

This research plan was developed by the EFC's Centre for Research on Church and Faith for the partnership studying *Women in the Canadian Evangelical Church (WCEC)*. For more information, please visit www.TheEFC.ca/women-in-church.

Proposed research question: How do Christian women in EFC's affiliate networks understand their role in their local church and what factors influence their participation?

We want to understand how women engage in the ministry of the local church and what factors influence their involvement (or lack thereof). In addition to collecting demographic information, we are interested in asking participants:

- in what ways she is involved in her local church,
- how she understands her contributions,
- how she became involved,
- if and how she interacts or serves with men,
- and if she would change anything about her current level of involvement.

By asking these questions, we hope to learn more broadly:

- if there are patterns in a woman's age or stage of life that corresponds with how often or what kinds of activities she participates in,
- if a woman's involvement reflects the roles she occupies at home and/or at work,
- if a woman's involvement reflects her skillset and gifting,
- if and how women work alongside men in the local church,
- how women develop their convictions to serve in the way they do,
- and what are obstacles and opportunities for women's contributions in the local church.

Primary population (40 interviews, national survey): Evangelical women in EFC-affiliate local congregations with regular church attendance (monthly or more). We will aim to:

- differentiate between those who consider their participation as contributing to the ministry of the local church, and those who do not,
- differentiate between those who consider themselves leaders or not,
- let respondents define what constitutes participation, service, and leadership,
- include women who serve but do not have (or see themselves as having) an official role,
- include women who serve through official (or vocational) roles.

Ministry expert population (25 interviews): church leaders, denominational leaders, women's ministry organization leaders, subject matter experts and influencers, academics.

Access to population:

- Women affiliated with the EFC through its affiliate structures,
- Research partner networks.

Representativeness: We will aim to recruit a sample of English- and French-speaking women that represent a range of evangelical traditions, ethnicities, regions, age groups, employment status, marital status, and life stages. We will consult the 2021 census and EFC's denominational metrics to set quotas for representativeness. Survey samples are more difficult to control for quotas, but we will make every effort to recruit a diverse cross-section of participants.

Significance: Robust research on women in the church could help us:

- gain insight into trends in women's participation and their future in the church,
- identify obstacles to and opportunities for women's involvement in the church, and
- identify pathways for women and men to participate together effectively.

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