

## **The Theory of Property In Kenya: The Case of The Emuhaya District In Vihiga County**

**Hezekiah Obwoye**

*Lecturer at Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology*

---

**ABSTRACT:** - Religious Institutions have made combined attempts towards answering both spiritual and physical cries of the underprivileged in Africa, and Kenya in particular. This has to some extent been attributed to the fact that religion is not lived in a void and that spiritual development and worldly progress are necessarily interconnected. However, documents of earlier studies have focused on the economic systems while underestimating the power and influence of religion in the eradication of poverty; thus, relegating religion to a matter of spiritual significance. It is evident that economic systems alone to date have been inadequate and the growth of poverty has not been reversed. Nevertheless, the role of religion in poverty eradication has not been adequately studied by researchers yet human spirit and determination are cornerstone for poverty alleviation and wealth creation. Over 65% of the people living in Emuhaya District live below the poverty line and are food poor. The overriding objective of this study was to assess the place of the church in social economic liberation in Emuhaya District of Western Kenya. This study was a cross-sectional research that sought to give an examining and descriptive scrutiny of the place of the Church in Kenya herein referred to as CK, in social economic liberation in Vihiga County - Kenya. The concepts of liberation theology and reconstruction provided the analytical framework for the study. It posited that a socio-political process represents a radical engagement for Christianity with the world, with the intent to represent human freedom and God's gratuitous activity in the questions and issues of the day.

---

### **I. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

The present social and economic situation of Africa in general and Kenya in particular appears to be characterized by poverty and suffering which form relatively high levels of material deprivation. Poverty is a major concern of the church, and countless poverty alleviation programs and campaigns have been developed over time, across the regions. Poverty is defined as having numerous manifestations and characteristics that include low and unreliable income, poor health, and low levels of education, insecurity, disempowerment and isolation from the mainstream of the economic development (Cavanaugh, 2008). These characteristics are also referred to as indicators of measuring poverty. The biblical word on the relation of the community of faith to poverty is clear and unambiguous because God identifies himself with the poor, so too the community of faith is called to special concern for these persons. Traditionally, many scholars, policy makers, and practitioners working broadly in programs aimed at poverty alleviation are in concord that development coincides with religious vision in viewing history as a process of salvation (Tarino, 2005; Bryant, 1999; Sinclair, 1980). Religions teach people to believe that happiness is either in the present or in the future and compels those who abide in it to act in a particular manner (*Ibid.*). In consequence religion performs the following role:

*Contributes to the advancement of knowledge and commitment. Such an influence is vital in fashioning values system. The spirit of commitment and creativity, as necessary components of wealth creation, arise from inside the person. Such convictions influence the material well being of individuals and communities. Economic prosperity cannot be achieved without taking into account the power of the human spirit and determination (Tarino, 2005:40).*

One's belief makes a difference in the way of organizing one's life and in the perception of the good. Beliefs allow certain conditions and thinking under which the desired values could be unfolded and thereby effect action. Beliefs structure relationship between people and affect the destiny of human life (*Ibid.*). Within a religious culture, one finds that the way of life, the behavior patterns, the whole meaning of existence is knit together by reference to God, to the deity – to the 'Supreme Being'. Consequently, religion and life are intimately connected, and the proper action and behavior is that which is pleasing to God and what is commanded by God.

In Kenya, the 2007 Human Development (HD) Survey showed that the people living in abject poverty constituted 56.3% of the Kenyan population, and that the situation was deteriorating further as it has continued to rise from 30% in early 1990's to 56% by 2007 (MDG Centre, 2009). Over 65% of the people living in

Emuhaya District where the Church of God - Kenya herein referred to as CoG-K is the most dominant denomination, live below the poverty line and are food poor (ESDP, 2011). This means that more than a half of the population in Emuhaya District is in some state of poverty. Whereas poverty, religion and corruption may account for some of this plight, many of the poor are victims of natural disasters, famine or drought. Farmers on the other hand, often cannot make an adequate living from their small and infertile land. In addition to suffering, sheer lack of income, the poor are often uneducated and afflicted with physical sickness.

Furthermore, the Kenyan situation could rightly be cited as the best example of glaring disparity between the economically empowered on one side and the marginalized masses on the other. The wealthy have access and control of the market, whereas the poor remain at the mercy of the market dictates even where their own produce is concerned. A report by the Society for International Development (2004) revealed that only a tenth of the 30 million Kenyan controlled the nation's resources and income and that 42 percent of the total wealth of the country is concentrated in the hands of the 10 percent of the population (Galgalo, 2005). This implies that a tenth of the population is gobbling nearly half of the available resources.

In recent liberation studies, there has been an inclination to look at development almost entirely in economic terms (Ogot, 1999). Although very important, economics cannot be relegated to the deepest levels of life. The 2007 United Nations Development Program's (UNDP) report on Kenya shows that despite an economic growth rate of 5.8 percent, 50 percent of Kenyans lived below the poverty line (Zacharia, 2012). According to Zacharia (2012: 45):

*Compared to the year 2004, human poverty has increased marginally in all provinces. 16 million Kenyans are living on less than a dollar a day, while 18.9 million can hardly afford a meal with more than a dollar at their disposal. The gap between the rich and the poor also continue to widen. Poorer people have little or no hope of bringing up a child to the age where they can benefit from free primary education introduced by the government in 2003, let alone taking them to secondary school.*

As a result, these have continued to marginalize certain sectors of the society, especially the women, children and rural inhabitants. Compounding this enormous problem is the recent emergence of HIV/AIDS pandemic in virtually all African countries (Saitoti, 2002).

Until recently, it was believed that rising poverty could be tackled by increased economic growth that would lead to higher incomes. Growth was seen as a natural process which could be nourished through the application of correct and timely input. Likewise, it could be impeded through bad conditions, but once these constraints were removed the process would continue (Verhelst, 1990:56). Development was seen essentially as a question of increasing gross levels of savings and investment both internally and externally, private and state – until the economy reached a take-off point into self-sustaining development.

Development and economic growth was seen as a matter of applying appropriate levels of investments after taking into consideration the rate of population growth, the capita: output ratio and desired rate of growth (Burkey, 2000). A combination of domestic savings, the international investments and international aid would provide the fuel to drive the process through stages of growth which would ultimately bring the benefits of modernization to the entire population. However, it was found out that various traps and barriers to development were to be found in the traditional or primitive sectors. It then became necessary to reduce population growth, improve health, introduce new seed varieties and then growth and development would occur so long as investment was sufficient (Prandervand, 1990). This strategy has however, been limited in reducing poverty and it has been argued that growth alone may not be sufficient to reduce poverty. Accumulated information pointed towards a growing poverty complex: marginalization, mass unemployment and recurrent starvation crisis.

The emerging crisis has prompted the continuing search for appropriate approach to, and strategies for solving the problem. Poverty alleviation has been the subject of subsequent National Development Plans, Session Papers, Presidential Commissions, Task Forces, and studies in Kenya. The large range of contributions reflects the pressure on the Government to find solutions to the persistence of poverty in Kenyan society. However the government of Kenya on its part has not sufficiently addressed these needs due to increasing national population growth and the concurrent costs (EDSP, 2015). This inadequacy has been greatly felt in Emuhaya District because of its high density as compared to other rural areas in Kenya (*Ibid.*). It is in this process of taking initiative in development that existing churches in Emuhaya District have played role in development.

Presently in Emuhaya District are a wide range of churches which are known to actively take part in human development through its agencies such as Compassion International, Youth Empowerment Programs and World Vision. These churches include the Anglican Church of Kenya, Church of God in Kenya, Pentecostal Assemblies of God, Coptic Church, Israeli Nineveh Church, African Interior Church, Salvation Army, Revival Church (Obwoye, 2011), just to mention a few. While acknowledging the role played by these churches in both spiritual and social-economic development, the present work delves its attention to the role played by the CoG-K in poverty alleviation to the populace in Emuhaya District. The Emuhaya District has a population of about 250,000 inhabitants according to the 2009 population's projections (EDP, 2010). Currently, the birth rate is

estimated at 3.5% per annum (*Ibid.*). Nevertheless, poverty is a complex phenomenon that cannot be eradicated solely by politics, economic policies and financial investments. It is a social construct that cannot be limited to mere economic growth. In order to be authentic, it must be integral; that is, it has to promote the good of each individual and the whole person. Material and spiritual values must be brought together (Pope Paul VI, 1967).

Accordingly, the existing challenges in relation to the various dimensions of poverty require an understanding that poverty can be fought from many fronts, which include using religion. We cannot ignore the fact that religion is an economic institution as it participates in the economy and is an economic 'force' as it influences various economic activities. Today, religion is believed to seep into all aspects of life in the society including economic aspects (Mbiti, 1969). It is viewed as the most effective stimulus for economic growth and social change in general. As stated, the economy is one of the society's most important institutions and religion is in a continuous reciprocal and interdependent relationship with the economy. Although religion is often viewed as a semi autonomous social system paralleling other institutions, it is itself in various ways part of the inclusive economic system of the society. Evidently, the important place of spirituality in human development has been acknowledged (Gumo-Kurgat, 2004; Bryant, 1999; Nyaundi, 2003; Vinay, 2005). Secular groups involved in development are beginning to take seriously the religions of communities with whom they work. Scholars are seeking for ethics and morality in development strategies. Therefore, true development be it Christian or non-Christian, requires addressing the spiritual, because it is not possible to alleviate poverty without the spiritual facet. It is in this regard that the church and Christian organizations have made concerted attempts towards answering the cries of the poor in the society. This contribution of the CK in alleviating poverty is likely to be enhanced by the fact that Christianity in Africa is growing greatly. This study aims at assessing the place of the church in social economic liberation, with special reference to Emuhaya District of Western Kenya.

### **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Poverty is a prevalent phenomenon that is of significance to all stakeholders of the development processes including the Church in Kenya (CK). Documents of earlier studies have focused on the economic systems while underestimating the power and influence of religion in the eradication of poverty; thus, relegating religion to a matter of spiritual significance. Emuhaya District experiences very high poverty levels that stand at 65% of the total population of Kenya (GoK, 2010; KNBS, 2010; ESDP, 2008). Furthermore, 52.3% of the households in the district live below poverty levels. Thus, the district's contribution to national poverty is 3% (*Ibid.*). However, it is evident that economic systems alone to date have been inadequate and the growth of poverty has not been reversed (Speckman, 2001; Ogot, 1999; Nandy, 1998). People do not live by economics or science and technology alone. Thus, the role of religion in poverty eradication has not been studied yet human spirit and determination are cornerstone for poverty alleviation and wealth creation.

Christians believe that the religious perspective in development has to be prominent in dealing with human beings, especially in an attempt to improve the quality of the human life. This view is not only based on the belief that human beings are created in God's "image and likeness" (Genesis 1:2) but also on the theological view, that religion creates a symbolic universe that legitimizes earthly structures, thereby giving people the will to live. Thus, people have concepts, beliefs and value systems which engage the priorities and qualities of the social relations. Consequently, this study seeks to examine the role of religion in addressing the phenomenon of poverty. In particular the study seeks to assess the role of CoG-K in addressing the problem of poverty in Emuhaya District, Western Kenya. At the moment, Churches haven gained a wide acceptance among the people of Emuhaya District of Western Kenya and also influenced their way of life. The study seeks therefore to determine the contributions of the Church's to people's participation in poverty alleviation and further to examine to what extent the said projects have been successful in achieving their goals as an attempt to eradicate the said phenomenon.

### **1.3 Justification of the Study**

The study is justifiable base on the facts that poverty reduction is a national challenge. Experience with the post-independence anti-poverty policies reveals that Kenya has not achieved much progress during the last 40 years (Saitoti, 2002). At the outset, Kenya hoped to eliminate poverty through trade and industrial growth. It was seen as a short-term hardship, which would disappear as the nation developed and grew in monetary terms. Poverty is now recognized as a major threat to every significant section of Kenya. It is also increasingly recognized that economic growth alone will not be sufficient to reduce poverty (Ogot, 1999). Furthermore, poverty is a problem encompassing boundaries beyond physical aspects thus poverty reduction needs to be supported by a combination of measures. In this regard, there is a growing recognition of the role of the church in poverty alleviation and hence improving the quality of life (Vinay, 2005). Even though secular programs meant to alleviate poverty have ignored or underestimated the importance of the church in alleviating poverty and even sustaining relief and development, church programs and its gospel has continued to be a force for

social change (*Ibid.*). Galgalo, captures the essence of the situation when he says: The deep economic problems of today do in fact, have spiritual roots and are related to forms of unbelief - for which a solution is present. And to make the answer more apparent we urgently need personal Christian reflection on economic life - in our schools as well as in universities (Galgalo, 2004:23). In this context, Africa must welcome a serious examination of its record to identify approaches that go beyond economics; religion and culture has been the missing dimension in this experience (Ogot, 1999). Experience has shown that the consequences of development are deeply rooted in the cultural, value and psychological systems. They cannot be simply evicted by economics and political intervention, reduction as they may be (*Ibid.*). In view of the fact that religion is not lived in a vacuum and that spiritual progress and worldly development is necessarily interrelated (Tarino, 2005), the human soul that is truly seeking to save itself is fully social. The progress of religion in this world brings with it an immeasurable improvement in the conditions of human social life. This however raises questions with regard to the communication of the whole of the gospel in relation to the existing social-economic situation. Indicators in Kenya demonstrate the depth and breadth of poverty and the magnitude of the challenge. The response to poverty, ignorance and disease has been a major goal of the government since independence. The church in general under the influence of spirituality of integral development has also played a positive role in development especially in the area of education and health, thus, "alleviating" poverty. The question otherwise is the extent to which poverty has been alleviated. This is an aspect that has not been given adequate attention by researchers in Kenya. Consequently, CK is subject to this assessment as a way of challenging the approach of excluding the impact of religion to economic concerns. Accordingly, the role of CK in combating poverty is subject and justified for assessment. It is therefore important for any analysis or recommendations to take this into account. This study is aimed, therefore, at filling these shortcomings. The findings will provide strategies for the policy and program development to scholars, theologians and economic planners.

## II. METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Research Design

This study is a cross-sectional research that sought to give an examining and descriptive scrutiny of the place of the CK in social economic liberation in Emuhaya District. According to Babbie (1998:93), several research projects are designed to study various phenomena by taking a cross section carefully. These help studies to understand informal factors and processes of a phenomenon at a particular place and time. This study being descriptive in nature adopted the cross-sectional design to show the place role of Churches in social economic liberation in Emuhaya District of Western Kenya.

### 2.2 Study Area

This study was carried out in Emuhaya District of Vihiga County. The district borders Vihiga District to the West, Kakamega South District to the north, Siaya District to the east, and Kisumu West District to the south. The district being studied here covers a total area of 173.2 sq km, and is divided into two divisions: Emuhaya and Luanda, and eight locations namely Wekhome, East Bunyore, West Bunyore, North Bunyore, North- East Bunyore, Central Bunyore, South West Bunyore and South Bunyore (ESDP, 2008). The CK administrative Areas in Emuhaya District are namely: East Bunyore, West Bunyore, Esirabe Special Center, Emusire special centre and Kima Centre. The CK has largest number of adherents or believers within the population of Emuhaya District as indicated in Table 2.1. Nevertheless, Population growth is one of the major factors affecting socio-economic development. A fast growing population has serious implication on the resources and services in Emuhaya District. According to the 1994 – 1996 District Development Plan, Emuhaya District had a population of 115,000. This was projected to increase to 150,000 by 2003, a population growth rate of 3% per annum. However, 1999 figures provided in the PRSP report showed a population of 161,712 and in 2008 the estimated population is 213,752 (District statistics Office, 2008) based on the area of 173.2 sq.km, Emuhaya has an average population density of 1,234 persons per sq.km, one of the highest densities in rural areas (ESDP, 2008). The majority of the people living in Emuhaya District are the “Abanyore”, a sub-tribe of the Luhya community.

**TABLE 2.1: EMUHAYA DISTRICT POPULATION DISTRIBUTION AND DENSITY**

DIVISION	POPULATION by size and density				
	Area/size Sq. Km	Males	Female	Total	Density
Luanda	98.6	56,965	65,525	122,217	1,240
Emuhaya	74.6	42,077	49,458	91,535	1,227
Total	173.2	99,042	114,710	213,752	1,234

Source: District Statistics office, 2008

Emuhaya District is dotted with many churches and denominations as Table 3.2 below and Map 4 on page 47 indicates, however the CK has the largest number of adherents and existing congregations in Emuhaya District.

**TABLE 2.2: DENOMINATIONAL DISTRIBUTION IN EMUHAYA DISTRICT**

<b>Name of the Denomination</b>	<b>Number of Congregations</b>	<b>Number of Members</b>
Church of God in Kenya	141	180,000
Anglican Church of Kenya	90	13,000
Pentecostal Assemblies of God	45	10,000
Israel Nineveh Church	39	7,200
Salvation Army	36	3,400
African Interior Church	21	1,400
Jehovah Witness	17	800
Revival Church	30	2,000
Coptic Church	6	1,900
New Hope Church	10	1,200
Dini Ya Musambwa	-	-
Legio Maria	-	-
Church Of Christ	-	-

**Source: CK 2015**

The church branches or centers are ranked according to the number of congregations and also according to the number of adherents in the District.

### **2.3 Study Population**

The sample respondent in this study was drawn from the population of the Church adherents in Emuhaya District. This study targeted Emuhaya District which has a population of 180,000 people who are members of the various churches in the district. These were represented in all the 141 Church congregations in Emuhaya District. Other participants who were thought to have important information for the research were the Church leaders, directors and the church elders who were purposively sampled as discussed under sampling procedures.

### **2.4 Sampling Procedure**

According to Singleton (1988:137) sampling procedure is that part of the research plan that indicates how cases are to be selected for interview. Within the CK's population, a sample size of 312 respondents was sampled for oral interviews, administering the questionnaire and focus group discussions. In order to achieve this, the researcher selected the CoG-K congregations and its leadership institutions that are based in Emuhaya District. Saturated sampling technique was used to opt for the 4 administrative heads of the CoG-K namely the Bishop, the General Secretary, CK Treasurer, CK trustee and the 16 heads of departments for in-depth interviews.

### **2.5 Methods and Instruments of Data Collection**

To obtain data for analysis, qualitative methods of data collection, which include in-depth oral interviews, focus group discussion, observation and documentary analysis, were employed.

#### **2.5.1.1 Self-administered Questionnaire**

Questionnaires were prepared and administered according to the information required from the specific groups of respondents. There were different questionnaires for the church leaders, pastors and associate pastors, and elders respectively. Factual and subjective questions sought for respondents' beliefs, attitudes, opinions and fact on matters related to the role of the Church in alleviating poverty in Emuhaya District. The main advantage of the self-administered questionnaire is that "self-administered questionnaires avoids biases due to interviews, ensure standardized presentation of questions, give respondents more privacy (important for sensitive questions), and may increase the validity of responses that require the respondent to check information to think about his or her answer" (Kothari, 2003:45). Respondents were requested to fill out the questionnaire and later provide them to the researcher. The questionnaire consisted of qualitative open-ended designed questions to

allow participants freedom to express their opinion and perceptions to the topic. The researcher and the assistants distributed the questionnaires and briefed the respondents. A total of 282 questionnaires were sent out to pastors and associate pastors in Emuhaya District. The pastors and associate pastors were purposively chosen with the assumption that they are responsible for teaching the local congregations on issues pertaining poverty and were also responsible for implementing the church policy on poverty alleviation in the Church

### **2.5.2 In-depth Oral Interviews**

It was significant for the researcher to do in-depth oral interviews for the church leaders in order to facilitate exhaustive probing on key question from the formulated questionnaires. This type of interview was chosen because the researcher has a great deal of freedom to probe and ask specific queries during the course of the interview. Ochola (2001:36) notes that, "it is only through the interview that the evaluator can fully explore an audience's perspective and the reason for it" Thus, the technique was used with key informants; namely the Bishops, the General Secretary, General assembly Treasurer, General Assembly Trustee and the 16 directors of the Church departments who formulate policy at the national and area level. The interview schedule is included in the appendices of this research. The interview schedule indicates the names of the interviewees, their statuses and the highlights of the remarks made during the interview.

### **2.5.3 Observation Method**

Both structured and non-participant types of observation were used to observe and record the CK development projects meant to alleviate poverty in Emuhaya District. The researcher observed the environment where the Church programs and projects are run. The activities contributing to poverty alleviation therefore formed an important part of this study. Participation of the adherents in the development projects and the role played by the church leaders in the established projects was also observed and a checklist filled. Of interest to the researcher were the programs, physical appearances of believer's homes (building, chair, toilets etc) and the general behavior of the respondents. Through this tool, the researcher was able to collect additional data to enrich qualitative sets of data, which helped in informing the findings of the study.

### **2.5.4 Methods of Data Analysis and Presentation**

Data collected through the questionnaires, personal interviews, focus group discussions and observation was synthesized systematically and logically compiled to determine the role of CK in alleviating poverty in Emuhaya District. Data was coded manually and organized under different themes. The researcher then investigated the concepts of liberation and reconstruction in improving the well being of the poor through an analysis and interpretation of the theological methods of induction (TMI). This method entails critical examination and evaluation of the contributions of the CK's teachings and people's participation in poverty alleviation. Thus, an evaluation of CK's projects in combating poverty was also scrutinized in relation to its teachings. This implied avoidance of precipitance and prejudiced conclusions that are more or beyond that which is gathered. Through the TMI, CK's religious symbols on poverty and that which is symbolized by them and the factual sense between believers' ultimate concern and that about which he is ultimately concerned were analyzed. This analysis of the human situation to employ material was made available by believers' creative self-interpretation poverty. Consequently, TMI designated correspondence of the series of data, as in statistical data; was designated the logical interdependent of things or events in structural wholes. Data was then synthesized systematically and logically compiled and presented descriptively through use of narratives and frequency tables. Conclusions were made according to the findings of the study in light of the research questions, objectives and theoretical framework.

## **3.0 Church Teachings and Poverty Alleviation**

The theology of the church in Kenya in general and for Emuhaya district forms the basis by which social problems are viewed and addressed. Poverty is one of the major social issues of the society and the church in general. It has ramifications that are social, economic and spiritual. The problems of the poor are multiple, practical, and interrelated. The biblical interpretation of the CK adherents has continued to play a major role in social action (Amaya: OI, 11/11/2016). Thus, law governing the lives of the members and the church polity is grounded in the bible. Admittedly, it is the poor people who draw inspiration from the bible in the absence of other forms of material and spiritual support (Ondeko: OI, 11/11/2016). Poor people need an awareness of God's presence and His care. Oral interviews showed that some of the adherents felt that the CoG-K needs a re-evaluation of its theology of poverty, which will hence re-address the needs of the poor in the church at large.

According to Sangolo, "we cannot have a theology of the poor without a re-interpretation of its source – the origin of this theology which is the bible must be contextualised to address the plight of the suffering" (OI, 12/11/2016). This view is supported by Obed Ochwany, who stated that the church for which the Bible is

foundational is perceived as an institution that has much credibility among the 'underdeveloped' people (Ochwanyi: 08/11/2016). Fern (1989:45) observes: "Christianity is not only a supernatural and spiritual force, but it is also force for change. By its very nature, vital Christianity is an active social agent". The CK members in Emuhaya believe that a theological perspective has to be prominent in any dealing with human beings, especially in attempts to improve the quality of human life. This view is not only based on the belief that human beings are created in God's "image and likeness" (Genesis, 1:26), but also on the sociological view that religion creates a symbolic inverse that legitimates earthly structures, thereby giving people the will to live. A 'committed reading' of the Bible becomes a point of convergence for the CoG-K adherents and social action, in this case, development. It was observed by Okama (OI, 10/08/2016) that the scripture does not contain blue print for what could be called a "biblical" or "Christian" economic system. Okama remarks that the bible makes no reference to anything that remotely resembles the kind of capitalistic economic system of our day (*Ibid.*). However, it lays sufficient basis for moral judgment, business ethics and just structures and parity. Despite the fact that the bible could be a valuable resource for providing guiding economic principles, the Christians are faced with formidable challenges from the realities of the present day marketplace. The adherents are participants or members of a market society where the market forces ensure the competition does not always adhere to the principle of fair play (Ochola: OI, 24/03/2015). The researcher asked the respondents: if there any theological or biblical principle which a CK adherent can apply to this situation of poverty. One such principle which the respondents identified is a "theology of equipoise". The respondents identified this theology as having two aspects: first is what the study calls resisting the spirit of negative desire. Otemba (OI, 1/04/2016) claims, it is that which 'seems to combine the idea of vaunting ambition and of unjust or fraudulent means'. The unjust acquiring of property is characterized by an insatiable spirit or excessive greed for more. Prophet Jeremiah in chapter 22:13-17 is one good example of the Old Testament reference that describes and condemns it:

*Doomed is the man who builds his house by unjust and enlarges it by dishonesty; who makes his countrymen work for nothing and does not pay wages. Doomed is the man who says, 'I will build myself a mansion with spacious room upstairs.' So he puts it red. Does it make you a better king if you build house of cedar, finer than those of others?*

The Old Testament warns of the evil result of negative desire especially that of greed. The adherents in Emuhaya District identified a culture that has multiplied in the following areas: the grabbing of public utility land, hoarding sugar to hike prices in order to make maximum profit, travel or medical claims, use of faulty measuring scales, outright cheating such as small traders selling bags of charcoal half filled with dust and adulterated fuel or milk – all these because of the present day market capitalism and materialism have in cultured a spirit of negative desires. Like the Old Testament, the New Testament equally condemns the spirit of greed and excess. The Christian is warned against this sin and exhorted to embrace moderation. The best example which the CoG-K members quote is expressed in Luke 12:15 which says, "Watch out and guard yourself from every kind of greed; because a person's true life is not made up of the things he owns, no matter how rich he may be". The second aspect of a theology of equipoise in the CoG-K is what Ochwanyi (OI, 1/04/2016) calls creating shalom where equitable distribution guards against violent conflict that is always primarily caused by control of resources. This is a tall order especially considering that the CK members often have no control over the market forces, and are like everybody else, participants in a competition that does not often respect fair play. However, the CK members are called upon to be the salt and light of the world (Matthew, 5:13) and this calls for positive influence that can transform the market values and not just conform to the prevailing value system.

According to Ndale (OI, 12/08/2016), the CK members ought to resist any blind conformity to the systems and norms of this world, including the market. The believer ought to be transformed by renewing of the mind so that they prove what the will of God is, what is good, and what is acceptable and perfect. To reject conformity to the order of this world thus means 'coming into conflict with the prevailing order, confronting unjust structures and social groups that control them' (*Ibid.*) Such was the Jesus' mission of transforming society; where the good news is preached to the poor – this is the reign of God on earth, it is "the Kingdom come that God's will may be done on earth as it is in heaven" (Mark 5). It is a fact that the CK members have no choice but to be in this world, but at the same time, the Christian must never lose sight of the fact that the believer is not of this world. A balance between the two must be struck, however difficult such a task may be. It is here on earth that the values of the Kingdom must be planted and seen to permeate the secular society for the realization of the vision of the Kingdom of God. This is what God intends, and what, therefore the CK believer must strive after in the hope of bringing about a more humane, equipoise society (Okech: OI, 11/11/2016).

The CK is a witness and a place where the visible manifestation of the kingdom can be experienced. Thus, reflecting the twofold reality of the kingdom of God. David Bosch (1980) expresses this attitude as follows:

*The church is a foreign body in the world. She lives in a double relationship: to the world, for she is part of the world and of the secular history; to God, as expression of his saving love reaching towards a perishing world. These two relationships are interdependent. Without a faithful and a sustained contact with God the church loses her transcendence. With a true solidarity with the world she loses her relevance.*

*The church is the community of believers, gathered by divine election, calling, and new birth which lives in communion with the triune God, is granted the forgiveness of sins and sent to serve the world in solidarity with all humanity.*

This service must without exemption, extend to all sections of life including the market place. In practical terms, this could include the church's role to influence positively the market dynamics, that the market may incorporate the kingdom's values and vision, and that the gospel of the Kingdom of God rightly provides the basis for human relationship. The church must preach against unjust commercial practices, and show the way in saying "no" to a system, which takes away from the poor to subsidize the rich (Okech: OI, 27/O2/2016).

The church must fight for realization of a just, equitable society (Litunya: OI, 28/12/2016). To do this; the role of the CK is to act as stimulus in the economic growth, management of the natural resources, conflict prevention, peace building, health and education. The theology of the CoG-K is the central driving force for change because it permeates into the economics of the residents of Emuhaya District. The following descriptions are perceived to have an effect on the CoG-K's social concerns in the context of Emuhaya District.

### **3.1 Jesus Christ as a Reconstructionist**

Jesus Christ in his public ministry viewed the church as an entirely new community, in which people of different background could witness together to the love of God. Thus, people of all walks of life including the poor came to Jesus Christ.

The adherents perceive the Sermon on the Mount as a concise outline of the reconstructive theology. He said that "blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:3). Jesus does not praise poverty but the poor are blessed. The poor are those who depend entirely on God and trust Him (Opuochi: OI, 11/12/2016). This is the starting point for Jesus in His interpretation of the Old Testament in the new light. Consequently, Jesus makes a contrast between the teachings of Moses and his own. He shows that new social consciousness was needed in order for the community to regain its dignity. Jesus declared that:

*Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfil them. For truly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. Whoever then relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches so shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but he who does them shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you. Unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven (Matthew, 5:17-20).*

Jesus Christ was accepted as a rabbi who taught with authority and not as the scribes did. As the founder of a new social movement, he had come to inaugurate a new era, improving on the old mosaic norms, but transcending them. The church adherents believe that faith should have a similar impact on every culture that comes under its influence (Ndeka: OI, 14/11/2016). It is also evident that cultural norms could affect the message of reconstruction.

Jesus Christ identifies himself with the needy and suffering human beings. Thus he commands that the poor must be shown hospitality (Luke, 14). This does not mean that he opposed the riches in themselves but because they are often misused. Acquisition of riches in them becomes a source of exploitation and injustice to others, especially the poor (Otwoma: OI, 15/11/2016). Riches provide people with a lot of power over others. Jesus often spoke of wealth as an obstacle to eternal life. Consequently, the rich man is asked to behave as a steward of the riches he has, not as a master. He has to use his wealth in total submission, to support the needy (Matthew, 25:34-40). It is in this relation that the CK's theology should empower the local church to articulate its response to the Gospel.

According to Makokha the Bishop of the Church of God in Kenya (OI, 11/11/2016), Jesus came to preach the good news to the poor, to liberate captives and set prisoners free. Thus, Jesus Christ preached a kingdom of love, justice and liberation.

*Then the scribes said to him, 'you are right, teacher; you have truly said that "he is one, and besides him with there is no other"; and love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength", and "to love one's neighbour as oneself", - this is much more important than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices (Mark 12: 31).*

Therefore, the poor, the oppressed and the marginalized need to be included in the kingdom of God by liberating them from all that is dehumanising in Emuhaya District (Obunde: OI, 15/11/2016). The church has a goal which is to establish a reign of love and justice in which both the rich who are poor in spirit and the poor in material



things of this world, would be equitably treated, especially in inheriting the kingdom of God. Thus, the CK has an obligation to deal with the dehumanizing situations positively and practically as captured in the following spiritual messages:

*I was hungry and you fed me, thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me into your home, naked and you clothed me, sick and you took care of me (Mathew, 25:39 – 40)*

The preceding passage acts as a caution to the CK members to mind the way they treat those in need in the society for they will be judged on the basis of their deeds. On his part, Jesus fed the hungry (Mark, 8; 1-10), gave those who were thirsty a drink (John, 2:1-12) and welcomed strangers (John 4:1-41). The interaction of Jesus with those who were regarded as the “untouchables” should be a constant reminder of the CK of Jesus, they should identify themselves with people who have been dehumanized as victims of various forms of prejudice (Oketch: OI, 22/12/2016). Table 4.1 indicates the prejudiced persons in Emuhaya District.

**TABLE 3.1: PREJUDICED PERSONS IN EMUHAYA DISTRICT**

<b>Intolerance towards those</b>	<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Beggars	42	14
Without or Poor Shelter	32	10.7
With Jiggers	57	19
Inadequate Education	72	24
Tattered clothing and Shoes	28	9.4
Prostitutes	31	10.4
Not Married	14	4.7
With HIV/AIDS	13	4.4
The Old	9	3
Others	2	0.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Field Data

Jesus also taught his followers a prayer, which projects a transformative earth through the coming of the Kingdom and sharing of food, forgiveness and security. Therefore, seeking God’s blessings and justice is the path to the new world order. It is the law of love that transcends racial, gender and class boundaries. In the world that Jesus’ love exists, it should transform the world and make human concerns the focal point of all development and other policies. Thus, in the Church, the religious men and women are called upon to participate in the liberation of the poor. Liberation is a process for making all people free from servitude, so that they can actively shape their destiny (Ochola: OI, 24/12/2016). It means there is on-going development of humanity, in particular of educating people in order to create in them awareness of their problems and needs and at the same time find solutions to those problem. In consequence, this study established that the CK has been able to establish these institutions of learning so as to help in solving these problems. Inconsequence, it is the mission of the CK to participate in the liberation of the poor following the example to their master Jesus Christ who loved and served the poor. The CK recognizes itself as having the duty to be the voice of the poor.

### 3.1.1 St Paul and Reconstruction

The CK sees Paul as the oppressor of the Christians until his conversion on the Damascus road. Whatever may have happened to him physically has been turned into a religious orientation in the CoG-K, and he is believed to be the perfecter of Christianity. Paul conceives the followers of Christ as one body and each member of that body (1 Cor., 6:15-17). As the concept implies the oneness of Christians, it may also imply the unity and brotherhood of the humanity. This concern ensures collective progress of the humanity and integral development of the human person. Leaving one behind either materially or spiritually brings about the breaking of the brotherly bond (Litunya: OI, 11/11/2016). The most quoted exposition about poverty and wealth in the CK is 2 Corinthians, where Paul explains the idea of Christian charity of the gifts of God and especially that of his son: “for you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor so that by his poverty you might become rich” (2 Cor., 8:9).

This research perceived this as a social reconstruction. St. Paul demonstrates that the attitude of the people must first of all be changed before institutions can be reformed. In his epistles to the Romans (12:1-2) he gives his observation in a reconstructive manner:

*I appeal to you therefore, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world by renewal of your minds, that you may prove what is good and acceptable and perfect.*

The CK missionary work in eyes of its adherents is reconstructive, heralding a new society that is built on the foundations of the old ones. This Pauline instruction does not imply other worldliness. Rather, it emphasises the necessity to avoid the risk of becoming so comfortable to the norm of this world, as to render incapable of supporting the struggles of liberation in the society. The church must hence foster the struggles of the suffering especially the poor. According to Amwayi (OI, 15/11/2016), the debate in the CK on the Gospel and culture as recorded in Acts 15 is a reminder that the church ought to move beyond cultural innovation so that it can alleviate the suffering of poor. Given the actual conditions of the world today, the CK adherents are called to totally dedicate their lives to the liberation of the poor. These include the beggars, street children, orphans, widows and the down-trodden farmers in the rural areas, poor working conditions, insecurity of the unemployed and broken homes (Makokha: OI, 11/11/2016). The religious are urged to become the voice of the voiceless and are required to personally involve themselves in supporting the poor. In the same vein, the religious communities in Emuhaya District are required to empower their members for missionary work in the world.

### 3.1.2 The Concept of Poverty

Wealth and poverty among the CK adherents Emuhaya District, is interpreted against the backdrop of the belief in the Supreme Being. The CK members in Emuhaya District believe in the Supreme Being called “Were”, who is the creator of all things, the controller of every thing in heaven and on earth and the sustainers of the natural and social order (Ong’alo: 17/2/2016). The Supreme Being is the benefactor and giver of all things in life (Muyela: OI, 15/11/2016). He provides food, rain, cattle and other necessities of the day to day living.

Human beings look up to God for their daily provision as per their request in the church. For those who are considered wealthy individuals in the CK are expected to assist the less advantaged because wealth comes from the one living above. And the more one shares with others, the more he or she accumulates blessings for oneself, family and the clan. Sharing with the poor and the needy is thus seen to be very important to the adherents of the CK. Therefore, this is expected both at the church level and at individual level (Ondeko: OI, 11/11/2016). Although it is noted above that riches are as a result of the blessing of God, the reverse is not necessarily true. The general understanding among the CK adherents of Emuhaya District is that poverty is not a curse from God (*Ibid.*). It is generally understood among the people that poverty is brought about by natural calamities such as droughts, famine, epidemics and conflicts. It is also facilitated by witchcraft, wrong ideologies, and lack of relationship with God and the environment. On the other hand, poverty is not considered a permanent situation of the CoG-K adherents, thus it is considered the responsibility of the church to forge a relationship of the people to God by preaching repentance (Ombusa: OI, 24/02/2016). However, the CoG-K is faced with contextual challenges in interpreting the scripture that is taught about poverty by the church in Emuhaya District. These include the challenges that are shown in table 4.2

**TABLE 3.2: CONTEXTUAL CHALLENGES FACING THE CoG-K TEACHINGS IN EMUHAYA DISTRICT**

Contextual Challenges	Respondents	Percentage
Ungodliness	41	14.0
Laymen’s inability to hermeneutics	29	10.4
Cultural interpretation of scripture	58	20.7
Gospel of Prosperity	67	23.9
Poor Leadership	23	10.0
Literary Level	32	11.4
Insecurity	9	3.2
Uncontrollable congregations and in fighting	10	3.6
Rejection of Western Theology	3	1.1
Others	9	3.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Field data

Table 4.2 above indicates the challenges faced by the CK in its efforts to teach its adherents in Emuhaya District. The concerns of culture interpretation and poor preaching methods indicate that the Gospel that is taught by the CK has influenced people’s participation in programs meant to alleviating poverty. Cultural issues among the adherents of the CoG-K of Emuhaya District have had an impact on the thinking and process of alleviating poverty in one way or another. According to Musumba (OI, 19/08/2016), the Gospel that is preached

in the CK is not independent of the culture of the community in Emuhaya District. Culture is the carrier of religion and world view of a community, therefore it becomes a variable which affect development. The oral interviews revealed that the cultural life patterns still feature among the CoG-K adherents in Emuhaya District.

It emerged from the CK church leadership that cultural activities in the District have been a hindrance to both spiritual and economic development. It is evident that culture as ethos, as a way of life that form character is immensely powerful and not all removed from the realm of life including religion. Therefore, there is need to underscore the place of culture as the bearer of religion that in turn affect poverty alleviation in Emuhaya District. It is in this regard that Kilonzo (2008: 308) asserts that:

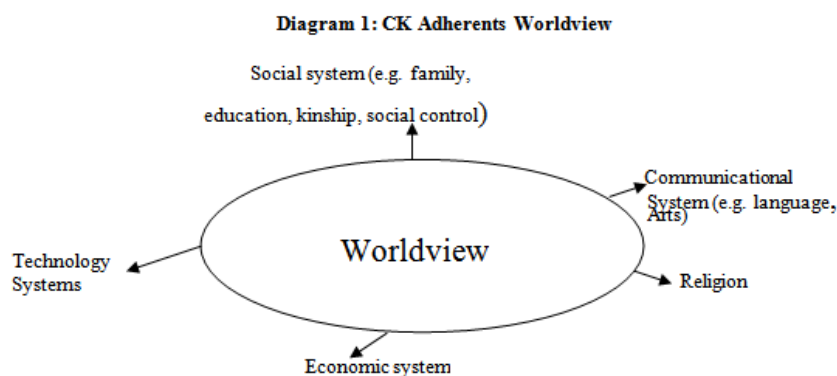
*Cultural issues should not be sidelined in the contextualization of the Gospel. The church should strengthen cultures that improve people's way of life and bring people together as one community. Culture is both an impediment as well as a promoter of development. It is therefore contextual and situational that further investigations be done on the integration of religion and culture.*

According to Ogot (1999), individuals do not live only by economics, public orders or science and technology. Before these, they have concepts and beliefs, they have value systems which affect the priorities and qualities of the social relations; they have their attitudes, aspirations, hopes, fears, expressions and manifestations of ethical and traditional code of conduct (*Ibid.*). Products and such expressions, over generations and centuries, accumulate in written words, spoken language, played music and performed dances as well as in works of art and movements. Culture in this way become a cohesive factor in building human language, history, religion, values, hopes and fears, it is founding stone of the society. According to Kellum (OI, 16/02/2016), within CoG-K member community, property enhances the value and dignity of both the rich and the poor in the community. Historically, African traditional life was essentially a life of sharing, therefore, those who have received property or other goods were obligated to share with the needy (kellum: OI, 20/12/2008). Every member is cared for including the widows and the orphans, the young and the old and this concern for others extended even to strangers. Material things were understood within the context of communal or kinship ties within the culture. Thus, communities usually preserve and perpetuate a culture due to the values associated with it by the people (*Ibid.*). The significance of values to the development of culture is inestimable, in that, it is an integral part of life. In other words, values are vital parts of culture. Culture shows that the whole framework of values associated with human existence forms a culture. The communal beliefs and customs that are important to a society are part of its cultural values. These would include religious beliefs, moral norms, and occupations. In Emuhaya District, CK adherent's values do penetrate all areas: Christian faith, politics, and economics. Every young person of the community undergoes a prescribed set of cultural ceremonies meant to foster an understanding of culture, environment and the intended self-adaptation during their life time. Ong'oyi (OI, 08/11/2015) notes that there are wise men and women (*abasakhulu abachesii*) who help maintain the well being of the society, but also there are wizards and witches (*omulosi*) who hamper it. The cleansing of evil spirits against any "wrongs" contrary to custom or tradition is taken seriously. The customary oral rules are considered authoritative. They cannot be separated from economic, social, religious and political development (*Ibid.*). They are part and parcel of a people's life. These oral rules are not static but dynamic.

The CK believers of Emuhaya District are considered spiritual; this is confirmed by observances of their ceremonial rituals and customary rules both in the CK and outside the church's influence (Okech: OI, 2/02/2008). Any problem, mistakes or errors call for a religious solution where the Holy Spirit is evoked to cleanse the people. It is believed that Jesus shed blood at Calvary and everyone must therefore be covered by this holy blood so that the evil spirits that can haunt them, or members of their families or clan, be kept away or exorcised. Some CK adherents visit the diviner or fortune-teller whenever 'trouble' hits their families, livestock or community if they do not find satisfactory answers to their questions in their Christian faith. This decision is not due to a limited belief in the one supreme God. Rather such behaviour often shows that CK adherents believe that the work of a diviner does not exclude God's mediation. In the relationship between the diviner and God, it is God who gives the power to cure or advise people in different situations. The relationship has to do with healing. The diviner is a trusted person who diagnoses the cause of bad omens or occurrences and advised on procedures to avert and avoid them. Simwaka (OI, 12/12/2008) observes that the diviner is visited without the knowledge of the pastor or the Clergy. Even some Pastors are said to visit the diviner for advice when "an African solution is needed for the African problem especially when witch craft is involved" (Omuseni: OI, 11/12/2016). The world view helps the people to comprehend how organization structure in Emuhaya District is shaped by religion, culture and the environment. At the same time, it attempts to achieve justice through its orderly lines of authority and through the reign of objective rules rather than unplanned decisions by members. It was observed by Ondeso that worldview of the believers in CoG-K was participatory which provides a holistic, relational and collaborative characteristic that the world is not made up of separate compartments of things, but rather a relationship that the community continues to create. Wilbur O'Donovan (1995), observes that a holistic view of life which in essence affects the spiritual, cultural, political and economics aspects, means that all the parts of life fit together into one piece like the woven design of a piece of cloth. Life is not divided

into separate and unrelated parts. All the parts together form a beautiful picture called life.

Collaboratively, people participate in community and church activities in order that the “reality” they experience is a creation that involves the primal that has been given by the universe and human feeling. A participatory perspective of the people is both situational and reflective to be explicit from which knowledge is created or built. The worldview is the centre that integrates the total cultural life system among the CoG-k adherents. From the oral interviews, it was gathered that this worldview and its various subsystems of cultural structures stand out as may be captured in the diagram that follows:



**Source:** Field data

From the preceding diagram, all aspects of life are determined by the worldview of the CoG-K members. Each subsystem consisted of ritual and creative behaviour. The basic assumption that supports all these systems is set by the worldview. Yet each of the subsystems gives additional assumptions specific to its own special form. These assumptions are worked out in ritual and creative behaviour, specifically appropriate to each form of life. Within the form governed by each system there are habitual patterns of behaviour called ritual: for example, worship ritual, buying and selling ritual, political ritual such as voting and debating. Beyond such ritual activities scattered about, a choice was made by people to think and behave accordingly. Learning is essentially an important feature in the CK cultural setting (Otaha: OI, 18/11/2016). Thus, the wide range of the use of ‘value’ in various fields of learning signifies the integral relation of value to different aspects of culture.

The CK adherents tend to find identity and meaning in life by being part of the extended family, clan and tribe. There is a strong feeling of common participation in life, a common history, and a common destiny. Thus, the reality among the believer of the CoG-K in Emuhaya District is described in the statement: “*ise ndio khulua ifwe*” meaning, I am here because of the community (Okoko: OI, 12/12/2016). It is this reality that in turn shows why one needs to help others especially those in poverty. Secondly, a notable element has to do with the relationship between the living and those who had departed. Part of belonging to the community is a person's relationship to those who had gone before. The CK members have belief in God, and a sense of an existing relationship between the physical and spirit world. According to Anyamba (OI, 24/11/2015), the CK members tend to place a higher priority on people and human relationships and on how to nurture them. In the CK, the way of life is made up of two basic parts, namely, the surface level behaviour and the deeper level that underlies that behavior. Therefore, the worldview of a believer, map the reality that provides patterns for charting their life and its course. It is the shared perception of a social life that enabled them to perceive and function as a group. At the surface level their culture could be described in terms of ‘cultural subsystems’, for instance, economics, politics, religion, language, and social organization. According to Obwanyo (OI, 02/01/2015) both the African traditional and CK’s perspectives have influenced the Abanyore people, leaving them often with two or three theological economic interpretations on any given event or issue. They find themselves applying one viewpoint to one set of circumstances and another, sometimes contradictory viewpoint, in another. Olembo (OI, 28/02/2015) observes:

*Culture is often a property, a way of life of a society as a whole... Culture is man's contribution to the nature of environment. It is a general way of life of a people, which, among other things, demonstrates their celebrated achievements in thought, morals and material production. These three summarize the context of culture, which in totality is a people's body of knowledge, beliefs and value, behavior, goals, social institutions plus tools, techniques and material constructions.*

Into this culture and viewpoint the missionary's approach is characteristic of a different, western, worldview, with sharp division between the natural and the supernatural, and the living and the dead. This basic difference in worldview has many theological and practical implications. For the believer in the CK the missionaries came with their western theology and talked about truth, grace, and guilt, when the basic issue to the people is spiritual power, involving confrontation with evil spirits and demons (Kageho: OI, 11/12/2014).

If God is gracious, some of the CK members asked, why does he allow the spirits to torment them and why can he not stop the dead from sending diseases to the living? At the end of twenty years of mission work among the Africans which is between 1925 and 1945, many of them were baptized Christians, but at a deeper level they still questioned the western theological view of God (*Ibid.*). They needed to relate to God in the concept of the natural world around them, to their myths, stories and proverbs, and to their philosophy. They needed to relate this also to their art and music, social patterns, beliefs about life after death, relationships to their ancestors, marriage patterns and the whole fabric of their social life. To curb the challenges indicated in Table 4.2, the CoG-K teaches that the rich and the poor were mutually dependent and related to each other with dignity and it was the communities' responsibility to ensure that every adult had a piece of property. What emerges is the common use of property, not common ownership of property. In the past, material things were used for the benefit of all. The problem today in Emuhaya is that people have allowed the western world especially through the church, to define their understanding of good life (*Ibid.*). The implication of the foregoing to the church is that:

*The church of God in Kenya is built on the traditional understanding of good life. The Christian community ought to be a community of sharing. It is a community in which all members ought to be keepers of one another. Christians are more than an extended family; they are a universal family of god through Christ. The poor have right to receive help from those who have material things and power, and when the rich abuse their power, the poor have a right to protection from greed or violence (Osogo: OI, 12/12/2008).*

The statement above fits well with our observation from the theology of equipoise, especially the observation about the importance of generosity and justice towards the poor.

### **3.3 People's Participation in Social economic activiteits in Emuhaya District**

The CK adherents in Emuhaya District are engaged in a variety of economic activities in order to earn a living. The adherents of the CKs participation in activities meant to alleviate poverty have been influenced by the teachings of the CK. The prominent activities of the CK adherents in economic activities comprise of agriculture and non-farm small scale enterprises. In the majority of the CK communities, land is sacred; Emuhaya District is not an exception (Okwete: OI, 23/12/2016). The land belongs to God, the living community and the generation to come. Land therefore is essential for ensuring livelihood of the people. Today, land is still given the first priority by individuals and the community and is also seen as a sign of wealth among the CK members. The CK's key- respondents in Emuhaya District identified non-farm small scale enterprises and daily farming as the main economic activities. Agriculture contributes over 75 percent and 60 percent of the employment and income respectively to the CK residents of Emuhaya District (Bundotich: OI, 01/01/2016).

This implies that land is one of the most crucial resources in agricultural production where discussions ought to start. In Emuhaya land is owned in personal small holdings which vary in size depending on the population density of the area.

Table 3.3 below shows the distribution of land in Emuhaya District among the CK adherents

**TABLE 3.3: LAND OWNERSHIP**

<b>Acre of Land</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
0	60	17.0
0.25 – 1.4	45	12.8
1.5 – 3.4	115	32.8
3.5 – 6.0	49	14.0
4.6 – 6.0	60	17
6.1 – 8.0	9	2.7
8.1 – 10	8	2.3
10.1 – 15	3	0.3
Over 20	1	0.3

**Source:** Field Data

The foregoing record from the field data indicates that the average per holding in the densely populated district of Emuhaya is 0.25 acres. This pattern of land distribution comes out clearly in the interview for the study. Respondents reported ownership of different sizes of land. Data show that amongst the respondents 71.1 percent own land less than 2.5 acres, while 17 percent of the respondents do not own land, some of whom are mainly the youth who are still living in their parents land. The implication of this is the fact that this land will again be sub-divided to accommodate the youth. Subdividing of land which is considered ancestral inheritance is meant to satisfy both religious and economic quest for the CoG-K adherents. Therefore, the wealth that parents bestow upon the children is land so that they are not considered poor or landless (Ochilo: OI, 12/11/2015). It is evident that land ownership is a decisive factor in the lives of individuals in Emuhaya District. In fact, there was evidence on the part of some fathers to hand over land to their sons. The family system had become nuclear to the degree that parents began to doubt that their children would support them if they face some hardship when ageing. The custom had been for fathers to hand over, while still alive, at least their eldest sons' part of the inheritance. But with the increasing commodity prices, the threat of poor crops and low market prices of maize, the elderly CK adherents were afraid to part with their own security. On the other hand, there were cases in which the youngest son was hesitant to leave the inherited homestead, even when he was living in conditions of hardship. The duty of the youngest son to remain in the homestead was emphasized over and over again. The previously described parental curse and fear of misfortune that might befall a son neglecting his duty still acted as a powerful sanction. A man working away from home might even keep his wife at home because he could not break with the obligation placed on him by the custom to keep the lineage inheritance in his possession and care for it (Akhwale: OI, 15/08/2015). Family property especially in terms of land is thus a form of wealth with which one may define his destiny. Thus according to Oketch (OI, 11/11/2008) in his definition of the poor:

*The poor are the landless, but sometimes have pieces of land with mud walled houses; they cannot afford even the basic education or medical cover thus relying on traditional herbs. They have a few clothes that are either second hand or torn. They don't use modern methods of agriculture or input.*

There is less farming activity at Emmusta, Musikhoni, Ebusiraro, Emmasti and Emmunua where land has a lot of rocks. The CoG-K has encouraged the residents not to be idle but be engaged in hewing rocks for ballast and making of rock blocks for building houses so that they can make a living by selling them. Thus, the rock which is a natural material has provided a source of income thus raising the living standards of the people. Consequently, land even if it has rocks is still viewed as a source of livelihood. According to Siaunya (OI, 11/11/2015), the poor lack basic needs and they struggle to get them. While on the other side, the rich have enough resources. Evidently, the poor are not a single people with only a single problem of lack of money. It is evident that people view and experience poverty in different ways. For example, in Emuhaya, women have much weaker access to, and control over, capital assets such as land. It is on land that agricultural productions like livestock takes place. Despite the small land distribution, livestock farming is also significant. It was established from the interviews, that proportions of respondents are involved in livestock farming as shown below in Table 3.4

**TABLE 3.4: TYPES OF CATTLE KEPT BY THE CK's ADHERENTS**

Number	Exotic Cattle		Local Cattle	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
0	243	81	99	33.0
1 – 4	54	18	150	50.0
5 – 9	3	1	39	13.0
10 – 14	-	0	9	3.0
15 – 19	-	0	5	1.6
20 – 24	-	0	2	0.6
Over 25	-	0	1	0.3

**Source:** Field Data

As indicated in Table 3.4, the data from the field research show that up to 67 percent of the residents of Emuhaya keep local cattle as compared to the exotic breed. Livestock plays a central role among the members of the CK of Emuhaya District in their social and religious life. The importance of livestock lies in the fact that the adherents depend on them for survival thus they assist to reduce poverty (Asiachi: OI, 15/08/2015). The products of the livestock like milk and meat for example are used for food, the skin and the horn as religious sacred containers; the dung for manure and smearing the houses (Sikinyi: OI, 23/12/2015). Most important, the livestock is used to pay dowry. For this reason, God is always petitioned in the church to grant more cattle and to protect the animals from diseases and theft (Mulima: OI, 29/02/2015). Livestock is also used to reward the

clergy for their good work in the church and also those who have excelled in good behaviour (Ochango: OI, 13/02/2015). Ochieng (OI, 17/11/2015) on the other hand complains about the use of rewards to the CK clergy: *The elite CK clergy can hardly be poor. The majority live in luxurious environment not comparable at all with the situations of the members of the congregations find themselves. Although I am not advocating that he clergy should live in situations similar to the poor people they preach to, they should help create programs that help liberate the poor from the suffering. Today the clergy spend very little time with the both the spiritually and the materially poor. The clergy must emulate the way Christ conducted his affairs with the poor (Ibid.).*

Land and livestock therefore continue to be important measures of wealth among the members of the CoG-K in Emuhaya District. It is also on land that infrastructural development takes place (*Ibid.*). For instance, the development process of any community particularly in the rural areas is to a large extent influenced by the infrastructure. The transportation and communication network, educational facilities, health facilities, water sources, energy supply among others greatly affects the development of a particular community (Akhaenda: OI, 19/12/2015).

The road transport is predominated by earth roads which are considered poor. Most of the roads in Emuhaya are impassable during the rainy seasons thus rendering business to market areas like Luanda, Mwichio, Esibuye, Mahanga and Emakakha impossible. Sometimes some goods reach the destination as spoils. Transport, or rather lack of it was an important issue for the people in Emuhaya. The *murrum* (dirt) road that connects Luanda to Emusire was being repaired as part of the development projects in Emuhaya District, after the CK petitioned the Luanda town council to help so that people's way of life can be improved thus alleviating poverty. However, potholes, muddy and stony stretches seemed to be the destiny of the road, and it still had to be negotiated carefully on bicycle (*bodaboda*) or vehicles (*matatu*). Footpaths run through the hilly landscape and connect Kima to Emmatsi and other villages of Emmunua. There was no bus service from Ekwanda to Emaloba, Luanda to Esirulo, Ebuyangu to Hobuyaya, khwipanga to Emukunzi, Epanga to Ebusiraro, Ebuyangu to Ebukolo and Esiandumba to Ebusubi People transport each other and goods on foot or on bicycle. Occasionally, visitors arrived on hired taxis in the area. Children would then get up from their seats in the school and even in homes and run towards the road shouting "*motokaa, motokaa*", meaning vehicle. The unpredictability of the weather and the prolonged dry season had resulted, not only in hunger, but also in feelings of deep uncertainty and frustration. "These things (poverty and frustration) come together, and that is why some CoG-K adherents turn to drinking of *chang'aa* in Emuhaya District (Siberenje: OI, 26/02/2013). When a man earns 1500 shillings in a month and knows that he cannot fulfil the family's needs of feeding, clothing, school fees and other necessities, he becomes so frustrated and goes to get a drink or two to feel a bit happy and forget the whole thing" (Andabwa: OI, 18/11/2016). Men and women, teachers, nurses and children mentioned poverty and alcohol as the main problem facing them and their community. There is some irony in the fact that some women in the area survived and paid for their children's school fees by brewing *chang'aa* and selling it in local bars, mainly to men. The study observes that the majority of the CK members in Emuhaya District are poor. According to Ochieng (OI, 11/11/2016), the majority of the CK residents of Emuhaya District are leaving in abject poverty. Biblical pictures and drawings in the religious books used in the CK transmit an image of God that is often anthropomorphic. Yet, within the CK's perspective, even a developed image of God has certain anthropomorphic features: God is not "faceless", but rather a person with whom one can have a close relationship. A picture provided by the children about the image of God was that he is "*omundu we chingubo chindafu nende chindefu*" (a fellow with some beard and a white gown). When asked, "What does God do?" his activities as a creator did not predominate. The children described God more in terms of helper, guardian, or protector when they are faced with worldly problems including providing food, shelter and fees for school. CK adherents revealed the deformation which human sin against God brought in to the world; they begin with suffering caused by greed and domination over others. It is in this context that God's deliverance of the Hebrew from the captivity may be viewed. One clear goal of the liberation and reconstruction theology is to prevent injustices ever arising again among the children of God. Jesus Christ was himself poor (2 Cor., 8:9), and his ministry in Galilee was aimed at liberating the dispossessed and the outcast. The ministry of Jesus Christ was thus with the sick, those branded as 'sinners' and the communally rejected persons. At the same time as the poor experience the good news of the kingdom of God, the real nature of the gospel becomes evident to others. The New Testament pays special attention to what that means in relation to children, the social outcasts and the sick or generally the "*kondoo wa bwana amba wamepotea*" (the lost sheep that belong to the Lord). Field data analysis of the six compassion stations in Emuhaya District on Table 4.7 showed that the respondents identify the following problems as the results of poverty among the children.

**TABLE 3.5: MARKS OF POVERTY AMONG CHILDREN OF CK ADHERENTS**

Predicament	Respondents	Percentage
Lack of education	42	14.0
Hunger and Malnutrition	32	10.7
Poor clothing	57	19.0

Neglected children	72	24.0
Street children	28	9.4
Child labor	31	10.4
Alcohol and drug taking	14	4.7
Poor health	13	4.4
Crime	9	3.0
Incest	2	0.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Field data

The interpretation of table 4.7 indicates that the ramifications of poverty among children can be attributed to the number of neglected children in the community. 24% of the respondents indicated that neglected children have become the major cause of suffering among the children. To alleviate this problem, the CK put in place a mechanism of recruiting them into the child development centre and Kima Integrated Community Initiative Program, through its local congregations. Other indicators among the children include poor clothing, lack of education and child labour in a descending order in the foregoing table. Most of the children in these institutions were under 15 years with the majority being boys (Ombima: OI, 12/12/2016). For instance, the Kima Integrated Community initiative Program centre has a total of 2236 children, of these, 820 are boys (KICIP Records, 2016). As much as KICIP which is a faith-based organization of the CoG-K has supported and helped to alleviate poverty among the children, the study revealed that there was lack of adequate facilities to support the increasing number of poor children in Emuhaya District.

Poverty was also identified as the main cause behind abandoned and neglected children. The study revealed that poverty due to unemployment and lack of adequate education and vocational training led to alcohol and drug taking. This in turn led to broken families and emergence of single parenthood, which further pushed more children into crime and on the streets of small towns like Luanda and Mwichio. Some children ran away from their homes due to violence inflicted on them by their alcohol and drug-taking parents. Some parents are reported to take a lot of 'omusala' a local word for marijuana (Kuya: OI, 15/09/2016). This study also shows that besides poverty, cultural factors have also contributed to the worsening condition among the children adherents of the CoG-K in Emuhaya District. For instance, children borne from an incestuous relationship between relatives are usually abandoned at birth or later. This is an old custom in the society that is still being observed (*Ibid*). The CoG-K has been concerned with rescuing these children and arranging for adoption through its programs with Compassion international. The missionary Board of the CoG-K which governs the missionary activities has also been involved in helping to adapt the children into new families (Smith: OI, 11.09/2016).

The CK efforts in alleviating poverty of children in Emuhaya District call for concerted efforts by all stakeholders. It is evident that there is need to create social-economic structures that will empower the victims of poverty. The children should be educated: in addition, CK should focus on cultivating a spirit of self-determination so that the adherents can identify with the poor. It is also the only way that the church can claim to be prophetic.

### III. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the study findings the following conclusions were made:

**4.1** The study concludes that the CK's teachings are largely pertinent in the development of adherents and their participation in activities that are designed along people's development needs. They have subsequently been essential in terms of local people's accessing resources for improving their livelihood. However, the paucity of resources has aggravated a dependency syndrome in the CK programs, which has left most activities of the programs not self sustaining.

**4.2** The study proved that the CK has a role to play through her programs like Sisi kwa Sisi, Child Development Centres, Health care Units and education, thus these institutions make a significant contribution to sustainable development in Emuhaya District and are useful instruments for spearheading alleviation of poverty in the said district.

The CK's development is founded upon a spirituality of mutual sustenance and transformation through its concern for the adherents' struggle with poverty. This study found out that faith activities and the related projects implicitly advance the poverty alleviation cause, thus all development revolves around spirituality. From this perspective the CK has the responsibility to engage in all aspects of development within spirituality as the foundation of such engagement.



**4.3** The study concludes that as much as the CK has made concerted attempts towards development in Emuhaya District by influencing the peoples thinking on legitimacy of wealth and education, and on the moral value of saving and investing. However some of its programs and ceremonial functions like ordination, baptism, marriage and weddings tend to retard these efforts of alleviating poverty. Although such programs and celebrations serve the poor at the grassroots level, they delay change in behavioural and institutional transformation capable of sustaining economic growth.

#### **IV. RECOMMENDATIONS**

On the basis of the conclusions of this study the following recommendations were made:

**5.1** This research recommends that if Emuhaya District is to develop, it has to place the CK teachings and theology of option for the poor at the top of the agenda and to consider it as is so often the case, as adjunct to the real core of the work that is, development. The study proposes that for the CK to improve her input in social concerns of the people, it should reshape its theology of development so that it can fully address the plight of the poor. This study also recommends that studies be done to establish the impact of specific doctrines of the CK that have an effect on the economic growth.

**5.2** The study submits to the fact that power lies in the CK projects which, subsequently play a positive role in alleviating poverty in Emuhaya District. As a result, these study findings suggest that development will in future need to be considered in term of religious teachings. The study recommends that development experts, theologians, policy makers and practitioners should cultivate long-term relationship with the church in general and the CoG-K in particular so as implement policy for development consequently alleviating poverty.

**5.3** There is a need to change cultural practises that tend to retard development among the adherents of the CK in Emuhaya District. The study posits that cultural practices surrounding marriage and death that are repugnant and detrimental to change should be discarded if development is to take place.

#### **REFERENCES**

- [1] Adeney, M. T. (1984), *God's Foreign Policy*. Grand Rapids: Eardman Publishers. Albertini, R. V. (1980), *Colonialism and Underdevelopment: Critical Remarks on the Theory of Dependency*. Leiden: Leiden University Press.
- [2] Amin, S. (1976), *Unequal Development: An essay on the Social Formulations of Peripheral Capitalism*. Hassocks: Harvest Press
- [3] Ayanga, H. O. (1999), *The Secularization Process and Its Impact on Christianity in Kenya: Eldoret as a Case Study*. Unpublished Ph.D Thesis: Moi University.
- [4] Babbie, E. (1998), *Social Research Methods*. Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing. Barret, D. B. (1975), *African Initiatives in Religion*. Nairobi: East African Publishing House.
- [5] Bediako, K. (1996), *Serving with the Poor in Africa*. California: Mare Publishers. Belshaw, D. (2001), *Faith in Development: Partnership Between the World Bank and Churches of Africa*. Oxford: Regnum Books International.
- [7] Bradshaw, B. (1997), *Christian Witness and Transformational Development*. Monrovia: MARC. Berg, B. L. (2001), *Qualitative Research Methods of Social Sciences*. Needhm Height: Allyn and Bacon Publishers. Bryne, T. (1970), *The Church and Development Dilemma*. Eldoret: Gaba Publishers.
- [9] Bob, G. (1995), *Beyond Poverty and Affluence*. New York: Oxford University Press. Burkey, S. (1993), *People First: A Guide to Self-Reliant, Participatory Rural Development*. New York: Zed Books Ltd.
- [11] Cavanaugh, W. T. (2008), *Being Consumed*. Cambridge: Eerdman Publishers. CBS. (1999), *Social-Economic Profile of the Population Dynamics, Kenya 1999 and Housing Census*. Nairobi: CBS Publications
- [13] Chambers, R. (1996), *Rural Development: Putting the Last First*. Essex: England Longman Press. Craige, B. L. (1999), *Neither Poverty nor Richness*. Illinois: Essex Publishers.
- [14] Daily Nation. (2004), *Nairobi Women*. Nairobi: Nation Media Publishers. Dunne, G. (1964), *Poverty in Plenty*. New York: Orbis Books.
- [15] Dye, D. (1963), *Asceticism in the Church God Reformation Movement from 1880 to 1913*. Unpublished Masters Thesis: University of Tulsa.
- [16] Fern, D. W. (1986), *Third World Liberation Theologies*. New York: Orbis Books. Galgalo, J. D. (2005), *African Christian and the Contemporary Market Place: Materialism and the Theology of Moderation*. Butere: Chadwick.

- [17] Gavin, K. L. (1982), *Development and Underdevelopment in Historical Perspective*. New York: Methuen Press.
- [18] Gonzalez, J. (1987), *A History of the Christian Thought: from the Protestant Reformation to the Twentieth Century*. Nashville: Abingdon Press.
- [19] Government of Kenya. (2010), *Kenya: 2009 Population and Housing Census Highlight*. Nairobi: Government Printers
- [20] Gumo-Kurgat, S. (2004), *The Catholic Church and Social Change in Busia District, Kenya 1924 1995*. Published Ph.D Thesis, Saarbrücken: Lambert Academic Publishing
- [21] Publishing
- [22] Gustavo, G. (1968), *Liberation Theology*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmann Publications. Himbara, D. (1994), *Kenyan Capitalists: the State and Development*. Nairobi: Lynn Publishers.
- [23] Henderson, L. (2000), *Development of the Church in Anyere*. Nairobi: Acton Publishers. Kageni, B. (2008), *No Expense is Spared When Death Calls*. Nairobi: Nation Media Press.
- [24] Kemp, C. F. (1975), *Pastoral Care with the Poor*. Indiana: Abingdon Press. Kanyandago, P. (2002), "Rich but Rendered Poor: A Christian Response to the Paradox of Poverty in Africa". In Kanyandago P. (Ed) *The Cries of the Poor in Africa: Questions and Responses for African Christianity*. Uganda: Kisubi Publishers.
- [25] Kimambo, L. (1999), *East African Expression of Christianity*. Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers.
- [26] KNBS. (2010), *Kenya Demographic and Health Survey 2008 – 09*. Nairobi: KNBS Publications. Kothari, C. R. (2003), *Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques*. New Delhi: Wishwa Prakasham.
- [27] Prakasham.
- [28] Krueger, J. (1998), *Focus Groups: A Practical Guide for Applied Research*. Newsbury: Sage Publications. Marx, K. (1970), *Selected Writings in the Sociology and*
- [29] Mbiti, J. S. (1996), *African Religion and Philosophy*. Nairobi: Heinemann Publishers. MDG Center. (2009), *Taking Action to End Extreme Poverty*. Nairobi: Acton Publishers.
- [30] Meeks, D. (1989), *God the Economist: the Doctrine of God and Political Economy*. Minneapolis: House Press.
- [31] Ministry of Planning and National Development. (1999), *National Poverty Eradication Plan*. GOK Printers.
- [32] Myers, B. L. (1997), *Changing the Story: Christian Witness and Transformational Development*. Pasadena: MARC Publishers.
- [33] Myers, P. (2000), "Pentecost as New Economy" in Duchrow (ed) *Colloquium 2000: Faith Community and Social Movement Facing Globalization*.
- [34] Geneva: WCC.
- [35] Nandy, A. (1998), *Tradition, Tyranny and Utopia*. Bombay: Oxford University Press. Ndegwa, P. (2003), *Africa's Development Crisis*. Nairobi: Heinemann Press.
- [36] Nyong'o, A. (1990), *Regional Integration in Africa*. Nairobi: Academic Science Publishers. O'Brien, J. (1992), *Theology and the Option for the Poor*. Michigan: A Michael Glazier Publishers.
- [37] Ochieng, W. R. (2002), *Historical Studies and Social Change in Western Kenya*. Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers.
- [38] Oduyoye, M. (1986), *Church Women and Church Mission*. In J. Pobee, *New Eyes of Reading for Biblical Theological Reflections by Women*. Nairobi: Pauline Publications.
- [39] Pauline Publications.
- [40] Office of the Member of Parliament. (2010), *Work and Development*. Nairobi: Citizen Press. Office of the Member of Parliament. (2008), *Emuhaya Strategic Development Plan 2008 – 2018*.
- [41] *Emuhaya Constituency*. Nairobi: Citizen Press.
- [42] Ogot, B. A. (1999), *Building on the Indigenous; Selected Essays 1981 – 1998*. Nairobi: Regal Press.
- [43] Parrinder, G. (1975), *African Mythology*. London: Hamlyn Publishing. Plant, R. (2001), *Politics, Theology and History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [44] Pope Paul VI. (1993), *Populorum Progressio*. Washington DC: Catholic Conference. Pope Pious. (1967), *Liberation Theology*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmann Publications.
- [45] Prandervand, P. (1990), *Listening to Africa; Developing Africa from the Grass Roots*. New York: Praeger Publisher.
- [46] Rasmussen, T. (1996), *Christian Responsibility in Economic Life*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press.
- [47] Saitoti, G. (2002), *Economic Development*. Nairobi: Government Printers. Schreiter, R. (1991), *Faces of Jesus in Africa*. London: SCM Press.
- [48] Segundo, J. L. (1976), *The Liberation of Theology*. New York: Orbis Books. Shorter, A. (1999), *Christianity and the African Imagination*. Nairobi: Pauline Publishers.

- [49] Sinclair, M. (1980), *Green Finger of God*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press. Singleton, M. Q. (1988), *Qualitative Evaluation Methods*. Newbury Park: Sage Publications
- [50] Smith, J. W. (1981), *The Bible in the Church of God Reformation Movement: A Historical Perspective*. Unpublished Ph.D Thesis: Anderson
- [51] School of Religion.
- [52] Speckman, M. T. (2001), *Relief, Foreign Aid and Making of A Beggar in the Bible and Human Development in Africa*. Nairobi: Pauline Publishers.
- [53] Sugden, S. (1987), *The Church in Response to Human Needs*. Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers. Tarino, A. S. (2005), *Applied Ethics and Africa's Social Reconstruction*. Nairobi: Acton
- [54] Publications.
- [55] Thomas, G. (1975), *Religious Philosophy of the West*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. Tillich, P. (1951), *Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality*. Indiana: Anderson
- [56] University Press.
- [57] NDP. (1996), *Progress Against poverty: A Report on Activities since Copenhagen UNDP Progress Report*. New York: UNDP Publications.
- [58] UNDP. (2003), *Human Development Report: Gender Work*. New York: UNDP Publications. Verheist, T. (1990), *No Life Without Roots: Culture and Development*. London: Zeb Books.
- [59] Vinay, S. (1999), *Mission as Transformation*. Oxford: Regnum Publishers.
- [60] \_\_\_\_\_ (2000), *AD 2000 and Beyond: A Mission Agenda*. Oxford: Regnum Publishers. Wanyama, F. (2003), *Local Organizations for Sustainable Development; the Political Environment of the Community Based Organizations in Western Kenya*.
- [61] Unpublished Thesis: Maseno University.
- [62] Wengraf, T. (2001), *Qualitative Research Review: Biographical Narrative and Structured Methods*. London: Sage Publications.
- [63] Wesangula, H. (2009), *Church Marriage*. Nairobi: Heinemann Publications. Whyte, S. R. (1992), *Medicine and Self-help: The Privatization in the Social Relations of Health*.
- [64] London: James Carry Press.
- [65] Wickersham, H. (1990), *Holiness Bible Subjects*. Grand Junction: Gospel Company. World Council of Churches, (1993), *Land Rights for the Indigenous People*. Geneva: WCC
- [66] Publishers.
- [67] Zacharia, G. (2007), *Participation of Women in Development in Rural Areas in Kenya: Readings on Poverty, Politics and Development*. Institute of Population Studies: Anderson University Press.