becoming hostile towards gender of the perpetrator. For example, a woman who had been sexually assaulted by men may experience feelings of hostility towards the abusers, and

fear of men. These feelings, as one respondent in the discussion group said, may be directed against a specific person, such as the offender, or generalized to all men. Here, the researcher stresses on forgiveness and reconciliations, although some forgive and will not forget, particularly in rape cases or where you may have caused mayhem on the individual for disabilities in life like amputating people's limbs or hands. However, according to some biblical scholars, forgiveness, in the Old Testament, is made possible by the grace of God, and Jesus affirmed that forgiveness is the doorway through which humanity come together to form a new community. Bishop Joseph C. Humper (UMC, SLAC), as chairman of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in Sierra Leone, during his campaign tours within the country to heal the wounds of the different communities, said, 'in forgiving, humanity comes, humanity declares in faith in the future relationship and in the capacity of the wrong-doer to make a new beginning, on a course that will be different from the one that caused the damage to the relationship'. True forgiveness must deal with the past so as to make the future possible. Bishop J.K. Yambasu (UMC, SLAC) said that forgiveness also involves empathy and distinguishing the act from the enemy among other practices.

Of course, people are picking from the resources available to heal their wounds. However, they need to be embraced by and to be reconciled to their communities fully. Yet these unfortunate cases of violence are occurring on a daily basis. They want to be healed and to be made whole as they look up to churches for solace. Feelings of difference, alienation, isolation and despair are often experienced by

sexual assault survivors if they are unable to share their experiences with others. Survivors, as well as those threatened with violence, often experience sleepless nights and or nightmares and also feel intensely ashamed and embarrassed and rejected. But if the healing process by the church would be offered, these would be consolation and breakthrough.

4.2.7 With regards to family values and sexual violence

According to one of the local head woman of a fairly big village in the Taiama circuit, Sierra Leone used to be a country where the youth had a high level of respect for their elders, families and their communities. The young and the old believed in the things that held them together, what they do and choose not to do. The young had respect for the old, and the old in turn, provided for their children's good protection. The prevalence of good morals made rare occurrence of any sexual violence. Following the war these emerged individuals' motivation for sexual violence.

In pre-war Sierra Leone, it was the duty of the father to provide for the children which was seen as a source of pride and joy. The father was the king in the house and he was as the economic back-bone of the family. However, things began to change even before the war and thereafter because of poverty, it became hard for the fathers to have the upper hand and it became impossible for most of the parents to take care of the kids. This must have been the main reason for many of them to join the rebels without hesitation that resulted to such violence under study.

4.3 Summary

As indicated, this chapter presented and discussed the data that was collected in the study in response to the research questions that were given for investigation. The chapter has been divided into two sections. Data presentation and analysis constituted the first segment, while discussion and interpretation made up the second section. Tables were used as the main media in the presentation of the numerical data while interview reports were shown in prose.

The laity said that the clergy were not effective enough in counseling them, contrary to what the clergy evaluated themselves. There was much violence in the conference and the church mechanisms were ineffective to eradicate violence.

The next chapter gives the summary of the whole project, conclusion and recommendations.

Chapter Five

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

5.0 Introduction

This chapter is the concluding part of this study where the whole study is summarized, concluded and recommendations are given. Conclusion comes from the findings discussed in Chapter four, and recommendations come from the data findings. This chapter ends with suggestions for further studies.

5.1 Summary

This study was designed to assess the role of UMC, in alleviating the sexual violence in the MED, by way of ministering to those experiencing emotional, physical or spiritual difficulties, towards the improvement of the quality of one's own self-reflection. The study established the biblical understanding of sexual violence, which was a result of sin. Mankind needs to repent from evil violent practices to reconcile with God and to value lives with dignity and respect. During the civil war in Sierra Leone, there was total breakdown of law and order, for example that led to a lot of atrocities like battering, forced labour, rape, sexual violence, etc. This menace also continued in the post war era that led the researcher to study the role of the church, especially clergy's role, in their healing ministry of pastoral care and counseling to their various members on preventing and fighting against sexual violence. The

convenient and purposive survey design, using quantitative and qualitative methods, were used, as the research methodologies. The random stratified sampling method was used to come up with a sample of 70 respondents, composed of the District Women's Executives, the Youth and Young Adults, UMC Clergy, elderly women and men from each of the four circuits studied. The sample was representative enough of the target population, to collect reliable and valid data and information. Both probability and non probability sampling were used to select the respondents. Questionnaires, interviews, and group discussion were used as research instruments to collect data. The interview was also used to clarify areas which were not fully covered by the questionnaire. The data was fully augmented by the discussions.

5.2 Conclusion

The study concluded that:

In the Moyamba East District, of the post war Sierra Leone, sexual violence was very common, having been perpetrated by men against women. Men were in the habit of demanding sex even when their partners were not ready. It emerged that a significant number of 54.18 % were exposed to rape and other related forms of sexual violence.

Physical violence was one of the most frequently cited atrocities and thus familiar type for the respondents. Five themes emerged in the perception of physical violence, representing this broad range of actions like cruel punishment, physical torture, forced labour, assault with weapon and death. The acts of physical torture were often

accompanied by details that exhibited elements of cruelty, degradation, coercion and excess in humanness. Some form of violence described had to do with power and control. Various factors were paramount in the discussion, including the lack of choice and lack of protection. In the discussion, women were experiencing various degrees of violence, degrees of increased domestic violence, such as battering, starving, abduction, forced labour, sexual harassments and the profane languages against each other.

In the findings, the researcher viewed most traditional practices like FGM, or elements of traditional practices as a form of psychological violence because they were regarded by women as norms of degrading, devaluing and humiliating mechanisms.

Government made frantic effort to set up Special Court in Sierra Leone, in order to bring the perpetrators of those who were responsible for the worst crimes against humanity to justice and at the same time set up Family Support Units at major Police units throughout the country to deal with sexual and domestic violence.

Respondents showed dissatisfaction on the way the government addressed the issues of sexual violence. The protection of individual's basic human rights were not observed. It could mean that sexual violence cases were not properly handled by the judiciary and many associated crimes were on the increase which posed threats to their environments.

Pastors underestimated the pervasiveness of sexual and domestic violence in their congregation and some of the clergy members had naïve consciousness to talk about sexual violence or publicly denounce it in their sermons.

From the above analysis, the challenge of sexual violence still remains to be a threat until people realize themselves, forgive and reconcile. In either context, the subject of reconciliation, and the process of addressing the legacy of past violence and the rebuilding of the broken relationships are focuses of increasing interests. There is also an urgent demand for better tools to address this most difficult post-violence issue.

Reconciliation has only recently been recognized as a necessary component of post-violence reconstruction. We know that reconciliation can never be a quick fix. It requires time and patience, an incremental approach and a capacity to evolve and adapt to challenges and opportunities. Everyone wants to get on, to move fast, and to get away from the past as quickly as possible. Dwelling on the painful past and the unfinished thoughts and feelings around past violence would endanger the healing of wounds.

It is not only important to help people deal with the impact of the conflict on them, but it is also essential to deal with the causes of the distress because human condition cries out for a healing church, which the clergy, as well as other health professionals, should give the pastoral care and counseling to people in need. They are the implementers to heal wounds of post war or conflict. The healing of wounds is demonstrated by self-

realization, the spirit of forgiveness and forgetting the past for the future in reconciliation, through the name of God's love.

5.3 Recommendations:

From the above conclusions, the following recommendations could be made:

The researcher highly recommend that both institutions, that is, the church and government, be persuaded to respect the victims and perpetrators of sexual violence for their human values and dignity. These institutions should be theocentric. There should be combined efforts of exercise or ministry of reconciliation and forgiveness. Combined efforts should focus on the course of reconciliation between the victim and the offender in order to minimize or eliminate sexual violence. The church should be exemplary and the government has to be observant and strict on justice for the welfare of the society.

5.3.1 The Church:

- The United Methodist Church, in response to sexual violence, should embark on regular training of her lay and clerical leaders as critical ongoing ministry of the church, with focus on healing wounds of post war sexual violence.
- There is need to streamline gender in the curricula of the UMC theological schools, so that pastors (who are leaders of the church), are equipped with skills that make them sensitive to gender issues in their churches and communities.

- Sexual harassment should be understood as an exploitation and abuse of power relationships rather than as an exclusively sexual issue. Sexual harassment is a form of sexual misconduct. The devastating effects on persons when it happens in a faith community jeopardizes spiritual life, theological meaning, and relationships. Therefore, every local congregation should be required to have a policy and procedure on prevention of sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment. The United Methodist Church's, constant vigilance is needed to keep effective, updated policies and procedures in all places in the church on this issue.

- The member churches in the Moyamba East District should contribute needed resources to hold sensitizing or educational programmes, to enlighten Christian community to work vigorously against sexual and gender-based violence, hence the church should provide the following:
 - a) Short term programme ministry with the victims and marginalized, standing with 'victims or survivors', listening to them, understanding their needs and aspirations, and working with them to achieve their goals.
 - b) Long term programmes to bring victims on board by educating them, and providing scholarships. The church must recruit young people, including

women who are vulnerable for training programmes to equip them to be effective leaders. It should build theological & secular schools for both pastors and laity, colleges or institutions to engage members for tomorrow's developments. Methodism founder, John Wesley said, "I look upon all the world as my parish," meaning that Christians are called to step out of their little corner of the world in order to spread the good news, transform hopelessness into hope and help God's children, wherever they may be.

- Effective counseling programmes in all churches should be conducted, since victims and survivors, infected and affected people are in the same household of faith. The fight against sexual and gender based violence should be regarded as a communal issue and church work with other local partners, and government organizations, should achieve justice. Justice should prevail and impunity measures should be taken against the perpetrators. This requires collective effort that embraces and respects the dignity and values of all lives.
- Counseling should be offered to the couples together so that they can be open in sharing, live in peace, love and harmony to prevent further violence.
- Pastors should be available to offer counseling to their parishioners in times of illness or crisis, being sensitive and responsive to any suggestion of difficulty to prevent violence and to be creative/proactive in handling violence.

- The positive role that religion can play in facilitating peace and mutual understanding, as well as recovery from emotional disturbances in war-affected populations, should be carefully identified and promoted.
- The church and judiciary should be proactive in dealing with cases of violence. There is need for speedy judgments delivered to the perpetrators.
- Women organizations should be empowered to educate women and girls and even young boys about their rights, because most of the time people are not even aware that their rights are being violated.
- Pastors should be faithful to the Bible in times of counseling, and remember that they are not there to judge, instead, they are just there to help equip their members with sobriety.
- The church, in collaboration with responsible government ministries, departments and agencies should provide, not only counseling for sexual violence victims, but holistic support.

5.3.2 The State/Government:

- Scholarship schemes should be made available by the ministry of Social welfare, Children and Gender Affairs in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and the church to cater for sexual violence victims, from primary to tertiary/University levels.

- There is need for the reassessment of gender and economic policies. This calls for the consideration of sensitive gender issues, such as transformational change, positive self –esteem, equal opportunities, and the elimination of stereotypes and structures that promote discrimination and violence against women and men.
- Educational policies and programmes in the country should be critically examined and reorganized in ways that contribute towards promoting peace, harmony and mutual understanding among socially, culturally and ethnically polarized communities in various parts of Sierra Leone.
- The government and its implementing partners, such as non- governmental organizations, and more so the government ministry (Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children’s Affairs) should provide psycho-social counseling sessions to victims of sexual violence.
- Parents and guardians should not compromise with perpetrators of sexual violence. The perpetrators should be brought to book through the full process of the law. The perpetrators should receive psycho-social counseling during their jail term to avoid recurrence of such horrible acts.
- Policy-oriented and neutral social science research must be promoted in war-affected areas with a view to identifying ways and means of facilitating recovery, reconciliation and normalization of life after long exposure to war and ethnic tension.

- The NGOS should also represent the victims in the courts, combat the stigma through sensitization and encourage parents to report cases of violence to the law enforcement agencies for redress.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Research

To date, there has been few formal studies in the church, related to the approaches of pastoral care and counseling. Further study, is therefore, recommended and encouraged, following this study. Fellow researchers will take advantage of the topic for further research as basis for deeper and broader investigations on:

- Women should be better educated in order to participate fully in leadership, in the UM. Churches.
- To design special ministry by the church, in liaison with government, targeting perpetrators in one way or the other and to reaffirm dignity to the victims and perpetrators.
- Women who should be conceptualized on self-defense through the establishment of programmes, by both the government and the church.
- Domestic violence against women in all United Methodist Churches in the other districts.
- Pastoral care and counseling in other districts of the United Methodist Church.

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Appendix I

INTERVIEW GUIDE

The interview questions will be based on research questions/sub-questions to include the following:

1. Understanding violence, sexual violence and gender based violence as related to Old and New Testaments and political, social, economic, cultural, religious and psychological contexts of Sierra Leone and Moyamba East District of the United Methodist Church, Sierra Leone Annual Conference.
2. Issues related to violence, gender based violence and related issues
3. Effects and types of violence
4. Challenges the Church and Country face in attempt to reducing and eradicating violence crimes
5. Effective ways, strategies that the Church could use to reduce and eradicate violence crimes in the Moyamba District and country.
6. Any other issues as they would emerge during the interviews.

Appendices

Appendix II: Permission Letter



“Investing in Africa’s Future”

FACULTY OF THEOLOGY

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to introduce **Rev. Emerson Laggah** who is a Master’s student in the **Faculty of Theology** at the **Africa University, (A United Methodist-Related Institution)**, Mutare, Zimbabwe. He is presently undertaking a research project on: **“A MINISTRY ON HEALING POST WAR VIOLENCE IN SIERRRA LEONE: A CASE STUDY OF THE MOYAMBA EAST DISTRICT OF THE SIERRRA LEONE ANNUAL CONFERENCE; 2002-2013”**.

This project necessitates issuing questionnaires and conducting interviews with District Superintendent, Pastors, the District Women’s Desk, Laity and a few Community Elders of the above district.

This letter is to request your assistance and co-operation to supply the necessary information which will constitute the data for the study. All information received will be treated as confidential and will be used only for this study

Thank you in advance for your assistance and cooperation which will enable him to pursue his research interest.

Professor T.M. Nyajeka

Supervisor /Head of Department; Pastoral Care and Counselling

Cc. The Resident Bishop

Director, Theological Education, U.M.C., Sierra Leone Annual Conference

President, Women’s Desk U.M.C. Moyamba East District Conference

The District Youths & Young Adults, Moyamba East District Conference

Community Heads/ Village Chiefs/Elder

Appendix III: Map of Sierra Leone



20 0 20 40 60 Kilometres

- International Boundary
- Province Boundary
- District Boundary
- Capital City
- Province Headquarters
- District Headquarters
- Other Towns
- Main Road

Lucan T.A., Pabs-Canon E.A., Roy-Macauley C. (1982),

First Atlas for Sierra Leone Schools, London, Macmillan Publishers LTD, p.9.

Appendix IV: Questionnaire data collection instrument

Target group: Clergy

I am Emerson Laggah, a final year student at Africa University, studying in the Master of Arts in Theology. I am currently researching on the topic ‘A Ministry on Healing Wounds of Sexual Violence in the Post War Sierra Leone: A Case Study of the United Methodist Church, Moyamba East District of the Sierra Leone Annual Conference, 2002-2013’. You have been identified as one of the participants who can contribute significantly to this study. May you, therefore, kindly respond to all items in the questionnaire as honestly and fully as you can? The data collected will be used for academic purposes only. Please do not write your name or identity yourself on the questionnaire. **(Tick where applicable)**

Part 1: Personal Details of Respondent

1. Sex of respondent:

a. Male [] **b.** Female []

2. In what capacity do you serve with U.M. Church?

a. Student [] **b.** Deacon C. Elder [] **d.** service beyond local church []

3. Are you a full time Minister? - **a** Fulltime Pastor [] **b** associate Pastor []

Part 2: Ministry Pastoral Care and Counselling Services

4. Do you have counseling programmes in your local church? - - Yes [] or No []

5. How many classes did you take in pastoral care and counseling during your theological training? _____

6. How many members do you schedule for counseling per week /month?

7. Has any member ever reported an incident of violence? - - Yes [] or No []

8. What form of Violence? **a.** Physical [] **b.** Psychological [] **c.** Economical []

9. Will you briefly describe the violence? (No Name)

10. How did you (as Pastor) respond?

a. Visited & prayed [] **b.** Visited, prayed & counseled []

c. Showed concern & assisted in kind [] **d.** Any other []

11. Was the person satisfied with your care & counseling? - Yes [] or No []

12. Do you have premarital counseling in the church program? -Yes [] or No []

13. Has any couple reported violence in their marriage? - - Yes [] or No []

Thanks, and God bless you

Appendix V: Questionnaire data collection instrument

Target group: Laity

I am Emerson Laggah, a final year student at Africa University, studying in the Master of Arts in Religious Studies. I am currently researching on the topic ‘A Ministry on Healing Wounds of Sexual Violence in the Post War Sierra Leone: A Case Study of the United Methodist Church, Moyamba East District of the Sierra Leone Annual Conference, 2002-2013’. You have been identified as one of the participants who can contribute significantly to this study. May you, therefore, kindly respond to all items in the questionnaire as honestly and fully as you can? The data collected will be used for academic purposes only. Please do not write your name or identity yourself on the questionnaire. **(Tick where applicable)**

Part 1: Personal Details of respondent

1. Sex: - - **a. Male** [] or **b. Female** []
2. What is your age? **a. Youth** [] **b. Young Adult** [] **c. Adult** []
3. Did you get an opportunity to go to school? - - **Yes** [] or **No** []
4. IF (yes) – at what level of school? **a. Primary** [] **b. Secondary** [] **c. Tertiary** []

PART 2 - Before/during and after the war

1. What is your Marital Status? –Please indicate
a. Single [] **b. Married** [] **c. Widowed** [] **d. Divorced** [] **e. Separated** []
2. Have you ever heard about sexual & gender-based Violence? - **Yes** [] or **No** []
3. Did you ever experience violence? - - **Yes** [] or **No** []

4. If yes what form of violence? **a. Rape/ sexual harassments** []

b. Batter / abusive, starvation []

c. Armed Robbery [] **d. Any other** []

5. Are you a member of the secret societies (Bondo /Poro) - - Yes [] or No []

6. What were the experiences during the war in terms of violence against you? (No name and brief)

7. Are you aware of someone in your family, community who has suffered violence?
Yes [] or No []

8. If yes please feel free to share the person's experience (no name & brief eg. battered, starved or rape etc.)

9. Do you think the Sierra Leone Government/church are addressing the issue with all the seriousness it deserves? Yes [] or No []

10. If (yes), what do you say? **a. Enforce community laws & Judiciary** []

b. Perpetrators, to be severely punished []

c. Advocate educational programmes against violence [] **d.** Any other []

11. How do you think the church should treat perpetrators of sexual violence?

a. Church/pulpit should not be silent [] **b. Advocate educational Programmes** []

c. Pastoral Care & Counseling [] **d. Work with other partners** [] **e. Any other** []

Thanks, and God bless you

Appendix: VI.

Vernacular Language – The Mende

Ngew□ Kawcibu

Emasin Lagah kalupui mia Africa Kol□gami

Mutare Lahun, Zimbabwe

Molisia mbawuiva ngi hunyusia k□i lani, Moyamba East Nyakuisiama, U.M. S□sii
hun e heijae 2002-2013

Gb□gbeh e bimaligbi hungbe –gbe ngi va. A wotel□ a ngbomah ,tao ngibemakeh
ngitiya

Clergy Information - Ngew□ Gabandelebla

1. Y□□ a biye (yela Wunbu) a. Hindo [] b. Nyaha []

2. Toomi ye gb□ bi loina S□sii yeingei hu wua U.M. S□sii?

(Yela Wumbu) ①Kaalopo le a biye []

②Ngew□ laya lew□ le a biye []

③S□sii gbaako Ngew□ laya leva m□ le a biye []

④Bia bi yeingei ii geleni lee s□sii na ma bi na []

3. Ngew□ layei lee vama bi heini? ①Ngew□ laya lem□ t□m□ kam□i [] ②
Kp□ma kam□i []

Part Two (Ministry of Pastoral Care & Counseling Services)

4. Hinda hu GbeKpe hugbate gbi l wu s□sii hu mia bi na? - - Ah [] / Ah ah []

5. Numu lolemia keng□ hinda bu gbekpe va wikii ma/ngawui ma?

6. Tomba lole gaamia bi piyeni bi magbe lava hinda bu gbekpe va watii bi ye Ngew□
hinda maagaa goami?

7. Yee mam□ kponye gbi weil□ a ge ke kpale mia ti ndanengi ... Ah [] /Ah ah []

8. Kpalei ye gbe nyuk□ le?

9. Ba ye kpalei na hugel□ kulo sawu?

10. Gb□ Pastor peini?

11. Ye numui na I ndinep□ j□il□ a bi hugbatei bi ye peini? Ah [] /Ah ah []

12. Nyaha J□□ mam□li hugbate gbi l□ wu s□sii hu Ah [] /Ah ah []

13. Heiny□ya blaa gbi ti kponye weinga gba k□long□ kpunde hinda ma ti heny□ yei hu? Ah [] /Ah ah []

14. Bi kargbi wae lo numu nepova? Ah/ Ah ah

15.Lole mia bi karni?_____

Bi Sei – Ngewo Bi Bawoh

Appendix VII

Ngew ☐ Kaweibu

Emasin Lagah kalupui mia Africa Kol ☐ gami

Mutare Lahun, Zimbabwe

Molisia mbawuiva ngi hunyusia k ☐ i lani, Moyamba East Nyakuisiama, U.M. S ☐ sii
hun e heijae 2002-2013

Gb ☐ gbeh e bimaligbi hungbe –gbe ngi va. A wotel ☐ a ngbomah ,tao ngibemakeh
ngitiya

LAITY (s ☐ sii mablesia gbele)

PART One (gbak ☐ i halagi)

1. Y ☐ ☐ a biye (Yela wumbu) Hindo / Nya?
2. Bi Vui? ① Foninge d ☐ gbe [] ② Kpaako d ☐ gbe [] ③ Kpaako Kamaing ☐ []
3. Bi Sabu j ☐ il ☐ liva sukui hu? Ah [] / Ah ah []
4. Ina be Ah, Ke ah, Ke foo lolemia bi ye sukui hu ?(yela wumbu) ① Plimale [] ②
Secondi [] ③ k ☐ lejihu []

PARTY TWO (gbak ☐ i felegi)

BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE WAR (Tatomi, nye pemi ke ena Woma)

1. Bia s ☐ ☐ hu? (k ☐ ne mbumbu yela bi ke)
 - ① Bia kpele or kpawu le a biye? []
 - ② Hindo ☐ nyaha l ☐ biyeya? [] ③ Bi hini haanga []
 - ④ Wu g ☐ lenga [] ⑤ Wu luahu k ☐ l ☐ ng ☐ i []
2. Bi ye njepe gbi humeninga k ☐ long ☐ heny ☐ ya gbunde gulala? Ah [] / ah ah []
3. Ye Kpunde hindei jisias ti bi malinga gba? _____

4. Ina be ah,Ke gbe gbunde le?_____
5. Bu wa halehun gbi (sandi /poweh)? Ah [] / Ah ah []
6. Hindei yei gbengaal□ ban da nemahu keng□ ajiandama ti piyeni a biye Kweji hu?

7. Bi numu gbi hind hug□□l□ bi bondeihu or kuulukui hu na I kpals j□□nga I
kpunde hindei jisias hu? Ah [] /Ah ah []
8. Ina bi lumaama,Ke baa seka gbi numui na ngi giliyei huge va?_____
9. Ba ngil□ Saleone govermenti hungbatenga weinga sawema hindegisias ma?
Ah [] /Ah ah []

Bi Sei- Ngewo Bi Bawoh

Appendix VIII



INVESTING IN AFRICA'S FUTURE

P.O. BOX 1320, MUTARE, ZIMBABWE • OFF NYANGA ROAD, OLD MUTARE • TEL: (+263-20) 60075/60026/61611 • E-MAIL: aurec@africau.edu • WEBSITE: www.africau.edu

AFRICA UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (AUREC)

Ref: AU023/14

12 September, 2014

Emerson Laggah
Faculty of Theology
Africa University
Mutare

Re: A ministry on healing post-war violence in Sierra Leone: A case study of the United Methodist Church Moyamba East District of the Sierra Leone Annual Conference 2002 to 2013.

Thank you for the above titled proposal that you submitted to the Africa University Research Ethics Committee for review. Please be advised that AUREC has reviewed and **approved** your application to conduct the above research.

The approval is based on the following.

- a) Research proposal
- b) Questionnaires
- c) Informed consent form

- **APPROVAL NUMBER** AUREC023/14
This number should be used on all correspondences, consent forms, and appropriate documents.
- **AUREC MEETING DATE** NA
- **APPROVAL DATE** September 12, 2014
- **EXPIRATION DATE** September 11, 2015
- **TYPE OF MEETING** Expedited

After the expiration date this research may only continue upon renewal. For purposes of renewal, a progress report on a standard AUREC form should be submitted a month before expiration date.

- **SERIOUS ADVERSE EVENTS** All serious problems having to do with subject safety must be reported to AUREC within 3 working days on standard AUREC form.
- **MODIFICATIONS** Prior AUREC approval is required before implementing any changes in the proposal (including changes in the consent documents)
- **TERMINATION OF STUDY** Upon termination of the study a report has to be submitted to AUREC using standard form obtained from.

Yours Faithfully

.....
MITI G.P. - AUREC SECRETARIAT
FOR CHAIRPERSON,
AFRICA UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE



APPENDIX IX

CONSENT FORM FOR THE CLERGY

My name is Emerson Laggah, a final year (Faculty of Theology) student from Africa University student. I am carrying out a study on the following topic “A Healing on Wounds Ministry of Sexual Violence in the Post War Sierra Leone: A Case Study of the United Methodist Church, Moyamba East District of the Sierra Leone Annual Conference”. I am kindly asking you to participate in this study by filling in questionnaires.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to find out what the United Methodist Church in Sierra Leone is doing to alleviate the problem in healing the wounds of sexual violence in the Moyamba East District of the Sierra Leone Annual Conference.

Procedure and duration

If you decide to participate in this research/study, you will be required to fill in a questionnaire form with open-ended questions sourcing your perceptions in the healing of wounds of sexual violence; A ministry of Pastoral Care and Counseling of the United Methodist Church, Moyamba East District of the Sierra Leone Annual Conference. It is expected that this will take about 15 minutes.

Risks and discomforts

Participation in this research may affect your personal values and moral behaviour. Some questions may affect your religion and touch social practices of friends and relatives. However, the participants will receive some counseling or will be referred to specialist counselors before participating in the study.

Benefits and /or compensation

There will be no direct benefit to you but findings will guide practice in addressing and reducing sexual violence in your various communities.

Confidentiality

All information you provide will be treated with strict confidentiality and your name and address will not be written anywhere on the questionnaire.

Voluntary participation

Participation in this study is voluntary. If you decide not to participate, your decision will not affect your future relationship with your organization or any authority. If you have chosen to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent at any time, whenever you feel like doing so.

Offer to answer questions

Before you sign this form, please ask any questions on any aspect of this study that is unclear to you. You may take as much time as necessary to think over it.

Authorization

If you have decided to participate in this study, please sign this form in the space provided below as an indication that you have read and understood the information provided and have agreed to participate.

.....

Name of Research Participant (Please Print)

Date

.....

Signature of Research Participant or Legal Authorized Representative

If you have any questions concerning this study or consent form beyond those answered by the researcher, your rights as a research participant, or your feeling that you have been treated unfairly and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, please feel free to contact the Africa or University Research Ethics Committee telephone (020)60075 or 60026 extension 1156 aurec@africau.edu

Name of Researcher.....

APPENDIX X

CONSENT FORM FOR THE LAITY

My name is Emerson Laggah, a final year (Faculty of Theology) student from Africa University student. I am carrying out a study on the following topic: A Ministry on Healing Wounds of Sexual Violence in the Post War Sierra Leone: A Case Study of the United Methodist Church, Moyamba East District of the Sierra Leone Annual Conference”. I am kindly asking you to participate in this study by filling in the questionnaire.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to find out what the United Methodist Church in Sierra Leone is doing to alleviate the problem in healing the wounds of sexual violence in the Moyamba East District of the Sierra Leone Annual Conference.

Procedure and duration

If you decide to participate in this research/study, you will be required to fill in a questionnaire with open-ended questions sourcing your perceptions in the healing of wounds ministry of sexual violence in the Parishes of the United Methodist Church, Moyamba East District of the Sierra Leone Annual Conference”.

Risks and discomforts

Participation in this research may affect your personal values and moral behaviour. Some questions may affect your religion and touch social practices of friends and relatives. However, the participants will receive some counseling or will be referred to specialist counselors before participating in the study.

Benefits and /or compensation

There will be no direct benefit to you but findings will guide practice in addressing and reducing substance abuse and related violence in the church and society.

Confidentiality

All information you provide will be treated with strict confidentiality and your name and address will not be written anywhere on the questionnaire.

Voluntary participation

Participation in this study is voluntary. If you decide not to participate, your decision will not affect your future relationship with your organization or any authority. If you have chosen to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent, at any time, whenever you feel like doing so.

Offer to answer questions

Before you sign this form, please ask any questions on any aspect of this study that is unclear to you. You may take as much time as necessary to think over it.

Authorization

If you have decided to participate in this study, please sign this form in the space provided below as an indication that you have read and understood the information, provided you have agreed to participate.

.....

Name of Research Participant (Please Print)

Date

.....

Signature of Research Participant or Legal Authorized Representative

If you have any questions concerning this study or consent form beyond those answered by the researcher, your rights as a research participant, or your feeling that you have been treated unfairly and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, please feel free to contact the Africa or University Research Ethics Committee telephone (020)60075 or 60026 extension 1156 aurec@africau.edu

Name of Researcher.....

