

**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELECTED PRINCIPLES OF BIBLICAL  
HERMENEUTICS AND CONTEXTUAL THEOLOGY IN AFRICAN  
INSTITUTED CHURCHES: A CASE OF *AKŪRINŪ* BELIEVERS IN NAIROBI  
COUNTY, KENYA**

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**A Thesis Submitted to the Institute of Postgraduate Studies of Kabarak University  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Award of Doctor of Philosophy in  
Practical Theology**

**KABARAK UNIVERSITY**

**NOVEMBER, 2023**

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## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated to my dear wife Joyce Wanjiku, daughter Bernice, sons Caleb, Titus, his wife Lin, and our granddaughter Tapte Chiku.

## ABSTRACT

Studies have been done on the history and anthropology of African Instituted Churches (AICs). Findings show that little has been investigated on the relationship between principles of hermeneutics and contextual theology. This study investigated the relationship between selected principles of biblical hermeneutics and contextual theology in African Instituted Churches: a case of *Akūrinū* believers in Nairobi County, Kenya. The study objectives were: First, to assess the relationship between biblical genre and theology of dressing among *Akūrinū* believers; Second, to find out the relationship between biblical context and fulfilment of biblical mission among *Akūrinū* believers; Third, to examine the relationship between *Akūrinū* believers' understandings of God and their use of paranormal experiences; Fourth, to determine the moderating effect of culture on theology of dressing, fulfilment of biblical mission and use of paranormal experiences among *Akūrinū* believers. Divine Command Theory and Diffusion of Innovations Theory guided the study. Descriptive and correlation designs were employed. From a target population of 2618, 328 *Akūrinū* believers and 18 leaders were sampled. A questionnaire and interview guide were used to collect data. Supervisors examined the content and face validity of the instruments. Using Cronbach Alpha method, the coefficient of reliability of the questionnaire was 0.792. Data were analysed with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22 and Stata Software to generate frequencies, Chi-squared and Wald Chi squared respective results. Logistic binary regression and binary hierarchical models were used to test hypotheses 1-3 and 4 respectively. Qualitative data were presented using frequency tables and percentages while inferential data were presented using tables. At  $\alpha=0.05$  level, the study revealed that hypotheses 1-3 were statistically significant with weak positive predictive probabilities of 0.256, 0.245 and 0.259 respectively. Hypothesis 4 was statistically insignificant at  $p>0.05$ . Moderating effect of culture was negative. Findings could benefit churches, religious researchers and reduce contextualization challenges among *Akūrinū* believers. Based on findings on variables studied, the study concluded that challenges *Akūrinū* believers encountered in biblical hermeneutics and biblical contextualization of their theology were typical of other AICs. The study recommended that *Akūrinū* leaders should address specific challenges which emerged in the findings concerning interpretation of the Bible and how to contextualize biblical truth in life.

**Keywords:** *Hermeneutics, contextualization, theology of dressing, biblical mission, understandings of God, paranormal experiences, culture.*

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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

ABI	: African Bible Interpretation
AHGCC	: African Holy Ghost Christian Church
AICs	: African Instituted Churches
AKI	: African Kanisa Israel
AWR	: Akūrinū Worship Reformation
CF	: Christian Fellowship
COGIC	: Church of God in Christ
DCT	: Divine Command Theory
DIT	: Diffusion of Innovations Theory
GECACA	: Conference of Akūrinū churches Assembly
GPS	: Global Positioning System
HGC	: Holy Ghost Church
HGCCEA	: Holy Ghost Christian Church of East Africa
HGM	: Holy Ghost Biblical mission
JPC	: Jesus Preachers Church
KIC	: Kenya Israel Church
NACOSTI	: National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
PCG	: Preachers Church of God
SPSS	: Software Package for Social Sciences



## CONCEPTUAL AND OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

**Aberrant:** –Straying from the right, normal or usual course (Webster’s Encyclopaedic Unabridged Dictionary of English Language, 1<sup>st</sup> edition, 1983). In this study, it refers to non-authentic interpretation of the Bible with respect to objective principles that lead the human interpreter to the meaning God originally communicated in the biblical text being interpreted.

**Aberrant Hermeneutics:** – Interpreting the scriptures contrary to the rules of biblical faith (Black, 2008). In this study, aberrant hermeneutics refers to any methods of interpreting the Bible which do not lead the interpreter to get God’s truth as He originally communicated it biblical texts using inspired writers.

***Akūrinū* believers:** Kikuyu people in Central Kenya who share same self-understanding that their doctrines, beliefs and practices are based on the Bible and constantly interpreted by prophets through dreams and visions as vehicles of the Holy Spirit’s communication of truth from God, notably on matters of dress codes.

**Biblical Hermeneutics:** A process in which a Bible reader interacts with a biblical text such that personal meaning is eventually aligned to God’s meaning expressed in the text (Clines, 1982). In this study, biblical hermeneutics, hereafter called authentic hermeneutics, is a process of interaction of readers with a Bible text based on objective principles geared towards helping the reader to understand God’s meaning expressed in the text and apply it.

**Biblical Genre:** Genre is a group of literally works based on content, subject and structure (Krejcir, 2006). In his study, Genre refers to the writing styles used by Bible writers to communicate God’s truth, such as prophecy, narratives and poetry among others.

**Contextualization:** The act of creating relevance and meaning between communicator of a particular culture and audience of a different culture (Wyatt, 2014) by theologising in any situation of life. In this study, contextualization refers to act of creating relevance and meaning of biblical doctrine among *Akūrinū* believers in order to inform contextual aspects of their Christian living.

**Contextual Theology:** A theology done in dialogue with reality of original truth God gave in scripture, in the light of present human experience or context, social location as a man or woman interacts with cultural identity and change within his or her context (Bevan, 2010). This meaning is retained in this study.

**Culture:** Customs, arts, technology, entertainment, life-style, language, change, communication and other aspects of social life shared by a community or nation (Marbaniang, 2014). In this study, religion is included in the *Akūrinū* cultural communities whose respondents were rural and sub-urban.

**Diffusion:** Refers to partial or total transfer of innovations from one person to another through social interaction (Rogers et al., 2003). In this study, the term explains how innovations regarding theology of dress spread among *Akūrinū* believers as doctrines, beliefs and practices in hierarchical (leaders to members) and horizontal patterns (among *Akūrinū* believers).

**Enculturation:** Refers to honest and serious attempt to make the Gospel of Jesus Christ understood by every culture (Ikechukwu, 2016). In this study, the term refers to efforts made by *Akūrinū* believers to understand God's truth within African context by interpreting the texts in the Hebrew Bible regarding theology of dress, dreams, visions and prophecy.

**General Conference of Akūrinū Churches Assembly (GeCACA):** Refers to National leadership of *Akūrinū* community churches whose headquarters is in Nairobi, Kenya (GeCACA, 2017).

**Hermeneutics:** To bring out meaning of a written text to its reader (Zimmermann, 2015). In this study, hermeneutics refers to an encounter between the Bible reader and biblical text in ways that enable the reader to get God's intended meaning and apply God's truth to life.

**Inculturation:** An attempt to translate Christian faith into a specific culture through an ongoing interaction between the two variables (Ogochukwu, 2020).

**Moderator Variable:** A variable (M) that influences the strength of relationship between variable X on dependent variables Y through a statistical interaction between X and M (Westfall & Judd, 2015). In this study, changes in variables of culture influence believers' contextualization of scriptures as dependent variables.

**Praxis:** How practice informed by a known theory can be useful and relevant to practitioners towards transformation, not the same as any practice since not all practices are informed by known and relevant theory, and geared towards transformation (Osmer, 2019). Same meaning retained.

**Paranormal Religious Experiences:** Latin 'super' means 'above', 'natura' means nature and 'para' means contrary or outside. Paranormal religious experiences refer to subjective experiences a religious person receives from a supernatural being contrary to scientific knowledge (Aarnio & Lindeman, 2015). In this study, prophecy, dreams and visions are paranormal because they are outside normative means God uses to communicate to humankind, which is the written scriptures.

**Practical theology:** A branch of theology that seeks to explore dynamics involved in faithful performance of the Gospel based on believers' love for God (Swinton and Mowat (2016). In this study, practical theology is limited to dynamic relationship between hermeneutics as a research methodology to enable Bible reader to access God's truth and faithfully apply it in relevant situations in daily life.

**Theology of dressing:** Dress is any modification or supplementation to the body in order to express social, political and economic norms as well as personal identity (Ambrosio, 2019). In this study, theology of dress refers to garments used to cover the body, hairstyles, use of rings and beauty products among *Akūrinū* believers to express their relationship with God.

**Triangulation:** Refers to a research method in which a variety of respondents, methods, theories, instruments and locations are used in order to increase objectivity of findings in complimentary, divergent or contradictory ways (Heale & Forbes, 2013). The term retains this meaning in this study.

**Worldview:** Refers to how an individual or a group of people interpret temporal life on the basis of six worldview questions, namely; what is there, its origins, is it good or evil, where is it going, what is true or false about it and how are we to act? (Vidal, 2008). The term retains the meaning but contextualises the same to hermeneutics and contextual theology.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter focused on the background to the study, the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research objectives, and justification for the study, scope, limitations and assumptions of the study.

#### **1.1 Background to the Study**

Practical theology has been defined as the critical, theological reflection on the practices of the church as believers in God interact with God and the world with a redemptive biblical mission in view (Swinton and Mowat, 2016). Four assumptions underlying this definition are: believers engaged in theologizing seek to know who God is; God is the only source of objective truth worthy practising; practices of Christians are influenced by their experiences and these practices celebrate and testify of God's saving work to the unsaved humanity. Schuringa (2019) has defined practical theology as application of any theological content by a believer in God in his or her world rather than a branch of theology such as systematic theology or phenomenology, for example preaching, teaching or praying. Schunga's definition lacks inclusion of critical and analytical nature which distinguishes practical theology from applied theology. Epistemology (how we know what we know) of both scholars is incomplete since interpretive dimension of practical theology is missing. Swinton and Mowat (2016) identify six theological tasks of practical theology as follows: Seek truth that informs praxis in faithful and transformative ways; play mediation role between tradition and challenges/situations/problems existing in the social context; examine theories and underlying assumptions; serve as an interpretive discipline whose insights may challenge tradition to change; stay in touch with religious/theological experience and keep a missiological focus. God as

the objective source of theological content practised and how methods used to access God's truth may influence the quality of practice.

Osmer (2008) has identified four tasks of practical theology as descriptive-empirical task, interpretive task; normative task and pragmatic task (figure 6). In specific reference to children of Israel in Exodus, activities of God such as providing water and quails enabled Israelites to partially know who God was, His functional identity as their provider was a faith anchor on unchanging God inspite of their changing circumstances. In this study, though partial, such understandings of God contrast with His declared immutability in Mal. 3:6). In this sense, every Bible reader encounters biblical accounts norms in theology as the basis/standard of evaluation of applied truth based on revelation of God's truth and it corresponds with ultimate reality (Harbart's model in Hwang, 2019). Carlson (2007) defines norms in theology as *norma normans*, the rule of faith for the believer in God who acts. This rule is the scripture, the rule of Christian doctrine, faith and practice. Since God's acts volitionally (out of His will and not forced by human needs), understandings of God are an instituted variable. The plural use of 'understandings' of God is justified by the fact that God does different things to different believers, hence each understands God subjectively. Gademar (2006) argues that the Bible interpreter encounters God's truth with his or her subjective truth from culture which interferes with application scholarly principles of hermeneutics in his or her efforts to access God's truth, therefore truth is humanly constructed.

This is a postmodern epistemological view. It denies possibility of objective truth. Osmer critiques Gademar by saying that this theological content brought into the biblical text by the human interpreter introduces a subjective nature into the interpretive task called hermeneutics of art but it does not incapacitate the human interpreter from accessing God's revealed truth and differentiating it from human truths. This study is

guided by Osmer's epistemological view. Schipani (2020) views Osmer's four tasks/ as dimensions and process which form epistemological structure that provides new knowledge in a logical cycle as; observation, descriptive task, reality in human experience as a starting point, what is going on? Followed by analysis/ interpretive task, seeking to answer why is it happening? Evaluative task, normative, focusing on ideal provides what should be going on as a basis for critiquing the fourth dimension which is application, pragmatic, dimension, which focuses on what works in real world as the ontological dimension of the study in practical theology. The topic, research objectives and hypotheses fit in the four tasks of practical theology in methodological process as illustrated in Figure 3.

Throughout history, outstanding scholars who have contributed to development of hermeneutics have come up with diverging and harmonised principles of interpreting the Bible. In Greco-Roman world, use of hermeneutics originated in ancient Greece. It dates back to Homer's poetic writings in 800 BC-701 BC (Diggs, 2010, Abulad (2007)). The influence of Homer, Plato and Philo on Jewish hermeneutical approaches developed three types of hermeneutics in the early church, namely, philosophical method (use of reason to validate God's truth), theological (plain meaning God gave about Himself) and Philo's numerology (numbers have meaning) which was a subjective assignment of hidden spiritual meanings to numbers used in the Bible. In support of Plato, Philo interpreted that physical nature of man was primarily sensual and earthly whereas spiritual nature was pure (Jeffrey, 1992) and claimed that Scriptures were God's revelation to Hebrews whereas philosophy was God's revelation to Plato (Grant & Tracy, 1984).

Every kind of truth has a source and a means of accessing it. Diggs (2010) notes that the term hermeneutics is derived from the Greek word, *Hermes*, Ἑρμῆς, *messenger*, who

was a Greek god believed to bring messages of fortune to merchants, thieves and travellers in Ancient Greece, as a god of paths and travels. Greek philosopher, -Homer, derived the term hermeneutics from Hermes. The verb, *hermeneuo*, ἐρμηνεύω and noun, *hermeneia*, ἐρμηνεία, denotes verb 'to interpret' and 'interpretation' respectively (Zuck, 2002). The Hebrew rendering, *pathar*, פתח, means to bring out the meaning of a written text to its reader (Einspahr, 1976). Biblical hermeneutics is a function of interaction between God's truth in the biblical text in its context and application of that truth in the interpreter's contemporary context (West & Dube, 2021).

Brown (2007) notes that hermeneutics simply means interpretation. Zimmermann (2015) adds that this activity is intrinsic and occurs daily. It is used in any area of study and by everyone in day-to-day life. When applied to a written text, such as biblical text, a set of standard rules/principles help readers arrive at one meaning, which the writer intended to communicate to the readers. Hermeneutics is the study of locus of meaning of a written text and principles of interpretation and application of the meaning in contemporary culture or situation, called Contextualization in this study. A reader of a text is said to have understood the meaning if one can correctly express the written truth in words and actions. A biblical text is a verse or successive verses, with a fixed, single and definite meaning and subject. Biblical hermeneutics describes principles used to determine the correct meaning of a text and implications of its meaning to contemporary user and process of getting correct meaning from text is called exegesis Corley, Lemke & Lovejoy (2002). Correct interpretation is necessary because it provides Bible scholars, biblical reformers in the Church, teachers, preachers and believers who seek to live out (contextualise) God's truth, through awareness and application of principles that facilitate access of God's truth to guide their doctrine, faith and practice.



Jensen (2007) has highlighted on phases of theological hermeneutics from perspectives of Early Church. Jewish theologians and philosophers, notably Philo, began to allegorise scriptures in Alexandria. New Testament writers, such as Paul, Peter and John wrote as inspired by God but apologists of the second century, notably Justin martyr and Origen, undertook to decide what was canonical and what was not. Origen used critical method of hermeneutics with emphasis on literal and exegetical approaches. In Antiochene School, Lucean and others rejected allegorical interpretation but accepted typological interpretation of the Old Testament. Philo's criteria that informed the text to allegorize were four-fold. First, if the text used figures of speech such as 'hand of God', Bible interpreter should give it spiritual meaning (allegorising) since God does not have human physical features. However, this explanation reflected limited knowledge in biblical studies because these human organs used to describe God's activity are called anthropomorphisms of God (Onwuka, 2020).

The phrase 'hand of God' acquires meaning based on the subject of the text in its context. Second, the interpreter gave personal meaning if the text was not clear to him. The implication is that personal limitations of any interpreters would distort or discard God's objective truth. Third, the interpreter would give spiritual meaning to a text considered to have historical problems. Last, the text had to adapt to philosophical worldview, which glorified human reason over God's revelation. Philo's hermeneutical principles were subjective in that the individual read meaning into the scriptures (eisegesis) instead of extracting meaning from the scriptures (exegesis). Philo replaced repentance of sin and seeking God's forgiveness as God's way to be righteous with education, practice and natural goodness as methods of cultivating godliness. Philo, therefore, introduced the first paradigm shift from authentic hermeneutical approach, which replaced the meaning God intended with aberrant hermeneutical approach. Philo's

approach in turn introduced to the Western Church different meanings of scriptures given by a few elitist interpreters (Berthelot, 2012). This study sought to find out whether traces of such aberrant hermeneutics existed among *Akūrinū* believers.

Newton (1988) points out four stages of historical development of hermeneutics in church age, as follows: interpretive stage during which meaning of myths, legends and texts in human history developed regional hermeneutics; methodological stage during renaissance and reformation which developed general hermeneutics; phenomenological stage which emphasised that meaning of texts was derived mainly from religious experiences, which resulted in ontological hermeneutics; contemporary hermeneutics which includes systems of thought and perspectives such as philosophical, feminist, black, liberation, African and Asian hermeneutics, among others.

The relationship between principles of hermeneutics used to guide authentic interpretation of God's recorded truth and praxis as a bridge between academy and praxis in African Instituted Churches (AICs) from a critical and analytical approach is the focus of this study. Validation of Zimmermann's argument is the Jesus' own promise of involvement of the Holy Spirit in hermeneutics (John 16: 12-15, NKJV).

*12 "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 13 However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. 14 He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. 15 All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore, I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.*

Although God's truth may be contextualized differently by different people, the truth does not change because God is consistent with nature and character as revealed in scriptures. Biblical hermeneutics is the act of human engagement with a biblical text based on a certain theory in order to interpret God's truth and apply it (Davis 2020). In order to get that truth, interpreting the Bible correctly is important for any disciple of

Jesus Christ since the Bible is the written revelation of God's truth (2Tim 2:15, 2 Tim 3:16-17). The study focuses on four theological tasks of practical theology, namely descriptive, interpretive, evaluative and pragmatic (Osmer, 2008 & Schipani, 2020).

From a philosophical perspective, the study of how people acquire knowledge, its source and the nature is called epistemology (Hooper & Pitrich, 2004). McMahon (2013) argues that how a Bible interpreter comes to know what God said in the original Bible texts requires standard principles of interpretation. Major principles of hermeneutics developed by various scholars in the history of hermeneutics include but are not limited to the historical background principle/biblical context, grammatical principle, genre principle, harmony of scripture principle, one interpretation principle (a text has one meaning only), progressive revelation principle, scripture interprets scripture principle, the contextual principle and literal interpretation principle, and theological principle, among others. This study has used only genre, context and theological principles based on their dominance in the literature reviewed on *Akūrinū* believers.

When God's unchanging truth interacts with ever-changing culture, theology becomes contextual and sometimes reactionary (Chai, 2015). Theology is the science of divine things, from Greek noun *theo*, meaning God, and *logia*, meaning speech. Meanings of terms *theo* and *logia* are important in that biblical theology is based on God's written truth in the Bible and its content is from God as the divine personal being who spoke to or through the inspired human writers (2Tim 3:16-17 & 2Pet 1:20-21). The Bible is the authoritative, innerant and infallible word of God and therefore valid to make contextual theology biblical when applied corerctly. According to Marbaniang (2012), Contextualization is the interaction of God's truth with the people of faith in God as they apply God's truth in biblically faithful and culturally meaningful ways. However, the Bible informs us what is culturally relevant from a faith in God and the application of

biblical truth. Being biblically faithful involves what God said and how He said it. Limiting what God said in prophecy or in person about Jesus Christ limits contextualization of theology to Christ-centred worldview. In this study, biblical contextualization is centred on what God said about variables and related issues. According to (Mburu, 2019), an example is in Acts 17:17-34 where Paul uses cultural worldview as a bridge to theologically engage Greek philosophers to believe in Jesus Christ. Worldview of any Bible interpreter has implications on hermeneutics. African world was traditionally theistic.

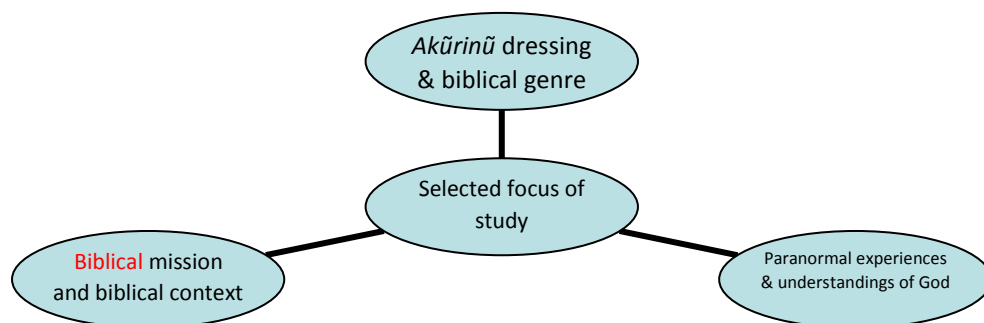
The Supreme God (implying there were other lesser gods), was the creator of the universe, the ultimate reality and humans had a transactional relationship with Him, such as providing rains but when He could not, rain-makers were the next source of help. Ndungu (2009) as one of the African voices who made efforts to have the Bible in Kikuyu language for effective hermeneutics but he led *Akūrinū* believers to use it to fight the white biblical missionaries who brought the Bible to them. However, syncretism was practised by some believers in *Akūrinū* community in using traditional healing methods. Use of Kikuyu language in *Akūrinū* churches was also partly a reaction against English language as language of the whites and partly for efficient hermeneutics by use of mother tongue. West and Dube (2021) call hermeneutics with specific cultural sensitivity inculturation hermeneutics. Kimathi (2019) affirms use of vernacular by *Akūrinū* as a way to fit practical theology into its context as a way of anchoring African theology on rich cultural wealth. Kimathi (2017) *Akūrinū* vernacular theology. However, *Akūrinū* believers need to use English and Kiswahili languages in urban contexts in order to strengthen her evangelical biblical mission (Acts 2:1-11 & 6: 1-4).

Hiebert (2008) argues from anthropological approach that people's worldviews change with time. Worldview is the invisible foundation in any culture. The four main elements

of worldview are logistics, epistemology, beliefs and categories/definition of a cultural unit. In the interest of this study, how truth and religion changes with each world view is of interest since *Akūrinū* believers were a product of multiple worldviews explained by Hiebert as small-scale oral sciences, peasant, modern, postmodern and global/postpost modern worldviews. Understanding of biblical worldview in which God’s truth was written interact with interpreter’s worldview in ways which enable the reader to apply God’s truth was necessary towards godly application by *Akūrinū* believers. Since contemporary worldviews change while the biblical worldview does not, embracing God according to biblical truth provides opportunity for living godly (biblical contextualization) in any cultural worldview. When the sources of the four elements that make a worldview (logics, epistemology, beliefs and categories) is God as recorded in the Bible, it is called biblical worldview. Why is one’s worldview important? Because worldview helps to interpret the world which informs a lifestyle. Lifestyle has visible and invisible/spiritual indicators. Among *Akūrinū* believers, turban is the visible indicator of their worldview. Beliefs and doctrines that inform beliefs had to be investigated since they were intrinsic. The narrative of Hiebert’s model to guide study of humans was adopted and contextualized as presented in Figure 1.

**Figure 1**

*Pictorial Innovation of Hiebert’s Model for Study of Humans*



Source: Author (2023)

African voices argue that multiple realities informed African traditional worldviews. Upon receiving Jesus Christ as saviour, multiple worldviews informed their hermeneutics, resulting in syncretic lifestyle among some Christian believers. According to Bediako (2004), traditional African communities were holistic as mythical cult of ancestors. The dead and the living were actively interactive as members of one community. Ceremonies (birth, naming, initiation rites to adulthood, marriage and burial) ensured continuity. Among other possible causes, this myth of the cult of ancestors explains why some Christians in African Instituted Churches (AICs) were syncretic in their contextualization of theology. Epistemology was primarily based on experience. Philosophically, empiricism informed African hermeneutics.

However, this myth of unbiblical afterlife can be used as a bridge to introduce Jesus Christ as the guarantee of continuity of life in heaven to those who trust Him as their Lord and saviour (John 14:1-5, 11:25). As a Contextualization skill as a missiological task of the church. Mbiti (2015) explained that traditionally, African religion was the way of life. One was born into it. Preaching of Christ for salvation in order to have revelation of God was foreign. Hermeneutics was done as cultural consensus. Mphahlele & Ngwa (2019) add that African hermeneutics was dialogical and cultural in that African theologians interpret the Bible to see God as involved in social-cultural, economic and artefacts and mentifacts. In the light of the foregoing explanations, principles of biblical hermeneutics would have to change the worldview informed by Kikuyu traditions while interpreting the Bible for contextualization to be biblical among *Akūrinū* believers. However, since God's truth is already written in the Bible, details on how to get it right (correct interpretation) precede Contextualization.

However, (Zuck, 2002 & Van der Merwe, 2015) have raised some challenges to correct Bible interpretation. There exists spiritual gap between interpreter's ability to interact

with God for the Holy Spirit's help to interpret God's truth. Contemporary Bible interpreter is confronted by the time gap due to historical differences between time when the Bible was written and time the interpreter is accessing recorded truth. The Bible was written within various cultures, such as Africa and Middle East (Exodus, et. al), Palestine and Europe (Acts, Romans, Thessalonians) and Babylon (Esther, Daniel), creating a cultural gap between contemporary Bible readers. Literary gap (use of different writing styles, genre) such as poetic style which the interpreter may not be familiar with challenge every Bible interpreter. Geographical gap and language gap have to be confronted. Some biblical content is usually lost through the translation of the Bible from one language to another or the interpreter's limited competences in language, among others. There are other challenges such as different versions of the Bible in the same language or differences in the academic disciplines such as philosophy, theology, linguistic or legal theorists to which the interpreter belongs (Zimmermann, 2015). This study does not focus on the mitigation of the said gaps but it does acknowledge their existence as some of factors that might have influenced results negatively or positively. The implication is that knowing the scientific principles of hermeneutics does not guarantee that any Bible interpreter will get God's truth perfectly.

Lantz (2012) and (Ramm, 2012) have categorised hermeneutics into two. Hermeneutics of science refers to use of standard principles/rules of hermeneutics to draw God's authentic truth from the biblical passage as God intended readers or hearers of all time. Hermeneutics of art refers to skills of the interpreter to use these principles and apply the truth obtained. Ludd (2013) adds that hermeneutics is an art because the skills applied are to interpret biblical texts are unsystematic or subjective manner. This results in non-authentic interpretation, called aberrant hermeneutics. Whenever a Bible reader or hearer

gets the truth in a Bible passage as God intended to communicate through writers, this process and application are called biblical hermeneutics in this study.

Synthesis of principles which guide an interpreter of the Bible toward getting God's truth in this study was based on contributions of several scholars, notably; Haselhorst (2000), Augustine cited by Black (2008), Berkhof (2016). Berkhof (2016) notes that when interpreting prophetic genre, words of prophet are to be taken literally unless the prophet uses symbols. Kaiser (1996) adds that some prophecies in the Old Testament had one current meaning while other texts had current and future meanings. Graham (2002) has defined context as the circumstances in which the text was written. The context of each text needs to be harmonised with wider context of biblical truth on the same subject in order to get unity of God's truth for accurate understanding of the meaning of a biblical text. Augustine (cited by Black, 2008) noted that difficult texts are to be interpreted by using clear texts in other contexts, which discuss the same subject, which Berkhof (2016) calls historical principle, but in this study, it is called biblical context. Grammatical principle pays attention to grammar of the text. In biblical hermeneutics, grammar and context must agree. Theological principle focuses on theological themes in the biblical text with reference to what it reveals about who God. Krejcir (2006) has defined genre as the writing style in any written work in any language for the purpose of effective communication to readers. Use of genre to get specific meaning from a text is called genre principle.

In this study, genre, historical context and theological principle (understandings of God) were selected for the purpose of investigation of relationships between each of them and the ways *Akūrinū* believers contextualise their theology because of dominance of interpretive and contextual issues expressed in theological literature on African Instituted churches (AICs). Reviewed literature suggests that *Akūrinū* believers fall under AICs.



For acceptance or rejection of this suggestion, selected principles of hermeneutics are re-named without changing their basic meanings. Genre principle was simply stated as genre, historical background principle as biblical context and theological principle as called understandings of God.

The relationships studied in-depth among *Akūrinū* believers are genre and dressing of *Akūrinūs*, biblical context and fulfilment of *Akūrinū* biblical mission, understandings of God and use of paranormal experiences among *Akūrinū* believers. Moberly (2000) has argued that any believer who uses sacred writings as source of truth from their deity is justified to seek truth from that deity in order to apply it correctly. Based on this justification, there was need for correct interpretation of the Bible as God's written revelation of His truth that inform right doctrine (orthodoxy) leading to Christian faith (orthocardia) which is contextualised by Christian believers as Christian practice in all matters of life (orthopraxy). Use of the foregoing principles guides Bible interpreters towards God's truth and therefore promotes biblical hermeneutics whereas non-use of the same promotes aberrant hermeneutics. Aberrant hermeneutics leads to contextual theologies whose indicators include church splits, cults, weakening of witness for Jesus Christ (Acts 1:8) and different understandings of God, among others.

### **1.1.1 A Study done in America**

In America, study done by Itula-Abumele, (2014) whose respondents were American hippies who converted to Christianity indicated that Christ can transform cultural dressing when hermeneutics is authentic. At first, other Christians in the same congregations accepted them gradually as God transformed these former hippies into godly men and women, resulting in adjusted outward dress. In contrast, study done by Hume (2013) revealed that breakaway Mennonite Amish believers in North America were not guided by biblical hermeneutics but by extra-biblical convictions which led

them to assign subjective meaning to black attire to signify their separation from the wider culture as indicators of humility, modesty, orderliness and social equality. Migliore (2004) notes that for contextual theology to remain biblical, Christians are to live in tension between dynamics of culture God's unchanging truth since God is immutable (Mal. 3:6). However, not all cultural dressing promote sin in any culture.

### **1.1.2 Studies done in Africa**

In Africa, studies done by Bediako, (2010), Ikechukwu, (2016) and Wunch (2015), among others, revealed a prevalence of aberrant hermeneutics through contextual theologies in AIC churches. In an effort to mitigate aberrant hermeneutics, Wunch (2015) has recommended four changes Christian theologians in Africa need to make in order to effectively contextualise the five principles of hermeneutics afore-mentioned in this study. First, a shift from reactive hermeneutics that stands against all standard principles of biblical interpretation to use of the same in doing contextual theology, with emphasis on application of God's truth. Second, academic interpreters need to interact with Christians who seek to apply God's word in their daily lives in an effective way in order to help them interpret and apply the Bible in all matters of life.

Third, studies revealed that the African interpretative approach was focused on working of God's truth in experiences of everyday life (praxeology) unlike the Western focus on seeing the Bible as patterns of belief as intellectual truth (Stinton, 2010 ed. of Bendiako; Ikechukwu, 2016). To correct this error, Christians in Africa need to allow God's truth to rule over human domains of spirit, reason, emotions, actions, cultural religious experiences and relationships while doing contextual theology. Fourth, contextualization of biblical texts that inform theology of dressing, paranormal religious experience and biblical mission of AICs in their communities should involve all Christians in the process of interpreting the Bible, academicians and non-academicians, in real life issues (Poon et

al., 2016). To mitigate the dichotomy between academic theologians in theological institutions and other non-trained Christians, training all Christian to use objective principles of hermeneutics to interpret the Bible correctly is a theological reform strategy needed in AIC churches. The concerns raised by Wunch (2015) support the observation that use of selected principles of hermeneutics is an attempt to harmonise various interpretive approaches which exist among Western theologians, Eastern theologians and African in their theological tasks so that the church of Jesus Christ move towards the unity of God's truth, faith in God and practice of godliness. However, there are deeper issues besides training, specifically cultural differences such as gender, age, ethnicity, traditional beliefs, language, level of education, identity preservation, individualism collectivism cultures, urbanization and worldviews in conflict. Among others (Oyewole, 2022 & Rohrbauph, 2023).

Among African voices, Sakupapa (2018) notes that John Mbiti (1931-2019), Kwame Bendiako (1945-2008), Jesse Mugambi (b. 1947) and Mercy Aduyoye (b. 1934) made three common contributions in formulation of African Christian theology. First, these scholars identified four approaches used in African Christian theology towards contextualization of Christianity in African settings, namely; inculturation, translation, reconstruction and women's theology. Second, they made efforts to decolonise African theology from Western cultural expressions by replacing it with traditional African expressions, which emphasised on a religious experience unlike Western emphasis on the intellectual study of God. These African scholars named churches started by Africans in African continent as African Instituted Churches (AICs). The third emphasis was on theological reflection from an African perspective (the process of finding God in human experience). Among studies on AICs, little has been done on the relationship between biblical hermeneutics and contextual theology that is biblical in empirical terms. This

study sought to fill this knowledge gap. The relationship between hermeneutics and contextual theology that emerges in African Instituted Churches (AICs) with a specific study on contextualised theology of Akūrinū believers in Nairobi County is the emphasis of this study.

Studies done in Botswana by Kealotswe (2014) reveal that hermeneutics of AICs interpreted the Bible using four levels of hermeneutics, namely, spiritual sense (allegorical), holiness of life (moral), plain sense (literal) and analogical sense. It implies that a text has to be interpreted in those four senses to assign spiritual meanings (allegorical), plain sense, holiness in life (moral) and subjective comparisons rose from African culture (analogical sense). Results indicated that believers in AICs believed the Bible is the word of God but God revealed His truth to them through African prophets in their respective congregations by speaking to them as interpreters of Jewish prophetic writings in the Old Testament and New Testament writings to their church members. These African prophets integrated parts of Mosaic Law and rituals with traditional similarities and other selected scriptures to form a syncretic system of theology. Studies indicated that experiential approaches to interpretation, which informed the contextual theology of AICs seemed to be biblical. However, literature revealed mystical tendencies among AICs. There was a need for biblical approach to hermeneutics based on, at least, three scientific principles of hermeneutics needed to mitigate this challenge among Akūrinū believers.

An empirical study done in West Africa by Diop and Merunka (2013) revealed that beside attribution of mystical powers to dressing, misuse of prophecy and visions, the tension between loyalty to two cultures was real. Muslims and Christians preferred to use traditional dress for religious meetings because it made them feel closer to God and Western clothing for work because it made them feel part of modern culture. This

finding suggested that culture has a moderating effect on factors that affect contextual theology.

Strohbehn (2016) studied Zionist churches in Malawi as an example of African Instituted Churches (AICs). The findings included two salient features, namely, extra-biblical claims of reliance on the Holy Spirit and prophetic leadership. In East Africa, AICs emphasize Jewish doctrines, beliefs, laws and practices based on selected Old Testament theological themes, notably Holy Spirit speaking to believers through paranormal experiences (dreams, visions and prophecy). African prophets who rely on the Holy Spirit and prayer receive truth from God and interpret various matters of believers' life as commandments of God (Anderson, 2003).

### **1.1.3 Studies done in Kenya**

In Kenya, an AIC religious group, Legio Maria, believe there is a relationship between the type of dress and the attraction of the Holy Spirit to the one wearing (Kustenbauder, 2009). However, (Kustenbauder, 2009) argues that there is no relationship between attraction of the Holy Spirit and the believer in God as a doctrine in the Bible. Some of the indicators of the AICs include emphasis on distorted theology of dressing, reliance on paranormal religious experiences (prophecy, dreams and visions) and sense of prophetic and priestly biblical mission to African communities as contemporary the Jewish people in Africa and rhythmic singing, among others (Njeri, 1984; Waigwa, 2007). Cloud (2017) notes that Christians dress according to godly convictions, which are based on pure conscience toward God. This observation agreed with God's truth that godly convictions come from the Holy Spirit (John 16:8). Being sensitive to effect of one's clothing on others is important (Roberts, 2015). According to Ayegboyin and Ishola (1997), characteristics of AICs include emphasis on prayer, spiritual, experiences of the Holy Spirit, divine healing, attention given to women in leadership, free ways of

worship, evangelism and revival, non-rigid administrative structures and African world-view among others. Historical development of hermeneutics informs us whether challenges in hermeneutics and contextualization studied among Akūrinū believers had a historical background beyond the history of Akūrinū believers or they were a new development in the area of study.

Literature reviewed on Akūrinūtheolgy indicates that Akūrinū believers are a group of African Instituted Churches (AICs) since they display characteristics of AICs in their theology.

#### **1.1.4 Akūrinū believers are not a cult**

Zukeran (2003) highlights main doctrinal, characteristics sociological structure and outreach focus of a cult that claims to be Christian group as follows: First, believers gather around a person who misinterprets scriptures. Second, the person has unlimited authority over theological life of the followers. Third, the sole interpreter of the Bible selects certain scriptures upon which he or she builds theology of believing folloers. Fourth, cults have distorted view of doctrines of trinity, Jesus Christ, salvation, heaven, hell, and followers do not know when they have enough to saved. Fifth, their dominnering leader tells them that they are the only ones with extra-biblical revelation, usually accessed progressively. Sixth, the cultic believers do not socially mingle with other evangelical Christians or non-christians in several aspects of their secret life. Seventh, cultic believers live under fear of judgement, strict legalism and commitment to evangelism of winning people to their group, not to Jesus Christ. Based on Zukeran's checklist, Akūrinū believers are not a cult. Like any evangelical Christian group, Akūrinū believers display some theological departures from purely biblical Christianity as literature and results of this study indicate.

### **1.1.5 Theological studies on Akūrinū believers in Kenya**

Akūrinū denomination in Kenya is a typical example of African Instituted Churches (AICs). According to Ndungu (edited in West and Dube). According to Njeri (1984), Akūrinū believers consider their dressing to have mystical power, including sanctification before God. Culture has moderated hermeneutics of Akūrinū believers. Initially, Akūrinū s rejected Western clothes and wore skins but they accepted Western dress with time. Their religious dressing is mystical notes, those Akūrinū believers believe in the sanctity of their attire. Akūrinū believers could not buy second-hand clothes because they are contaminated with sins of non-Akūrinū users and this would make Akūrinū users spiritually unclean. Akūrinū prayer leader (*muhoi*) in Kikuyu) must sanctify new clothes through prayer before Akūrinū believers wear them. Literature reviewed on Akūrinū theolgy indicates valuable meanings on dressing, notably turban, commitment to fulfilment of God-given biblical mission. Akūrinū laws of ritual cleanliness reveal a mix of Judaic and Kikuyu doctrines, beliefs and applications in life. Akūrinū believers have multiple theological meanings of dressing, notably the turban, commitment to fulfilment of God-given biblical mission as interpreted by Akūrinū prophets and church leaders in general.

Macharia (2012) notes that Akūrinū church was born in Kikuyu land through a triad of Kikuyu Christian prophets (“arathi”), dreamers (“aroti”) and visionaries as those to whom God spoke using prophecies, dreams and visions. The unbelievers would mock them asking who the redeemer was (“mukuuri nuu”?). The dreamers would then answer that Jesus was the redeemer. Reportedly, the trio had fellowships in which the Holy Spirit taught them in prophecies, dreams and visions. With time, they were called “Akūrinū” (redeemers) by public, which thought the preachers were the redeemers, not Jesus whom they could not see. Generally, the level of education was very low among

these groups of believers who proclaimed Jesus as the redeemer (*mũkũũri*). With time, they were called the *Akũrinũ* (redeemers) by the public, which thought the preachers were the redeemers, not Jesus whom they could not see. More men went to school later than women because more women left the faith as they went to higher levels of schooling. Many parents had convictions that their daughters would rather marry early while in the faith after class 8 or highest in form 4 than turning away from *Akũrinũ* faith in college or University. Theological training took place in “*gaarũ*” (hall where theological training took place). Training would take several days and it was done by experienced prophets. Shallow trainings took place as seminars lasting for an hour or a day in sanctuaries by clergy or lay leaders. “*Gaarũs*” were in rural areas because of space. *Akũrinũ* believers understood God as communicator to *Akũrinũ* faith community mainly through dreams, visions and prophecy. The three main means of communication are called paranormal experiences (Njeri (1984), Ndungu (1994), Waigwa (2007) and Macharia (2012).

Wanyoike (2016) notes that the turban is a symbol of *Akũrinũ* s’ identity. It has mystical connection between the believer and God. It also symbolises holiness, cleanliness and righteousness. This mystical belief may replace the biblical teaching that God’s righteous is received through repentance from sin and faith in Jesus Christ as saviour (Rom. 5:15-19) and no symbols should be added. Study done by Waigwa (2007) further narrates the *Akũrinũ* belief that a married *Akũrinũ* believer, Lilian Njeri, received instruction through a vision from God in 1927 to wear white sash (*gacuka* in Kikuyu) around her chest during the day. This event became the theological basis that all married *Akũrinũ* women must wear the sash and that God would use it to communicate to them his will for their daily lives. In essence, the sash became a mystical medium of God’s revelation. Macharia (2012) adds that women were included in prophetic leadership because of this



encounter between Lilian Njeri and God to introduce new prophetic guidance on Akūrinū attire.

Ndungu (1994) has highlighted the theological and scia Akūrinū believers believed that the Holy Spirit communicates to them through their prophets concerning doctrine, faith and practice by the means of prophecy, dreams and visions to identify and interpret colours, symbols and numbers to be attached to dressing. These specifications had temporal and eschatological theological significance. Recent works of Ndungu (in West and Dube, 2021) indicate that Akūrinū churches have a male-dominated leadership. However, Akūrinū females compensate for biblically supported oppression by their males in leadership by being stronger than their men in prophesy, and other ministries of the Holy Spirit. Akūrinū prophetesses have been said to prophesy over marriage partners. The Bible has been translated into Kikuyu language to made language friendly for those who cannot read or speak English fluently. Two proposals to mitigate the challenge are promotion of education among females to empower them in all aspects that require education, including ability to read the Bible for themselves. Theological leaders need to write commentaries of vernacular Bibles in respective dialects in Africa as additional resources to help AIC believers to interpret the Bible more competently for quality life by the church.

General Conference of *Akūrinū* Churches Association was formed in 2016 to harmonise diversity in doctrines, beliefs and practices among *Akūrinū* believers (GeCACA, 2016). *Akūrinū* churches registered with under the conference include African Holy Ghost Christian Church, Holy Ghost Christian Church of East Africa, *Aūkrino* Worship Reformation, Christian Fellowship, Israel and Africa Kenya Israel, among others. Names of churches reflected multiple theological emphases, spirituality and biblical mission of *Akūrinū* believers. GeCACA constitution indicated reforms

needed and qualification of clergy responsible for reform-oriented ministries without strategy of achieving the same. Waigwa (2007) notes that “*Akūrinū* did not have any structures, constitutions and doctrines to guide church activities as the Holy Spirit did everything” (Waigwa, 2007, p.113). Specifically, objective viii of GeCACA constitution seeks to “facilitate members for effective expression of the *Akūrinū* faith and the Christian doctrines, over all aspects of human life” (GeCACA Constitution and By-Laws, 2016, Appendix V, p.1). Complaints rose in *Akūrinū*’s online article, ‘*Akūrinū* Must Change’ (GeCACA’s comment, 2015) calling certain *Akūrinū* believers to repent of sins based on faulty moral teachings. GeCACA leaders were clear in their expression of what they desired to become (normative dimension).

In words in the preamble: “We the members of the *Akūrinū* community of Churches, Honouring the Will of God in our Special Calling, Acknowledging His Supremacy, appreciating our special calling, the Diversity and the uniqueness in our Calling, exercising our Historical role of interceding for our nation and Realizing that our diversity and unique calling merits an appropriately constituted National body” (GeCACA Constitution and By-Laws, 2016, Appendix V, p.1. Gitahi (2019) notes that *Akūrinū* believers in Nyandarua County were criticised for their dressing, poverty, low level of education, not greeting people, not going to hospital and walking for long distances, among others. These complaints affected their evangelistic work negatively. Waigwa (2007) adds that *Akūrinū* believers believe that the Holy Spirit uses dreams and visions and prophecy to reveal colours, which allegorise (represent) spiritual, theological and social meanings. The white colour on *Akūrinū* flag symbolises their purity before God, red for their cleanliness by the blood of Jesus, green for their former life in sin contrasted with yellow for the current activity of Holy Spirit in their lives.

White (2009) argues that the outcome of the sound hermeneutical process leads to sound interpretation that eventually results in biblical and systematic theologies contextualised by believers in their lived experiences in the market place. Failure to abide by scientifically verifiable principles results in erroneous doctrines and beliefs, which often lead to unbiblical Contextualization of the same.

Scholars such as Njeri (1984) and Ndungu (1994), among others, have provided anthropology of *Akūrinū* faith and their history. Within *Akūrinū* community, efforts to mitigate problems interpretation of dressing, biblical mission and differences in the understanding of God, among others, led to the formation of GeCACA in 2016 which proposed a constitution to work towards mitigation of the said challenges. However, phenomenological evidence, such as church splits, and literature indicate that the problem exists. Available literature was on anthropology and history of *Akūrinū* denomination, leaving a knowledge gap of lack of study on the relationship between how *Akūrinū* believers do hermeneutics (interpretive task of practical theology) and how they contextualised their theology (pragmatic dimension of practical theology), suggesting that a correlation problem existed.

Based on biblical justification, such as Jude 1:3-4, John 17:3 and Matt. 28:18-20, among others, Contextualization of God's truth follows the process of being accessed by believers in God, internalised and then applied in life by the believer. There was a need to investigate the relationship between selected principles of biblical hermeneutics and contextual theology in African Instituted Churches: A Case of *Akūrinū* believers in Nairobi County, Kenya.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

Based on normative dimension of practical theology, proper interpretation of biblical texts reveals God's objective truth to the believers, which should inform their contextualized theology in various matters, such as dressing, fulfilment of God-given biblical mission, use of paranormal religious experiences, unity in marriage and biblical leadership, among others, in their praxis. Specifically, it is the outcome of God's unchanging truth as recorded in the scripture (biblical orthodoxy), which informs the biblical faith (orthocardia) which results in biblical practice (orthopraxy). Relationship between interpretation of scripture and Akurinu theology needed to be filled. The problem was inaccurate praxis mainly in dressing, fulfilment of biblical mission and use of paranormal experiences among Akurinu believers. The problem resulted in lived *Akūrinū* theology instead of biblical contextual theology. The existence of multiple truths which informed praxis caused the problem. The problem affected the whole *Akūrinū* community as indicated by theological needs stated in Akūrinū constitution, such as to restore "one Church, one calling, and one faith: united in purpose and to nurture a common understanding of the Akūrinū faith and biblical mission; promote the historical role as pertains our special calling," (GeCACA, 2016, appendix V, p. 1). If this problem continued, challenges of theological diversity reflected in contextualization of *Akūrinū* lived theology would continue. From a biblical perspective, it is a God-given mandate to every believer in Christ to 'contend for the faith' and remain in 'common salvation' (Jude 3-4), have eternal life through true knowledge of the only true God (John 17:3) and fulfil the main biblical mission of making disciples of Christ (Matt. 28:18-20). The clarity of the relationship between accurate interpretation of the Bible and biblical contextualization considered effective towards addressing unbiblical contextualization of theology among *Akūrinū* believers. It is against this backdrop that

this study sought to undertake a study on ‘Relationship between selected principles of Biblical Hermeneutics and lived contextual theology in African Instituted Churches: A Case of *Akūrinū* believers in Nairobi County, Kenya.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

#### **1.3.1 Main Objective of the study**

To investigate the relationship between biblical hermeneutics and contextual theology among *Akūrinū* believers in Nairobi County.

#### **1.3.2 Specific Objectives of the Study**

- i. To assess the relationship between biblical genre and theology of dressing among *Akūrinū* believers.
- ii. To explore the relationship between biblical context and fulfilment of biblical mission among *Akūrinū* believers.
- iii. To examine the relationship between *Akūrinū* believers’ understandings of God and their use of paranormal experiences.
- iv. To determine the moderating effect of culture on theology of dressing, fulfilment of biblical mission and role of paranormal experiences among *Akūrinū* believers.

### **1.4 Research Hypotheses**

- H1. There is no statistically significant relationship between biblical genre and theology of dressing among *Akūrinū* believers.
- H2. There is no statistically significant relationship between biblical context and fulfilment of biblical mission among *Akūrinū* believers.
- H3. There is no statistically significant relationship between *Akūrinū* believers’ understandings of God and their use of paranormal experiences.

H4. There is no significant moderating effect of culture on theology of dressing, fulfilment of biblical mission and paranormal experiences among *Akūrinū* believers.

### **1.5 Justification for the Study**

The motivation behind this study was to add new knowledge and research methods to the anthropological, sociological, historical and theological content and methods used predominantly in studies on *Akūrinū* believers. Since each academic discipline has its approach, language and purpose, anthropological, sociological and historical information has been made available to people outside the denomination. Scholars such as Njeri (1984) used anthropological approach whereas Ndungu (1994) focused on history of beliefs and practices of *Akūrinū* believers. From a theological perspective, little has been studied on relationship between how *Akūrinū* believers do hermeneutics and how they contextualize results in their theology. Literature reviewed suggested that dynamic and key indicators such as sacred aspects of *Akūrinū* dressing, role of dreams and visions as prophecy (paranormal experiences), and fulfilment of biblical mission, among others, were outcomes of hermeneutics of *Akūrinū* believers. Although all theology is contextual and dynamic aspect of any culture, *Akūrinū* believers reflected hermeneutical challenges, which were suspected to be the main cause of these features of *Akūrinū* lived theology.

### **1.6 Significance of the study**

Significance of the study indicates why this study was needed, specific contribution it made to the field of practical theology and its benefits. In the previous studies on AICs, most scholars focused on tracing the origins (anthropology) and historical development of AICs as a specific denomination or a group in particular geographical region in Africa (Njeri, 1984, Ndungu 1994, et al.). Methods used were mainly qualitative

techniques, narrative in nature, but neglected emphasis that God's absolute truth could be contextualized in AICs. Wunch (2015) emphasized on the need for change in African theology from theory to practice. Kealotswe (2014) recommended that principles of hermeneutics should be used to correct allegorical hermeneutics but did not explain why and how. There was a gap in investigation of existing relationships between variables which this study sought to fill. A unique contribution was new knowledge on Akūrinū lived theology, based on quantitative and qualitative methods in the field of practical theology. Notably, the use of binary logistic regression to test the hypothesis to verify the extent to which believers in AICs embraced God's absolute truth as opposed to falsehood in a postmodern age that rejects all absolute truth claims and how the use of selected principles of hermeneutics can be used to mitigate this theological challenge. Specifically, the findings were expected to benefit religious researchers, theologians, educators and inform policy among Akūrinū leaders and believers as a unique contribution on the relationship between theological reflection and practice of theology in the church and the world.

### **1.7 Scope of the Study**

Scope refers to the boundaries of study (Uttarakhand Open University, 2019). The study was limited to the relationship between selected principles of hermeneutics and contextual theology among *Akūrinū* believers. The study was carried out in Nairobi County. The population of study was 2600 *Akūrinū* believers from which 328 were sampled to fill out the questionnaire and 18 leaders to participate in the in-depth interviews, as the target population provided by GeCACA office in 2018. Vonk (2017) designates target population as a complete set of possible respondents in a study, known as *Akūrinū* believers and leaders in this study. GeCACA leadership in office were designated as; national chairman and assistant, secretary general, national treasurer,

national chairman-youth department, chairperson-advisory council, national youth patron and director of programmes, organizing secretary-programmes, national coordinator-events and coordination, and national chairperson-women conference (GeCACA, 2016). Based on the responsibilities of GeCACA leaders, the source of the target population was the reliable and so was the population given.

### **1.8 Limitations of the Study**

Limitations were identified and mitigated. The *Akūrinū* believers sampled had their unique strengths, weaknesses, and cultures and widely spread. Triangulation of instruments mitigated this limitation. This limitation was mitigated by sampling *Akūrinū* churches in Nairobi, which were registered in GeCACA. These churches had some members who were involved in national leadership. Belief system of the *Akūrinū believers* was homogeneous and receptive to the researcher, which was an advantage during data collection. The researcher further mitigated this limitation by requesting for support of leaders of *Akūrinū* believers and being non-judgmental in this study. Critical incidents and implications on the achievement of objectives were encountered. Lack of enough females with competences in the English language, two leaders refused to allow research to be carried out in their congregations. Selecting another GeCACA congregation within the same sub-County where negative reactions of some clergy emerged was an application of adaptive sampling since total respondents were sampled based on theological groups. *Akūrinū* research assistants were used because they were accepted by other *Akūrinū* believers. The assistants helped a few ladies to interpret English into Kiswahili and Kikuyu during the self-administered question sessions. This adaptive strategy enabled the researcher to collect adequate and reliable data, which enhanced the validity of results.



During data collection, the researcher encountered four main challenges and used appropriate mitigation strategies for each challenge. First, use of Kikuyu language in all congregations since all liturgies excluded other language groups. Second, the congregations with name 'Israel' were predominantly composed of believers whose highest level of education was predominantly primary level, Class 8 and few F4 respondents at secondary school level. Third, *Akūrinū* believers in the congregations using "Israel" as the name of their congregations had lower education in general, were more phobic about giving information to the researcher and more reliant on visions, dreams, prophecy and teachings of leaders as a set of principles of hermeneutics. *Akūrinū* believers with more education did not see themselves as extension of Israelites in Kenya. This challenge was mitigated by the use of adaptive sampling by adjusting stratified sample based on the availability of respondents with education from class eight and above, proportionate sampling by gender and working with leaders to explain what was to be done on the questionnaire and deal with fear of releasing *Akūrinū* secrets to non-*Akūrinūs*. Fourth, the last challenge was the availability of church members due to joint religious services in different locations, which were attributed to the Holy Spirit's direction, especially the churches with name 'Israel'. As long as perbiblical mission was granted to the researcher by top leadership, this challenge was mitigated by patience in data collection by waiting until normal services resumed in such congregations.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter examines existing literature under key subheadings, notably, research objectives, theoretical and empirical review of literature on hermeneutics in relation to contextual theology and conceptual framework, summary of reviewed literature and emergent research gaps.

##### **2.1.1 Theoretical Foundations of Practical Theology in Relation to Contextualized Hermeneutic**

Swinton and Mowat (2016) argues that foundations of practical theology are seeking truth, reflecting theologically, interpreting situations, complexify situations, understanding situations, autonomy and unity, meaning of our practices, techno-theology, the telos of our practices and content of our practices, among others.

There was need for accurate interpretation of texts of the Bible informed by traditional African worldview rather than Western worldview which informs interpreters seeking to contextualize theology biblically in African Instituted Churches (AICs) and in churches founded in Africa as extensions of denominations based on Western worldview. Research-based theological and philosophical discussions by African scholars in respective fields are useful resources towards meeting this need for biblical contextual hermeneutics. Since African converts into Christianity, Western biblical missionaries and biblical texts they used in presentation of the Gospel had three different world views, would theological and philosophical beliefs and realities in each worldview run into conflict unless they were constructively harmonized? This is the question which several African scholars have made attempts to answer as African voices committed to providing

biblically contextualized hermeneutic to guide the church of Jesus Christ in Africa as an ongoing iast in the field of practical theology.

The main goal of biblical hermeneutics should be to identify and use standard interpretive skills which facilitate acquisition of God's truth in the biblical text and flexible methods of its application in lived experiences of the interpreter based on the assumption that the interpreter is a committed practicing Christian in his or her African contemporary contexts (West & Dube, 2021). Mburu (2019) has defined contextualized biblical hermeneutics as a dynamic process of innovatively adjusting methods of application of God's unchanging truth from a biblical text in culturally-relevant ways.

Hermeneutic principles are not static in their utilization because each cultural context is unique in its worldview, theological and philosophical beliefs which inform their practices. based of a metaphor of a four- legged traditional African stool (Mburu, 2019). Innovatively, each leg represents a specific context to be considered by the Bible interpreter in order to support application as the top of the stool. Graphically, Figure 2 adds visual power to the discussion.

**Figure 2**

*Innovative illustration of Mburu (2019) four-legged hermeneutical model, GITURUA: Traditional Kikuyu Stool. Left: Beecher 1942, Right: Kiambu*



Source: Wordpress.com (2014)

These four contexts as four interrelated steps are: The parallels to African contexts (working from known to unknown), the theological context (who God is to the people), the literary context (genre or writing style in which a text is written) and the historical context (when the context in Bible was written. and cultural context (the cultural community. Ultimate reality as supreme God, physical reality as observable aspects of life and how human relationship dynamics were in African traditional communities are worthy looking at.

According to Mbiti (2015), theological beliefs included living humans interacting with the spirits of the dead ancestors as part of their spiritual life. There were sky spirits in charge of weather. Spirits were accessed by witches and medicine men. African prophets and priests accessed the Supreme God when spirits failed to address a widespread and life-threatening pestilence like drought as transactional God, not relational. The Supreme God was the creator of the earth but He did not interfere with human life. Mbiti demonstrates that Africans had an organized religion which Christian biblical missionaries would have used to build bridges towards introduction of church in Africa.

Whereas Mburu (2019) agrees with Mbiti on these few among many theological beliefs, she adds that African philosophical beliefs on reality were mainly three. God was the ultimate reality. External reality comprised of God, other spirits, ancestors, physical objects and God all lived together on earth. This was a holistic worldview. Human relationships were communal. An individual was incomplete without others in his or her community based on the philosophical concept of *ubuntu*. Ubuntu meant that life of an individual is expressed fully within the contexts of relationship with others in his or her community. In words of Lefa (2015, abstract), “Ubuntu is actually regarded as the soul force that drives almost every facet of societal life in African societies and that create the

relationship between the African community”. Biblical parallels were in line with ubuntu philosophy. In Acts 2: 42-47, for example, individual Christians expressed their faith in Jesus Christ daily in fellowship, doctrine, holy communion and prayers. Whereas urban and rural lives differ in contemporary African communities, this biblical worldview was (still is) helpful in the the church.

However, Western parallels were slightly different as presented in the life of the biblical missionaries in Africa in that the emphasis was on individuals expressing their faith individually which inevitably gave room for competitive performance in contemporary church. Most scholars agree that there are more individualistic persons in the West and more communal persons in Sub-Saharan Africa Metz (2015). In both traditional and Western societies, God was needed as transactional being without much relational emphasis. The contemporary prosperity gospel interpreters may use Luke 6:38 in their pursuit for God as transactional God to limit this text to money whereas it applies to every kind of giving, including intercessory prayers, ministry time to people, love and kindness, to mention a few. An example of power of distorted view of God is Luke 6: 38. “Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.” This discussion informs objective three in this study.

Biblical hermeneutics result in accurate contextualization by adapting the unchanging biblical truth to various cultural contexts. Stovell & Porter, eds. (2012) argue that there are five taxonomies (classifications) of hermeneutics. Each taxonomy reflects a paradigm shift in method, purposes and theological outcomes of hermeneutics in church history. The first two are historical-critical/grammatical view focuses on the history behind the text by analysing the grammar and syntax of the original text. First, the purpose and outcome of historical-critical method are to extract God’s original truth and apply it to

the contemporary context without changing that truth. The Bible interpreter attempts to get God's truth expressed by the original authors in the respective biblical texts. Second, grammatical methods focus on meaning of words, phrases, semantics (meaning of words) and syntax. Purposes and outcomes include correct translation and interpretation of biblical truth.

The danger of giving words different or spiritual meanings has led to unauthentic interpretation of scriptures and different versions of the same language use different words. Third, philosophical hermeneutics has persisted in the postmodern church as an assertion that all truth is relative as an aspect of process theology. However, God is not evolutionary, neither is His truth, as Haught (2018) tries to argue that increase in human intelligence is an evidence of ongoing subjective evolution. If applied as a theology of dressing, every *Akūrinū* believer would wear whatever one interprets to be personally proper interpretation of biblical texts on dress codes, dreams, visions, prophecy and understanding of God's biblical mission would be given meanings subjectively. Although there exists differences in interpretation of scriptures, *Akūrinū* believers do not intentionally use philosophical hermeneutics. Fourth, theological hermeneutics focuses on who God is and what He does since He is consistent in nature and character. *Akūrinū* believers use this method as literature reveals. Fifth, literary /genre focuses on style of writing of a text. This study has focused on the use of historical context, genre and theological principles based on attempted hermeneutical methods among *Akūrinū* believers as literature reveals.

Van der Merwe, (2015) has discussed principles of hermeneutics based on the premise that Bible truth is normative truth that informs faith and practice among any believers in in God according to the Bible. The historical background principle, grammatical principle, genre principle, harmony of scripture principle, one interpretation principle (a

text has one meaning only), progressive revelation principle, scripture interprets scripture principle, the contextual principle and literal interpretation principle. In the light of the foregoing theological discussion, specific principles of hermeneutics selected for detailed investigation in this study were biblical genre, biblical context and understanding of God (traditionally called theological principle) since other principles, notably grammar and scripture interpretes scripture, were inadequate to address the needs hermeneutics among Akūrinū believers as detailed literature review by Kealotswe (2014), John Mbiti (1931-2019), Kwame Bediako (1945-2008), Berkhof (2016), (Poon, 2016) and Strohhahn (2016), among others. Krejcir (2006) has defined the genre as a group of literary styles based on content, subject and structure. Genre principle focuses on identifying the writing style in a biblical text. Major biblical genres are: narratives as record of events as they occurred; poetry as songs or parallelism (pairing of two parallel elements). An illustration in Psalm 2:1 which reads; “Why do the nations rage, and the people plot a vain thing?” Parallelism in this Psalm points out different people had rejected God’s rule and they were raging in vain because God’s rule would prevail.

Genre refers to what kind of writing style, such as poetry, prophecy or wisdom) the text being interpreted is. Genre is therefore essential in enhancing accurate interpretation of any text in the Bible. Beville (2016) notes that contextual meaning is best understood when the interpreter follows the sequence as follows: the meaning of the text, within the book in which the text is, in the Testament and meaning within context of the whole Bible. Context is derived from Latin noun *con*, meaning together and verb *texere*, to weave. It refers to weaving the content of immediate text with other related content such as geographical setting where God appeared to Moses at the burning bush in Exodus 3. Prayer and reliance on the Holy Spirit are necessary in the process of interpretation.

Literary/postmodern approach emphasises use of literary style and character of the text. The purpose and outcome are to interact with literary strategies in the text so that each author makes sense out of it. The danger of this method is relative truth. Thiselton (2009) notes that notable scholars inform philosophical approaches and each of them has produced a hermeneutical approach and theological outcomes. Gadamer (cited by Malpas, 2003) denies possibility of traditional objective truth from scripture claiming that each interpreter brings into the text wisdom from communities, which interact with textual meaning inter-subjectively as a dialogue with biblical text to get meaning of each other. Ricoeur (1974) argues that social factors and historical time give each interpreter a level of autonomy, which tends to conflict God's sovereign truth. Descartes emphasised rational approach to interpretation of texts, placing human reasoning above faith in God. Redemptive –historical approach emphasises that Jesus Christ is the focus of the whole Bible. Its weakness is the tendency to relegate the Bible to only Messianic content.

The canonical approach focuses study of relationships between texts, similar to scripture interprets scripture. Geraty (2014) summarises the hermeneutical debates Gadamer, Descartes and Ricoeur approach to interpretation of a text happens is philosophical and therefore improper since whoever wins philosophical debates develops personal to principles, called hermeneutics of art. Unlike biblical hermeneutics that is based on God's timeless truth recorded in texts of the Bible, philosophical hermeneutics discussed by When proper principles are used, hermeneutics is said to be biblical. Chipao (2017) has defined biblical interpretation as a systematic interpretation of the Bible using sound principles that help the interpreter to get God's truth as God meant when writers wrote it. In support of biblical hermeneutics which is the approach used in this study, Geraty (2014) concludes that the hermeneutical task is to hear what God is saying now through scripture based on the original communicative acts of God. Beerbaum (2016) adds that



hermeneutics that provides the same meaning to everyone, all the time, everywhere is objective and therefore pure hermeneutics unlike post-modern (philosophical) hermeneutics which is subjective. In biblical hermeneutics, the concept of hermeneutic circle in which meaning of part of a text is related to the whole and vice versa. Challenges to interpretation include time gap, cultural gap (differences in customs, beliefs, traditions and practices), geographical distance, language gap, philosophical gap (how one views life) and relevance gap (today's Bible readers and Old Testament writers). Use sound principles of hermeneutics are context, theological, grammar, genre and scripture interpret scripture helps to minimize these gaps (Chipao, 2017).

Seebohm (2007) categorises hermeneutics into general and special. General hermeneutics focuses on application of hermeneutics in all disciplines with different genres such as legal literature, scientific literature, philosophical literature and religious literature, among others. Traditionally, biblical hermeneutics has been called special hermeneutics. Meaning is obtained through use of methodically guided principles based on pretermine truth recorded in various pre-determined genres in biblical texts. Special hermeneutics is the focus of this study.

Krejcir (2006) has identified nine types of biblical genres. First, Law, referring to God's law for His instructions and precepts, such as Deuteronomy. Second, history or narrative as a record of events as they occurred (Genesis, Numbers, Jonah and Acts). Third, wisdom which are recorded maxims and sayings that provide godly wisdom for godly living (Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Job). Fourth, poetry referring to writings presented in prose and rhyme (Psalms, Songs of Solomon and Lamentations). Fifth, Gospel as good news of Jesus Christ who saves sinners (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John). Sixth, parables are illustrative and instructional narratives drawn from real life experiences of the original hearers. Seventh, prophecy as direct visual or verbal communication in the Bible

days through which God gave His revelation, command, warning or promise for current or future event. Eighth, epistles (twenty-one of them) are letters of various types of ministries written by New Testament writers mainly Paul, Peter and John, among others, to individuals or specific congregations of the Church of Jesus Christ. Ninth, apocalyptic genre as writings that combine prose and poetry presented in imagery and narrative forms, such as Daniel, Ezekiel, parts of Isaiah, and Revelation.

Ramm (1970) states that hermeneutics ascertains what God has said and get meaning of what He said. The interpreter must be able to hear what God said to the original hearers, carry that truth and content through linguistic, geographical and historical epics and apply it to the contemporary hearers. To Ramm, this is the purpose and meaning of theological hermeneutics and this study affirms this view. It is assumed that the interpreter believes in the Bible as the inspired, authoritative, inerrant and infallible word of God. In principle, *Akūrinū* believers have this stand. In general, biblical hermeneutics refers to the standard principles for interpreting any part of the Bible.

#### **2.2.1.1 A Case on How Genre is Interpreted**

According to Griffith (2013), there are five main parts the genre-focus interpreter needs to examine for improved accuracy in addition to using proper principles of hermeneutics. First, action (inciting moment), like the battle between Israel and Philistines (1 Samuel 17). Second, character (one acting), like Goliath challenging armies of Israel arrogantly. Third, setting (place), like the valley of Elah wher the battle took place. Fourth, theme (subject matter), international battle in this case. Fifth, plot (sequence of events in the genre-focus text). Plot is the sequence of vents and how each affect another within the text. Plot draws the reader's attention from the beginning to the end of a genre-type paragraph or sentences. Basic character types are four. Antagonist, one who generates and leads conflict, like Goliath, but is finally defeated. Protagonist is the hero in the

genre, with negative impact on the one who is creating the problem, like David with God of Israel, which results in killing Goliath. A confidant advises the hero and supports in the background, like God anointing David. Love interest is the one who reveals weaknesses of the antagonist to the protagonist so that he can be the hero. God loved His covenant people Israel and He wanted them to win, as God did in Judges 7:1-15, NKJV). Components of biblical hermeneutics are mainly three, namely; capacity of the author, capacity of the reader (interpreter) and capacity of text. The three capacities influence the meaning obtained by the interpreter. Unless product of biblical hermeneutics is applied, the Bible remains a dead book talking about dead people. The interpreter needs to be born again, have a passion to know God's truth and applied it, have a deep reverence for God with meekness, humility and patience as indicators, total dependence on the Holy Spirit to guide and illuminate the scriptures in personal life, be intellectually open-minded to be informed by texts.

### **2.1.2 Theoretical Foundations for Contextual Theology**

Contextualization is a process of communicating God's supernatural message in ways that the receiving culture can apply it in their context (Mashoko, 2005). This meaning is retained in this study. Contextual theology is theology done in dialogue between reality of original truth God gave in scripture in the light of human experience or biblical context, social location as a man or woman, cultural identity and change within the contemporary context and its similar contemporary elements without changing God's truth.

Mligo (2020) argues that cultural lenses cannot be isolated from a Bible reader. Practical theology is supposed to be biblical contextual theology. An example grammatical/critical and historical challenge its resolution is demonstrated. In John 2:7-9, where Jesus turns

water into wine in a creative miracle, not scientific chemistry. In an African context where unfermented wine is unknown, Jesus is rejected as an alcoholic (challenge of contextual theology based on concept of place). However, use of historical-critical/grammatical principle clarifies the mistaken identity of Jesus. Lees (2018) exegeted two common Hebrew words for wine, tirosh and yayin. Tirosh is from yarash, meaning product of the soil, grape juice, non-intoxicating, called sweet wine (Isa. 65:8, Prov. 3:10, Deut. 11:14, 33:28, Joel 2:29, among others. Drinking yayin (fermented wine, therefore intoxicating) is sin against God (Prov. 4:17). Those swallowed up in yayin found no favour with Jehovah. The term context is from Latin word contere, to weave together. In this study, contextual theology is theology that in which God's meaning in the original context is retained but applied within relevant expressions of each and theology is faith seeking understanding, *fides quaerens intellectum*. This discussion informs objective one in this study.

Aduyoye (2009) adds that regardless of context, proclamation of God's truth should be reasoned and presented in a systematic manner (theology from praxis). Salvation must be holistic, communal as well as individual. Biblical missionaries missed these qualities in contextualization of the gospel in Africa. African recipients received it as dogma (something that seems true). Apologetics is ability to reasonably explain why one believes God (Jude 3). However, God (Deut. 29:29) tells us that even if we were to reason our faith accurately, God has mysteries which we must receive by faith in Him as omniscient God. Practical theology must start from faith in God so that He can give understanding (interpretive dimension/task). Kanyoro (2002) argues that African Christians operate in a theological dilemma, Biblical being trusted for two opposing cultural demands, African and Western. Contextual theology becomes dichotomous. Bediako (2004) observes that the rich African cultural heritage had God-consciousness

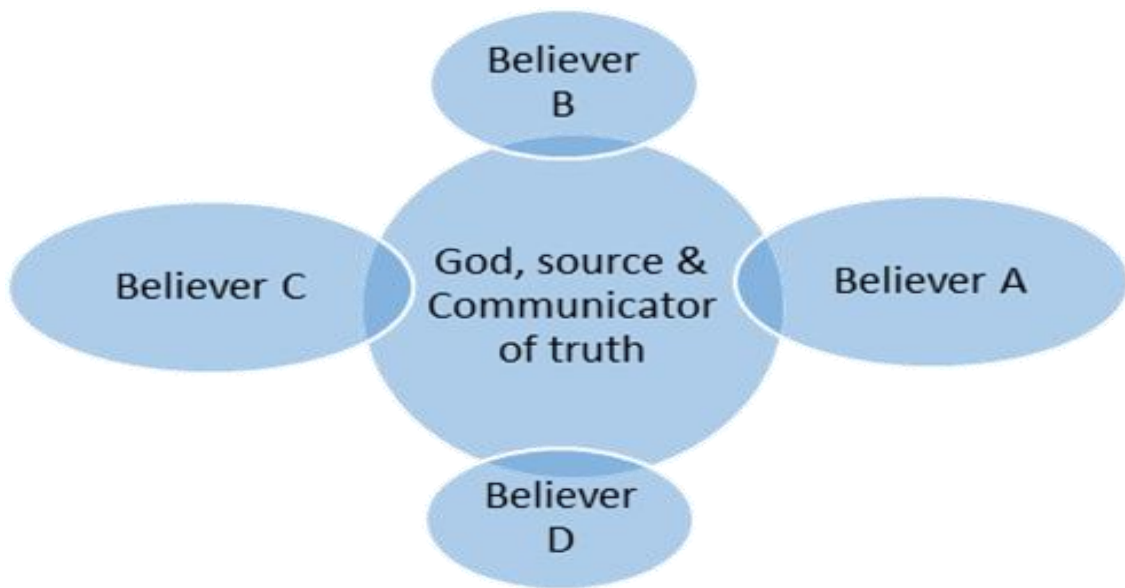
and integration of biblical truth with theology in African heritage in conformity with the Bible should have been done. Reactions to that missiological failure has taken various contextual dimensions. Extremes have been rejection of Jesus by some Africans on basis of cultural dishonor. However, God teaches that as long as the Gospel of Jesus brings sinners to Jesus for salvation, humility and fear of God open doors for Him to provide individual believers in the culture with His riches, honour and life (Prov. 22:1-4, NKJV).

Pears (2009) notes that when biblical theology is presented to a non-Christian individual or community in ways that enable hearers to live a Christian lifestyle, Contextualization is said to have taken place. The activity of Contextualization involves a never changing truth interacting with an ever-changing cultural strategy (Chai, 2015). Several scholars have studied the relationship between biblical hermeneutics and contextual theology among professing Bible believers globally. According to Bevans (2010), contextual theology is a theology done in dialogue with reality of original truth God gave in scripture, in the light of present human experience or context, social location as a man or woman, cultural identity and change within the context. Why hermeneutics and contextual theology? Cults based on non-authentic interpretation of the Bible have emerged among African Instituted Churches (AICs). Martin (1997) has defined a cult as a gathering of people around a person who misinterprets the Bible.

Mcquail & Windahl (2015) have argued that regardless of taxonomy, dynamics within communication relationship, such as lack of familiarity or credibility of source, psychological noise, semantics (meaning of words), syntax (word order in a phrase) and selective filtering, among others, enhance or block communication of God's truth to people as radial ven Figure 2 illustrates.

**Figure 3**

*Innovative Relational Communication Model by Mcquail & Windahl, 2015*



*Source: Author (2023)*

God speaks the same truth to believers A, B, C and D who have personality differences, at different levels of relationship with God, have differences in interpretive skills and socio- economic contexts in which they apply biblical truths to alleviate poverty and access God's help in other needs. Areas where venns interact suggest aspects of believer's life where God rules, the predictive percentage of biblical Contextualization of God's truth. Consequently, the flesh or other forces that rule other aspects challenge the believe's biblical contextualization in dynamic ways. Applying this communication diversity to *Akūrinū* believers in Nairobi County, personality differences, levels of education, age, gender and socio-economic differences, among others, were expected to influence geographical location of *Akūrinū* churches, socio-economic status, language used in their gatherings and other cultural dynamics. Although such variables are difficult to measure or control, they were expected to influence contextual theology of *Akūrinū* believers in Nairobi County.

Bevans (2016) has discussed six models of Contextualization, namely: translation, anthropological, praxis, transcendental, counter-culture and synthetic.

#### **2.1.2.1 Translation Model of Contextualization**

The model posits that Bible translation is part of contextualization because it provides God's truth in the language which the interpreter understands. It facilitates the effective use of grammar principle of hermeneutics. Hu (2010) has identified three pillars of translation as context of situation, context of communication and visual context. Context of situation has three aspects, namely field (what is happening), tenor (who is taking part) and mode (role of language used by participant in that situation). Context of communication refers to methods of communication used, such as body language, mime, symbols and spoken language, among others. Visual context refers to use of pictures, drawings and diagrams which show the translator what the bible writer is saying. In all these pillars, Bible translators have to get equivalent words but retain situation and visuals used.

#### **2.1.2.2 Anthropological Model of Contextualization**

The anthropological model seeks to make the Gospel understood by the receiving culture. Three components of anthropological model are infrastructure, social structure and superstructure (ideology of a particular culture, content of thinking). In Acts 14:17 illustrates the three components. *“Nevertheless, He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good, gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.”* God is the giver and sustainer gave humans rains which make rainy seasons fruitful as infrastructure to sustain bios life (social structure) for food and gladness (superstructure). The model assumes the host culture is good and God can make other cultures good using same Gospel content and different methods of

application. It seeks to present God to another culture based on culture of the presenter of the gospel. This is the Western biblical missionary model since biblical missionaries assumed their culture was good and African culture was bad. However, biblical contextualization only approves what God says is good in any culture according to scriptures.

#### **2.1.2.3 Praxis Model of Contextualization**

Praxis model is an interaction between God's truth as theory and practice as supported in James 1:22. God's truth is the theory and believer's application are the practice in view of godly transformation. It advocates that the Gospel must be practised first by the receiving culture, and then reflect on God's truth. It is the practical theology. It emphasizes orthopraxy in God's pattern of biblical orthodoxy (God's truth) informing orthocardia (biblical faith) and resulting in biblical practices, called contextual theology in this study.

#### **2.1.2.4 Transcendental Model of Contextualization**

Transcendental model states that God exists but He does not manifest His presence in our empirical and phenomenological world. God's truth is an intellectual resource. Critical examination based on biblical accounts testifies that God is interactive with universe He created. The appearance God to Moses at the burning bush as mysterious fire followed by His combiblical missioning of Moses to authoritatively go Pharaoh in Egypt and execute Exodus of Isrealites (Exodus 3:1-14).

#### **2.1.2.5 Counter-Culture Model of Contextualization**

Counter-culture model is an approach to Contextualization in which the leading to syncretism. Mashoko (2005) recommends inter-culture model instead of counter-culture model. Inter-culture model integrates the gospel with culture in biblically authentic ways.



Synthetic model of contextualization. Given limitations of each and strengths of each model, Lee (2015) recommends a combination model of Contextualization process as long as it retains God's unchanging truth (biblical orthodoxy) which informs biblical faith (orthocardia) which further informs biblical practice (orthopraxy) in changing cultures. The combination model is the position adopted in this study for contextual theology in AICs, *Akūrinū* believers are like host, biblical missionary community to receiving non-Akūrinūurbanites in Nairobi County.

Schreiter (2007) argues that Western biblical missionaries imposed a mixture of gospel and Western culture, ignoring that African religions were part of African traditional cultures. Three salient indicators of contextual theology among the *Akūrinū* believers are theology of dressing, fulfilment of biblical mission and use of paranormal experiences. Dladler (1996) contends that analysis of the present situation is a central task in addressing challenges of contextual theology anywhere in the world. However, Mburu (2019) argues that situations are the starting point of the four tasks practical theology. If contextual theology is done outside the four tasks, it lacks biblical soundness provided by normative task, God's truth (Figure 3). Applying this contention to dressing, studies in California by Venkatesha, Annamma, John, Sherry, and Deschenes, (2010) investigated relationship between bodily appearance and self-identity among the Christian women and indicated a strong positive relationship between the two variables. These Christian women were given identity by their contemporary culture which was not based on biblical truth on who human being is as spirit, soul and body (1Thess.5:23). Since *Akūrinū* dressing is quite conspicuous, the theology of dressing was important in order to find out the extent to which it was biblical and the relationship between this variable and writing style (genre) of texts *Akūrinū* used. As a means of

visual communication, dressing used by any believer reflects intrinsic theological values, gender distinction for moral purposes and social relationships (Deut 22:5, NKJV).

Sire (2009) justifies biblical Contextualization, saying that it sustains holistic church health by protecting the church of Jesus Christ from cults, moral decline and apathy to holiness, among vices. God's truth in scripture serves as a biblical diagnostic tool kit for assessment of doctrinal and contextual authenticity in all professing Christians, *Akūrinū* believers included. Gibson (2011) uses critical thinking as a theologising approach to argue for biblical truth as the standard for Christian contextual theology needed for this study. These six-fold criteria for truth are absolute, correspondence to reality, coherence, universality, exclusiveness, and objectivity. For any society to function, it needs standard weights and measures, time keeping and currency among others. Similarly, truth seekers in the church are open-minded to be informed by God what His truth is in every aspect of life. Truth-seekers assume God's truth can be found, pursue it until they find it, believe it once they find it, and apply it to see God change their lives resulting in consistent growth as disciples of Christ. These six qualities of biblical contextualization relate to the godly character of Berean Christians of whom it is recorded.

*Then the brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea. When they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. 11. These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so (Acts 10:10-11, NKJV).*

Surburg (2020) has categorised Contextualization of theology into two levels; intellectual and educational level, which does good theory without living God's truth, accessed using biblical principles. The second level is spiritual and moral where the Bible interpreter seeks to access God's truth for living a godly life. Spiritual qualifications for the interpreter in the second category include faith in Jesus Christ as

personal saviour, dependence on the Holy Spirit for illumination of scripture in one's spirit (Prov. 20:26) and mind (Rom. 12:1-2), commitment to obey God by applying the found truth and church membership, based on correct use of biblical principles of interpretation.

The New Testament church is founded on the teachings of Jesus Christ, prophets and apostles and human teachers taught other believers (Acts 2:42-47). The Holy Spirit worked in and through human teachers (1Cor. 3:9). Contradictory to norms in the first apostolic church, gifted apostolic teachers taught doctrine while prophets gave people a direct word from God (see role of prophet Agabus in Acts 21:10-12). Since the imperial Government persecuted them, they lived in caves because of insecurity (Wanyoike, 2016). Unlike the Western existential approach of Dilthey et al. (1969), African interpretive approaches are based on religious experience. Whether Akūrinūdress is associated with any experience with God is yet to be investigated in this study. Conservative protestant believers hold that the Bible is the only authoritative word of God to man (*sola fidei regula*) and their hermeneutics is derived from the Bible only.

Catholic and Eastern Oriental Church consider the Bible to be the primary source of God's truth (*prima fidei regula*) but they add secondary sources, notably Apocrypha, tradition, magisterium and sound judgement to the Bible resources for determining God's truth (Carnell, 2005). The biblical accounts which inform theology of dressing in Akūrinū church is informed by selected Old Testament and New Testament texts which are interpreted by Akūrinūteachers and prophets, dreams, visions and selected scriptures which designated Akūrinū biblical mission as priestly and prophetic towards delivering Kenya from the tyranny of colonialism.

Njeri (1984) studied the history of AIC churches in Kenya, primarily the background, rise, spread, beliefs and practices of *Akūrinū* believers. The study did not cover the relationship between hermeneutic method and theological diversity, which this study undertakes to investigate. The study revealed that problems of escalating schisms based on theological differences within *Akūrinū* community have characterised the denomination since its inception. Evidence include use of sect names of *Akūrinū* congregations such as 'People of God' (*watu wa mungu*), prophets or seers, (Arathi in Kikuyu), *Aroti* (dreamers) and "Arata a Roho" (Friends of the Spirit). Findings by Njeri (1984) also indicated that *Akūrinū* believers understood the call of their prophets by God was of equal weight as that Moses, Elijah, Samuel and others. Njeri's findings included the claim by *Akūrinū* believers that they wore white because God commanded them when they climbed Mount Kenya in 1927 according to Exod 29:8-9; Lev: 8:7-8; Rev 7:9-10.

This claim presents two hermeneutical challenges to *Akūrinū*'s Contextualization of the Bible. First, the use of selected scriptures contradicts God's command in His people in Deut 8:3, that man shall live by every word that comes from God's inspired. However, the first two texts refer to establishment of Levitical priesthood, which Jesus replaced and perfected in His own work at the cross and made all His believers a royal priesthood. (1Pet 2:9). Levitical order and its dress code is not for New Testament Church. Revelation 7:9-17 is a scene of tribulation saints in heaven, not God's instruction to the earthly saints to wear white robes.

Study by Wanyoike (2016) in Kandara indicates that *Akūrinū* believers understood that God's call included socio-economic development leading to transformation of communities from a biblical perspective. Waigwa (2007) notes that *Akūrinū* s' important vestments and symbols include *mondo*, white bag carried by *Akūrinū* elders to church as

God's law initially received from top of Mount Kenya by a group of founding elders. Waigwa (2007) further notes that theology behind wearing white attire and removal of shoes in the sanctuary by *Akūrinū* believers is based on Exodus 3 and Revelation 7. This is *Akūrinū*'s interpretation of religious phenomenon in Exodus 3 where God told Moses to remove saddles from his feet for he stood on a holy ground.

The imagery of white clothing in Revelation 7 is cited as signifying holiness of the saints in heaven. The biblical doctrine of holiness in the Bible covers all aspects of believer's life, not just place. It does not include colour of clothing and place of worship. Based on the hermeneutical rule that scripture interest scripture, Exodus 3 is an incidental detail. It has no other reference in the Bible. Zulick (2003) called this manifestation of God theophany but he does not give significance of removing sandals. Crabtree (2014) notes that biblical theology of dressing has more prohibitions than symbolisms. Women were not to wear men's clothes and vice versa (Deut. 22:5). Linen and wool were not used to make the same dress (Deut. 22:11). God's people were not to cut tattoos (Lev. 19:18). Christian women were to wear head covering to show that they were under authority of their husbands at the time of Paul (1Cor. 11:4-10). Expression of authority structures through dressing in relation to family, community or between man and God will be investigated. Studies done in Kenya are in the background to the study. All these studies indicate that contextual theology is moderated by cultural factors such as gender, level of education, urban-rural characteristics and quality of theology in congregations, among others (Marbaniang, 2014).

In GeCACA (2017), the outlined seven strategic pillars of biblical mission of General Conference of *Akūrinū* Churches Assembly (GeCACA) were unity of *Akūrinū* churches; restore, preserve and sustain *Akūrinū* heritage (special calling and theology, defined identity based on shared values, lifestyles and spirituality, develop biblical mission-

oriented calendar and formal theological formulation; internal reform agenda, education and healthcare; partnerships with government organisations for increased participation in nation building, integration and interaction with larger society among others (p.5-18). The gap is that very little has been done on the relationship between interpretation of the Bible and Contextualization of theology in AICs.

## **2.2 Theoretical Framework**

Kivunja (2018) notes that theory used in research helps to identify and the field of study and keep the researcher focused on interrelations among variables and subject of study.

Diffusion of Innovations Theory and Divine Command Theory were used (Rogers, 1962 & Haris, 2008) respectively. Diffusion of Innovations Theory (DIT) was appropriate because it explains how *Akūrinū* hermeneutics and contextual theology permeated *Akūrinū* communities of faith from leaders to believers (hierarchical diffusion) and among believers (horizontal diffusion). In this study, diffusion was expected to occur through word of mouth, imitation and teachings in *gaarūs* (training places next to *Akūrinū* sanctuary). Divine Command Theory explained was appropriate because it explained why *Akūrinū* believers believed every teaching from their leaders as long as they believed that was what God taught in the Bible.

### **2.2.1 Diffusion of Innovations Theory (DIT)**

Rogers developed diffusion of Innovations Theory (DIT) in 1962. The theory explains how an idea or truth spreads within a social system over time and is eventually applied within four variables in its operation process, namely, nature of innovation, communication channels, time and social system. The process of diffusion involves knowledge, persuasion, decision-making and implementation. According to Postill (2006), an ancient Iban language became the national language in Malaysia by using it

over time through media. When national leaders used it to address citizens, the language gained more value. This top-down spread is called hierarchical diffusion. Contagious diffusion takes place when several people adopt beliefs or practice from origin. Adoption of new practices but changed by adopters is called stimulus diffusion. Relocation diffusion occurs when adopters move to new places and new adopters pick the ideas from immigrants. The process is innovative over time. The relevance of this theory to this study is that before Bible knowledge is communicated, the prior conditions are previous moral practice, felt needs or problems, innovativeness of believers and cultural norms which influence biblical interpretation that results in new lifestyle.

**Figure 4**

*Four Phases of Hermeneutical Process as Explained by Diffusion of Innovations Theory*



*Source:* Author (2023)

Knowledge undergoes three levels, namely; awareness, how-to knowledge and principles to guide the process. Interpreted truth is introduced into a decision-making unit (human mind) which has socio-economic, spiritual and theological characteristics. Perceived characteristics of innovation at persuasion stage are relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trial and observation. At decision-making stage, new truths or beliefs are adopted or rejected. At the implementation stage, the adopted innovations are implemented and if rejected, they continue to be rejected. Confirmation ensures continuity. As time goes on, implementation may continue or stop, those who first rejected may adopt or earlier adopters of innovation as more recent findings by Rogers, Singhal, Quinlan, (2003) suggest. Adopter categorisation is four-fold as follows: early

adopters (13.5%), early majority (34%), late majority (34%), and laggards (16%). Keeley et al. (2013) have identified ten types of innovations used in business world. They are; profit model, network, structure, process, product, performance product, product system, and service, channel, and brand and customer engagement. This theory helps to explain how innovations took place in *Akūrinū* community but in a holistic and dynamic context.

Contextualising Diffusion of Innovations Theory (DIT) to *Akūrinū* believers, *Akūrinū* music has spread among Christians and non-Christians as an aspect of *Akūrinū* contextual theology in Nairobi County and beyond. In general, this theory provides an explanation of the process of acquisition and spreading of God's truth through biblical hermeneutics or destroying it through aberrant hermeneutics. When theological content diffuses from leaders to *Akūrinū* believers, it is called hierarchical diffusion. When doctrines, beliefs or practices spread (diffuse) among *Akūrinū* believers, it is called horizontal diffusion.

The functionality of this theory assumed that doctrine was well received and applied wherever it diffused. As a sociological theory, this theory is weak in that it does not explain the sources of ability of the interpreter to apply. This theory is less supportive of the study variables since it only explains patterns of spread of any influence, good or bad. However, it can be used to explain how biblical hermeneutics is related to specific variables such as theology of dressing and how each variable spread among *Akūrinū* believers. Rogers (2010) adds that attitudes of adopters, factors influencing decision, communication channels and strength of change agent's influence on rate of change of dress codes can be explained. Diffusion theory only explains pattern of spread of human behaviour. God's commands to which *Akūrinū* s are committed to obey have a better theory to explain believers' response.



### **2.2.2 Divine Command Theory in Relation to Hermeneutics and Contextual Theology**

The theory advanced by Haris (2008) presents an argument and claim that in any religion, the deity of that religion provides the right doctrine, faith and practice as divine commands to believers in that deity. Applied to Christianity, Quinn (1978) adds that an action is morally right because God commands it and believers are obligated to obey by acting accordingly. Plato argued whether a thing is good because God says it is good or it is inherently good and God only affirms that it is good. Plato called this Euthyphro's dilemma (Adams 1987, Evans, 2007). This study is based on the premise that God is good and what He says is good since it promotes the wellbeing of His creation, human beings included. God as source of morality (biblical morality) resolves Euthyphro's dilemma. God decided what is good and therefore commanded all human beings to obey.

Since God honours the will He gave to human beings, He does not force individuals to obey. People who willingly obey benefit from the goodness of what He said is good and recorded it in the Bible (Baggett, 2002). Assuming *Akūrinū* believers act on communication they receive from God to inform their theology of dressing, biblical mission and use of paranormal experiences, then their contextual theology is biblical. However, Macharia (2012) notes that the Holy Spirit gave direct instructions to *Akūrinū* prophets to tell a believer which colour of turban or headscarf to wear. This study sought to find out whether this was the case. Divine command theory helped to explain the motivation for various interpretations that exist in the *Akūrinū* believers and consequent dress codes, *Akūrinū* biblical mission and understandings of God, among others.

## **2.3 Empirical Review**

Studies done on the variables under investigation are reviewed in this section, objective by objective.

### **2.3.1 Relationship between Biblical Genre and Theology of Dressing among Akūrinū Believers**

In this objective, the study focused on how *Akūrinū* believers used biblical texts to support their theology of dressing. The relationship between the two variables was important because strength of the relationship would predict accuracy of interpretation of texts used as biblical and theological foundations for theology of dressing. The strength of the relationship between correct interpretations of genre (writing styles) and theology of dressing was of interest.

Chipao (2017) notes that a text or a stand-alone scripture has only one interpretation although it may have many implications and applications while retaining the meaning God gave to writers. Genre principle takes note of the style in which the biblical text is written and uses the principles that suit the genre. Plummer (2010) notes that one of the most common genres in the Bible is historical narratives, such as Book of Acts. To interpret such, take it as subjective record of events as they occurred, unconcerned with some details the current leader may require, may reveal who God is by how He acted or one receiving the action received His self-revelation. Narratives are often embedded with other writing styles. As a rule, genres should be interpreted according to rules of language, type of genre and what the events say about those involved in them (Griffith, 2013).

Batten (2010) notes that in Ancient Near East attire put on clothing for several purposes besides body covering. Archaeological findings indicate that men in general wore

turbans and hats as headgear for war. High priests in various religions wore crown and priest wore turban as intercessors for the land of Israel. Turbans and crowns were for designation between clergy and lay people of God (Exod 39:30-31). When this poetic genre is interpreted using grammar principle, meaning of nations need to be understood in this context. Strong (1990) has used the Hebrew word *goyim*, גוים, meaning foreigners. Here the noun is called nations as Jews called Gentiles according to the biblical context. Grammar principle is demonstrated in the meaning of use of term nation in this text being different from a political unit. In the book of Job, most of what job claimed (Job 29) and his three advisors accused him of (Job 20, 22 & 25) are theologically wrong. His first three friends think people suffer as God's punishment for their sin. If it were so, in every case, everyone should live a life of suffering since all have sinned (Rom 3:23). Prophetic genre refers to forth telling as speaking of God's truth as it is to God's people, with foretelling the future in some cases. Apocalyptic genre records God's revelation from God to humanity through an angle, vision, dreams, symbolism and numbers, future judgment and future salvation. The Epistle genre is a record of pastoral letters written to specific people to address their contemporary life.

Factors that influence dress are gender of parent, media, acculturation, religious beliefs and fashions, among others (Manwa, Ndamba, and Jinga, 2013). Theology of dressing is a current debate in the contemporary church on what is modest and immodest dressing. Gilkerson (2013) attempts a biblical response to the debate within American context by presenting two assertions. First, this author interprets Rev 21:2 to argue that modesty does not mean anti-fashion. However, this text uses dress imagery to describe phenomena of the second coming of Jesus Christ with His glorified Church, not a temporal biological woman or version. New Jerusalem is the eternal, heavenly and

ultimate destination of all the saints. The second assertion is that modesty is about whom one worships (1Tim 2:8-10).

However, dressing reflects the heart condition (Matt 12:33-37). The text does not prohibit women from adorning themselves. However, God calls for moderation and emphasises the importance of adorning the heart. Modesty includes godly attitudes, actions and motives; dealing with sin and ensuring cultural fashions communicate the work of God in the believer. John and Duncan (2014) define modest dressing as being moderate, not for impressing others, not excessive and decent as informed by scriptures. Marshall et al. (2010) add that in classical Greek, the term modest (*kosmios, κόσμιος*) refers to a person who lives moral, respectful and self-controlled life (Gal 5:22-23). This meaning was consistent with biblical theology of modesty whose focus godly character. From a biblical perspective, it means that any dressing that does not promote moral uprightness, godly respect and self-control in the face of moral temptations is immodest. Clothing in biblical cultures was loose fitting, never form-fitting to reveal body shapes. Lehmann (2015) defines modest dressing in terms of biblical indicators. Covering human body from nakedness (Gen 3:21) as God did for Adam and Eve as opposed to fig leaves which partially covered their nakedness is only an external expression of modesty. Using the term in a metaphorical sense, Batzig (2015) adds that at creation, humankind was clothed with glory, righteousness and beauty of God. However, this assertion is not supported by scripture after fall (Gen 3:1-19) because God's glory, righteousness and true beauty is being restored to fallen humanity through new birth in Jesus Christ (John 3:1-8; 1Cor 1:30) as a process of on-going transformation (2Cor 3:17-18).

Modest dressing is gender-specific (Deut 22:5) and it reflects godliness in spirit, soul and body (1Tim 2:9-10; 1 Pet 3:3-5; 1Cor 6:16-20). These scriptures provide principles of modest dressing as follows: wearing clothing came from God's approval; wearing

clothes of opposite sex is prohibited; modest clothing covers the body in ways that do not attract prideful attention or promote sexual impurity; to dress too far from one's culture attracts undue attention, shows false humility and socially alienates one from healthy interaction with other people. Based on the biblical qualities that define modest dressing, the study investigated the relationship between genre and theology of dressing among *Akūrinū* believers. However, a theology that attributes dress colours to mystical powers an indicator of unbiblical theology.

In South, Central and East Africa most believers in AIC denominations wear white while going to church and remove shoes and jewels while in church as a sign of holiness and earning acceptance by God (Oladipo, 2006). This reflects wrong understanding of God, which consequently tends to interpret biblical texts on dressing to carry preconceived meanings contrary to authentic contextual theology since God is not geographical. Neufeld (2014) uses dressing of John the Baptist that was goatskins to show that believers do not have to conform to culture in order to bear witness to God's power to change society prophetic preaching attracted crowds and adds that John's dressing as a mockery to a physically better-dressed society but in serious problems for lack of inward righteousness. John's identity and purpose were based on holistic godliness (godly lifestyle) which included spirit, souls, body and other realms in which religion is expressed. Starr (2007) adds that any form of dressing that entices anyone into sexual sin, pride or any other sin is not modest. According to this definition, *Akūrinū* dressing is regarded modest. However, motives need to be pure before God (Titus 1:15). *Akūrinū* dressing was informed by paranormal religious experiences (prophecy, dreams and visions), not scripture, suggesting hermeneutical differences between the theology of dressing and inward righteousness among *Akūrinū* believers.

Hume (2013) notes that dress can communicate information about doctrine, beliefs, faith, identity, power, agency, resistance, and fashion. Using dressing metaphorically, Barbieri (2003) and Moules (2002) note that dressing the heart to be beautiful before God can be reflected by outward dress. The use of Greek terms αἰδώς, *aidos*, reverent, decent and σωφροσύνη *sophrosune*, soberly, self-control, to refer to appropriate dressing, with holistic emphasis on inward and outward harmony supports this meaning (Peter, 2016). Christian adorning emphasises inward beauty (1Tim 2:7). Stone (2014) and Glahn (2010) interpret *aidos* and *sophrosune* to refer to kind of dressing that does not lead one to sins like pride and seduction. Studies reveal that definition of theology of dressing must include garments, hair style, men's beard, cosmetics colouring of lips, tattooing and other emerging beauty products cosmetics, creams, rouge, and lip colouring (Batten 2009). Since the list was open-ended, these accessories to dress were not be investigated since findings would have been difficult to analyse.

Study done in Europe by Rutt (2006) has given emphasis for need to observe social phenomena in a current context for hermeneutics to have contextual relevance to current issues, adding that phenomenology is indispensable to practical aspects of hermeneutics since living experiences inform best. Kim (1998) conducted a study in United Kingdom on Paul's clothing imagery by looking back to symbolism in the Bible. The study focused on a wide range of use of the verb to clothe from God clothing Adam and Eve (Gen 3:21), metaphor of Holy Spirit's manifestation upon Gideon (Judges 6:34 NKJV), priestly ministerial Garments and ministry (Exod 28-29 and Lev 8-9 NKJV).

Milligan (2016) notes that in Asia, women in the Orthodox Church wear head coverings not only as a symbol or sign of inward state of subbiblical mission to God's order but as a demonstration of one's willingness to receive God's blessing. One woman cited in the article affirms that her wearing the head covering was an outward sign of her subbiblical

mission to God's order for which God would bless her. Benefits given by the orthodox women are a demonstration of their relationship with God, such as humility (spiritual), testimony that they are morally upright, taking care of sexual purity of their brothers by avoiding distractive bodily exposures (moral benefit), manifestation of honour of Christian women (social benefit), saving time and money spent by women on saloon and other hair-keeping activities (economic benefit).

Studies done in Africa on theology of dressing, paranormal experiences and biblical mission in relation to hermeneutics have focused on African Instituted Churches (AICs). White is said to be the colour of priesthood. It means the believer is holy inside as the outward whiteness signifies. Similarly, outward green clothes signify inward holiness. The Zulu word *abangubo* refers to cloaks, blankets or any covering in general actually made white in the blood of Jesus (Revelation 7:13-14).

Studies done in Kenya on dressing in Akūrinūdenomination are informative. Study by Gitahi (2019) in Nyandarua County on the relevance of special revelation among Akūrinū s attribute dressing to visual expression of *Akūrinū* faith specifically revealed by God. Theology of dressing is expressed differently depending on events. Wairimu (2011) interviewed *Akūrinū* couple at *Akūrinū* wedding. Oral interviews revealed that *Akūrinū* men must always wear a jacket. Failure to wear jacket communicates that there is a problem in marriage. The bride wears white gown and still wears white headscarf inside the gown. Similarly, a married woman must always wear a sash on top of her clothes. Different Akūrinūgroups wear different colours and they cannot intermarry, neither can a mukurinu marry a non-*mukūrinū*. Can these multiple sources of theology of dress, which are indicators of aberrant hermeneutics, be biblically harmonised to make hermeneutics authentic in relation to theology of dressing? These discussions suggest an evolving

worldview among the *Akūrinū* believers on the relationship between dressing and biblical hermeneutics.

Vidal (2008) has defined worldview as a compound of six elements embraced by a person or persons in an attempt to answer six philosophical questions of life. These worldview questions are what is (ontology-a model of reality as a whole), origins (a model of the past), prediction (a model of future), what is good and evil (axiology as theory of values), praxeology (theory of actions) and epistemology (what is true or false-as theory of knowledge). Huffman (2012) notes that only God is the source of absolute truth, which also corresponds to reality, produce beliefs as truth claims and these beliefs inform practices. Contextualization process among *Akūrinū* lived theology might have been influenced by this dynamic of worldviews. Huffman defines worldview as a conceptual framework or a belief system that interprets reality. Edwards & Noebel (2002) have defined theology as the study of who God is according to His attributes and how He relates to His creation, human being included. The dominant philosophical worldview adopted in this study is *pragmatism*, a research approach that focuses on consequences of human actions, problem-centred, pluralistic and oriented towards real world practice (Grover, 2015). Three other worldviews considered necessary for this study are post *positivism* (empirical observation and measurement), *transformative* (change oriented) and *constructivism* (seeks to understand). Pragmatism related to contextualization of *Akūrinū* lived theology in Nairobi County, positivism relates to the methodology used, transformative relates to changes anticipated in the future in response to response to findings by a variety of possible users and constructivism relates to use of three principles of biblical hermeneutics to understand God's truth in the foundational texts in the scriptures that inform *Akūrinū* lived theology.



### **2.3.2 Relationship between Biblical Context and Fulfilment of Biblical mission among Akūrinū Believers**

This objective investigated biblical and theological foundations upon which *Akūrinū believers* should base their theology. When truth of God is interpreted correctly using biblical context, the interpreters are supposed to contextualise the truth correctly in their biblical mission.

Boda (2009) explains that there are phases to examine when using biblical context (historical principle) of hermeneutics to interpret any text. Phase 1 is original context. The word context has two parts, Latin *con*, meaning *together* and *texere*, meaning *to weave*. Nystron (1977) has outlined three phases through which a Bible interpreter towards making Contextualization of theology biblical accurately applies historical principle (called biblical context in this objective). In phase one, God as the speaker through human writers, original audience, their needs, problems, questions, dynamics of their context, among other details are understood.

#### **2.3.2.1 Exegesis of Zech 3:1-5 in relation to Akūrinū Believers' White Turban**

In Zech. 3:1-10, God spoke to post-exilic Israel by using leaders in the priestly ministerial office. Of the eight visions God gave to Zechariah, vision with symbolism of Joshua is the fourth. These visions relate to God's purpose in time, which was restoration of godliness to His contaminated post-exilic Judah. In Daniel 9, Daniel repents for Judah through identification repentance. Similarly, God assures Joshua that He had cleansed priests and the land of Judah. God's forgiveness to Judah after full punishment for seventy years for her sins is stated in Isa 40:1-2. God removed Judah' idolatry and other sins as symbolised by removal of filthy garments and replacing them with clean ones. Grammar principle helps to clarify the meaning of Zech 3:4. The Hebrew verb used here

is *abar*, עָבַר, with wide range of meanings, ‘to pass over, by or through, alienate, bring, carry, do away, take, take away’ by erasing (Heb. *machah*, מָחָה) their sins. The Heb. noun for mitre in Zech. 3:5 is *tsaniph*, צָנִיף, ancient Jewish headdress of cloth, turban, wrapped around the head (Strong, 1990). In Ezek 21:26, Heb. noun *misnepet*, wound around, refer to turban worn by kings. Babylonian nobles wore turbans for royalty (Bromiley, 1988). When used by priests in the Old Testament, colour of turban is not specified (Exo 28:36-38; 39:30-31). Therefore, since the original meaning was to alienate, God’s act of cleansing the nation meant that He would no longer treat Judah as sinners. The turban colour is not specified as white, neither did it mean repentance in the text. God’s cleansing is not merited in this case.

Based on grammatical principle for the meaning of words or phrases, ‘standing before God has legal connotation (Num. 35:12; Job 1:6; Job 2:1-7; 1Kings 22:19; Psalm 109:6) The phrase ‘right hand’ was the official place of the accuser (Satan) whose purpose was to show evil side of Judah to persuade God to reject post-exilic Judah. However, it is God who has redeemed Judah from captivity would violate His nature and character (theological principle) if He rejects Judah. Jesus (the Angel of the Lord) talks to the Father to rebuke the accuser as in Psalm 110:10, Jude 9. Based on theological principle, God does not contradict Himself. Based on ‘scripture interprets scripture’ principle, other texts speaking of God’s preparation of post- exilic Judah to start a new community, such as Ezra 10:4 where God calls fellow priests to repent sins of mixed marriages, kind of idolatry. The original meaning and purpose of the text was cleansing of Judah by God as manifestation of His mercy and grace using symbolism of filthy garments (sin of post-exilic Judah) being replaced by God with clean garments (His imputed righteousness). There is no reference indicating God demanding the usual condition of repentance as a precondition for forgiveness as an element of normative theology illustrated in Prov.

28:13 & Acts 2:38, among others. Similarly, based on theological-thematic context, Leviticus has three theological themes. Leviticus 1-10 is holiness in worship, Lev. 11-24 is on holiness in everyday life and Lev. 25-27 is on holiness in the Promised Land (Schultz, 2012).

Hiebert (2009) argues for the need of effective contextualization of the Gospel by exegeting the contexts (social, cultural, linguistic, religious) and the people to whom God has sent us to preach the gospel. Views on contextualization include non-contextualization, meaning that proclamation of God's truth does not need adaptation to culture of the hearers. This view is corrected in scripture. In Acts 17:16-34, Paul, the biblical missionary was Jewish and his Gospel hearers in Athens were Greek philosophers whose gods were many (15 major, pantheon) and reasoning was their epistemological tool. Paul needed to build bridges between their context and biblical context. To Paul, shrine bearing "To the unknown God" was a major bridge introduce Jesus as the only way for Greeks to know that by revelation as their saviour (John 17:1-3) so that they could change the inscription to read "to our known God". In this study there was need to build bridge between researcher and *Akūrinū* believers as a micro-cultural group. Sharing letter of consent and being introduced by their leaders was necessary acceptance bridge for the researcher.

In phase two, once the interpreter has God's truth from the biblical text in its original context, universal dimension of this truth becomes the focus since God's truth is timeless (does not change, Mal. 3:6). God's truth in scripture as He spoke to the original audience still speaks to every individual in any culture as the unchanging truth. The third phase in the use of biblical truth focuses on contemporary significance. Believers committed to Contextualization of God's truth are educated in order to understand their contexts, questions, opportunities, challenges, threats, strengths and weaknesses, among other

dynamics in the light of compatibility with God's truth. Relating this procedure to every Akūrinū believer in Nairobi County, the texts that speak on biblical mission of God to mankind through the church, such as great combiblical mission in Matt 28:18-20 on disciple-making and Matt 5:13-14 on the church being influential upon unchurched in godly ways similar to the ways salt and light work applies to *Akūrinū* believers if Contextualization of theology of biblical mission were purely biblical. It was upon this biblical critique that the relationship between variables in this objective was evaluated.

In the USA, the understanding of biblical basis of the biblical missionary call is to go outside America and preach the Gospel of Christ as an interpretation of Romans 10: 8-17. Sills (2008) has defined biblical mission as God's plan for every believer for God's salvation to ungodly in the world. This plan has content, timing, context, and ministerial tasks for every believer or a group of believers in Jesus that become instrumental towards revealing who Jesus Christ is to the unsaved to the effect that converted become disciples of Jesus Christ. Sills (2008) believes that every Christian is called to international biblical missions because of Paul's use of 'sent'. However, the text does not imply geographical mobility or location as it does about reaching the condition of human heart. The text includes unsaved neighbour in America and for every other Christian. In Gen. 3:1-15, God as Misio Dei went after Adam and Eve as lost people from their former relationship with Him. Romans 10:8-17 therefore refer to unsaved people as God's biblical mission field through the Christian believers (Matt. 28:18-20), not geographical coverage. According to Proverbs 1:7; Matt. 10:1-2; Phil. 3:10 and Daniel 11:32 among other texts, God's primary and perpetual call to humans is to grow in the knowledge of Him. It is the highest level of God's call. His word, prayer, seeking His counsel, orienting desires of the heart to Him (Col. 3:1-4) are some of human means.

However, the measurement of whatever constitutes a believer's service to be God's biblical mission is a challenge to the clergy, members of churches and researchers in religious studies, among others. Although this task was not part of this study, a basic understanding of the dimensions of religion would help to categorise activities of one's God-given biblical mission. Smart (1999) has identified several dimensions of religion. Doctrinal dimension in any religion deity's specification of what truth is concerning any aspect of life and believers in that deity are obliged to use that truth to determine standards of performance. Devotional dimension includes a believer's inward interaction with God in such intrinsic activities such as prayer, worship, praise, and thanksgiving, and repentance, forgiveness, fasting and listening to God's voice. Other includes mystical, material, social, experiential and philosophical.

However, Moyaert (2019) defines ritual as a series of religious activities believed to change the state of the human actor through divine power to whom the action is directed. In case of *Akūrinū* believers and their leaders, prayer was a daily recital of the same content using the same wording like chanting. Smart (1999) notes that ethical and legal dimension is the religious domain that addresses what is right and wrong. It is informed by the doctrinal dimension. Social dimension refers to how people freely interact within a social group. Material dimension comprises of religious icons such a design of a sanctuary in a particular Christian denomination. Since morality answers questions on what is right and wrong behaviour, biblical mission is internal and external (Matt 12:33-37). Whether biblical or unbiblical, do founders of denominations influence interpretation of biblical mission of their congregations?

Aniol (2015) categorizes the church into three. Biblical missional churches seek the lost people by all means for Jesus to save the lost (Luke 19:10), characterized by features of spiritual movements. Specifically, goals of biblical missional churches are to reach the

pagan world for Christ by adapting their style of worship, preaching Christ and dressing, among others, to secular post-modern culture in order to attract non-Christians. Structure of biblical missional churches is informal, format is spontaneous and worship style adapted to cultural forms contemporary music. In USA, they are called seeker-sensitive or cell-based churches. As much as they have good intentions, God still says that light and salt metaphors (Matthew 5:30-14) demand godly distinctiveness for godly impact upon the dark and tasteless in their culture. Aniol (2015) concludes by agreeing to live in healthy tension between living godly among them as guide by scripture in all matters of life and taking social action and evangelism. The emerging church refers to evangelicals who are seeking to become biblical missional church. This category seeks to become biblical missional to the lost in their neighbourhood. An emergent church is more organisational church, with liberal tendencies.

In Kenya, Njeri (1984) and Ndungu (1994) studied *Akūrinū* believers and found out believers have historically prayed spontaneously for emerging needs, although their main biblical mission was to pray for their country, Kenya. Since God has set standards and recorded them in the Bible through inspired human writers, it was possible for *Akūrinū* believers to interpret what was moral or immoral using selected principles of hermeneutics and respond to morality at spiritually (internal) and socially (externally) as part of their biblical mission. The two writers focused on anthropological (Njeri, 1984) and historical (Ndungu, 1994).

Gathogo and Kinyua (2014) contend that *Akūrinū* believers use allegorical interpretation which the writers call Afro-biblical hermeneutics, such as spiritualizing removal of shoes based on God's one-time encounter with God in Exodus 3. Adamo (2015) defines Afro-biblical hermeneutics as use of God's truth in the Bible to contextualize theology to transform Africa by making the African cultural context the subject of interpretation in

ways that link biblical texts to real life. Speaking on the biblical mission of holy God to sinful humans as a prerequisite to biblical mission of any believers, Paskin (2016) contends that God told Moses to remove sandals because sandals covered only the physical realm and God was addressing three parts of Moses (spirit, soul and body, 1Thess. 5:23). Paskin's hermeneutics is aberrant because the text is clear that God referred to holiness of place where Moses stood as a result of God's holy presence. The practice of removal of shoes when entering the church building among *Kurinu* believers as a command from God based on Exodus 3 reflects aberrant hermeneutics. God commanded Moses to remove the shoes as reverence for His presence than a religious observance when entering a sanctuary since God is omnipresent (Psalm 139:1-7).

Macharia (2012) notes that progenitors of *Akūrinū* church, such as Joseph Nganga, were called by the Holy Spirit to intercede for colonial Kenya as mediators between God and oppressed Africans. They also preached against injustices done to Africans by Whites. The text of Isa. 61:1-4 was applied to the Africans as the good news *Akūrinū* progenitors preached. Bishop Jeremiah Kariuki notably called upon all Africans to consecrate themselves to God in repentance so that they would preach gospel of God's redeeming mercy according to Titus 3:4-7, Eph. 2:8-8 and Acts 2:38. Redemption had double meanings, from oppression by whites as primary application and salvation in Jesus Christ as secondary. With time, two streams of this hermeneutics became two streams of meaning of *Akūrinū* biblical mission. Another stream of meaning of biblical mission was based on *Akūrinū*'s understanding as God-raised priesthood on behalf of Kenya (Rev. 5:10, Exod. 29:1-37 & Lev. 8:1-36). Yet *Akūrinū* faith was centred on the mystery of God's sanctuary (Isa. 19:8, Heb. 5:12-14, Matt.7:6 and Ezek. 44:31, among others).

*Akūrinū* believers continue to be faithful in implementing God's call in 2Cor 6:14-18, "come out from among them and be separate..." as well as salt and light, as articulated

widely in Kikuyu songs. However, faith in Jesus for salvation comes by hearing the word of God concerning Jesus as *Misio Dei* (biblical mission of God, Rom 10:17). Rather than surrounding culture being given power to shape church life, biblical truth should be the basis for God's authority given that human obedience to God according to His word takes place (Heb 4:12; Psalm 119:105, Psalm 119:89). This is contextual theology. GeCACA seeks to bring balance to these extremes by first introducing reforms in *Akūrinū* church under 3T motto, which is; transform, transfigure, transition (GeCACA, 2017, p.7). *Akūrinū* philosophy is being watchful at all times and on guard against all enemies of our call (Luke 12:35, 1Pet 5:8). According to Waigwa (2007), six elements in their biblical mission statement is to believe in one God, Jehovah; live sober, virtuous and truthful life; live committed, dedicated and socially active; serve God in selfless ways Rom 12:1-2); evangelise in word and deed (James 2:14-26); live holy (1Pet 1:13-16) and take care of environment (Gen 1:28). To be able to achieve this six-sided biblical mission, *Akūrinū* believers need Godly knowledge, clarity, objective and godly evidence based on biblical world-view and validity of historical accounts in scripture and historical context (Bartholomew et al., 2011). Compared with original biblical mission defined by founding prophets (pray for liberation of Kenya from colonisers, live a holy life for God to answer prayer and live as African version of Leviticus priesthood, Njeri, 1984; Ndungu, 1994; Waigwa 2007), GeCaCA has the right direction towards biblical contextualization but findings indicated neither pure stated six-fold biblical mission or pure original biblical mission.

### **2.3.3 Relationship between Believer's Understandings of God and Role of Paranormal Religious Experiences**

This objective investigated how *Akūrinū* believers perceived their understanding of God predominantly based on dreams, visions and prophecy as God's main means of speaking



to them. The relationship between the two variables was important because strength of the relationship would predict the accuracy of interpretation of texts used as biblical and theological foundations for dreams, visions and prophecy, collectively called paranormal experiences.

Cottrell (2011) defines a vision as a supernatural picture, which God brings to a natural mind when one is awake and mostly during prayer sessions while dreams are streams of images passing through human mind while asleep. Mazzaferri (2010) defines prophecy as God's channel of communication to operate through human vessel. Cottrell (2011) contends that visions and dreams are gifts of the Holy Spirit to prophets according to Num. 12:4-8. Kin (2014) raises a justified call for the church to return to Christian theology so that such differences in what dreams and visions are can be mitigated. The implication is that departure from the biblical theology has gradually taken place among believers in the church. Kin argues that one of the causes of this phenomenon is that interpreters of the Bible are ill-prepared and incompetent in that they study all Law, Psalms and Prophets as shadows of Jesus Christ. Although there are prophetic verses in these genres that point to the fulfilled prophecies of Jesus Christ and others to future events, these genres have God's oracular message for their original audience. Interpreting biblical texts to refer to one aspect or person only (atomic hermeneutical method) only provides partial truth God intended to communicate. Just as biblical context was multidimensional, the contemporary context in which dreams, visions and prophecy occur is multidimensional, specifically global.

### **2.3.3.1 Example of Aberrant Hermeneutics in the Field of Paranormal Experiences**

Nel (2018) has reviewed works of Nieberk (1994). The reviewed works critiqued narratives of a neo-Pentecostal Institutedchurch movement in South Africa. An aged pastor who interpreted dreams for believers in his congregation and wrote books to guide

Christians to adopt his skill was called “Big Daddy” for this reason. Nel (2018) argues that the interpreter made no references to the Bible to correlate cases, needs and contexts in order to get Holy Spirit’s insight into the meaning as one prayerfully waits for God’s fulfilment if it is a promise or intervention if it is a warning of danger. Nieberk gave allegorical meanings by matching meaning of the Hebrew words in the Bible to interpret dream, vision or prophetic symbols. To Nieberk, golden brown stone in the Bible was hard and so it refers someone who works hard.

This is an example of aberrant hermeneutics. Seeing any symbol close to this meant God was saying the dreamer should work hard. Rom. 10 supported dream or vision with symbol of this colour (V.17) since faith in God encourages godly action. Since Hebrew, word for pride means swelling, dream symbols looking like frogs meant pride, calling the person to humble himself or herself. Dinosaur in a dream meant something one was doing but God said it was extinct. Triangle meant strife with authority, therefore calling one to confession of sin to ask God for forgiveness and cleansing. The proper principles of hermeneutics would correct such errors if applied by *Akūrinū* believers and leaders.

When a Christian decides on how to respond to a situation, a person, an experience, God or any other being, He or she contextualises his or her understanding of God. Wei (n.d) proposes a solution in his recommendation of application of five dimensions of Christian theological task, namely, comprehension, construction, communication, criticism and practice, of which theological construction and criticism as foundational elements to interpretation of the Bible. To comprehend/understand God’s truth, the application of gifts of Christian teachers is necessary (1 Cor 12:28; Eph 4:11). As Anselm put it, faith in God based on God’s truth accurately obtained from biblical texts is a prerequisite to spiritual understanding. Construction of language of faith (theological language) is used

to communicate God's truth within the dynamics of any cultural context and is needed in order to help Christians to practice and communicate their faith to non-Christians.

The foregoing observations need to be validated or invalidated by passing scanning them through relevant biblical screen. Prophets in the Bible called upon Israelites to examine their faith in God and relate it to their life (Hagg 1:1; Isa. 1:19). The three-fold process of this theological criticism at personal level (self-criticism) was restoration of understanding of God and His ways so that they would constantly align themselves with God in their contextual theological task (Isa 55:1-12). However, Christian faith cannot be contextualised effectively unless every Christian has a sustainable inbuilt capacity to defend his or her faith (apologetic criticism) against secular challenges and hostilities such as secular values, mind sets, cultures, politics, economic systems which are expressed through secular lifestyles in communities where this believer lives.

In his contextual ministry, Paul responded to similar challenges through his several charges to every Christian in city church in Rome (Rom 12:1-2), Corinth (1Cor 6:16-20; 1Cor (24-27)' and Ephesus (Eph 4:17-22) and regional churches in Galatia (Gal 5:7), among others. Just as Jesus confronted sin in mankind as expressed in various lifestyles in His community and taught His disciples to do the same by His on-going relational power, the contemporary Christian must confront sin (prophetic criticism) in self (Rom. 8:19), in other Christians (Joel 2:12-17) and non-Christians (Matt. 28:16-20). To interpret prophecy, dreams or visions require accurate understanding of meaning of words as used in the original context (grammar principle). To illustrate this interpretive skill, the noun prophet in Hebrew is *nabi*, נָבִי, from the root "to bubble forth as from a fountain" as he gives people message from God. A prophet is a spokesperson for God (Atley, 2014). God instituted the prophetic office when He called Abraham (Gen. 20:7).

Marshall et al. (2010) have outlined characteristics of a true prophet as one who prayed, lived a prayerful life.

A study done in United Kingdom by Kim (1998) revealed that in (A-GOD-MAN in Christ) hermeneutics is aberrant hermeneutics and most of the AICs use allegorical approach in pursuit of spiritual using paranormal experiences because they thought that getting it from the Bible was not God's revelation knowledge but intellectual knowledge. In USA, a theologian and church minister, Stone (2011) defines dream as a visual screen through which scenes of events pass while one is asleep. He cites a critical incident of when he slept briefly at 3 pm during the day in 1996; he saw tornado images with five pillars of smoke in a New York City. He shared with some ministers and an artist drew what he saw. Similar picture came again in 1999. He did not have interpretation. He looked at drawings in his office again in 2001 and said it looked like a terrorist attack was to happen on World Trade Centre and it happened that year in 9/11/2001.

Stone contextualised this critical incident of paranormal experience by sharing with others, announcing God's warning and an artist contextualised it by drawing these visions and putting them in Stone's ministry office. Stone notes that dreams are signs of a prophet because of John 15:26 and John 16:13. In a critical incident in the Bible, God instructed Joseph, Pharaoh of Egypt, Nebuchadnezzar, Joseph and Mary but they were not identified as prophets. Based on historical context principle, the texts do not say that the Holy Spirit what He wants to show through dreams. He can illuminate through scriptures as well. Stone's interpretation of scripture allegorizes texts to categorise believers into ministerial classes yet God gives other criteria for spiritual manifestations, such as cleanliness in life (2Tim. 2:20). Hamon (2000) observes that God has always desired to communicate to His people using various means, including prophetic dreams and visions as demonstrated in biblical example in Numbers 12:6.

A brief survey of other examples of God's use of dreams to change situations, destinies and bring prophetic knowledge to people was helpful towards evaluation of biblical and non-biblical Contextualization of dreams. God warned King Ambimelech for taking Sarah (Gen. 20:6-7), confirmed to Jacob of time to leave Laban (Gen. 31), revealed to Joseph His future when he was seventeen years (Gen. 37:5-10), Gave Joseph ability to interpret dreams on seven-year famine in Egypt (Gen. 41: ), gave Gideon confidence to fight the Medianites (Judg. 7), gave Solomon assurance of answer to his prayer request for wisdom (1Kings 3:5-12). In the six cases, God warned a king, instructed Jacob, uncovered future destiny of Joseph, gave Joseph ability to interpret dream towards birth of Israel in fulfilment of His promise to Abraham in Gen. 12:1-4 and confidence to Gideon to deal with national oppressors. God gave Daniel a dream and interpretation (Dan. 2:1-47). Do all dreams come from God? Stone (2011) notes that dirty dreams come from people who house them by the life they live or as spirits ruling over a region (Mat. 12:43) and they can trouble someone like they did to Job as nightmares (Job 7: 13-14). While asleep demons attack the mind at night if one is not spiritually strong, signs, or cravings stuck in one's mind. Dreams should be judged by the word of God, conformity with nature and character of God and character of the dreamer.

Kusmierz (2016) observes that AICs in general are characterised by Contextualization of theology in daily lives through lived experiences. They have prophetic type leaders. They get involved with socio-economic, religious and political problems as part of their prophetic biblical mission. The priest is seen as the medium through which God comes to man. The aspirations and expectations of AICs are met through development of African Christology. In practical ways, Jesus must be priest, prophet and King (Phil. 2:5-11). Knowing Jesus in daily experiences of pain, suffering and other aspects of daily life is characteristic of AICs. In Africa, study done by Bariu (2018) in Roho Churches found

out those two main roles of prophets is forth-telling current events and foretelling future events. Similar roles were played by biblical prophets in the Old and New testaments. In both contexts, prophets did not tell people what to wear and how to wear. God apprehended true prophets in His power to act through them among the people. Their behaviour varied with historical period, need, place and social and cultural context. Possession behaviour was not always the same. It could sometimes deviate from social norms. A true prophet is fearless, humble and an intercessor (Grubb, 2010).

Deke (2015) investigated dilemmas the prophets serving in AICs. He found that they are faced with a challenge of trying to integrate traditional means of communicating with spiritual entities through soothsayers, divination, fortune telling, spirit guides and dependence of the Holy Spirit to bring messages from God and mediate divine healing to the sick in AIC churches. The review was a general overview of brief metamorphosis of AICs and shifts in the understanding of the role of prophets. Deke's study therefore lacks findings of living prophetic roles based on a specific AIC group. There was no focus on any area in which the role any AIC group of prophets were studied in their field of practice. Sources of doctrines informing Akūrinū dress codes used on various occasions their relationship to understanding of God and specific roles of prophets in dress code will be investigated. In General Conference of Akūrinū churches (2016), main Akūrinū symbols and vestments were affirmed and defined. Turban, worn by men on the head, signifies that Akūrinū people are peacemakers. The proposed study is intended to fill these gaps by studying the role of prophetic practice in a specific AIC, the Akūrinū denomination. This study will do so by collecting data in a specific religious phenomenon, role of Akūrinū prophets in establishing the right dress code for groups in the study by Ndungu (1994) notes that the first Akūrinū denomination was an offshoot of the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa, which was started in 1926. Based on oral

interviews, God appeared to Kagana in 1930 in a dream gave him two texts (Jer.31:34 and Hebrews 8:10-11) which soon became part of the foundational teachings for Akūrinū believers.

These divinely given texts were taken to be God's directives that: Bible teachers or Bible studies are not necessary since God has placed His law into every believer's heart. The Holy Spirit baptism is for all. Study by Njeri (1984) found that *Akūrinū* believers elevate Holy Spirit above Jesus Christ and God the Father, Holy Spirit communicates doctrines mainly through dreams, visions and prophecy to the Akūrinū believers, Levitical laws are strong element of their theology, especially ritual cleansing. Miracles, especially healing were expected; and anticipation of God's Day of Judgment at the coming of Jesus was to be emphasised in preaching. Based on Hebrews 8:10-11 (NKJV) quoted from Jer.31:34, human teachers take a back seat.

*“For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 11 None of them shall teach his neighbour, and none his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them”.*

As Ndungu (1994) notes, the Akūrinū church initially interpreted this text to mean that the Holy Spirit now teaches every believer and no human teachers are needed. The outcome of this belief led *Akūrinū* believers to disregard theological training or even Bible studies in regular Akūrinū services. *Akūrinū* believers interpret Zechariah 3:3-4 as God's instruction to men to wear white turban and women to wear white headscarf as a symbol of purity and God's call to be priests and prophets. However, the scene in the text is that God appears to Joshua, the high priest and prophet, in a vision as he stands before Yahweh in filthy clothes. The context is God's courtroom and Satan is pressing charges against the children of Israel through Joshua. God tells Joshua to remove filthy

garments and put one clean one as imagery for call of Israel to repentance. God interprets the contextual meaning of the Hebrew verb *labash*, לָבַשׁ, to put on, to wear, be clothed, in verse 4, “See I have removed your iniquity from you and I will clothe you with rich robes.

The children of Israel were sinful before God but he was willing to clothe them with His righteousness (Batzig, 2015). Based on verse 4, authentic hermeneutics is that the clothing of Joshua was symbolic of the cleansing act of God on Israelites after their return from Babylon. The other text used to support white priestly garments is Lev. 8:9-14. However, the context is the consecration of Aaronic priesthood was for liturgical services. The colours of coat and mitre (liturgical dress put on the head during liturgy) are not specified. Ndungu’s findings suggest theology of dressing for *Akūrinū* believers has multiple sources of interpreting dress code. However, Ndungu’s study did not investigate the relationship between biblical hermeneutics and use of paranormal experiences as God’s mode of communication to them and then the church.

Due to divergent understanding of God held by *Akūrinū* believers, their hermeneutics is evolutionary. As used in this study and specifically applied to *Akūrinū* believers in Nairobi County, this evolutionary Contextualization is unbiblical. The Bible is a spiritual book and God’s guide to anyone who relies on the Holy Spirit to make principles of hermeneutics relevant. Prophecies from God exhort, warn for repentance, edify or comfort believers (1Cor. 14: 29) and false ones do not (Jer. 23:25-27). Use of biblical principles of hermeneutics, namely genre, scripture interprets scripture, theological principle (attributes of God), biblical context and grammar, would minimize errors interpreting dreams, visions and prophecy neo-Pentecostals (called AICs in Africa) and specifically among *Akūrinū* believers in Nairobi County.



#### **2.3.4 The Moderating Effect of Culture on Theology of Dressing, Paranormal Experiences and Biblical Mission**

In objective four, selected measures of moderating variables in culture were gender, level of education, type of theological training and urban life in general. Gill (2013) has defined culture as people's shared traits such as values, beliefs, attitudes, ideas and ways of doing things that shape lifestyle of the people group. Gill (2013) has categorised culture into mental models (procedures, reasoning systems, beliefs and knowledge), preferences (attitudes and values that guide moral reasoning), and artifacts (manifestations of cultural life such as language, transport and communication systems among others). As noted by Spencer-Oatey (2008, p.3) have defined culture as "a fuzzy set of basic assumptions and values, orientations to life, beliefs, policies, procedures and behavioural conventions that are shared by a group of people, and that influence (but do not determine) each member's behaviour and his/her interpretations of the 'meaning' of other people's behaviour." Due to the unique set of traits shared by any people group, concept of cultural relativism and how it relates to the uniqueness of religious variables in any people group is significant in this study. Andreatta and Ferraro (2012) have defined cultural relativism as looking at cultural values, beliefs and practice from the perspective of members of the cultural community.

A study done by Yasha (2015) on the relationship between feminist theology and biblical interpretation in an American context showed that some white and African-American women activists selected some Bible texts to support their claim for equality with men, even in the church. Assuming selected biblical principles of hermeneutics were taught in such a cultural context, women and men would contextualise God's truth differently. Applying this to *Akūrinū* believers, the study partly sought to look at the selected variables from the *Akūrinū's* cultural perspective in order to investigate how each

variable moderated biblical truths taught or untaught on theology of dressing, fulfilment of biblical mission and role of paranormal experiences. Those moderating variables are gender, level of education, type of theological training and dynamics of urban life. Moderator strengthens, weakens, negates or alters association between Institutedvariable (IV) and dependent variable ((DV).

Heskett (2011) has identified eight challenges to cultural effectiveness as inconsistent leadership behaviour, pride, rapid growth, slow growth, non-organic growth, failure to maintain a feeling of social belonging, leadership that is external to group life and ineffective measurement and action. However, standards that measure the effectiveness of each element in each culture are subjective to the cultural group unless God's standards that inform each aspect of life are interpreted correctly using objective (scientific) principles, specified earlier as genre, biblical context, God's truth carried across cultures and finally applied in the contemporary cultural context, grammar and related aspects of language such as syntax and semantics, understanding who God is and consistency with what He does (theological principle and cross-referencing of biblical texts that speak the same truth for clarity purposes (scripture interprets scripture).

Measures of effectiveness of any cultural group include but not limited to impact within group, upon other groups and sustainability, among others. Ground breaking review done by McPherson et al. (2001) on elements that keep people together as friends (homophile) include race and ethnicity, sex and gender, age, religion, education which stratifies occupation and social class, network position such near or periphery, conduct, attitudes, abilities, beliefs and aspirations. Studies have been done in African Instituted Churches in Africa to investigate moderating effect of specific variables in culture on specific variables in biblical theology and spiritualities. This objective focused on moderating

effect of religious training, gender, education level and urban life as a lifestyle which included dressing on *Akūrinū* believers.

Hyginus and Chigere (2001) argue that emphasis on prayer, prophecy, healing, other miracles, separation from mainline churches started in Africa by white biblical missionaries and autonomous African leadership characterize AICs. Ositelu (2002) adds that some AICs of Aladura (those who pray) Church movement with emphasis on Pentecostal and charismatic manifestations have become diaspora biblical missionary churches, such as church of the living God, Church of Christ the Saviour, Christ Apostolic Gospel Church, and Deeper Life Christian Bible Church, among others. Some of Aladura churches have congregations in America and Europe. Unity in diversity (community), preaching Christ and praise and worship are additional emphases in AICs. Gruchy (2005) explains the origin of AICs in South Africa, noting that at the turn of twentieth century, Black-White Church in South Africa had three options of existence; a black church under Western administration from Europe or America, member of a multi-racial church dominated by white supremacy or initiates their own as African Christians. Oosthuiszen et al. (1994) differentiates African Initiated Zionist Apostolic type churches born in Natal from Ethiopian Aladula AICs, which broke from biblical mission churches for spiritual freedom primarily. *Akūrinū* church in Kenya is classified Zionist Apostolic type of AIC. The studies revealed that the three types of AICs struggle with the relationship among identity, worldview and social-cultural experiences primarily due to racial and ethnic diversity between blacks and white.

Mucherera (2017) notes that African Instituted Churches struggle with blending Western Christianity with religious values of Shona traditional religion in Zimbabwe. There was need for social analysis in order to understand why Pentecostal churches were taking those in AICs churches. The two critical observations revealed religious identity conflict.

The negative biblical missionary attitude that Shona culture was pagan disregarded the biblical elements with Shona culture and religion. Reactions to this attitude by Shona converts led to rise of AICs whose believers attempted to contextualise blended theology.

For biblical missionaries, conversion meant turning from Shona culture to western culture and faith in Jesus Christ coming last in their biblical mission emphases. One of the solutions to this conflict was to introduce biblical counselling to AIC believers in order to help them overcome low self-esteem, identity conflicts and dehumanisation, living tension between bi-religious and bi-cultural, a force of economics and urban planning forcing traditionally communal Shona to live individualistic lives in urban contexts in an effort to shield their faith from secular attacks.

Venter (2004) observes that AICs in South Africa are faced with crisis of lack of conservative structures in the city life due to anonymity and pressure to conform to secular lifestyles as opposed to social interaction which would promote spiritual growth. The effect of the modern city on an individual's identity is a challenge to Contextualization of Christianity among AICs. A specific application of multiple living tensions among the AICs is the theology of dressing. Dressing communicates personal values and shared values in families and the culture to which they belong and the language of dress has a silent impact on culture in positive and negative ways. Contextualization of the theology of dressing has application in specific work environments in Kenya. Findings by Malakwen (2015) were based on a study conducted in Nairobi Serena Hotel on the influence of employees' dress code on customer behaviour revealed that decent uniform attracted more customers. This confirms the view that silent language of dressing has positive or negative impact on different people depending on association they make between dress code and persons wearing the same.

This study was to find out from *Akūrinū* believers the various associations made by non-*Akūrinū* s regarding *Akūrinū* s' unique dress codes, their religion, levels of acceptance by the general culture and how these responses influence *Akūrinū*dress codes.

Waigwa (2007) asserts that the Bible has four diagnostic questions, which may guide a Christian towards a godly dress code, are: First, does the dress code demonstrate personal surrender to the Lordship of Christ and commitment to holiness? (Rom 12:1; Titus 2:11-12; 1 Tim 2:10). It was important to note that what is called modest dress code varies from culture to culture. The married *Akūrinū*men wore coats or jackets to indicate they are married and they are faithful to their wives, dressing was an outward sign of their sexual purity (Waigwa, 2007). Similarly, married women wore sash across their chest to indicate they are married and they are faithful to their husbands. It was of interest to find out how different non-*Akūrinū*people in the urban communities interpreted *Akūrinū* dressing. Second, although in 1Pet 3:1-4, the apostle addresses women in particular that they should adorn themselves with purity, God uses the same standard for everyone and he primarily looks at the heart (1 Sam 16:7; Prov 31:30). The implication is that *Akūrinū* s and very other Christian should focus on honouring God with the whole personality as spirit, soul and body (1Thess 5:23). Third, choices of clothing are to be consistent with transformed thinking (Rom 12:2). Fourth, a sign of change by the Holy Spirit is self-control of one's ungodly appetites and desires (Rom 6:12-13). The *Akūrinū*dress codes are reliable indicators of holy living. Fruit of the Holy Spirit is reliable indicator for every Christian (Gal 5:22-23) since external is not an adequate indicator.

Budiselić (2013) recommends that sound theological education should be given to all Christian believers in the church unlike the way it has been traditionally done by a few in various schools. 'Culture is a fuzzy set of basic assumptions and values, orientations to

life, beliefs, policies, procedures and behavioural conventions that are shared by a group of people, and that influence (but do not determine) each member's behaviour and his/her interpretations of the 'meaning' of other people's behaviour' (Spencer-Oatey 2008, p. 3).

Ott and Strauss (2010) note that biblical mission is God's saving activity to everyone who has no salvific relationship with Jesus Christ (John 3:16-17). There are six worldviews which challenge biblical worldview. Anthropological worldview is based on the premise that Christ transforming cultures interferes with traditional cultures. Psychological worldview cites cases such as genocide in Rwanda and Burundi or terrorism such as 9/11/2001 in New York, to express fear that religion might lead to insecurity. Socio-religious argument contends that all religions should co-exist harmoniously without anyone trying to convert another since all religions are equal. Historical worldview claims that Christian biblical missions have been associated with colonialism and capitalism. Epistemological worldview argues that no truth claim that is valid for everyone at all times. The pragmatic worldview contends that Christians are everywhere now so biblical missionaries are not needed (Naylor & Santos, 2019). The Western church sees biblical mission as going outside their continent to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. Biblical meaning of biblical mission is the act of reaching unsaved people, near and far, with the Gospel of Jesus Christ so that God regenerates the spirit and soul with His life in Jesus Christ (Acts 1:8; Matt 28:16-20). The unregenerated spirit and soul of any living human being is the biblical mission field.

Moreau (2012) presents two models of Contextualization as revelation of reality by God to ignorant humans and calls it Hiebert's critical Realism and interpretation model, which he calls Craft's Critical Realism. Hiebert (1985) defines critical realism as a practice that leads people to analyse their old customs in the light of biblical teachings.

Like other, AIC believers, Akūrinūs have constantly struggled with syncretism in their effort to translate the Bible into kikuyu language and traditions and yet remain Christian. Countercultural model confronts evils in their culture as contextual approach. Models here refer to categories of Contextualization. Moreau defines Contextualization as process of adapting the forms, content and praxis of Christian faith to enable the Gospel to reach people of other cultures.

Initially, this biblical mission was so confined to decolonization of Akūrinū lived theology, culture and nation by using the Bible against those who brought it (West & Dube, 2021). However, religion as lived experiences, economic and political changes in Kenya moderated Akūrinū biblical mission.

#### **2.3.4.1 Does One's Worldview Inform One's Understanding of Reality?**

Hwang (2019) notes that Kraft's critical realism as an approach to contextualise God's truth denies authoritative nature of God's propositional truth recorded in the Bible as complete and objective truth. To Kraft, God continues to reveal Himself more to individuals in new ways and subjectively. Both scholars agree on theistic definition of realism as interaction of reality as God has it and reality as each human being experience it and understand it. Human interpretation of his experiential reality based on biblical principles of hermeneutics results in biblical Contextualization of God's reality, which expressed in biblical texts as God's special revelation.

This study adopted Harbert's revelation/correspondence model as the biblical model of Contextualization on the grounds that human can access God's prescriptive truth in the Bible through correct use of biblical principles of hermeneutics. In this study, selected biblical principles are genre, biblical context and understandings of God (theological principle). Kraft's model of reality was rejected because it rejected the ability of human

to access God’s truth, thereby supporting relative truth based on unlimited versions of human realities. The status of *Akūrinū* believer’s version of reality was evaluated and categorised based on findings. Harbart’s revelation/ correspondence model and Kraft’s process model are contrasted in Table 1.

**Table 1**

*Two Evangelical Views of Critical Realism and Contextualization of Truth*

Kraft’s Critical Realism	Harbart’s Critical Realism
True reality exists; God is the only one who knows reality in its complete sense	True reality exists; God is the only one who knows reality in its complete sense
Critical realism. Reality is the product of resolution of interpretive conflicts between content and forms in which God’s truth is communicated	Critical realism. While we cannot experience or understand reality as God experiences or understands it; being made in God’s image, we can grasp reality adequately and sufficiently.
Human experience and understanding are always subjective; we generate our own reality from our own perceptions of reality resulting in subjective reality. Objective reality does not exist.	While our experience of reality is always subjective and we generate our own reality from our own perceptions of reality, we can benchmark with God’s reality that corresponds with our as recorded in biblical texts yet not denying that our reality is true

Type of knowledge an interpreter has influences quality of interpretation. Gilanie (2022) has categorized knowledge from a philosophical perspective. As a branch of philosophy, epistemology is the study of theory of knowledge (awareness) in terms of its nature, justification and rationality of belief. A priori knowledge requires reasoning, not experience. Postpriori is knowledge is knowledge that something is true. that comes experience and then inform reasoning. Explicit knowdge is formal knowledge, therefore more reliable. Tacit knowledge is subjective. Propositional knowledge is knowledge



something is true. Procedural knowledge is acquired through a procedure which may involve being systematic, having right semantics, using logic and using empirical data.

Thorbecke and Hall, (eds.) (1990) agrees with Hiebert and adds that data analysis using a prescriptive content model is validated by some decision-making rules, notably, logical consistency and contextual workability of absolute truth. Thorbecke & Hall and Hiebert are validated by internal biblical evidence of God's prescriptive truth as cited in Mal.3:6, "I am the LORD, I do not change...", among other texts.

Theoretically, *Akūrinū* believers' lifestyle was expected to correspond with God's prescribed truth as evidence that their contextual theology was biblical, which was the thesis statement. The second test that guided biblical Contextualization of theology is the workability of God's truth for every believer in every context, called workability test by pragmatics. Saaty (2014) has discussed four laws of logic, which are necessary for decision making for unchanging truth as solution to doctrinal differences in the church. God's truth recorded in the Bible falls in this category. Law of identity states that two elements x and y are identical if they share the same properties. Considering *Akūrinū* faith presented by founding prophets as a shared element, all *Akūrinū* believers should share the same belief as long as source of their faith was the same, specifically God and His word. Literature reviewed had indicated variations in the faith existed among various *Akūrinū* groups of believers. Either the law of non-contradiction is valid if x or not x is true but not both. Methods of Contextualization of theology may vary but content. It was noted that content contextualised had variations. Third, element x has property y or it does not. Regardless of gender, age and context, *Akūrinū* believers were either on transition into special group of evangelical Christians or remain as believers whose faith is anchored on *Akūrinū* traditions instead of Jesus Christ.

The lived experiences expressing three components of outcome variables were indicators of contextual theology and were conceptualised as observed meanings of dressing, religious services, motivation and meanings behind service delivery, and experiences of dreams, visions and prophecy as perceived to be God's means of who He was and how He acted in life style of *Akūrinū* believers.

## **2.5 Summary of Reviewed Literature**

Five taxonomies of hermeneutics, namely; historical/context, grammatical, philosophical, theological and literary/genre have been discussed. Historical/context, theological and literary/genre classifications/ approaches have been used in this study because they are more relevant to variables under investigation among *Akūrinū* believers. Contextualization involves a never-changing truth from God interacting with an ever-changing human context as lived-out theological experiences. In this study, God's truth from biblical texts have been discussed in the light of ever-changing theologising approaches among *Akūrinū* believers in relation to dress codes, biblical mission given by God and use of dreams, visions and prophecy as God's means of self-revelation, each variable discussed under each objective. Moderating variables of urban culture are level of education, gender, type of theological training and urban life in general. Divine command theory and diffusion of innovations theory have been discussed as most appropriate theories, which guided the study. Empirical review is done according to objectives.

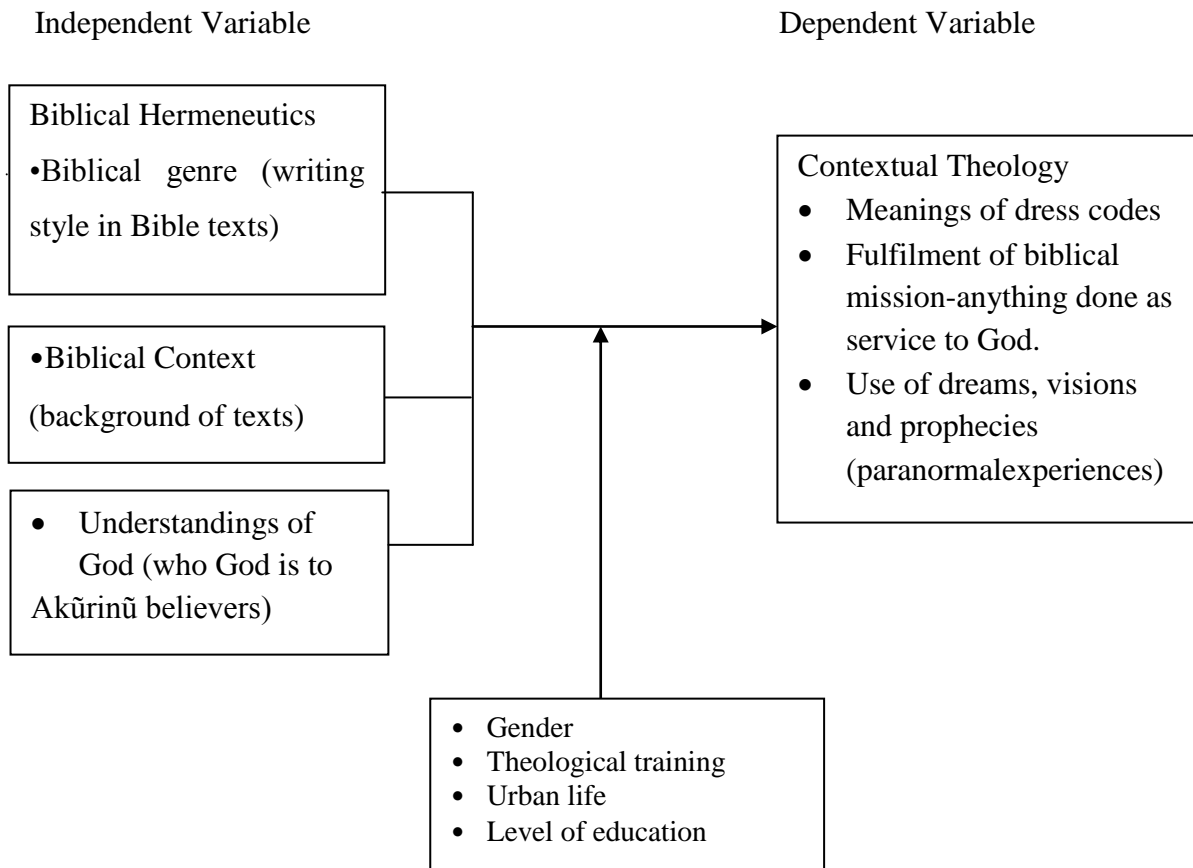
## **2.6 Conceptual Framework**

Author designed the conceptual framework that best fits this study. In this context, personal traits were conceptualised to include but not limited to gender; age, perceived sources of theological knowledge, knowledge of God and commitment to God's truth

and personal holiness according to Scriptures. Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2007) note that conceptual framework is a research tool that assists the researcher to conceptualise the situation being scrutinised. The relationship between variables is presented in (Figure 5).

**Figure 5**

*Conceptual Framework*



Source: Author, (2023)

**2.7 Research Gaps Emergent from Literature**

Types of research gaps which existed in this study were knowledge void, methodological conflicts and contradictory evidence. *Knowledge void*. The literature reviewed revealed that the relationship between hermeneutical approaches used by *Akūrinū* believers to interpret God’s truth which informed their theology varied from accurate, eisegesis, allegory, analogies of Kikuyu culture and reasoning, Kealotswe (2014), Njeri 1984,

Ndungu (1994 and Macharia (2012) yielded historical and anthropological data on *Akūrinū* believers and AICs in general. This outcome reflected over-researched areas. However, no published literature was available on relationship between hermeneutics and contextualised theology on *Akūrinū* believers. This study responded to this knowledge void as an under-researched area.

*Contradictory evidence.* Stone (2011) as a critical incident discussed contradictory evidence on sources of dreams and visions that when Stone slept briefly at 3 pm during the day in 1996, Stone saw tornado images with five pillars of smoke in a New York City. Similarly, in Acts 10:9-16, Peter slept and saw a vision of mixed foods. “Take any and eat...a’ God was correcting Peter’s racial prejudice about preaching to Cornelious. He shared with some ministers and an artist drew what he saw. Similar picture came again in 1999. He did not have interpretation. The vision was fulfilled in the destruction of Twin-Towers in New York on September 11, 2001. With this evidence being similar to the cases of Daniel and Joseph in the Bible, the vision was from God.

On the contrary, Waigwa (2007) narrates the *Akūrinū* belief that a married *Akūrinū* believer, Lilian Njeri, received through a vision from God in 1927 instruction to wear white sash (gacuka in Kikuyu) around her chest during the day. This vision was interpreted to be God’s instruction to all *Akūrinū* married women to wear sash as an identification of their marital status. However, there is no similar case in the Bible where subjective vision or dream shown to an individual once became normative theology. After all, only a small group of married *Akūrinū* women use the sash today (Macharia, 2012). The two cases are examples of contradictory evidence on claims of God’s revelation and instruction in the field of paranormal experiences.

*Methodological gap.* The literature revealed that studies done on AICs in general and *Akūrinū* believers in particular used descriptive designs. This study used mixed methods research which employed descriptive and correlational designs, yielding qualitative and quantitative data. The study results provided a more accurate understanding of the nature and practice of contextual theology of AICs, notably *Akūrinū* believers. The four-stage tasks of practical theology are an important contribution to theologians.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter addresses research design, location and population of the study, sampling procedure and sample size, instruments of the study, data collection procedure, data processing and analysis, and ethical considerations.

#### 3.2 Research Design

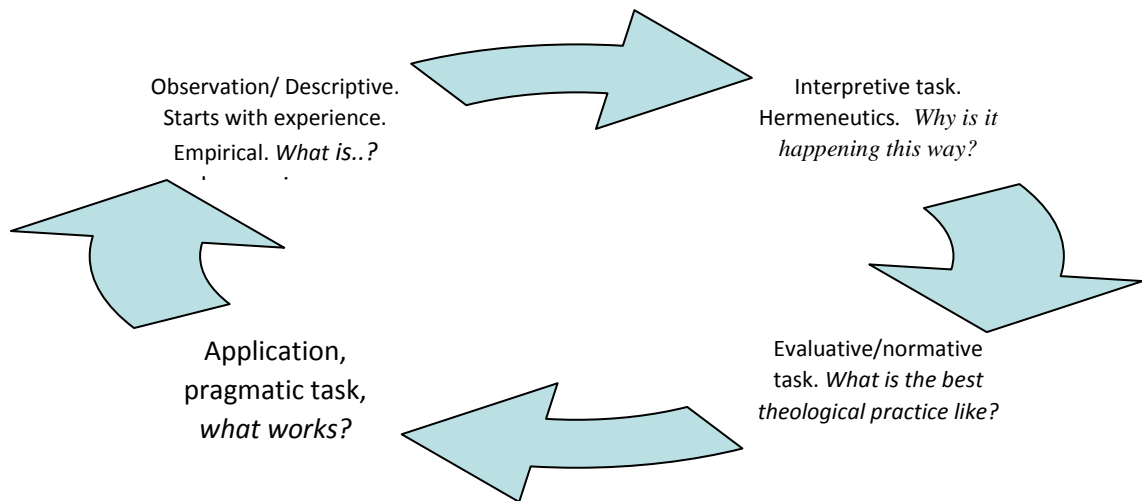
Research design is the logical plan of research tasks used than logistical problem of the study (Burns & Grove, 2003). The type of data influences the type of suitable design for a particular research (Gaille (2020). Descriptive and correlational designs are used to provide qualitative data from interviews with *Akūrinū* church leaders using similar items in the questionnaire, for *Akūrinū* believers in this study in the field of practical theology.

Practical theology is the critical and analytical correlation of interpreted theory and praxis (application of that theoretical content) theologically in contemporary situations.

The terms ‘critical’ (expression of analysis of literature in ways that show merits and demerits) and ‘praxis’ (practical application of theory) distinguish practical theology from applied theology. Researcher’s task/dimension/sequence loop summarising Osmer (2008) and Schipani (2020) to inform the study is innovatively presented in Figure 6.

## Figure 6

*Four Methodological Tasks in practical theology, adopted from Osmer (2008) & Schimpani (2020). Pictorial Summary*



*Source: Author (2023)*

According to Zubkov, Činčala, & Penno, (2021) practical theology is a unique, three-pillar (Bible, theory and human experiences in their holistic reality) inter-disciplinary study done using critical and analytical techniques that integrate theology and social sciences. Applied theology is different from practical theology in that applied theology focuses on application of any theological content in contemporary situations, regardless of accuracy. Preaching John 14:6 does not need analytical and critical study. It is proclamation of God's truth as is. Preaching fits into applied theology when it is not informed by results based on four tasks /dimentions of practical theology (figure 5).

Correlational/predictive design was used to infer an association between predictor and outcome variables as predictive probability, not causality (cause and effect). Gaille (2020) has identified three main advantages and disadvantages of using correlational design. First, variables being investigated cannot be manipulated since observation takes place in a natural setting unlike the case in experimental research. Second, results are

more applicable in addressing real- life needs such as the relationship between principles of biblical hermeneutics and contextualization of biblical mission as God's special calling upon *Akūrinū* believers. Third, data can be used to estimate the extent of association, such as the predictive probability of association between biblical genre and theology of dressing among *Akūrinū* believers. Disadvantages of using correlational design include, but not limited to; data shows only a connection between variables without explaining the cause, extraneous variables can interfere with the process of data collection and it is not possible to quantify actual influence of a variable in dynamic relationships.

Qualitative designs have strengths and weaknesses. Roller and Lavrakas (2015) have noted three strengths of using qualitative design in research, among others. First, descriptive design is appropriate for capturing the general or specific quality of dynamic behaviour at a given moment, such as influence of gender on the theology of dressing among *Akūrinū* believer in Nairobi County at the time when data is collected. Second, by use of social media research, descriptive design has been used to investigate quality of moral conduct desired. Texts recorded from interviews with *Akūrinū* leaders provided raw data for reflexive thematic analysis of specific theological content of each leader. Third, descriptive design is appropriate for data on demographic characteristics which make a unique contribution to the world of research in that it cannot be replicated.

However, the weaknesses of using descriptive design include: first, results do not provide absolute truth since dynamic behaviour is only captured at the moment. Second, researcher bias exists since the researcher is part of the data collection instrument. Third, like any, other design, type of descriptive design is limited to the type of complex phenomenon under investigation. In-depth interviews with *Akūrinū* leaders provided rich theological data on contextual theology according to *Akūrinū* leaders as a reflection of



congregational theologies under each leader interviewed, which was useful for identification of variety of hermeneutical approaches.

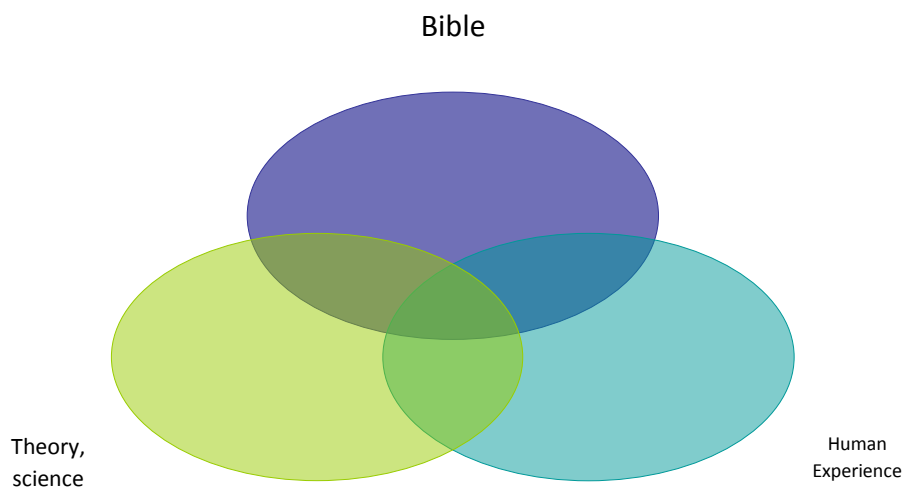
Mixed methods research techniques were appropriate for this study. Mixed methods research is a research process which combines concurrent search for qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques in a single study (Schoonenboom & Johnson, 2017; Creswell, 2003; Cameron, 2009). The method provided strengths of qualitative approach and compensated for weaknesses of quantitative and vice versa. In addition, use of qualitative and quantitative techniques provided more reliable findings on variables being studied (Creswell & Clark, 2011). According to Zubkov, Činčala, & Penno, (2021), the five philosophical underpinnings in qualitative research in practical theology are; ontology, epistemology, theology, axiology and methodology. Ontology is a branch of philosophy concerned with the nature of reality. Social science approach to research is based on the premise that there are multiple realities to be discovered. In theological research, God is ultimate reality and He provides unchanging reality to be accessed through the Bible and be used to inform other human realities.

Theology informs human ontology. Epistemology is the study of the nature of knowledge. In this study, *Akūrinū* believers had two natures, intellectual/cultural and revelation knowledge God has given in biblical texts. Both sets were expected to inform application of their theology. Axiology is the study of values. Qualitative research is value-laden. Although other value systems were expected, godly values were foundational in this study. Methodology as a way of accessing knowledge included revelation knowledge in the Bible and intellectual knowledge inductively, emerging and dependent on researcher's skill. Qualitative techniques were therefore unique. Quantitative techniques were not unique since they were borrowed from social sciences. Philosophical paradigms integrated in this unique methodology are; empirical (human

experience) interpretive/hermeneutic and normative. Research methodology was therefore unique, only fit for practical theology as a multidisciplinary discipline. Graphic summary adopted from interactive triad proposed by Zubkov, Činčala, & Penno, (2021) and given visual form by researcher is presented in Figure 7.

**Figure 7**

*Philosophical Paradigms Informing Research Designs in Practical Theology by Zubkov, Činčala, & Penno, 2021). Innovative Pictorial by Researcher*



*Source: Author (2023)*

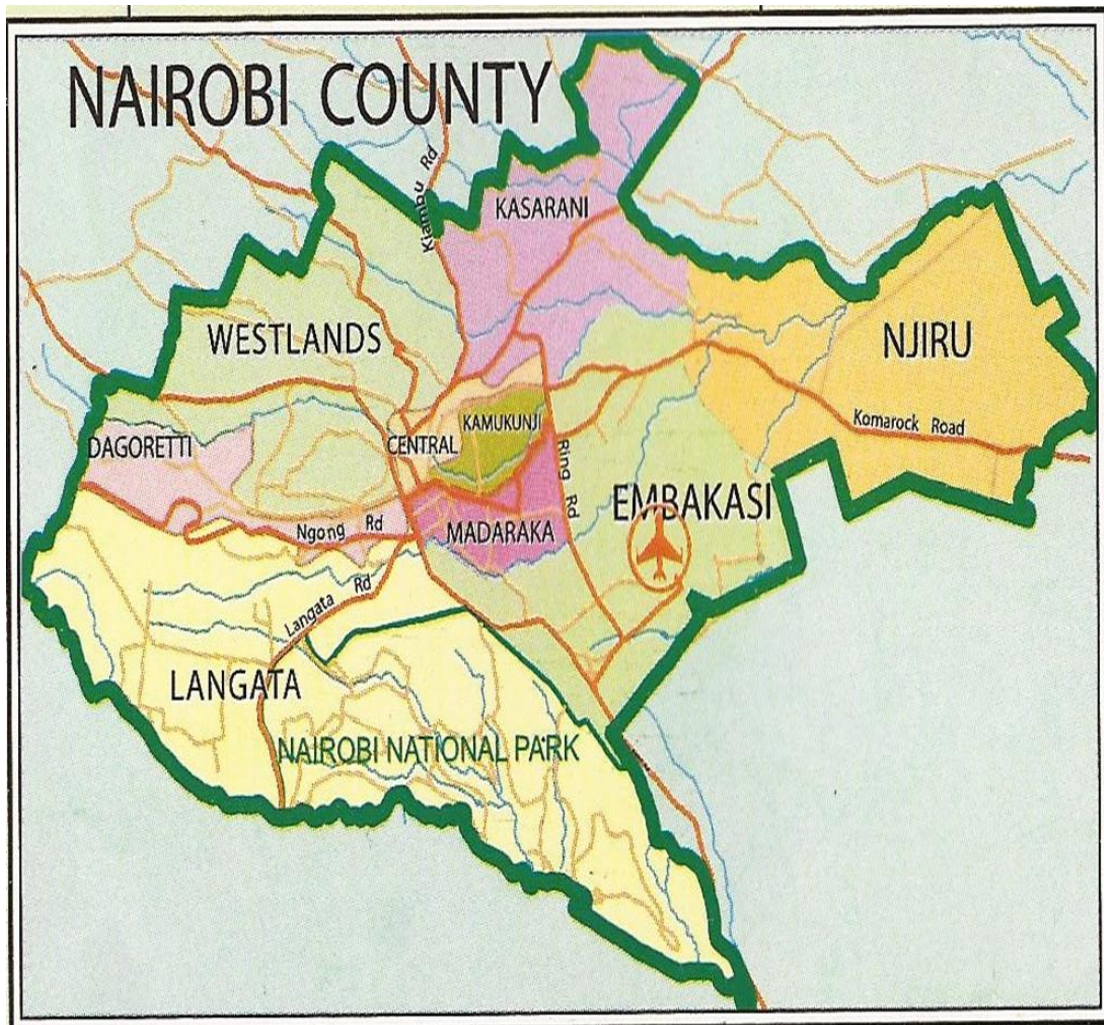
**3.3 Location of the Study**

The study was conducted in purposefully sampled sub-counties in Nairobi County. Nairobi is located in Global Positioning System of (GPS) as Latitude: -1° 16' 59.99" S and Longitude: 36° 49' 0.01" E (GPS, 2023). The city has an area of 255 square miles (696 km<sup>2</sup>) and a population of 5,325,000, people in the metro area (GPS, 2023) as shown in Figure 8.

Nairobi was selected because of theological influence of Akūrinū leadership residing in Nairobi, including GeCACA leaders who lead Akūrinū churches at national level and dynamics of its secular culture (GeCACA 2016). If Akūrinū believers and leaders would contextualise their theology effectively in the city, then they would easily contextualise it in other Akūrinū churches in other parts of Kenya as informed by diffusion on Innovations Theory (Rogers, Singhal & Quinlan, 2003). It was envisioned that results of the study would be effective in addressing challenges associated with biblical.

**Figure 8**

*Map Showing Nairobi County and its Sub-Counties*



*Source: GPS Coordinates.net, (2018)*

Contextualization of *Akūrinū* lived theology within the city and in the entire nation. God would then transform *Akūrinū believers* and use them to influence unbelieving urban communities (Matt. 5:10-16, Isa. 55:10-11). Nairobi was also purposely selected because access to accurate and adequate data, and administrative support from top *Akūrinū* leadership and members for the purposes of the study would ensure easier transferability. Study of selected moderating aspects of specific variables was based on most frequently variables in the literature review. The character of demographics of *Akūrinū believers* was important influence on the selection of Nairobi. Literature revealed that low levels of literacy was a historical feature among *Akūrinū* believers in the rural settings mainly due to reactive nature of the founders who were opposed to everything Western in during the colonial period, education included (Macharia, 2012). The researcher was interested in finding out how education was a moderator to variables *Akūrinū believers* were contextualising *Akūrinū* lived theology in relation to other variables of the study.

General Conference of *Akūrinū* Churches Assembly (GECACA, 2016) notes that there were over 800 registered *Akūrinū* churches located in Nairobi, Muranga, Nyeri, Meru, Embu, Nyandarua, Nakuru and Uasin Gishu counties. GECACA was formed in 2016 for the purpose of fostering church unity, prayers, support to church ministers, official registration of *Akūrinū* congregations, manage change and administration among others. The headquarters of GECACA provided national leadership to all its members. The largest single *Akūrinū* congregations in Nairobi are members of GECACA. Majority of the GECACA national leaders are in these congregations. Nairobi county has sixteen (16) sub-counties, namely; Dagoretti North, Dagoretti South, Embakasi Central, Embakasi East, Embakasi North, Embakasi South, Embakasi West, Kamukunji, Kasarani, Kibra, Langata, Makadara, Roysambu, Ruaraka, Starehe, Westlands and

Central (Nairobi sub-counties, 2016). Only seven of these sub-counties have *Akūrinū* congregations.

### **3.4 Population of the Study**

According to Vonk (2017), target population is a complete set of possible respondents in a study. In this study, target population refers to all *Akūrinū* believers registered with GeCACA in Nairobi County in 2018. This population was provided by the office as 2600 *Akūrinū* believers, main leaders excluded. Since *Akūrinū* congregations registered with GeCACA were fifteen and they were concentrated within seven sub-counties, only seven sub-counties were considered in this study. GeCACA leadership positions were designated as; national chairman and assistant, secretary general, national treasurer, national chairman-youth department, chairperson-advisory council, national youth patron and director of programmes, organizing secretary-programmes, national coordinator-events and coordination, and national chairperson-women conference (GeCACA, 2016). Based on leadership position, distribution and responsibilities of GeCACA leaders, the source of the target population was the reliable and representative of *Akūrinū congregations* in the seven sub-counties selected. Researchers need to know that the study was done among urban *Akūrinū* population in Nairobi County. Key respondents who gave qualitative data were the main custodians and teachers of *Akūrinū* lived theology. As GeCACA leaders living in Nairobi but influencing *Akūrinū* lived theology in Kenya.

### **3.5 Sampling Procedure and Sample Size**

Three sampling techniques; proportionate, purposive and adaptive, were used. Purposive sampling technique was used to select eighteen (18) top GeCACA leaders based on their *Akūrinū* theological knowledge and influence. As noted earlier, most of GeCACA

national leaders lived in Nairobi. Based on the resourcefulness and accessibility of church leaders, the eighteen (18) selected were composed of some *Akūrinū believers* who were part of the national leadership team of clergy. For purposes of objectivity, at least one clergy in each congregation, some youth leaders, Njata TV minister and two wives of the clergy for gender balance, were purposely selected for interview.

According to Sedgwick (2014), personal characteristics of the respondents such as mood and memory change with the day of the week, time of the day, individual circumstances and availability of respondents for data collection exercise, the best opportunity to collect data was soon after service in each congregation. First, formula by Nassiuma (2000) was used to determine total sample as (328 *Akūrinū believers*) in the sub-counties selected. Proportionate sample in each congregation was then determined based on formula by

Cochran (1977)  $\left(\frac{n}{N}\right)N_h$  determining the sample size from a proportionate part of total population. Results are in Table 2. The total sample size was determined using the formula by Nassiuma (2000) as follows:

$$n = \frac{NC^2}{C^2 + (N-1)e^2}$$

Where:

n = sample size and N=population size;

C = Coefficient of variation which is  $\leq 30\%$ ;

e = margin of error which is fixed between 2-5%).

The sample was calculated at 25% coefficient of variation and 5% margin of error, meaning that any error below 2% is to be rejected as valid data (Nassiuma, 2000).

Using the equation, the sample translated to: N=2600, c=30%, e=1.55%,

$$\text{Sample Size, } n = \frac{2600 \times 0.3^2}{0.3^2 + (2600 - 1) \times 0.0155^2} = 327.54 \approx 328$$

Population statistics (GeCACA, 2018) and sub-county populations (strata) calculated using the formula were presented in Table 2.

**Table 2**

*Summary of Target Population in Seven Sub-Counties in Nairobi County*

Sub-County	Total Population (N)	Sample (n) $\left(\frac{n}{N}\right)N_h$
Mathare	844	106
Roysambu	525	66
Kasarani	474	60
Embakasi S.	189	24
Embakasi N.	172	22
Dagoretti North	215	27
Dagoretti South	181	23
Total: Seven Sub-Counties	2,600	328

*Source:* Totals from GeCACA office (2018)

Proportionate, purposive and adaptive sampling techniques was used to determine number of needed respondents in each sub-County and results presented in Table 3.

**Table 3**

*Sample Size, Sampling, Category of Respondents in Seven Sub-Counties and Tools used*

S/N	Respondents	Sampling Technique	Sample Size (n)	Tools Used
1	Leaders	Purposive	18	Interview Guide
2	Believers	Proportionate & Adaptive	328	Questionnaire
Total	Two groups	3	346	2

### **3.6 Instrumentation**

Two types of instruments were used, namely, Questionnaire and Interview Guide. Questionnaire was used to generate data from *Akūrinū* believers. The questionnaire was used in this study to allow the researcher to obtain adequate information of wider variety from large population. To enable investigation of relationships between specific variables targeted, descriptive and inferential data on lived religious experiences was collected. The structure of the questionnaire had two parts, the demographic characteristics of respondents and objective-based items to help to collect data that interrogated each of the four objectives. The format had five sections. There were seven (7) questions under demographic characteristics. Objectives 1-3 have six (6) questions each and objective four with five questions.

Beiske (2003) has identified the main strengths and weaknesses of using a structured questionnaire to collect data. Six strengths identified are use of data to develop a new theory, test an existing theory, compare responses of different respondents on the same item as an indicator of individual differences, to study large populations, to obtain data for hypothesis testing, and provide anonymity of respondents. Weaknesses of using structured questionnaire include; dishonest answers, not all respondents interpret items as the intended by the researcher, very weak for covering emotions of the respondents and challenges of accessing respondents.

An Interview Guide was used to collect detailed information from clergy and lay leaders. In-depth interview guide was used because it was the most suitable tool for collection of detailed information from experienced *Akūrinū* leadership. Eight (8) major questions were used. A section on demographic characteristics has five (5) questions. Objectives 1-3 has two (2) questions each and objective four had three (3) questions. The questions



covered the variables in the objectives in order to facilitate relevant, accurate and adequate data collection.

Guest, Namey & Mitchel (2013) have pointed out the main strengths of interview guide. First, ability to study religious experiences (phenomenology), such as frequency of dreams said to be from God among *Akūrinū* leaders by gender in Nairobi County within memory between May and July 2019. Second, understand real-world problems based on reflexive thematic analysis derived from textual categories as proxy experiences. Third, develop mitigation strategies based on specific or ranked texts. However, data from interview guide lack objectivity, statistical significance and inability to study character of respondents unless the study is longitudinal.

### **3.6.1 Reliability of Instruments**

The reliability of a research instrument refers to the extent to which an instrument can be used repeatedly with the same population and produce the same results, assuming the demographic characteristics remain constant (Middleton, 2019). It was therefore a measure of efficiency of the questionnaire as a tool for data collection. In addition to expert examination by supervisors, the reliability of instruments was ensured through pilot testing, compiling pilot reports and addressing weaknesses identified through the piloting exercise before the instruments were used with respondents to collect data. Thirty-one (31) questionnaires were administered in African Holy Ghost Christian Church (AHGCC) Thika, a branch of one of sampled congregations in Nairobi County. SPSS-assisted analysis was used to run pilot test (version 22). A research instrument is reliable if it can be used repeatedly with same or similar respondents and yields the same or similar findings, meaning that focus is on reliability of data collected. That is why testing reliability of instrument was important. Avoiding errors which may arise from

ambiguity in giving instructions to the respondents was one way to ensure reliability of research instruments.

Kasi (2009) has discussed three methods of ensuring reliability as follows: test-retest reliability, which refers to administration of instrument between period one and period two on the same respondents and correlation computed. This test was not applicable because it was suitable for action research. Inter-observer reliability refers to the consistency of an instrument when it is administered by different people. This test was not applicable to the study because the researcher needed to supervise the process administration of instruments to ensure the accuracy of data by explaining to respondents from one informed source and the study did not require team of researchers. Split-half method divides pilot items into two by numbering them and picking 50% odd numbers and 50% even numbers, then administering each set to 50% of respondents. Results are compared. This test was not used because it measures the reliability of items testing the same area of knowledge and this study investigated two knowledge areas, namely, hermeneutics and contextualization.

The researcher used the internal consistency reliability in which Cronbach's alpha (0.792) or reliability coefficient which estimates the internal consistency of data by measuring a given construct with variety of knowledge, pilot test and report based on guidelines by Kubai (2019). Kurpius and Stafford (2006) recommend that a Cronbach alpha reliability correlation coefficient should be around 0.70. A coefficient of 0.80 or more implies that there is a high degree of reliability in the data (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Internal consistency was achieved by the use of SPSS statistical software to analyse by piloting of the instruments using a similar but in a different Akūrinūcongregation in Nairobi. Specifically, piloting was done in African Holy Ghost Church, Thika. It was selected because it is outside Nairobi. Sampling was done using

simple random and findings were examined and weaknesses identified were addressed. In addition to expert advice given by supervisors, the instruments were also given to two experts (in the subject area and in statistics) provided expert advice and adjustments were factored as advised. To test reliability of the questionnaire, 31 questionnaires were piloted, SPSS statistical software was used to analyse data. For more comprehensive report (see Appendix IV.).

### **3.6.2 Validity of the Instruments**

Beerbaum (2016) defines internal validity as how well the study is conducted in terms of structure and process to ensure that the results are valid. In this study, internal validity was ensured by collecting data at the same time in each congregation using simple random, avoiding manipulation of respondents and ensuring gender balance. Factors influencing selected variables were controlled by objectivity of principles hermeneutics and objectivity of God's truth in scriptures (2Tim. 3:16-17). In social sciences, an element of bias exists since it is not possible to control human factors that may influence dependent variables. In objectives one and two, biblical genres and biblical contexts are controlled in that they are predetermined.

If principles of hermeneutics are used correctly, understanding of who God is would be consistent since God is consistent and self-revealing in His nature and character. Shenton (2004) has identified provisions necessary to promote internal validity. They included the use of well-established research methods, familiarisation with culture of respondents, random sampling to negate selection bias, triangulation, techniques to help respondents to be honest in their reporting, negative case analysis in which hypotheses or typologies were refined to accommodate all findings, frequent debriefing with supervisors for clarity and broadening of perspectives, peer scrutiny of the thesis presentation in

conferences. The researcher published and presented papers and participated in data presentation seminars. To increase the reliability and validity of data, sampling was done across gender, age, ministerial hierarchy among *Akūrinū* leaders.

External validity (ability to generalize results in all *Akūrinū* population) was not possible since demographic and other cultural characteristics were dynamic and unique to the population of interest and time frame. However, statistical significance at p-value less than 0.05 indicated that a small percentage of theological characteristics were generalizable if results were statistically significant in each hypothesis (Streefkerk, 2019).

### **3.7 Data Collection Procedure**

After obtaining research permit from National Combibical mission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI), the letter to the respondents was used as an evidence to convince *Akūrinū* leaders that the researcher was attached to Kabarak University.

The test for reliability was completed first through piloting and instruments were modified according to findings before being administered to the respondents and pilot report compiled and utilised to improve the reliability of the questionnaire. The researcher sought administrative support and sampled the respondents as explained under sample size and sampling procedures. The detailed logistics and procedure are explained under the following four sub-headings.

#### **3.7.1 Training of Research Assistants**

For the purpose of efficiency of data collection procedures and improvement of objectivity of data, the researcher trained *Akūrinū* research assistants provided by leaders in each congregation based on education level and spiritual maturity. The researcher used

these assistants to assist in the administration of self-administered questionnaire. Other characteristics such as availability, gender balance and level of education were considered. The training was done case by case at congregational level to provide basic awareness of the purpose of the research and logistics of the administration of instrument. The training logistics involved brief theory followed by the administration of the instruments to the respondents in respective congregations.

### **3.7.2 Administration of the Questionnaire**

Introduction letter to the respondents was read by the leader incharge as in (Appendix1) for informed consent by explaining in to the respondents in Kikuyu. Questionnaires were administered face to face by the researcher with the help of research assistants after senior clergy interpreted the letter to the respondents to them at the language level of each of them in every congregation. The exercise took place in natural settings in each congregation. Questionnaires were self-administered but supervised and collected by the research assistant under researcher's supervision in order to increase response rate and objectivity

Questionnaires were administered face-to-face by the researcher and collected in order to maximize response rate. According to Lavrakas (2008), response rate of 70% and above was acceptable implying that 90% response rate was achieved in the fieldwork was good. The response rate was calculated as number of responses divided by number of questionnaires distributed and then multiplied by 100%. Samples in each congregation were indicated in Table 3. Church leaders provided logistics on how best the exercise were done in each congregation, preferably in one sitting per group in a face to face setting so that the researcher collected the self-administered questionnaire. The purpose of this is to increase the response rate. Before each exercise began, research ethics

relevant to the respondents were discussed and amicably agreed upon between researcher and main leader who then introduced the researcher to the congregation.

### **3.7.3 Conducting of Interviews**

The leader being interviewed as in (Appendix1) read introduction letter to the respondents. Semi-structured interview guide was used by combining variety of relevant items in each case in a 6- item instrument to conduct in-depth interviews with recording of verbal responses. Items were designed to elicit demographic information of leaders as well as data necessary for each objective. Each interviewee spent at least twenty minutes with the researcher. Only the researcher conducted the face-to-face interviews in order to increase the chances for accuracy and adequacy of data. Rules that guide research interviews for effectiveness of the exercise were applied. They included the following: Assumption that the respondents would see the usefulness of information they gave toward growth of their congregations theologically when results would available the them in the future through reading work in the library in the university the researcher was part of; be relaxed and friendly; create a good rapport with interviewees; be very familiar with interview guide questions and assure the interviewee of confidentiality of findings. The researcher observed the afore-mentioned guidelines during data collection exercise.

Challenges of much time required, expense, and high skill to avoid bias, estrangement was taken care of to ensure flexibility in terms of time bookings or venue. Interviews were scheduled with leaders mostly soon after collecting the data from the believers to ensure availability. Time taken in each interview was agreed case by case through discussion between each leader and researcher.

### 3.8 Data Analysis

Qualitative data from interviews were analysed by categorizing responses of respondents according to emerging themes, coding each theme and assigning numerical values. Marshall and Rossman (1999), notes that the purpose of data analysis is to bring order, structure and interpretation of a large mass of information. Rafferty & Traynor (2002) have argued that demographics are the main unit of analysis and knowing respondents' characteristics help in the interpretation of findings more accurately and therefore addresses the objectives effectively. The unit of analysis was composed of *Akūrinū believers* (302) and leaders (18).

The procedure given by Botany & Kreps (1999) was used to inform some steps of analysing qualitative data. The inductive process begins with flexible coding which involves selecting verbal texts relevant to study objective to guide analysis of content, structure, meaning and implications of recorded content taken through video (encoding). Decoding is done. Attia (2020) explains that decoding informs analysis of theological content.

Caulfield (2019) adds that the transcribed conversation is analysed to bring out content sought in the in-depth interview. Braun and Clarke (2014) note that constructed factual categories in content analysis provide basis for construction of reflexive thematic analysis based on relevant objective. This study adopted these steps as content analysis followed by reflexive thematic analysis, discourse analysis (how people say what they say) and discussion of results. Logically, content analysis and discourse analysis relate to hermeneutics since the focus at this level is to find out meaning of God's truth in biblical texts for comparison with meanings given by respondents. Facts obtained at this level are organised into factual categories. Kent (video, May 19, 2013) has outlined step-

by-step guide as recording of recorded quotes, grouping them into factual categories and constructing themes from factual categories in a ranked order with frequencies and percentages. These theological themes were analysed in order to categorize contextual theology of *Akūrinū* believers, the ultimate unit of analysis.

The researcher manually did coding, analysis of results and discussion as guided by reviewed literature. Braun and Clarke (Video, June 25, 2018) have provided six steps as a methodological approach to thematic analysis as follows: First, familiarize with the data, actively engage with data, listen repeatedly, make notes, identify patterns within data as factual categories. Second, code the data by reflecting on quotes categorise data into analytic entities (codes as labels that systematically identify meanings). Third, develop reflexive theme as central ideas, not more than six to avoiding data overload. Fourth, review theme, checking for clarity and accuracy and representation of the quoted data. Fifth, refine of themes, semantics, syntax, while being relevant to the objective. Sixth, tell the story from themes, illustrate using several respondents' quotes. All the steps are done reflexively (uniquely flexible to the researcher's language, personal perspectives and actively engaging with data).

### **3.8.1 Rules of Logic and Relevant Scriptures were Used to Guide Interpretation**

From a philosophical perspective, one truth that informs specific decisions and conclusions is considered valid when principles of science of correct reasoning, called logic, are applied. According to Leech (2015) and Lapointe (2018), the law of identity states that a thing is what it is the law of excluded middle states that truth is definite because truth cannot exist between and what it is and what it is not. The law of non-contradiction states that truth cannot be truth and error at the same time. The law of logical inference states that orderly thinking draws conclusions from major and minor



premises. From theological and philosophical perspectives, biblical reasoning concludes that God's truth is binary, absolute, universal, eternal, correspondent with reality and therefore consistent with laws of logic for people within cultural settings (Numbers 23:19 & Mal. 3:6, Eccl.3:14-15). This binary reasoning was adopted for this study because Triune God provides only one truth in a text of scripture. Logically, God is a spiritual being and cannot be flesh (Matt. 28:19 & John 4:23, Gen. 1:26-27).

Quantitative data from questionnaire was analysed using methods appropriate to the categorical (dichotomous) variables. Myers et al. (2006) have defined binary logistic regression as a type of regression that uses probability to relate predictors to dependent variable in a non-linear way because only changes in log odds in the dependent variable are calculated; contextual theology in this case, not changes in the dependent variable itself as in linear regression models.

Addai (2011) has defined odds as a ratio of probability of an event occurring to the probability of the event not occurring. Since binary data was non-parametric, Wald chi squared test was suitable as a test for independence since the categorical data in the dependent variable was mutually exclusive and therefore non-causal. Independence between two variables was hypothesised to state that no relationship existed between them as null hypothesis (Addai, 2011). Crowson (2018) adds that odds ratio is the probability of event A happening to probability of event A not happening in binary (dichotomous) data,  $odds = P(T)/P(F)$  where T=truth and F= false as choices made by *Akūrinū* believers on categorical (binary) data. According to Matheson (2008), statistical significance is mathematical value but practical significance is the importance of that value in real life of respondents. It means that whether null hypothesis is accepted or rejected, results always have a practical value on real life of research respondents or in the real world.

According to Battle (2012), binary logistic regression predicts natural logarithm of the odds or probability that change may happen in the dependent variable in response to a unit change in the Institutedvariable. 'Z' whose value is determined by logit model formula denotes this natural log called 'logit':

$$Z = \log(p/1-p) = B_0 + B_1.X_1 + B_2.X_2 + B_3.X_3 \dots + e \text{ where;}$$

Z= outcome (dependent) variable,

B<sub>0</sub>=constant,

X<sub>1</sub>, X<sub>2</sub>... are predictor variables,

B is the average change in Z per unit change in X

P= probability that a unit change in predictor variable will be reflected in outcome variable as 1-p, as odds ratio, meaning that the predicted change in log odds in the dependent variable for every one unit change in the predictor variable.

e=2.71828 as error term

Log or ln [p/1-p] is the log odds, or "logit".

Z-value is calculated by dividing constant by standard error value (B<sub>0</sub>/e). It is reflected in the Wald Chi squared test SPSS output as Wald (Crowson, 2018).

Error terms in logistic regression models are heteroskedastic, meaning that variance in dependent variable is different with different values of Institutedvariable. The model confines the maximum likelihood estimation to lie between 0 and 1. Z is a linear function of predictors and it is transformed into probability by use of natural log called logit to fit the data into the model in a better way than would be the case if linear regression model was used to predict non-linear changes (Battle, 2012).

Binary logistic regression increases the Maximum Likelihood Estimation (MLE) when used instead of using linear regression model (Ismail & Alias, 2014). Binary logistic

regression model is non-parametric and non-linear hence it does not require distributional assumptions, such as linearity. Variables are categorical. Binary logistic model was suitable to the study because individuals among *Akūrinū* believers had doctrines, beliefs and practices, which they held to be right. Scriptures are a record of God's objective truth. Any doctrine is either true or false. Measured against God's standard truth in scripture to determine whether *Akūrinū* contextual theology was accurate or inaccurate, selected principles of biblical hermeneutics were used as predictors of the extent to which contextual theology was biblical (true) or false. A unit increase in the biblical interpretation of texts that informed *Akūrinū* lived theology in relation to dressing, practice of biblical mission and use of dreams, visions and prophecy to understand God increasing the likelihood of change in odds ratio on contextual theology in non-causal ways.

As decision-makers, *Akūrinū believers* were mainly concerned about getting services from God through their relationship with God in the best way theology informed them. Given standard teachings theological teachings as understood to be from God, individual *Akūrinū believers* sought to interpret God's truth intellectually (based on one of more cognitive variables), believe God based on this truth based on one or more spiritual variables and commitment to do the best to practice this faith in God correctly in lived experiences in the market place, called contextual theology in this study ((Bevans, 2010). Quantitative data was collected using questionnaire, coded and analysed using SPSS as the tool of analysis.

These numerical values were processed using Software Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) to obtain quantitative data. The assumption was that cases that belonged to the same group were similar than cases that belonged to different groups. Osborne (2014) adds that, unlike multiple linear regression, logistic binary regression does not require

assumptions, namely, linearity, normality, reliability of measurements, homoscedasticity, and multicollinearity, among others, as discussed in detail by Onchiri (2013) and White (2009). The four objectives yielded categorical data (such as male and female), ordinal (non-numerical ratings such as frequencies and percentages) and numerical data, where numbers represented possible response categories were computed. The three scales of measurement were used in the study by providing items, which yielded qualitative and quantitative data.

Qualitative data interrogated any exaggerations respondents might have given in the oral interviews and some items in the questionnaire. As done with data from interviews, this qualitative data was analysed by coding the raw data using texts, categorizing texts (oral statements recorded or written) into reflexive themes (using researcher's judgement based on data) and using thematic analysis to yield frequencies and percentages based on guidelines of Braun and Clarke (2014, 2018 & 2019). Braun and Clarke argue that reflexive thematic approach to qualitative analysis provides room for the researcher's accountability, clarity and precision, trustworthiness and personal growth since qualitative analysis is primarily subjective.

Based on kind of data, measures of central tendency (mean, mode and median) and measures of dispersion (critical incidents) were not appropriate since they were categorical/binary (dichotomous) and has only one true answer, such as male or female. Frequencies and percentages of each category are suitable. It is not possible to have average truth of what God has said in biblical texts. It is either God's truth or not from God. In this study, binary logistic regression, hierarchical logistic and Wald chi-squared tests were performed using SPSS. This test variable and moderating effect of culture on the dependent variable (contextual theology), hierarchical logistic regression tests were

suitable because they allowed flexibility for different values of predictor variable to be produce change in log odds in dependent variable (Luvai, 2018).

The culture was the moderating variable. Since culture had many dynamic aspects that would have influenced hermeneutics among Akūrinū believers and their leaders, four most frequently occurring aspects of culture in literature reviewed as influential on variables of interest were gender, education level, theological training and urban life in general. Binary logistic regression analysis was done to find out how each predictor or repressor variable ( $H_{04}$ ) affect dependent variables, denoted as  $H_{01}$ ,  $H_{02}$  and  $H_{03}$ .

**Table 4**

*Summary of Data Analysis*

S/N	Objective	InstitutedVariable	Dependent Variable	Method of Analysis
1	Relationship between genre and theology of dressing	Biblical Genre	Theology of Dressing	Qualitative Data: Reflexive Analysis on interviews & Wald Chi-square test.chi square test of independence on questionnaire. Quantitative Data: Binary Logistic Regression.
2	Relationship between biblical context and fulfilment of biblical mission	Biblical Context	Fulfilment of Biblical mission	Qualitative Data: Reflexive Analysis on interviews & Wald Chi-square test & Chi-square test of independence on questionnaire. Quantitative Data: Binary Logistic Regression (SPSS) & ANOVA.
3	Relationship between understandings of God and role of paranormal experiences	Understandings of God	Use of paranormal experiences	Qualitative Data: Reflexive Analysis & Wald Chi-square test. Chi-square test of independence on questionnaire. Quantitative Data: Binary Logistic Regression (SPSS)
4	Moderating effect of culture on selected dependent variables	Selected Cultural Variables	Dressing, biblical mission and paranormal experiences	Qualitative Data: Reflexive Analysis on interviews. Chi-square test of independence on questionnaire. Quantitative Data: Hierarchical Logistic binary Regression (SPSS)

### 3.9 Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues related to the researcher and respondents, including plagiarism rules were observed by acknowledging all academic sources used and subjecting the work to turn it in for similarity index. Based on guidelines offered by Jensen (2013), communication between the researcher and respondents was observed by disclosing the purpose of the study to all respondents and their top leaders in each congregation. Confidentiality, respect and privacy, anonymity, avoidance of physical or psychological harm, the voluntary and informed consent were observed. This minimised fear of disclosure of *Akūrinū* doctrines, deeper beliefs and some practices, which were reserved for *Akūrinū believers* and increased the response rate because respondents felt free to give all information they had.

Hammersley and Traianou (2012) note that the level of responsibility over control of context when collecting data is an important consideration in that it can affect the validity (extent of accuracy) of findings. Observations made by Koskei and Simiyu (2015) on specific ways of applying ethical rules to safeguard against specific violations were adopted and applied in the study. These violations include using politics and the power of church leaders to make respondents feel obliged to participate in the interviews of questionnaire. The dual role such as collecting data and teaching principles of hermeneutics or counselling respondents and infringement into private religious practices of *Akūrinū* believers were avoided.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This Chapter presents the findings, interpretations and discussion according to the objectives and hypotheses. The chapter is organised into four sections. Section one is demographic characteristics of the respondents. General and demographic information of the respondents are discussed. Section two is objective one. The sequence starts with analysis and discussion of qualitative data from interviews, followed by quantitative data, testing of hypothesis one and results of moderating effect. Section three is objective two following the sequence of objective one. Section four is objective three following the sequence of objectives one and two. Results of objective four are captured under inferential statistics in objectives one to three.

#### **4.2 Demographic Information**

The general information included response rate and diagnostic test.

##### **4.2.1 General Information**

Rafferty & Traynor (2002) have argued that demographics are the main unit of analysis and knowing respondents' characteristics help in interpretation of findings more accurately and therefore address the objectives effectively. The unit of analysis was composed of *Akūrinū believers* (302) and leaders (18).

##### **4.2.1.1 Response Rate**

Saldivar (2012) has defined response rate as percentage of actual number of research tools returned compared with number distributed by the researcher during data collection. Response rate was computed from three hundred and twenty-eight (328)

questionnaires. Three hundred and two (302) were returned. The response rate was therefore ninety-two per cent (92%). Results are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5**  
*Response Rate for Questionnaire*

Sub-County	Questionnaires Issued	Questionnaire Returned	Percent (of expected)
Mathare	106	98	32.3
Roysambu	66	61	20.1
Kasarani	60	55	18.3
Dagoretti North	27	25	8.3
Embakasi South	24	22	7.3
Dagoretti South	23	21	7.0
Embakasi North	22	20	6.7
Total	328	302	100

The high response rate (92%) was achieved through researcher-supervised administration of the questionnaires. Ideally, a 100% response rate is expected in a researcher-supervised questionnaire exercise. However, a few believers who were in attendance but in a hurry to leave service requested to carry questionnaires on the grounds that they needed more time to complete the questionnaire. Some questionnaires were not returned. The highest responses were realised in Mathare, Roysambu and Kasarani mainly due to a very positive reception of the researcher by the respondents based on very positive introduction by leaders of respective congregations.

Although reception was generally positive, one congregation under clergy C7 (Table 6) in which a prophetess discouraged filling of the questionnaire by uttering words “write not”. This was taken to be prophetic word from God and so it overruled good reception by clergy but he had participated in the interview already. This incident agreed with observation by Olufowote (2017) who noted that limitations in research are factors



beyond researcher's control. In this study, the limitation was a general suspicion as to why non-*Akūrinū* was studying detailed theology of the *Akūrinū* believers. Perhaps the suspicion was caused by government's announcement that unregistered churches would be closed. This limitation was mitigated by good word about the researcher spreading from some *Akūrinū* leaders who were more influential to those less influential among the sampled congregations that he was not a government investigator.

#### **4.2.2 Demographic Data**

In this section, the unit of analysis and discussion of results are *Akūrinū* believers. The organisation and sequence adopted is qualitative data analysis and discussion of data from interviews followed by data from questionnaire, objective by objective. Inferential data with hypothesis testing using binary logistic regression to test the coefficient of the relationship between Independent and dependent variables in each objective is followed by testing of the effect of moderating variables of culture using binary hierarchical regression.

##### **4.2.2.1. Analysis and Discussion of Descriptive Data: Interviews**

Eighteen church leaders (18) were interviewed; data summarised to show codes of church leaders as the unit of analysis, office title held, duration in leadership, gender, and mode of *Akūrinū* theological training, education level, church name and duration of respective denomination. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 6.

**Table 6***Demographics of Church Leaders by Variables of Interest*

Clergy Code	Office title	Duration in Leadership	M/F	Edu. level	Mode of Theological training	Church Name	Duration of Church
C5	Pastor	5 years	M	Form 4	Mentor	HGCEA	60 years
Y16	Youth	7 years	F	Degree	Seminars	HGCEA	60 years
C11	Archbishop	17 years	M	Class 8	Gaarũ	AMHGC	50 years
C1	Snr. Bishop	30 years	M	Form 2	Gaarũ	AHGCC	40 years
C2	Snr. Pastor	30 years	M	Class 8	Gaarũ	AHGCC	40 years
C4	Pastor	12 years	M	Masters	Gaarũ	AHGCC	40 years
C3	Pastor	10 years	M	Degree	Gaarũ	AHGCC	40 years
D	Deacon	5 years	M	Diploma	Gaarũ	AHGCC	40years
C7	Bishop	20 years	M	Class 8	Gaarũ	KI	20 years
C14	Bishop	3 years	F	Form 4	Gaarũ	HCHM	15 years
C10	Pastor	4 years	M	Form 4	Mentor	RHP	13 years
C8	Bishop	12 years	M	Masters	Gaarũ	ECFCI	12 years
C12	Archbishop	3 years	M	Class 8	Gaarũ	GSIC	11 years
C13	Overseer	2 years	M	Diploma	Mentor	GSIC	11 years
PW17	Wife	2 years	F	Form 4	Mentor	GSIC	11 years
Y6	Youth	4 years	M	Degree	Mentor	AKI	10 years
PW18	Wife	1 year	F	Form 4	Mentor	BSDAC	10 years
Y9	Youth	5 years	M	Degree	Mentor	IKC	7 years

In question two, raw data was analysed by coding it according to positions of clergy, two wives of clergy, three youths and deacon. The abbreviation codes for church groups used in Table 6 were: African Holy Ghost Christian Church (AHGCC); Holy Ghost Church of East Africa (HGCEA); Israel Kenya Church (IKC); Africa Kanisa Israel (AKI); Kenya Israel (KI); Evangelistic Christian Fellowship Church International (ECFCI); Israel Kenya Church (IKC); Rehoboth House of Prayer (RHP), African Biblical mission Holy Ghost Church (AMHGC), Good Shepherd Israel Church (GSIC), Hosanna Christian Holy Ministry (HCHM), Holy Ghost Prophet Church (HGPC), Full Gospel Africa Israel (FGAI); Beroiya SDA Church (BSDAC); Holy Ghost Church of the Prophets (HGCP).

Table 6 shows that office titles were predominantly male, 78%. Among the 22% of women leaders was a bishop (C14) with 3 years of experience, an overseers' wife

(PW17) with 2 years of experience, pastors' wife (PW18) with one year of experience and a youth leader (Y16) with seven years of experience. The oldest denomination, the Holy Ghost Church of East Africa (HGCEA), was 60 years old but with its first, 5-year old congregation in Nairobi under a pastor (C5). The African Holy Ghost Christian Church (AHGCC) had highest number of leaders (5). Ten leaders had been trained in gaarũ. African Biblical mission Holy Ghost Church (AMHGC) was 50 years old in rural areas but the top leader archbishop (C11) was one of GeCACA consultants on matters of Akũrinũ lived theology. The other denominations (70%) were twenty years old and below in Nairobi County.

Names of *Akũrinũ* denominations reflected a variety of theological emphases. The dominant theological emphases had phrases 'African/Kenya' (80%), 'Holy Ghost' (50%) and 'Israel' (50%) in their names. Sakupapa (2018) notes that African voices in African Christian theology, John Mbiti (1931-2019), Kwame Bendiako (1945-2008), Jesse Mugambi (b. 1947) and Mercy Aduyoye (b. 1934) worked hard to decolonise African Christians from interpreting the Bible from a Western theological perspective. Christian churches started by Africans in Africa under this theological reform used the names, which expressed their theological perspectives, notably African Instituted Churches (AICs). God was primarily interpreted through theological reflection, mainly through the Holy Spirit. Studies of Zionist churches done in Malawi by Strohbehn (2016) revealed that self-understanding of this group of AICs was that they were God's Isaelites in Africa. Based on findings in the field, the dominance of the phrases 'African or Kenya' found in 80% 'Holy Ghost' in 50% and 'Israel' (50%) of Akũrinũ churches is a strong evidence that Akũrinũ churches were AICs. Seventy-eight per cent (78%) of theological contributions in the interviews expressed theological positions of male leaders. Gender balance was weak in *Akũrinũ* leadership in congregations sampled. Results suggest that

*Akūrinū* lived theology varied by gender and denominations. Results and Literature Informed the Study that *Akūrinū* church was a typical AIC.

In objective four (Interview guide, item 7), respondents were asked to make brief comments on changes in their level of education, type of *Akūrinū* training, gender and urban life are influencing their way of dressing, our fulfilment of *Akūrinū* biblical mission and our use of dreams, visions and prophecy. Since culture moderated the three objectives, its data was analysed and discussed in this section. Specific cases on negative and positive influence of culture on *Akūrinū* faith were recorded, transcribed and presented in Table 7.

**Table 7**

*Content Analysis of Negative Effects on Akūrinū believers*

Quoted Data (Texts)	Designated Code	Factual Categories
City women are affected by worldly dressing in the urban areas more than men are. Some are painting their lips and fingernails. Youth is worse. We do not know where to start so that we can help them on dressing. Spirituality of leaders mentoring them influences the members. All believers them experience dreams, visions and prophecy in the same way because clergy interprets prayerfully. Educated Akūrinūs are too busy. Their spirituality is negatively affected.	Archbishop (M). Clergy C11	Urbanisation. Mentorship. Paranormal experiences (dreams, visions and prophecy). Education.
Youth are the most affected by evil in the urban area, then women in general. Some urban women are using cosmetics and a few men in Kayore were recently found drinking. Pastoral training is effective through mentorship. Married and youths experience dreams, visions and prophecy in the same way as long as they are walking with God. Education is good for Akūrinūs because our people can be employed and understand the culture better.	Archbishop (M). Clergy C12	Gender. Beauty. Age. Leadership. Mentorship. Paranormal experiences (dreams, visions and prophecy). Education. Urban life (good and bad).
God uses each gender equally as He used Miriam and Moses in the Bible. I was trained in gaarū by experience and mature minister, Jeremiah Matu, who taught me how to shepherd and two others taught me on	Senior Bishop (M). Clergy C1	Biblical truth. Theological education. Secular education. Marital status. Urbanisation. Hermeneutics.

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<p>prophecy and administration because those were their areas of calling. Married people are mature in Akūrinū faith. They teach and mentor the youth. Urbanisation is weakening dressing and spirituality. Education is good. I reached form two. Our educated Akūrinūs have opened congregations in Mombasa, Taveta and Ukambani. They are using Kiswahili and English.</p>		<p>Gender. Beauty. Age. Urbanisation. Mentorship. Living experiences (dreams, visions and prophecy). Education.</p>
<p>God uses anyone is use in prophecy but fulfilment is confirmed three times in the church before one is recognized as called by God. Personal mentorship is used often instead of gaarū meetings of the past. Youth do not interpret dreams, visions or prophecy. Urbanisation is influencing some of our women to wear seductive miniskirts and still put robes (kanjū) on top while in the sanctuary. Most of the educated people are resisting Akūrinū dress code except turban.</p>	<p>Bishop (M). Clergy 7</p>	
<p>Dressing of urban women is negatively affected more than that of men, training in gaarū is the most effective, dressing of youth is negatively affected more, use of dreams, visions and prophecy is the same for those who are walking with God and high level of education is helping to correct some Akūrinūbeliefs which are not in line with the word of God. Morality is purely negative.</p>	<p>Bishop (M). Clergy C8</p>	<p>Gender. Age. Urbanisation. Mentorship. Living experiences (dreams, visions and prophecy). Education. Morality.</p>
<p>Faith in God among women and youth are negatively affected more by urban evils. Women are used more in prophecy, dreams and visions in rural and urban, gaarū teachings are most effective for positive change and level of education has both good and bad results. Congregations of educated Akūrinū s are better organised and programmed.</p>	<p>Bishop (F). Clergy C14.</p>	<p>Gender. Age. Urbanisation Mentorship. Living experiences (dreams, visions and prophecy). Education.</p>
<p>Akūrinū believers are rebelling against dressing given by the founding prophets of Akūrinū church. I got to F2 in education. Dress is personal taste; women and youth have challenges with dressing. Some are now wearing free long dresses but showing body shapes. Dreams and visions are valued. Gaarū seminars are the most effective for group teachings, education is good, married people are stable.</p>	<p>Senior Pastor (M). Clergy C2 Pastor (M). Clergy C3.</p>	<p><i>Akūrinū</i> roots. Education.  Gender. Age. Leadership. Mentorship. Dreams, visions and prophecy). Education. Urbanisation</p>
<p>Youth experienced dreams, visions and prophecy less frequently than the married regardless of gender. Married women feperienced dreams, visions and prophecy more</p>	<p>Pastor (M). Clergy C4.</p>	<p>Gender. Age. Urbanisation Mentorship. Living experiences (dreams, visions and prophecy).</p>

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frequently than married men. Married people are less affected by negative changes because they are more stable in their faith. Experience of dreams, visions and prophecy more frequent among the married compared with youth. Urbanisation is generally challenging Akūrinū spirituality. Education is good but it is influencing Akūrinū faith negatively.		Education.
Dreams, visions and prophecy are not so frequent among the urban youth. Dressing is negatively affected mostly in women, mostly among the youth. Everyone is challenged by urban life. Dreams, prophecy and visions are not as common as in the churches in Muranga rural. About 72% of Akūrinū clergy has been trained in gaarū. They then train members in seminars, counselling and personal mentors.	Pastor (M). Clergy C5.	Gender. Age. Urbanisation. Living experiences (dreams, visions and prophecy). Education.
Godly purposes of dressing are more negatively affected in our women. Dreams are frequent; visions are rare in men and women. Training is mentoring, mostly by examples we see in those above us. Dreams, visions and prophecy are vetted by church leaders.	Pastor (M). Clergy C10.	Gender. Age. Urbanisation. Mentorship. Living experiences (dreams, visions and prophecy). Education.
On dressing, women are the most affected by urban culture and youth in general. Dreams, visions and prophecy are mostly experienced by married women. Educated people are affected negatively on dressing but on dreams, they are sober in handling dreams and they have better understanding of God through the word.	Overseer (M). Clergy C13.	Gender. Age. Mentorship. Dreams, visions and prophecy).Education. Revelation of God. Urbanisation.
Dressing among the youth is negative. For dreams, visions and prophecy.	Youth leader (M). Y9.	Living experiences, urbanisation
City life negative on dressing, no effect on dreams and visions. Prophecy is more frequent among the ladies.	Youth leader (M). Y6.	Gender. Age. Dreams, visions and prophecy. Urbanisation
Theological training in Akūrinūcontext has positive effect on dealing with urban problems faced by our believers. Everyone gets dreams, sees visions and prophecy but on prophecy, most of them given by women. Level of education and urbanisation has negative influence on dressing.	Deacon (M). Clergy C15.	Gender. Age. Urbanisation. Mentorship. Living experiences (dreams, visions and prophecy).Education.
Women, especially youth, are more negatively influenced on dressing, dreams more frequent with women, visions experienced by both, prophecy is more frequent with men. Trained through youth seminars and camps. Teachings improve use of dressing, interpretation of dreams, visions and prophecy. Urban life is a	Youth leader (F). Y16.	Gender. Beauty. Age. Urbanisation. Mentorship. Living experiences (dreams, visions and prophecy). Education.

challenge to our faith. Higher education is improving dressing, no effect on dreams, visions and prophecy. You get to understand other people, read the Bible and respect other religions.

Dressing of women is more negatively affected than men. Dreams, visions and prophecy are not affected. Dreams are mostly reported by women, visions and prophecy by men. Training in seminars is helping to reduce dressing problems but not visions, dreams and prophecy. Influence of urban life is negative on dressing, dreams, visions and prophecy. Level of education has no effect.

Pastor's wife.  
PW17

Gender. Age. Urbanisation. Mentorship. Paranormal experiences (dreams, visions and prophecy). Education.

Women are negatively influenced on dressing, they dream more than men, visions are rare, men and women prophesy. I am reading the Bible and I now understanding many things. In the past, women were not allowed to read the Bible. As they go beyond F.4, more Akūrinūs are losing their faith. Education is good because one can use other languages to preach, get job and read the Bible.

Overseer's wife.  
OW 18

Gender. Age. Urbanisation Mentorship. Living experiences (dreams, visions and prophecy). Education (positives). Get jobs, read English Bible

Since *gaarũ* theological education was deeper and more accurate due to time taken, high quality Akūrinū and elderly clergy, mentorship level in urban produced believer of theologically poor quality. Results in Table 7 are a summary of culture variable and its effect on contextualization of Akūrinū lived theology and presented in Table 8.

**Table 8**

*Results of Textual Data by Frequencies and Percentages*

Culture variable	Variable and nature of effect on Contextualization	f	Percent
Education level	Negative on dressing and <i>Akūrinū</i> faith. Paranormal experiences depend on godly personal walk with God	17	94%
Urban life	Negative on dressing and spirituality in general	17	94%
Gender	Variables are more negative on youth, mostly girls	18	100%
Theological training	Mentorship, seminars and youth camps providing mitigating effect. Clergy (89%) trained in <i>gaarũ</i> .	13	72%

Level of education, urban life and gender moderated contextual theology negatively, meaning that culture resisted sustainability and growth of *Akūrinū* faith. However, theological training was used by *Akūrinū* leaders to mitigate negative effect of other variables.

The tension between quality of *Akūrinū* spirituality and living better in urban in their socio-economic aspects of life existed. Theological training as a measure to ensure that *Akūrinū* believers remain in urban Nairobi County as congregations suggested that;

- i. *Akūrinū* leadership was aware of spiritual health of the believers and proactive for continuity of their churches within tension between sustainability of spiritual health and improved standards of living as defined in socio-economic terms.
- ii. The theological implication of these results is that potential teaching selected principles of biblical Contextualization based on findings, leaders would retain their congregations in Nairobi County.

In question 8, *Akūrinū* leaders were asked to state any three aspects of life which non-*Akūrinū* express appreciation about religion of *Akūrinū* believers and give an example if any. The purpose of this item was to investigate whether contextualised theology by *Akūrinū* believers had any positive moderation of moral and spiritual life of non-*Akūrinū* communities around them based on feedback from the community or not. Results from testimonies of leaders are presented in Table 9.



**Table 9***Appreciation of Akūrinū believers by Non-believers*

Quoted data (texts)	Designated Code	Factual categories
Some people ask us to sing our songs for them. They value fulfilment of our prophecies. Our decent dressing attracts some people to become Akūrinūs.	Archbishop (M). Clergy C11	<i>Akūrinū</i> songs adopted. Fulfilled prophecies. Decent dressing
They like our dress code, moral strictness and our workers in their places of work”	Archbishop (M). Clergy C12	Moral strictness. Work ethic. Decent dressing
They like our dress code because of the moral discipline associated with it. Example: Esther’s character attracted the king. Some people appreciate our church discipline.	Senior Bishop (M). Clergy C1	Decent dressing. Moral purity. Godly character
They like our dressing, singing and godly character.	Bishop (M). Clergy C7.	Decent dressing. Moral purity Godly character
Non-Akūrinūs like Akūrinū songs, our dressing and prayer.	Bishop (M). Clergy C8	<i>Akūrinū</i> songs. Prayer answered. Decent dressing.
They like our songs, answers to prayer and decent dressing.	Bishop (F). Clergy C14	<i>Akūrinū</i> songs. Prayer answered Decent dressing
People like our Akūrinū heritage, needs met through our prayers and godly character.	Senior Pastor (M). Clergy C2.	<i>Akūrinū</i> heritage. Prayer answered Godly character
People like our purity of life, identify us with God and respect us.	Pastor (M). Clergy C3	Moral purity. Godly character
My wife dresses in white all the time. Young women admire her example. People identify us with good behaviour.	Pastor (M). Clergy C4	Religious dressing. Godly character
White dressing makes us unique and shows righteousness. Kikuyu tribe was earlier considered as Israelites extended to Africa in form of Akūrinūs in line with Aaronic priesthood but now we are telling people to stop sinning and come to Jesus Christ.	Pastor (M). Clergy C5	White dressing as symbolism. Emphasis on preaching against sin (salvation in Christ (evangelical sign)).
People like our songs ask us to pray for them and our honesty. Some people employ our girls in their homes because they can trust them.	Pastor (M). Clergy C10	<i>Akūrinū</i> songs liked. Prayer answered. Trustworthy.
“Our dressing shows good morals, decency and trustworthiness. However, dressing of women is for public morality, testimony and not tempting others.	Overseer (M). Clergy C13	Decent dressing. Moral strictness. Godly character. Trustworthiness.
Dressing, God answers our prayers. They tell us to sing for them.	Youth leader (M). Y6	Decent dressing. Godly character. Prayer answered

Selected to pray, trusted more, respected for our dressing.	Youth leader (M). Y9.	Decent dressing. Trustworthiness. Prayer answered.
Associated with deep spirituality and godliness. We are respected for these, decency included.	Deacon (M). D15.	Deep spirituality. Godly character. Decent dressing
Non- Akūrinūs appreciate our dress. They say we are smart and respect us. It is our Christian identity. They associate us with our holiness.	Youth leader (F). Y16	Dressing as identity. Godly character. Decent dressing
Respected, we find God's favour before people for public services. We wear as royal priesthood. Dressing gives us moral protection.	Pastor's wife. PW 17	Dressing earns public favour. Moral protection and acts a symbol of royal priesthood.
Our dressing is not tight. It gives us moral protection from sexual harassment. It is decent and shows fear of God.	Overseer's wife. OW 18	Decent dressing. Moral protection tool and symbolism of royal priesthood

Feedback of texts summarised in form of reflexive themes were converted into numerical data, ranked and presented in Table 10.

**Table 10**

*Positive Moral Impact Akūrinū believers on Non-Akūrinū Culture*

Reflexive Themes	Non-Akūrinū 's main likes	f	%
Religious Dressing	Decent (not tight), identity symbol.	18	100
Moral strictness	Godly character (moral purity)	15	83
Testimonies of God' activity	Prayers answered, prophecies fulfilled	7	38
Singing	<i>Akūrinū</i> songs	2	11
Deep spirituality	Overall spiritual rating	1	5
Total	5	43	

Results in Table 10 indicate ranked order of specific aspects of life of *Akūrinūs* by non-*Akūrinū* believers. In rank order of likes of phenomenological indicators was dressing, godly character, answered prayers and fulfilled prophecies, *Akūrinū* songs deep spirituality as the overall rating.

All leaders agreed that dressing was the most effective way of doing biblical mission among *Akūrinū* believers. The intrinsic qualities as expressed in godly behaviour in

every aspect of life were praised by non-*Akūrinūs* as Godly character. Testimonies of answered prayers and fulfilled prophecies supported the immanence of God among *Akūrinū* believers.

- i. Two categories of religious communication, which constituted phenomenological indicators, emerged. *Akūrinū* songs were an expression of deep spirituality noted by non-*Akūrinūs*. Visual symbols (dressing) and oral expressions of faith (songs) communicated *Akūrinū* faith to non-*Akūrinūs* whereas answered prayers and fulfilled prophecies communicated God's presence among *Akūrinū* believers as God's involvement in contextual theology. Biblical Contextualization involves vertical (man and God) and horizontal (social) dimensions.
- ii. Based on negative and positive reports on the *Akūrinū* faith by non-*Akūrinūs*, there was an evidence culture moderated contextual theology positively and negatively. Positives motivated *Akūrinū* believers to continue practising their faith, thereby acting as a socially mitigative measure against cultural challenges to their contextual theology.

#### **4.2.2.2 Qualitative Analysis and Discussion of Demographic Data: Questionnaire**

Questions one and two investigated the gender distribution among *Akūrinū* believers within counties studied. Data was analysed and results shown in Table 11.

**Table 11***Gender of Respondents by Sub-County*

Gender	Sub-county							Total
	Dagoretti	Dagoretti	Embakasi	Embakasi	Kasarani	Mathare	Roysambu	
	North	South	North	South				
Female	11	11	7	11	18	42	30	130
	3.64	3.64	2.32	3.64	5.96	13.91	9.93	43.05
Male	10	14	13	11	37	56	31	172
	3.31	4.64	4.3	3.64	12.25	18.54	10.26	56.95
Total	21	25	20	22	55	98	61	302
	6.95	8.28	6.62	7.28	18.21	32.45	20.2	100

Chi-square=35.5,  $P < 0.001$

Majority of the leaders had Form 4 or Diploma training. (Chi-Square=69.34,  $P < .0001$ )

Results indicate that males were more females. There was gender balance in each sub-county. Kasarani, Mathare and Roysambu had larger congregations.

The spatial distribution of *Akūrinū* believers was important in this study because it suggested existence of relationship between socio-economic factors and religious impact of *Akūrinū* was associated (objective two and objective four). Voicu (2010) notes that a study done in Romania indicated that people with less education settled in rural areas in large numbers and people with higher levels of education settled in urban centers in large numbers. The main reason was that people with higher levels of education got that education in urban institutions and so adapted to urban life while at school and got jobs and perhaps started businesses in the urban centers. A stronger reason given was that Romanians with higher education got jobs in urban as elite class that governed the nation in a variety of aspects, religious leadership included.

Sub-counties in Table 11 were occupied by low-level income groups as compared with residents in Lavington, Westlands and Kileleshua among others who were doctorate

holders and a few rich business people. Compared with study in Romania, education level is a cultural variable that predicted where *Akūrinū* believers were likely to spread in the future in Nairobi. The findings in Table 11 indicate that male respondents were more than female respondents were. Gender balance improves validity of findings because males and females vary in the way each gender applies God's truth in theological contexts. In Table 11, three females saw *Akūrinū* dress as a means of moral protection against sexual harassment by some men. No male interpreted dress that way. According to study by Ndungu (1994), females were less educated than males. Archbishop C 11 (Table 6) explained that few *Akūrinū* women who attained higher education gave up *Akūrinū* faith. Male church leaders used these experiences inductively to discourage higher levels of education for their women as a mitigating measure to protect *Akūrinū* faith among their females. Early marriages for economic reasons were another reason given. This finding was supported by observation made during piloting in this study that women were more than men were but a few women would not fill in the questionnaire due to low competence in English challenges. However, there was no evidence of influence of level of education on distribution of *Akūrinū* believers by gender across the sub-counties.

To mitigate possible gender imbalance, adaptive sampling was adopted during data collection. Thomson et al. (1996) support adaptive sampling for addition of relatively few respondents to replace expected respondents who may not meet criteria for study and the researcher discovers this during data collection. Use of Kiswahili with a few *Akūrinū* females who were not comfortable with English mitigated the challenge of higher population of females in *Akūrinū* congregations had lower education than men on average. In every congregation, spontaneously recruited *Akūrinū* research assistants to help those women was part of adaptation. This gender balance was necessary for

achievement of objectives and Contextualization of *Akūrinū* lived theology to ensure that results were representative of theological differences across gender. To illustrate this observation using objective one, some females reported that their dressing provided moral protection from sexual harassment which was also confirmed by male leader (C4, Table 7, and female leader (C14, Table 7), among others. Since purposes of Contextualization varied by gender, gender consideration was necessary as a moderating variable in the interpretation of results in each objective.

Questions 3&5 were analysed in a single matrix. *Akūrinū* believers were asked to indicate the duration they had stayed in the same congregation, for prediction of trend of rural-urban migration (sustainability each congregation inspite of low rate of backsliding according to Table 9). Results are presented in Table 12.

**Table 12**

*Number of years as a Member of the Church by Gender*

Gender	Less than 2yrs	2-5	6-10	10-15	Over 15 yrs	
Female	28	17	4	7	74	130
	9.27	5.63	1.32	2.32	24.5	43.05
Male	23	22	14	22	91	172
	7.62	7.28	4.64	7.28	30.13	56.95
Total	51	39	18	29	165	302
	16.89	12.91	5.96	9.6	54.64	100

Majority of the church members had stayed in the church for over 15 years. Chi-square=10.56,  $P \leq 0.032$ .

Females who were in urban congregations over fifteen years were more than men. Current trends in fifteen years indicate a gender balance in numerical growth in all congregations. There no evidence to support or reject rural-urban migration or urban evangelism as the possible causes of numerical growth. The observation was due to

chance factors. However, the migration trend has been rising within the last two years. If the trend continues as challenges to biblical contextualization of *Akūrinū* lived theology, *Akūrinū* congregations may continue in Nairobi County.

In question two, *Akūrinū* believers were asked to indicate the name of their denomination for investigation of theological diversity. Results are presented in Table 13.

**Table 13**  
*Distribution of Respondents by Denomination*

Denomination	Frequency	Percent
A.K. Israel	20	6.62
AHGCC	202	66.89
ARWC	1	0.33
ECCCD	2	0.66
Evangelical Christian Fellowship	8	2.65
Full gospel A. Israel	21	6.95
GPC	1	0.33
HWCC	1	0.33
Holy Ghost Prophet	32	10.6
Hosanna Christian Church	1	0.33
Rehoboth	10	3.31
Ricenafes seminars church	3	0.99

Detailed discussion is done under Table 6 on theological diversity suggested by words used in names of churches in Tables 6 and 13. Results in Table 13 inform the study on distribution of *Akūrinū* believers by denomination. AHGCC (202 out of 302 respondents) dominated the participation in the study and theological expressions in the study. The denomination had been in Huruma for 40 years. The implication of this result is that results of this study cannot be generalised across *Akūrinū* denominations. Since results from other congregations were used to generate statistics, there is logical basis to conclude that the results reflected theology of AHGCC since 202 out of 302 respondents

were from this congregation. This congregation can lead towards making contextualization more biblical if results of this study are applied. In questions 1&3, Chi-square test for agreement was performed and results of the distribution of education level by gender of *Akūrinū* believers and leaders presented in Table 14.

**Table 14**

*Education Level of Respondents by Gender*

Education level	Male	Female	Total
Class 8	11	39	50 (16.56%)
Form 4	30	67	97 (32.12%)
Diploma	63	26	89 (29.47%)
Degree	32	22	54(17.88%)
Masters	7	2	9 (2.98%)
Doctorate	3	0	3(0.99%)
Total: 6	146	156	(302)100%

Results in Table 14 indicated that the gender of respondents was not distributed equally over education levels. There were more females than males at lower classes (standard 8 and Form 4) while there were more males than females at Diploma to doctorate levels ( $\chi^2=151.7$ ,  $P\leq 0.0001$ ) of the sampled population. With p-value less than 0.05, difference in level of education between males and females was statistically significant. This characteristic would be found as likelihood in larger population from which the sample was taken. This finding farther justified use of adaptive sampling discussed under demographic data in order to balance gender in data collection since other variables investigated needed this balance. Results indicated *Akūrinū* believers and leaders were dominated by class 8 and form 4 (48.68%) diploma (29.47%) and first degree (17.88%), thus positively skewed. How did corroboration with literature look like?.



African voices (Among African voices, Sakupapa (2018) notes that Mbiti (1931-2019), Bendiako (1945-2008), Mugambi (b. 1947) and Aduyoye (b. 1934) and Macharia (2012), among others, argue that African Instituted Churches had lower education compared with other Africans due to their religious beliefs which made them initially reactive to all that was associated with Western colonizers, formal education included. In later years, education became acceptable to AICs but schools demanded specific uniform dressing for all students. Many *Akūrinū* believers could not go to school because they could not give up on their dressing codes. The school authorities relaxed this demand with time. However, there was no biblical basis for this position since every believer in Christ is equal before God and should be given equal opportunity to pursue education (Gal.3: 26-28, “there is neither male nor female, Greek or Jew”). Results agree with reviewed literature.

In questions 3 & 6, chi square test was done in order to investigate the relationship between leadership position and gender.

**Table 15**

*Position of the Respondents in their Respective Churches by Gender*

Gender	Position in Church						Total
	Church member without leadership role	Main Sunday School leader	Main worship Leader	Men leader	Women Leader	Youth Leader (Choir/other)	
Female	54	24	18	0	17	13	130
	17.88	7.95	5.96	0.00	5.63	4.3	43.05
Male	64	29	21	42	0	20	172
	21.19	9.6	6.95	13.91	0.0	6.62	56.95
Total	118	53	39	42	17	33	302
	39.07	17.55	12.91	13.91	5.63	10.93	100

Chi-square=35.5, P<0.001

Majority of the leaders had Form 4 or Diploma training. (Chi-Square=69.34, P<.0001)

The distribution between males and females by leadership involvement in leading ministries (60.93%) compared with believers without ministerial leadership (39.03%). The differences between the two groups were dependent on gender (Chi-square=236.3,  $P \leq 0.0001$ ). The findings were a good indicator of involvement in what the *Akūrinū* believers understood to be God’s call in biblical texts to fulfill His biblical mission in as objective two states. However, incidental detail in theology between gender involvements in ministry was that was that female’s dominated leadership in worship (5.3% females compared with 0.33% males). However, there is no biblical basis for females to lead worship suggesting they had God’s call to worship which males did not have since Holy Spirit who enables worship to be done in spirit and truth is not gender specific (John 4:23-24).

Item four (4) investigated accuracy and depth in *Akūrinū* lived theology by gender as an indicator of consistency of *Akūrinū* hermeneutics and Contextualization of their theology. Respondents were asked to identify the venue (*gaarū* or other) in which they received their theological training. Results are presented in Table 16.

**Table 16**

*Analysis of Type of Theological Training*

Gender	Response by Gender		Total
	Responses (yes= <i>gaarū</i> , no=other)		
	No	Yes	
Female	32 (10.60%)	98(32.45%)	130 (43.05%)
Male	36(11.92%)	136 (45.03%)	172 (56.95%)
Total	68(22.52%)	234 (77.48%)	302 (100%)

The findings in Table 16 indicated that majority of respondents were trained in *gaarū* (32.45% female & 45.03% male,  $\chi^2=236.3$ ,  $P \leq 0.001$ ) comprising of 77.48%. Gender

balance was good enough to provide evidence that 234 (77%) male and female believers were trained in *gaarũ* implied they were majority thorough in *Akũrinũ* doctrines, faith and practices since *gaarũ* was the most credible school for *Akũrinũ* lived theology.

Theological diversity as a salient feature (Table 13) suggests that each denomination organised its own *gaarũ* to preserve and propagate their denominational theology, which took several days in which seasoned teachers, usually top prophets and older clergy, taught (Macharia 2012). The chances of contextualising *Akũrinũ* lived theology in ways that reflected true *Akũrinũ* theologies across gender were very high in all denominations. Question three, objective four gave respondents an opportunity to give variables of culture, which moderate three dependent variables in objectives 1-3. It fits in this section so that results are discussed with dependent variables in their respective objectives. *Akũrinũ* believers were asked to state any three aspects of life which non-*Akũrinũs'* negative remarks about religion of *Akũrinũ* believers and give an example they knew, if any. Results extracted from questionnaires are presented in Table 17.

**Table 17**

*Negative Remarks Made by Non- Akũrinũs about Akũrinũ Believers*

Negative remarks by non- <i>Akũrinũs</i>	F	%	Reflexive themes
I avoid interest in secular world	55	18.2	Exclusivists
Dress code is awkward	54	17.9	Social misfit
I do not understand my loyalty to God	53	17.5	Faulty theology
They think I am brainwashed	30	9.9	Irrational
I should live as one of them	17	5.6	Anti-culture
I do not know meaning of turban	16	5.3	Faulty hermeneutics
Do you trust the teaching of the Bible?	7	2.3	Biblical authority questioned
I look old fashioned	1	0.3	<i>Akũrinũ</i> dress is odd
No response	69	22.8	Unknown position
Total	302	100%	

The top three negative comments of non-*Akūrinūs* on *Akūrinū* believers as exclusivists, social misfit and faulty theology. The middle three comments communicated the message that *Akūrinū* believers were irrational, anti-culture and with wrong meaning of turban. The last cluster questioned authority of the Bible as word of God.

The results were reflectors of cultural challenges to Contextualization of theology of dressing. The results agree with results of 94% of *Akūrinū* leaders whose textual data indicated that urban life was a challenge to *Akūrinū* dressing and *Akūrinū* spirituality in general. The dominance of top three negative comments suggested social and doctrinal challenges from urban culture existed. Though not quantifiable, it reflected negative influence on contextualization of *Akūrinū* lived theology. Descriptive statements from leaders (Table 8) and members agreed that urban life *moderated* theology of dressing negativity.

### **Question 7: Respondents’ Salvation Experience in Jesus Christ**

This item investigated experience of new birth based of personal testimonies by *Akūrinū* believers (self-understanding as evangelicals). The results were summarised in Table 18.

**Table 18**

*Personal Experience of Salvation in Jesus Christ*

Gender	Response by Gender on Being Born Again		Total
	Born Again		
	No	Yes	
Female	5 (1.66%)	125 (41.39%)	130 (43.05%)
Male	4 (1.32)	168 (55.63)	172 (56.95)
Total	9 (2.98)	293 (97.02)	302 (100)

The findings in Table 18 indicated that majority (97.02%) of respondents sampled professed having saving faith in Jesus Christ. Born again were gender dependent (56.95%,  $\chi^2=236.3$ ,  $P\leq 0.001$ ). There were more saved males than there were females in the sampled population. Gender balance was good enough to provide evidence that male and female contributions were a fair representation of strong commitment to evangelical faith. Evidence that strong agreement across gender that *Akūrinū* community were committed to scriptures for relationship with God and His truth existed and agreement significant (Chi-square=236.3,  $P\leq 0.0001$ ). The results were not by chance.

Study done by Peterson (1980) found that believers in Christ as spiritually born-again people through personal faith Christ were more predisposed to receive their leaders' biblical teachings and more likely to conform to God's truth than non-born-again believers and apply this truth in their contextual theology. Results validated appropriateness of use of Divine Command Theory as defined by Haris (2008) as a guiding theory in this study.

### 4.3 Results and Discussion of Pilot Testing

**Table 19**

*The Relationship between Biblical Genre and Theology of Dressing*

Pilot Results, Item-Total Statistics				
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
The Bible is my only source of my knowledge on how to interpret prophecy	9.17	4.141	.171	.770
The teachings of my leaders on dressing agree with what the Bible teaches	9.44	4.277	.312	.741
I interpret a Bible passage by looking at style of writing, such as prophetic writing	9.09	3.602	.453	.717
My dressing helps me to communicate with God	9.16	3.515	.530	.700
The Holy Spirit teaches me on dressing through the prayer leader	9.13	3.663	.427	.722
I interpret the Bible prophecy by assigning meaning to symbols used shown when prophecy comes	9.09	3.476	.530	.700
I consider the style in which the Bible passage was written, for example, prophetic writings, so that I can interpret as prophetic message	9.26	3.555	.581	.692
In every writing style, the subject being discussed gives me spiritual meaning of the Bible text about purpose of dressing	9.28	3.612	.558	.697

R-coefficients were high on average. Majority (over 60%) of the respondents had completed the items and said the right things. Based on literature review by Waigwa (2007), & Macharia (2012), among others, the good performance in this objective was attributed to familiarity of *Akūrinū* believers with content (about *Akūrinū* dressing, its sources, meanings, and other details which were part of their daily contextualization and with high retention, retrieval was high. Findings by Carrier & Pashler (1992) indicate that test trial/study trial increases retention thereby improving academic performance. This theoretical framework explains why pilot results were relatively high in objectives 1 & 4 than in objectives 2 & 3 in which case retention might have been less because of less preoccupation with biblical mission, priestly garments and scriptures, perhaps due to negative influence of urban life.

**Table 20**

*The Relationship between Biblical Context and Fulfilment of biblical mission among Akūrinū believers*

	Pilot Results, Item-Total Statistics			
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
I know my ministry through needs of my community.	8.89	1.692	.330	.427
I glorify God as an extension of God's holy Israel in Kenya	8.94	1.811	.248	.465
My ministry is to pray for the country	9.11	1.898	.334	.438
My ministry is to serve God through singing	9.08	1.968	.223	.474
My ministry is to preach Christ.	9.20	2.203	.149	.498
The Holy Spirit spoke to founders of my church on my main biblical mission a believer.	9.10	2.000	.208	.480
I receive knowledge of God's truth for change and act immediately	8.90	1.820	.225	.476
I receive knowledge of God's truth for change and wait for first observe how the first large group acts before I act	8.52	1.941	.158	.502



**Table 21***The relationship between Understandings of God and Paranormal Experiences*

Pilot Results, Item-Total Statistics				
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
I read the Bible as God's most reliable means He uses to speak to me	7.68	1.650	.266	.520
God speaks to me directly through dreams	7.43	1.467	.218	.545
I use common sense to know the will of God on daily matters	7.28	1.284	.360	.469
My character promotes my ability to hear from God	7.55	1.549	.213	.540
God speaks to me weekly through a prophet	6.98	1.404	.401	.455
God speaks to our church only through prophecy	6.96	1.478	.334	.487

R-values were high on average. Majority (over 60%) of the respondents had completed the items and said the right things. Based on literature review by Waigwa (2007), & Macharia (2012), among others, the good performance in this objective was attributed to familiarity of Akūrinūbelievrs with content (about Akūrinū dressing, its sources, meanings, and other details which were part of their daily contextualization. Motivation was high.

**Table 22**

*The Relationship between Biblical Context and Fulfilment of biblical mission among Akūrinū believers Reliability statistics of the variables involved in Objective 1,2 & 3 are given as;*

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha		No. of Items		
Objective 1	0.745		8		
Objective 2	0.55		8		
Objective 3	0.505		6		
<b>Reliability Statistics</b>					
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items		N of Items		
.792	.795		31		
<i>Item-Total Statistics</i>					
	Scale Mean if Deleted	Scale Variance if Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
The Bible is my only source of my knowledge on how to interpret prophecy	42.36	23.621	.254	.	.788
The teachings of my leaders on dressing agree with what the Bible teaches	42.63	24.105	.319	.	.786
I interpret a Bible passage by looking at style of writing, such as prophetic writing	42.28	22.972	.381	.	.782
My dressing helps me to communicate with God	42.35	22.678	.463	.	.778
The Holy Spirit teaches me on dressing through the prayer leader	42.32	23.138	.351	.	.783
I interpret the Bible prophecy by assigning meaning to symbols used shown when prophecy comes	42.28	22.434	.501	.	.776
I consider the style in which the Bible passage was written, for example, prophetic writings, so that I can interpret as prophetic	42.45	23.149	.402	.	.781

message					
In every writing style, the subject being discussed gives me spiritual meaning of the Bible text about purpose of dressing	42.47	23.220	.395	.	.782
I know my ministry through needs of my community.	42.34	23.977	.174	.	.792
I glorify God as an extension of God's holy Israel in Kenya	42.39	23.960	.187	.	.791
My ministry is to pray for the country	42.57	23.977	.274	.	.787
My ministry is to serve God through singing	42.54	24.039	.234	.	.788
I receive knowledge of God's truth for change and wait for first observe how the first large group acts before I act	41.98	23.420	.326	.	.785
I read the Bible as God's most reliable means He uses to speak to me	42.61	24.100	.285	.	.787
I use common sense to know the will of God on daily matters	42.21	22.889	.394	.	.781
My character promotes my ability to hear from God	42.48	24.401	.110	.	.794
God speaks to our church only through prophecy	41.89	23.888	.261	.	.787
Prophets who specify my ministry in our church may be men or women	42.55	23.619	.358	.	.784
How I dress is the most important way of telling other people that I am committed to God.	42.46	23.830	.241	.	.788
Prophets give me correct understanding meanings of my dressing through dreams, visions and prophetic message.	42.42	23.935	.201	.	.790
To help me to interpret the Bible for us.	42.57	24.067	.247	.	.788
Teach us standard ways of	42.60	23.912	.333	.	.785

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interpreting the Bible so that we can interpret for ourselves					
My gender is a challenge to my dress code	41.83	24.155	.240	.	.788
Secular culture in my community does not socialize with me freely because of my special ministries God has given me.	42.10	23.710	.226	.	.790
Current fashions are influencing meanings of my dressing.	42.05	23.512	.278	.	.787
My level of education helps to interpret dreams, prophecy and visions by reading the Bible.	42.14	23.794	.203	.	.791
Whenever church leaders introduce new ways of living my faith, I am the first one to act.	42.12	22.926	.393	.	.781
Whenever church leaders introduce new ways of living my faith, I join majority in acting.	42.04	23.303	.328	.	.785
The closer I am to the city centre, the secular culture makes it difficult for me to practice my faith	41.99	23.250	.361	.	.783
My understanding of my biblical mission as a believer is informed by needs of my church community.	42.26	23.983	.163	.	.793
God speaks to me weekly through a prophet	41.91	23.716	.296	.	.786

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Moderating effect of culture on the relationship among theology of dressing, fulfilment of biblical mission and paranormal experiences and among Akūrinū believers.

**Table 23***Pilot Results, Reliability Statistics*

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
Objective 1	0.745	8
Objective 2	0.55	8
Objective 3	0.505	6

*Reliability statistics of the variables involved in Objective 1,2 & 3 are given as below*

<i>Reliability Statistics</i>			
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items	
.792	.795	31	

*Summary Item Statistics*

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum / Minimum	Variance	N of Item
Inter-Item Correlations	.111	-.239	.585	.825	-2.443	.016	31

*Item-Total Statistics*

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
The Bible is my only source of my knowledge on how to interpret prophecy	42.36	23.621	.254	.	.788
The teachings of my leaders on dressing agree with what the Bible teaches	42.63	24.105	.319	.	.786
I interpret a Bible passage by looking at style of writing, such as prophetic writing	42.28	22.972	.381	.	.782
My dressing helps me to communicate with God	42.35	22.678	.463	.	.778
The Holy Spirit teaches me on dressing through the prayer leader	42.32	23.138	.351	.	.783
I interpret the Bible prophecy by assigning	42.28	22.434	.501	.	.776

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meaning to symbols used shown when prophecy comes					
I consider the style in which the Bible passage was written, for example, prophetic writings, so that I can interpret as prophetic message	42.45	23.149	.402	.	.781
In every writing style, the subject being discussed gives me spiritual meaning of the Bible text about purpose of dressing	42.47	23.220	.395	.	.782
I know my ministry through needs of my community.	42.34	23.977	.174	.	.792
I glorify God as an extension of God's holy Israel in Kenya	42.39	23.960	.187	.	.791
My ministry is to pray for the country	42.57	23.977	.274	.	.787
My ministry is to serve God through singing	42.54	24.039	.234	.	.788
I receive knowledge of God's truth for change and wait for first observe how the first large group acts before I act	41.98	23.420	.326	.	.785
I read the Bible as God's most reliable means He uses to speak to me	42.61	24.100	.285	.	.787
I use common sense to know the will of God on daily matters	42.21	22.889	.394	.	.781
My character promotes my ability to hear from God	42.48	24.401	.110	.	.794
God speaks to our church only through prophecy	41.89	23.888	.261	.	.787
Prophets who specify my ministry in our church may be men or	42.55	23.619	.358	.	.784

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women					
How I dress is the most important way of telling other people that I am committed to God.	42.46	23.830	.241	.	.788
Prophets give me correct understanding meanings of my dressing through dreams, visions and prophetic message.	42.42	23.935	.201	.	.790
To help me to interpret the Bible for us.	42.57	24.067	.247	.	.788
Teach us standard ways of interpreting the Bible so that we can interpret for ourselves	42.60	23.912	.333	.	.785
My gender is a challenge to my dress code	41.83	24.155	.240	.	.788
Secular culture in my community does not socialize with me freely because of my special ministries God has given me.	42.10	23.710	.226	.	.790
Current fashions are influencing meanings of my dressing.	42.05	23.512	.278	.	.787
My level of education helps to interpret dreams, prophecy and visions by reading the Bible.	42.14	23.794	.203	.	.791
Whenever church leaders introduce new ways of living my faith, I am the first one to act.	42.12	22.926	.393	.	.781
Whenever church leaders introduce new ways of living my faith, I join majority in acting.	42.04	23.303	.328	.	.785
The closer I am to the city centre, the secular culture makes it difficult for me to	41.99	23.250	.361	.	.783

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practice my faith					
My understanding of my biblical mission as a believer is informed by needs of my church community.	42.26	23.983	.163	.	.793
God speaks to me weekly through a prophet	41.91	23.716	.296	.	.786

Moderating Effect of Culture on the Relationship among Theology of Dressing, Fulfilment of Biblical mission and Paranormal Experiences and among Akūrinū believers.

**Table 24**

*Moderator Results*

<i>Pilot Results, Item-Total Statistics</i>					
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
My gender is a challenge to my dress code	12.56	5.337	.429	.283	.745
Secular culture in my community does not socialize with me freely because of my special ministries God has given me.	12.84	4.868	.454	.253	.738
Current fashions are influencing meanings of my dressing.	12.79	5.036	.384	.272	.749
My level of education helps to interpret dreams, prophecy and visions by reading the Bible.	12.88	4.836	.459	.249	.737
Whenever church leaders introduce new ways of living my faith, I am the	12.86	4.694	.538	.337	.724



first one to act.						
Whenever church leaders introduce new ways of living my faith, I join majority in acting.	12.78	4.812	.505	.312	.730	
The closer I am to the city centre, the secular culture makes it difficult for me to practice my faith	12.73	4.960	.459	.405	.737	
Generally, I seek God's guidance on life issues by using the Bible more than relying on prophecy, dreams and visions.	13.11	5.172	.324	.155	.758	
My understanding of my biblical mission as a believer is informed by needs of my church community.	13.00	4.865	.443	.231	.740	

### *Summary*

Reliability statistics of the variables involved in Objective 1, 2, 3 & 4 are given as below.

**Table 25**

### *Reliability Statistics of Variables*

Variables in;	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha based on Standardized items	No. of Items
Objective 1	0.745	0.747	8
Objective 2	0.505	0.513	8
Objective 3	0.55	0.556	6
Objective 4	0.762	0.765	9

The table above shows the reliability statistics of variables in every objective. Variables in objectives one and four are reliable since their Cronbach's Alpha is greater than the threshold alpha of 0.7 for reliability to be affirmed. Furthermore, the data as a whole is reliable with a Cronbach's alpha 0.792 which exceeds the threshold of 0.7 as shown below.

**Table 26**

*Culture Variables*

<i>Reliability Statistics</i>							
	Cronbach's Alpha		Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items			N of Items	
	.792		.795			31	
<i>Summary Item Statistics</i>							
	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum / Minimum	Variance	N of Items
Inter-Item Correlations	.111	-.239	.585	.825	-2.443	.016	31
<i>Pilot Results, Item-Total Statistics</i>							
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlati on	Cronbac h's Alpha if Item Deleted		
The Bible is my only source of my knowledge on how to interpret prophecy	42.36	23.621	.254	.	.788		
The teachings of my leaders on dressing agree with what the Bible teaches	42.63	24.105	.319	.	.786		
I interpret a Bible passage by looking at style of writing, such as prophetic writing	42.28	22.972	.381	.	.782		
My dressing helps me to communicate with God	42.35	22.678	.463	.	.778		
The Holy Spirit teaches me on dressing through the prayer leader	42.32	23.138	.351	.	.783		
I interpret the Bible prophecy by assigning meaning to symbols used shown when prophecy	42.28	22.434	.501	.	.776		

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comes					
I consider the style in which the Bible passage was written, for example, prophetic writings, so that I can interpret as prophetic message	42.45	23.149	.402	.	.781
In every writing style, the subject being discussed gives me spiritual meaning of the Bible text about purpose of dressing	42.47	23.220	.395	.	.782
I know my ministry through needs of my community.	42.34	23.977	.174	.	.792
I glorify God as an extension of God's holy Israel in Kenya	42.39	23.960	.187	.	.791
My ministry is to pray for the country	42.57	23.977	.274	.	.787
My ministry is to serve God through singing	42.54	24.039	.234	.	.788
I receive knowledge of God's truth for change and wait for first observe how the first large group acts before I act	41.98	23.420	.326	.	.785
I read the Bible as God's most reliable means He uses to speak to me	42.61	24.100	.285	.	.787
I use common sense to know the will of God on daily matters	42.21	22.889	.394	.	.781
My character promotes my ability to hear from God	42.48	24.401	.110	.	.794
God speaks to our church only through prophecy	41.89	23.888	.261	.	.787
Prophets who specify my ministry in our church may be men or women	42.55	23.619	.358	.	.784
How I dress is the most important way of telling other people that I am committed to God.	42.46	23.830	.241	.	.788

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As in objective one, the culture variables were straight forward and common knowledge to the respondents. Very few gaps were left, perhaps due to challenges of competences in

English language. This challenge was mitigated by use of adaptive sampling if the main study, as discussed in detail under summary of pilot results in chapter four.

In all the objectives, correlations between Institutedvariables and dependent variables were less than 0.5, meaning that other factors that influenced the relationships between variables were over 50 %. They are discussed in chapter four. The data in general is reliable with a Cronbach's alpha 0.793 which exceeds the threshold of 0.7.

#### **4.4 Findings for Objectives/Hypotheses**

This section addressed data analysis, presentation, discussion for each objective and its relevant hypothesis. There were four objectives and hypotheses. The data collected was qualitative and quantitative. Qualitative data was analysed using SPSS and thematic and content analysis, presented in form of frequencies and percentages in tables and discussed. Stata software was used to analyse quantitative data. Discussion of results in qualitative data focused on comparisons and contrasts within findings. Decisions made were considered valid on the premise that biblical truth is absolute, correspondent to reality, coherent, universal, exclusive, and objective. Quantitative data was analysed using binary logistic regression models to generate results which were further used to guide decision-making on whether to reject or accept null hypotheses. Results were corroborated with studies by notable authors and theories to identify their agreement or disagreement with results of the study. Biblically-informed themes and sub-themes were constructed. Theological consensus and departures, recurring patterns and critique critical incidents reported by respondents.

#### **4.4.1 The Relationship between Biblical Genre and Theology of Dressing among *Akūrinū* believers in Nairobi County**

H1: There is no statistically significant relationship between biblical genre and theology of dressing among *Akūrinū* believers.

H4: There is no significant moderating effect of culture on theology of dressing among *Akūrinū* believers.

In this objective, the relationship between biblical genre and theology of dressing among *Akūrinū* believers was investigated. Four analyses were done and discussed under each of the four data sets. Qualitative data from leaders' responses interview sessions. Reflexive thematic analysis was used as applicable. Qualitative data from the questionnaire was the second data set. Chi square was used to agreement or disagreement between results of nominal variables as applicable. Inferential data set was analysed and discussed under hypothesis (H1) was tested using Wald Chi and binary logistic regression model to determine whether there was a statistically significant relationship between biblical genre and theology of dressing. Data on moderating effect on dependent variable was analysed based on results from inferential data as the fourth data. Hierarchical logistic regression model was used. Since variables of culture moderated dependent variable in each of the first three objectives, objective four was absorbed in the first three objectives in chapter four.

##### **4.4.1.1 Qualitative Analysis and Discussion of Data from Interviews**

In question one, church leaders were asked to state any three reasons why *Akūrinū* believers wore different colours as their colour codes (white, red, pink, and blue, red, other), especially turbans. No rank was required. This semi-structured question investigated various theological meanings the leaders gave to turban. These meanings

were to inform variety of Contextualization of theology of dressing. Turban was selected because it was the only common religious garment to all *Akūrinū* groups regardless of gender, age or differences in doctrines, beliefs and practices. Different meanings were expected to reveal any accuracy or aberrance in interpretation of texts the believers gave in question one and associated variance or harmony in Contextualization of theology of dressing claimed to be derived from cited biblical texts. Results from recorded and transcribed texts (decoded data) on meanings of turban and origin of different colours were presented in Tables 27.

**Table 27**

*Content Analysis on Origin, Meanings and Colours of Turban*

Quoted data (texts)	Designation code	Theological categories
Turban signifies ash according to Isa.61:1-3. Michael Chege was a preacher in public buses. He claimed that the Holy Spirit revealed to him other colours for specific ministries with angels. In our church, both wedding ring and sash are put on to indicate men and women who are married since men do not put on a sash.	Archbishop (M) ClergyC11	Repentance as meaning Subjective source of theology. Human-angel on biblical mission
Turban is a sign of ash and humility before God according to Isa. 61:1-3. One wears red turban and Kanjū (robe) when in spiritual warfare.	Archbishop (M) Clergy C12	Multiple meanings, ash and humility
God gave theology of dressing to Akūrinū founding prophets by citing specific scriptures (Zech. 3:1-5, Deut. 22:5 & Exod. 28)	Senior Bishop (M). Clergy C1	Biblical basis given.
White turban is symbolic of ashes, repentance and intercessory ministry as a priest.	Bishop (M) Clergy C8	Multiple meanings, ash, repentance and intercessory prayer.
Turban is for ash. Angel Michael uses red turban to work with those called to spiritual warfare, he wears red turban and Kanjū (robe) while is for doing spiritual warfare. Turbans and Kanjūs of other colours were introduced by bishop Micheal Chege of Kawangware in 1990s.	Bishop (M) Clergy C7	Turban is for ash. Red turban designated angel Michael –assisted warriors. Source of coloured turbans was Michael Chege, 1990s.

<p>White turban contextualise glory, moral protection and holiness. Purple dressing is for cleanliness instead of white and healing ministry with angel Luke. Yellow is for messengers through prophecy, dreams and visions, green is for peace, especially when praying for peace of nation. Red is for warfare and angel Michael works with the person wearing it.</p>	<p>Bishop (F) Clergy C14</p>	<p>Multiple meanings of white turban (glory, protection &amp; holiness). Connection: Purple cleanliness and healing angel Luke, yellow for messengers; green for peace; Red for spiritual warfare assisted by angel Michael.</p>
<p>Kĩremba nĩ kĩgitagĩra ũthingu, meaning that turban provides moral protection in three ways; serving as a testimony to evil people; challenging the user to behave in godly ways according to the dress code which is symbolic of righteousness and testifying of God’s call to special service. The clergy cited Isaiah 61:1-5 as the theological basis for wearing white turban, saying ‘kĩremba ni mwĩto na nĩ Ngai oigire mundu ekĩre kĩremba ithenya rĩa mũhuu’, meaning, turban is a calling and it is God who said that a person should put on turban instead of ashes. Turban is like a crown for God’s service police but believers who do not wear turbans are like God’s CIDs since they have no visible identity.</p>	<p>Pastor (M) Clergy C10</p>	<p>Turban has four messages; testimony, righteousness, God’s special call. Put in obedience to God’s command to put turban instead of ashes.</p>
<p>Original turban is sign of ash. Some Akũrinũ believers are rebelling against original dressing because they want to be like current culture.</p>	<p>Senior Pastor (M) Clergy C2</p>	<p>Turban contextualized as ash.</p>
<p>Wearing turban is a calling from God and He tells the person to put turban instead of ashes. Red is for war angel, green for economic prosperity, white for peace and flag for guarding angel.</p>	<p>Pastor (M). Clergy C3.</p>	<p>Symbolic of call. Colours: red for war, white for peace, green for economic prosperity, flag for guarding angel.</p>
<p>White turban represents peace and holiness”. I do not know where the other colours came from or what they meant.</p>	<p>Youth leader (M) Y6</p>	<p>White means peace and holiness. Source unknown, yet contextualised.</p>
<p>Turban is for ash. Different colours of religious dressing has come from protestants among Akũrinũ believers.</p>	<p>Pastor (M). Clergy C4</p>	<p>Multiple meanings Other colours are used by rebels. Spirituality symbolized.</p>
<p>White turban is for ash. Colours were introduced by Akũrinũ protestants who claimed that the Holy Spirit revealed colours and meanings to them, red for war angel, green for economic prosperity, white for peace. Sash was shown to a prophetess for married women instead of wedding ring.</p>	<p>Pastor (M). Clergy C5</p>	<p>White means ash and peace. Other colours represented protest. Holy Spirit revealed meanings of red green and white colours of turban.</p>

White turban is a sign of ash and humility.	Overseer (M). Clergy C13	Multiple meanings; ash and humility.
White turban symbolises ash.	Deacon (M). D 15	Turban contextualise ash.
White turban represents peace.	Youth leader (M). Y9.	Turban represent peace. Symbolism
Turban signifies holiness of the person wearing it, an indicator that one is chosen to serve God. Kanju (white robe or dress) is for married men and women.	Youth leader (F). Y16	Turban signifies white ash. White robe for married women. Social status.
White turban signifies ash. I do not know where other colours came from”.	Pastor’s wife (M). PW 17	Turban signifies white ash. Symbolism.
I was born in Akūrinū family. Turban has been with me. It is not tied to my salvation.	Overseer’s wife (OW). OW18	Turban tradition, not salvation.

The quoted data (texts) were categorised into frequencies and percentages in ranked order for display of degree of dominance of meaning based on factual categories (Table 19). The three theoretical frameworks underlying epistemological (how to know what is known), philosophical (rationality) and ontological (nature of meaning). Results are presented in Table 28.



**Table 28***Reflexive Thematic Analysis on Interpretations of Turban*

<i>Theological Themes</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
Dominant meaning: White turban signifies ash (repentance)	PW, Archbishops, pastors	14	50.0
Turban signifies specific biblical mission (relationship between variables)	Youth leaders (M)	8	28.6
Turban represents peace (representation theology)	Youth leaders (Y6&Y9)	2	7.1
Turban is for moral protection (security, Contextualization)	Youth, (F), pastor, OW	2	7.1
<i>Akūrinū</i> tradition (founding prophets)	Overseer's wife OW,	1	3.6
Turban contextualise God's glory (mystical), holiness, for moral protection (meaning by gender).	Bishop (F). Clergy C14	1	3.6
Total:	18	28	100.0

Tables 28 & 29 show content analysis of question one on variety of relevant statements recorded from the *Akūrinū* leaders interviewed on theology of turban as the main religious garment in *Akūrinū* faith and transcribed. The theology of turban given had multiple meanings. The dominant theological meaning turban was that it was symbolic of repentance of *Akūrinū* believers (50%), specific biblical mission of an individual *Akūrinū* believer or community of *Akūrinū* believers (28.6%), represented peace (7.1%), provision of moral protection (7.1%), symbol of identity of *Akūrinū* tradition (3.6%) and reflection of God's glory (3.6%).

The sampled eighteen leaders gave seven different meanings of the same religious attire. The foregoing results indicated a lack of one meaning of turban religious head-dress among *Akūrinū* leaders. This finding was consistent with similar findings in AIC

churches. According to Ludd (2013), hermeneutics is an art when skills applied to interpret a biblical text are subjective and at variance with God's one meaning in a biblical text. The art-based hermeneutics is called aberrant hermeneutics. The contextualization of theology based on such unsystematic communicates different meanings of a word or text has two main implications.

- i. It misrepresents the nature of God in the market place since God communicates only one truth in a single text. However, a biblical text has only one meaning which God gave to original writers (McMahon, 2013).
- ii. Variance in contextualised theology of turban reflected variance in sources that informed meanings of turban, variance in *Akūrinū* hermeneutics and life styles lived as result of erroneous theologising (engagement in theological study).
- iii. Results supported the stated problem of the study; relevance of theories used and need for use of selected principles of biblical hermeneutics to mitigate the problem.

In question two, the level of biblical literacy was investigated. In oral interviews question two, the respondents were asked to mention any three chapters in the Bible which informed their theology of dressing. Results were recorded in Table 29.

**Table 29***Content Analysis of Results on Biblical Literacy*

Quoted data (texts)	Designation code	Factual Categories
White dressing for Akūrinūs originated from God when the church was started in 1922 as the prophets were combiblical missioned by the Holy Spirit who gave holy priestly garments in Exodus 28.	Archbishop (M). Clergy C11.	All priests needed to wear special garment while doing their priestly duties signify that they were in God's service (Exod. 28). No colour specified.
Isa.61, 1Tim. 2:9 and Zeph. 1:8 tell us what Akūrinūs should put on and keep away from in our dress codes”	Archbishop (M). Clergy C12.	Zeph. 1:8- foreign apparel does not mean non-priestly. It means dressing for pagan gods. Isa. 61:1-3-garment of praise means festive joy, not literal. 1Tim. 2:9- modest apparel for women, no colour specified.
Deut. 22:5 tells us that dressing must match the gender Prophets are called by God to bring to us what God is saying about dressing.	Bishop (F). Clergy C14. Bishop (M). Clergy C7.	God gave gender specifications on theology of dressing (Deut. 22:5) God gives other leaders theology through prophets (ministerial rank, prophetic genre and Contextualization)
We use metaphors such as the woman in Revelation, meaning the church, Akūrinū tradition and discernment given by the Holy Spirit are commonly used to interpret the Bible on dress codes.	Bishop (M). Clergy C8.	Interpretation of metaphors provides theology of dressing. (Apocaryptic genre and Contextualization)
We pray to God, rely on Holy Spirit, read the Bible regularly, preach, and work hard in ministry to interpret all matters.	Senior Bishop (M). Clergy C1.	
Isa. 61:1-5, Zech. 3:1-5, Lev. 8: 7-9 give us the priestly garments to use when ministering.	Overseer (M). Clergy C13.	Zech. 3:1-5 –Scripture is not on priestly garments but symbolic of cleansing, hence clean garment, no colour mentioned. Lev. 8: 7-9, Garments were to mark God's desnated servants, no colour specified.
Zech. 3:1-5; Isaiah 61:1-3 and others as the Holy Spirit who gave the scriptures to the founding prophets.	Pastor (M). Clergy, C4.	Zech. 3:1-5 –Scripture is not on priestly garments but symbolic of cleansing, hence clean garment, no colour mentioned.
Teachings about our clothes also come from Matt. 22:11-13, Rev. 3:18-19, Rev. 7:9-10, Lev. 8:7-9 and Deut. 22:11-12 as taught in our constitution. I use literal interpretation for plain texts, allegory for parables, Kikuyu proverbs and practices, common	Senior pastor (M). Clergy C2.	Multiple sources (scriptures, common sense, prayer and Kikuyu proverbs & practices) inform theology of dressing.

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sense and pray to God the author. Parents put turbans on little boys and girls to show them religion of their Akūrinū family. They are taught Akūrinū doctrines beliefs and practices after standard eight, after boys are circumcised.		
Isa. 61:1-5 teach value of Akūrinū dressing as garment of praise for ashes.	Pastor (M). Clergy C10.	Isa 61:1-5 gives theology of dressing (single source)
The Holy Spirit spoke to Akūrinū prophets on dressing through Zech. 3:1-5 and visions. Determinants of the type of dressing by gender are taught in Deut. 22:5 and Exod. 28.	Pastor (M). Clergy C5.	God gave theology of dressing to <i>Akūrinū</i> founding prophets by citing specific scriptures (Zech. 3:1-5, Deut. 22:5 & Exod. 28)
Daily dress is personal taste. White turban has spiritual significance. It is symbolic of priesthood (1Pet. 2:1-9), righteousness (Rev. 7:13-14), garment of a priest (Zech. 3:1-5, Isa. 61:1-5).	Pastor (M). Clergy C3	Daily dressing is personal choice, religious functions need priestly garments (1Pet. 2:1-9, Zech. 3:1-5), righteousness (Rev.7:13-14)
Guidance by the Holy Spirit, scripture interprets scripture, help from the elders and personal understanding on dressing.	Youth leader (M). Y6	Holy Spirit, scripture interprets scripture, help of church elders & personal understanding.
Reading the Bible regularly, praying to ask God for interpretation, attending Bible studies, relying on interpretation by our spiritual leaders and attending Akūrinū seminars.	Youth leader (M). Y9	Regular reading of scripture, prayer, relying on clergy & attending seminars
Scriptures on dressing are known while in groups, such as Bible studies, personal fellowships and allegorising symbolism as agreed generally by Akūrinū leaders.	Deacon (M). D15	Getting scriptures in fellowships, then using allegories given by church leaders to inform theology of dressing
That one I will do research.	Youth leader (F). Y16	No scriptures in mind, leaders are right.
Modesty in 1Tim. 2:9, head covering in 1Cor.11:1-3 and gender specific in Deut. 22:1-5	Pastor's wife (F). PW 17.	Emphasis on theology of dressing was modesty (1Pet. 2:9), head covering (1Cor.11:1-3) & gender specification (Deut. 22:5)
There are many but I cannot remember.	Overseer's wife (F). OW 18	No scriptures in mind but committed to rely on scripture for theology of dressing

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The quoted data were categorised into reflexive themes based on factual categories (Table 29) quantified into frequencies, percentages and results presented in Table 30.

**Table 30***Reflexive Thematic Analysis of Biblical Literacy*

Reflexive Theological Themes	f	%	Rank
Scriptures inform theology of dressing (Truth)	17	58.6%	1
The founding prophets gave scriptures (Origin)	4	13.7%	2
Prayer, Holy Spirit & church leaders (3 Origins)	3	10.3%	3
Common sense/ personal understanding/choice (reason)	2	7%	4
Scriptures are many but I cannot remember any (memory)	2	7%	5
Contemporary <i>Akūrinū</i> prophets/ <i>Akūrinū</i> tradition, Kikuyu proverbs and practices/ biblical metaphors (sources)	1	3.4	6
Total	29	100.0	

Based on summary of reports in Tables 30 & 31, 58.6% of *Akūrinū* leaders cited scriptures, which informed Contextualization of their theology of dressing. Although memory of scriptures does not guarantee application of the same in lived experiences, it was a measure of potential level towards Contextualization as supported by scripture, “Your word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against You” (Psalm 119: 9-11). The Psalmist had an experience that having God’s word in memory enhanced Contextualization of God’s word. Amin & Malik (2014) have argued that when knowledge is needed for application, retrieval mechanism of what is stored in the brain depends on retention. Verbal reports from Church leaders ranged from lack of citation of scriptures to a variety of scriptures as verbal statements as noted in Table 18. Verbal indicators were “modesty” in 1Tim. 2:9, “head covering” in 1Cor.11:1-3 and “gender specific” in Deut. 22: 5” (PW). The only female bishop available for interview reported that “Deut. 22:5 tells us that dressing must match the gender (clergy C14). “1Tim. 2:9 and Zeph. 1:8 tell us that *Akūrinūs* should keep away from sin while in our dress codes” (clergy C12, Table 8).

Comparing reports by gender, female respondents contextualised the cited scriptures as referring to modesty dressing, head covering and gender differentiation as they considered being God's commands. Since this clergy (C12) had served in that position for thirty (30) years, his teachings to younger clergy and church members may have diffused this emphasis in Contextualization of theology of dressing. This explanation is further supported by Roger's (1962) theory of diffusion of innovations explained that an idea or truth spread within a social system over time and is eventually applied based on four elements, namely, nature of innovation, communication channels, time and social system. The process of diffusion involves knowledge, persuasion, decision making and implementation.

Four categories of respondents emerged. First, five middle level *Akūrinū* leaders could not accurately contextualise biblical texts since they could not remember. This observation was based on verbal reports from middle level leadership interviewed. Specific statements "That one I will do research" (Youth leader, F), "I cannot remember" (OW), "They are many. Scriptures on dressing are known while in groups, such as Bible studies, personal fellowships and allegorising symbolism as agreed generally by *Akūrinū* leaders" (deacon), "I cannot remember. We know scriptures by reading the Bible regularly, praying to ask God for interpretation, attending Bible studies, relying on interpretation by our spiritual leaders and attending *Akūrinū* leadership seminars" (youth leader). "I have none in mind" (youth leader responded). Although the problem stated in this study presented a Contextualization process that starts with God's unchanging truth as recorded in the scripture (biblical orthodoxy) which informs the biblical faith (orthocardia), resulting in Christian practice (orthopraxy) in African Instituted Churches (AICs).

Basic communication model discussed by Adler and Towne (1978) posits that communicator encodes (receives accurately) content from a source and uses a specific channel, such as face to face, phone or written record, to transmit the content to intended recipients. Recipient decodes (interprets) content based on personal factors such as ability to understand and then retains it for application based on ability to retain. Applying this model to the study, the clergy who taught the five middle level leaders might have been accurate in receiving from God. However, some content might have been lost within the communication channel or due to personal factors between clergy and *Akūrinū* believer. The level of awareness of Bible texts upon which *Akūrinū* lived theology of dressing was based was a general predictor of the extent to which Contextualization was considered biblical by *Akūrinū* believers.

#### **4.4.1.1.1 Biblical Critique on Cited Scriptures as the Basis for Contextualization**

The second categories of respondents were leaders who cited the scriptures in support of theology of dressing, notably the turban. A biblical critique of scriptures was done to determine the accuracy on hermeneutics among *Akūrinū* leaders and followers. Four senior clergy said “white turban has spiritual significance. It is symbolic of priesthood (1Pet. 2:1-9), righteousness in Rev. 7:13-14, garment of a priest in Zech. 3:1-5, Isa. 61:1-5” (C3). “The Holy Spirit spoke to *Akūrinū* prophets on dressing through Zech. 3:1-5 and visions. Determinants of the type of dressing by gender are taught in Deut. 22:5 and Exod. 28” (C5). “Isaiah 61:1-5 teach value of *Akūrinū* dressing as garment of praise for ashes” (clergy C10). “Teachings about our clothes also come from Matt. 22:11-13, Rev. 3:18-19, Rev. 7:9-10, Lev. 8:7-9 and Deut. 22:11-12 as taught in our constitution. I use literal interpretation for plain texts, allegory for parables, Kikuyu proverbs and practices, common sense and pray to God the author.

#### **4.4.1.1.2 Church Culture and Contextualization of Dressing**

The third category of mainly followed the *Akūrinū* church tradition to perpetuate theology of respondents dressing. Lane (1975) has defined church tradition as a set of doctrines formulated by leadership of a denomination as general and suitable application of what the scripture teaches. Generally, *Akūrinū* leaders allegorized and rationalized meanings that fit the desired applications in specific aspects of life within their respective denominations (Tables 15 and 19, among others).

Specifically, a thirty-year serving clergy said, “Parents put turbans on little boys and girls to show them religion of their *Akūrinū* family. They are taught *Akūrinū* doctrines beliefs and practices after standard eight, after boys are circumcised (clergy C2This category relies on *Akūrinū* tradition. Macharia (2012) has affirmed traditional believe on the basis of the sacredness of certain garments. In his words, “the turban, the robe, gacuka (chest covering won by married women), and the sash (belt won by unmarried girls to indicate chastity) are sacred garments that give them dignity, honour and authority, Exodus 28” (Prince, 2012, p.102).

#### **4.4.1.1.3 Variety of Mystical Meanings of Turban**

The fourth category of respondents depended upon mystical interaction with angels mentioned in the Bible by linking them with certain prophetic activities God supposedly gave to a prophet and prophetess who wore certain colour of turban and religious robe while in ministry. Merton (2008) has defined Christian mysticism based on Greek *mustikos*, Latin *mysticus*, referring to secret knowledge of God but revealed at personal level for specific purposes. It is not possible to label every personal communication with God mysticism. The term is used to refer to interaction between human being and God to get authoritative truth outside the Bible. Evidence of this category was noted in



verbalised explanations for origins of different colours used by different *Akūrinū* leaders. In words of one clergy, “Angel Michael uses red to work with those called to spiritual warfare; he wears red turban and *kanjū* (robe) while doing spiritual warfare. Turbans and *kanjūs* of other colours were introduced by Bishop Micheal Chege of Kawangware in 1990s,” (clergy, C7). “White turban symbolises glory and holiness. Purple dressing is for cleanliness instead of white and healing ministry with angel Luke. Yellow is for messengers through prophecy, dreams and visions, green is for peace, especially when praying for peace of nation. Red is for warfare and angel Michael works with the person wearing it” (clergy C14).

Although this phenomenon is widespread in AICs, similar Christian groups around attach sacredness to their religious garments. Findings by Gitahi (2019) in Nyandarua County agree with results in Nairobi County, especially on dressing as visual expression of God’s special revelation to *Akūrinū* believers. Similarly, Hume (2013) notes that a break away Mennonite Amish group in USA had extra-biblical convictions which led them to assign subjective meaning to black attire to signify their separation from the wider culture as indicators of humility, modesty, orderliness and social equality.

This category tends to display contextual similarity to studies done by Kealotswe (2014) which revealed that hermeneutics of AICs interpret the Bible using four levels of hermeneutics, namely, spiritual sense (allegorical and moral), analogical and plain sense. This association of role of specific angel with colour code to get God to work replaced the gifts of the Holy Spirit in Romans 12, 1Cor. 12-14 and Eph.4:8-16. *Akurinu* lived theology displayed characteristics typical of AICs.

#### **4.4.1.1.3 Gospel Genre and Contextualization of Priestly Garments**

Based on principle of biblical genre in its context, the message of 1Pet. 2:4-9 is the New Testament believers are a spiritual house called by God in Jesus Christ to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Christ's work in their lives. The genre is an Epistle and it was not meant to provide an additional requirement for acceptance of New Testament believers before God over and above the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ. The use of priesthood here is a contrast to the Old Testament priesthood which was hierarchical in that a high priest would represent other believers before holy God to offer physical sacrifices for their sins, his included. Representative theology and physical sacrifices were accomplished once for all by sacrificial death of Jesus Christ at the cross so that each believer in Jesus Christ (called the New Testament Church) would have direct access to God the Father in the holy of holies to offer spiritual sacrifices. The text has no reference to God's command to put on any symbol for this different type of priesthood to be accepted by God (Heb. 9: 23-26 NKJV). Representative theology is aberrant.

*23 Therefore it was necessary that the copies of the things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. 24 For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; 25 not that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood of another— 26 He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.*

#### **4.4.1.1.4 Apocalyptic Genre and Contextualization of Heavenly Garment Imagery**

The subject and context of Rev. 7:13-14 refers to the life of saints in heaven. White robes washed in the blood of Jesus refer to imputed righteousness on glorified saints. Tribulation of saints has been continuous but great tribulation refers to an acceleration of this experience in the church. The symbolism of robes used here is not therefore God's

instruction to earthly saints to literally wear robes of any colour. The Text, Rev. 7:9-17. Verses 16-17, confirm that the context is heaven, “the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat. The lamb that is in the midst of the throne” refers to Jesus Christ with saints who died in faith and with Him in heaven (John 14:1-6). Zechariah 3:1-5 is part of prophetic genre (writing style). The essence of this vision is the cleansing of priesthood and other postexilic Israelites who had just returned to Judah from Babylon with various forms of uncleanness before holy God. Ezra led the cleansing process by starting with calling all priests who had married several pagan wives to repent by putting them away (Ezra 10:1-10). Putting clean robes on Joshua as the representative high priest was symbolic of God’s forgiveness, which was contingent upon their genuine repentance (Prov. 28:13). Texts cited, literature and biblical interpretation of texts in Tables 22 and 21 had an evidence strong enough to conclude that the problem was erroneous contextual theology with regard to its three components; dressing, fulfilment of biblical mission and paranormal experiences.

#### **4.4.1.2 Analysis of Descriptive Data: Questionnaire**

Questions 1-4 in the questionnaire investigated relationship between biblical genre and *Akūrinū* lived theology of dressing. In question one, the respondents were asked to identify their theological source/sources that inform theology of dressing. The results were presented in Table 31.

**Table 31***Bible as Exclusive Source of God's Truth or Alternative Sources*

Gender	Other Sources. Bible only		Total
	No	Yes	
	Female	32 (10.6%)	
Male	44(14.6%)	128(42.4%)	172 (56.10%)
Total	76(25.2)	226(74.8)	302(100)

The findings in Table 31 on the sources of God's truth were gender dependent (56.95%,  $\chi^2=236.3$ ,  $P\leq 0.001$ ) with more males indicating the Bible to be the only source (42%). However, the gender balance was good enough to provide evidence that male and female could recall the verses which informed *Akūrinū* lived theology.

The fact that majority (75%) of respondents could remember some scriptures implied that intellectual awareness of biblical basis for their dressing existed. It was not a guarantee that majority of *Akūrinū* believers dressed according to the biblical meaning of dressing. A biblical critique was necessary to investigate the status of their hermeneutics. The text, Zech. 3., is a reference to God's forgiveness of sins of post-exilic Israel now that they had gone through full period of captivity in Babylon for seventy years (Isa. 40:1-3). Comparing these results with results in Table 22, reflexive themes on multiple meanings of turban were moral protection, repentance, holiness, church culture, peace and biblical mission, scripture memory does not imply practical application.

These meanings reflected lack of objective methods of interpreting scripture, an element of mysticism and faulty Contextualization of dressing as evidence supports. "White turban contextualises glory and holiness, purple for cleanliness and healing angel Luke, yellow for messengers, green for peace, red for spiritual warfare assisted by angel

Michael” (Clergy C7). This lack of unity was articulated as a problem in GeCACA (2016). Biblical genre principle of hermeneutics was needed as a mitigation strategy to contextual theology of dressing.

In question two, *Akūrinū* believers were asked to state a chapter in the Bible which gave them teachings of; turban, white robes and garments of the priest. The purpose of this item was to investigate the levels of scripture memory by gender. Since this is biblical data and therefore binary, Psalm 119: 9-11 (NKJV) records that a Christian believer has to hide God’s word in the heart in form of memory so that one can remember and apply when needed. To be able to contextualise theology of dressing, what God teaches in the Bible is the standard measure against which Contextualization of dressing was to be measured. The levels of retention of relevant texts were a predictor of potential *Akūrinū believers* had to be able to apply texts accurately. Other items investigated whether contextualised truth was based on accurate interpretation or not and other questions have interrogated those aspects. The responses of *Akūrinū* believers were recorded in Tables 20-22. These garments were selected on the frequency of their use as cited by various scholars in AICs, *Akūrinū* churches included. Results were presented in Tables 32-34 as interpreted by *Akūrinū* leaders and believers.

**Table 32***Content Analysis of Texts Considered to be the Basis of Wearing the Turban*

Responses	Male	Female	Total
Zechariah 3	63	70	133 (44.0%)
Exodus 28	4	3	7(2.3%)
Daniel 3	7	8	15(5.0%)
Luke	14	9	23(7.6%)
Isaiah 61	16	17	33(10.9%)
Lev. 6 & 8	4	5	9(3.0%)
Ezek. 24 & 44	5	6	11(3.6%)
Deuteronomy	0	1	1(0.3%)
No response	59	11	70(23.2%)
Total:	172	130	302(100%)

**Table 33***Content Analysis of Texts Considered being the Basis of Wearing White Robes*

Responses	Male	Female	Total
Zechariah 3	18	21	39(12.9%)
Exodus 28	27	28	55(18.2%)
Daniel 3	15	17	32(10.6%)
Luke	14	17	31(10.3%)
Isaiah 61	12	9	21(7.0%)
Leviticus 6 and 8	3	5	8(2.6%)
Ezek. 24 and 44	4	4	8(2.6%)
Deuteronomy	4	4	5(1.6%)
No response	75	25	104(34.4%)
Total:	172	130	302(100%)

Males who could not remember any chapter in the Bible were 43.6% compared with 19.2% of females. Based on this observation, females had higher memory of scriptures than men. The implication was that a higher percentage of women could apply the scriptures to life, hence contextualise theology of dressing more accurately.

**Table 34**

*Distribution by Gender of Texts Considered to be the Basis of Wearing Garments of the Priest*

Responses	Male	Female	Total
Zechariah 3	20	16	36(11.9%)
Exodus 28	43	46	89(29.5%)
Daniel 3	8	7	15(5.0%)
Luke	3	6	9(3.0%)
Isaiah 61	5	4	9(3.0%)
Leviticus 6 and 8	18	11	29(9.6%)
Ezekiel 24 and 44	2	4	6(2.0%)
Deutronomy	0	1	1(0.3%)
Revelation	2	2	4(1.3%)
No response	71	33	104(34.4%)
Total:	172	130	302(100%)

Results in Tables 34-36, shows that *Akūrinū* men who could not remember Bible chapters that informed their theology were more than *Akūrinū* women. Two clergy (C5&C8) made a remark that *Akūrinū* lived theology was preserved through songs as a way that God gave and preserved scriptures (Clergy, C8). Based on this observation, the finding suggested that *Akūrinū* women sang more often as a ministry of praise and worship involved in church. This repetition might have enhanced encoding of more scriptures in their minds than it was with men in general. Kang (2018) supports this view from empirical studies done in the College of Education, King Saudi University, Saudi Arabia, on the effect of spaced repetition of meaning recall and form recall on retention. Findings indicated that males and females were committed to knowledge of scriptures. This finding was an indicator that biblical contextual theology had a baseline to work from in response to recommendations made based on findings of this study.

In question two, *Akūrinū* believers were asked to record Bible chapters upon which theology of turban, white robes and garments of the priests. The distribution of Bible chapters members could remember and record in the questionnaire were Zech. 3 (133, 44%) for support of turban, Ezek. 24 (44, 11%) as an account of God's instructions on the moral and ritual purity of Levitical priests, Isa. 61: (33, 10.9%) for support of turban as symbol of repentance, Luke (23, 7.6%) on Jews gambling for the clothes of Jesus at the cross, Daniel 3 (15, 5%) as an example of suffering for one's faith, Leviticus 8 (9%) as doctrine of garments of the priests, Exodus 28 (7, 2.3%) as doctrine supporting garments for the priests, Deut. (1, 3%) indicated no relevance to the question and non-response (70, 23.2%). The biblical genre of the cited chapters was prophetic (208, 68.9%). This statistic was higher than results of regression analysis.

- i. Assuming that *Akūrinū* believers obeyed God as explained by Divine command theory and *Akūrinū* prophets accurately heard from God for the people, then majority (68.9%) Diffusion theory developed by Rogers (1962) explained the spread of these doctrines, beliefs and practices historically (horizontal diffusion) and hierarchically (hierarchical diffusion). Tuerlinckx and Lee (2011) have called hierarchical diffusion or multilevel diffusion. These two theories explain why prophetic role is major and patterns of spread of doctrines, beliefs and practices proclaimed.
- ii. The finding indicated that, whether right or wrong, what *Akūrinū* believers agreed with maxim that orthodoxy (right doctrine) informed orthocardia (right faith) and orthopraxy (right practice) respectively (Moberly, 2000).
- iii. Turban was the dominant religious garment among *Akūrinū* believers and supported by Zech. 3:5 although the text refers to God's forgives of post exilic Jews since seventy-year jail term in Babylon was over.



- iv. God's instruction that Zecharia be clothed with white turban meant they were back in their land so they could restore their cultural dressing as part of evidence of their return.
- v. The statistical significance at coefficient of relationship between biblical genre and theology of dressing implied that 0.744% of Contextualization of dressing was influenced by other factors to other factors. A perfect application of principle of genre (literary principle) would only change *Akūrinū* believers up to 25.6 % of being perfect in their biblical Contextualization of dressing.

In question 3, the *Akūrinū* believers were asked to affirm or reject the proposition that prophets interpreted for them the meanings of dressing through dreams, visions and prophecy. The results indicated that two hundred twenty-six (226, 74.8%) *Akūrinū* believers agreed that prophets gave them correct meanings of their dressing through dreams, visions and prophetic messages while seventy-six (76, 25.2%) affirmed that they got correct meanings of their dressing from other sources. Farther analysis was done using Chi-square test for independence and results were presented in Table 35.

**Table 35**

*Role of Akūrinū prophets as Interpreters of Akūrinū lived theology*

Gender	Roles of Prophets as Interpreters		Total
	No	Yes	
Female	15(5.0%)	115(38.1%)	130(43.1%)
Male	20(6.6%)	152(50.3%)	172(57.0%)
Total	35(11.6%)	267(88.4%)	302(100%)

The findings in Table 35 indicated that the role of prophets as interpreters of *Akūrinū* lived theology is gender dependent ( $\chi^2=236.3$ ,  $P\leq 0.001$ ) with more males (50.3%) compared to 38% female agreeing. However, the gender balance was good enough to

provide evidence that male and female were good representation of theological agreement by gender across the congregations sampled. The chances of relying on any meaning given by the prophet were high. About 88.41% of respondents affirmed that *Akūrinū* prophet was the interpreter of *Akūrinū* lived theology.

Strong affirmation (88%) by both males and females that prophets interpreted *Akūrinū* lived theology implied that:

- i. Contextual theology/ theology of dressing was strongly influenced by dynamic theology of the *Akūrinū* prophets (75% agreement).
- ii. Divine command theory was appropriate in explaining this theological trust in prophets since prophets were believed to do hermeneutics directly with God and bring God's truth to *Akūrinū* believers. There was danger for Bible to be irrelevant.
- iii. Use of selected principles of hermeneutics was not necessary for *Akūrinū* believers since prophets represent authority of God. This reliance on prophets as representing God and replacing the need for the Bible (representative theology) is dangerous in *Akūrinū* church as supported by incidental detail authority of prophetess who stopped administration of the questionnaire although bishop (C7) had allowed the researcher to collect data in the congregation.

In question four, respondents were asked to state any three ways of knowing how to dress in order of importance to every participant. Results were summarised in Table 36.

**Table 36***Content Analysis of Theology of Dressing from Believers' Perspective*

Factual Categories	Frequency	Percent
Get guidance from the Bible (Biblical truth, God's way).	73	24.20
Long dress/gown are required while in church ( <i>Akūrinū</i> tradition) as lived experiences	44	14.56
Follow original dressing code given by prophets (tradition)	42	14.0
Rely on church elders (mentorship)	37	12.25
Self-instinct (conscience)	29	9.6
Show good morals (moral dimension)	28	9.3
Conformity to social demand (social dimension)	26	8.1
Turban and belt are essential (essentials of faith)	19	6.3
Holy Spirit (inner convictions)	4	2.6
Total:	302	100

Results in Table 36 indicate that agreement among *Akūrinū* believers that commitment to biblical orthodoxy was the highest single source (24.20%). Church leaders and members had five shared sources of theology of dressing and they are cited by 12% as sources of theology. Prophets as a single category of leaders were trusted to be sources of theology a direct word from God scored 75%.

Compared with statistical test of hypothesis (odds ratio/coefficient of 0.256), qualitative results appear high. This finding supported believers' expression that they relied on church leaders for theology of dressing. Results on testing of hypothesis indicated a weak association between biblical genre and theology of dressing. The sampled *Akūrinū* leaders and members had multiple sources of theology of dressing. A study in Asia among church women who wore turban indicated that the women put on turbans to honour God's order and to keep their men from sexual temptations. Others wear as part of their cultural attire, as folk practice (Milligan, 2016). Two women among *Akūrinū*

leaders interviewed reported that they wore turbans and long dress for their protection from sexual attacks. The two reports were similar.

- i. Similarity of moral reasons for dressing in Asian females whereas no *Akūrinū* male reported such a reason suggests that interpretations of theology of dressing varied with gender. The findings from *Akūrinū* believers showed that four levels of interpretation of their selected texts that informed relationship between biblical genre and theology of dressing. Studies done in Botswana by Kealotswe (2014) revealed that hermeneutics of AICs interpreted the Bible using four levels of hermeneutics, namely, spiritual sense (allegorical and moral), literal, analogical sense and literal. The findings indicated that system of hermeneutics among *Akūrinū believers* was characteristic of hermeneutics of AICs. The results supported the stated problem existed (GecACA, 2016). The problem was widespread in AICs as literature reviewed indicates. This implied that:
  - ii. Any attempts to teach selected principles of biblical hermeneutics by any Bible teacher other than *Akūrinū* leaders would be resisted by *Akūrinū* believers.
  - iii. Multiple sources of theology of dressing explained existence of multiple dressing styles, colours, theological meanings and denominations as affirmed by literature and field study.
  - iv. The similarity of the findings which show multiple theological meanings, sources meanings, beliefs and practices to what literature review reveals as typical of AICs (African Instituted Churches) supported categorisation of *Akūrinū* Churches as one of AIC churches.

- v. Although there could be other factors not accessed through this study, these multiple sources and meanings account for 74.4% of factors which influenced contextual theology of *Akūrinū* dressing.

#### **4.4.1.3 Test of Hypothesis One**

The first hypothesis (H1) was used to determine whether there was a statistically significant relationship between biblical genre and theology of dressing among *Akūrinū* believers. The first objective investigated the relationship between biblical genre and theology dressing among *Akūrinū* believers.

Questions five and six investigated the relationship between biblical genre and theology of dressing. The believers were specifically asked to agree or disagree with given statements on Bible genre and theology and responses were categorised into Institutedvariables. The goal was to find out their interpretive approaches to the Bible texts. The dominant genre (writing style) was prophecy and narratives of God's instructions regarding ministries of Levitical priests. Data was separated into independent (IV) and four dependent (DV) variables in Table 29 and Table 30 to facilitate analysis using SPSS. The hypothesis proposed that there is no statistically significant relationship between biblical genre and theology of dressing among *Akūrinū* believers. To assess the hypothesis of no significant relationship between biblical genre and theology of dressing among *Akūrinū* believers, a binary logistic regression model was used to analyse the responses to this question. Results of Wald Chi were presented in Table 37.

**Table 37***Analysis of Sources of Theology of Dressing from Believers' Perspective*

Instituted Variables (IV)	False	True	Chisq	P>Chisq
The Bible is my only source of my knowledge on how to interpret prophetic writings and apply to my dressing	38.41	61.59	16.23	<0.001
Consider the style in which the Bible passage was written, for example, prophetic writings, so that I can interpret as prophetic message	7.28	92.72	220.41	<0.001
Interpret a Bible passage by looking at style of writing, such as prophetic writing about how I should dress	43.05	56.95	5.84	0.016
In every writing style, the subject being discussed gives me spiritual meaning of the Bible text about purpose of dressing	39.07	60.93	14.42	<0.001

The respondents agreed ( $\chi^2=16.2$ ,  $P\leq 0.001$ ) that the Bible was their only source of knowledge on how to interpret prophetic writings and apply to their dressing, considered the style in which the Bible passage was written as prophetic message ( $\chi^2=220.4$ ,  $P\leq 0.001$ ), looking at writing style guided Contextualization ( $\chi^2 =5.8$ ,  $P\leq 0.016$ ) and writing style gave respondents spiritual meaning ( $\chi^2=14.2$ ,  $P\leq 0.001$ ). The findings were statistically significant.

One main implication of  $p > 0.05$  for use of genre by *Akūrinū* believers is that writing style was not known to them as a guide to exegesis of biblical texts for their theology of dressing to be biblical. The results on this item were due to chance factors. However, results in other related items were statistically significant, meaning that results obtained were due to specific causes, not chance.

Question 5 investigated criteria used by *Akūrinū* believers to interpret prophetic genre and ability to contextualise meaning in their theology of dressing. Variables tested were; ‘the Bible is my only source of my knowledge on how to interpret prophetic writings and apply to my dressing’, ‘I consider the style in which the Bible passage was written, for example, prophetic writings, so that I can interpret as prophetic message’, ‘I interpret a Bible passage by looking at style of writing, such as prophetic writing about how I should dress’. Results were reported in Table 38.

**Table 38**

*Analysis of Interpretations of Prophetic Genre and Contextualization*

C	FDC	GB	LDC	LE	Mo.	TT	TBH	HS	SI	CHISQ	P>CHISQ
1	12.79	38.36	13.24	5.48	8.22	9.59	5.02	1.37	5.94	187.4	<0.0001
2	14.01	11.59	17.39	21.26	10.63	5.31	6.76	12.08	0.97	57.3	<0.0001
3	15.22	21.74	13.04	9.78	9.24	3.26	15.22	1.63	10.87	50.9	<0.0001

Key: FDC=Follow initial dressing code, GB=Get guidance from the Bible, LDC=Put long dress/gown in church, LE=Look at Elders, Mo=Dress for moral protection, TT=Turban as tradition. C=Code TBH=Turban on the head & belt, HS=Holy Spirit, SI=Self instinct.

The chi-square test for analysis in Table 30 indicates that factors 1, get guidance from the Bible (38.4%,  $\chi^2=187$ ,  $P\leq 0.001$ ); 2=Look at elders, (21.3%,  $\chi^2=57.3$ ,  $P\leq 0.001$ ) and 3. Get guidance from the bible, 21.7%,  $\chi^2=50.9$ ,  $P\leq 0.001$ ) had a p-value less than 0.05 and therefore they were statistically significant. *Akūrinū* elders were believed by *Akūrinū* believers to be accurate interpreters of the Bible. In essence, what they said was what God had said in the Bible. This belief, right or wrong influenced results obtained.

In question 5, statements of the respondents were asked to indicate ‘true’ for relationship between biblical genre and biblical Contextualization of theology of dressing and false for non-biblical. The results were reported in Table 39.

**Table 39**

*Chi-squared Test of Agreement on Genre and Contextualization of Theology*

Dependent Variables (DV)	True	False	Chisq	P>Chisq
The teachings of my leaders on dressing agree with what the Bible teaches	43.05	56.95	5.8411	0.016
My dressing helps me to communicate with God	45.7	54.3	2.2384	0.13
The Holy Spirit teaches me on dressing through the prayer leader	28.81	71.19	54.2517	<0.0001
I know the meaning of Bible prophecy by assigning meaning to symbols shown to me	24.83	75.17	76.5033	<0.0001

The respondents disagreed (57%,  $\chi^2=5.84$ ,  $P\leq 0.02$ ) with their leaders that theology of dressing agreed with Bible teaching. They were undecided (54%,  $\chi^2=2.2$   $P>0.13$ ) on whether dressing helps them to communicate with God or not. Respondents disagreed (71%,  $\chi^2=54.25$ ,  $P\leq 0.001$ ) that the Holy Spirit teaches on dressing through the prayer of their leaders. They also disagreed (75%,  $\chi^2=76.5$ ,  $P\leq 0.001$ ) that the meaning of Bible prophecy is by assigning meaning to symbols shown to them (Table 39).

Disagreements and indecision at  $p>0.05$ , meant that *Akūrinū* believers gave answers by guesswork in items 1&2. Results are not reliable for decision on theology of dressing. Majority of *Akūrinū* believers (3&4) rejected the claim that their prayer leaders or assigning meanings to symbols they saw in dreams was true leading from God. Results were statistically significant, meaning that disagreement among sampled *Akūrinū* believers in Nairobi County was a true reflection for *Akūrinū* population in the County.



#### 4.4.1.4 Wald Chi-squared test of Hypothesis one

In question 5, Wald Chi test was performed and results presented in Table 40.

**Table 40**

*Analysis of Variance for Theology of Dressing*

		Variables in the Equation					
		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1 <sup>a</sup>	Theology of	-	.167	66.171	1	.000	.256
	dressing	1.362					
	Constant	8.789	1.008	75.998	1	.000	6560.684

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: Theology of dressing.

Results in Table 40 indicated that biblical genre had predictive probability of change in odds ratio of 0.256. P-value was less than 0.05; therefore, the results were statistically significant. There was significant difference in relationship between the biblical genre and the theology of dressing with the Wald chi square = 66.171,  $P \leq 0.000$  which is less than  $p=0.05$  level. This finding indicated that there was sufficient evidence to conclude that the observed distribution, P (T) was different from the expected distribution was different distribution, P (F). The predictive probability of a unit change in odds ratio in biblical genre being associated with change in theology of dressing was  $(PT/PF) = 0.256$  log odds, or prob. of success divided by probability of failure ( $\log P/1-P$ ). Odds ratio of 0.256 implied that probability that changes in theology of dressing contextualised in the market place due to changes in other factors was  $1-0.256= 0.744$  log odds/ factors that explained variance in DV. There was statistically significant relationship between biblical genre and theology of dressing among *Akūrinū* believers. Results were attributed to shared beliefs of *Akūrinū* believers. Evidence in the sample studied also existed in the larger population of *Akūrinū* believers in Nairobi County.

#### 4.4.1.5 Moderating Effect of Culture on Theology of Dressing: Content Analysis

##### Questionnaire

Question one in the questionnaire investigated the moderating effect of dressing through personal expression of moral message encoded in personal dressing. Asked how personal of dressing communicated to others about personal moral purity as a youth or a married person, the sampled *Akūrinū* believers shared notable messages their dressing communicated to society. The SPSS analysis using Chi square tests of agreement and results are presented in Table 41.

**Table 41**

*Analysis of Basis for Contextualization of Dressing by Gender*

Gender	Responses by Gender						Total
	BS	AD	MD	HD	GD	SD	
Female	9	24	18	4	16	15	86
	4.31	11.48	8.61	1.91	7.66	7.18	41.15
Male	16	27	25	7	26	22	123
	7.66	12.92	11.96	3.35	12.44	10.53	58.85
Total	25	51	43	11	42	37	209
	11.96	24.4	20.57	5.26	20.1	17.7	100

Frequency Missing = 93=30.8%

Key: BS= Body covering and sexual purity. AD=Age and Dressing. MD= marital status and dressing; Married women to put chest scarf and wedding ring (females reported). HD= Holiness and dressing; Women to wear printed dress as a symbol of holiness. GD=Special dress for married women (males reported). SD=Stylic turban; style of wearing turban according to gender but mandatory. T=Total.

The respondents agreed (69.8%,  $\chi^2=1.2896$ ,  $P\leq 0.0059$ ) that; women wore to cover their bodies to enhance sexual purity. Style of dressing across gender varied by marital status, dressing garments varied with gender and marital status, turban was mandatory as a sign

of *Akūrinū* faith. Age (24.4%), marital status (20.1%) and moral message through dressing among females (20.57%) dominated the criteria used to specify style and pieces of garments to put on.

Moral reasons for dressing dominated females than males. Bevans (2010) support variation Contextualization of theology varies with gender, age and cultural dynamics in general. Since the reasons *Akūrinū* believers make these adjustments is in obedience to God's known theology of dressing, Divine Command theory which states that a believer is obliged to obey commands of his or her deity was supported, it was therefore relevant. However, God's one truth in each of the texts *Akūrinū* community based their theology of dressing was not supported by findings. McMahon (2013) argues that how a Bible interpreter comes to know what God said in the original Bible texts require laws of logic as a science of correct reasoning. According to the law of identity, God is spirit and cannot be flesh (John 4:23). What God says in any text of scripture has one meaning. Contextualization as a means of communicating morality and *Akūrinū* faith varied with, gender and marital status. Several biblical genres support this view.

Results in Table 41 indicated that 61 (20.2%) of believers gave meaning of turban to be moral purity. Other meanings given were decency, identity of married women, covering body parts to avoid tempting others and printed dress as symbol of holiness. To the founding prophets, *Akūrinū* dressing expressed message of "priesthood and righteousness" as the biblical Contextualization of theology of dressing (Waigwa 2007, p. 101). The messages communicated suggested that apart from turban, the relationship between dressing and moral purity was strict on women. According to founding prophets and the scriptures, God's standards of moral purity have no gender.

In question two, the respondents were asked to respond to proposition that their dressing was their best expression of their commitment to God. The question was intended to investigate the three-predictor variables. The results revealed dressing as the most salient religious feature of *Akūrinū* community and it was dependent variable of objective one and two in that dressing was symbolic of *Akūrinū* biblical mission. However, dressing was the only visible and symbolic expression of *Akūrinū* understandings of God, which made understandings of God an independent variable. Test of the probability of association between urban life and theology dressing covered three predictors. Wald-Chi test results were presented in Table 42.

**Table 42**

*Analysis of Moderating Effect of Culture by Gender*

Responses of Respondents by Gender			
	False	True	Total
Female	88 (29.14%)	42(13.91%)	130 (43.05%)
Male	129(42.72%)	43(14.24%)	172(56.95%)
Total	217(71.85%)	85(28.15%)	302(100%)

The respondents disagreed (71.85%,  $\chi^2=1.6104$ ,  $P\leq 0.1962$ ) that dressing was their best way of expressing their faith in the city. The p-value was more than 0.05, therefore null hypothesis was accepted. The overall influence of culture over all variables was statistically insignificant. Comparing results between gender, more males disagreed (42.72%) than did the females (29.14%). This gender disparity in disagreement implied more females agreed that dressing was their best way of expressing their commitment to God. The finding agreed with reports from clergy C7, 8, 11, 12 & 14 (Table 34), that *Akūrinū* dressing had multiple meanings within and between gender.

The research findings in the questionnaire and interviews agreed with Lee (2015) argues that contextual theology, even when biblical (retains God's unchanging truth), has flexible applications that suit dynamics of the people of the receiving culture, *Akūrinū* believers in context. Christa (2014) notes that in Asia, women in the Orthodox Church wear head coverings not only as a symbol or sign of inward state of subbiblical mission to God's order but as a demonstration of one's willingness to submit to it with which comes God's blessing. Contextual theology among *Akūrinū* believers was flexible with changes in culture in Nairobi County, regardless of the accuracy of biblical interpretation of their selected texts.

The implication of this finding was that dressing was not an important visual symbol of contextualising *Akūrinū* s' religious identity. It was possible that changing the interpretation of biblical genre would mean that they change their theology of dressing has to dissociate dressing from faith in Christ while retaining the biblical teaching on modest dressing to cover believers as the temple of the Holy Spirit as implied in 1Cor.6:16-20. Statistical insignificance indicated that results sample population lacked evidence of being found in the larger *Akūrinū* population.

Effect of moderating variable was introduced into each predictor variable in objective one by generating a hierarchical binary logistic regression model based on variables of culture (gender, level of education, type of theological training *Akūrinū* believers had and urban life in general. Results on moderating effect of culture on objective one is presented in Table 43.

**Table 43***Analysis of Variance for the Moderating Variable on Theology of Dressing*

		Variables in the Equation					
		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1 <sup>a</sup>	Theology of dressing	-1.386	.170	66.269	1	.000	.250
	cultureobj1	.237	.199	1.419	1	.234	1.268
	Constant	7.801	1.275	37.437	1	.000	2442.882

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: theology of dressing, culture obj1.

The purpose of this objective was to find out the relationship between biblical genre and theology of dressing among *Akūrinū* believers in Nairobi County. Stata software was used to generate hierarchical logistic binary regression models to predict decrease or increase in the likelihood that a value in the predictor variables was associated with a change in outcome variable. Implication of results from qualitative data in this objective was that correct interpretation of genre by *Akūrinū* believers could guarantee 100% biblical Contextualization of biblical theology of dressing unless comprehensive remedial measures were taken to address over 50% of other factors that influence erroneous interpretation of scriptures. Based on inferential statistics, the outcome was a decrease by 0.006 odds ratio in the dependent variable.

The meaning of this statistic was that selected variables of culture have small negative influence on the theology of dressing since a drop-in odds ratio from 0.256 to 0.250 (drop of 0.006) could only have been attributed to introduction of culture into theology of dressing. Culture therefore presented a challenge to efforts *Akūrinū* believers made to use religious dressing in Nairobi County. Farther, it meant that an observed change in the way *Akūrinū* believers contextualised their dressing (dependent variable) in Nairobi County could only be accounted for or explained by unit change (100%) in accurate

interpretation of any genre (prophecy, poetry, narratives and gospel, among others) as an Institutedvariable up to probability of 25.6% of observed change in theology of dressing. Results imply that 74.4% of changes observed were due to other factors discussed under qualitative analysis in this objective. However, since results from test of hypothesis three were statistically significant at 95% confidence level, findings were generalisable among *Akūrinū* population. The objective was achieved.

#### **4.4.2 The Relationship between Biblical Context and Fulfilment of Biblical Mission among *Akūrinū* Believers**

H1. There is no statistically significant relationship between biblical context and fulfilment of biblical mission among *Akūrinū* believers.

H4. There is no significant moderating effect of culture on fulfilment of biblical mission.

In this objective, the relationship between understandings of God and use of paranormal experiences among *Akūrinū* believers was investigated. Four analyses were done and discussed under each of the four data sets. Qualitative data from leaders' responses interview sessions. Reflexive thematic analysis was used as applicable. Qualitative data from the questionnaire was the second data set. Chi square was used to agreement or disagreement between results of nominal variables as applicable. Inferential data set was analysed and discussed under hypothesis (H<sub>02</sub>) was tested using Wald Chi and binary logistic regression model to determine whether there was a statistically significant relationship between biblical context and fulfilment of biblical mission. Data on moderating effect on dependent variable was analysed based on results from inferential data as the fourth data. Hierarchical logistic regression model was used. Since variables of culture moderated dependent variable in each of the first three objectives, objective four was absorbed in the first three objectives in chapter four.

#### **4.4.2.1. Analysis of Qualitative Data: Interviews**

Two questions guided oral interview with eighteen Akūrinū leaders in objective two. The purpose was to find out the relationship between meanings of scriptures used by *Akūrinū* church to inform their fulfilment of biblical mission as they understood it and how they knew specific activities considered to be contemporary understanding of their fulfilment of biblical mission God gave them through the original founders of the denomination. If the meanings were true as God gave texts used in their biblical context, then *Akūrinū* believers and leaders were involved in a biblical service in their efforts to fulfil their biblical mission.

Question one sought to find out memory of texts that informed their God-given biblical mission and whether those scriptures were the right scriptures to use even if their current biblical mission was biblical. To achieve this goal, leaders were asked to write down ‘three Bible verses which help us to know about your service to God’, and results are presented in Table 44. Factual categories column states the true meaning God intended Bible readers to hear.



**Table 44***Content Analysis of Leaders' Perspective on Biblical Context for Biblical mission*

Quoted Data (Texts)	Designation Code	Factual Categories
We know it from Zech. 3:1-5, Lev. 8:1-10 and Exodus 29:1-7 as God's once for all biblical mission of Akūrinū church	Archbishop (M): clergy C11.	Cited texts talk about Restoration of post-exilic Judah Zech 3:1-5; Institution of priestly office as formal order of O.T. biblical mission, Lev.8:
1Cor. 14:26, Isa. 61:1-5 and 1 John 4:1	Overseer (M): clergy C13.	Gospel-based biblical mission
Zech. 3, Exodus 29 and Leviticus 8	Bishop (F): clergy C14.	Messianic prophecy, Institution of priestly office as formal order of biblical mission
Prophets were given scriptures by God, such as Zech. 3:3-4, to guide the biblical mission of Akūrinū, mainly warfare prayer assignments for Kenya. Prophets interpret what God is saying directly	Bishop (M): clergy C7.	Restoration of post-exilic Judah
Zech. 3 and others. God, in His own sovereign way gave biblical songs to composers as biblical revelation. They are biblically based	Bishop (M): clergy C8.	Restoration of post-exilic Judah
Matt. 2:11-13, Deut. 22:11-12 and Rev. 3:18-19 9 (white garments)	Senior Bishop (M): clergy C1.	God's safety through dreams, non-allegorical dress materials, restoration of Laodicians in Revelation.
Scriptures revealed to the Akūrinū prophets include Zech. 3 and others in Exodus as God's command to Aaron and his sons.	Senior pastor (M): clergy C2.	Restoration of post-exilic Judah. Institution of priestly office as formal order of biblical mission
Mainly through prophetic leadership, Zech. 3 and communal ministries guided by Acts 2:42-47	Pastor (M): clergy C3.	Restoration of post-exilic Judah, formal discipleship in apostolic church
Exo. 28, Leviticus 8. However, what God tells the prophet is very strong in determining and sustaining our standards of life and ministry	Pastor (M): clergy C4.	Institution of priestly office as formal order of biblical mission
We dress according to Aaronic priesthood in Exod. 28 for ministry in Exodus 29	Pastor (M): clergy 5.	Dressing symbolised Aaronic priesthood
Isa. 61 and Exo. 29 teach us about service	Pastor (M): (clergyC10).	Dressing and biblical mission are positively related

There are many verses but I cannot remember any off-head	Youth leader (M): (leader Y 9)	Challenge memory of scriptures (Psalm 119: 9-11, 105)
Zech. 3 and Isa. 61	Youth leader (M): leader Y6).	Messianic prophecy, Restoration of post-exilic Judah
There are many scriptures, Zech 3 and Isa. 61 included	Deacon (M): leader D15.	Restoration of post-exilic Judah
I cannot remember any	Youth leader (F): leader Y16.	Challenge memory of scriptures (Psalm 119: 9-11, 105)
1Cor. 6:16-20, Gen.1:26-28	Pastor's wife (F): leader PW 17.	Godly lifestyle related to biblical mission
Romans 12. Gifts of the Holy Spirit	Overseer's wife (F): leader OW18.	Gift-based and charismatic biblical mission related

Distribution of original biblical mission given by God in texts cited by church leaders as theological basis for their biblical mission in rank order were: restoration of post-exilic Judah (33.3%), institution of priestly office as God's formal order of biblical mission (22.2%), relational biblical mission, notably right dressing, specific gifting and godly lifestyle as a manifestation of God-given biblical mission (33.3%), restoration of Laodiceans (5.5%), biblical mission and God's safety of His servants (5.5%), challenge of scripture memory (11.1%).

An excursus of texts cited helped to provide their meanings based of the principle of biblical context and corroboration with literation is extensively done address variables of this objective in relation to the nature of hermeneutics according to *Akūrinū* hermeneutics that informed the nature of their Contextualization of biblical mission. According to (Nystron, 1977), the word context has two parts, Latin *con*, meaning together and *texere*, meaning to weave. When this weaving of a biblical context with its written text is accurate, the contextualised theology biblical. Results in Table 36 revealed diversity of hermeneutical approaches which existed among *Akūrinū* believers who

participated in the study. Archbishop, coded as archbishop (M): clergy C11, interpreted that ‘the once for all given biblical mission to Akūrinū church is predominantly in Zech. 3.1-4, Exod. 20-29 and Isa. 61’. These frequently cited texts suggested selective and subjectively interpreted doctrines, which made slight variations in Contextualization of theology. The archbishop traced the contemporary interpretations of Akūrinū biblical mission to God’s specific revelation of specific scriptures to the founding prophets of Akūrinū church. “We know it from Zech. 3:1-5, Lev. 8:1-10 and Exodus 29:1-7 as God’s once for all biblical mission of Akūrinū church”. Clergy’s use of the phrase “we know” claims authoritative epistemological position in theology of the *Akūrinū* believers.

This interpretive authority was based of the credibility of archbishop as ecclesiastical leader who had mentored other bishops and pastors who cascaded this doctrine, belief and practice to *Akūrinū* believers. Senior pastor (clergy C2) who was mentored by senior bishop (clergy C1) expressed the interpretation of scriptures cited by clergy C1 as the primary sources of Akūrinū doctrine and practices. Scriptures cited by both were not exhaustive; neither were they saying the same thing. Clergy C1 cited Matt. 2:11-13, Deut. 22:11-12 and Rev. 3:18-19 in support of using white garments, turban included. Clergy C2 said that “Scriptures revealed to the Akūrinū prophets include Zech. 3 and others in Exodus as God’s command to Aaron and his sons” to believers in that deity. Quinn (1978) adds that an action is morally right because God commands believers to obey by acting accordingly. Once *Akūrinū* believers received what their clergy told them was true, they acted upon it, thereby supporting the appropriateness of divine command theory.

#### **4.4.2.1 Variations in Interpretations of Cited Texts in Relation to Fulfilment of Biblical Mission**

Variations in interpretations were partly due to multiple mentors and individual development of hermeneutics as an art. *Akūrinū* believers were obedient to God if their clergy told them that the cited scriptures meant what their clergy told them as explained by Diffusion of Innovations Theory (Rogers, 1962). The findings revealed a challenge of multiple approaches to hermeneutics among clergy and believers they taught. Use of biblical context principle would have helped to minimize the challenge.

Two youths could not remember scriptures. “There are many verses but I cannot remember any off-head” (Youth leader, M, Y 9). The female youth said “I cannot remember any” (Youth leader, F, Y16). Since sampling leaders was purposive, the observation of little exposure of sampled youth to *Akūrinū* texts was may have been due to chance factors. Whatever the cause of lack of scriptures in their memory, the condition minimized chances of biblical Contextualization of *Akūrinū* biblical mission. Studies by Mcquail and Windahl (2015) suggest that regardless of taxonomy, dynamics within communication relationship, such as lack of familiarity or credibility of source, psychological noise, semantics, syntax and selective filtering, among others, enhance or block communication of God’s truth to people as radial ven (Figure 2). There was a positive correlation between scripture memory and biblical fulfilment of biblical mission (Amin & Malik, 2014).

Clergy C8 expressed that *Akūrinū* songs preserve *Akūrinū* heritage and doctrines on *Akūrinū* biblical mission included. Reliance on songs tended to replace the Bible as source of doctrine. A pastor (Pastor, M, clergy 5.) interpreted dressing as a symbolism of God’s continuity of Aaronic priesthood through *Akūrinū* church and linked dressing to

biblical mission. “We dress according to Aaronic priesthood in Exo. 28 for ministry in Exodus 29”. Pastor Exo. 28, Leviticus 8. However, what God tells the prophet is very strong in determining and sustaining our standards of life and ministry. This observation suggested that eternal priesthood of Jesus Christ which replace Aaronic priesthood for New Testament believers was not practised (Hebrews 9:23-28). Bishop (clergy C7) strengthened the interpretative authority of individual prophet or prophetess in a congregation as superior to scriptures. “Prophets were given scriptures by God, such as Zech. 3:3-4, to guide the biblical mission of *Akūrinū*, mainly warfare prayer assignments for Kenya.” Bishop (M, clergy C7) magnified spontaneous utterances of *Akūrinū* prophets to the level of God speaking His mind regardless of scripture teachings concerning a matter. Findings in Table 36 are the basis for unified hermeneutics.

Divine command theory (Haris, 2008) presents an argument and a claim that in any religion, the deity of that religion provides the right doctrine, faith and practice as divine command. The theory explains how doctrines, faith and practices spread in any community of believers. The process of diffusion involves knowledge, persuasion, decision making and implementation. In this objective, the findings revealed that *Akūrinū* clergy interpreted selected texts differently and *Akūrinū* believers reflected this inconsistency by assigning multiple meanings to biblical texts cited.

Exegesis on Zech. 3: 1-5 reveals God’s truth in a vision of restoration of post-exilic Judah through representative high priest, Joshua, and unconditional forgiveness of sin. Wearing of turban by Joshua on behalf of restored people whom Satan insisted on accusing before God did not imply turban had spiritual or theological meaning. When biblical context is used, the Bible interpreter hears what God said originally. Although results indicated there was a positive relationship between biblical context and fulfilment of biblical mission, an illustration of qualitative Contextualization using grammar

principle helps to clarify the meaning of Zech . 3:4. The Hebrew verb used here is abar , עָבַר, with wide range of meanings , ‘to pass over or by or through , alienate, bring, carry, do away , take, take away’ by specifically erasing (Heb. verb machah , מָחָה) their sins (Strong, 1990). Therefore, since the original meaning was to alienate, God’s act of cleansing the nation meant that He would no longer treat Judah as sinners. The Heb. noun for miter in Zech. 3:5 is tsaniph, תְּסַנִּיף, ancient Jewish head dress of cloth wrapped around the head, turban, which was contemporary head dress in the Middle East.

Results in Table 36 revealed six approaches to hermeneutics among the *Akūrinū* church leaders. Six leaders demonstrated potential to rely on scriptures through their ability to cite scriptures. Verbally mentioned scriptures by six leaders were; “Isa. 61 and Exo. 28 teach us about service” (clergy C10). “1Cor. 6:16-20, Gen.1:26-28” (pastor’s wife, PW), “Zech. 3 and Isa. 61” youth leader Y6). “We dress according to Aaronic priesthood in Exod. 28 for ministry in Exodus 29” (clergy C5). “Isa. 61 and Exo. 28 teach us about service”. Acts 2:42-47” (clergy C3. “We know it from Zech. 3:1-5, Lev. 8:1-10 and Exodus 29:1-7 as God’s once for all biblical mission of *Akūrinū* church (clergy C11). Based on statistics only, the score of the six leaders (33.3%) in Table 36 showed percentage of believers who were able to cite scriptures which informed them on their personal ministries.

Work of the Holy Spirit in each believer and objective call in the scripture needed to harmonize to minimise this kind of aberrance as supported by selective use of few scriptures by *Akūrinū* church leaders such as “We know it from Zech. 3:1-5, Lev. 8:1-10 and Exodus 29:1-7 as God’s once for all biblical mission of *Akūrinū* church (archbishop, C11). Jesus made it a categorical imperative to use very scripture by citing Deut. 8:3 in Matt. 4:4 “It Is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God”.

- i. A corrective action needed to make contextual theology of *Akūrinū* believers as biblical as possible was to use selected principles of hermeneutics to inform their task of Contextualization.
- ii. The turban in the cited texts did not carry any theological or spiritual meaning since it was a cultural headdress worn by everyman then regardless of their relationship with God.
- iii. The emergent similarities, theological contradictions, justification of different interpretive positions generated internal conflict within *Akūrinū* church concerning *Akūrinū* doctrines, beliefs and practices. One of the stated problems in GeCACA constitution was the need for restoration of “One Church, One Calling, and One Faith: United in purpose and biblical mission.” (2016, p.1, Appendix V).
- iv. The main implication of finding from interviews was that application of the three selected principles of biblical hermeneutics would partially promote biblical Contextualization of *Akūrinū* lived theology of biblical mission.

Question two in the interview investigated ways *Akūrinū* believers knew their specific area of serving God, here called fulfilment of biblical mission. The purpose was to find out the nature of contemporary fulfilment of biblical mission and compare results with expected nature according to texts cited in question one and kind of hermeneutics leading to the contemporary. Results are presented in Table 45.

**Table 45***Content Analysis on Leaders' Fulfilment of Biblical mission*

Quoted Data (texts)	Designation Code	Textual summary
As one serves in the church and others notice and confirm it as God's call, spiritual devotion to God and leaders notice and assign a suitable responsibility, generous giver as an expression of love for people. Example: In a gathering of Akūrinū leaders for corporate prayer for the nation God has told us through the prophets to go to Mugoiri and pray for three days in May this year for the nation. We shall know the specific needs when we get there.	Senior Bishop (M): clergy C1	Affirmed by leaders as one serves (fruit test)
As I pray, Holy Spirit guides. Godly character The prophet directs the church leaders to specific prayer missions, voice of God, a vision as one is praying and leaders confirm, and godly character. In April 25, 1967, I was told by the Holy Spirit to put on Kanju for ministry but I was unwilling. I got sick for three days but when I put on Kanju, I was healed instantly. For members, we know their ministries through testimonies they give, tested prophecies about their calling and obedience to their leaders.	Archbishop (M), clergy C11 Bishop (M): clergy C7	Holy Spirit working with prayer. Prophet directs, critical incident
Confirmation by others as people come to me for ministry. Example: People came to me for spiritual help, leaders noticed. With time, leaders made a minister but as a woman I do not do ordinations.	Bishop (F), Clergy C14.	Confirmed as one serves (fruit test)
Through praise, prayer and prophecy coming in answer to prayer. Through the word and prayer	Pastor (M). Clergy, C10 Overseer (M), clergy, C13	Prophetic direction Word of God and prayer
Gifted, ordination and inheritance from the family of origin. I learned my calling in ministry and devotion from my parents. The Holy Spirit spoke to a few church leaders to separate themselves to pray for independence of Kenya and God answered.	Bishop (M): Clergy C8. Pastor (M): Clergy C5	Parental heritage and gift of the Holy Spirit Holy Spirit spoke to founding prophets
Akūrinū lived theology was revealed second time on 22/7/1944 the Holy Spirit came down in form of biblically sound songs to Daudi Ikīgu. The clergy emphasised by saying; Nī Ngai waririe uhoru ucio na njīra ya Kīrīkanīro kīa Roho Mūtheru, meaning, It is God who gave that message to Akūrinū church from the Old and New Testaments as the covenant of	Pastor (M): Clergy C4	Holy Spirit inspired songs, therefore biblical.



the Holy Spirit.

Mostly through dreams and visions. In 1990, I was given a pink turban in a dream and Kanju to be wearing when praying for servants of God. Soon after, I was given purple colour with A and Z on either side of turban for praying for servants of God and the nation.	Archbishop (M): Clergy C12	Holy Spirit instructed in a dream on put on pink turban, purple when praying for nation and servants
Gifting of the Holy Spirit, participation in God's work and appointment by the church leaders.	Pastor (M): Clergy C3.	Holy Spirit's gift plus ordination
Leaders look for evidence of gifts of helps, praying for people and hearing from God through dreams, visions and prophecy. For example: God has told us through the prophets to go to Mugoiri and pray for three days in May for national problems we shall know when we get there.	Pastor (M): Clergy C2.	Scope of operation of gifts of the Holy Spirit noted by leaders for placement into prophetic office
Participation in God's work, Holy Spirit's conviction and appointment by leaders. Prophetic word, participation and appointment by leaders.	Deacon(M): Leader, D15 Youth leader Y6.	Participation, conviction and appointment Participation, prophecy and appointment
Through service, prophetic word from a far and in prayer meetings. Others notice your service and make you a leader, such as praise and worship. You feel it from inside.	Youth leader (F): leader C9 Youth leader (M). Leader Y16.	Participation, prophecy from a visitor, appointment Participation, prophecy and appointment
Working with my husband and hospital career	Pastor's wife (F): Leader PW. 17	Supporting husband and workplace
Supporting my husband and family chores	Overseer's wife (F): leader OW18.	Supporting husband and family chores

Table 45 shows ranked ways of knowing specific biblical mission according to textual summary in Table 45. Reflexive themes presented in Table 46 in rank order.

**Table 46***Reflexive Thematic Analysis on Knowing God-given Biblical mission*

Ways of knowing God-given biblical mission	Frequency	Per cent
Holy Spirit, through prophet /prayer/praise/visions /dreams	9	45
Affirmed by leaders while serving	5	25
Akūrinū tradition from founding prophets	2	10
Word of God & Songs as doctrine	2	10
Supporting husband and work	2	10
Total:	20	100

Results in Tables 46 & 47 revealed diversity in fulfilment of biblical mission, which existed among *Akūrinū* believers who participated in the study. 45% (9) leaders agreed that the Holy Spirit working through *Akūrinū* prophets/prophetesses, direct revelation as believers pray, praise God, see visions or dream spontaneously specified what biblical mission to fulfil, where, when, by whom and why. (25%, 5 leaders agreed that affirmation by top leaders to believers as they served within service delivery context, a direct observation, phenomenological method. 10% (2 leaders) agreed that *Akūrinū* tradition, common knowledge method. Same percentage agreed that word of God, which included *Akūrinū* songs informed biblical mission. Two female leaders interpreted their biblical mission as support to their husbands and workplace (10%). This observation conforms with biblical doctrine in 1Peter 2:9 which state that regardless of gender or marital status, every believer in Jesus Christ should have a direct access to God as part of priesthood of all believers. Based on results from interviews, the relationship between biblical context and fulfilment of biblical mission was 10%, implying that 90% of fulfilment of biblical mission was informed by other factors.

The spontaneous work of the Holy Spirit dominated the factors that informed fulfilment of *Akūrinū* biblical mission. Findings indicated that two youths could not remember

scriptures. “There are many verses but I cannot remember any off-head” (Youth leader, M, Y 9). The female youth said, “I cannot remember any” (Youth leader, F, Y16). Since sampling leaders was purposive, the observation of little exposure of sampled youth to biblical texts was perhaps due to their age in the faith and chance factors. Clergy C8 expressed that *Akūrinū* songs preserve *Akūrinū* heritage and doctrines on perceived *Akūrinū* mission included. This observation reflected a tendency to replace the Bible with *Akūrinū* songs as source of doctrine.

Results indicated that there was a weak association between biblical context and contemporary fulfilment of biblical mission but not based on accurate interpretation of the texts cited. *Akūrinū* clergy interpreted selected texts differently and *Akūrinū* believers reflected this inconsistency by assigning multiple meanings to biblical texts cited. The main observation was that contextualization of biblical mission was characterised by subjective ways based on subjectivity of sources that informed each believer or a group of believers and by gender in Nairobi County. Findings were a moderating evidence that there was an association between what *Akūrinū* believers received as doctrine from God (biblical context) and fulfilment of biblical mission (contextual theology of biblical mission). Results reflected that interpretation of their selected scriptures was aberrant. Non-biblical ways of knowing specific biblical mission (90%) dominated over biblical ones (10%).

Results reflected a potentially good foundation for fulfilment of biblical mission if GeCACA leadership taught the biblical context as a principle of hermeneutics and implemented in contextual theology that was biblical.

#### 4.4.2.2 Qualitative Analysis of Data: Questionnaire

In question one (i) under objective two, the respondents were asked to affirm or reject two propositions on how their leaders helped them to interpret the Bible concerning their call to service by God.

“Our leaders interpret the Bible for us”. This data was on True/False, therefore binary.

Results were reported under inferential statistics in Table 47.

**Table 47**

*Leader-Assisted Interpretation of Scriptures by Gender*

Gender	Responses by Gender		Total
	False	True	
Female	22(7.28%)	108(35.76%)	130(43.05%)
Male	20 (6.62%)	152(50.33%)	172(56.95%)
Total	42	260	302
	13.91%	86.09%	100

In Table 47, results indicated that males and females strongly agreed that their leaders interpreted scriptures for them (86%). The main theological implication was that theology of *Akūrinū* believers of *Akūrinū* believers was mainly influenced by leaders in each congregation and therefore homogeneous within the congregations. Males (56.95%,  $\chi^2=1.7173$ ,  $P\leq 0.2396$ ) dominated the expression of trust in God’s truth based on what their leaders taught as God’s truth. Results were statistically insignificant. Alternative hypothesis was accepted. The gender balance was good enough to provide evidence that male and female contributions were a fair representation of theological decisions made.

Results could not be generalised in all *Akūrinū* communities since they were due to chance factors. Results were valid since *Akūrinū* believers elsewhere had different cultural characteristics. Believers accepted interpretation of the Bible from their leaders, perhaps because they did not have other options and they had to show that they were

loyal. Theological implication was that the most effective way of teaching selected principles of biblical hermeneutics based on findings would be start with *Akūrinū* leaders who would then teach *Akūrinū* believers since trust was very strong between the two (86%). Results from this demographic uniqueness made a unique contribution in world of research and therefore making the study have a global value addition by providing new knowledge.

In question one, examples of how leaders taught believers to interpret the Bible on God’s call. SPSS results were reported in Table 48.

**Table 48**

*Examples of Extra-Biblical Ways Leaders Taught Akūrinū believers on How to Interpret the Bible (hermeneutics of art).*

Leaders’ Teachings on how to Interpret the Bible										
Gender	Responses of Respondents Art of Hermeneutics									Total
	D&V	HSR	CS	IP	Obs	P	SI	IS	CA	
Female	18 (8.9%)	15 (7.4%)	14 (6.9%)	4 (1.9%)	11 (5.4%)	8 (3.9%)	6 (3%)	7 (3.5%)	2 (1%)	85 (41.9%)
Male	19 (9.4)	26 (12.8)	16 (7.9)	7 (3.5)	8 (3.9)	12 (5.9)	18 (8.9)	11 (5.4)	1 (0.5)	118 (58.1)
Total	37 (18.2)	41 (20.2)	30 (14.8)	11 (5.4)	19 (9.4)	20 (9.9)	24 (11.8)	18 (8.9)	3 (1.5)	203 (100)

Key: D&V=dreams and visions, Holy Spirit’s revelation=HSR, common sense=CS, influence of peers=IP, observation of how things are done=Obs, prophecy=P, self-instinct=SI, Influence by society= IS, church activities=CA.

Results in Table 49 shows that nine (9) extra-biblical ways leaders taught *Akūrinū* believers was a system of subjective approach to interpretation of texts they cited-variance in art of *Akūrinū* hermeneutics. The implication of these results was that leaders had a strong influence on believers’ response to questions designed to find out the

probability of change in odds ratio in the fulfilment of biblical mission that would be attributed to change in accurate interpretation of biblical context. The finding also revealed that there was no common understanding of what *Akūrinū* biblical mission was since the leaders did not have it. Frequency missing (99, 32.8%) indicated ignorance as knowledge gap among believers on what Akūrinū biblical mission was, implying that other reasons given were 67.2%. Holy Spirit's revelation ranked highest, 48.3% (20.2%, 18.2%, and 9.9) since dreams, visions and prophecy were considered one of the means used by the Holy Spirit to identify biblical mission to be fulfilled. Leaders and *Akūrinū* believers agreed that the Holy Spirit was the main spontaneous revealer of specific biblical mission; people to do it, when and where. Results show that fulfilment of biblical mission was mainly associated with spontaneous activities of the Holy Spirit, not by biblical context.

In question two, the respondents were asked to state a chapter in the Bible where teachings helped them to know areas of ministry where God had called them individually. The responses were reported in Table 50.

**Table 49***Differences between Biblical Meanings and Meanings in Akūrinū 's Theology on Fulfilment of Akūrinū biblical mission*

Text	Correct biblical texts and meanings in Biblical context	<i>Akūrinū's</i> interpretation
Zech. 3:1-8	God pointed out Israel's sin, called for national repentance and promised His imputed righteousness through Christ.	White colour added on turban and robes, and garments were spiritualized (allegory).
Exo. 28-29	God's establishment of Levitical priesthood, liturgical garments and duties of priestly leadership, not for all congregation of Israel.	Levitical priesthood interpreted as recovered by God by establishing Akūrinū church. Cultic tendency.
Isa.61:1-7	Prophecy concerning ministry of Jesus and His contemporary Church. Jesus declared Himself to be the fulfilment of the prophetic text (Luke 4:18-21).	Interpreted as white turban replacing white ash (sin) and other white garments of righteousness in life of <i>Akūrinū</i> believers.
Lev. 8	Lev. 8. God's instructions on consecration of Levitical priests. They were male (Aaron and his sons) and fellow Israelites were male and female to be restored to God as biblical missionaries to heathen nations since the fall of Adam and Eve from Gen. 3 forward.	Ordination done plus automatic calling by God to priestly office for male and female clergy to other <i>Akūrinū</i> believers who are priest at different levels in the market place.
Deut. 22:5	22:5 God commanded men and women to wear clothes that differentiate gender.	Contextualised correctly by <i>Akūrinū</i> believers.
1Cor. 14:26 ; Rom. 12	Gifts of the Holy Spirit validate God's call and are exercised as prescribed.	Gifts are exercised fervently but without verification of eauthenticity through God's word.
Rev. 3:18	White garment is a metaphor for God's righteousness in Jesus Christ who makes believers in Him righteous.	<i>Akūrinū</i> believers contextualised, enacted and assigned different spiritual meanings
Acts 2:42-47	Four ministries: Doctrine, prayers, fellowship and holy communion	Holy communion excluded by <i>Akūrinū</i> s.
1Cor. 6:16-20	God's call to all believers to sexual purity	contextualised fervently and biblically
Matt.2: 11-13	God's security measured through use of angel and dream as incidental detail in theology, not normative to be doctrine.	Overemphasised in 'Israel' churches by use of flag to work with guardian angel

The purpose of this critique (Table 50) was to illustrate the use of biblical genre, biblical context and understandings of God (theological principle) as the basis of evaluation of the quality of hermeneutics which informed contextual theology of *Akūrinū* believers.

Comparing texts cited by leaders as biblical and theological basis for biblical mission of *Akūrinū* believers with meanings of cited verses in their original contexts, findings indicated that *Akūrinū* church leaders and members were incompetent in use of biblical/historical context as hermeneutical approach to interpretation. Members believed that their founding prophets taught their contemporary church leaders how to interpret scriptures. Findings showed that *Akūrinū* leaders had a challenge in interpreting symbolism. Citation of Ezekiel 24: 16-18 and 44:22-27 illustrates the point. Ezekiel is an exilic book written by prophet Ezekiel in Babylon. Prophet Ezekiel is in Babylon and besides intense sufferings, Jews were going through as deported slaves in Babylon. Ezekiel's wife had just died in this suffering. In Ezek. 24:16-18, God used the circumstance of death of Ezekiel's wife and the customary mourning in Bible days as a micro sign, as emphasised by Heb. noun *mophet*, מוֹפֵת, (Strong, 1996) to prophesy about current judgment God allowed Israel to pass through because of their persistent sin. Israelites had to be punished for 70 years and then this kind of warfare would be ended. God's justice was consistent with His love and righteousness (Mal.3:6). God's forgiveness after punishment or before punishment if Israel had repented earlier confirms His unchanging nature and character.

*“Comfort, yes, comfort My people!” Says your God. “Speak comfort to Jerusalem, and cry out to her, that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned for she has received from the Lord's hand. Double for all her sins.”). (Isa. 40:1-6).*

The point was that when time came, they were to mourn for their sins in repentance instead of customary morning. They wore sacloths during that time, not a lifestyle.



Turban was put on as part of customary mourning for sufferings in Israel, not as God’s instruction for normative theology. In Ezekiel 44: 22-27, the subject is on dress code for priests when they served in the sanctuary. God did not give turban and other priestly garments multiple spiritual or theological meanings. *Akūrinū* believers have given turban over seven spiritual and theological meanings. This practice is adding to scripture which God has prohibited (Deut. 4:2; Prov. 30:6 & Rev. 22:18-19). The message of Zech. 3:1-5, Lev. 8:1-10 and Exodus 29:1-7 is restoration of post-exilic Judah; Institution of priestly office as formal order of biblical mission. 1Cor. 14:26, Isa. 61:1-5 and 1 John 4:1 focus on Gospel-based biblical mission which Jesus confirmed. God’s message in Matt. 2:11-13, Deut. 22:11-12 and Rev. 3:18-19 (white garments mentioned) was His assurance of safety of baby Jesus through dreams, dress materials for priestly garments and restoration of Laodicians. If contextualization by *Akūrinū* believers was biblical, the same meaning would be retained but applied to different aspects of restoration of lukewarm believers, among others. God wards every interpreter of the Bible against subtracting from or adding to scripture (quote Rev. 22: 19-20, NKJV).

In question three, the respondents were asked to respond to proposition that their prophets interpreted the Bible accurately. The Stata-generated Chi-square results are presented in Table 50.

**Table 50**

*Believers’ Trust in the Prophets for Accurate Interpretation of Scriptures*

Gender	False	True	Total
Female	55(18.21%)	75(24.83%)	130(43.05%)
Male	57(18.87%)	115(38.08%)	172(56.95%)
Total	112(37.1)	190(62.91)	302(100)

Results in Table 51 indicated that majority (62.91%) believed that church prophets were accurate in their interpretation of scriptures. Gender balance was fair in theological positions made. However, more males (56.95%,  $\chi^2=2.2888$ ,  $P\leq 0.1181$ ) than females believed that their leaders interpreted the scriptures accurately.

Results were not statistically significant. Alternative hypothesis was accepted. *Akūrinū* believers did not believe that their prophets interpreted scriptures accurately, yet they depended on them. Results were by chance and confined to the respondents. Gender balance being good was important because Contextualization of fulfilment of biblical mission was fair across gender based on total of 62.91% confidence that God instructed believers through the scriptures (Divine Command theory (Haris, 2008; Quinn, 1978)).

More females had less confidence in their male prophets being godly enough to hear from God those male believers. Based on qualitative data, the critical significance (practical effect on life of respondents), reports indicated that some male prophets had become sexual perpetrators on their women and some had divorced and remarried. Perhaps this was one of the reasons for loss on confidence that men could interpret scripture correctly.

In question four, believers were asked to state any three ways through which each person knew the specific ministry God had given him or her. The SPSS output was summarised in Table 51 using frequencies, percentages and rank order. The question was to probe believers on various alternatives they had to use the Bible as source of God's guidance. Results are shown in Table 51.

**Table 51***Ranked Choices of Extra-biblical Ways of Knowing Call of God*

Biblical mission Identification	Male	Female	Total Choices	Ranked Ways
Holy Spirit's revelation	72	80	152(22.3%)	1
Dreams and visions	43	50	93(13.6%)	2
Community needs	47	35	82(12.0%)	3
Personal instinct	28	50	78(11.4%)	4
Leaders appoint us	40	35	75(11.0%)	5
Prophecy	30	43	73(10.7%)	6
Leaders note my fruit	22	41	63(9.2%)	7
Social influence	18	25	43(6.3%)	8
Influence of peers	9	10	19(2.8%)	9
Church activities	3	2	5(0.7%)	10
Total choices	312	371	683 (100%)	

*Akūrinū* believers believed what the prophets said, visions and dreams and any direct voice of the Holy Spirit (10.7% +13.6% +22.3% =46.6% of all the choices made) were different ways of saying that 46.6 % of activities that indicated their fulfillment of biblical mission were biblical.

The other ways cited do not rule out chances of fulfillment of biblical mission being biblical or not. Retaining 53.4% constituted extra-biblical ways. According to Macharia (2012), biblical mission to pray for the nation and preach Christ was the God-given to the founding *Akūrinū* fathers. Results suggest that other different sources of what *Akūrinū* believers interpreted as biblical mission was *Akūrinū* hermeneutics.

Question five investigated whether wearing turban signified call of God to biblical mission or not. The true/false question that 'wearing turban indicates God has called me to a special service' implied data was binary and statistical significance was tested. The results were presented in Table 52.

**Table 52***Distribution of Meaning of Turban in Relation to God's Call to Biblical mission*

Gender	Responses		
	False	True	Total
Female	87 (28.81%)	43 (14.24%)	130 (43.05%)
Male	134 (44.37%)	38(12.58%)	172(56.95%)
Total	221(73.18%)	81(26.82%)	302(100)

Results in Table 52 indicated that majority (73.18%) denied that turban signified God's calling to special biblical mission among to *Akūrinū* believers. Gender balance was fair in theological decisions made. However, more males (44.37%,  $\chi^2=4.5511$ ,  $P=0.0364$ ) than females (28.81%,  $\chi^2=4.5511$ ,  $P=0.0364$ ) denied the proposition that turban signified God's special calling.

Both males and females disagreed on association of turban with God's call to special biblical mission. Bromiley (1988) notes that Babylonian nobles wore turbans for royalty but he does not associate the turban with a special task. Njeri (1984) notes those *Akūrinū* believers believe in sanctity of their attire but turban did not signify God's special calling to *Akūrinū* believers. Waigwa (2007), on purposes of dressing among *Akūrinū* did not link turban to special call to biblical mission. Biblical context on turban indicates that God's call on Aaronic priests preceded that dressing they were to put on as identification with ministry office rather than special calling. Majority of *Akūrinū* believers, scripture or literature reviewed did not support report by clergy C7 that one wearing red turban had a warfare assignment to work with angel Michael. P-value was greater than 0.05, implying that clergy C7 represented believe held by those groups who put on red turban. Though results were statistically insignificant, they were critically significant in that they were new knowledge to *Akūrinū* believers in other groups who did not know the meaning of red turban and non-*Akūrinū* s who would access this meaning in this study.

#### 4.4.2.3. Test of Hypothesis Two

The hypothesis, H2, stated that ‘there is no statistically significant relationship between biblical context and fulfilment of biblical mission among *Akūrinū* believers.

In questions, 6 & 7 in, *Akūrinū* believers were asked to name specific ministries they believed to have been given by God according to propositions given in Table 45. Results of logistic binary regression were presented in Table 53.

**Table 53**

*Analysis of Variance for Fulfilment of Biblical mission*

		Variables in the Equation					
		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1 <sup>a</sup>	Fulfillment biblical mission	-	.238	34.733	1	.000	.245
	Constant	7.985	1.139	49.138	1	.000	2936.599

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: fulfillment biblical mission.

The predicted probability is *Akūrinū* believers in agreement that Contextualization was biblical as P (T) divided by P (F) to get odds ratio in Table 53. To assess the hypothesis of no statistically significant relationship between biblical context and fulfilment of biblical mission among *Akūrinū* believers, the logistic regression was used to analyse the response on this data. There was significant relationship between the biblical context and the fulfilment of biblical mission with the  $\chi^2=34.733$ ,  $P \leq 0.000$  which was less than 0.05 significant level. The predictive probability of change in odds ratio on fulfilment of biblical mission was 0.245, which means that only 24.5% of a unit change in fulfilment of biblical mission was associated with accurate interpretation of biblical context to inform fulfilment. The implication was that 75.5% of a unit change in fulfilment of biblical mission was associated with other sources that informed fulfilment of biblical

mission. Crowson (2018) and Grande (2016) note that odds ratio indicated that the probability that a value in predictor variable would cause change in log odds of dependent variable existed. When value of odds is 1, (PT/PF=1=Exp. (B), likelihood that change in unit value in the predictor variable will cause change in the dependent variable is the same. When odds value (Exp.B) is 0.245, the likelihood that change in the predictor variable would result in change in odds ratio in the dependent variable is less than it would not. This odds ratio would be found in the entire population of *Akūrinū* believers. Results from qualitative analysis were higher but statistically insignificant, implying that critical value (importance in practical application, 46.6%) was greater for urban population than it was among *Akūrinū* believers outside Nairobi County. The hypothesis was rejected.

#### 4.4.2.4 Moderating Effect of Culture on Fulfilment of Biblical Mission

##### Inferential Statistics: Moderating Effect

In questions 6 &7 in the questionnaire, hierarchical logistic model was generated using stata software and results are presented in Table 54.

**Table 54**

*Analysis of Variance for the moderating variable on fulfilment biblical mission*

		Variables in the Equation					
		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1 <sup>a</sup>	Fulfillment of	-	.244	34.997	1	.000	.235
	biblical mission	1.446					
	cultureobj2	-.238	.169	1.984	1	.159	.788
	Constant	9.308	1.524	37.302	1	.000	11020.837

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: cultureobj2.

To assess if the moderating variable culture influences the relationship between the biblical context and fulfillment of biblical mission knowledge, the hierarchical logistic binary regression model was used.

From the analysis the direct relationship between the biblical context and fulfillment of biblical mission among *Akūrinū* believers was significantly different, Wald chi squared =35.266,  $P \leq 0.000$  which was less than  $p=0.05$  level. Results are highly significant. It is unlikely that results are due to chance. It also means that there was sufficient evidence that variables of culture reduced the odds ratio on fulfillment of biblical mission from 0.245 to 0.235, implying a decrease of odds ratio by 0.010. At p-value of 0.159 was more than 0.05, statistically insignificant, implying that this moderation downwards was limited to biblical context and fulfillment of biblical mission within sampled population.

- i. New knowledge of the study was generated because it was not possible that study done elsewhere on relationship between biblical context and fulfillment of biblical mission would not have been moderated by the same variable of culture with same results.
- ii. Every cultural group is unique and dynamic in its set of its values, norms, language, artifacts and symbols. The introduction of this variable to odds ratio of fulfillment of biblical mission lowered the odds ratio by 0.010. Though small, this decrease reflected a negative relationship between urban culture and fulfillment of biblical mission, meaning that critical significance of this result was that prevailing culture made it difficult for *Akūrinū believers* to fulfil their biblical mission in Nairobi County. In this objective, the moderation was an interference with predictive probability that 0.245 changes in biblical context would be reflected in the fulfillment of biblical mission. This moderating effect was not statistically significant, implying that results from variables of culture could not be generalised among *Akūrinū*

population since culture was dynamic in the same city, between rural and urban and from individual to individual. The objective was achieved.

#### **4.4.3 Objective Three: The Relationship between *Akūrinū* Believers Understandings of God and their Use of Paranormal Experiences**

H3. There is no statistically significant relationship between *Akūrinū* believers' understandings of God and their use of paranormal experiences.

H4. There is no significant moderating effect of culture on paranormal experiences among *Akūrinū* believers.

In this objective, the relationship between understandings of God and use of paranormal experiences among *Akūrinū* believers was investigated. Four analyses were done and discussed under each of the four data sets. Qualitative data from leaders' responses interview sessions. Reflexive thematic analysis was used as applicable. Qualitative data from the questionnaire was the second data set. Chi square was used to test agreement or disagreement between results of nominal variables as applicable. Inferential data set was analysed and discussed under hypothesis (H3) was tested using Wald Chi and binary logistic regression model to determine whether there was a statistically significant relationship between understandings of God and use of paranormal experiences. Data on moderating effect on dependent variable was analysed based on results from inferential data as the fourth data. Hierarchical logistic regression model was used. Since variables of culture-moderated dependent variable in each of the first three objectives, objective four was absorbed in the first three objectives in chapter four.

##### **4.4.3.1 Analysis of Qualitative Data: Interviews**

In question one, *Akūrinū* leaders were asked to identify any three ways they generally used to interpret dreams, visions and prophecy and cite specific incidents, which were



called critical incidents in this study. The purpose of critical incidents was to find out whether there was evidence that variance in Contextualization of theology existed as stated problem by GeCACA. Relevant verbal statements made by sampled church leaders were transcribed and recorded in Table 55 according to text (for content analysis), codes of leaders in Table 55 and emergent themes.

**Table 55**

*Content Analysis of Data from Oral Interviews: Objective Three*

Quoted data (texts)	Designation code	Factual categories
Dreams and visions are interpreted by gifted people. We act on prophecies. We prayed to God to resolve political crisis last elections (2017). God answered our prayer.	Senior Bishop. Clergy C1.	Obedience to God. Gifted believers. Critical incident. Prayer.
Dreams and visions are given to elders recognized in the congregation as gifted to interpret according to the scriptures through how often one is used by God and how specific the message is. Elders pray and provide answers from God.	Archbishop. Clergy C11	Church leaders. Gifts of the Holy Spirit in believers. Prayer.
Those who dream or see visions share with elders who take these messages to the pastor. Pastor prays and relies on personal experience to get meaning. Dreams are compared with teachings in the Bible to guide meaning.	Archbishop. Clergy C12.	Prayer. Clergy experience. Biblical sources. Church leaders.
Dreams are given to the elders for interpretation. Elders compare the dream with experiences and the teachings in the Bible. Prophecies are acted upon. Visions are clear.	Overseer (M). Clergy C13.	Leader's experience. Biblical teachings.
Dreams are recorded by church secretary, given to leaders to pray for interpretation from God and then act.	Bishop (M). Clergy C7.	Church leaders. Prayer. Obey God.
Relying on the Holy Spirit, use allegory, through ministry meaning given by the pastor. Going to the spirit world of the prophet while he or she is prophesying and interpreting to the people. Dreams come in pictures. Most pictures have conventional meanings in the church, for example, in a dream, vehicle represents church.	Bishop. Clergy C8. Bishop (F). Clergy C14.	Holy Spirit. Allegory. Church leaders. Mystery/allegory. Imagery.
The secretary writes the dream, vision or prophecy if it is for the church, takes it to the pastor, pastoral	Senior Pastor (M). Clergy	Church leaders. Prayer.

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leadership prays and gives direction to the believer.	C2.	
Dreams, visions and prophecy are shared with secretary, given to church leaders for prayer to get direction from God. Cheetah in a dream was recently interpreted by a prophet to indicate witchcraft.	Pastor (M). Clergy C3.	Church leaders. Imagery/allegory.
Share with prophets for revelation from God. In some cases, pray and God gives you interpretation.	Pastor (M). Clergy C4.	Prophetic ministry. Prayer.
Prophecy, dreams and visions that concern several people or congregation are interpreted by gifted believers.	Pastor (M). Clergy 10.	Gifts of the Holy Spirit in believers.
Use the Bible to check for alignment of meaning. Use experiences of church leaders, pray”	Pastor (M). Clergy C5.	Bible. Church leaders. Prayer to God.
Dreams, visions and prophecy are interpreted through prayer by leaders.	Youth (M). Leader Y6.	Prayer. Church leaders.
Prophecy, dreams and visions are interpreted by a person with special gift from God. Youth Y9.	Youth (M). Leader Y9.	Gifts of the Holy Spirit in believers.
Use of gifted leaders or members of the congregation and pray.	Deacon (M). D15.	Pray. Gifted believers.
There are rules. You pass through the pastors and explain. Pastor helps you to know whether the dream is for the congregation or personal. Only visions come from God always. In the early days, people were holy. Prophecies and dreams were always from God. I have never experienced a prophecy.	Youth (F). Leader Y16	Church leaders interpret, prophecy, dreams and visions Expressed moral decline, hence dreams and visions may not be from God.
Dreams and visions are reported to leaders, recorded and raised to God in prayer, waiting for interpretation and fulfilment. Critical incident: Recently, parents of my husband were told by a believer in the congregation that ‘I dreamt that a boy child was being taken away from parents by one of two other people who were making efforts to take him.’ It has not been fulfilled. We are waiting.	Pastor’s wife. PW 17.	Prayer. Church leaders. Critical incident.
Prophecy, dreams and visions are common in our church. Not everyone interprets. Critical incidents: For dreams. I pray and search in my phone for help because there are posts from some people who write guidelines on how to interpret dreams.	Overseer’s wife. OW 18.	Gifted believers. Critical incident. Social media and theology.

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The recurring factual categories were used to construct reflexive theological themes, frequencies and percentages in order to get quantitative data for improved analysis. Reflexive theological themes were presented in Table 56.

**Table 56**

*Reflexive Thematic Analysis of Oral Interviews with Church Leaders*

Reflexive theological themes	Frequency	Per cent	Rank
Prayer to God for interpretation of paranormal	10	28	1
Church leadership as interpreters	9	25	2
Gifts of the Holy Spirit in believers who obey God	7	19	3
Critical incidents/ living experiences	4	11	4
Bible dream symbols used to interpret paranormal	3	8	5
Continuity and change/ declining morality	2	6	6
Interpretation guidelines in social media	1	3	7
Total	36	100.0	

Results in Table 56 indicate that *Akūrinū* believers believed that the most effective way to interpret dreams was to ask God for meaning in prayer (28%). Belief that God is asking for interpretation of His word was consistent with biblical interpretation as supported by a biblical example of Daniel.

*“Then Daniel went to his house, and made the decision known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, that they might seek mercies from the God of heaven concerning this secret, so that Daniel and his companions might not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon. Then the secret was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. So Daniel blessed the God of heaven” (Daniel 2:16-19, NKJV).*

However, scientific principles of hermeneutics are needed to ensure objectivity since God’s truth is objective. The remaining variety of hermeneutics was 72% were from

unreliable sources. Based on results, there was strong evidence that *Akūrinū* contextual theology associated with biblical understandings of God was at 0.28.

Moberly (2000) notes that right doctrine (orthodoxy) from the Bible helps believers to understand various God makes Himself understood. The biblical truth farther helps the interpreter of dreams, visions and prophecy by comparing their content with the nature of God. Malachi 3:6 states that God does not change, neither does His truth. When God is the source of paranormal experiences and therefore qualified to give correct meaning of what He manifests to the *Akūrinū* believer and consistency with His attributes. Youth leader (Y6) argued that anyone could dream but only prophecies exclusively came from God to anointed believers. Results indicated that clergy C5, C4 and C13 had strong emphasis on the importance of paranormal experiences to *Akūrinū* believers. The results indicated that *Akūrinū* congregations leaned heavily on dreams, visions and prophecy which partly made them a unique type of pragmatic believers in God who reveals secrets. Cottrell (2011) defines a vision as a supernatural picture which God brings to a natural mind when one is awake and mostly during prayer sessions while dreams are streams of images passing through human mind while asleep.

Paranormal experiences were considered to be gifts of the Holy Spirit and there carried more authority in themselves and for the human communicator. Visions and dreams are gifts of the Holy Spirit to prophets according to Num. 12:4-8. However, God used dreams and visions to speak to prophets in the Old Testament, people who were not prophets such as Pharaoh of Egypt, Nebuchadnezzar, Mary and Joseph and the wise men among others, in both Testaments. God used Moses and called him a prophet in (Deut. 18:15). He used him to prophesy of the coming of Jesus Christ, God spoke to Moses plainly, and then Aaron would speak to the people. Moses was closer to God than other prophets were in general at the time of Numbers. In Cor. 12: 10, prophecy is one of the

nine gifts of the Holy Spirit. Mazzaferri (2010) defines prophecy as God's channel of communication to man through human vessel.

Studies conducted by Bendiako (2010) Ikechukwu (2016) revealed that African hermeneutical approaches focused on working of God's truth in experiences of everyday life (praxeology) unlike Western focus on seeing the Bible as patterns of belief as intellectual truth. However, contextual theology is based on God's truth. This truth is validated by six-fold criteria of truth which are absolute, correspondence with reality, coherence, universality, exclusiveness, and objectivity (Gibson, 2011). To correct this error, Christians in Africa, *Akūrinū* believers included, needed to allow God's truth to rule over human all domains of reason, emotions, actions, cultural religious experiences and relationships while doing contextual theology. This critical incident may represent others with similar false claims in different *Akūrinū* congregations. The challenge led to administrative decision to vet all dreams, visions and prophecy to avoid damages such false claims brought to congregations. A report by an overseer's wife (OW) was significant. Although there might have been many leaders and members, who used social media to get their theological help, this social media case created awareness of variety of hermeneutical approaches depending on what a believer considered efficient.

Personal experiences were considered more credible than reports on what happened in the congregations generally. This consideration was supported by theological validity in biblical texts based on witnesses of divine experiences such as Moses' experience of theophany at the bush (Exodus 6:1-10); Luke's account to Theophilus based on eye witnesses (Luke 1:1-4) and Peter's witness of angelic deliverance from prison in answer to corporate intercessory prayer (Acts 12: 1-12), among others. Based on these case studies, living experiences of church leaders informed variables of the study in more credible ways and shed light on contemporary theology of Contextualization.

Experiences are application of God's objective truth when they agree with truth in scripture.

Macharia (2012) attributes different meanings and response to dreams, visions and prophecy to this background. Without objective truth recorded in the biblical texts because of use of scientific principles of hermeneutics, personal experiences can skew isolated biblical texts towards what the interpreter desires to get from God and people in order to address needs raised by personal experiences, just as Black theologian, James cone and *Akūrinū* founding prophets did.

Results were corroborated with theories, clergy with members and notable authors among others. Clergy C3 added that there in 2013, "A young man had claimed to have gift of prophecy and went ahead to claim that young wife of another man was sexually impure before marriage and the church needed to nullify the marriage". Separation took place immediately after public announcement by the prophet. Clergy C3 called leaders to prayer, counselling with separated spouses. They consulted the relevant biblical texts on how God provided guidance towards marriage and reasoned that this God would have shown them during courtship since He would allow sin to destroy the church He loves. The marriage was restored and measures put in place on prayerful censorship of all paranormal experiences by the church leadership to get clarity from God and preserve purity, stability and integrity of the faithful believers in the congregation. This critical incident was one-time evidence that false prophecies were possible and that a reliable means of control of the practice would vary the hermeneutical method. Clergy C4 expressed concern that "lust-driven prophecies had split *Akūrinū* families and led to many splinter groups especially in Kariombangi". These critical incidents and observations justified the importance of application of theological principle which states that human experiences that do not conform to God's nature (who God is) and character

(what God does because of who He is) should not be attributed to God as the source or the doer (Mal. 3:6 “For I am the Lord, I do not change; Therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob”).

Macharia (2012) notes that key interpreter of God’s truth was manifestation of the Holy Spirit through prophecy, ministry of Akūrinū prophets, experience of dreams and visions and results affirmed. Biblical critique on divergent ways of Contextualization understandings of God supported the necessity to use selected hermeneutical principles in order to provide theological balance. Biblical critique of reports from Akūrinū leaders and members indicated that human beings dream and see visions. Not all paranormal experiences come from God. Theological principle may be used to interpret dreams, visions or any other unclear subjective religious experiences. Taking a God-centred perspective means that no biblical text should be interpreted to say contrary to who God is and what He does according to correspondence theory of truth (McDill, 2014). When God reveals truth using dreams, visions or prophecy, He becomes the Institutedvariable, here called the understanding of God. Paranormal experiences (dreams, visions and prophecy) are the dependent variable). The relationship being investigated was whether exclusive reliance upon these paranormal experiences distorted Contextualization of Akūrinū lived theology.

Comparing these reports with scores with hypothesis H<sub>03</sub> (coefficient of 0.259 (25.9%) with high scores on frequencies of their occurrence in the interviews, data sets suggested a stronger positive relationship between understandings of God through His means of communication with which *Akūrinū* believers and leaders were familiar. This finding suggested that hearing from God among the members in order to understand Him was supposed to be frequent. However, it was delayed by long process of reporting to leaders for interpretation. Accounts in the Bible about on procedure of interpretation of dreams

and visions vary case by case in terms of method, time frame of interpretation and fulfilment among other variations.

This high coefficient was not therefore an indicator of accurate understanding of God. Second, low scores on reliance on the Bible to validate or guide interpretation of paranormal process once the congregations reported to leaders and means of interpretations leaders reported suggested prevalence of human interpretive errors (aberrant hermeneutics) making Contextualization aberrant as well. The findings supported the conclusion that there was a strong positive relationship between how different *Akūrinū* believers understood God and how each used dreams, visions and prophecy as God's means of instruction. The explanatory variable was 25.9% efficient in predicting the role of paranormal experiences among *Akūrinū* believers. In effect, variables such as level of education, urban life, theological training and gender among others accounted for 34.1% as moderator variables. However, the overall influence of culture was statistically insignificant. This result supported theological logic that right doctrine (orthodoxy) produced right belief (orthocardia) resulting in right practice (orthopraxy) but practical significance of this theological ideal was 28%.

#### **4.4.3.2. Qualitative Data: Questionnaire**

In question one, the respondents were asked to affirm or reject two propositions on how their leaders helped them to interpret the Bible concerning their call to service by God. "Our leaders interpret the Bible for us". This data was on Yes/No, therefore binary. Results were reported in Table 57.



**Table 57***Distribution of Leader-Assisted Interpretation of Scriptures by Gender*

Responses by Gender			
Gender	False	True	Total
Female	22(7.28%)	108(35.76%)	130(43.05%)
Male	20 (6.62%)	152(50.33%)	172(56.95%)
Total	42	260	302
	13.91%	86.09%	100

In Table 57, results indicated that males and females strongly agreed that their leaders interpreted scriptures for them (86.09%). The main theological implication was that theology of congregational leader influenced results; contextual theology was homogeneous within the congregations. Males (56.95%,  $\chi^2=1.7173$ ,  $P\leq 0.2396$ ) dominated the expression of trust in God's truth based on what their leaders taught as God's truth. Results were statistically insignificant, meaning that this observation could not be generalised in all *Akūrinū* communities. Gender balance was good enough to provide evidence that male and female contributions were a fair representation of theological decisions made.

In question two, examples of how leaders taught believers to interpret the Bible on God's call. SPSS results were reported in Table 58.

**Table 58**

*Examples of Extra-Biblical Ways Leaders Taught Akūrinū believers on How to Interpret the Bible*

Distribution of Leaders' Teachings on How to Interpret the Bible										
Gender	Responses of Respondents Art of Hermeneutics									Total
	D&V	HSR	CS	IP	Obs	P	SI	IS	CA	
Female	18 (8.9%)	15 (7.4%)	14 (6.9%)	4 (1.9%)	11 (5.4%)	8 (3.9%)	6 (3%)	7 (3.5%)	2 (1%)	85 (41.9%)
Male	19 (9.4)	26 (12.8)	16 (7.9)	7 (3.5)	8 (3.9)	12 (5.9)	18 (8.9)	11 (5.4)	1 (0.5)	118 (58.1)
Total	37 (18.2)	41 (20.2)	30 (14.8)	11 (5.4)	19 (9.4)	20 (9.9)	24 (11.8)	18 (8.9)	3 (1.5)	203 (100)

Key: D&V=dreams and visions, Holy Spirit's revelation=HSR, common sense=CS, influence of peers=IP, observation of how things are done=Obs, prophecy=P, self-instinct=SI, Influence by society= IS, church activities=CA.

Results in Table 58 show that nine (9) extra-biblical ways leaders taught *Akūrinū* believers was a system of subjective approach to interpretation of texts they cited-variance in art of *Akūrinū*hermeneutics. The implication of these results was that leaders had a strong influence on believers' response to questions designed to find out the probability of change in odds ratio in the fulfilment of biblical mission that would be attributed to change in accurate interpretation of biblical context. The finding also revealed that there was no common understanding of what *Akūrinū* biblical mission was since the leaders did not have it. Frequency missing (99 (32.8%) indicated ignorance gap among believers on what *Akūrinū* biblical mission was, implying that other reasons given were 67.2%. Holy Spirit's revelation ranked highest, 48.3% (20.2%, 18.2%, and 9.9) since dreams, visions and prophecy were considered to be one of the means used by the Holy Spirit to identify biblical mission to be fulfilled. Leaders and *Akūrinū* believers

agreed that the Holy Spirit was the main spontaneous revealer of specific biblical mission; people to do it, when and where. Results show that fulfilment of biblical mission was mainly associated with spontaneous activities of the Holy Spirit, not by biblical context.

#### **4.4.3.2.1 Citing Chapter in the Bible that Reveals God's call to *Akūrinū* Believers**

In question two, the respondents were asked to state a chapter in the Bible where teachings helped them to know areas of ministry where God had called them individually. The responses were reported in Table 59.

**Table 59**

*Differences between Biblical Meanings and Meanings in Akūrinū lived Theology on Fulfilment of Akūrinū biblical mission*

Quoted Data	Correct Biblical Texts and Meanings in Biblical Context	Factual Categories
Zech. 3:1-8	God pointed out Israel's sin, called for national repentance and promised His imputed righteousness through Christ.	White colour added on turban and robes, and garments were spiritualized (allegory).
Exo. 28-29	God's establishment of Levitical priesthood, liturgical garments and duties of priestly leadership, not for all congregation of Israel.	Levitical priesthood interpreted as recovered by God by establishing Akūrinū church. Cultic tendency.
Isa.61:1-7	Prophecy concerning ministry of Jesus and His contemporary Church. Jesus declared Himself to be the fulfilment of the prophetic text (Luke 4:18-21).	Interpreted as white turban replacing white ash (sin) and other white garments of righteousness in life of Akūrinū believers.
Lev. 8	Lev. 8. God's instructions on consecration of Levitical priests. They were male (Aaron and his sons) and fellow Israelites were male and female to be restored to God as biblical missionaries to heathen nations since the fall of Adam and Eve from Gen. 3 forward.	Ordination done plus automatic calling by God to priestly office for male and female clergy to other <i>Akūrinū</i> believers who are priest at different levels in the market place.
Deut. 22:5	22:5 God commanded men and women to wear clothes that differentiate gender.	Contextualised correctly by <i>Akūrinū</i> believers.
1Cor. 14:26 ; Rom. 12	Gifts of the Holy Spirit validate God's call and exercised as prescribed.	Gifts are exercised fervently but without God's word to test truth
Rev. 3:18	White garment refers to metaphor for God's righteousness in Jesus Christ who makes believers in Him righteous	<i>Akūrinū</i> believers contextualise, enact and assigned different spiritual meanings
Acts 2:42-47	Four ministries: Doctrine, prayers, fellowship and holy communion	Holy communion excluded by <i>Akūrinū</i> s.
1Cor. 6:16-20	God's call to all believers to sexual purity	contextualised fervently and biblically
Matt.2: 11-13	God's security measured through use of angel and dream	Overemphasised in 'Israel' churches by use of flag to work with guardian angel

The purpose of this critique (Table 59) was to illustrate the use of biblical genre, biblical and understanding of God (theological principle) as the basis of evaluation of the quality of hermeneutics which informed contextual theology of *Akūrinū* believers.

Comparing texts cited by leaders as biblical and theological basis for biblical mission of *Akūrinū* believers with meanings of cited verses in their original contexts, findings indicated that *Akūrinū* church leaders and members were incompetent in use of biblical/historical context as hermeneutical approach to interpretation. Members believed that their founding prophets taught their contemporary church leaders how to interpret scriptures. Findings showed that *Akūrinū* leaders had a challenge in interpreting symbolism. Citation of Ezekiel 24: 16-18 and 44:22-27 illustrates the point. Ezekiel is an exilic book written by prophet Ezekiel in Babylon. Prophet Ezekiel is in Babylon and besides intense sufferings, Jews were going through as deported slaves in Babylon. Ezekiel's wife had just died in this suffering. In Ezek. 24:16-18, God used the circumstance of death of Ezekiel's wife and the customary mourning in Bible days as a micro sign, as emphasised by Heb. noun *mophet*, מוֹפֵת, (Strong, 1996) to prophesy about current judgment God allowed Israel to pass through because of their persistent sin. Israelites had to be punished for 70 years and then this kind of warfare would be ended. God's justice was consistent with His love and righteousness (Mal.3:6). God's forgiveness after punishment or before punishment if Israel had repented earlier confirms His unchanging nature and character.

*“Comfort, yes, comfort My people!” Says your God. “Speak comfort to Jerusalem, and cry out to her, that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she has received from the Lord's hand. Double for all her sins.”). The point was that when time came, they were to mourn for their sins in repentance instead of customary mourning (Isa. 40:1-6).*

Turban was put on as part of customary mourning for sufferings Israel, not as God's instruction for normative theology. In Ezekiel 44: 22-27, the subject is on dress code for priests when they served in the sanctuary. Turban and other priestly garments were not given special religious meanings which *Akūrinū* believers have given turban over seven

spiritual and theological meanings. This practice is adding to scripture which God has prohibited (Deut. 4:2; Prov. 30:6 & Rev. 22:18-19). The message of Zech. 3:1-5, Lev. 8:1-10 and Exodus 29:1-7 is restoration of post-exilic Judah; Institution of priestly office as formal order of biblical mission. 1Cor. 14:26, Isa. 61:1-5 and 1 John 4:1 focus on Gospel-based biblical mission which Jesus confirmed. God's message in Matt. 2:11-13, Deut. 22:11-12 and Rev. 3:18-19 (white garments mentioned) was His assurance of safety of baby Jesus through dreams, dress materials for priestly garments and restoration of Laodicians. If Contextualization by *Akūrinū* believers was biblical, the same meaning would be retained but applied to different aspects of restoration of lukewarm believers, among others.

In question two, believers were given two options (daily and weekly) on how often they were the Holy Spirit answered them through dreams and visions when they prayed for God's direction. The purpose of this question was to find out frequency at which answers to prayer was attributed to the Holy Spirit's help to the believers in their understandings of God, who was more interactive with them as God the Holy Spirit. Results are presented in Table 60.

**Table 60**

*Use of Dreams, Visions, Prophecy as God's Means of Communication*

Dependent Variable	FALSE	TRUE	CHISQ	P>CHISQ
God speaks to me directly through dreams and visions about who He is	25.17	74.83	74.5	<0.0001
I know my specific service through the needs in my community	78.81	21.19	100.3	<0.0001
God speaks to our church only through prophecy on our service to Him	79.8	20.2	107.3	<0.0001

Respondents strongly believe that God speaks to me directly through dreams and visions (75%, chi-square=75,  $P \leq 0.0001$ ). Similarly, they strongly believe that God speaks to our church only through prophecy on our service to Him (80%, chi-square=107,  $P \leq 0.0001$ ). However, they disagree of the knowledge of the specific service through the needs of the community visions (79%, chi-square=100,  $P \leq 0.0001$ ) (Table 52).

In question two, *Akūrinū* believers were asked to indicate the frequency with which God spoke to them using prophecy, dreams and visions on specific matters of life. The question investigated relative frequencies among the three indicators of paranormal experiences. To find out whether God use of dreams, visions and prophecies to communicate to males and females were different between gender, Chi square test of independence was used. Findings were analysed using chi square test of independence because each gender received dreams directly from and presented in Table 61.

**Table 61**

*Distribution of Occurrence of Dreams, Visions and Prophecy by Gender*

Gender	Occurrence of Dreams, Visions and Prophecy				Total
	Variance				
	MF	F	LF	NU	
Female	33	48	24	25	130
	10.93	15.89	7.95	8.28	43.05
Male	42	75	34	21	172
	13.91	24.83	11.26	6.95	56.95
Total	75	123	58	46	302
	24.83	40.73		15.23	100

Key: most frequent=MF, frequent=F, less frequent =LF, never used=NU

Results show that females experienced dreams, visions and prophecy more frequently than men. However, there was a higher percentage (25%) of females who never experienced paranormal than percentage of males (21%). This difference might have

been due to chance, although results from interviews indicated that experience of paranormal was positively associated with deeper spirituality. Based on credibility of the leaders' reports, more females were negatively affected spiritually by urban culture than males. This report might explain why fewer women received God's communication than men. Among the 'never' group, women dominated.

In question three, top three aspects of Akūrinūlife taught to believers by the prophets in relation to understanding of God were asked. The purpose of this question was to investigate whether the ministry of the prophet as the key resource person in the leadership dominated *Akūrinū* believers' understanding of God and therefore heavily influencing truth contextualised. This was important towards the understanding of God as a communicator to *Akūrinū* believers through the prophets as perceived to have been given to Akūrinū church by the founding prophets (C11, Table 8 & Macharia, 2012). The results were presented in Table 62.

**Table 62**

*Ranked Prophetic Guidance on Understanding God*

Content analysis	F	%	Reflexive Theme
Bearing fruits in Christ	113	37.4	Character
Work for my salvation	100	33.1	Sanctification
Repentance and forgiveness	97	32.1	Spirituality
Humility and obedience	77	25.2	Authority
Building faith in God	60	19.9	Faith
How to know God's way	54	17.9	Guidance
Dedication to God	47	15.6	Consecration
God's plan for the church	23	7.6	Ecclesiology
How to pray for community	1	0.3	Devotional
How to serve God only	1	0.3	Service
	302	100	



The order of reports on ways of understanding God through what He does in *Akūrinū* believers and calls them to live was character, sanctification, spirituality, authority, faith, guidance, consecration, ecclesiology, devotion and service.

#### **4.4.3.3 Test of Hypothesis Three**

The third objective set out to examine the relationship between understandings of God and role of paranormal experiences among *Akūrinū* believers. The results indicated a positive and statistically significant relationship. The results indicated that a unit increase in understanding of God increase the role of Paranormal by and it is statistically significant at 95% level of confidence. Hence, null hypothesis was rejected and the study concluded that there was statistically significant relationship between understandings of D5. Response on the truth about your experiences in the use of dreams, visions, and prophecy as God's means of communication to you.

#### **4.4.3.4 Experiences of Dreams, Visions and Prophecy as God's Means of Communication**

The question investigated whether scriptures, the work of the Holy Spirit and Bible texts the founding prophets said they received from God were considered as a means of understanding God. The purpose was to find out whether there were other ways of understanding God besides the paranormal experiences based on the influence of the teachings of the founding prophets in understanding of God were different between the observed data (H1, True) and the expected data (H0 , False). The results were presented in Table 63.

**Table 63***Chi-square Test for Independence*

Independent Variable	False	True	Chisq	P>Chisq
I read the Bible as God's most reliable means of knowing who God is	14.24	85.76	154.4901	<0.0001
The Holy Spirit helps me to understand God	37.75	62.25	18.1325	<0.0001
I know God through verses God gave to first Akūrinū prophets	48.34	51.66	0.3331	0.56

The respondents disagreed (71.85%,  $\chi^2=1.6104$ ,  $P\leq 0.1962$ )

P-values for propositions 1-2 (Table 63) were less than alpha 0.05 ( $P\leq 0.0001$ ) and therefore statistically significant, meaning results were not due to chance at confidence limit of 95%. Results could be generalised among Akūrinū population. *Akūrinū* believers believed strongly that reading the Bible was the most reliable way of knowing God. Since the Bible is God-given truth about Himself and other truths He intended readers to receive through the inspired writers, understandings of God is accessible through reading the Bible, with underlying assumption that the reader considers the Bible inspired and there hears God speak as he or she reads the scriptures. *Akūrinū* believers fit this assumption as results and literature review indicate. Reading the Bible therefore was on Institutedvariable, a predictor of Contextualization of *Akūrinū* lived theology (paranormal experiences). In response 3, the p-value of 0.56 was greater than alpha level 0.05 and therefore this variable (knowing God through what He had spoken through the founding prophets) was statistically insignificant, meaning it might have happened by chance. As Macharia (2012) notes, history of Akūrinū church was necessary to preserve because most of the scriptures used as the basis of *Akūrinū* lived theology were given to the founding prophets by God, as believed by Akūrinūconglomeration of churches.

The response by *Akūrinū* believers revealed a theological challenge of contextual theology in that a half (48%) did not know biblical basis of their dressing. Perhaps this finding also indicated the gap in lack of gaarū teachings where the existing theologians among older clergy (C2, C4, C7, C8, and C11, among others) would have taught the younger generation of *Akūrinū* believers their theological roots. GeCACA objective in Appendix IV, 4.0. V. “Promote the Historical Role as it pertains to our Special Calling” affirms this observation. Experience in the use of dreams, visions and prophecy is God’s means of communication to me”.

Question six investigated whether relationship existed between understandings of God and believers’ experience of visions, dreams and prophecy from God. Proposition that service to the community as a way of understanding God was meant to check whether respondents were keen in their response. Proposition that God spoke to *Akūrinū* church only through prophecy was intended to find out relative weight of this variable among the three. Like any other, Chi-square test has null (H0, ‘False’ responses) and alternative (H1, ‘True’ responses) hypotheses. The variables being investigated were categorical. Decision was made on the condition that if p-value was greater than alpha value (0.05), the observed distribution was not the same as the expected distribution. There enough evidence to conclude that the two variables were not Instituted of each other but they were related. The results were presented in Table 64.

**Table 64***Analysis of Understanding of God and Paranormal Experiences*

Dependent Variable	FALSE	TRUE	CHISQ	P>CHISQ
God speaks to me directly through dreams and visions about who He is	25.17	74.83	74.5	<0.0001
I know my specific service through the needs in my community	78.81	21.19	100.3	<0.0001
God speaks to our church only through prophecy on our service to Him	79.8	20.2	107.3	<0.0001

Respondents strongly believed that God spoke to them directly through dreams and visions (75%, Chi-square=75,  $P \leq 0.0001$ ). However, they disagreed on the knowledge of the specific service through the needs of the community as a way of understanding God (80%, chi-square=100,  $P \leq 0.0001$ ). They also disagreed that God spoke to their church on their service to Him only through prophecy (80%, chi-square=107,  $P \leq 0.0001$ ). The results were statistically significant, meaning that understanding of God and paranormal experiences were not Institutedof each other.

Therefore, there was a relationship between understanding of God and use of dreams, visions and prophecy (paranormal experiences). Proposition that service to the community as a way of understanding God was rejected by majority (79%) indicating that a high percentage of respondents were keen and honest in their responses. Similarly, proposition that God spoke to Akūrinū church only through prophecy was intended to find out honesty of the respondents in reporting since they had already agreed that God spoke to them through dreams and visions. These findings interrogated validity of data. To assess the hypothesis no statistically significant relationship between understandings of God and role of paranormal experiences among *Akūrinū* believers, the logistic

regression was used. Wald Chi-square test was performed in order to test hypothesis 3 and results presented in Table 65.

**Table 65**

*Analysis of Variance for Paranormal*

		Variables in the Equation					
		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1 <sup>a</sup>	paranormal	-	.204	43.707	1	.000	.259
		1.350					
	Constant	7.610	1.042	53.327	1	.000	2018.628

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: paranormal.

There was significant relationship between the understanding of God and the paranormal with the Wald chi square =43.707,  $P \leq 0.000$  which is less than  $p=0.05$  level. The coefficient of paranormal experiences was 0.259, which means that the increase in one unit of the understandings of God had a probability of odds ratio of 0.259 increases in the paranormal experiences. Consequently,  $1-0.259= 0.741$  gave probability of other sources of paranormal experiences. Chances that biblical understandings of God led to true paranormal experiences were 0.259. Texts from clergy C3 and C4 supported this finding.

#### **4.4.3.4 Moderating Effect of Culture on Role of Paranormal Experience Textual Analysis**

Results in Table 67 (Appendix 1V) show that all believers experienced dreams, visions and prophecy in the same way because of one who interprets prayerfully, (Archbishop, C11). Women are used more in prophecy, dreams and visions in rural and urban, gaarũ teachings are most effective for positive change and level of education has both good and bad results (Bishop C14). Dreams and visions are valued (Pastor, C3). Experience of dreams, visions and prophecy more frequent among women than men. Experience of dreams, visions and prophecy more frequent among the married compared with youth.

Urbanisation is generally challenging *Akūrinū* spirituality. Education is good but it is influencing *Akūrinū* faith negatively (Clergy C4). Dreams, visions and prophecy are not so frequent among the urban youth (Clergy C5). Educated people are affected negatively on dressing but on dreams, they are sober in handling dreams and they have better understanding of God through the word (Overseer, C13).

Clergy C11 reported that it is the prayerful interpreter who gave meaning to dreams since all dreams come in imagery. This finding presented a challenge on how such congregations would allow each believer to prayerfully get interpretation from God in order to have a direct understanding of God. Comparing the role of paranormal experiences by gender, women experienced more paranormal than men, youth experienced less compared with married believers, less educated experienced more paranormal than more educated because the more educated would understand God better through reading the Bible. Another clergy said men experienced more paranormal than women.

Udokang (2011) notes that African churches in urban areas cannot ignore their need to adjust in godly ways in order to preserve their spiritual identity and security. Venter (2004) observes that AICs in South Africa are faced with crisis of lack of conservative structures in city life due to anonymity and pressure to conform to secular lifestyles as opposed to social interaction, which would promote spiritual growth. The effect of modern city life on an individual's identity is a challenge to Contextualization of Christianity among AICs. Findings on moderating effect of culture among the *Akūrinū* believers had negative effect on the predictive probability of change in odds ratio on contextual theology.

There was a general understanding that God revealed Himself to *Akūrinū* believers mainly through paranormal experiences. However, assuming that all paranormal

experiences came from God and He works with spirituality of the human recipient, the results suggest that paranormal experiences youth were the most challenged in their spirituality. Biblical basis for this assumption includes Psalm 24:3-4, who may ascend into the hill of the Lord? He who has clean hands and a pure heart. Reports indicated complaints about deteriorating spirituality of urban *Akūrinū* youth. There was therefore a weak relationship between understanding of God and use of paranormal experiences, although these variables were mainly intrinsic.

I.G. Q. 2. And questionnaire Q2. Question two in the questionnaire on the distribution of respondents by denomination was analysed. The purpose of the question was to investigate whether theological diversities existed among respondents or not. Different names of *Akūrinū* congregations of respondents in each denomination were observed. Results are presented in Table 66.

**Table 66**

*Denomination of respondents*

Denomination	Frequency	Percent
A.K. Israel	20	6.62
AHGCC	202	66.89
ARWC	1	0.33
ECCCD	2	0.66
Evangelical Christian Fellowship	8	2.65
Full gospel A. Israel	21	6.95
GPC	1	0.33
HWCC	1	0.33
Holy Ghost Prophet	32	10.6
Hosanna Christian Church	1	0.33
Rehoboth	10	3.31
Ricenafes seminars church	3	0.99

Data from interview with *Akūrinū* church leaders is useful in interpretation of question two in the questionnaire as a moderator of variables in objective three. Similar data in question two of interview guide (I.G.) was analysed by coding it according to positions of clergy, two wives of clergy, three youths and deacon. The abbreviation codes for church groups used in Table 7 (Appendix IV) were: African Holy Ghost Christian Church (AHGCC); Holy Ghost Church of East Africa (HGCEA); Israel Kenya Church (IKC); Africa Kanisa Israel (AKI); Kenya Israel (KI); Evangelistic Christian Fellowship Church International (ECFCI); Israel Kenya Church (IKC); Rehoboth House of Prayer (RHP), African Biblical mission Holy Ghost Church (AMHGC), Good Shepherd Israel Church (GSIC), Hosanna Christian Holy Ministry (HCHM), Holy Ghost Prophet Church (HGPC), Full Gospel Africa Israel (FGAI); Beroiya SDA Church (BSDAC); Holy Ghost Church of the Prophets (HGCP).

Items 1-6 in the bio data of church leaders were and results on leaders interviewed are presented in Table 7 by code of leader, years of leadership, gender, type of theological training, church name and period of existence of the sanctuary, were summarised in rank order and presented in Table 7 (Appendix IV). Results show that the two arch-bishops, five bishops and six pastors reported that they had been trained in *gaarū* totalled 72% of sampled church leadership that gave data. One main implication of this majority of long-serving and theologically seasoned clergy is that they were trainers of *Akūrinū* lived theology.

The variable mainly moderated the coefficient of relationship between understandings of God and paranormal experiences (objective 3). Like other two moderating variables of culture, type of theological training moderated other coefficients in objectives 1-3 but with the highest moderating effect on objective three. Whether theological training took place in *gaarū* or mentorship by spiritual leaders of denomination, see Table 7 for details.



Literature reviewed suggested that Akūrinū lived theology was primarily influenced by their leaders in each congregation. Results obtained from leaders on training and duration in each congregation were fairly indicative of theology of *Akūrinū* believers in respective congregations and duration of *Akūrinū* believers' stay in one congregation suggested an association between leaders' theology and that of *Akūrinū* believers and homogeneity of theology in that congregation. (Macharia 2012).

Macharia (2012) reports from archbishops, bishops and pastors agreed that the purpose of *gaarū* training to preserve and transmit Akūrinū doctrine, faith and practices as Akūrinū school of theology. The practice was called Akūrinū tradition. This finding informs how Contextualization of Akūrinū lived theology was inculcated into *Akūrinū* believers for application in lifestyle as contextual theology. Duration of church leaders in the same congregation suggested a likelihood of longest serving clergy influencing contextual theology as a trainer of younger pastors, other leaders and believers they had raised by virtue of age, seniority, experience, respect and trust earned, among other factors. The implication of this observation is that any effort to change *Akūrinū* lived theology from outside would therefore be fought by leaders and members, including introduction of selected principles of hermeneutics. This finding helps to explain why the results of a unit change in any variable of culture indicated that culture was relevant to contextual theology. This is a challenge to the four assumptions stated for this study.

Two emergent theological implications were: First, intrinsic variety of theologies in the respondents could not be measured, yet they acted upon predictor variables as moderating variables might have accounted for low or high score in the inferential data obtained in each objective. Unified church leadership structure was lacking, social belonging was strong among Akūrinū groups and external leadership was non-existent. GeCACA (2016) expressed concern of doctrinal inconsistency as one of problems

GeCACA was formed in 2015 to address (GeCACA proposed constitution, Appendix V). Heskett (2011) has identified eight challenges to cultural effectiveness as inconsistent leadership behaviour, pride, rapid growth, slow growth, nonorganic growth, and failure to maintain feeling of social belonging, leadership that is external to group life, ineffective measurement and action. This divergence in theological tenets was a weakness in the study in that hypotheses reflected conclusions based on decision-making statistics, which could not capture true reflection of the variability of contextual theology. Textual analysis provided a more realistic picture of the nature of Akūrinū lived theology.

Second, corroboration of the findings with findings in literature reviewed in AIC churches was strong evidence that Akūrinū churches were part of AIC. Findings validated the topic as supported by reflection of some features of evaluative models of Contextualization, namely anthropological (evolution), praxis (practice), translation (truth), synthetic (multiple sources) and transcendental (God as unique source of truth) as discussed by Bevans (2010). Macharia (2012) notes, *Akūrinū* believers emerged as an exclusive group of prophetic and Spirit-dependent to liberate Kenya from the Western coloniser. This historical background helps to explain why their Contextualization strategies were reactionary. On a positive note, *Akūrinū* prophets (Arathi) called upon their Kikuyu people to repent so that God would hear their prayer and liberate Kenya. Hiebert's critical Realism (Moreau, 2012 and Table 1) who contends that true reality exists and only God who knows reality in its complete sense. Whether purely biblical or mixed with cultural realities, findings provided strong evidence that Hiebert's model explained *Akūrinū* lived theology than Kraft's model that denies exclusive authority of God's propositional truth in the scriptures as complete and objective truth. However, the

nature of Contextualization of Akūrinū lived theology was, literature supported that Akūrinū were typical AICs. Indirectly, results were valid and the topic was supported.

To assess if the moderating variable culture influences the relationship between the understanding of God and paranormal experiences, the hierarchical logistic binary regression model was used. Results were presented in Table 67.

**Table 67**

*Analysis of Variance for the Moderating Variable on Paranormal*

		Variables in the Equation					
		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1 <sup>a</sup>	paranormal	-	.205	40.928	1	.000	.269
		1.313					
	cultureobj3	-.170	.156	1.197	1	.274	.843
	Constant	8.272	1.220	45.982	1	.000	3914.700

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: paranormal, culture.

Results showed that the predictive probability that a unit change in paranormal experiences was associated with biblical understandings of God was 0.269 odds ratio. Moderating effect of culture on paranormal experiences was  $0.269 - 0.259 = 0.01$  at p-value less than 0.05 positive. Urban culture enhanced the use of paranormal experiences implying that any Akūrinū believer coming from the rural area into the urban was likely to use paranormal more and understand God less with significant difference of 0.574 at Wald chi square = 40.928,  $\leq 0.000$  with a p-value of 0.274 which was more than  $p = 0.05$  level and therefore statistically insignificant. This means that there was sufficient evidence that an increase in the use of paranormal experiences was associated with culture, not understandings of God. This is the only objective in which variables had a large positive influence. The results of the study also indicate that the indirect relationship between the moderating variables of culture with the paranormal

experiences was not significantly different, Wald chi square = 1.197,  $P > 0.274$  which is greater than  $p=0.05$  level results were due to chance factors.

Culture had positive effect on use of paranormal experiences but negative effects on understanding of God. Results indicated that culture was not statistically significant which meant that results could not be generalized to wider Akūrinū population since this condition meant that Akūrinū believers were negatively influenced by variables of culture in different ways. The objective was achieved. Moderating effect of culture was the main new knowledge in this study. Without unique dynamics of urban culture, it was possible that dependent variables would have produced similar results in studies done elsewhere with Akūrinū believers or similar religious groups around the world, *ceteris paribus* (with assumption that changes among Akūrinū believers are non-universal though taken to be non-influential on the beyond selected variables (Schurz, 2016).

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter summarises the findings of the study, conclusions arrived at, and recommendations. The study investigated relationship between selected principles of biblical hermeneutics and contextual theology in African Instituted Churches: a case of *Akūrinū* believers in Nairobi County, Kenya. Findings are presented under the summary of findings. Based on these findings, conclusions were drawn and recommendations were made. The chapter proposes areas for further research.

#### 5.2 Summary of the Major Findings

##### 5.2.1 Demographic Characteristics

Demographic characteristics provided results relevant to the study. Church leaders identified multiple meanings of theology of dressing, different ways of fulfilling biblical mission and different roles of paranormal experiences among *Akūrinū* believers. Literature was generally in agreement with findings. Results of the study displayed characteristics typical of hermeneutics of AICs. Notably, use of four categories of hermeneutics, namely, assigning spiritual meanings (allegorical), plain sense, holiness in life (moral) and subjective comparisons with African culture (analogical sense). Although there was no consensus among *Akūrinū* believers on some details of doctrines, faith and practices, there was consensus that the Bible is the word of God and God reveals truth through African prophets who should contextualise their theology in the African context. Emphasis on selected spiritual experiences informed by selected scriptures, among other non-biblical sources.

### **5.2.2 To Assess the Relationship between Biblical Genre and Theology of Dressing Among Akūrinū Believers**

In objective one, the findings based on the qualitative and quantitative data revealed that there was a predictive probability of 0.256 odds ratio, meaning that for every unit change in theology of dressing, only 25.6% was associated with changes in biblical genre. Moderating effect of culture dropped odds ratio from 0.256 to 0.250, a drop of 0.006 or 0.06% as a negative association between culture and contextual theology.

### **5.2.3 To Explore the Relationship between Biblical Context and Fulfilment of Biblical Mission Among Akūrinū Believers**

In objective two, relationship between biblical context and fulfilment of biblical mission among *Akūrinū* believers, the study established that culture moderated predictive probability a unit change in fulfilment of biblical mission due to odds ratio of 0.245 to 0.235, a negative moderation of 0.010 odds ratio or 1% drop in odds ratio. Findings indicated that God's leadership attributed to the Holy Spirit dominated believers and church leaders. Other ways of leadership included dreams and visions, prophecy, observing needs of the community, personal conviction, affirmation by friends and leaders and church activities such as prayer meetings. Texts cited as biblical and theological basis were believed to have been personally handed by God to the *Akūrinū* founding prophets and this was understood as God's revelation of *Akūrinū* identity and biblical mission. Selective use of scriptures was done by God, contrary to Deut. 8:3.

### **5.2.4 To Examine the Relationship between Akūrinū Believers' Understandings of God and their use of Paranormal Experiences**

In objective three, findings showed that reliance on paranormal experiences was in the following order. Dreams (84.9%), prophecy scored (78.3%) and visions (74.6 %). Use

of multiple methods of interpretation of dreams, visions and prophecy such as allegorising dream pictures, following subjective promptings of the Holy Spirit and interpretation guidelines in social media. Use of these multiple means of interpreting paranormal suggested that there was an open room for a wide range of meanings which resulted in variety contextual theologies based on similar paranormal experiences. God was understood by *Akūrinū* believers as one who spoke them predominantly in dreams, visions and prophecy through inter-subjective hermeneutics. The results indicated that a unit increase in use of paranormal experiences was associated with predictive probability of 0.259 odds ratio on punderstandings of God. Moderating effect of culture on paranormal experiences was  $0.269-0.259=0.010$  at p-value less than 0.05. Culture positively moderated the understanding of God positively by 0.05%.

### 5.3 Conclusion

Results from demographic characteristics led this study to conclude the following:

First, dynamics of gender differences in education level among *Akūrinū* believers and leaders who participated in the study and there were statistically significant ( $\chi^2=151.7$ ,  $P\leq 0.0001$ , Table 10). The implication was that similar results would have been obtained if this study was done among *Akūrinū* population in the sampling frame. The study concluded that, without use of adaptive sampling, education level would have moderated gender balance negatively and lower validity of results. Second, results indicated that majority of respondents were trained in gaarū (32.45% female & 45.03% male,  $\chi^2=236.3$ ,  $P\leq 0.001$ ) comprising of 77.48%, Table 11). The implication was that 77.48% (234 *Akūrinū* believers) reflected the most reliable theology typical of *Akūrinū lived theology* in Nairobi County.

Third, the results in Tables 6 & 13 demonstrate theological variance among *Akūrinū* congregations, showing agreement with problem stated in this study (GeCACA)

constitution and by-laws (2016, p. 1, Appendix VI) was the need for restoration of “one Church, one calling, and one faith: united in purpose and to nurture a common understanding of the *Akūrinū* faith and biblical mission...”.

Fourth, based on results in Tables 51-54, quoted data and themes showed strong evidence that moderating effect of culture worked more against than for *Akūrinū* faith, implying that, regardless of general declining moral quality, chances of survival of *Akūrinū* church existed. Diffusion of innovations theory explained the phenomena more than divine command theory did. This was new knowledge in the world of research in that chances of variables of culture moderating the relationship between Independent and dependent variables in another research were non-existent, given unique personal characteristics, group dynamics and dynamics of city culture.

First, on the basis of findings on objective one, the study concluded that Contextualization of dressing was consistent with *Akūrinū* faith which they considered to be biblical. This observation was supported by low predictive probability of change in odds ratio of 0.256 on theology of dressing for every one-unit change in correct interpretation of biblical texts according to writing style (biblical genre). The results could be generalised among *Akūrinū* population within the sampling frame upto 25.6%, meaning that 74.4% of contextual theology was associated with subjective factors.

Second, based on qualitative data, moderating effect of culture on theology of dressing from qualitative data was negative and positive (Tables 51-52). The positive comments in the tables motivated committed *Akūrinū* believers and leaders to continue as conservative *Akūrinū* church or *Akūrinū* Orthodox Church vis-avis emerging liberal *Akūrinū* church in Nairobi County. Results from this demographic uniqueness made a



unique contribution in world of research and therefore making the study have a global value addition in the world of research.

Third, based on inferential statistics, culture variables reduced predictive probability of biblical genre on theology by 0.006 (0.06%). This change was statistically insignificant, implying that the increased challenge to biblical Contextualization of dressing was limited to sampled *Akūrinū* believers in Nairobi County. This was new knowledge that this study added to the world of research.

First, the results indicated low predictive probability of change in odds ratio of 0.245 on fulfilment of biblical mission was associated with change in correct interpretation of biblical texts according to what God meant to original audience in the biblical context. This phenomenon could be found among *Akūrinū* believers elsewhere in Kenya. However, variables of culture decreased the predictive probability of biblical context on fulfilment of biblical mission by 0.010. Second, females contextualised fulfilment of biblical mission differently from men (Chi-square=236.3,  $P \leq 0.0001$ , Table 13).

Third, based on the verbal texts from interviewed leaders, they were committed to use of biblical texts to justify their perceived God-given biblical mission. However, accurate and objective methods of getting God's truth from the cited texts were lacking. Fourth, variables of culture, namely, level of education, gender, urban life and type of theological training moderated fulfilment of biblical mission negatively among *Akūrinū* believers in Nairobi County. Fourth, non-biblical ways of knowing God's specific mission dominated (90%) over biblical ones (10%).

First, the findings supported the conclusion that paranormal (dreams, visions and prophecy) experienced by *Akūrinū* believers and leaders were all attributed to God as the source, and to be God's primary method to communicate to *Akūrinū* believers. Their

understanding of God as a communicator qualified this understanding to be predictor variable. Qualitative findings indicated high association between understanding of God and paranormal experiences compared with hypothesis test results which had a predictive probability of change in odds ratio of 0.259. on the paranormal experiences. There was a weak association between biblical genre and theology of dressing since findings were statistically significant.

Second, hypotheses in objectives 1-3 were statistically significant with probabilities of odds ratios of 0.256, 0.245 and 0.259 as predictors of change associated with a unit change in variables of contextual theology before moderation by culture. Culture had a negative association with contextual theology from a biblical perspective. Findings indicated multiple ways of determining theology of dressing, knowing specific biblical mission and using prophecy, dreams and visions in biblical ways by *Akūrinū* believers and leaders reflected theological variance. Evidence was contradictions and misinterpretations of God's communication in the biblical texts, which informed contextual theology. Dominant texts were Zech. 3:4-5, Exo. 29:6-9, Dan. 3:21, Ezek. 17:23 and Isa.61:1-3.

Third, based on findings on variables studied, the study concluded that challenges *Akūrinū* believers encountered in biblical hermeneutics and biblical contextualization of their theology were typical of other AICs.

## **5.4 Recommendation**

### **5.4.1 Policy Recommendation**

First, policy makers in *Akūrinū* church needed to add teaching of biblical principles of hermeneutics as one of the main measures towards realizing common doctrine, faith and practice through biblical contextualization of their theology. The

seven strategic pillars in p.5 of the General Conference of *Akūrinū* churches (GeCACA, 2017) raises concern that contextualization of *Akūrinū* lived theology was omitted. The eighteen (18) functions and objectives of GeCACA (2016) lack theological function at national leadership level. The implications are that theological tasks emergent in this study will continue unless this national leadership undertakes biblically sound theological tasks as guided by biblical principles of hermeneutics so that objectives, functions and pillars will be anchored on God's unchanging truth for unity of doctrine, faith and practice. The church leadership need include theological tasks in GeCACA strategic vision (2017).

Second, one fact that emerged from results of this study is that real or perceived truth results in belief system, which further informs morality of lifestyles at personal and societal levels. This fact is useful for policy makers at all levels of social strata in Kenya as a basis for considering God's truth in the Bible as a mitigation strategy against moral evil plaguing Kenyan society in the 21st century by impairing morality of human capital in spirit, soul and body.

Third, results suggest that use of Kikuyu language in sermon delivery and in the rest of liturgy was due to illiteracy among believers. It might have been an expression of ethnicity of the founders of the religion (Njeri, 1984). Since believers used Kiswahili and English in the market place, use of Kiswahili or English in their liturgies would have given an opportunity to interested people in other tribes to join *Akūrinū* faith in urban, a step towards making *Akūrinū* congregations a multi-ethnic church.

First, in all *Akūrinū* congregations sampled, females were more than males in attendance, yet in Table 4, the males are more than females because there were more females with lower level of education than men (Table 7) in any random sample. Leaders needed to

encourage women to go to school and organise seminars for adult education for women who could not fit formal schooling by revising their GeCACA constitution to incorporate practical ways to mitigate problems raised in literature and in the empirical findings, such as backsliding of more females than males with higher levels of education (Appendix V, GeCACA).

Second, since the findings justified the need for church leaders to effectively teach and apply objective principles of interpreting Bible, including biblical context, genre, theological, scripture interprets scripture and unity principle, among others, were instrumental in biblical contextualization. Implementation of this recommendation by *Akūrinū* leaders would be more effective if *Akūrinū* leaders attend Non-*Akūrinū* biblically- sound Bible schools to be taught biblical hermeneutics so that they would teach followers to interpret the Bible correctly.

Third, *Akūrinū* leaders need to be taught the four-task loop of ongoing interpretation that enables theology to be practical, situations identified being studied to know why they are happening, evaluated against biblical truth to see God's standard and applied to see the changes achieved in the new situations.

Fourth, findings indicated that Kikuyu was used in urban congregations. According to grammar principle of interpretation, lack of user-friendly language for non-Kikuyus made it difficult for *Akūrinū* lived theology to be biblically contextualised among other tribes. *Akūrinū* leaders needed to use Kiswahili and English, especially in the *Akūrinū* congregations in Nairobi county. Findings indicated that use of Kiswahili and English had enabled *Akūrinū* leaders to plant congregations in Mombasa.

#### **5.4.2 Recommendation for Further Research**

Areas for further research based on respondents' responses were:

- i. To evaluate *Akūrinū* songs as *Akūrinū* lived theology in relation to biblical doctrine in Muranga County, Kenya.
- ii. Examine the relationship between gender-based hermeneutics and gender-based *Akūrinū* lived theology of dressing in Kenya.
- iii. Find out the implications of dominant use of Kikuyu language in *Akūrinū* congregations on their biblical mandate to make disciples.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix I: General Letter to the Respondents

I am a Ph.D student at Kabarak University. My intention is to collect information among you on the *Relationship between Selected Principles of Biblical Hermeneutics and Contextual Theology in African Instituted Churches: A Case of Akĩrinũ believers in Nairobi County, Kenya*. The research will be conducted according to legal and ethical standards including your voluntary participation, my observation of confidentiality, and anonymity during and after the research process. The findings will be available to respondents on request. Kindly support this effort by completing every item as accurately as possible and with adequate content. Feel free to participate at will. By completing research tools provided, you indicate that you have volunteered to participate in this study.

Thank you.

Simon Nderitu

**Appendix II:** Questionnaire for Akūrinū believers

**Bio Data**

Please tick [√] the appropriate box or space provided.

1. Gender.

Male

Female

2. Name of my church-----Sub-County-----

3. My highest level of education is

Class 8

Form 4

Diploma

Degree

Masters

Doctorate

4. I have been taught Akūrinū doctrines in *gaarū* meetings.

Yes

No

5. I have been a member of my current church for

Less than 2 years

2 to 5 years

6 to 10 years

10 to 15 years

Over 15 years

6. Indicate with a tick [√] what is true for you.

Men's leader

Women leader

Main worship leader

Youth leader (chair/ other)

Main Sunday school leader

Church member with no leadership

**Objective One. The Relationship between Biblical Genre and Theology of Dressing**

Kindly select the right answer according to you by ticking --- √ --.

1. I get the meaning of my dressing from the: (tick --- √ --only).

Bible only

A number of sources

2. State a chapter in the Bible that teaches each of the following dress codes.

i. Turban-----

ii. White robes-----

iii. Garments of priest.....

3. Prophets give me correct understanding of the meanings of my dressing through dreams, visions and prophetic message. Indicate correct answer with a tick --- √ --

Yes

No

4. In order of importance, three main ways of knowing how to dress as taught by my church are:

i. -----

ii. -----

iii. -----

5. Indicate what is true or false about you about the correct interpretation of the Bible

S/N	Institutedvariables (IV)	True	False
1	The Bible is my only source of my knowledge on how to interpret prophetic writings and apply to my dressing		
2	I consider the style in which the Bible passage was written, for example, prophetic writings, so that I can interpret as prophetic message		
3	I interpret a Bible passage by looking at style of writing, such as prophetic writing about how I should dress		
4	In every writing style, the subject being discussed gives me spiritual meaning of the Bible text about purpose of dressing		

6. Indicate what is true or false about you about the correct interpretation of the Bible

S/N	Dependent Variables (DV)	True	False
1	The teachings of my leaders on dressing agree with what the Bible teaches		
2	My dressing helps me to communicate with God		
3	The Holy Spirit teaches me on dressing through the prayer leader		
4	I know the meaning of Bible prophecy by assigning meaning to symbols shown to me		

**Objective Two: Relationship between Biblical Context and Fulfilment of Biblical mission among *Akūrinū* believers.**

Indicate your appropriate answer with a tick (√)

1. To help me to interpret what the Bible teaches about my service to God, our church leaders;

i. Interpret the Bible for us.

Yes

No

ii. Teach us standard ways of interpreting the Bible by examples of how they do it”.

Yes

No

2. Indicate chapters in the Bible which help you to know your specific area of God’s call to biblical mission.....

3. Prophets who specify my ministry in our church use the Bible accurately.

True

False

4. Three ways that guide leaders to know the specific ministry God has given me are:

i. ....

ii. ....

iii. ....

5. To me, wearing turban indicates God has called me to a special service.

Yes

No



6. Indicate what is true to you in the statements of your Christian practice

S/N	Instituted Variable (IV)	True	False
1	My ministry is to pray for the country		
2	My ministry is to serve God through singing		
3	My ministry is to preach Christ.		
4	I receive knowledge of God's truth for change to new ministry and act immediately		

7. Indicate what is true to you in the statements of your Christian practice

S/N	Dependent Variable (DV)	True	False
1	I glorify God as an extension of God's holy Israel in Kenya		
2	I know my ministry through needs of my community		
3	The Holy Spirit spoke to founders of my church on my main biblical mission as a believer.		
4	I receive knowledge of God's truth for change to new ministry and wait to see how others act before I act		

**Objective three: The Relationship between Understandings of God and Paranormal Religious Experiences (prophecy, dreams and visions) among *Akūrinū* believers**

Instructions: Indicate your correct answer with a tick (✓).

1. I pray and the Holy Spirit speaks to me directly in a vision or dream on what to do.

Every day

At least once a week

2. Among prophecy, dreams and visions as a means of getting messages from God in your church on matters of life, indicate with a tick (✓) how often God uses each means in your gatherings.

i. Prophecy:

Most frequent

Frequent

Less frequent

Never used

ii. Visions:

Most frequent

Frequent

Less frequent

Never used

iii. Dreams

Most frequent

Frequent

Less frequent

Never used

3. The top three aspects of life in which our church prophets and prophetesses guide me are:

i. -----

ii. -----

iii. -----

4. To me, wearing turban or head scarf indicates God has called me to a special service

Yes

No

If yes, indicate the special service. -----

5. Using T/F options, indicate the truth about your experiences of dreams, visions and prophecy as means God uses to communicate to you

S/N	Instituted Variable	True	False
1	I read the Bible as God's most reliable means of knowing who God is		
2	The Holy Spirit helps me to understand God		
3	I know God through verses God gave to first Akūrinū prophets		

6. Using T/F options, indicate the truth about your experiences in the use of dreams, visions, prophecy as God’s means of communication to you (DV)

S/N	Dependent Variable	True	False
1	God reveals Himself to me directly through dreams and visions		
2	I know my specific service through the needs in my family or church community or nation		
3	God speaks to our church only through dreams, visions and prophecy		

**Moderating Effect of Culture on the Relationship among Theology of Dressing, Fulfilment of Biblical mission and Paranormal Experiences and among *Akūrinū* believers**

1. My way of dressing tells others about my moral purity as a youth or a married person. Give your personal example.....

2. How I dress is the most effective way of telling others that I am committed to God.

True

False

3. State any three aspects of life which non-Akūrinū s’ negative remarks about religion of *Akūrinū* believers. Give an example you know, if any.

i.....

ii.....

iii.....

.

4. State any three aspects of life which non-Akūrinū s express appreciation about religion of *Akūrinū* believers.

Give an example you know, if any. ....

5. Select the statement that fits your state on how much each factor influences your choice of the way you dress, fulfil your ministry or use dreams, prophecy and visions

<b>S/N</b>	<b>Moderating Variables</b>	<b>True</b>	<b>False</b>
1	My gender is a challenge to my dress code		
2	City fashions are weakening godly meanings of my dressing		
3	Training by my leaders helps me to resist secular dressing		
4	My level of education helps to serve God better		
5	Whenever church leaders introduce new ways of living my faith, I act on it		
6	City life makes it difficult for me to practice my faith		
7	My understanding of God based on dreams, visions and prophecy is being weakened by city life		
8	My understanding of God is being improved by non-Akūrinū Christians		
9	My understanding of God is improved by my education		

**Appendix III:** Interview Guide for top Clergy, Selected Youth Leaders and Deacon

Participants' Relevant Information, (Bio Data)

**Part A: Bio Data**

1. My leadership position in the church is -----for a period of -----
2. The name of the church I am serving now is-----
3. My gender is -----M-----F-----
4. I have been taught Akūrinū doctrines in gaarū--, by personal mentor--both---other---
5. My highest level of education is: Class 8  Form 4  College  University

1. **Objective One** State three reasons why *Akūrinū* believers wear different colours as our dress codes, such as white, pink, red, sky blue turbans and kanju (robe).
2. State any three chapters or verses in the Bible in which God tells *Akūrinū* believers how to dress.

**Objective Two**

1. State three Bible verses which help us to know Akūrinū biblical mission as given by God.
2. State ways through which *Akūrinū* believers know specific area of ministry (service) God has called us to.

**Objective Three**

1. Two ways *Akūrinū* believers use to interpret dreams, visions and prophecy in your congregation.
2. Three or more Bible verses which help us to know that it is God speaking to us through dreams, prophecy or visions.

**Objective Four**

7. Changes in your level of education, type of *Akūrinū* training, gender and urban life are influencing your way of dressing, our fulfilment of *Akūrinū* biblical mission and our use of dreams, visions and prophecy. Kindly mention which case is more negatively or positively affected the other, meaning both negative and influence of culture exists.
8. State any three aspects of life which non-Akūrinū s express appreciation about religion of *Akūrinū* believers. Give an example you know, if any.

## **Appendix IV: GeCACA Proposed Constitution (GeCACA, 2016)**

### General Conference of Akūrinū churches Assembly (GECACA, 2016), Constitution and By-Laws

As proposed and adopted by  
The national steering committee,

#### **1. Preamble**

We the members of the *Akūrinū* community of Churches, Honouring the Will of God in our Special Calling, Acknowledging His Supremacy, appreciating our special calling, the Diversity and the uniqueness in our Calling, exercising our Historical role of interceding for our nation and Realizing that our diversity and unique calling merits an appropriately constituted National body and whereas in the period between 1970 and 2010, efforts have been made to unite member churches within the *Akūrinū* faith.

Honouring and respecting those who have committed them in search for unity, affirm that generally an organization with a wider scope and that embraces all aspects of life and membership, and that gives full representation of the *Akūrinū* churches, Adopt, Enact and Give this Constitution to ourselves, as the General Assembly of General Conference of *Akūrinū* community Churches Assembly and to our future generations.

#### **1.1 Preliminary**

1.1.1. This Constitution shall be cited as General Conference of Akūrinū churches Assembly (GeCACCA) Constitution and shall come into operation on such a day as is approved by the General Assembly.

#### **1.1.2. In this Constitution, unless the context otherwise requires,**

‘General Conference’ means the Umbrella body of *Akūrinū* community of Churches i.e. The General Conference of *Akūrinū* community Churches Assembly also abbreviated as ‘GeCACA’. ‘Registrar’ means the registrar of Societies.

‘Member’ means any church, association and organization duly registered and is registered as a member of GeCACCA. ‘Member of General Assembly’ is any delegate representing a member church/organization of General Conference.

## **2.0 Identity**

### **2.1 Name & Establishment.**

There is hereby established the General Conference of Akūrinū churches Assembly (GeCACA) (hereinafter referred to as the ‘General Conference’ in this Constitution).

The General Conference is a family of Christian communion and an umbrella body comprising of duly registered churches and organizations that profess and advance the *Akūrinū* faith, beliefs and doctrines. It is a society of members united in faith, calling and purpose. This Constitution shall be the Supreme organ of the General Conference.

### **2.2 Registered Office.**

The General Conference’s Head Office will be determined and established by the National Executive Council. (NEC).

## **3.0 Vision**

One Church, One Calling, and One Faith: United in purpose and biblical mission.

## **4.0 Biblical mission**

- i. Promote and Facilitate Unity, Fellowship and Partnership within the *Akūrinū* community and the body of Christ.
- ii. Promote and Enhance consultations and joint action by members in all actions that bear upon our faith and witness, be it doctrinal, liturgical or administrative.
- iii. Engage in capacity building to enhance members undertake their biblical mission.
- iv. Nurture a common understanding of the *Akūrinū* faith and biblical mission.
- v. Promote the Historical Role as pertains our Special Calling.

## **5.0 Objectives & Functions**

- i. To engage in and provide quality, fair and accountable leadership to the *Akūrinū* community of believers.
- ii. To promote Unity and co-operation among churches within the *Akūrinū* community. iii. To establish, enhance and entrench mechanisms and platforms aimed at enhancing unity, co-operation and enriching the *Akūrinū* faith.
- iii. Capacity building to enhance advancement of our faith as entrenched and founded in the Holy Scriptures.
- iv. Facilitate acquisition of necessary resources by members for efficient undertaking of our biblical mission and historical role.
- v. Promote services that are holistic, relevant and self- sustaining.

- vi. Promote the *Akūrinū* community's corporate image, identity and growth for faithful and effective stewardship of corporate Vision, biblical mission, heritage and sustainability.
- vii. Facilitate members for effective expression of the *Akūrinū* faith and the Christian doctrines, over all aspects of human life.
- viii. Bring together representatives of the General Conference membership and other interested parties for prayer, periodical consultations and reflections on matters that pertain to our Faith, Calling spiritual and social life.
- ix. To establish mechanisms and systems that will strengthen the capacity of the General Conference's membership to promote their spiritual and institutional growth.
- x. Provide a link between membership, the people, the *Akūrinū* community and the government of Kenya and other bodies in matters of common concern.
- xi. Facilitate the breaking of barriers between membership, the people of Kenya and nurture a united human race living in peace, justice, Love and fear of the Lord.
- xii. To exercise and establish counseling, mediation and reconciliation roles and mechanism within and between memberships interested groups or persons.
- xiii. To invest, acquire and dispose off by purchase, donation, lease, exchange or by any other legal means movable and immovable properties for use in facilitating the achievement of the objectives of the General Conference.
- xiv. Promote sound internal governance and relationships with third parties as is consistent with the *Akūrinū* faith and Christian principles.
- xv. To seek and obtain legal advice and any other assistance on any matters affecting the *Akūrinū* faith.
- xvi. To participate with other organizations, in conferences, local or international.
- xvii. To undertake any other function that is right in the judgment of the General Assembly.

## **6.0 Membership**

### **6.1 Basis of Membership**

The General Conference recognizes that each church and organization within the *Akūrinū* community has its own basis or order and leadership; nevertheless all members of the General Conference shall accept any general rules and regulations as may be set out in this constitution by the General Assembly.



In matters of faith and doctrine the General Conference shall be governed by the membership criteria that shall be spelt out by the General Assembly.

**6.2. Membership Committee.**

There shall be a Membership Committee constituted by the National Governing Council as set out in the by-laws and that shall concern itself purely with matters of membership criteria, basis, applications and approval.

The committee shall also educate members on their rights and obligations and ensure members meet their obligations.

**6.3. Classes of Membership.** Membership of corporate bodies into the General Conference may be in either one of the following classes;

**i. Full Membership.**

Open to all churches that profess the *Akūrinū* faith and are duly constituted in Kenya and that pass membership criteria as shall be set out by the National Executive Council.

**Appendix V: University Letter for Data Collection**

**KABARAK**



**UNIVERSITY**

Private Bag - 20157  
KABARAK, KENYA  
<http://kabarak.ac.ke/institute-postgraduate-studies/>

Tel: 0773 265 999  
E-mail: [directorpostgraduate@kabarak.ac.ke](mailto:directorpostgraduate@kabarak.ac.ke)

**BOARD OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES**

5<sup>th</sup> April, 2019

The Director General  
National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation (NACOSTI)  
P.O. Box 30623 – 00100  
NAIROBI

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE: SIMON NDERITU WAMBUGU- REG. NO. GDT/M/1185/09/15**

The above named is a Doctor of Philosophy student at Kabarak University in the School of Education. He is carrying out research entitled “**Relationship between Selected Principles of Biblical Hermeneutics and Contextual Theology in African Independent Churches: A Case of Akorino Believers in Nairobi County, Kenya**”. He has defended his proposal and has been authorized to proceed with field research.

The information obtained in the course of this research will be used for academic purposes only and will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Please provide him with a research permit to enable him to undertake his research.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

**Dr. Betty Tikoko**  
**DIRECTOR - (POSTGRADUATE STUDIES)**



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**Kabarak University Moral Code**

*As members of Kabarak University family, we purpose at all times and in all places, to set apart in one's heart, Jesus as Lord. (1 Peter 3:15)*



Kabarak University is ISO 9001:2015 Certified

## Appendix VI: NACOSTI Research Authorization Letter



### NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Telephone: +254-20-2213471,  
2241349, 3310571, 2219420  
Fax: +254-20-318245, 318249  
Email: dg@nacosti.go.ke  
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke  
When replying please quote

NACOSTI, Upper Kabete  
Off Waiyaki Way  
P.O. Box 30623-00100  
NAIROBI-KENYA

Ref. No. **NACOSTI/P/19/19966/29553**

Date: **25<sup>th</sup> April, 2019**

Simon Nderitu Wambugu  
Kabarak University  
Private Bag - 20157  
**KABARAK.**

#### **RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION**

Following your application for authority to carry out research on "*Relationship between selected principles of biblical hermeneutics and contextual theology in African Independent Churches: A case of Akurinu Believers in Nairobi County, Kenya*" I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Nairobi County** for the period ending **23<sup>rd</sup> April, 2020**.

You are advised to report to **the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Nairobi County** before embarking on the research project.

Kindly note that, as an applicant who has been licensed under the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 to conduct research in Kenya, you shall deposit a **copy** of the final research report to the Commission within **one year** of completion. The soft copy of the same should be submitted through the Online Research Information System.

**GODFREY P. KALERWA MSc., MBA, MKIM**  
**FOR: DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO**

Copy to:

The County Commissioner  
Nairobi County.

COUNTY COMMISSIONER  
NAIROBI COUNTY  
P. O. Box 30124-00100, NBI  
TEL: 311666

25/04/2019

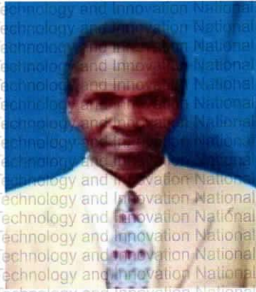
The County Director of Education  
Nairobi County.

*National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation is ISO9001:2008 Certified*



## Appendix VII: NACOSTI Research Permit



**THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:** Permit No: **NACOSTI/P/19/19966/29553**  
**MR. SIMON NDERITU WAMBUGU** Date Of Issue : **25th April, 2019**  
of **KABARAK UNIVERSITY , 0-200** Fee Received : **Ksh 2000**  
**NAIROBI, has been permitted to conduct**  
**research in Nairobi County**  
**on the topic: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN**  
**SELECTED PRINCIPLES OF BIBLICAL**  
**HERMENEUTICS AND CONTEXTUAL**  
**THEOLOGY IN AFRICAN INDEPENDENT**  
**THEOLOGY: A CASE OF AKURINU**  
**BELIEVERS IN NAIROBI COUNTY, KENYA**  
**for the period ending:**  
**23rd April, 2020**

  
**Applicant's Signature** **Director General**  
**National Commission for Science,**  
**Technology & Innovation**

**THE SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION ACT, 2013**  
The Grant of Research Licenses is guided by the Science, Technology and Innovation (Research Licensing) Regulations, 2014.

**CONDITIONS**

1. The License is valid for the proposed research, location and specified period.
2. The License and any rights thereunder are non-transferable.
3. The Licensee shall inform the County Governor before commencement of the research.
4. Excavation, filming and collection of specimens are subject to further necessary clearance from relevant Government Agencies.
5. The License does not give authority to transfer research materials.
6. NACOSTI may monitor and evaluate the licensed research project.
7. The Licensee shall submit one hard copy and upload a soft copy of their final report within one year of completion of the research.
8. NACOSTI reserves the right to modify the conditions of the License including cancellation without prior notice.

  
**REPUBLIC OF KENYA**  
  
**National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation**  
**RESEARCH LICENSE**  
National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation  
P.O. Box 30623 - 00100, Nairobi, Kenya  
TEL: 020 400 7000, 0713 788787, 0735 404245  
Email: dg@nacosti.go.ke, registry@nacosti.go.ke  
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke  
Serial No. A **24276**  
**CONDITIONS: see back page**

**Appendix VIII: Ministry of Education Research Authorization Letter**



**Republic of Kenya  
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION  
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EARLY LEARNING & BASIC EDUCATION**

Telegrams: "SCHOOLING", Nairobi  
Telephone: Nairobi 020 2453699  
Email: [rcenairobi@gmail.com](mailto:rcenairobi@gmail.com)  
[cdenairobi@gmail.com](mailto:cdenairobi@gmail.com)

REGIONAL DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION  
NAIROBI REGION  
NYAYO HOUSE  
P.O. Box 74629 - 00200  
NAIROBI

When replying please quote

Ref: **RCE/NRB/GEN/1/VOL. 1**

DATE: **25<sup>th</sup> April, 2019**

Simon Nderitu Wambugu  
Kabarak University  
P O Box 14634-00800 Private Bag - 20157  
**KABARAK**

**RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION**

We are in receipt of a letter from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation regarding research authorization in Nairobi County on "**Relationship between selected principles of biblical hermeneutics and contextual theology in African Independent Churches: A case of Akurinu Believers in Nairobi County, Kenya**".

This office has no objection and authority is hereby granted for a period ending **23<sup>rd</sup> April, 2020** as indicated in the request letter.

Kindly inform the Sub County Director of Education of the Sub County you intend to visit.

  
  
**JAMES KIMOTHO  
FOR: REGIONAL DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION  
NAIROBI**

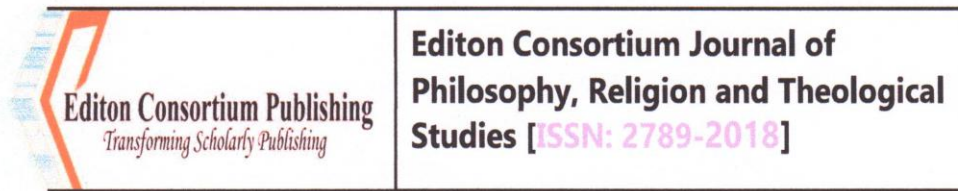
c.c

Director General/CEO  
National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation  
**NAIROBI**





## Appendix IX: List of Publications



Volume: 01 Issue: 01 | Nov-2021

**Received:** 10.09.2021; **Accepted** 13.09.2021; **Published:** 05.12.2021 at [www.editoncpublishing.org](http://www.editoncpublishing.org)

Nderitu, S., et al., Editon Cons. J. Philos Relig. Theol. Stud.–*Blind Peer Reviewed Journal*

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.51317/ecjprts.v1i1.298>

### Paranormal Experiences and Understanding of God for Innovative Community Development: Interrogating the Akurinu Believers in Kenya.

#### Author

Simon Nderitu <sup>(1)</sup>; Esther Kibor<sup>(2)</sup>; William Koros <sup>(3)</sup>

<sup>(1)(2)(3)</sup>Kabarak University, Kenya.

**Main author Email:** [nderitusimon1982@gmail.com](mailto:nderitusimon1982@gmail.com)

#### Abstract

The study's objective was to examine the relationship between Akurinu Believers' understandings of God and their use of paranormal experiences with an emphasis on innovative community development in Nairobi County, Kenya. The research was guided by Divine Command Theory and Diffusion of Innovations Theory. Descriptive and correlation designs were used. The study was conducted among 2618 Akurinu believers who formed Akurinu congregations registered with the General Conference of Akurinu Churches Assembly in Nairobi County. Data were analysed on Software Package for Social Sciences computer system to generate frequency distributions, and the Chi-square test was used on qualitative data to test agreement between variables. Wald Chi to test for predictive probability in quantitative data. A logistic binary regression model was used to test the hypothesis on quantitative data. Qualitative data were presented in frequency tables, and percentages and inferential data were presented in SPSS software tables. Based on  $\alpha=0.05$  level, the hypothesis is statistically significant with a predictive probability of odds ratio of 0.259 of change on the dependent variable. P-value was less than  $\alpha=0.05$ . The study concluded that sustainable innovations in Akurinu spirituality, education and economics existed. They were understanding God through the Bible and relying on the Holy Spirit. Although Akurinu believers and leaders claimed that they derived their understandings of God through paranormal experiences, the probability was less than 50 per cent (0.259 odds ratio). The study recommended that the Akurinu leaders use theological principles, here called understandings of God, to train Akurinu believers to understand God better.

**Key Terms:** Paranormal Experiences, Innovative Development, Akurinu Believers.

#### Article Citation (APA)

Nderitu, S., Kibor, E. & Koros, W. (2021). Paranormal Experiences and Understanding of God for Innovative Community Development: Interrogating the Akurinu Believers in Kenya. *Editon Cons. J. Philos Relig. Theol. Stud.*, 1(01), 82-91. <https://doi.org/10.51317/ecjprts.v1i1.298>

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## Relationship between Biblical Context and Fulfillment of Mission among Akurinu Believers in Nairobi County, Kenya.

Simon Nderitu Wambugu<sup>1</sup>, Dr Esther Kibor<sup>2</sup>, Dr William. Koros<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup>Kabarak University, Kenya.

Main author email: [nderitusimon1982@gmail.com](mailto:nderitusimon1982@gmail.com)

### Abstract

The intent of this study was to look into the relationship between biblical context and fulfillment of mission among the Akurinu believers in Nairobi County, Kenya. Two theories that guided the study were Divine Command Theory (DCT) and Diffusion of Innovations Theory (DIT). Descriptive research design under mixed methods research was adopted. Akurinu congregations registered with the General Conference of Akurinu Churches Assembly (GeCACA) in Nairobi County were sampled using simple random, proportionate and purposive techniques to obtain 336 Akurinu believers and 18 leaders respectively out of a population of 2,600 congregants. Structured and semi-structured questionnaires and interview guides were used to collect data. Validity and reliability were ensured through piloting and expert advice. Software Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 22.0, was used to generate multivariate linear regression models at  $\alpha=0.05$ . Frequency tables, themes and inferential statistics were used to present data. SPSS output with an  $r$ -value of 0.207 indicated that there was a weak positive relationship between biblical context and fulfillment of the mission. An alternative hypothesis was accepted. The findings were useful to Akurinu leaders, believers, researchers and policymakers among GeCACA national leadership towards biblical contextualisation of theology.

**Key Terms:** Biblical hermeneutics, contextual theology, contextualisation, diffusion, divine commands.

\*\*\*

#### How to cite this article in APA (6<sup>th</sup> Edition)

Nderitu, S.N., Kibor E., & Koros, W. (2019). Relationship between biblical context and fulfillment of mission among Akurinu believers in Nairobi County, Kenya. *Editon Cons. J. Arts., Humanit. S. Stud.*, 1(2), 142-149. <https://doi.org/10.51317/ecjahss.vii2.278>

\*\*\*



# Appendix X: Evidence of Conference Participation







Serial No:AIC 2021/92

## Kirinyaga University Certificate

This is to certify that **Dr. Simon Nderitu** from **Kabarak University**, Presented a paper titled: **Relationship between Biblical Context and Akurinu Mission with Emphasis on Poverty Alleviation** during the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Virtual International Conference under the theme "**Achieving Sustainable Development through Innovative Research and Global Collaborations**", held on **March 24-25, 2021** at **Kirinyaga University, Kenya.**

Deputy Vice Chancellor (ASA)

Vice Chancellor

Tel: +254 709 742 000/30, + 254 728 499 650  
P.O. Box: 143-10300 Kerugoya  
Email: info@kyu.ac.ke