

Research Article

## Effects of Leadership Styles in Pentecostal Evangelistic Fellowship of Africa on Growth and Development

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**Abstract:** Pentecostal Evangelistic Fellowship of Africa (PEFA) in Bungoma County is a Pentecostal church established in 1962, but it has been plagued with conflicts due to leadership wrangles. The purpose of this study was to investigate conflict and unity on growth and development of PEFA Church in Bungoma. The study was set to examine the effects of leadership styles in PEFA on growth and development and identify strategies used to minimize conflicts in PEFA church in Bungoma County. This study was guided by the instrumentalism and constructivism theory, which helped in identifying structural and institutional characteristics of PEFA church. The study used a mixed method approach for designing sampling techniques, where purposive and simple random techniques were used to arrive at a sample of 164 respondents. Further, questionnaires, focus group discussions (FGDs) and in-depth interviews were used as data collection tools. Quantitative data generated from questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics and presented in form of tables and figures after serializing, developing code books, exporting to excel sheet then to SPSS sheet version 25.0 and interpreted whereas qualitative data was analyzed thematically after transcription of recorded voices. The findings revealed that trained pastors and leaders were proved to perform better than non-trained in terms of handling of issues daily demonstrating spiritual maturity during conflicts, confidence in addressing emerging issues on time regardless of one's socio-economic status and position in church. Moral fabric of the pastors and leaders contributed most to the disintegration of the church not necessarily the leadership style. Effects of inefficient leadership in times of conflict were withdrawal of members; break up, formation of splinter groups and loss of the flock back to worldly pleasures. The type of leadership style demonstrated by pastors may promote commitment and active participation of the members who in turn could influence members of their families, friends and the community to join the church. The study recommended that PEFA church needs to review and decentralize theological training curricula.

**Keywords:** Leadership styles, community, socio-economic status.

### Background

Pentecostalism is a Christian religious movement that started in the early 20<sup>th</sup> C in the United States of America (USA). The movement emphasizes on the direct personal experiences with God through the saving grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and *glossolalia* (speaking in tongues). This movement traces its origin from the account of the Day of Pentecost over 2000 years as exemplified in Acts 2:1-4. It is recorded that on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came upon believers who were praying in the upper room in Jerusalem enabling them speak in diverse tongues. Pentecostalism emerged among radical adherents of the holiness movement who were energized by revivalism and expectation of the imminent return of Jesus Christ. However, a unique feature notable from the beginning is that Pentecostal churches were involved in conflicts (Gathuki, 2015).

Conflict in Pentecostal churches dates back to the inception of Pentecostalism. Mahoney (1993) observes that the modern Pentecostal movement started from the Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles California in the USA between 1904 and 1906 under the leadership of William Joseph Seymour, a pastor in a little mission on Azusa Street. According to Seymour's preaching, despite sanctification, Christians could not be said to have received the baptism of the Holy Spirit until they spoke in tongues. The three year revival resulted in the spread of Pentecostalism throughout the USA and the rest of the world as visitors carried the Pentecostal experience back to their home churches or felt called to the mission field. However, even among the many Christians who joined the movement later, conflicts arose causing splits. Hollenweger (1997) notes that conflict among Pentecostals began in 1906 with Charles Price Jones and Charles Harrison Mason who were both pastors in the "Church of God in Christ" a Pentecostal church located in a cotton gin in California. Though Jones was the leader of the church, Mason was more dominating and popular. Their harmonious working relationship ended in 1907 due to a leadership struggle. When Mason left this church after excommunication, about half of the ministers and members followed him. In 1909, after two years of fighting over the church name in court, Mason and his faction retained the use of the name "Church of God in Christ."

According to Hollenweger (1997), Pentecostalism in Africa began with John Graham Lake who lived between 1870 and 1935. Graham led a large missionary party to Johannesburg, South Africa in April 1908 marking the beginning of the spread of Pentecostalism in Africa. He founded the Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa (AFMSA) in 1910 and the Zion Christian Church (ZCC) in 1913. These two were large and influential Pentecostal churches in South Africa. Adeyemo (2006) notes that today, the estimated figure is 107 million people making roughly 12% of Africa's 807 million are followers of Pentecostalism. The success of the Pentecostal churches according to him is due to "African realities of poverty". Poverty has opened up Africans hearts to the Pentecostal influence which inspires the congregations with biblical messages such as "whoever sows generously will also reap generously" as quoted in 2 Corinthians 9:6.

Wilfred (2011) observes that Pentecostalism has experienced a variety of divisions and controversies. He further notes that another early dispute was centered on the doctrine of the Trinity. This led to further division between the Trinitarian and the Non-Trinitarian branches which are in existence till today. This scholar further observes that there are over 792 million Pentecostal followers worldwide and the movement is still expanding in many parts of the world.

Gathuki (2015) observes that conflicts and subsequent splits in Pentecostal churches are common in Kenya. For instance in 2008, the Full Gospel Churches of Kenya (FGCK) was involved in a succession dispute that broke the six year old unity which it had enjoyed. This dispute split the church into two factions namely, the original FGCK and a faction called Gospel Revival Center (GRC). In 2014, the Deliverance Church (DC) Nyeri branch which had about 300 members, got involved in leadership conflict which split it into two. A large group of members left with the assistant pastor and established a church called Prime Ministry International (PMI). Welbourne and Ogot (1966), alluded that Pentecostalism in Kenya was introduced by the missionaries. They are all in agreement that the Pentecostal Assemblies of God (PAG) was the earliest Pentecostal mission in Kenya established at Nyang'ori near Kisumu by the Canadian Pentecostal Missionaries. It was followed by the Church of God Mission (CGM) at Kaimosi in 1918. After 1940, two large Pentecostal denominations emerged, that is, Pentecostal Evangelistic Fellowship of Africa (PEFA) started

by US missionaries in Mombasa in 1944 and the Full Gospel Churches of Kenya (FGCK) started by Finnish missionaries in 1949 in Western Kenya. The Pentecostal Evangelistic Fellowship of Africa (PEFA) developed from the partnership and merger of churches that had been founded by Elim Fellowship (formerly Elim Missionaries Assemblies). It has its headquarters in Lima, New York, USA. Another was the International Pentecostal Assemblies, now known as International Pentecostal Churches of Christ whose headquarters are in London. Those two missionary bodies agreed to unite their churches to form PEFA.

Pentecostal Evangelistic Fellowship of Africa in essence means a vibrant Pentecostal Church where the ministry gifts of the Holy Spirit are in operation in the lives of the church members. It is an evangelistic Church envisioned to preach the Full Gospel of Jesus Christ – embracing the ideals of the Holy Spirit. Two locations in Kenya are identified as legitimate birth places, that is, Bukuria Mission in Kuria being the birth place of Elim Churches, while Kaimosi Mission being the birth place of International Pentecostal Assemblies Churches. Roy and Theresa Hill are the first missionaries who came to Tarang'anya (Light go away) in 1943. They were joined by Rev Arthur Dodweit and his wife May who were the second missionaries to come here. Bukuria Mission was registered as the first Elim mission station in 1945. Rev Bud and Fay Sickler first moved to Bukuria in 1944 where they stayed until 1953 when they moved to the coastal town of Mombasa. The first PEFA General Overseer was Erastus Otieno who served between 1979-2000 when he died.

From Mombasa, the church spread to Nairobi pioneered by Rev Paul Johansson who arrived in Kenya in 1961. The western region which includes Rift Valley, was pioneered by the late Rev Daniel Chege, Rev. Gerrishom Lazaro, the late Musa Khasi and Meshack Khaligona. ([http://pefachurch.org/our\\_history](http://pefachurch.org/our_history) ).

## **Effects of Leadership styles on church growth and development**

### **Church growth and development**

The congregations are in interdependent groups of Christians which constitute the physical representation of Christ on earth. That is why its pastoral leadership programs emphasize spiritual growth of every individual member, numerical growth, church planting, and expansion. Programs also move people closer to God in order to see Christ as the cornerstone of their lives and embed the Bible in everything they do. The Bible is the foundation for teaching and life instruction. "If the story is told faithfully and accurately, it will be one of life with God in a church for the world." The backbone of this church is the Holy Scripture on which everything is based. Hence, leaders have to live a life modeled on the scripture (Fackre, 1973). The congregations have a sense of belonging to the church and they believe that they are the church. They are all involved in the discipleship process, a strategy for church growth and kingdom expansion. Everyone is accountable for changing their character to become more like Christ in faith and actions. As part of being good shepherds, all the members are serving their communities by being involved in community issues and meeting important pressing concerns. Individual local churches were established with a need to carry on the work of Christ as a local body of believers. "And so were the churches established in their faith and increased in number daily" (Acts 16:5) (Ngasura, 2012).

According to Ngasura (2012), a church is an organization that is able to fulfill all the functions that are appropriate for a local church as per the teachings of the New Testament. In this context, the New Testament church is the Lord's church of which He is the head. This being the whole truth about church, the real church is the body of Christ on earth. He observes that the Africa Gospel Church was founded on what Jesus said about his church: "I

will build my church” (Colossians 1:18). Only those who are the called ones are a part of that church - called out of the world, purified, and cleansed by his blood to be his own. It is the Lord that adds people to this church, those who are getting saved. Thus, this church is more than an organization in the sense that it is a living, growing, organism, with the life of Christ within. Many grow the church through exploitation of different spiritual gifts and talents. The Holy Spirit gives each Christian a spiritual gift or gifts to be used for the common good. God gives Christians in a congregation the gifts needed to carry on ministry in that place. “And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues”(I Corinthians 12:28; Eph. 4:11-14).

There has long been a connection between religion and development, as evinced in the twin activities of colonialism and missionary work. And religious institutions are, of course, a key part of civil society, being the most prevalent form of associational life in Africa today (Gifford, 1994). Nevertheless, two recent changes in the religious and development landscapes are forcing scholars to assess their current interconnections more closely. First, alongside the rise of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and their increasing role as the implementers of secular development interventions, there has been a recent blurring of the distinction between church and NGO, as many mainline churches established development wings following the expanded flow of aid money to civil society organizations in the 1980s and 1990s. This NGO of the mainline churches (Gifford, 1994), has been matched by a parallel growth in Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs) not necessarily directly linked to any particular church or mosque, but inspired by religious teachings and approaches. Noting the significance of these trends, there have been a growing number of studies of faith-based Christian and Muslim NGOs (Dicklitch and Rice 2004, Hefferan 2007, Kaag 2008, McDonic 2004), including some excellent ethnographic accounts (Bornstein 2005, De Temple 2006, Kamsteeg 1998), as well as discussions of donor experiences and strategies for engaging with this type of development organization (Benedetti 2006, Clarke 2006, Marshall and Van Saanen, 2007).

Second, there has been a massive ‘Pentecostal explosion’ that has radically altered the religious landscape in much of the developing world. Millions of people in Africa have joined Pentecostal churches in the past 30 years. This movement does not separate religion from development, and for the most part does not set up development wings or Faith Based Organizations (FBOs). It does, however, bring with it a radically new conception of development and broadcasts it to its followers with tremendous energy and efficiency. African Pentecostals see development in terms of ‘What God wants for Africa’ and most recently in terms of the gospel of prosperity.

What God wants for Africa, they claim, is a continent blessed with health, wealth and abundance, where people work hard, pray hard and live upright moral lives. What the devil want for Africa, however, are under development, poverty and suffering. And thus, along with hard work, development requires a ‘war against the demons’, a notion that captures hearts and minds much more energetically than the NGOs’ rhetoric of the ‘war against poverty’. This religious view of development is made explicit in sermons, preaching and religious literature, and it is broadcast to followers and indeed many others across the continent, through films and teleserials made by Pentecostals (Pype, 2009).

Another factor that leads to the establishment of Pentecostal churches is the desire to fulfill the great commission given by Jesus Christ, (Matt 28:19). The commission is to go out to all

parts of the world, preaching the 'Good News' and baptizing all those who believe in Christ. In the New Testament the early apostles had a great desire to fulfill the great commission despite the persecutions they faced. Barnes (1985) quotes one of the early Christian authors Tertullian, from Carthage in the Roman Province of Africa, who asserted "the blood of the martyrs became the seed of the Gospel". This is a replica to the manner in which Pentecostal churches are established today. Kalu (2005) asserts that, in the process of fulfilling the Great Commission, many Pentecostal churches are established to serve those who join the Christian faith. Bonk (1991) observes that, it was out of the Great Commission that the Christian missionaries from Europe and USA came to Africa in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

According to Samita (2004) attribute the establishment, growth and development of Pentecostal churches to the Christian crusades, conventions, conferences, revival meetings, Bible workshops and the availability of Christian literature. Such occasions and meetings draw many people into the Pentecostal churches. These scholars, further, assert that churches which rose due to these factors are presently active in urban areas such as Nairobi, Kinshasa and Lagos. Samita (2004) further observes that urban Pentecostal Churches heavily rely on crusades for numerical growth. This has led to the establishment and growth of mega Pentecostal churches in Nairobi and its environs. However, according to this study, these factors are not limited to urban areas. They have also been identified as contributors of the establishment and growth of the Pentecostal Churches in the rural areas. The factors therefore, will provide guidance to this study as the researcher will assess the growth and the development of P.E.F.A church in Bungoma County.

### **Influence of Leadership Styles on Church Growth and development**

Kippenberger (2002) says that leadership style is the form that leaders adopt in their dealings with those who follow them. He further explains that style in this type of context is generally taken to mean a —way of behaving. That is, the appropriate style will depend on a wide variety of criteria, including the relationship between the parties involved, the nature of what needs to be done and the match between the difficulty of the task and the competence available. Dales (1986), states that leadership style is the characteristic manner of expressing our values and of executing our work. This is supported by Hybels (2002), who states that leaders often have impact not only because they are highly gifted but also because their leadership styles mesh perfectly with specific ministry needs. Uris (1991), asserts that standardized leadership style instruments can help to uncover an individual's leadership style which may assist in being effective or even more effective in leadership.

However, Hybels (2002), formed his different styles of leadership and theories after reading a book called —*Certain Trumpets: The call of leaders* (1994), by Garry Wills and observing church leaders for many years. He states that all church leaders have the spiritual gift of leadership, but they express that gift in varied ways. First is visionary; the visionary leader has a clear picture in mind of what the future could hold. Such a leader casts powerful visions and has indefatigable enthusiasm for turning those visions into reality. Visionary leaders shamelessly appeal to anybody and everybody to get on board with their vision. They are idealistic, faith-filled leaders who believe that if they cast their vision clearly enough and often enough it will become a reality. They are not easily discouraged or deterred.

Visionary leaders may or may not have the natural ability to form teams, align talents, set goals, or manage progress towards the achievement of the vision. To be either effective over the long-term, they will have to find other people who can help them or they will have to work very hard to develop the skills that do not come naturally to them. Visionary leaders can



be found in every facet of society, whether business, government, social change movements, religious organizations, community groups, or sports teams. Visionary leadership exists in all cultures, across gender lines, and at all organizational levels.

However, the phenomenon of leadership has been studied for thousands of years, but it was not until the late 1970s that formal visionary leadership theories were developed. Visionary leadership theory is part of a genre of leadership theory that includes leader visioning behavior as a key leadership behavior. Early ideas on visionary leadership were developed via the sociologist Max Weber's notions of charisma and the transformational and charismatic leadership theories of the historian James MacGregor Burns and the management scholar Robert House. Other theorists, such as Bernard Bass, Ben Avolio, Warren Bennis, Burt Nanus, Jay Conger, and Rabindra Kanungo also developed theories with vision communication components (Eden, 1990). Visionary leadership behaviors beyond vision development and communication vary across leadership theories. Visionary leadership is said to have positive effects on follower outcomes, resulting in high trust in the leader, high commitment to the leader, high levels of performance among followers, and high overall organizational performance. Visionary leaders are said to have insight into followers' needs or values and to develop a vision statement reflecting those needs or values. In addressing why a leader's visionary behavior improves followers' outcomes, Robert House and the psychologist Boas Shamir theorize that this happens because the vision has positive effects on followers' self-concept; followers become motivated to achieve the vision because they find it meaningful, identify with it, and believe in the vision and their ability to achieve it. Although the ideological goals that visionary leaders provide can never fully be achieved in practice, followers can pursue or can act in accordance with the vision statement on a daily basis. For example, a pharmaceutical company's vision statement might make ideological references to improving health care and saving lives. Other aspects of the vision include statements of confidence in followers' ability to carry out the vision, especially by working together; vision statements may also make references to the organization's unique history (Collins & Porras, 1991).

The organization's early principles or experiences, difficulties that have been overcome or specific markets that it serves often appear in vision statements. The scholar Marshall Sashkin proposed that to formulate a vision, a leader must have certain personality attributes and cognitive skills. Specifically, the leader must have the ability to think in long time spans. This ability allows the leader to develop a long-range vision of what his or her organization should become in ten, twenty, or more years into the future. The leader also must possess excellent communication skills, as he or she must communicate the vision continually, in new ways, and must tailor the vision to the specific audience. Visionary leadership theories specify how leaders implement their vision. The following are some of the key implementation behaviors of various theorists according to Levin (2000). They include role modeling; visionary leaders model the desired actions required for working toward the vision. They are visible symbols of what they want their followers to be and also set an example through their actions, empowerment the leader's optimism and confidence in followers' abilities empowers them to work toward the vision. Visionary leaders are confident that followers will work toward the common vision rather than their own personal agendas.

The sixth point is adapting: Responsiveness to a changing environment is another visionary leadership behavior. Visionary leaders display flexible or versatile problem-solving styles. They are effective at gathering, processing, and distributing information to their organizations

so that appropriate responses can be carried out (Lewin, 2000). Besides, he observed, that visionary leaders are intellectually stimulating; they are said to stimulate followers to challenge assumptions, to see the world in new ways, and to question existing stereotypes or generalizations. The leader's ideas may be different from followers' existing beliefs but a visionary leader can persuade followers of his or her ideas because of the high trust and commitment that followers of visionary leaders demonstrate (Lewin, 2000).

In addition, directional style; Hybel (2002), states that the directional style of leadership does not get much press, but it is exceedingly important. The strength of this leader is his uncanny, God-given ability to choose the right path for an organization as it approaches a critical intersection. A critical intersection is that point when an organization, a department, or a church starts asking, which course should we take? More so, a leader with a directional style is able to sort through all the options. He or she can carefully assess the values of the organization, the mission, the strengths, the weaknesses, the resources, the personnel and the openness to change. With remarkable wisdom, the directional leader puts the church or ministry in the right direction. This style of leadership is extremely important because mistakes at key intersections can wreck organizations.

Additionally there is the shepherding style; he notes that the shepherding leader is a leader, who builds a team slowly, loves team members deeply, nurtures them gently, supports them consistently, listens to them patiently, and prays for them diligently. This kind of leader draws team members into such a rich community experience that their hearts begin to overflow with good will that energizes them for achieving their mission.

Shepherding leaders tend to draw people together almost regardless of their cause. Under a shepherding leader, the range of vision can be very broad, but what really matters are the community dynamics. They may not excel at casting visions or putting strategic plans in place, but their unique ability to shepherd people enables them to make a huge difference (Hybel, 2002).

The re-engineering leadership style; Hybel (2002), continues to argue that while entrepreneurial leaders love to start new endeavors, re-engineering leaders are at their best in turn-around environments. These leaders are gifted by God to thrive on the challenge of taking a troubled situation, a team that has lost its vision, a ministry where people are in wrong positions, a department trying to move forward without strategy-and turning it around. These leaders enthusiastically dig in to uncover the original mission and the cause of the mission drift, and they re-evaluate personnel, strategy, and values. They repeatedly meet with team members to help them figure out where the old went wrong and what the new should look like and then prod team members on to actions. Also, re-engineering leaders love to path up, tune-up, and revitalize hurting departments or organizations. But when everything is back on track and operating smoothly, these leaders may or may not be motivated to stay engaged. Some are content to stick around and enjoy the fruits of their labor, but many prefer to find another department or organization that needs to be overhauled.

### **Methodology**

This study applied descriptive survey research design. Through description the researcher obtained a lot of information and indirectly tested theories. Descriptive research design describes the present status of people, attitudes and progress (Oranga, 2016). Descriptive survey design was preferred for the study as it allows the researcher to examine the relationship between variables. The study examined the Organizational structure of PEFA

and its influence on unity, the extent to which the theological structure contributes to unity and conflicts, effects of leadership styles on growth and development and strategies used to minimize conflict in PEFA church in Bungoma County. The target population of the study was 300 PEFA churches and respondents included; the bishops, pastors, deacons/elders, youth leaders, women leaders and Sunday school teachers. The study used purposive and stratified techniques. The required sample size was 164, selected as follows: 14 bishops, 3 pastors per local church, one leader per selected strata for Urban, Peri-urban and rural local churches for elders/deacons, youth leaders, women leaders and Sunday schools teachers. Three research instruments were used in this study; namely questionnaires, interview schedules and Focus Group Discussions. The researcher obtained an introduction letter from the School of Graduate Studies and a research permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). Data collected from the field was coded and entered into the computer for analysis using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Qualitative data was analyzed thematically. Descriptive statistics including percentages and frequency counts were used to analyze the obtained quantitative data.

### Findings

The study established that lack of balance among leadership styles negatively affects church unity and growth. The results revealed that bishops exhibited balanced leadership styles than pastors. They had high inclination to participatory or inclusive and achievement oriented styles. The findings revealed that the youth felt that dictatorial leadership style was commonly applied in PEFA churches. The study also established that disagreements among the youths were not adequately resolved owing to the generational gap between them and the leaders hence escalation of conflicts in the church. The study revealed that the youths prefer participatory and directional leadership styles as compared to the rest. Finally the findings indicated that elders/deacons said that delegated and strategic leadership styles were commonly applied by church leaders. The findings revealed that a church leader should display visionary, prayerful and systematic sermon delivery in pulpit ministry.

The study findings indicated that a leader should show genuine love. Accordance to Ephesians 4:1-3 a leader should walk worthy of the calling received with humility and gentleness, with patience, accepting one another in love, diligently keep unity of the spirit with the peace that binds them. The results also indicated that sometimes personal traits of people who are prayerful, visionary, skillful and good at resource mobilization lead to church unity and growth because they pose a challenge to inactive members FGD/Lug/voice 006. The following were found to be causes of leadership conflicts: expectations for leadership roles or theological training were not met.

Failure for church leadership to facilitate planned church programmes such as youth and Sunday school retreats. Lack of communication and accountability on financial matters is another source of conflict in the church. The findings further revealed that 26.1% of the respondents indicated that discrimination, compromising standards and unfair treatment of some members bring hatred and divisions which affect unity and growth of the Church to a great extent.

The findings further revealed that personality clash can generate leadership conflict in the church. In addition, the study established that leadership styles have a high impact on unity which translates to growth and development in any church. The findings also revealed that successful leadership largely depends on the vision bearer, individual and congregational prayers, dialogue, delegation and promptness in resolving disputes.



## Conclusion

The study concludes that inefficient leadership in times of conflict were withdrawal of members; break up, formation of splinter groups and loss of the flock back to worldly pleasures.

## Recommendations

- ✓ Church leaders to adopt leadership styles that minimize on conflict.
- ✓ The church to adopt transformational leadership for successful propagation of the vision.

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